

# Trustee Update

Stephanie Donaldson

Ward 9: Davenport & Spadina - Fort York

Toronto District School Board

416-395-8787 • [Stephanie.Donaldson@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:Stephanie.Donaldson@tdsb.on.ca)



Hi Everyone,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family very well and that you had a chance last week to experience some of the joy of Halloween and connecting with others. Thanks in advance for reading this newsletter. I know how full inboxes these days are, so I appreciate you taking the time. Some of the highlights of this newsletter include [information about construction of the new Bloor CI/Alpha II](#), [trustee advocacy for increased funding from the province](#), [vaccine information](#) and more.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, every day I have been so grateful for the actions that folks in this city have taken to preserve the health of their neighbours and themselves. I also continue to be proud to serve as a member of Toronto's Board of Health during this critical time and pleased to report that as of this week, Toronto has hit another milestone in our vaccination campaign. 84% of eligible Torontonians are now fully vaccinated - and nearly 88% have their first does. The city's 90% target is truly within reach. Keeping our schools safe and open is the priority and vaccines are one of the key measures in preserving our students' ability to learn in-person, in our schools, in their home communities.

In community,  
Stephanie



## **Bloor CI/Alpha II Construction and Field Update**

Construction of the new Bloor Collegiate Institute and ALPHA II Alternative School is beginning. The students and staff of these two schools are currently being welcomed at Central Technical School. A number of factors, including COVID -19 delays to the Ministry of Education and City of Toronto approval processes, have affected the project timelines. The TDSB has awarded the construction contract to Percon Construction and the duration of the construction is expected to be 30 - 32 months. During this time, the lease for Brockton Stadium field (managed by Toronto Lands Corporation) will be extended until the new school opens. For inquiries regarding this project, please contact me, Ward 9 Trustee Stephanie Donaldson at [stephanie.donaldson@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:stephanie.donaldson@tdsb.on.ca) or Trustee services at 416-395-8787. Updates on the project will be available on the Bloor

CI/ALPHA II Alternative relocation webpage. The TDSB is so excited to be building this incredible new community asset and we thank you for your patience.

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## Join us for a Ward Forum

### Ward Forums

I was pleased to host 2 roundtables for Ward 9 SAC Chairs at the end of the last school year and the beginning of this year. Please find the notes for each of the roundtables on my website at <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/ward9/Ward-9/Ward-Forums>. Also, please save the date for an upcoming Ward Forum on December 7th which will be focused on Parent Engagement and co-hosted with Trustee Robin Pilkey from Ward 7.

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### Letter to the Minister: Pandemic Funding Support

On Oct. 22, 2021, Chair of the Board Alexander Brown wrote to the Minister of Education to request predictable and stable pandemic funding and support for school boards, to ensure the health and safety of students and staff. The [full letter](#) is now available online.

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### Update on TDSB's COVID-19 Vaccination Procedure for Employees, Trustees and Other Individuals

The TDSB continues to implement the [COVID-19 Vaccination Procedure for Staff, Trustees and Other Individuals \(PR734\)](#) to support the health and safety of staff and students in our schools and workplaces. To date, more than 88.5% of our 40,000 staff members are compliant with the procedure.

To ensure that we can continue to support service levels to staff, students and our community, the TDSB will be gradually implementing compliance measures for employees over the next three weeks, starting on Tuesday, November 2, 2021. For more information, please read the [full update](#) that was provided to parents/guardians on Wednesday, Oct. 27.

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### Voluntary Disclosure of Student Vaccination Status

The TDSB continues to prioritize keeping schools safe for students and staff and to focus on limiting the number of disruptions to learning as a result of COVID-19. In the event of an interim cohort dismissal related to COVID-19, students who are fully vaccinated are allowed to continue

to attend school as long as they have no symptoms. Fully vaccinated staff and students will still have to pass the COVID-19 screening tool each day, confirming they do not have symptoms.

To more effectively manage possible COVID-19 cases and outbreaks in schools, Toronto Public Health has requested that Toronto school boards begin collecting the voluntary disclosure of vaccination status by students born in 2009 and earlier. This is intended to minimize disruption to the students and support a more efficient dismissal process. For more information, please read the [web story](#).

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### **Toronto Public Health School Immunization Program**

Toronto Public Health is offering free Vaccination Clinics in Toronto for the following vaccines:

- Meningococcal-ACYW to prevent meningitis
- Human papillomavirus to prevent cancers
- Hepatitis-B to prevent liver cancer

All students in Grade 7 and higher who have not received any or all of these vaccines are eligible.

These vaccines will be available Tuesdays through Saturdays from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the City's vaccination clinics located at:

- Metro Toronto Convention Centre, 255 Front St W, North Building
- Scarborough Town Centre, 300 Borough Drive
- Cloverdale Mall, 250 The East Mall
- Mitchell Field Community Centre, 89 Church Ave
- Woodbine Mall, 500 Rexdale Blvd

No walk-ins, make an appointment at [www.tphBookings.ca/tph/studentvaccines](http://www.tphBookings.ca/tph/studentvaccines)

Meningococcal vaccination is a requirement for school attendance. Your child must be up-to-date with the meningococcal vaccine or have a valid exemption to avoid school suspension.

For information about these vaccines talk to your doctor or call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600. Read the [full letter](#) from Toronto Public Health and complete the [consent form](#) to access the vaccinations.

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### **Statement from TDSB Chair Alexander Brown Re: Supreme Court Ruling**

While we are disappointed with today's Supreme Court ruling on Bill 5, the fact that it was a very close decision supports our Board's position that the Province's actions were undemocratic.

Our board took great effort to consult with our communities before finalizing ward boundaries, only to have the Province change them without any opportunity for public notification and consultation. As we said at the time, this is not reflective of reasonable public expectations for consultation, transparency, accountability and the proper administration of government.

We appreciate that the Supreme Court of Canada considered the TDSB's position in support of the City of Toronto's case and the people who live here.

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## Director's Gender and Sexuality Alliance Awards Applications

Now Open For the past ten years, the [Director's Gender Sexuality Alliance\(GSA\) Awards](#) have recognized and honoured GSAs across the Toronto District School Board, however during these last two school years (2019-20 and 2020-21) the GSA Awards were postponed due to the pandemic. But this year, the Director's GSA Awards is back. We know GSAs have been working hard to support each other while having to pivot to remote learning. During this time, some GSAs transitioned their individual school-based groups online whilst others partnered with grassroots activists and community organizations to connect queer, trans, and non-binary students with even more support. One of the most outstanding initiatives created during the pandemic was the [TDSB's GSA Network](#), which continues to connect hundreds of staff and students across the school board through incredible broad actions of collective care. To honour all of this creative work by GSAs to support each other, the TDSB wants to commit to providing the necessary resources for these groups to continue and expand. Therefore, this fall/winter the Director's GSA Awards will be awarding \$1,000 to eight GSAs from across the TDSB that operated during the 2019-2020 and 2020-21 academic school year. In Spring 2022, four more awards will be announced for GSAs operating during the 2021/22 academic school year. The application deadline is Friday, December 3, 2021 at 4 p.m. Please send applications to [GSA Awards@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:GSA Awards@tdsb.on.ca).

For full application details, [click here](#).

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### Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement – Community Consultations

The Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement in collaboration with select community partner organizations are facilitating a series of community consultations. Community members and parents of students who self-identify as Black are invited to register for a virtual session. Upcoming dates are November 9, 16, 17 and November 23 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. For more details and to register, visit: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/cebsa/community-engagement>

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### Grade 8 Virtual Open Houses and Information Nights

Grade 8 students and families are invited to attend virtual open houses and information sessions (live or pre-recorded) hosted by high schools beginning in November. These sessions offer important information to help make an informed decision when choosing a high school. To learn more about important program and school information, access the pre-recorded information sessions and see the dates/times for information sessions, please visit the Virtual Open Houses and Information Sessions website at [www.tdsb.on.ca/OpenHouses](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/OpenHouses).



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### Reminder to call school if your child will be late or absent

One measure of keeping our students safe is to ensure we can account for any absences or reasons for being late to school. We

would like to remind you that if your child is going to be absent or late for any reason, we ask that you contact the school immediately and report the reason for the absence. If we are not informed about the absence, we will make attempts to contact you through our automated call-out system to determine the reason for the absence.

To find out how this automated system works please

visit <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/HighSchool/CaringSafeSchools/SafeArrivalProgram.aspx> Please let the office know by calling the school if your contact information, including phone number, changes at any time throughout the school year. Thank you for your continued cooperation to keep your children safe and accounted for.

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### **Keeping Children Safe**

Drivers are reminded to do their part to keep children safe near school buses.

Drivers should follow these tips:

- Stop and never pass a school bus when its red lights are flashing.
- Leave space around school buses and avoid blocking school bus loading zones so children can enter and exit safely.
- Be prepared to stop for a school bus at any time, not just during school hours.
- Always obey the rules of the road and watch for children, especially in school zones.
- Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks and school crossings.

Parents can also help keep their children safe by reminding them to be aware of their surroundings when they are on or near school buses.

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### **Join us for the PIAC Parent Conference!**

Save the date for November 27 and 28 for the PIAC Parent Conference. Bridging the Gap is a two day virtual event with speakers and workshops focused on bridging the gap in our schools in mental health, parent engagement and school councils. Engage with other parents and caregivers from across the TDSB as we learn and share best practices on reconnecting mentally and socially with ourselves, students, schools and communities. More information will be available online at [www.torontopiac.com](http://www.torontopiac.com).

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### **Lockdown and Fire Drills**

At the beginning of each school year, our students and staff prepare for the year ahead by establishing the foundations for a successful year. One of the ways we know we can help students be successful is to create a safe environment in which to learn. Though no one ever wants to see an emergency happen at a school, it's important for school staff to be equipped to deal with those situations, should they occur. The safety of students and staff is a top priority at our school and to that end, as with all emergency drills, it is essential that we are prepared and understand the importance of procedures that will help ensure the safety of everyone in our school. The TDSB has taken steps to ensure your child's safety while in school. Each school has

developed emergency preparedness plans that include steps staff will take in the event of an emergency, how staff will get students away from possible dangers, and how students' families

will be contacted. One aspect of emergency preparedness is the lockdown and fire drill. All schools are required to conduct a minimum of two lockdown drills and six fire drills each school year. Lockdown drills, like fire drills, are an essential component to ensure student and staff safety. It is important that all staff and students are prepared and know how to respond in cases of emergencies. The drills last approximately 5 minutes and ensure plans are effective and can also systematically identify any safety concerns. Communication is also very important in any emergency situation. The emergency contact information kept on file is important in helping this happen. It lists the people who can pick up a student from the school. If you have not yet provided this information to our school office or have updates to the information on file, please make sure our office staff have that information as soon as possible.

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## Heritage and History Months

The Toronto District School Board is proud to celebrate the following heritage and history months during November:

- [Indigenous Education Month](#)
- [Hindu Heritage Month](#)

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## TDSB Update

Sign-up for [TDSB Update](#) and stay informed about recent Board decisions and district-wide news



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