

Trustee Update

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Hi Everyone,

I truly hope that you are able to enjoy the holiday season in new and joyful ways this year, and if you are able, to get some good rest. This week, I attended our last Toronto Board of Health meeting for 2020 and was reminded of the importance of adhering to public health guidance to reduce contact with those outside of your immediate family and take the necessary precautions to stop the spread of the virus. I know how hard this pandemic has been, and how particularly challenging it is during the holiday season, so I want to thank you sincerely in advance for everything you are doing in

your own life to stop the spread of the virus. It makes a big difference in our city, and is so appreciated.

If you missed our December Ward 9 forum last week, you can still watch the recording and access the resources shared on my [website](#). Thanks again to everyone who joined us for this rich and informative discussion. Looking forward to more in the new year!

I will see you in 2021 and, until then, be well, stay safe, take care of each other and happy holidays!

In community,
Stephanie

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COVID-19: Reduce Virus Spread

<https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/>

The best way to keep our kids in school right now is to ensure everyone is following public health guidelines to prevent community spread. This is the most critical thing we can do. Let's all do what we can.

"Please choose to keep at least six feet or two metres apart from people you don't live with. Please choose to wear your mask when you're exposed to people you don't live with. Please choose to wash your hands as frequently as possible. And please choose to stay home and stay apart as much as you can. So if we've got to do this – and there is no doubt that we do – let's make it work." Dr Eileen de Villa

As COVID-19 continues to circulate in the community everyone is reminded to adopt these steps for self-protection:

as much as possible limit contact with anyone you don't live with;

as often as possible, keep at least two metres apart from people you don't live with;

as often as possible, wear a mask when outside your home, especially in indoor settings and when physical distancing is difficult;

wash your hands frequently; and

remain at home when ill.

Health and Safety over the Holidays

On Friday afternoon, the Minister of Education's Deputy Minister sent a memo to school boards with information for parents and teachers regarding health and safety measures over the holiday break and for the return to school in January.

"The holidays are going to look a little different this year. We understand that there may be challenges as the winter break approaches but we encourage all families to consider what we can all do to make the return to school in January 2021 as safe as possible...During the holidays, it is important for everyone to adhere to the public health measures in your communities when connecting with one another."

Please note at this point, heading into the last week of the school year before the Winter Break, there has been no direction from either the province or from Toronto Public Health for the TDSB to "pivot" the in-school system to Virtual for either this coming week or the two weeks after the Break. Should this decision be made, you will receive a system message.

Just in case, if you have any issues with any of the following actions, please inform your child's teacher this week.

Ensure you have a working device at home

Ensure that the school has your correct email address

Log into teacher's online platform to confirm you have access

Make sure you have teacher contact information in case there are technical issues

Bookmark this [Student Virtual Learning IT Support page](#)

COVID-19 Advisories

COVID-19 ADVISORIES
Current Confirmed COVID-19 Cases at the TDSB

The Toronto District School Board is committed to providing up to date information about confirmed cases of COVID-19 in schools (students and staff). This information is easily accessible by clicking on the [COVID-19 Advisories](#) banner on the main webpage of www.tdsb.on.ca. Please note that all schools where there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 will receive a letter from Toronto Public Health to inform them about the possible exposure.

As of December 11, 1,694 cases of COVID-19 cases had been reported in publicly funded schools across Ontario in the past 14 days, up from 1,180 last week. Of those cases, 1,398 are students, 293 are staff, and 3 are not identified. Eleven of the 4,828 schools in the province are currently closed, or 0.23%.

Please note that as of November 10, TDSB began tracking “resolved” cases on the website. If a case was resolved prior to November 10th, it wouldn’t be reflected on the website. Between November 10th and December 13th, 663 cases were resolved.

As of 5pm, December 13, in TDSB schools there were 444 students and 88 staff affected. Eight TDSB schools that have been closed to staff and students on the advice of Toronto Public Health to allow additional time to complete their investigations into COVID-19 cases at the schools. During the closure periods, students will be learning remotely. Letters have been sent to affected communities.

Should you have any questions, please contact your school, visit the [TDSB website](#) or visit the [TPH website](#) for general information. For general questions, please call the TPH COVID-19 Hotline at 416-338-7600, Monday-Sunday 8:30 AM – 8:00 PM, to speak with an agent. If you need immediate assistance, please call Telehealth Ontario 24 hours a day at 1-866-797-0000.



ThoughtExchange

Staff have recently been surveyed using Thought Exchange and we are gathering some excellent input from staff in the areas of mental health and well-being, health and safety, and system operations (e.g. communications, relationships, and

professional learning). Hearing from staff about their experiences will help shape our next steps in our COVID responses for the remainder of the school year. Please note a parent Thought Exchange as well as Student Survey are also being planned for early in 2021.

Please also note that the Director and senior staff are currently considering if the proposed opportunity to switch between in-person and virtual school and vice-a-versa (Feb 16, 2021 -

the day after Family Day) will go forward as determined last August - they are currently collecting data to consider all factors that would affect the continuity of student learning, system stability and the health and safety (including mental health) of both students and staff as well as the present COVID-19 situation in Toronto. More information will follow.

New Middle French Immersion Program

Please note: This program will replace the Junior Extended French program as the Grade 4 entry program in TDSB.

For families interested in the Toronto District School Board's system-wide Middle French we offer an online process to apply. For details, please see the downloadable information package <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Elementary-School/School-Choices/French-Programs/Application-Process/Middle-French-Immersion>

To apply for the MFI (Grade 4 entry) for September 2021, applications must be completed online between January 4 and January 29, 2021. An offer of placement in the program (a specific school) is guaranteed to all on-time applicants and will be made in the weeks following the close of the application window. **Please note:** Families with an older sibling currently enrolled in a French program and who will be in attendance next year are still required to complete an online application for the new student. Please select the “sibling option” within the online application.

Virtual Web Chat Information Sessions for families interested in the MFI (Grade 4 Entry) application and placement process will be held in January 2021. For more information, please join us on one of these dates and times listed below:

- January 14, 2021 – 10 a.m.
- January 21, 2021 – 7 p.m.
- January 27, 2021 – 7 p.m.

Please note: To participate in a live scheduled web chat, please visit [this web page](#) and a link will be available to join on the dates/times as outlined above.

Central Nutrition Pantry Opens for TDSB Students and Families

To help support students and families, the Toronto Foundation for Student Success (TFSS) has launched the Central Nutrition Pantry. This initiative, supported heavily by TDSB's Logistics Services, gets nutritious food in the hands of students and families who need it the most.



In the absence of numerous student nutrition programs that haven't been able to open this year, the Central Nutrition Pantry is helping to fill this gap. The TFSS' Central Nutrition Pantry is fueled by donations as well as bulk purchases of food. TFSS staff assemble deliveries for schools and then Logistics Services picks up the school deliveries and ensures it gets to students attending in-person classes.

In just one week, 12,995 students in nearly 30 schools have received ready-to-eat snacks. More than 32,500 food items were delivered for a total retail value of nearly \$75,000. There are still more than 70 schools on the waitlist, and the TDSB Logistics Services team will keep making deliveries in support of TFSS as long as food is available, to reach as many of them as possible.

Please consider donating to support student nutrition - <https://tfss.ca/donate/>.

PowerUp

PowerUp, run by Prospective Medical Professionals (PuMP) and STEM Fellowship, that aims to connect high school students in Grades 11 and 12 to mentors in university in the health, life, and biological sciences. Mentors will help answer mentees' questions about university admissions, programs, scholarships, and more to help guide them through the process. This program is remotely accessible and entirely free of charge! Sign up [here](#)

Navigate 211 Ontario

Find services for mental health, housing, legal, emergency, employment and more. 211 can help you understand what services and government benefits exist, and explain how to apply. Did you know you can call 211 any time of the day for information on, and referrals to, Ontario's community, social, health, and government services? You can also search their database for housing, legal, employment, youth

A Conversation with Parents and Guardians

211 Ontario

Community Support Workers in collaboration with 211 Ontario invite you to join a conversation about

How to Navigate the 211 Ontario Website

Join us on Zoom
Tuesday December 15, 2020 - 6:30
Meeting Link:
<https://tdsb-ca.zoom.us/j/91094824370s>

For more information please contact
jocelynn.smith@tdsb.on.ca Tel: 416-770-3576



services and more.

211 is answered 24 hours a day, every day of the year across Ontario. They list over 60,000 community and government programs and services. They can also provide an interpreter in over 150 languages. When 211

answers the phone, ask for the language you want and hold the line.

2021-22 Education Funding

2021-22 Education Funding

Consultation Guide

On December 3, 2020 the Ministry of Education provided the 2021-22 Education Funding Guide to school boards for feedback from the sector. They identified that feedback must be submitted by 15 January 2021 to the Ministry. Staff contacted Ministry staff and requested an extension of the deadline to 21 January 2021 to allow the Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee (FBEC) to review and approve the submission to the Ministry. The Ministry consultation document asks for feedback in the following areas through targeted questions in each area:

- COVID-19 Outbreak Response;
- Online Learning Adjustment;
- Priorities and Partnerships Fund (PPF);
- Reducing Administrative Burden and Red Tape;
- School Board Administration and Governance Grant;
- Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA);
- Census Data; and,
- Secondary Class Size Compliance.

In each area, many of the questions are operational in nature. Staff are working to prepare responses to these operational questions and will amend these responses based on feedback provided by Trustees and stakeholders. The Ministry of Education will also be accepting feedback on education funding topics outside the areas identified in this guide.

The Ministry of Education Budget Consultation Guide and a feedback survey tool will be posted to the [Board website](#) to allow stakeholders to provide feedback for consideration in developing the final submission. The survey will be open until 8 January 2021 for stakeholders to provide feedback. This

report and the final submission to the Ministry of Education on the feedback to the 2021-22 Ministry of Education Budget Consultation Guide will be posted on the TDSB Budget website.



Beyond 8: Grade 8 to 9 Transition

Due to the pandemic, the TDSB will not be hosting in-person open houses or tours, but will be hosting virtual events instead. The TDSB has posted new information on the [Going to High School section](#) of the TDSB website. Please check out the [Beyond 8](#) web page, watch the [video overview](#), read the [Secondary School Information Guide](#), and more.

The list of High School Virtual Open Houses and Information Sessions can be found: [here](#).

Optional Attendance

The optional attendance status for all schools for 2021-22 is now posted on the TDSB public website - <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Find-your/School/Optional-Attendance>. Optional Attendance Forms are available from your current school.

If you choose to apply for optional attendance you should know:

- You will be responsible for your own transportation.
- You may only apply to two regular and two specialized schools/programs.
- You may not apply to a school that is not permitted to receive applications (i.e. closed schools). A list of those schools is produced by mid-January.
- A school/program that receives more applications than it has space will run a lottery to determine the successful applicants.
- Once you accept an offer of admission to a regular school through Optional Attendance, it becomes your home school and you are expected to remain there until graduation. For specialized schools/program and alternative schools, you may return to your designated school by address at an appropriate intake opportunity (i.e. semester change, end of term)

Elementary Optional Attendance – Key Dates:

- February 12, 2021 - Optional attendance forms due at elementary school
- March 05, 2021 - Deadline for parents/guardians to be informed of the status of the application request
- March 26, 2021 - Parents/guardians must inform the requested school of their acceptance of the offer
-

Secondary Optional Attendance – Key Dates:

January 29, 2021 - Optional attendance forms due at secondary school

February 12, 2021 - Deadline for parents/guardians of students to be informed of the status of the application request

February 26, 2021 - Course selection sheets due at secondary schools

March 1, 2021: Course selection sheets due at secondary schools via myBlueprint

Download the COVID ALERT APP

Together, let's limit the spread of COVID-19. COVID Alert is an additional tool to protect yourself and your loved ones. COVID Alert helps us break the cycle of infection. The

app can let other app users know of possible exposures before any symptoms appear. That way, we can take care of ourselves and protect our communities. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/covid-alert.html>



School Year Calendar 2020-2021

The official school year calendar for the Toronto District School Board runs from September 1 to June 30, inclusive and has now been approved by the Ministry.

- The last day of class for elementary students is June 29
- **Secondary Quadmester Calendar**
- **Quad 2: Nov. 23 - Feb 4**

Quad 3: Feb 8 - April 20 + exams April 21 & 22

Quad 4: April 23 - June 23 + exams June 24, 25 & 28

PA Days & Holidays Remaining

Winter Break	Dec 21, 2020 - January 1, 2021
Elementary PA Day	January 15, 2021
Secondary PA Day (Semestered Schools Only)	February 5, 2021
Board-wide PA Day	February 12, 2021

Family Day	February 15, 2021
March Break	March 15 – 19, 2021
Good Friday	April 2, 2021
Easter Monday	April 5, 2021
Victoria Day	May 24, 2021
Elementary School PA Day	June 4, 2021
Secondary School PA Day	June 29, 2021

As this is the last week of school before Winter Break please note my next Weekly Update will be sent Sunday, January 3, 2021.

Enjoy the Winter Break and stay safe.



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