



TDSB Elementary Virtual School Family Newsletter

Students in all elementary virtual school classes continue to show incredible commitment, flexibility and adaptability and thanks to our incredible teachers, we continue to move forward and are seeing positive learning outcomes.

With the Winter Break just around the corner, we hope that all TDSB students and families have an opportunity to rest and remain safe and healthy.

We will see everyone back in January!

For more information and updates, please visit: www.tdsb.on.ca/virtualschool.

Mental Health and Well-Being Resources

Toronto Public Health (TPH) & TDSB

Now more than ever it is important to focus on wellness and mental health. Please view the [TPH resource document](#) that provides helpful links to TPH web pages for physical activity, nutrition and mental health resources.

[TPH Covid-19: Holiday Guide](#)

Visit the TDSB for additional [Mental Health and Well-Being Resources](#).

REMINDER: TDSB Virtual Schools Code of Conduct

Virtual learning is a new experience for everyone and while learning is taking place at home, the same responsibilities and expectations of teachers, students and parents/guardians apply as they do for in-person learning. This includes existing board policies and procedures such as the [TDSB Online Code of Conduct](#).

Please also review the [TDSB Virtual Schools Code of Conduct](#), which provides guidelines and expectations for schools/educators, students and parents/guardians.

Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week

The TDSB recognized Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week from November 15 to 21, along with [school boards across the province](#). Each year, this week is an opportunity to remember the impact that bullying can have on a school community and to talk about the ways we can report, support and prevent bullying in schools.

Learn more about [how we support students](#), [bullying prevention programs](#) that we offer and the [educational partners](#) we work with to support anti-bullying initiatives.

Please also read the [Ministry of Education's parent/guardian resource about cyberbullying](#).

Follow Along on Twitter!

There are incredible things happening across classrooms in the Elementary Virtual School. Teachers and students have shown great creativity and curriculum is being delivered in new and exciting ways on a variety of digital platforms. Check out some examples by following along on Twitter @tdsbvs.



Attendance and Safe Arrival Update

The Virtual Elementary School has established a guideline where all teachers take attendance twice a day. This is consistent with PR 707A: *Student Attendance and Safe Arrival Procedures* and practices at in-person schools.

While virtual school students are learning from home, there are times when students are absent from their virtual classroom (e.g. dental or medical appointments, illness, technology and/or internet service challenges).

Due to a number of misdirected student absence calls sent in November, the system has been deactivated until all updates have been completed in the Student Information System (SIS). Beginning on **January 11, 2021** the Safe Arrival automated calls for student absences will be re-activated. Families will receive more detailed information about this process in early January.

Please ensure that your contact information, including email and phone numbers, are up to date with TDSB.

Elementary Switching Survey

All elementary parents/guardians are asked to complete a switching survey to indicate if your child is interested in switching between in-person and virtual learning at the next opportunity. One was sent directly to all parents/guardians via email. If you did not receive this email, please visit the TDSB website to [complete a switching survey](#) by January 4.

The information gathered through this survey will help inform decision-making for this last opportunity to switch for the 2020-21 school year. Please note, it does **not** guarantee a switch will be possible.

International Languages and African Heritage Programs

The International Languages – Elementary/African Heritage Program is offering online language classes to students (TDSB and non TDSB) from Kindergarten to Grade 8. One day each week for 30 minutes, students have live, face-to-face interactive lessons with their instructor and classmates. Activities are focused on building abilities in oral communication, reading and writing.

For more information, visit www.ILPrograms.ca or @TDSB_ConEd.

Adult ESL

Gaining proficiency in English is a critical skill for many newcomers. Every year, nearly 20,000 adults benefit from the TDSB's English as a Second Language classes. Through general language training, and a host of specialized courses, we serve learners at all levels - from those with little or no formal education to those with post-secondary degrees. All Adult ESL classes are online.

For more information, visit www.ESLToronto.ca or @TDSB_ConEd.



Continuing Education – Community Programs

Online Learn4Life winter registration opened on December 2. Take up a new hobby or learn a language from home. Stay active with our many fitness classes or gain knowledge on how to invest in the stock market. Classes are for adults 18+ and start the week of January 23, 2021. Register at www.learn4life.ca.

Middle French Immersion

For families interested in the Toronto District School Board's system-wide French Programs, we offer an online process to apply for Middle French Immersion (begins in Grade 4). An offer of placement in the program (not a specific school) is guaranteed to all on-time applicants. Middle French Immersion applications must be completed online between **January 4** and **January 29, 2021**.

Offers of placement within the program (not a specific school) will be made to all on-time applicants in the weeks following the close of the application window. Families with an older sibling currently in a French program are still required to complete an online application for the new student.

[Virtual Web-Chat Information Sessions – Middle French Immersion Program:](#)

January 14, 2021 – 10 a.m.

January 21, 2021 – 7 p.m.

January 27, 2021 – 7 p.m.

For more information about French as a Second Language programs, the application process and important dates, please visit www.tdsb.on.ca/french.

Elementary Virtual School: Professional Learning Opportunities for Teachers

Teachers continue to take part in professional learning opportunities during the months of December and January, which cover a wide variety of topics and subject areas, including:

- Brightspace Digital Platform/digital tools
- **Anti-Oppression:** supporting student voice, understanding how to support a range in student learning styles, anti-indigenous and anti-black racism.
- **Early Years:** literacy, reading strategies and resources.
- **Kindergarten P.L.A.Y.:** Play has an important role in learning and can further learning in all areas of Kindergarten.
- **Universal Design for Learning:** approaches that benefit any students (e.g. use of **manipulatives; pre-reading strategies** in advance of text)
- **Fostering Classroom Community:** Building that sense of classroom community
- **Assessment & Reporting**
- **Junior/Intermediate - Literacy, Reading Strategies**
- **Show me Literacy Series:** Junior/Intermediate Independent Reading Program – sessions focus on Independent Reading for students in remote learning settings.