



Planning and Priorities Committee Revised Agenda

PPC:007A

Wednesday, May 17, 2023

4:30 p.m.

Boardroom, Main Floor, 5050 Yonge Street, Toronto

Trustee Members

Rachel Chernos Lin (Chair), Michelle Aarts, Alexis Dawson, Matias de Dovitiis, Sara Ehrhardt, Malika Ghous, Liban Hassan, Dennis Hastings, Debbie King, Shelley Laskin, James Li, Alexandra Lulka Rotman, Dan MacLean, Patrick Nunziata, Zakir Patel, Weidong Pei, Yalini Rajakulasingam, Farzana Rajwani, Neethan Shan, Anu Sriskandarajah, Deborah Williams, Manna Wong

| | Pages |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Call to Order and Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands | |
| 2. Approval of the Agenda | |
| 3. Declarations of Possible Conflict of Interest | |
| 4. Delegations | |
| To be presented | |
| 5. Report From Trustees Appointed to the Ontario Public School Boards' Association | |
| 5.1 OPSBA Directors' Report | |
| 6. Toronto Lands Corporation Reports | |
| 6.1 Q2 Business Operations Report | 1 |
| 7. Community Advisory Committee Reports | |
| 7.1 Inner City Community Advisory Committee, April 20, 2023 | 19 |
| 1. Learning Opportunities Index Scoring | |
| 7.2 Black Student Achievement Community Advisory Committee, April 23, 2023 | 21 |

1. BSSAC Endorsement of IDC4U Motion by Trustees Dawson and King, on behalf of Student Trustees Musa, Osaro and Indigenous Student Trustee Shafqat (Incorporating IDC4U: a Grade 12U Interdisciplinary Course in the TDSB, as Provincially Accredited Coursework)

8. Staff Reports

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| 8.1 | Central Student Interest Programs: Implementation Update [4541] | 23 |
| 8.2 | 2022 RBC Canadian Open: Permit Use at Richview Collegiate Institute [4542] | 91 |
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9. Written Notices of Motion

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| 9.1 | Intentional Enhanced Efforts to Create Improved Levels of Civility (Trustees Maclean and Ehrhardt) | 111 |
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10. Private Matters

Separate Document (PPC:007B)

11. Adjournment



60 St. Clair Ave E., Suite 201, Toronto, ON M4T 1N5
Tel: 416-393-0573 | Fax : 416-393-9928
www.torontolandscorp.com
A subsidiary corporation of the TDSB

TRANSMITTAL NO. 2022-152
[PUBLIC]

May 8, 2023

TO: Rachel Chernos Lin, Chair, Toronto District School Board (TDSB)

This communication is to inform you that the TLC Board at its regular meeting of April 20, 2023, received the report – **2022-23 Q2 Business Operations Report** (attached herein).

This report is developed in response to the accountability requirements under Section 4.10 of the Shareholder's Direction.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Toronto Lands Corporation, 2022-23 Q2 Business Operations Report is being forwarded to the TDSB Board for its information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Leola Pon'.

Leola Pon
Acting Chair, TLC and Interim TDSB Staff Director

cc. Stacey Zucker, Associate Director of Education, Modernization & Strategic Resource Alignment, TDSB
cc. Paul Koven, Executive Officer, Legal Services
cc. Craig Snider, Executive Officer, Business Services, TDSB
cc. Daryl Sage, Executive Officer, TLC

Q2 BUSINESS OPERATIONS REPORT

AUTHORITY: Board of Directors
DATE: April 20, 2023
ACTION: Information

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Q2 2022-23 Business Operations Report, be received for information by the Toronto Lands Corporation Board of Directors and subsequently that the report be forwarded to the TDSB Board for information at its May 24, 2023, meeting.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

TLC Strategic Plan Goal: To be a highly functioning organization successfully aligning TLC's and TDSB's Missions and the Shareholder Direction

Per the requirements set out in Section 4.10 of the Shareholder's Direction, the Toronto Lands Corporation reports regularly to the shareholder, the Toronto District School Board quarterly on the development of the business operations of the organization.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TLC is pleased to present its Q2 2022-23 Business Operations Report. As a part of accountability obligations under Section 4.10 of the Shareholder's Direction, the TLC Board is required to report quarterly to the TDSB Board highlighting key activities, achievements, and challenges in each area of the business.

Following the feedback provided by the Board of Directors, the Toronto Lands Corporation continues to develop its 2022 – 2023 reporting on the operational progress throughout Q2, in line with the direction of the Board and from the Board of TDSB requesting a high-level infographic approach to reporting on its operations, that to reduce the complexity and detail of the information being presented.

In line with direction, TLC has developed a dashboard for readers to easily grasp data and to be able to compare data at a glance in a single document, this reporting format style continues into 2022 – 2023. Currently, the dashboard is a static view of operational progress with a written analysis that follows, both are attached as **APPENDIX A**.

As TLC improves the dashboard, the intent is to have fully interactive capabilities, with access to on-demand resources and all of TLC's most important metrics.

ACTION PLAN AND ASSOCIATED TIMELINE

- That the Q2 Business Operations Report to be forward to TDSB Board for information at its PPC meeting (May 17, 2023) and subsequently to the TDSB board at its May 24, 2023, meeting.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no identified resource implications at this time.

DUE DILIGENCE

Review of the reporting requirements, as outlined in the Shareholders Direction.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE REFERENCE(S)

Shareholders Direction

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A Q2 2022-23 Business Operations Report

FROM

Daryl Sage, Chief Executive Officer, Toronto Lands Corporation, at dsage.tlc@tdsb.on.ca or at 416-393-0575.



Q2 BUSINESS OPERATIONS REPORT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
April 20, 2023

FOR INFORMATION

ACTION ITEM



It is recommended that the Q2 2022-23 Business Operations Report, be received for information and that the report be forwarded to the TDSB Board for information at its May 15, 2023, meeting.

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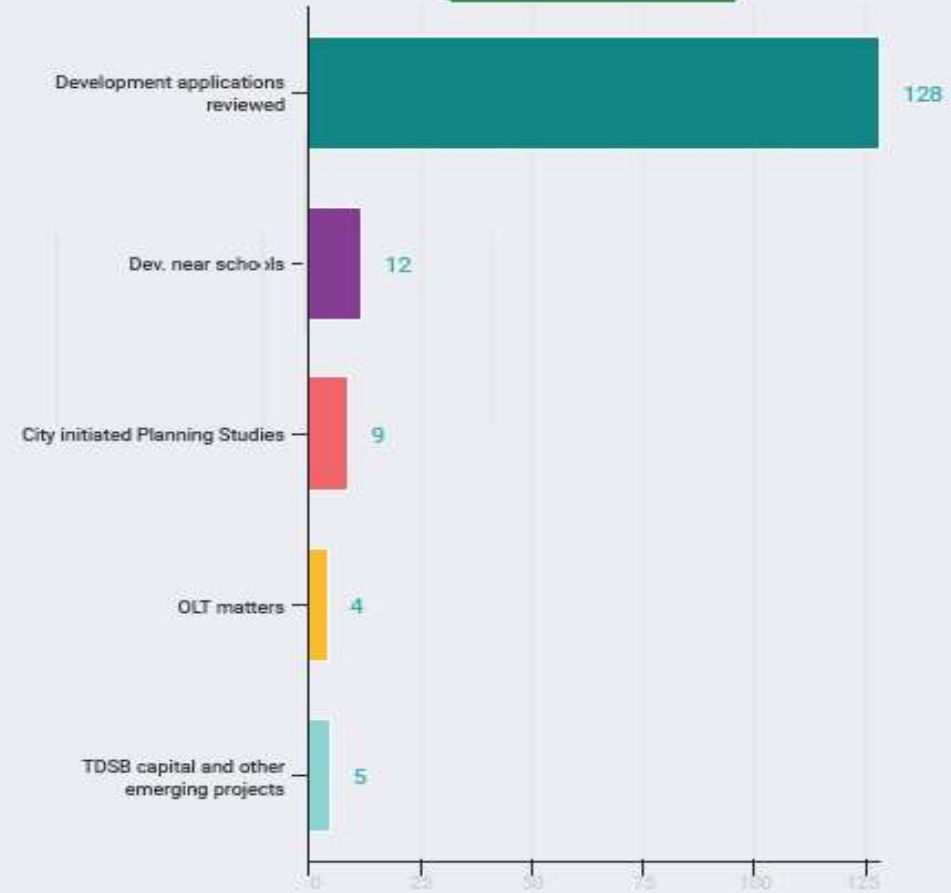
Quarterly Business Dashboard

December 2022-February 2023

Real Estate & Leasing



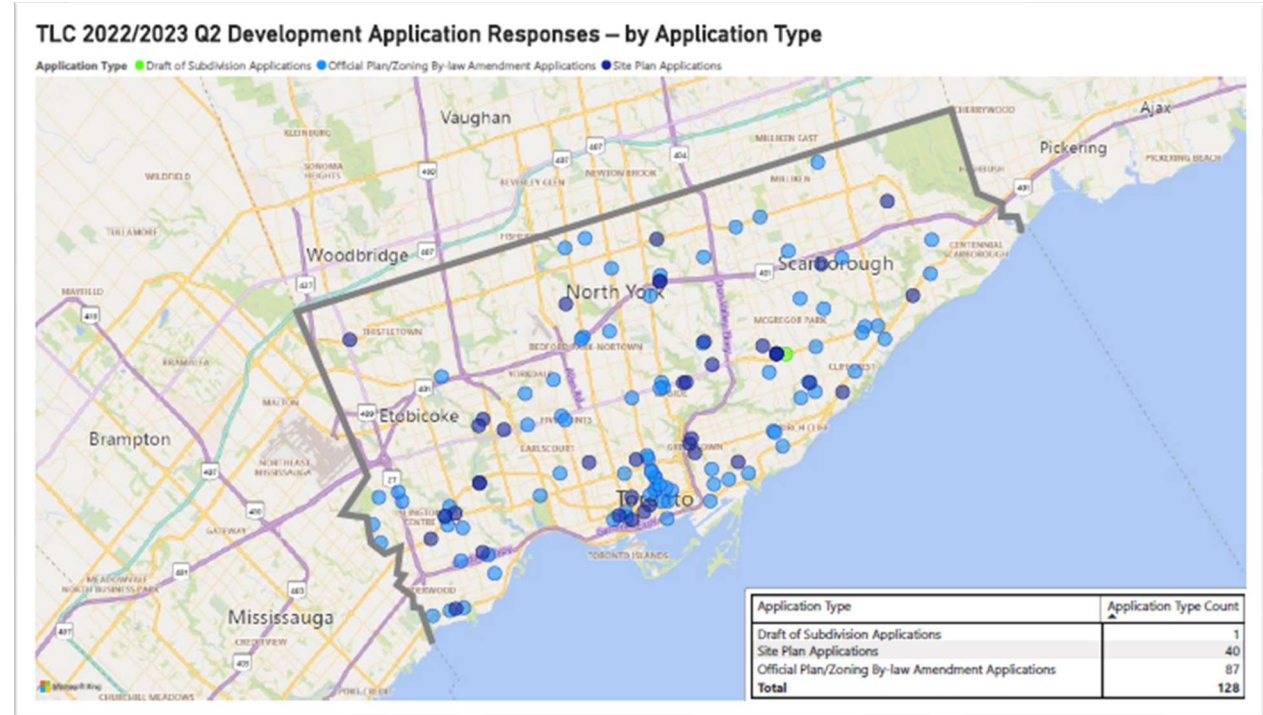
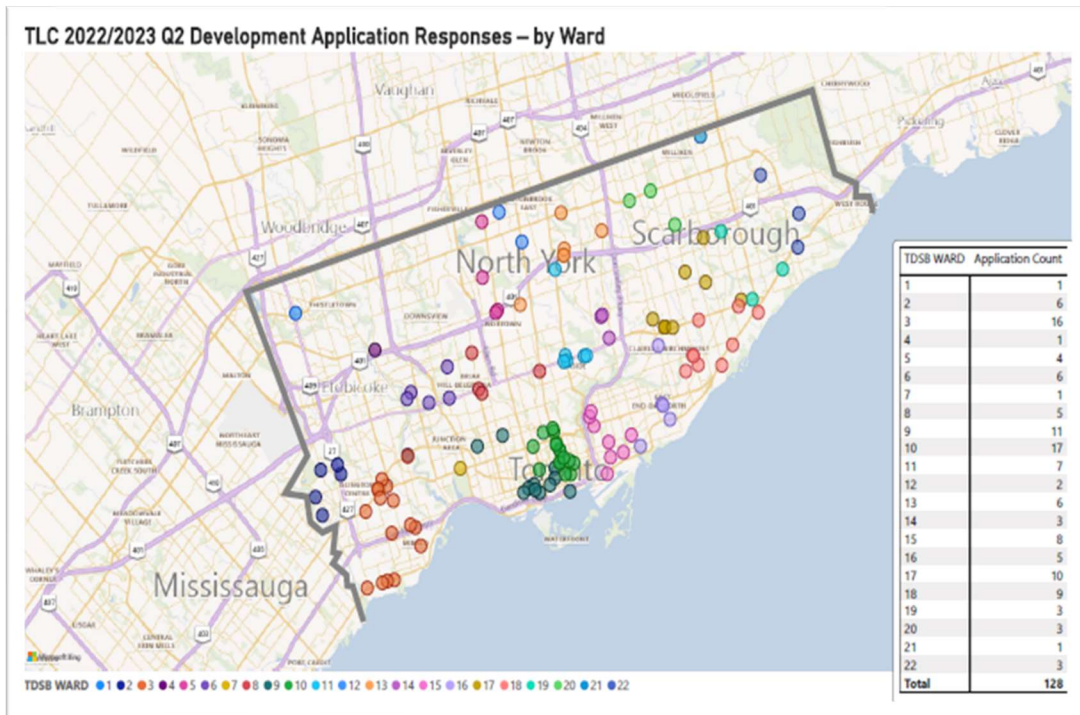
Land Use Planning



LAND USE PLANNING

Development Application Review

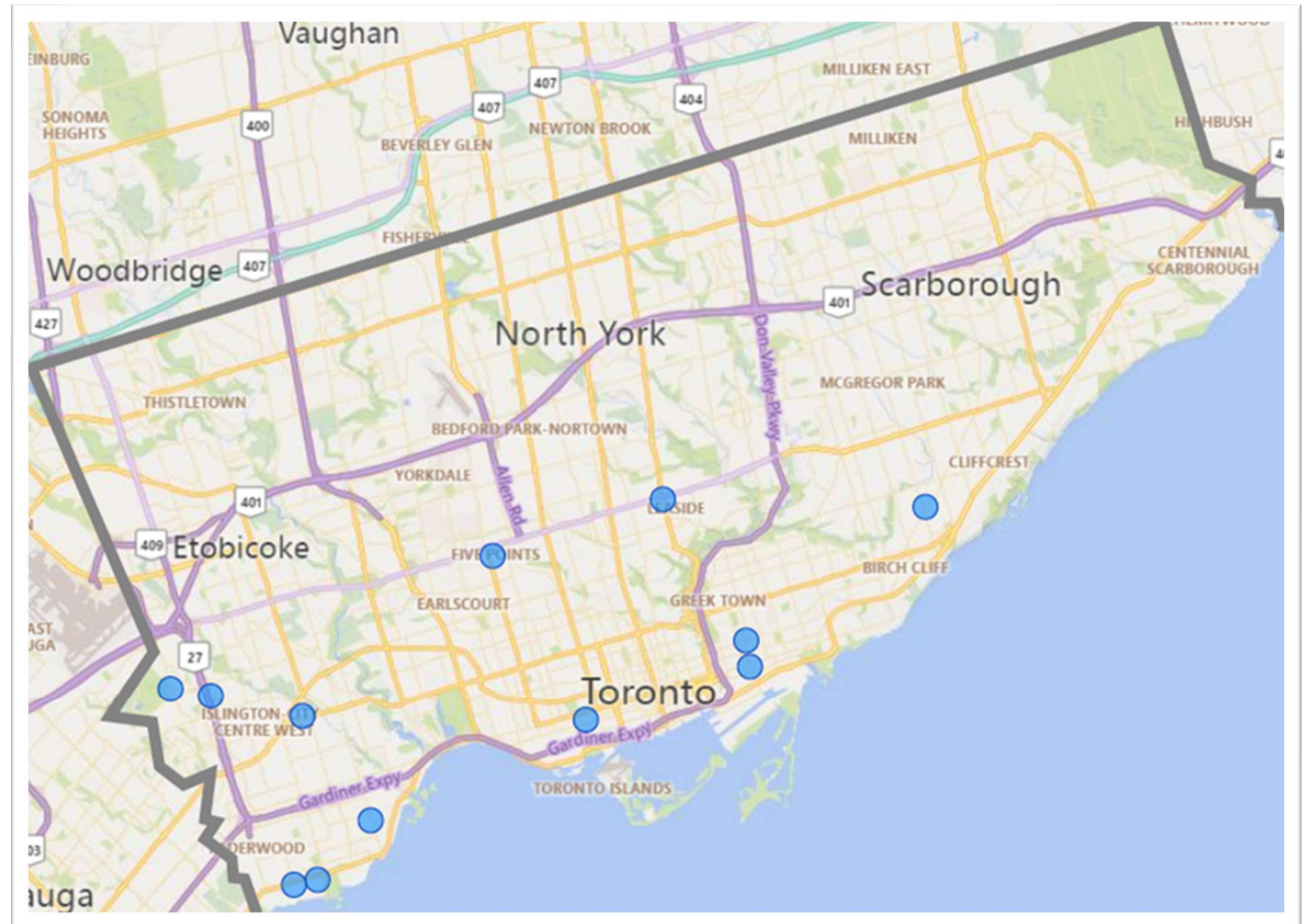
Reviewed 128 development applications in Q2 2022/23:



LAND USE PLANNING

Development Near School Sites

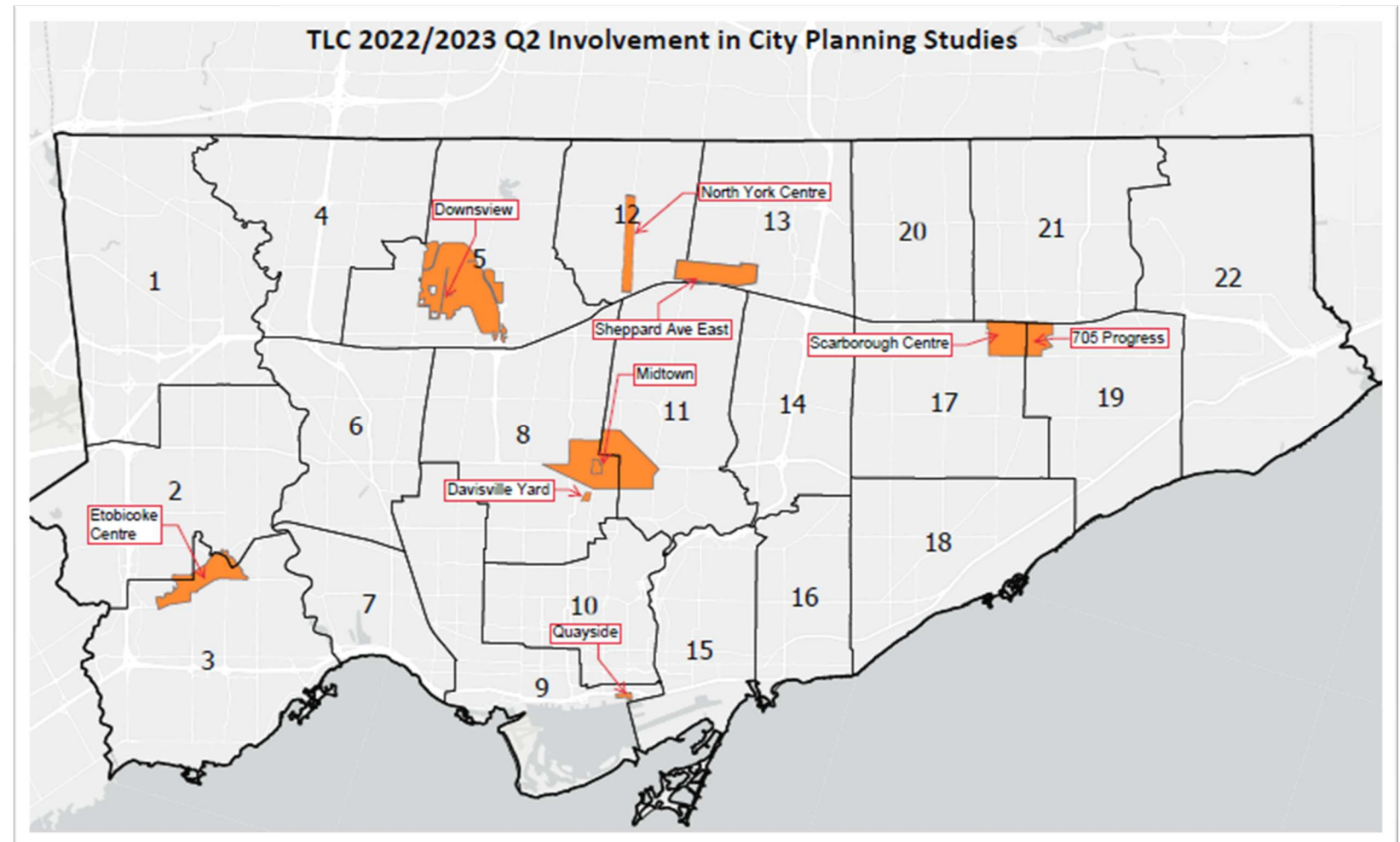
Minimize impacts of development on TDSB properties and the health & safety of students, staff, and school community. 12 Development applications reviewed in Q2 near school sites are shown on map:



LAND USE PLANNING

City-Initiated Planning Studies

Ongoing participation to ensure planning policies reflect TDSB's interest in the provision of schools as a component of complete communities.



LAND USE PLANNING

Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) Matters

Ongoing participation in OLT appeals to:

- Secure a potential new school site in the Wynford-Concorde redevelopment area (Ward 14);
- Protect TDSB schools from negative impacts of nearby development:
 - Millwood Jr PS (Ward 2) – mitigating traffic, shadow and wind impacts
 - Brown PS (Ward 8) – mitigating shadow impacts on school yard
- Protect property values and interests of TDSB portfolio: Harmonized zoning by-law 569-2013

TDSB Capital Projects

Provided land use planning support and advice to the TDSB Design & Renewal team on capital projects at: new school in Lower Yonge (Ward 9).

Other Projects

- Emerging capital projects: West Don Lands Block 9, Scarborough Centre (705 Progress Rd), Golden Mile, Keating Channel Quayside
- Maplewood HS: supporting TDSB in a severance of a portion of the Maplewood HS site for potential sale to Gabriel Dumont Non-Profit Homes, to support their development for additional Indigenous-supportive housing in the area.
- Scarlett Heights EA: supporting TDSB in a severance of a portion of the Scarlett Heights EA site for potential sale to Toronto Catholic District School Board to support their needs for a secondary school in this area

REAL ESTATE & LEASING

Infrastructure Projects

- George Harvey CI – Completed a shared use agreement that will permit the City to use a portion of the school property as a construction staging area. Negotiations are almost completed, and the City's project work is expected to commence in Q4 of 2022.
- Ontario Line Property Requirements at TDSB schools: Pape Jr. School and Blake PS – Negotiating agreements with Metrolinx for use of these two school properties in support of the Ontario Line construction project.

Active Negotiations

- Lower Yonge/Menkes project: finalizing terms of agreement for a new 55,000 sq.ft. public school to be built within a new residential condominium tower that will be built by Menkes within their Sugar Wharf project within the next 3-4 years
- Eglinton Public School: negotiations continue with a local developer called Bazis Inc. for the construction of a new 120,000 sq ft school at the corner of Eglinton and Mt Pleasant. The new school will be located within the podium of a new condominium project that Bazis is planning to build at this location within the next 5-10 years
- Memorial Park wastewater storage tank: negotiations continue with City to sell this TDSB property to facilitate the installation of a large underground water storage tank to be constructed.

REAL ESTATE & LEASING

Asset Management Review

- Jack Miner JMS – completing real estate property due diligence investigations
- St. Margaret's PS - completing real estate property due diligence investigations
- Poplar Road Jr. Public School - completing real estate property due diligence investigations
- Block 9 in the West Don Lands – Development of a new school with other uses
- Vanier and Woodbine (Peanut Plaza) – Modernization Opportunities
- Canadian Tire Lands – Ethennonnhawashsithnen Lane new school (Development opportunities)

Dispositions

- 200 Wilmington Ave. – Commencing negotiations with the current tenant to potentially sell this former TDSB school property
- Severed parking lot space at Bloor Collegiate to Safehaven Project for Community Living
- Scarlett Heights Academy/Hilltop Middle School (a portion after severance) – commencing with necessary real estate due diligence and negotiations for the potential disposition of this school to TCDSB
- Mimico Adult Learning Centre/St. Leo's – Negotiations are on-going with the TCDSB to sell a small portion of the TDSB school property to assist with the expansion of St. Leo's elementary school
- Douglas Park sale to New Haven
- Gabriel Dumont – Sale of portion of land to Metis Housing

REAL ESTATE & LEASING

Land Exchanges

Former Sir Robert Borden Collegiate (Scarborough) for 770 Don Mills Road (City owned) - On-going negotiations with the City for the potential exchange of the Former Sir Robert Borden Collegiate property for a new school to be built by the City at the corner of Eglinton and Don Mills.

Expropriations

Block 9 (TDSB property located at 155 Mill Street) – During negotiations for a 5–6-year lease with Metrolinx to allow for the use of this TDSB property as a construction staging area, Metrolinx decided to expropriate the property from TDSB to ensure use of the property is guaranteed given the importance of the site to the construction of the Ontario Line

CORPORATE SERVICES

Leveraging different technological platforms to create service improvements for internal partners at TLC, TDSB and for the TLC Board of Directors

In December 2022, TLC procured board portal, BoardEffect, as the TLC Board portal platform to be used beginning in March 2023. The portal will assist the TLC Board of Directors with:

- Managing Board meetings coordination and execution
- Assist TLC and TDSB staff with greater access to corporate records, including:
 - Board meeting resolutions
 - Minutes
 - Archived reports and Board artifacts
- The system will support the implementation of several recommendations outlined in the TDSB's review of TLC.
- During Q2, the Board development process and pre-launch activities include:
 - Addition of policies, procedures, legislation and other resources for director and staff to leverage for Board meetings.
 - Staff and Director training sessions have taken place with the BoardEffect Implementation Specialist, to familiarize directors and staff on the functionality of the portal, prior to the launch of the system for the April TLC Board meeting.
- The TLC implemented project management software Workzone, continues to be utilized organization wide to track the developments of ongoing projects, including:
 - The platform allows TLC staff to monitor all Annual Plan projects along with any other projects arising throughout the year, keeping the organization on track toward its commitments and further allows the TLC to report out to both the TLC and TDSB on progress.
 - Utilization of the platform across remains at 100% for the TLC Senior Leadership Team.
 - TLC will be introducing the platform to its colleagues at TDSB as a potential use for joint projects.
- Ongoing digital format for board meeting and board materials to become a paperless environment.

CORPORATE SERVICES

TLC-TDSB Service Request Form

- Q2 implementation of the form with TDSB colleagues underway.

Ongoing Policy, Procedure and Process Update

Provided TLC identified a need to have a formal manual on its governance protocols for the purposes of board meetings and to act as a guide for key TLC positions in clearly delineating roles and responsibilities. The manual was intended to be brought forward to the Board in its fall board cycle however was delayed due to pending results of the TDSB performance review of TDSB.

Disposition of Property for Sale or Lease (TDSB Policy and Procedure)

- In late fall 2022, TDSB staff advised TLC that it would be undertaking a policy review of two key policies that impact TLC's core business – Disposition Policy for Sales and Leases and Community Planning and Partnerships.
- The intent of the policy review and update is to streamline process, identify areas of potential efficiency and reduce administrative burden between both organizations.
- TLC continues to work with our TDSB partners to identify current process vs. a future proposed state which TDSB intends to bring forward its business case in its early winter cycle of meetings.

CORPORATE SERVICES

People & Culture

- Onboarded 4 new employees providing them with the resources, tools, information and people connections necessary to be successful
- Continued work on the implementation of the TLC recognition program. Target launch date is set for end of March 2023.
- Worked with HR & Nominating Committee of the TLC Board to complete the CEO's Performance Evaluation for 2021/22, which included a leadership 360 providing all the opportunity to provide feedback. The results of the performance evaluation were presented to the Board at the meeting of January 19, 2023.
- Worked with HR & Nominating Committee of the TLC Board to complete the CEO's Performance Evaluation for 2021/22, which included a leadership 360 providing all the opportunity to provide feedback. The results of the performance evaluation were presented to the Board at the meeting of January 19, 2023.
- Initiated the recruitment of 4 Citizen Directors for the TLC Board

Communications

- Orientation sessions for new Trustee TLC Board members
- Trustee Weekly information submissions
- Letter to City Hall re: TLC support of Housing Action Plan

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Committee: Inner City Community Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: April 20, 2023

Committee Co-Chairs: Omar Khan and Trustee Alexis Dawson

| | Motion/Recommendation | Name of Committee Member Putting Forward the Motion/ Recommendation | Name of Committee Member who Seconded the Motion/ Recommendation |
|----|---|--|---|
| 1. | <p>Whereas the LOI Policy Review is beginning now;</p> <p>Whereas to avoid undue harm where current MSIC schools have a program of choice;</p> <p>Therefore, be it resolved that those models that have a program of choice have their LOI scored separately from the Regular program to see if/where they fall on the LOI list in an effort to maintain services and support until the results of the LOI Policy Review are known.</p> | Ingrid Palmer | Bob Spencer |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |

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Name of Committee: Black Student Achievement Community Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: April 23, 2023

A meeting of the Black Student Achievement Community Advisory Committee convened on April 23, 2023, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. In a virtual meeting with Community Co-Chair Sharon Beason presiding.

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Voting Members: | Sharon Beason (Community Co-Chair), Mohamed A Mohamed (Social Service/CAS), Tina Beason (Community), Dennis Keshinro (EPAC Rep.), Sophia Ruddock (Education/Health/Law) Regrets: Trustee Co-Chair Liban Hassan |
| Staff Representatives | Lorraine Linton Interim Executive Superintendent, Employee Services, Karen Murray, System Superintendent, Equity, Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression Lisa White Administrative Support |
| Student Trustees | Naomi Musa Jeffrey Osaro Isaiah Shafqat |
| Community | System Superintendent, Peter Chang, Andrea Cross, Ayan Kailie, Cherie Mordecai-Steer, Jeffrey Caton, D. Tyler Robinson, Debbie King (Trustee), Alexis Dawson (Trustee), Kurt Lewin, Monique Willacey, Rosalie Griffith, Janine Small, Yvette Blackburn, Kowthar Omar, Valarie Taitt, Thando Hyman |

Part A: Recommendations

MOTION:

Whereas, IDC4U’s current designation as an Interdisciplinary course creates multiple institutional and system barriers because students can only use one Interdisciplinary course toward graduation; and

Whereas, changing from an Interdisciplinary course to a subject-specific course with a dedicated code, increases access and credit accumulation as a University pathway course; and

Whereas, the Black Student Achievement Community Advisory Committee (BSACAC) fully endorses the recommendation presented herein;

Therefore, be it resolved:

- (a) That the Chair write to the Minister of Education, Stephen Lecce, recommending that the course, IDC4U: Deconstructing Anti-Black Racism, be accredited as part of the Ontario curriculum offerings within the Social Sciences and Humanities AND/OR Canada and World Studies departments, as a university pathway course with its own dedicated course code;**

(b) That the Deputy Minister of Education, Nancy Naylor; Assistant Deputy Minister of Education, Student Achievement Division, Yael Ginsler; Director, Curriculum Assessment and Student Success, Mishaal Surti; and the Ontario Public School Board's Association Black Trustee Caucus be copied on the letter at Part (a)

Part B: For Information Only

Co-Chair updates included:

Trustee Hassan sends his regrets, Community Co-Chair Sharon Beason acknowledged the Heritage months for April.

The committee was informed that we will return to in-person meetings.

Student Trustee

Student Trustees reported on their support and perspective on the upcoming motion for an IDC course (Deconstructing Anti-Black Racism).

Staff update

- Karen Murray shared a report from the Equity Anti-Racism, Anti-oppression Department as well as the Combat and Hate and Racism strategy

System Superintendent, Peter Chang.

Presented on the history of Heritage months

Expression of interest

The link to the expression of interest form is now available on the BSACAC website

Nomination committee:

To date, we have 1 returned form and are waiting for others.

D. Tyler Robinson

The Accreditation of the Interdisciplinary Course (IDC41) Deconstructing Anti-Black Racism. Tyler and Student Trustees Musa and Osaro as well as Trustees Dawson and King would like the BSACAC community to support and endorse a motion that would make Deconstructing Anti-Black Racism, a grade 12U Interdisciplinary course in the TDSB, a provincially accredited coursework.

Kurt Lewin

Reminded the committee of the ONABSE conference taking place on April 28th at George Brown College

Part C: Ongoing Matters

NIL



Central Student Interest Programs: Implementation Update

To: Planning and Priorities Committee

Date: 17 May, 2023

Report No.: 05-23-4541

Strategic Directions

- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students

Recommendation

It is recommended that this update on the Student Interest Programs Implementation Update be received for information.

Context

Executive Summary

On May 25, 2022, the Board of Trustees adopted the Student Interest Programs Policy (P100). This update provides a snapshot of the first-year implementation of the TDSB's Central Student Interest Programs application process.

This first application cycle has provided staff with new data that allows us to better understand how Central Student Interest Programs operate within the TDSB and how they impact enrollment at local designated schools by address. The data (included as Appendices B through L) which provides a more complete picture of who is accessing programs will be augmented once the 2023 TDSB Student Census is completed and merged with Central Student Interest Program data.

To provide further background, staff have provided a literature review on the meritocratic perceptions of public education and diverse learning opportunities, included as Appendix M. Additionally, staff sought a legal opinion regarding the Central Student Interest Programs' admissions practices, in particular the assignment of priority seats for applicants self-identifying as one or more historically and currently underserved groups, as Appendix N. The Legal Services Department has waived privilege over the May 09, 2023 legal opinion letter for the express and limited purpose of including it in this report.

TDSB is the first board in the province to make such a significant shift in admission practices as a means of becoming a more equity-focused system. Evidence shared in this update will demonstrate that the implementation of the revised application process, as outlined in P100, was a success.

Highlights

Application and Selection Process Implementation: Over 7,000 applications were received, verified, processed and considered for Central Student Interest Programs. As demonstrated in Appendix E, nearly 800 students self-identifying as one or more of the historically and currently underserved groups were successfully prioritized and seated in programs.

Improved Representation of Underserved Groups in Programs: All programs that used a random selection process met the goal of filling 20% of seats with students self-identifying as First Nations, Métis and Inuit, as well as Black, Middle Eastern and Latina/Latino/Latinx, except for four International Baccalaureate programs and one Math, Science and Technology program.

Twenty percent is the combined representation of the four identified groups in the broader TDSB secondary school population. The four racial groups, were identified using the data included in Appendix D showing they:

- had lower representation in former Specialized Programs than the board-wide data for the racial demographic group
- were within board-wide representation data in all individual forms of specialization.

For example, students self-identifying as Black comprised 12% of secondary students in the TDSB, but only made up 6% of students in all former Specialized Programs combined. Additionally Black students made up less than 12% in each specific type of specialization.

Just **over 25%** of all seats were filled by self-identifying applicants.

Increased Application Numbers: There was an increase in the overall number of applications through the new online system. Significant barriers that prevented many applicants from accessing Central Student Interest Programs were removed. One of the goals of the policy was to engage students from new and underrepresented communities in Central Student Interest Programs.

- Students entering Grade 9 Arts-focus programs came from 139 TDSB Middle schools in September 2022. This increased to 170 TDSB Middle schools for September 2023 entry, a 22% increase. Eleven of these new schools had not sent any students to an Arts-focus program for the past three years and six of the thirty-one schools fall within the lowest 100 schools on the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI).
- Ursula Franklin Academy (UFA) received applications from 87 TDSB Middle schools this year and accepted students from a total of 43 schools, 10 of which

had not sent students to UFA in the last three years. Four of these 10 schools are in the lowest 100 schools on the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI).

- International Baccalaureate programs are welcoming students from 43 new TDSB Middle schools that had not sent students the year before; 14 of these schools fall within the lowest 100 schools on the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI).
- Students from nearly every single TDSB Elementary School (203/214 or 94.9%) applied to Math, Science and Technology programs for entry in September 2023.

Gender Representation: As a result of the priority seating in Math, Science and Technology programs, female-Identifying applicants now make up nearly 50% of seats in these Programs (48.0%). The change in admissions additionally affected the representation in both the International Baccalaureate and Leadership programs (Table 1).

Table 1: Percentage of Grade 9 Cohorts who are Male-Identifying

| Program | Percentage Male-Identifying Students in Grade 9 Cohort (October 2022) | Percentage Male-Identifying Students in Grade 9 Cohort (September 2023) |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| International Baccalaureate | 45.9% | 50.7% |
| Leadership* | 30.1% | 42.4% |

**to protect students' identities, the four different gender identifications (male, female, self-identified, not disclosed) are not included as some of the numbers are <10.*

Ward Engagement: The percentage of current TDSB Grade 8 students who applied this past Fall to Central Student Interest Programs varied from 11% to 55% (Appendix G). Wards with lower applicant rates tended to include secondary schools Closed to Out-of-Area Admissions. When considering current TDSB students who were accepted into Central Student Interest Programs, 35% attended programs within their current ward and 65% attended programs in another ward (Appendix J).

New Secondary Art-Focus Programs: As part of the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Study (LTPAS), central staff have been investigating two new locations for Arts-focus Central Student Interest Programs in the northwest and northeast of the city to address areas that have not had geographical access to these programs in the past. This coming Fall, students in Grade 8 will be able to apply to these two new Secondary programs for entry in September 2024 increasing access to arts programs.

New Secondary Math, Science and Technology (MST) Programs: Central Staff will be expanding professional learning opportunities linked to MST programming to numerous schools already offering local MST or STEM programs in underserved areas of the city to provide Central MST Programs for September 2024 and September 2025 entry. Through the Secondary Program Review lens, priority will be given to schools in areas of the board where there are currently limited program offerings for students.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

Heading into Fall of 2023, Central staff will continue to:

- Implement the revised Student Interest Program Procedures (PR612, formerly Admissions to Specialized Programs).
- Support school staff to develop Central Student Interest Programs that are culturally relevant and responsive.
- Update the online application to reflect new program offerings and the change to one program choice per student application.
- Support the professional learning of school teams in all schools, focusing on Math, Science and Technology, and the Arts.
- Support the Program Coherence Studies and include new program opportunities for students in Local programs and Central Student Interest Programs across the TDSB.

Resource Implications

N/A

Communications Considerations

Regular and detailed communication will be shared with all key parties, including school and central staff, parents/guardians/caregivers and students to support the implementation of the Policy and its associated Operational Procedures.

Next year, following the policy's second year of implementation, a report will be brought forward which will include information regarding:

- I. Access to centralized special interest programs including the number of central program spaces established annually;
- II. Access to local student interest programs including the number of programs, locations and enrolments;

Other indicators, including disaggregated data, drawn from demographic and geographic student information, which demonstrate program successes.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

- Student Interest Programs (P100)
- Admissions to Specialized Programs Procedures (PR612) - under review

Appendices

Appendix A: Student Interest Programs Implementation Update

Appendix B: Grade 9 Applicant Numbers for Sept 2022 and Sept 2023 per program

Appendix C: Student Interest Programs Implementation Update

Appendix D: Student Enrollment in Specialized Programs by Racial Identity October 31, 2020

Appendix E: By School/Program: Applicant and Seated Student Breakdown by S-I

Appendix F: Grade 4 Applicants by Ward/Program

Appendix G: Grade 9 Applicants by Ward/Program

Appendix H: Grade 9 Acceptances by Program Type by Gender (2022 and 2023)

Appendix I: School/Program Acceptances Within and Outside of Ward

Appendix J: Grade 9 Applicant Data by Ward Within and Outside of Ward

Appendix K: By School/Program: Waitlist Report

Appendix L: Seated Self-Identifying Applicants (all Grades)

Appendix M: Literature Review on Meritocratic Perceptions of Public Education and Diverse Learning Opportunities

Appendix N: Legal Opinion Regarding Central Student Interest Program Admissions Practices

From

Louise Sirisko, Associate Director of Instructional Innovation and Equitable Outcomes at Louise.Sirisko@tdsb.on.ca

Diana Panagiotopoulos, System Superintendent, Virtual Learning, Re-Engagement and Secondary Program and Admissions at diana.panagiotopoulos@tdsb.on.ca

Reiko Fuentes, Centrally Assigned Principal, Secondary Program and Admissions at Reiko.Fuentes@tdsb.on.ca

Appendix A: Student Interest Programs Implementation Update

1. Communication & Promotion

Staff developed a cohesive and comprehensive plan to support the successful implementation of TDSB's Central Student Interest Programs.

Prior to the start of the 2022-23 school year, staff created the Central Student Interest Program websites to share program/school-specific information about the various Central Student Interest Programs with students, parents/guardians/caregivers, and school staff.

[Secondary Central Student Interest Program Website](#)
[Elementary Central Student Interest Program Website](#)

Each website contained:

- Information about the types of Central Student Interest Programs
- A description of the programs, admissions requirements (where applicable) and program locations
- A Google Calendar listing information sessions, program open houses, application timelines, and webinar support sessions available during the application window
- Online application link
- Links to the Student Interest Program webinar recording, slides, and Q&A
- Access to the new [Choices: Secondary Program Guide](#) resource e-magazine

In the Fall of 2022, Central staff presented an overview of the changes at every Learning Network meeting in the TDSB, sharing important information with all school administrators.

Staff hosted the first Student Interest Program Webinar on November 3, 2022. Central staff provided information to **nearly 5,000** attendees about the new websites, the various programs and the new application process. The webinar recording has been viewed **over 6,000** times since it was posted on YouTube. Over 20 central and school-based staff collaborated to respond to questions through the Q&A feature, some of which were also answered live during the webinar.

Questions were gathered and formed the basis of the comprehensive Q&A that was posted on the TDSB Central Student Interest Program website. Many questions were asked about French language programs and Intensive Support Programs offered by the Special Education and Inclusion Department.

Three Application Support Webinar Sessions were scheduled and supported by staff from the following departments: Central Guidance, School Information Systems (SIS), French and Special Education and Inclusion with over 100 participants. Participants

could ask questions in the webinar or receive more specific/personalized support in breakout rooms with staff..

The webinar and the website links were shared via:

- Social Media
- TDSB website main banner
- Promo banner on all TDSB school websites
- [Printed flyer](#) in all Toronto Public Library locations
- Direct emails to all TDSB students in Grades 6, 7 and 8
- Parent/guardian/caregiver email to those with students in Grades 3 to 8
- TDSB Connects (e-newsletter)

The increase in overall applications is attributed to this system-wide communication and promotion that has not occurred in previous years.

2. TDSB Central Student Interest Program Information and Seats Per Grade for September 2023

There were 7,122 applicants to TDSB Central Student Interest Programs in November 2022. While the vast majority (5,931 or 83.3%) were for Grade 9 entry, there were many applications for other grades in secondary programs and the various possible entry grades in the elementary programs.

Applicants were provided with a link for an anonymous feedback survey regarding the application process and the application itself. Over 1,800 respondents provided feedback on their experience submitting the application and navigating the TDSB Central Student Interest Program website. The input is being used as we refine the application for next year.

Respondents also had the opportunity to provide other comments regarding the new process. The TDSB heard from students, parents/guardians/caregivers and community members that did not want to see the changes. A few sample comments include:

“As a Parent of a child that had a good chance of being accepted to the school with a portfolio, I have many concerns of such a specialized program as Claude Watson being a lottery choice. I worry for any student that is accepted as a lottery choice being pressured to produce art at a level they can not achieve. As this will greatly effect the students mental health and wellbeing.”

“Now that everyone is allowed to apply to an art focused school, the kids who are passionate about art are far less likely to be accepted into the program than before the application process change.”

“This process is unfair and ridiculous. It does not give kids the opportunity to compete fairly for a program. It makes no difference that someone worked hard all year to learn and achieve good marks. Everyone will be in the same pool for a

stupid lottery. Kids that did nothing all year have the opportunity to be rewarded to start a program they may not even be capable or willing to follow. And later on, these kids will drop out of the program.”

These comments tended to come from applicants who felt that they would have benefited from the previous application and admissions process and many shared ideas that the applicants that might now be participating in the application process were less worthy, talented, dedicated or deserving.

Through the policy’s public consultation process, we heard from many passionate and interested students and parents/guardians/caregivers who shared why they or their students had not applied to Specialized Programs in previous years:

- They had not been informed about these programs by their current schools;
- The students did not see themselves reflected as a part of the program or school community;
- Application fees were charged, presenting financial hardship;
- Auditions did not reflect their specific experiences, talents and skills;
- General Learning Strategies (GLE) was not offered as a Grade 9 course;
- Students new to the city/country may not have had experiences that could be documented and supported with current references;
- Students that had not had positive experiences with their Grade 7 teacher were required to submit report cards where comments and learning skills may have been a poor reflection of the student’s abilities;
- Outside responsibilities made it difficult to attend an entrance exam or audition on a weekend, evening or PA day;
- Students did not have the support/technology to prepare video submissions, or they did not have had a space in which to record such a video;
- Students did not know about the portfolio application that needed to have been started well before Grade 8 in order to apply.

In addition to the comments that were critical of the new process, there were numerous comments in support of the new admissions practices. A few sample comments include:

“We appreciate the new system of application which makes the process more equitable for all applicants. Not having to 'audition' or state all the ways that my kid is 'artsy' or has been involved in arts is refreshing. My child identifies as a cisgender straight white male, however, we appreciate that the program he is applying to will no longer cater to this community, and if he is selected, he will be in a more diverse learning environment that values the different perspectives that will be brought to the school setting. I know that there has been much controversy with this new system, but I can tell you that we appreciate the new process and what it will bring... Thank you.”

“I love that this is centralized and it is accessible. I also love that there are no longer test requirements and that everyone can now apply to any stream of their choice. I am so proud that our school board recognizes the need to be accessible

to students of certain background and gender (even though those categories do not apply to our family). I unfortunately heard some parents commenting at the open house that the TDSB "has gone too far with equity" and I want to tell you, you are doing the best thing. I see a lack of diversity and gender equality at my workplace, so if we can hold our schools and communities to a higher standard, then hopefully future generations are going to want more diverse workforces later on in life."

"I appreciate the acknowledgement and efforts made that every child can apply to special interest programs as not everyone had a chance to shine in elementary school. By just doing lottery system, have equal chances."

"I think the whole process was easy. I'm happy you are given some priority to kids of diversity as my son is Black. It makes him feel welcome. Thank you for that."

"I think the new process is wonderful - the way you are working to create an equitable education experience for students of all backgrounds and experiences truly warms my heart and is what I believe public education should be for kids. It's fair and makes me feel really proud that my kids are TDSB students. Congratulations. :)"

Some programs allowed for applications in grades other than the main entry grade, but not all of these programs were able to accommodate applicants, as spaces did not become available. The following was posted on the Central Student Interest Program websites when applications were accepted in grades other than the main entry grade: *"In November 2022, students may apply for admission to Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12. Students will be admitted in Grades 10-12 if space is available."*

While there were applicants, no seats became available for admission at:

- R H King Academy Leadership (Grade 10)
- Claude Watson School for the Arts (Grades 5 & 6)
- Karen Kain School for the Arts (Grade 8)
- Wexford Collegiate School for the Arts (Grades 11 & 12)
- Weston CI International Baccalaureate (Grade 10)
- Don Mills CI CyberARTS (Grade 11)

3. Application Data for September 2023

As a result of the centralized promotion of programs and open houses, all schools hosting Central Student Interest Programs reported better attendance at these events than in years before the pandemic. Quantitatively, we saw a substantial increase in the number of applications for the schools/programs compared to last year (data is not available from previous years) as shown in Appendix B.

There are numerous factors impacting the total number of applicants to the various programs:

- A lack of nearby program alternatives (e.g. SATEC, R H King Academy)
- Numerous programs of the same type in close geographic proximity (i.e. Math, Science and Technology programs along the northwest corridor of the TDSB)
- Programs designed to retain local students who may be interested in enrolling in numerous neighbouring non-TDSB programs (e.g. Lakeshore CyberARTS)
- Program specificity (i.e. Elite Athlete Programs)

A smaller number of applications should not lead one to conclude that the program is less successful, desirable or beneficial to students. Moving forward, it will be important for staff to further explore the reasons for some programs having fewer applicants to programs.

The two programs where 50% of seats were allocated to local applicants due to the significant enrollment pressures at the school saw a less substantial increase (William Lyon Mackenzie CI) and a decrease (Marc Garneau CI) in applications.

In moving to an online application, staff in local schools provided access to technology as well as support to students and their parents/guardians/caregivers completing the application.

Gender

Appendix C shows the applicants breakdown by gender identity. Some programs received a significantly higher proportion of applications from female-identifying applicants while others had a higher proportion of applications from male-identifying applicants.

Female-identifying applicants outnumber male-identifying applicants in Arts, CyberARTS, Leadership, International Baccalaureate and Integrated Technology programs. Male-identifying applicants are in the majority for Elite Athlete, Exceptional Athlete and Math, Science and Technology Programs. There were applicants for all types of Central Student Interest Programs whose gender was self-identified or who chose to not disclose their gender.

It was anecdotally noted that there was a marked increase in the proportion of male-identifying applicants to the Leadership program at R H King Academy as a result of the removal of the prior application format.

Racial Groups

Specialized Program student enrollment data from 2020 (Appendix D) relies on results of the 2016 TDSB Student Census, students self-identifying as First Nations, Métis and Inuit, as well as Black, Middle Eastern and Latina/Latino/Latinx:

- Had lower representation in former Specialized Programs than the board-wide data for the racial demographic group
- Were within board-wide representation data in all individual forms of specialization.

Applicants who self-identify as First Nations, Métis and Inuit, as well as Black, Middle Eastern and Latina/Latino/Latinx were the only groups that had sufficient data to support admission priority to students self-identifying as one of these currently or historically underserved and under-represented communities. Twenty percent of available seats were first allocated to students self-identifying as one or more of the racial groups listed above on their application.

The number of self-identifying applicants in the underrepresented groups far exceeded the number of priority seats. Applicants were selected for the priority seats through a random selection process and applicants not selected were then considered along with all other applicants for the remaining program seats.

As seats became available in programs, the numbers of seated applicants self-identifying as one or more of the identified racial groups were monitored. When needed, self-identified applicants were taken from lower in the waitlist to maintain a level of 20% in the program.

This system of prioritization elicited an increase in the number of applications from students within these four underrepresented racial groups. A summary of the proportions of self-identifying applicants in the overall applicant pool and seated students in programs is shown in Appendix E. Consistent with Board practices to protect students' identity, cells with less than 10 individuals are identified with "<10".

Every program where applicants exceeded available seats outside of the International Baccalaureate programs and one Math, Science and Technology programs were able to attain at least 20% representation by applicants self-identifying as one or more of the underrepresented racial groups.

Ward Data

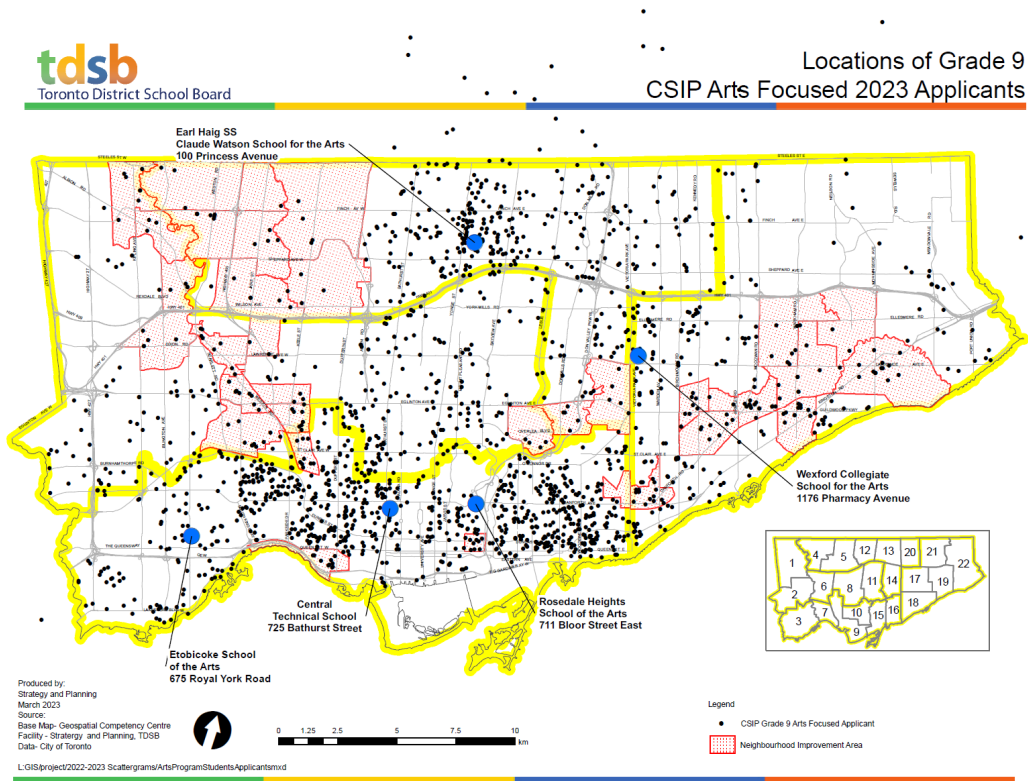
A summary of applicants currently attending schools in each of the 22 wards can be found in Appendix F (Grade 4) and Appendix G (Grade 9). A listing of the "first choice" program type that was selected is included. There were Grade 9 applicants from every ward for the program types with the most locations across the board (Math, Science and Technology, International Baccalaureate and the Arts).

Grade 9 Applicants to Arts-Focus Programs are plotted by home address in Map 1 below. The Map includes applicants not living in the City of Toronto; admission was only possible for these applicants after all applicants living in the City were accommodated.

While there remains a higher concentration of applicants in geographic proximity to the school/program locations, applicants come from across the city and from within City of Toronto Neighbourhood Improvement Areas, shown in red. Students attending 170 different TDSB Middle Schools were accepted into Grade 9 at the Arts-focus programs for September 2023; this is an increase from 139 Middle Schools for September 2022. Eleven of these 31 new schools had not sent any students to an Arts-focus program for

the past three years and six fall within the lowest 100 schools on the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI).

Map 1: Grade 9 Applicants to Arts-focus Programs mapped by home address



Ursula Franklin Academy received applications from 87 TDSB Middle schools this year and accepted students from 43 schools, 10 of which have not sent students to UFA in the last three years. Four of these ten new schools are in the lowest 100 schools on the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI).

International Baccalaureate programs welcome students from 43 new TDSB Middle schools that had yet to send students the year before; 14 of the schools fall within the lowest 100 schools on the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI).

It must be noted that some institutional barriers related to geography remain in place and have prevented some interested applicants from accessing programs:

- Inequitable distribution/geographic location of schools and programs
- Cost of public transit

4. Acceptances and Waitlists

There were nearly 6,000 applicants for Grade 9 Central Student Interest Programs. Appendix E showcases self-identifying applicant data from the four racial groups and acceptances for these applicants in all Central Student Interest Programs.

Gender:

A breakdown of acceptances by gender has been provided in Appendix H, showing the gender breakdown from the past two years. In the current year, the gender identity is based on the submitted application. In October 2022, the gender-identity was based on school records which may not reflect students' current gender-identity.

As some students have self-identified or chosen not to disclose their gender, this data has not been provided at a school level or in program types with a tiny number of program locations to ensure that students cannot be identified based on this personal information.

As a result of the priority seating in Math, Science and Technology programs, female-identifying applicants now make up nearly 50% of seats in these Programs (48.0%). The change in admissions also affected the representation in both the International Baccalaureate and Leadership programs:

- Leadership Program at R H King Academy: has moved from male-identifying students making up only 30.1% of the Grade 9 cohort in October 2022 to 42.4% of the incoming Grade 9 cohort anticipated in September 2023.
- International Baccalaureate programs: has moved from male-identifying students making up 45.9% of the Grade 9 cohort in October 2022 to 50.7% of the incoming Grade 9 cohort anticipated in September 2023.

Geography:

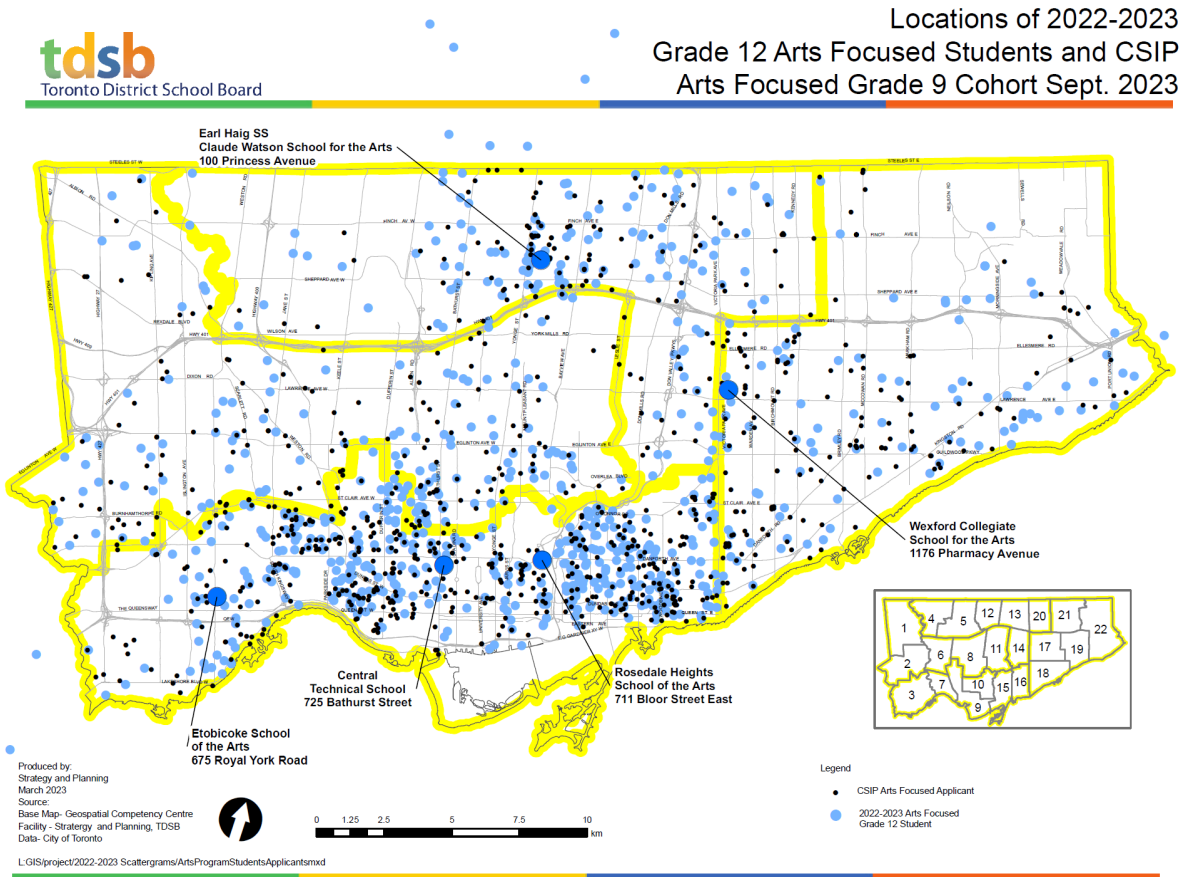
On the maps below, staff have plotted the current Grade 12 students (light blue) and the incoming Grade 9 cohort for September 2023, who have applied through the new process. Maps have been prepared for the four programs with the highest number of applicants: Math, Science and Technology, Arts, International Baccalaureate and Integrated Technology (Ursula Franklin Academy).

In Map 2: The Arts, there is a significant concentration of students (both Grade 12 and incoming Grade 9) in the downtown/central south end of the city, closest to the three programs in LC4 (Etobicoke School of the Arts, Rosedale Heights School for the Arts and Central Technical School).

The blue dots that fall outside the city map show students in grade 12 who either gained entry to a program while residing outside the City of Toronto or who moved out of the City since starting in Grade 9. Over the past four years, intentional work has been done to shift the admissions practices to align with the former Optional Attendance Policy, where City of Toronto residents were prioritized over non-Toronto residents.

Map 2: The Arts

Comparing the home addresses of the Current Grade 12 Cohort and the incoming Grade 9 Cohort for the 5 Secondary Arts-Focus Schools and Programs



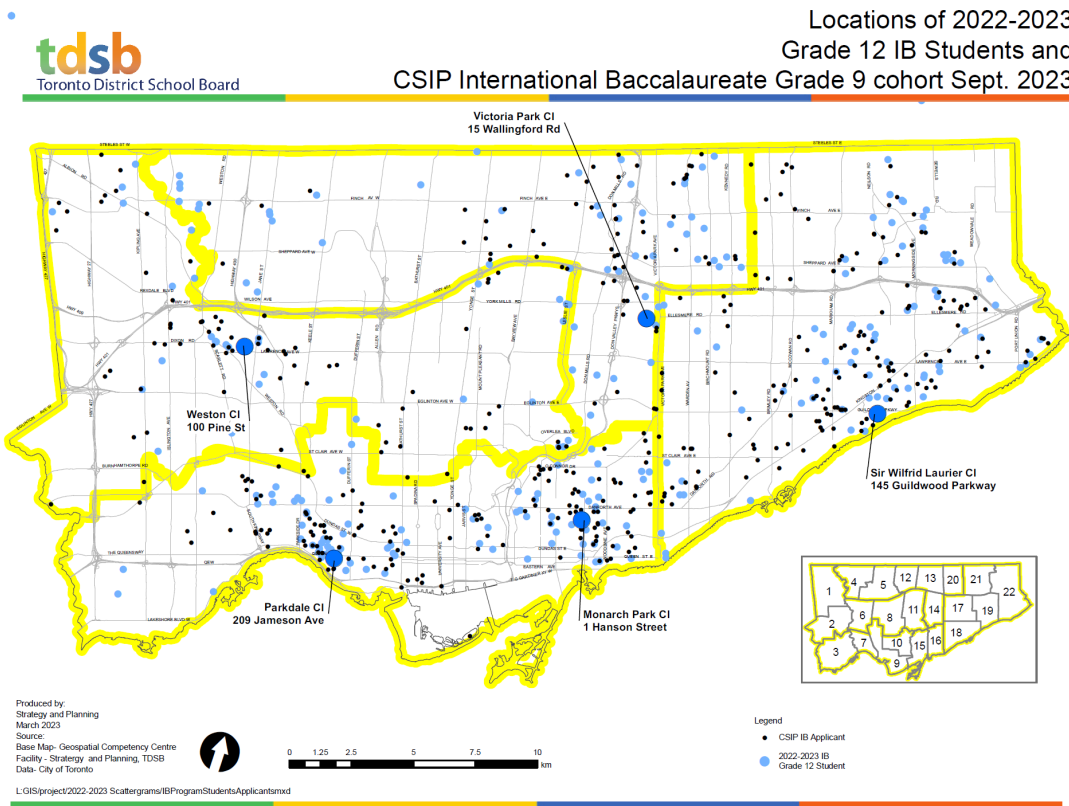
While distance and geography still present significant barriers for some areas of the city, there are indications that applicants from new pockets have engaged in Arts-focus programs, in particular in the following vicinities:

- Meadowvale and Sheppard
- Markham Road and Lawrence E
- Allen Road and Lawrence W
- Yonge and Steeles
- Southernmost tip of Etobicoke (Brown's Line and the Queensway)

The September 2024 launch of two new secondary Arts-Focus programs will increase students' engagement from the northwest and northeast parts of the city. The International Baccalaureate (IB) programs had extensive admissions processes four years ago, before COVID. Students were required to submit report cards, complete a written application, and, in many cases, sit an interview and/or write an entrance examination.

Five school sites offer an IB program; the west end of the city has the fewest applicants, and Weston CI has the smallest number of applicants of the five programs. Through the new centralized application process, the Weston CI program expanded from an entry cohort in the 30s to an entry cohort of 54 students for September 2023. This increase can be seen northwest of the city on Map 3: IB.

Map 3: IB
Comparing the home addresses of the Current Grade 12 Cohort and the incoming Grade 9 Cohort for the 5 Secondary International Baccalaureate Programs



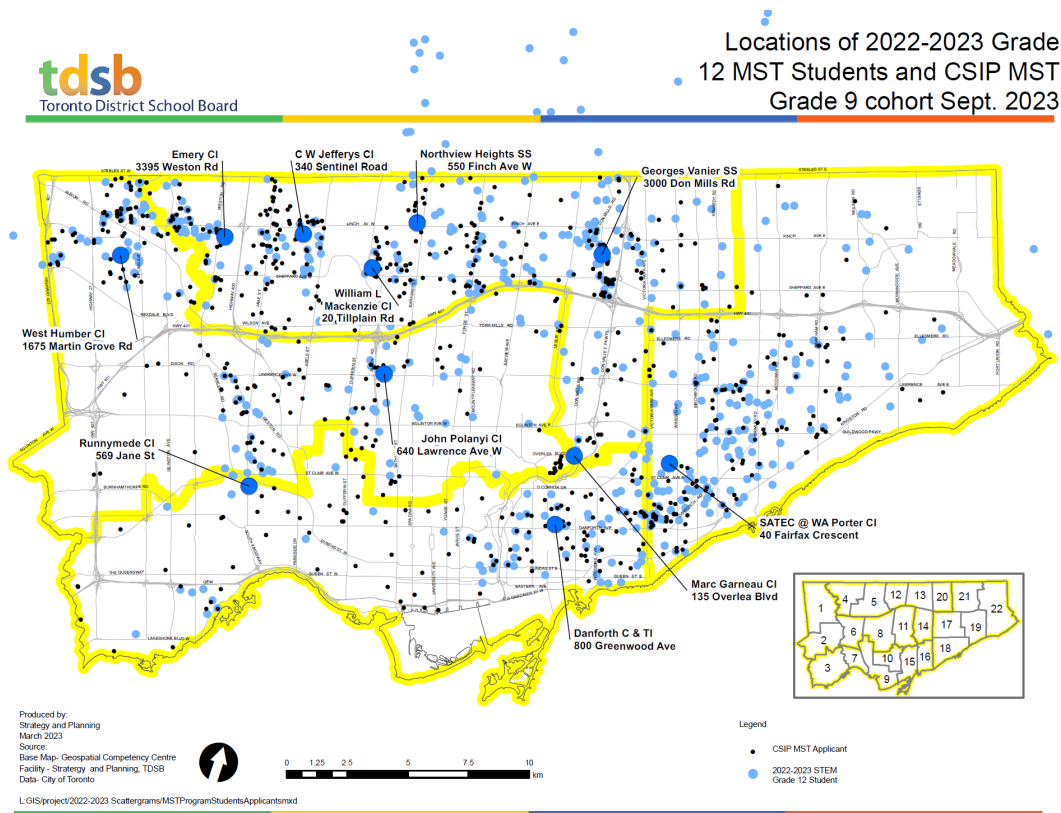
There are again new areas where students are accessing IB programs:

- Yonge and Sheppard
- McCowan and Finch
- Ellesmere south of the 401
- St. Clair E and Brimley

The IB program is the only External Central Student Interest Program based on a program of study set and monitored by an external body. IB programs continue accelerating programming over four years to ensure students cover the Ontario Secondary School Diploma and the International Baccalaureate Diploma requirements. Work is needed to further and better engage and attract students from our historically and currently underserved communities.

There are more Math, Science and Technology (MST) programs than any other Central Student Interest Program type. The number of applications for these programs surpasses all other program types. While the programs are numerous, Map 4: MST illustrates the need for more programs to achieve equitable distribution across the TDSB.

Map 4: MST
Comparing home addresses of the Current Grade 12 Cohort and the incoming Grade 9 Cohort for the 12 Secondary Math, Science and Technology Programs



Numerous MST programs have been initiated along the northwest edge of the board, with the fewest geographically accessible opportunities in other program areas. Math, Science and Technology programs have been initiated to meet increasing interest and have increased student retention in TDSB schools.

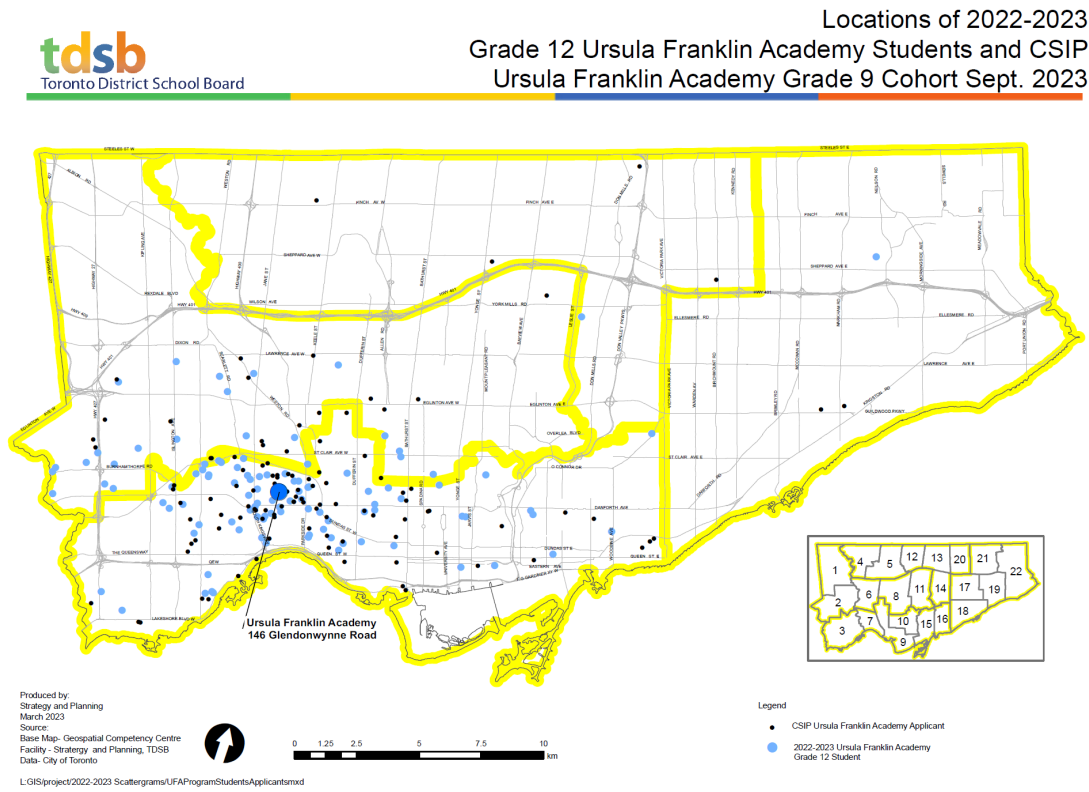
Under the Student Interest Program Policy guidelines, schools offering MST programs are shifting practices to be inclusive and designed to support the interests and passions of all students. Programs are shifting from acceleration towards deep learning, rich tasks and interest-based learning.

LC4 has traditionally shown high levels of participation in Arts-focus programs. This year, there has been a noted increase in the involvement in various Math, Science and Technology programs.

Central staff will be expanding professional learning opportunities linked to MST programming to numerous schools already offering local MST or STEM programs in underserved areas of the city to provide new Central MST Programs for September 2024 and September 2025 entry.

The Central Student Interest Program with the largest number of applicants is Ursula Franklin Academy (Integrated Technology). While the school is close to the Bloor subway line, Map 5: UFA shows the disproportionately low number of students from LC2 and LC3 attending the school currently in Grade 12 (light blue dots). It is impossible to remove access barriers altogether when only one site/location is available (Integrated Technology, Leadership, Exceptional Athlete Programs). The intense interest in these programs may suggest replication in other parts of Toronto. The single-site programs require closer examination through the Program Coherence Study process.

Map 5: UFA
Comparing home addresses of the Current Grade 12 Cohort and the incoming Grade 9 Cohort for Ursula Franklin Academy



Ward Data

Current Central Student Interest Programs are unevenly distributed across the TDSB. Four wards do not house any Central Student Interest Programs at the secondary level. Central Student Interest Programs draw in many students from outside the local catchment area, Learning Network and ward.

Appendix I shows an overview of where accepted Grade 9 applicants in each program are currently attending Grade 8 by ward. Please note that non-TDSB applicants are all considered “outside” of the ward.

While ward boundaries are not always an indication of proximity and local catchment areas (e.g. Marc Garneau CI filled 50% of seats with applicants from the local catchment area, but only four were from the same ward), it can be seen that some Central Student Interest Programs serve the local community in large part and were designed to keep local students at the school (e.g. West Humber CI, C W Jefferys CI, Emery CI).

A high proportion of the students entering the Elite Athlete Program at Silverthorn CI are currently students at Hollycrest MS, within the same ward; however, the students come from all across the city.

Schools that are “Closed” to Out-of-Area Admissions that offer Central Student Interest Programs (or that have no designated attendance area*) have some of the highest numbers of applicants:

- Ursula Franklin Academy*
- SATEC @ W.A. Porter
- Rosedale Heights School for the Arts*
- William Lyon Mackenzie CI
- Earl Haig Secondary School
- R. H. King Academy
- Etobicoke School for the Arts*
- Wexford Collegiate School for the Arts
- Marc Garneau CI
- Sir Wilfrid Laurier CI

There was a range of applicants for Central Student Interest Programs from each ward, as outlined in Appendix J. There are many factors contributing to this, but two of the most significant are:

- The perceived reputation of local school options
- Availability of Central Student Interest Programs (geography and program types)

When considering current TDSB students who were accepted into Central Student Interest Programs, 35% of them were going into programs within their current ward, and 65% were attending programs in another ward of the TDSB.

From Appendix J, it can be seen which Central Student Interest Programs are serving the local interests of students as applicants attend programs within the ward. The number of students leaving the ward for programming elsewhere is also shown. In all but five wards, more students are opting to leave the ward for Central Student Interest programming than remain within their ward (although four wards currently have no Central Student Interest Programs)

The percentage of Grade 8 students applying to Central Student Interest Programs this past fall per ward varies from 11% to 55%. Wards with lower applicant rates tend to include secondary schools that are “Closed” to Out-of-Area Admissions (*)

Less than 20% of Grade 8 students applying:

Ward 8 - North Toronto CI*, Lawrence Park CI*, Forest Hill CI, John Polanyi CI
Ward 11 - Northern SS, Marc Garneau CI*, Leaside High School *, York Mills CI*
Ward 20 - Dr. Norman Bethune CI, L'Amoreaux CI, Sir John A. MacDonald CI, Stephen Leacock CI
Ward 21 - Agincourt CI*, Albert Campbell CI, Lester B. Pearson CI*

Wards with the highest application rates tend to be wards with numerous Central Student Interest Programs within the ward. Two wards are among the five where more applicants stay within the ward than leave.

More than 40% of Grade 8 students applying:

Ward 7 - Western Tech CyberARTS, Parkdale CI IB, UFA, Runnymede CI MST
Ward 12 - Claude Watson at Earl Haig Secondary School
Ward 18 - Birchmount Park CI Exceptional Athlete, SATEC MST, R H King Leadership

This data is essential as we look to understand how Central Student Interest Programs (and Out-of-Area Admissions) operate in each ward and the impact that both types of “choice” impact the regular programs in local secondary schools.

Waitlists

Despite the high number of interested applicants, a fair number of programs were able to meet the demands and needs of their applicants. An overview of the number of applicants, the size of the waitlist and the percentage of applicants left on the waitlist is provided in Appendix K.

The number of applicants remaining on waitlists at the end of the process does not represent the number of applicants not seated in a Central Student Interest Program. Many of the 1,654 unseated applicants were counted on two waitlists.

Just under 50% of Grade 9 applicants were seated in a program of interest. As a summary of the programs, please refer to Table 2.

Table 2: Overview of Programs Based on Size of Waitlists (February 22, 2023)

| Percentage of Grade 9 Unseated applicants left on a waiting list after February 22, 2023 | Number of programs (41) | |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| 0 | 8 | 2 CyberARTS, 3 MST, all Elite Athlete, 1 ESA major |
| 0.1 - 10 % | 4 | 1 CyberARTS, 1 ESA major, Wexford PA, CTS |
| 10.1 - 30% | 11 | all International Baccalaureate, Wexford VA, 3 ESA majors, Rosedale, 1 MST |
| 30.1 - 50% | 10 | 1 CyberARTS, Exceptional Athlete, 3 MST, 3 CW majors, 1 ESA major, Leadership |
| 50.1 - 70% | 8 | 5 MST, 2 CW Majors, UFA |

All CyberARTS applicants remaining on the waitlist that indicated they would be interested in programs with space available were offered seats at Lakeshore CI (2 accepted placements). Over 50 applicants from the top of waitlists in Math, Science and Technology programs were offered spaces at John Polanyi CI and Emery CI (3 accepted placements).

Self-Identifying Applicants to Programs

There was tremendous interest in most types of Central Student Interest Programs from applicants self-identifying as one (or more) of the four identified groups of historically and currently underserved groups. All programs had more applicants than priority seats, and a random selection process was required.

Not all self-identifying applicants were accommodated in Central Student Interest Programs. The percentage of self-identifying applicants that were seated in programs can be found in Appendix L.

Appendix D also shows the number of seated self-identifying applicants; just over 25% of all seats were allocated to these applicants, first through the allocation of priority seats (20%) and then through the remainder of the random selection process.

Applicants and Seated Grade 9 Student Summary

There were 747 non-TDSB applicants for Grade 9 entry in Central Student Interest Programs this year, making up 12.5% of all Grade 9 applicants. The acceptance rate for these applicants was 29% (from Appendix J), lower than the acceptance rate of any other ward, indicating that outside applicants were applying for the more competitive programs.

Table 3: Summary of Grade 9 Applicants for September 2023

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Grade 9 applicants selecting one Central Student Interest Program choice for September 2023 | 2,346 (39.5%) |
| Grade 9 applicants selecting two Central Student Interest Program choices for September 2023 | 3,587 (60.5%) |
| TOTAL Grade 9 applicants | 5,931 |
| Non-TDSB applicants | 747 |
| TDSB Grade 9 Applicants | 5,185 |
| TOTAL number of current grade 8 students in the TDSB (October 31, 2022) | 16,580 |
| Percentage of Current Grade 8 students applying for Central Student Interest Programs | 31.3% |
| Number of Grade 9 Seats in Central Student Interest Programs | 2,675 |
| Percentage of Grade 9 Applicants that will attend a Central Student Interest Program in September 2023 (2,675 / 5,931) | 45.1% |
| Percentage of all current Grade 8 students that will attend a Central Student Interest Program in September 2023 (2,675/16,580) | 16.1% |

5. Next Steps Professional Learning Plan and the Expansion of Programs

Math, Science and Technology

Over the 2022-23 school year, there has been a series of professional learning sessions for the teaching staff from the twelve Math, Science and Technology programs led by the Program Coordinators of Math/Numeracy, STEM/Science and Global Competencies/DLL/Hybrid Coaching. The sessions' focus has been on enhancing the learning experiences for all interested students through rich, deep learning.

The plan for 2023-24 is to extend this program to include 12 new schools, many already running local STEM-focused programs. Geography, accessibility, and school utilization rates will also play a factor in identifying participating schools. Work will be done to ensure that the local programs are viable and aligned with the Student Interest Program Policy criteria for Central Student Interest Programs. Additionally, work will focus on integrating technology into the Grade 9 program, aligning with the new OSSD Graduation requirement recently announced by the Ministry of Education.

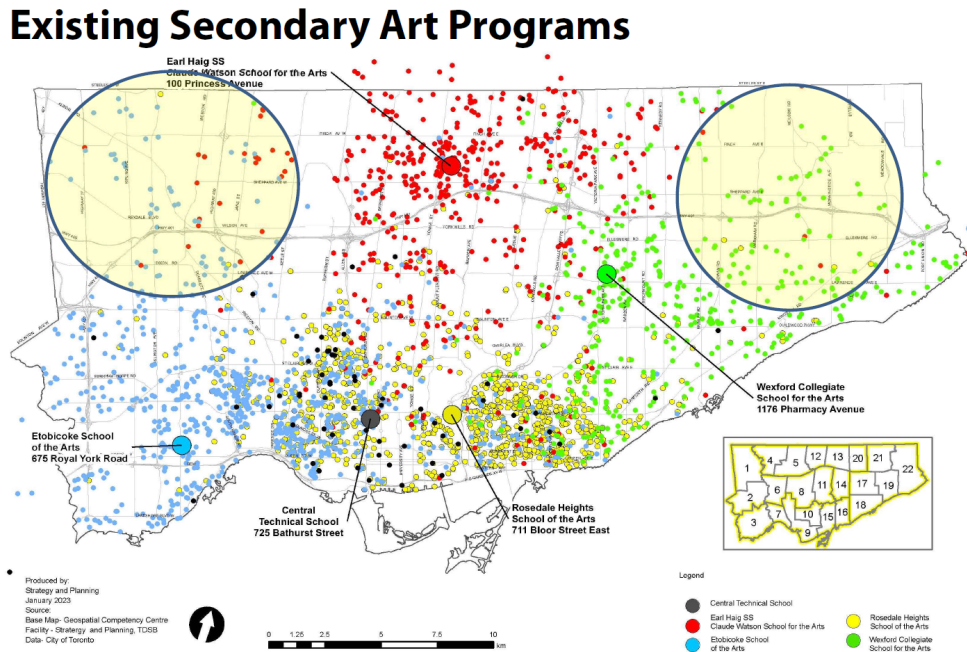
Further work will be done with the 24 school teams on advancing Indigenous perspectives and contributions in Math, Science and Technology. During November 2023, these new schools will have their local STEM programs showcased, and these local programs will be prioritized as the next generation of Math, Science and Technology Central Student Interest Programs.

Arts

As part of the Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy (LTPAS), Central staff have been investigating two new locations for Arts Focus Central Student Interest Programs in the Northwest and Northeast of the city to address these areas which do not have geographical access to these programs in the past as shown in Map 6.

These two new Secondary programs will admit their first grade 9 cohorts in September 2024. Two Local Feasibility Teams are currently holding Pupil Accommodation Review Team meetings with the communities involved, and Central staff are engaging with the local school staff to develop strong programming centred around student interest and voice, non-Eurocentric curriculum, robust integration of digital media and digital arts production along with a focus on the creative process.

Map 6: Students Currently Attending Arts-focus CSIP



The Central Accommodation Team’s recommendations will be forwarded to Planning and Priorities Committee (PPC) and the Board in June 2023 to open in September 2024.

Professional learning sessions will also be held for the seven current Arts-focus schools/programs (five secondary and two elementary) and the two programs under development. Joining the cohort will be the six former “CyberARTS” programs (4 secondary and two elementary) that will now fall under the broader “Arts” umbrella of programming.

PR612: Student Interest Programs Procedures: Program Coherence Studies

As a part of the associated Procedures that are currently being drafted, Central Staff along with the writing team have been developing a process through which existing Central Student Interest Programs and potential new programs will be evaluated to ensure alignment with the [Student Interest Program Policy](#).

- 6.3.1 TDSB Centralized Programs/Schools will be offered to all students to support programs with a specific focus (e.g., the arts, athletics, skilled trades, etc.) that require specialized infrastructure, facilities, scheduling, staffing and support.
- 6.3.2 TDSB Centralized Programs/Schools will develop and deliver programming for students that will foster and affirm students’ intersecting identities, creativity, global connections, real-world context for curriculum and will support the success of all interested students. At the secondary level, students must take a minimum of seven courses during a high school career, directly related to the program focus.

Program Coherence Studies will be conducted for each of the various types of Central Student Interest Programs, starting with the Elite Athlete Programs later this Spring.

Setting Priority Seats for September 2024 Admissions

- 6.3.7 Admission priority will be given to students self-identifying as one of the currently and historically underserved and under-represented communities in TDSB’s Centralized Schools and Programs. Annually, the percentage of all spaces in Centralized Schools and Programs to be allocated, prioritized and first filled by these applicants will be determined, with the goal of attaining a student population that is a better reflection of the broader demographic composition of the TDSB.

Upon completion of the 2023 TDSB Student Census, staff can closely and more completely examine and analyze the make-up of Central Student Interest Programs and TDSB’s overall student demographic. This information will allow for the identified groups to be reviewed and for underrepresented groups in the system to be identified and addressed.

A clearer understanding of how underserved students can be better identified, supported and prioritized also needs to be considered as we await the results of the Student Census.

Work is underway to adjust the prioritized seats allocated for applicants self-identifying as First Nations, Métis and Inuit as a separate group, to better align with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Data and Data Themes

Program retention rates: Staff will work closely with school program staff and administration to monitor and review the retention of students entering Central Student Interest Programs in September 2024, in addition to students already enrolled in the programs.

Work is needed to support students who have yet to be historically included in these programs so they feel seen, heard, represented, and belong. Understanding why students from the four historical and currently underserved groups leave a program is vital. It will measure our inability to support them, not their lack of dedication, passion or interest.

Graduation rates: Over the next four years, data related to secondary school graduation and post-secondary acceptances for students attending Central Student Interest Programs will be collected.

Secondary Program Review: Work will continue through the Secondary Program Review, strengthening the programming that is available in every local school. When the provincial moratorium is lifted, staff will commence the Pupil Accommodation Reviews designed to address the small collegiates across the system that have fewer program options available to students. Staff will monitor the impact of this work on the need and demand for Central Student Interest Programs.

| Program | School | Grade 9 Applications for September 2022 | Grade 9 Applications for September 2023 | Allocated Seats for Sept 2023 |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|-------------------------------|
| Arts Program | Central Technical School | 31 | 136 | 60 |
| Arts Program | Earl Haig | 364 | 566 | 130 |
| Arts School | ESA | 412 | 512 | 243 |
| Arts School | Rosedale | 370 | 718 | 243 |
| Arts Program | Wexford | 276 | 377 | 180 |
| | | | | |
| International Baccalaureate | Parkdale CI | 122 | 204 | 81 |
| International Baccalaureate | Victoria Park CI | 229 | 268 | 108 |
| International Baccalaureate | Monarch Park CI | 151 | 255 | 81 |
| International Baccalaureate | Sir Wilfrid Laurier CI | 228 | 242 | 108 |
| International Baccalaureate | Weston CI | 49 | 142 | 54 |
| | | | | |
| Integrated Technology | Ursula Franklin Academy | 862 | 927 | 108 |
| | | | | |
| Leadership | R. H. King | 370 | 558 | 120 |
| | | | | |
| CyberARTS | Don Mills CI | 55 | 90 | 60 |
| CyberARTS | Lakeshore CI | 15 | 20 | 28 |
| CyberARTS | Northview Heights SS | 49 | 88 | 60 |
| CyberARTS | Western Technical and Commercial School | 75 | 161 | 60 |
| | | | | |
| Elite Athletes | Silverthorn CI | 59 | 78 | 69 |
| Elite Athletes | Northview Heights SS | 17 | 38 | 30 |
| | | | | |
| Exceptional Athletes | Birchmount CI | 113 | 230 | 60 |
| | | | | |
| Math, Science and Tech | Bloor CI | 373 | 550 | 54 |
| Math, Science and Tech | C. W. Jefferys CI | 59 | 77 | 54 |
| Math, Science and Tech | Danforth CTI | 424 | 660 | 84 |
| Math, Science and Tech | Emery CI | NA | 28 | 27 |
| Math, Science and Tech | Georges Vanier SS | 114 | 189 | 81 |
| Math, Science and Tech | John Polanyi CI | 30 | 65 | 54 |
| Math, Science and Tech | Marc Garneau CI | 404 | 338 | 54 |
| Math, Science and Tech | Northview Heights SS | NA | 388 | 84 |
| Math, Science and Tech | Runnymede CI | 78 | 210 | 54 |
| Math, Science and Tech | SATEC @ WA Porter | 449 | 729 | 84 |
| Math, Science and Tech | West Humber CI | 125 | 229 | 81 |
| Math, Science and Tech | William Lyon Mackenzie CI | 541 | 587 | 81 |
| TOTAL | | 6444 | 9660 | 2675 |

| Program | School | Grade 9 Male-Identifying Applicants (%) | Grade 9 Female-Identifying Applicants (%) | Grade 9 Applicants with Gender Self-Identifying or Not Disclosed (%) |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| Arts Program | Central Technical School | 25.7% | 66.2% | 8.1% |
| Arts Program | Earl Haig | 23.0% | 73.3% | 3.7% |
| Arts Program | Wexford | 18.3% | 75.1% | 6.6% |
| Arts School | ESA | 21.9% | 70.5% | 7.6% |
| Arts School | Rosedale | 19.6% | 68.4% | 12.0% |
| | | | | |
| CyberARTS | Don Mills CI | 27.8% | 70.0% | 2.2% |
| CyberARTS | Lakeshore CI | 45.0% | 40.0% | 15.0% |
| CyberARTS | Northview Heights SS | 27.8% | 66.0% | 6.2% |
| CyberARTS | Western Technical and Commercial School | 42.9% | 50.3% | 6.8% |
| | | | | |
| Elite Athletes | Northview Heights SS | 54.8% | 45.2% | 0.0% |
| Elite Athletes | Silverthorn CI | 65.4% | 34.6% | 0.0% |
| | | | | |
| Exceptional Athletes | Birchmount CI | 66.1% | 33.0% | 0.9% |
| | | | | |
| Integrated Technology | Ursula Franklin Academy | 43.4% | 54.0% | 2.6% |
| | | | | |
| International Baccalaureate | Monarch Park CI | 46.3% | 51.0% | 2.7% |
| International Baccalaureate | Parkdale CI | 48.0% | 51.0% | 1.0% |
| International Baccalaureate | Sir Wilfrid Laurier CI | 50.8% | 49.2% | 0.0% |
| International Baccalaureate | Victoria Park CI | 51.9% | 47.0% | 1.1% |
| International Baccalaureate | Weston CI | 33.1% | 64.1% | 2.8% |
| | | | | |
| Leadership | R. H. King | 40.7% | 58.2% | 1.1% |
| | | | | |
| Math, Science and Tech | Bloor CI | 61.6% | 36.2% | 2.5% |
| Math, Science and Tech | C. W. Jefferys CI | 50.6% | 49.4% | 0.0% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Danforth CTI | 61.4% | 36.2% | 2.4% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Emery CI | 50.0% | 46.4% | 3.6% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Georges Vanier SS | 61.9% | 38.1% | 0.0% |
| Math, Science and Tech | John Polanyi CI | 78.5% | 20.0% | 1.5% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Marc Gameau CI | 58.5% | 41.2% | 0.3% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Northview Heights SS | 50.3% | 49.2% | 0.5% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Runnymede CI | 61.0% | 35.2% | 3.8% |
| Math, Science and Tech | SATEC @ WA Porter | 57.8% | 42.4% | 0.4% |
| Math, Science and Tech | West Humber CI | 52.8% | 46.7% | 0.4% |
| Math, Science and Tech | William Lyon Mackenzie CI | 58.8% | 40.4% | 0.9% |
| | | Male | Female | S/N |
| TDSB February 2023 gender breakdown of all Secondary students in the SIS | | 48.00% | 51.0 % | <1% |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| School / Program | Entry Grade | Entry Grade Applicants Male-Identifying (%) | Entry Grade Applicants Female-Identifying (%) | Entry Grade Applicants with Gender Self-Identifying or Not Disclosed (%) |
| Claude Watson /Arts | Grade 4 | 35.2% | 64.1% | 0.7% |
| Karen Kain /Arts | Grade 6 | 26.1% | 69.0% | 4.9% |
| C H Best /CyberARTS | Grade 7 | 29.8% | 68.4% | 1.8% |
| Don Mills MS /CyberARTS | Grade 6 | 43.3% | 56.7% | 0.0% |

| Race | TDSB Enrollment Gr 9-12 | Total Spec. Programs Enrollment Gr 9-12 | Arts Focus Program Enrollment | CyberARTS Program Enrollment | Elite/Exc. Athlete Program Enrollment | International Baccalaureate Program Enrollment | Leadership Program Enrollment | MST & Integrated Technology Program Enrollment |
|---|-------------------------|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|
| TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN PROGRAMS | 71,766 | 8334 | 2888 | 410 | 279 | 1288 | 559 | 2832 |
| Indigenous | 149 (<1%) | 13 (1%) | 11 (1%) | - | 1 (<1%) | - | - | 1 (<1%) |
| Black | 5812 (12%) | 354 (6%) | 120 (6%) | 14 (4%) | 15 (8%) | 44 (4%) | 24 (5%) | 91 (4%) |
| East Asian | 6069 (12%) | 886 (14%) | 127 (6%) | 66 (21%) | 5 (3%) | 265 (26%) | 15 (3%) | 407 (18%) |
| Latin American | 850 (2%) | 61 (1%) | 38 (1.9%) | 7 (2%) | 2 (1%) | 5 (<1%) | - | 9 (<1%) |
| Middle Eastern | 2852 (6%) | 143 (2%) | 37 (2%) | 12 (3%) | 6 (3%) | 19 (2%) | 13 (3%) | 56 (3%) |
| Mixed | 6203 (12%) | 881 (14%) | 426 (21%) | 58 (18%) | 28 (15%) | 89 (9%) | 35 (7%) | 242 (11%) |
| South Asian | 11,336 (23%) | 1667 (26%) | 95 (5%) | 29 (9%) | 12 (6%) | 413 (40%) | 329 (66%) | 788 (35%) |
| Southeast Asian | 2137 (4%) | 203 (3%) | 58 (3%) | 16 (5%) | - | 24 (2%) | 19 (4%) | 85 (4%) |
| White | 14,262 (29%) | 2111 (33%) | 1094 (55%) | 112 (36%) | 120 (63%) | 161 (16%) | 67 (13%) | 556 (25%) |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENT ENROLLED IN PROGRAMS WITH KNOWN RACIAL IDENTITY FROM 2016 CENSUS | 49,670 | 6319 | 2006 | 314 | 189 | 1020 | 502 | 2235 |

*The use of the 2016 TDSB Student Census data leads to an incomplete picture of students as it is missing the racial identities of 25% of the students. Students were either not in the TDSB in 2016, they opted to not complete the Census or the racial identity question on the Census, were missing their student ID number etc. Please note that the racial identifiers are the ones from the 2016 TDSB Student Census.

| Program Type | School | Grade 9 Applicants in November 2022 | TOTAL number of applicants Self-identifying as First Nations, Métis and Inuit, Black, Middle Eastern or Latina/Latino/Latinx | Percentage of applicants Self-Identifying | Filled Grade 9 Seats for Sept 2023 (April 4) | Number of Self-Identifying applicants accepted (April 4) | Percentage of seats filled by Self-Identifying applicants | Percentage of Self-Identifying applicants seated (April 4) |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| Arts Program | Central Technical School | 136 | 45 | 33.1% | 58 | 17 | 29.3% | 37.8% |
| Arts Program | Earl Haig | 566 | 135 | 23.9% | 130 | 38 | 29.2% | 28.1% |
| Arts Program | Wexford | 377 | 129 | 34.2% | 180 | 83 | 46.1% | 64.3% |
| Arts School | ESA | 512 | 130 | 25.4% | 231 | 62 | 26.8% | 47.7% |
| Arts School | Rosedale | 718 | 150 | 20.9% | 231 | 59 | 25.5% | 39.3% |
| CyberARTS | Don Mills CI | 90 | 23 | 25.6% | 60 | 16 | 26.7% | 69.6% |
| CyberARTS | Lakeshore CI | 20 | 6 | 30.0% | 15 | <10 | >20% | 100.0% |
| CyberARTS | Northview Heights SS | 88 | 28 | 31.8% | 61 | 16 | 26.2% | 57.1% |
| CyberARTS | Western Technical and Comme | 161 | 36 | 22.4% | 60 | 20 | 33.3% | 55.6% |
| Elite Athletes | Northview Heights SS | 38 | 16 | 42.1% | 26 | <10 | >20% | 100% |
| Elite Athletes | Silverthorn CI | 78 | 14 | 17.9% | 60 | 10 | 16.7% | 71.4% |
| Exceptional Athletes | Birchmount CI | 230 | 100 | 43.5% | 51 | 27 | 52.9% | 27.0% |
| Integrated Technology | Ursula Franklin Academy | 927 | 167 | 18.0% | 106 | 33 | 31.1% | 19.8% |
| International Baccalaureate | Monarch Park CI | 255 | 44 | 17.3% | 82 | 16 | 19.5% | 36.4% |
| International Baccalaureate | Parkdale CI | 204 | 32 | 15.7% | 81 | 16 | 19.8% | 50.0% |
| International Baccalaureate | Sir Wilfrid Laurier CI | 242 | 40 | 16.5% | 109 | 21 | 19.3% | 52.5% |
| International Baccalaureate | Victoria Park CI | 268 | 34 | 12.7% | 106 | 17 | 16.0% | 50.0% |
| International Baccalaureate | Weston CI | 142 | 59 | 41.5% | 53 | 21 | 39.6% | 35.6% |
| Leadership | R. H. King | 558 | 145 | 26.0% | 118 | 47 | 39.8% | 32.4% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Bloor CI | 552 | 79 | 14.3% | 54 | 15 | 27.8% | 19.0% |
| Math, Science and Tech | C. W. Jefferys CI | 77 | 27 | 35.1% | 51 | 20 | 39.2% | 74.1% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Danforth CTI | 660 | 91 | 13.8% | 81 | 18 | 22.2% | 19.8% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Emery CI | 28 | 9 | 32.1% | 15 | <10 | >20% | 100% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Georges Vanier SS | 189 | 30 | 15.9% | 82 | 15 | 18.3% | 50.0% |
| Math, Science and Tech | John Polanyi CI | 65 | 23 | 35.4% | 44 | 16 | 36.4% | 69.6% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Marc Garneau CI | 337 | 52 | 15.4% | 54 | 15 | 27.8% | 28.8% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Northview Heights SS | 388 | 111 | 28.6% | 82 | 33 | 40.2% | 29.7% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Runnymede CI | 210 | 70 | 33.3% | 52 | 21 | 40.4% | 30.0% |
| Math, Science and Tech | SATEC @ WA Porter | 729 | 142 | 19.5% | 84 | 24 | 28.6% | 16.9% |
| Math, Science and Tech | West Humber CI | 229 | 48 | 21.0% | 82 | 20 | 24.4% | 41.7% |
| Math, Science and Tech | William Lyon Mackenzie CI | 587 | 118 | 20.1% | 78 | 27 | 34.6% | 22.9% |
| TOTAL | | 9661 | 2133 | | 2577 | 743 | | |
| School / Program | Entry Grade | Elementary Applicants in November 2022 | TOTAL number of applicants Self-identifying as First Nations, Métis and Inuit, Black, Middle Eastern or Latina/Latino/Latinx | Percentage of applicants Self-Identifying | Filled Entry Seats for Sept 2023 | Number of Self-Identifying applicants accepted (April 4) | % seats filled by Self-Identifying applicants | Percentage of Self-Identifying applicants seated (April 4) |
| Claude Watson /Arts | Grade 4 | 290 | 34 | 11.7% | 60 | 15 | 25.0% | 44.1% |
| Karen Kain / Arts | Grade 6 | 142 | 32 | 22.5% | 60 | 18 | 30.0% | 56.3% |
| C H Best /CyberARTS | Grade 7 | 57 | 13 | 22.8% | 27 | <10 | >20% | NA |
| Don Mills MS CyberARTS | Grade 6 | 90 | 15 | 16.7% | 27 | <10 | >20% | NA |
| TOTAL | | 579 | 94 | | 174 | 48 | | |

| Ward where Student attends Grade 3 | Trustee | number of Gr 4 applicants | First Choice Arts | First Choice Elite |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Dennis Hastings | 1 | 1 | |
| 2 | Dan McLean | | | |
| 3 | Patrick Nunziata | | | |
| 4 | Matias de Dovitiis | 2 | 2 | |
| 5 | Alexandra Lulka Rotman | 5 | 5 | |
| 6 | Liban Hassan | | | |
| 7 | Debbie King | 1 | | 1 |
| 8 | Shelley Laskin | 17 | 17 | |
| 9 | Alexis Dawson | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| 10 | Deborah Williams | 7 | 6 | 1 |
| 11 | Rachel Chernos Lin | 26 | 26 | |
| 12 | Weidong Pei | 107 | 107 | |
| 13 | James Li | 53 | 53 | |
| 14 | Farzana Rajwani | 8 | 8 | |
| 15 | Sara Ehrhardt | 3 | 3 | |
| 16 | Michelle Aarts | 4 | 4 | |
| 17 | Neethan Shan | 2 | 2 | |
| 18 | Malika Ghous | 1 | 1 | |
| 19 | Zakir Patel | 3 | 3 | |
| 20 | Manna Wong | 9 | 9 | |
| 21 | Yalini Rajakulasingam | 3 | 3 | |
| 22 | Anu Sriskandarajah | 3 | 3 | |
| non-TDSB | | 41 | 33 | 8 |
| TOTAL GR 4 APPLICANTS | | 300 | 289 | 11 |

| Ward where Student attends Grade 8 | Trustee | number of Gr 9 applicants | First Choice Arts | First Choice Elite Athlete | First Choice UFA | First Choice IB | First Choice Leadership | First Choice MST | First Choice CyberARTS | First Choice Exceptional |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Dennis Hastings | 183 | 12 | 1 | 1 | 15 | 1 | 153 | | |
| 2 | Dan McLean | 196 | 33 | 43 | 49 | 31 | | 34 | 6 | |
| 3 | Patrick Nunziata | 232 | 89 | 2 | 89 | 3 | | 32 | 17 | |
| 4 | Matias de Dovitiis | 207 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 8 | | 170 | 21 | |
| 5 | Alexandra Lulka Rotman | 173 | 22 | 4 | 3 | 2 | | 123 | 19 | |
| 6 | Liban Hassan | 162 | 28 | | 28 | 33 | | 62 | 11 | |
| 7 | Debbie King | 345 | 80 | 3 | 157 | 47 | | 19 | 39 | |
| 8 | Shelley Laskin | 299 | 97 | 4 | 53 | 16 | | 113 | 13 | 3 |
| 9 | Alexis Dawson | 150 | 55 | 1 | 28 | 17 | | 32 | 16 | 1 |
| 10 | Deborah Williams | 260 | 97 | 1 | 60 | 31 | 1 | 59 | 9 | 2 |
| 11 | Rachel Chernos Lin | 155 | 60 | 7 | 7 | 14 | | 60 | 5 | 2 |
| 12 | Weidong Pei | 268 | 106 | 6 | 2 | 3 | | 130 | 20 | 1 |
| 13 | James Li | 256 | 80 | | 1 | 30 | 1 | 136 | 7 | 1 |
| 14 | Farzana Rajwani | 142 | 22 | | 1 | 23 | 2 | 73 | 19 | 2 |
| 15 | Sara Ehrhardt | 371 | 138 | 1 | 16 | 45 | 1 | 151 | 5 | 14 |
| 16 | Michelle Aarts | 336 | 91 | 1 | 8 | 45 | 4 | 165 | 1 | 21 |
| 17 | Neethan Shan | 296 | 67 | | 3 | 16 | 59 | 139 | 4 | 8 |
| 18 | Malika Ghous | 501 | 58 | | 3 | 26 | 84 | 261 | 0 | 69 |
| 19 | Zakir Patel | 265 | 28 | | | 63 | 70 | 83 | 3 | 18 |
| 20 | Manna Wong | 99 | 20 | | 2 | 25 | | 48 | 2 | 2 |
| 21 | Yalini Rajakulasingam | 86 | 14 | | | 28 | 8 | 27 | 4 | 5 |
| 22 | Anu Sriskandarajah | 204 | 29 | | | 51 | 63 | 43 | 1 | 17 |
| non-TDSB | | 747 | 253 | 25 | 175 | 36 | 10 | 232 | 10 | 6 |
| TOTAL GR 9 APPLICANTS | | 5933 | 1484 | 101 | 687 | 608 | 304 | 2345 | 232 | 172 |

| Program Type: Sept. 2023 | Grade 9 Applicants in November 2022 | Filled Grade 9 Seats (February 8, 2023) | Grade 9 Male-Identifying Applicants Seated in Program (%) | Grade 9 Female-Identifying Applicants Seated in Program (%) | Grade 9 Applicants with Gender Self-Identified or Not Disclosed Seated in Program(%) |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Arts Focus Program | 2309 | 829 | 21.8% | 70.4% | 7.7% |
| CyberArts Program | 271 | 195 | 32.3% | 61.5% | 6.2% |
| International Baccalaureate | 1111 | 410 | 50.7% | 48.5% | 0.7% |
| Math, Science and Tech | 4051 | 759 | 50.9% | 48.0% | 1.2% |
| Gender-Identity is based on the CSIP Application | | | | | |
| Program Type: Oct. 2022 | Grade 9 Applicants in January 2022 | Flagged Grade 9 Students Enrolled October 31, 2022 | Grade 9 Male-Identifying Applicants Seated in Program (%) | Grade 9 Female-Identifying Applicants Seated in Program (%) | Grade 9 Applicants with Gender Self-Identified or Not Disclosed Seated in Program(%) |
| Arts Focus Program | 1453 | 710 | 22.5% | 73.4% | 4.1% |
| CyberArts Program | 194 | 160 | 35.0% | 63.1% | 1.9% |
| International Baccalaureate | 779 | 366 | 45.9% | 54.1% | 0.0% |
| Math, Science and Tech* | 2597 | 614 | 54.7% | 45.0% | 0.3% |
| * Not all MST programs have been "flagged" correctly so a few programs have not been included in this data | | | | | |
| Gender-Identity is based on School Records | | | | | |

| Program Type | School | School Ward | Grade 9 Seats for Sept 2023 (April 4, 2023) | Seated Students From Within Ward | Seated Students From Other Wards | Percentage of Seats Filled by Students from Other Wards |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Arts Program | Central Technical School | 10 | 58 | 13 | 45 | 77.6% |
| Arts Program | Earl Haig | 12 | 130 | 42 | 88 | 67.7% |
| Arts Program | Wexford | 17 | 180 | 49 | 131 | 72.8% |
| Arts School | ESA | 3 | 231 | 54 | 177 | 76.6% |
| Arts School | Rosedale | 10 | 231 | 32 | 199 | 86.1% |
| | | | | | | |
| CyberARTS | Don Mills CI | 14 | 60 | 20 | 40 | 66.7% |
| CyberARTS | Lakeshore CI | 3 | 15 | 9 | 6 | 40.0% |
| CyberARTS | Northview Heights SS | 5 | 60 | 16 | 44 | 73.3% |
| CyberARTS | Western Technical and Commerce | 7 | 61 | 24 | 37 | 60.7% |
| | | | | | | |
| Elite Athletes | Northview Heights SS | 5 | 24 | 3 | 21 | 87.5% |
| Elite Athletes | Silverthorn CI | 2 | 60 | 42 | 18 | 30.0% |
| | | | | | | |
| Exceptional Athletes | Birchmount CI | 18 | 51 | 24 | 27 | 52.9% |
| | | | | | | |
| Integrated Technology | Ursula Franklin Academy | 7 | 106 | 29 | 77 | 72.6% |
| | | | | | | |
| International Baccalaureate | Monarch Park CI | 15 | 82 | 25 | 57 | 69.5% |
| International Baccalaureate | Parkdale CI | 7 | 81 | 37 | 44 | 54.3% |
| International Baccalaureate | Sir Wilfrid Laurier CI | 19 | 109 | 42 | 67 | 61.5% |
| International Baccalaureate | Victoria Park CI | 14 | 106 | 14 | 92 | 86.8% |
| International Baccalaureate | Weston CI | 6 | 53 | 21 | 32 | 60.4% |
| | | | | | | |
| Leadership | R. H. King | 18 | 118 | 48 | 70 | 59.3% |
| | | | | | | |
| Math, Science and Tech | Bloor CI | 9 | 54 | 5 | 49 | 90.7% |
| Math, Science and Tech | C. W. Jefferys CI | 4 | 51 | 45 | 6 | 11.8% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Danforth CTI | 15 | 82 | 23 | 59 | 72.0% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Emery CI | 4 | 15 | 12 | 3 | 20.0% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Georges Vanier SS | 13 | 82 | 43 | 39 | 47.6% |
| Math, Science and Tech | John Polanyi CI | 8 | 44 | 23 | 21 | 47.7% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Marc Garneau CI | 11 | 54 | 4 | 50 | 92.6% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Northview Heights SS | 5 | 82 | 13 | 69 | 84.1% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Runnymede CI | 7 | 52 | 3 | 49 | 94.2% |
| Math, Science and Tech | SATEC @ WA Porter | 18 | 84 | 35 | 49 | 58.3% |
| Math, Science and Tech | West Humber CI | 1 | 82 | 59 | 23 | 28.0% |
| Math, Science and Tech | William Lyon Mackenzie CI | 5 | 78 | 17 | 61 | 78.2% |
| TOTAL | | | 2576 | 826 | 1750 | 67.9% |

| Ward where Student attends Grade 8 | Trustee | Number of Grade 8 students in the Ward | Number of CSIP Applicants from Ward | Percentage of Gr 8 students applying to CSIP from Ward | Number of Applicants Accepted to CSIP (April 4, 2023) | Percentage of Applicants from Ward Accepted | Attending CSIP within current Ward | Attending CSIP in another Ward | CSIP Programs Within the Ward |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Dennis Hastings | 631 | 183 | 29% | 88 | 48% | 59 | 29 | West Humber CI (MST) |
| 2 | Dan McLean | 875 | 196 | 22% | 99 | 51% | 42 | 57 | Silverthorn CI (Elite) |
| 3 | Patrick Nunziata | 623 | 232 | 37% | 102 | 44% | 63 | 39 | Lakeshore CI (Cyber) ESA (Arts) |
| 4 | Matias de Dovitiis | 590 | 207 | 35% | 138 | 67% | 57 | 81 | Emery CI (MST) C W Jefferys CI (MST) |
| 5 | Alexandra Lulka Rotman | 568 | 173 | 30% | 80 | 46% | 50 | 30 | Northview Heights SS (Elite, MST, Cyber) William Lyon Mackenzie (MST) |
| 6 | Liban Hassan | 578 | 162 | 28% | 92 | 57% | 21 | 71 | Weston CI (IB) |
| 7 | Debbie King | 736 | 345 | 47% | 160 | 46% | 93 | 67 | Western Tech (Cyber) Parkdale CI (IB) Ursula Franklin (IT) Runnymede CI (MST) |
| 8 | Shelley Laskin | 1175 | 299 | 25% | 129 | 43% | 23 | 106 | John Polanyi CI (MST) |
| 9 | Alexis Dawson | 471 | 150 | 32% | 78 | 52% | 5 | 73 | Bloor CI (MST) |
| 10 | Deborah Williams | 701 | 260 | 37% | 120 | 46% | 45 | 75 | Rosedale (Arts) Central Tech (Arts) |
| 11 | Rachel Chernos Lin | 844 | 155 | 18% | 52 | 34% | 4 | 48 | Marc Garneau CI (MST) |
| 12 | Weidong Pei | 574 | 268 | 47% | 116 | 43% | 42 | 74 | Earl Haig SS (ARTS) |
| 13 | James Li | 896 | 256 | 29% | 119 | 46% | 43 | 76 | Georges Vanier SS (MST) |
| 14 | Farzana Rajwani | 774 | 142 | 18% | 85 | 60% | 34 | 51 | Don Mills CI (Cyber) Victoria Park CI (IB) |
| 15 | Sara Ehrhardt | 959 | 371 | 39% | 138 | 37% | 48 | 90 | Danforth CTI (MST) Monarch Park CI (IB) |
| 16 | Michelle Aarts | 845 | 336 | 40% | 131 | 39% | 0 | 131 | |
| 17 | Neethan Shan | 758 | 296 | 39% | 139 | 47% | 49 | 90 | Wexford (Arts) |
| 18 | Malika Ghous | 904 | 501 | 55% | 204 | 41% | 107 | 97 | Birchmount Park CI (Exc. Athlete) SATEC (MST) RH King (Leadership) |
| 19 | Zakir Patel | 867 | 265 | 31% | 125 | 47% | 42 | 83 | Sir Wilfrid Laurier CI (IB) |
| 20 | Manna Wong | 621 | 99 | 16% | 42 | 42% | 0 | 42 | |
| 21 | Yalini Rajakulasingam | 782 | 86 | 11% | 40 | 47% | 0 | 40 | |
| 22 | Anu Sriskandarajah | 808 | 204 | 25% | 82 | 40% | 0 | 82 | |
| Other | | | 747 | NA | 218 | 29% | | | |
| TOTAL GR 9 APPLICANTS | | 16,580 | 5933 | 36% | 2577 | | 827 | 1,532 | |
| | | | | TDSB STUDENTS | 2359 | | 35% | 65% | |

| Program | School | Allocated Gr 9 Seats for Sept 2023 | Applications for Grade 9 in November 2022 | | Waitlist Dec 16 | Waitlist Feb 22 (unseated) | Waitlist Feb 22 (seated) | % of applicants unseated remaining on waitlist |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|--------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Arts Program | Central Technical School | 60 | 136 | | 31 | 1 | | 0.74% |
| Arts Program | Earl Haig | 130 | 566 | | 468 | 351 | | |
| | | 26 | 101 | Dance | 57 | 45 | 4 | 44.55% |
| | | 26 | 134 | Drama | 87 | 60 | 11 | 44.78% |
| | | 26 | 119 | Film | 76 | 55 | 4 | 46.22% |
| | | 26 | 119 | Music | 74 | 62 | 7 | 52.10% |
| | | 26 | 253 | Visual Art | 174 | 129 | 25 | 50.99% |
| Arts Program | Wexford | 180 | 377 | | 131 | 71 | | |
| | | 90 | 158 | Performing Arts | 31 | 7 | 1 | 4.43% |
| | | 90 | 272 | Visual Art | 100 | 64 | 7 | 23.53% |
| Arts School | ESA | 243 | 512 | | 212 | 109 | | |
| | | 54 | 217 | Contemporary Arts | 124 | 72 | 27 | 33.18% |
| | | 27 | 68 | Dance | 25 | 12 | | 17.65% |
| | | 27 | 72 | Drama | 15 | 2 | | 2.78% |
| | | 54 | 112 | Film | 30 | 12 | 3 | 10.71% |
| | | 27 | 62 | Music Instrumental | 17 | 11 | 3 | 17.74% |
| | | 54 | 81 | Musical Theatre | 4 | 0 | | 0.00% |
| Arts School | Rosedale | 243 | 718 | | 340 | 214 | 33 | 29.81% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| CyberARTS | Don Mills CI | 60 | 90 | | 5 | 0 | | 0.00% |
| CyberARTS | Lakeshore CI | 28 | 20 | | 0 | 0 | | 0.00% |
| CyberARTS | Northview Heights SS | 60 | 88 | | 12 | 4 | | 4.55% |
| CyberARTS | Western Technical and Comme | 60 | 161 | | 72 | 53 | 4 | 32.92% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Elite Athletes | Northview Heights SS | 30 | 38 | | 0 | 0 | | 0.00% |
| Elite Athletes | Silverthorn CI | 69 | 78 | | 0 | 0 | | 0.00% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Exceptional Athletes | Birchmount CI | 60 | 230 | | 133 | 100 | 7 | 43.48% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Integrated Technology | Ursula Franklin Academy | 108 | 927 | | 710 | 592 | 71 | 63.86% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| International Baccalaureate | Monarch Park CI | 81 | 255 | | 120 | 72 | 6 | 28.24% |
| International Baccalaureate | Parkdale CI | 81 | 204 | | 85 | 46 | | 22.55% |
| International Baccalaureate | Sir Wilfrid Laurier CI | 108 | 242 | | 85 | 58 | 2 | 23.97% |
| International Baccalaureate | Victoria Park CI | 108 | 268 | | 101 | 54 | 4 | 20.15% |
| International Baccalaureate | Weston CI | 54 | 142 | | 62 | 38 | 4 | 26.76% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Leadership | R. H. King | 120 | 558 | | 340 | 278 | 17 | 49.82% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Math, Science and Tech | Bloor CI | 54 | 550 | | 422 | 371 | 32 | 67.45% |
| Math, Science and Tech | C. W. Jefferys CI | 54 | 77 | | 7 | 0 | | 0.00% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Danforth CTI | 84 | 660 | | 480 | 417 | 24 | 63.18% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Emery CI | 27 | 28 | | 0 | 0 | | 0.00% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Georges Vanier SS | 54 | 189 | | 70 | 38 | 4 | 20.11% |
| Math, Science and Tech | John Polanyi CI | 54 | 65 | | 0 | 0 | | 0.00% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Marc Garneau CI | 54 | 338 | | 244 | 209 | 16 | 61.83% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Northview Heights SS | 84 | 388 | | 233 | 171 | 34 | 44.07% |
| Math, Science and Tech | Runnymede CI | 54 | 210 | | 106 | 67 | 5 | 31.90% |
| Math, Science and Tech | SATEC @ WA Porter | 84 | 729 | | 543 | 448 | 55 | 61.45% |
| Math, Science and Tech | West Humber CI | 54 | 229 | | 124 | 91 | 4 | 39.74% |
| Math, Science and Tech | William Lyon Mackenzie CI | 81 | 587 | | 447 | 373 | 52 | 63.54% |
| | | | 4050 | | | 1654 | 466 | |
| School/Program | Entry Grade | Allocated Entry Grade Seats for Sept 2023 | Applications for Entry Grade | | Waitlist Dec 16 | Waitlist Feb 22 | | % of applicants remaining on waitlist |
| Claude Watson / Arts | Grade 4 | 60 | 290 | | 221 | 220 | | 75.86% |
| Karen Kain / Arts | Grade 6 | 60 | 142 | | 68 | 63 | | 44.37% |
| C H Best MS / CyberARTS | Grade 7 | 27 | 57 | | 18 | 1 | | 1.75% |
| Don Mills MS / CyberARTS | Grade 6 | 27 | 90 | | 50 | 43 | | 47.78% |
| | | 0-10% | 10 - 30% | 30 - 50% | 50 - 70% | 70%+ | | |

| Racial Self-Identification | TDSB Demographic 2016 Census JK to Gr. 12 | Percentage of Applicants to Spec.Programs (2019-20)* | Percentage of Applicants to CSIP (2022-23) | Total Number of Self-Identifying Applicants (2022-23) | Total Number of Seated Self-Identifying Applicants | Percentage of Self-Identifying Applicants Seated in Programs |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| First Nations, Métis, Inuit | <1% | <1% | 1.40% | 100 | 56 | 56.0% |
| Black | 11% | 6% | 10.00% | 713 | 383 | 53.7% |
| Latino, Latina, Latinx | 2% | 1% | 3.75% | 267 | 135 | 50.6% |
| Middle Eastern | 6% | 2% | 7.83% | 558 | 275 | 49.3% |
| | | Based on 2016 Student Census match | Based on application self-identification | Some applicants self-identify as more than one of the listed groups | | |



**REVISED
APPENDIX "M"**

**Literature review on meritocratic
perceptions of public education and
diverse learning opportunities**



TITLE: Literature review on meritocratic perceptions of public education and diverse learning opportunities

AUTHOR(S): Toronto District School Board, Research and Development

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Executive Summary

A society based on merit assumes all groups and persons have equal access to resources and opportunities. Merit-based societies justify the stratification or differences of economic, health, and educational outcomes based on individual behaviour or performance rather than structural or societal inequities beyond peoples' behaviours or performance. Meritocracy is generally seen as encouraging effort and maximizing individual output in society (Mijs, 2016). In such a society, the rewards of merit should incentivize individuals to demonstrate their abilities and/or invest more effort.

Beliefs around meritocracy in education often serve to ignore the ongoing role that structures or society play in student success. Discrimination, bias, or lack of opportunity in shaping individual performance are all ignored or unavailable as reasons for disproportionate outcomes of groups of people. Individual performance becomes the primary justification for opportunities offered to students as a result of student performance (e.g., an application process). Meritocracy can be used to legitimize and maintain existing inequities as functions of individual behaviour. Poverty, crime, health, and education- are all subject to this rationalization within meritocratic beliefs.

Meritocratic beliefs are flexibly applied within other conceptions of public education and exist in almost all public education systems to some degree. They are often integrated within other ideas of the role of public education within society and have different implications depending on the application of merit-based thinking with the larger education system. For example, many jurisdictions use standardized assessments to stream students based on their performance into different education opportunities that offer additional education and career trajectories.

Key to merit-based educational policies is the ways that success is defined. Counter to culturally responsive versions of academic success in which teachers and schools work with students' families and communities to develop culturally sensitive forms of academic achievement and general schooling success, merit-based approaches to student success have strict definitions of success that are applied to schools and students. What is valued or 'counts' as success is likely a reproduction or a representation of the dominant culture or ethnicity's values within a given society. As a result, these values, skills, and



forms of knowledge that define jurisdictional merit are more readily available or easily demonstrable by students from that particular economic, social, and cultural group.

In Ontario and across Canada, merit-based ideas have existed uncomfortably with notions of the value of multiculturalism, beliefs that diversity is a societal asset and that public education can interrupt systemic discrimination issues. Beliefs about diversity and multiculturalism are not represented within the existing infrastructure and resources within the urban schools in Toronto. Learning opportunities within public education for economically well-resourced families differ from opportunities for students experiencing more economic scarcity. Students from higher SES neighborhoods have greater representation in popular elementary school programs such as French Immersion or the special education identification of Giftedness.

This overrepresentation can have both structural and cultural elements. For example, 70% of all French Immersion programs in the TDSB exist in areas of the city that are more economically well-resourced (Parekh, 2014). In Ontario, education system excellence is defined by the overall academic achievement of all students and the success experienced by the most historically marginalized populations of students (see [link](#) as an example). Understanding how merit-based beliefs can interrupt the flow of opportunities and resources to areas of the education system that have historically suffered the most from scarcity of educational opportunities is critical in reaching this standard of system excellence.



Introduction to Meritocracy

First coined by Michael F. D. Young in his 1958 political satire *The Rise of the Meritocracy*, the term commonly refers to the assumption that ‘people with the same level of merit – IQ plus effort – should have the same chance of success’ (Swift, 2003, p. 24). This definition is now widely accepted as the essence of meritocracy, stripped from its original satirical and critical intent. Meritocracy aims to signal merit as a rule or principle that governs the distribution of limited resources and rewards in society (Jencks, 1988). Within the educational system, meritocracy is seen as an equalizing force, a way to fight social inequalities, and a path for upward mobility (Duru-Bellat, 2006, 2009; Minow et al., 2008). The ideology of meritocracy asserts that, regardless of social position, economic class, gender, race, or culture (or any other form of socially or institutionally defined difference), everyone has an equal chance at becoming “successful” based purely on individual merit and hard work (Au, 2016). Meritocracy is an ideology of social justice based on the notion of equality of opportunity. It assumes that social justice can be achieved if everyone has an equal opportunity to compete for social resources on the basis of merit rather than inheritance or wealth. This underlies the prevalent belief that success in school is determined by one’s talents and efforts (Kluegel & Smith, 1986; McCall, 2013).

However, as McNamee and Miller (2009) point out, meritocracy ignores the roles played by inheritance, connections, luck, discrimination, marriage, and criminality in getting ahead. The notion of merit arguable involves much more than just a demonstrated bit of personal quality, knowledge, or skill. It is also a set of socially produced capabilities underpinned by the capitals of social groups with relevant cultural knowledge and social relations that can respond to educational opportunities to assert or reproduce social and economic advantages. In this sense, many authors have commented (for example, Dench, 2006; Halsey, 2007; Sayer, 2005), meritocracy is a ‘displacement of one principle of stratification by another, of achievement...’ (Bell, 1973, p. 391).

A society based on merit assumes equality of access to resources/opportunities for all groups and persons and justifies the stratification of economic, health, and educational attainment or outcome on individual behaviour or performance rather than structural or societal inequities beyond peoples’ behaviours or performance. From a functionalist perspective, meritocracy is generally seen as a means



of encouraging effort and maximizing individual output in society (Mijs, 2016). In such a society, the rewards of merit should incentivize individuals to demonstrate their abilities and/or invest more effort.

In theory, meritocracy leads to fair resource allocation and a more productive society. However, research in areas of social psychology has shown how the application of merit-based beliefs can exasperate inequities in society. As an example, McCoy and Major (2007) found that when people are asked to think about the concept of meritocracy, they are more likely to attribute social inequalities as a personal or individual quality—a deserved outcome of individual performance. Beliefs that centre individual merit often ignore the ongoing role that structures, or society play in an individuals' success and outcome in relation to ongoing societal and institutional discrimination, bias, or lack of opportunity-- for certain groups of people or communities.

The principle of meritocracy can be used to legitimize and maintain existing inequalities, by justifying or legitimizing these inequalities as products of individual performance(s) and thus deserved. In sum, the concept of meritocracy relates to perceptions and beliefs that highlight individual achievement while also minimizing or justifying the existence of social inequalities. Meritocracy can also provide moral and intellectual justifications that support resistance to the implementation of practices that could reduce current intergroup inequalities. Believing that a society is meritocratic can be associated with opposition to organizational practices that challenge the status quo by providing key opportunities to people who have been historically disadvantaged (e.g., TDSB's Employment Equity Strategy, or affirmative action in general).

The concept of equity has long been featured in educational policies as a means of fostering equity in society. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) identifies education as one of the most powerful levers available to make society more equitable (OECD, 2007). However, for education to foster equity in society, education systems themselves need to be equitable. The OECD recognizes that achieving equity in and through education has remained an ongoing, difficult societal problem despite serious policy efforts (OECD, 2011). Equity within merit-based perspectives just discussed assumes that everyone has an equal opportunity, that there is a sameness of treatment and opportunity within peoples' experience both in education as well in society in general. It is often associated with market-oriented ways of thinking that foster ideals of fairness and equal opportunity.



Market-based policies like parental choice, school vouchers, and school competition are at times associated with promoting equity by raising system-wide excellence of service while attending to the diverse needs of individual families through selection and choice in the 'education market'. But this perspective also relies on assumptions that all parents are able to demand and obtain quality education for their children, irrespective of their socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, social capital, migrant status, gender, or other factors.

Almost all educational jurisdictions rely on some form or merit-based ideas in providing public education. The degrees to which principles of merit are embedded within any policy or practice in relation to education opportunity and outcome depends on many factors associated with a jurisdiction's approach to governing. This makes jurisdictional comparisons around the use of educational merit within educational policy challenging. However, exploring some examples of merit-based approaches is helpful in understanding how merit-based beliefs are interwoven within other conceptions of social mobility, equity, and the role of education within society. The forthcoming sections discuss educational equity in relation to meritocracy and the ways in which specific jurisdictions have used merit-based ideas within education policy and practice.

Adaptation of Meritocratic Ideals in Public Education

New York city is drawing on merit-based ideas in the city's persistent use of standardized testing to define educational success. As an example, New York city uses an admission policy to specialized high schools that is determined solely by applicants' performance on the Secondary High School Aptitude Test (SHSAT). The SHSAT is a timed multiple-choice exam of verbal and mathematical skills. Of the justifications that have been offered for these gifted educational programs, some point to the expected societal benefits of developing highly able students' talents while others focus on the moral responsibility of realizing the potential of gifted children and helping them to flourish as individuals. Out of approximately 400 public high schools in New York City, nine are considered 'specialized schools'. Meanwhile, persistent test score achievement gaps exist between rich and poor students and different racial groups (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Ravitch, 2013), leading to concentrated failure among low-income children of color as defined by these test scores. As a result, students of color have been subject to a narrower curriculum and an increase in pedagogical forms that are largely defined by test performance



pressure. Overall, these dynamics have resulted on educational experiences largely driven by the standardized tests for the majority of Black students compared to their often more economically privileged white peers who are not subject to this test performance pressure within teaching and learning (Nichols & Berliner, 2007; Nichols et al., 2005; von Zastrow, 2004). The overemphasis on standardized testing as a means that defines school success supports a process that renders low-income students of color, as well as their teachers and schools, visible as failures through high-stakes, standardized testing.

Since Singapore's inception as a nation state in 1965, the ideology of meritocracy has been a key principle of governance and educational distribution in Singapore (Lee, 2000; Mauzy & Milne, 2002). Singapore's use of meritocracy involves competition for educational resources and material rewards so that students' talent might be developed to their fullest potential (Tan, 2008). Singapore's education system supports the development of a small proportion of talented individuals that will work to maximize overall societal wellbeing (e.g., see Lim, 2012, 2013). Beginning at the primary level, for example, *the Gifted Education Programme* identifies and tracks the top 1% of 9-year-olds into a special and separate academic route in order to develop intellectual rigor, humane values, and creativity, so as to prepare the students for service to country and society' (Ministry of Education, 2011a). At the secondary level, the Integrated Programme allows students who are university bound to bypass the examinations at the end of secondary school and proceed directly to the advanced-level examinations at the end of junior college (Ministry of Education, 2011b). This approach to educational opportunity has produced significant disparities amongst different student racial populations in Singapore. While students from Malay and Indian backgrounds have made significant improvements in educational attainment over the last decades, their public examination results continue to lag behind those of their Chinese counterparts (Kang, 2005). Recurrent evidence shows that several non-merit factors, such as socioeconomic status, affect school achievement (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; OECD, 2015; Sirin, 2005)

Advocates of meritocracy have been prevalent in the English educational policy landscape historically from the tenure of Margaret Thatcher as an Education Secretary in the early 70s wherein she advocated for equality of opportunity to more recently with Theresa May arguing to create a fairer society by making the UK the 'world's great meritocracy' (May, 2016). Beliefs in notions of talent or merit based on assumptions of equality of quality educational experiences and subsequent disparities of student outcomes justified by merit has been a centre principle for much of England's recent school



reform approaches. This approach also serves to justify a (re)generation of elite through the domains of education and the labor market (Brown et al., 2016). Much like the international educational discourse around meritocratic social mobility (Smith & Skrbiš, 2017), the policy context in England centralises ideals that schools should enable hardworking and talented students to succeed regardless of their circumstances. However, these ideals do not recognize the societal, economic, and structural challenges that many England's students face in their ongoing schooling experiences that also influence disparities in student outcome.

In an empirical study focussing on the students and teachers at Hope Street School- a large state-funded community secondary school with strong meritocratic ethos in inner London- found considerable demographic influences on student outcomes. Hope Street participates in various practices aimed at 'levelling the playing field' for example, supplementary private tutoring for sixth form students; a student mentoring programme with 'professionals' from the local community and across the capital; a student bursary programme; a work experience programme; and extensive pastoral support. However, despite these efforts and resources available for students, families, and Hope Street's staff, the researchers found significant influence of structural disadvantages on students' educational opportunities: poverty, cramped housing, caring responsibilities, mental health issues, patriarchy, racism, and narrow notions of 'success'.

The findings from this study (Owens & St Croix, 2020) emphasized the contradictions inherent in the policy narrative and challenges the notion that meritocracy can serve as a pathway to achieve social mobility and social justice. Similar studies exploring the role of student selection based on merit have shown that pre-existing disparities of students are exasperated within differentiated opportunities that these schools offer students (Schmidt et al. 2015). The kind of stratification created by grammar schools can widen the gap between privileged and less privileged in terms of civic knowledge (Collado et al., 2015), emotional and behavioural problems (Muller and Hofmann 2016), and even achievement in many studies (Condrón 2013; Danhier & Martin, 2014; Goldsmith, 2011; Mendolia et al., 2016; Yeung & Phuong Nguyen-Hoang, 2016) as well as increase the direct impact of socio-economic status and low expectations (Parker et al. 2016).

Another example of a meritocratic structure of education is the Tiered Schooling in China. In 2006, the Chinese government announced the Compulsory Education Law with a structure of tiered



schooling. This structure is formed by two major examinations: a senior school entrance examination and Gaokao. Success in the first examination is the premise for achieving success in the second examination. In this way, Chinese schooling is a step-by-step selection process that is based on and continually oriented towards exam performance. This underwrites teachers' relations with students and students' orientation towards performance articulated within monthly examinations and corresponding rankings. The worth of a student is decided based on the rankings, as they reflect on their performances, develop strategies, adjust their ambitions, and regulate themselves. Research undertaken by Jin Jin and Stephen J. Ball (2020) found that students seek to achieve a certain degree of upward social mobility through their educational performance. Ball and Jin Jin (2020) argue that amongst other things, this tiered examination system serves to identify high performing students for new opportunities while also distancing them from their communities, personal histories, and cultures. While operating as a system of social mobility for these students, the system is also supporting a definition of these communities from which the student is seeking to leave as deficient or undeserving (Ball and Jin Jin, 2020).

The jurisdictional examples just discussed, amongst other things, show the flexibility and diversity that merit-based beliefs can inhabit within educational policy. The role that cultural capital plays in defining success seems implicit within meritocratic elements of educational policy just discussed (Bourdieu, Passerson, and Nice, 1990). Bourdieu's (1990) work illustrates that what is valued--what is considered knowledge, or capacity--all are defined by the dominate ethnicity or cultural groups.

When these artifacts then are considered demonstrations of merit, this in turn can support education systems that function less as social *mobilizers* and more as social *reproducers* of the existing structures and values that have served to marginalize some and privilege others (Bourdieu, et. al., 1990). Other forms of knowledge, cultural artifacts, and capacities that are integrated within historically marginalized groups and communities but not part of the capacities defined as valuable are then not available as part of the valued knowledge systems that the public education is meant to support or reproduce in the development of its students' knowledge, skills and/or abilities.

Diverse Learning Opportunities Aimed at Equity in Education

Over the past several decades, studies on the relations between culture and pedagogy have gained attention for their focus on helping low-progress, marginalized learners achieve academic success



through classroom practices informed by their home and family backgrounds. Prominently articulated by Ladson-Billings (1994, 1995, 2009) in her study of the pedagogic practices of exceptional teachers of African American students– culturally relevant pedagogy – identifies students’ unique cultural backgrounds as strengths and advocates nurturing them to promote academic achievement (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Morrison et al., 2008). Similar approaches have since been adopted in countless schools and classrooms across North America under various names, such as culturally responsive teaching, culturally congruent teaching, and culturally appropriate pedagogy. (Ferber, 2006; Hastie et al., 2006).

By having teachers draw upon students’ culture of reference (Ladson-Billings, 1994), schools can create bridges between students’ home and classroom experiences while still maintaining high expectations of state/national curricular mandates (Gay, 2000; Gutierrez, 2000). One of the central insights from the literature on students’ cultural backgrounds is that teachers need to understand that in academically low-progress classrooms, students frequently bring cultural capital that is different from mainstream norms and worldviews into the classroom. In a three-year ethnographic study of eight teachers of African American students, Ladson-Billings (2009) found that, on the surface, the teachers subscribed to a variety of instructional strategies and classroom routines, all of which sought to harness the cultural and social capital embedded in students’ home backgrounds and to use these as resources to promote a more meaningful and engaged teaching and learning environment. As an example, in utilizing students’ culture as a vehicle for learning, one of the teachers developed students’ appreciation of poetry through their love for rap music. Students were invited to perform the songs and the teacher reproduced them on the board so that they could discuss literal and figurative meanings as well as technical aspects of poetry.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s (OECD’s) programme (PISA) assesses reading, mathematics and science on a three-year cycle. In 2000, reading literacy was the main domain and mathematics and science literacies were minor. In PISA 2000 Australia’s Indigenous students performed at a lower level than the non-Indigenous students in the three domains and their results were below the OECD mean. Results using the Reading Proficiency Levels revealed that Indigenous students were under-represented among the highest-scoring students and over-represented among low-scoring students (Perry, 2009). In the work of Matthews, Cooper and Baturo (2007), the Eurocentric teaching methods in Australia have been replaced by efforts to contextualise mathematics pedagogy within



Indigenous culture and perspectives. Instilling a sense of pride in the students' Indigenous identity and culture has encouraged attendance and highlighted the capacity of Indigenous students to succeed in mathematics. These researchers adopted a story-telling approach in the teaching of mathematics. This approach involved story telling from the world of Indigenous students through to the world of algebra and the use of symbols that have personal meaning and draw on Indigenous students' experiences. The story telling starts with simple arithmetic but moves to algebraic thinking, pattern, and structure within something that is familiar. Therefore, there is a space to develop culture-fair assessment tasks as an ongoing process.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations in 2015 includes 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs), with a comprehensive global goal on education (SDG4). SDG4 on education is to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). Cooperative learning is an inclusive pedagogy and provides students with lifelong skills including social and emotional skills wherein cooperative work can contribute to social inclusion due to intergroup contact (Marsh, 2012). An equity pedagogy, such as cooperative learning creates intercultural competence and awareness of the complexities embedded in diverse identities that illustrate the need to understand diversity in a nuanced way, and that this notion of diversity is a strength or asset in classroom learning. Cooperative learning is used in schools in Sweden, a country which has had a significant number of refugee students arriving in the past few years. The use of cooperative learning is a way of creating a classroom in which there is opportunity for all and can help students develop a potentially more nuanced understanding of success, achievement, and subsequent merit.

The UK SPRinG program also found that group work can particularly help relationships and social inclusion (Baines et al., 2017). This is further supported by research that confirms small group learning is very useful help for the marginalized children to be incorporated into their team. Interactions among students are crucial to cooperative learning and the interactions that occur in the groups help to facilitate learning with positive relationships as students not only help each other but also enhance thinking (Gillies, 2002). When teachers actively include all pupils through identifying individual strengths and giving them roles in groups, then it recognizes diversity as a learning resource and changes the conditions that influence students' participation in the classroom (Cohen, 2014). This equity is fundamental to an intercultural classroom.



In a study (Martin et al., 2018) about students from a small, public charter school in a large Northern California city data was collected from participants over a course of 3 years to study the impact of youth repertoires of practice in the high school. Out of all the participants, 2.5% of participants were Asian, 25% were black, 17.5% were Latino/a/x, 35% were white, and 20% were two or more races; 47.5% were girls, 47.5% were boys, and 5% identified in another category. Gutiérrez and Rogoff (2003) define repertoires of practice as “the ways of engaging in activities stemming from observing and otherwise participating in cultural practices” and note that “individuals’ background experiences, together with their interests, may prepare them for knowing how to engage in particular forms of language and literacy activities, play their part in testing formats, resolve interpersonal problems according to specific community-organized approaches, and so forth” (p. 22). According to the findings of the study (Martin et al., 2018), within STEM fields, opportunities to connect existing competencies to new learning are systematically denied to marginalized populations, particularly students of color, female-identifying, and students from working class and low-income families (Vossoughi et al., 2016). Several foundational studies have showed that learning environments are more effective and more equitable when they are responsive to students’ diverse and culturally relevant skills, knowledge, and interests in contexts including language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

The suggestions of effective learning programs and strategies just shared, are not often supported within a merit-based approach to education equity in that they are highly responsive to diversity of the student populations that they support and importantly generate or define value in learning and knowledge acquisition through interactions and relationships with the communities that the school serves. This notion is supported in Pring and Walford’s (1997) assertion that in an education system that has adopted neoliberal ideologies- defined by merit within an individually competitive learning context-greater resources, such as more marketable pathways to post secondary opportunities, are more often directed towards those who are perceived to demonstrate greater potential, who are also often associated with households with more economic capital. Seen from this perspective, Neoliberalism underpins the economic rationale for a meritocratic system that determines which students are streamed or guided into basic education tracks and away from marketable education and career trajectories or opportunities (Davies, 2017).



Canadian Context and Its Meritocratic Interventions

In Ontario, Canada there is extensive debate over whether and how schools should support students who are perceived as having differing abilities, interests, and vocational inclinations. Canadian researchers (see Curtis et al., 1992; Martell, 2009) have argued that public school systems are structured to replicate the social stratification experienced by students who are poor, who are from minority groups, or who have disabilities and are systematically streamed away from academic opportunities. Critics further argue that the Canadian multicultural context is informed by a contradictory perception of colorblindness and meritocracy (Warburton, 2007). Canada's multiculturalism makes cultural, ethnic, and racial difference important enough to acknowledge and celebrate through discourses of diversity, while also asserting that intergroup differences are superficial and therefore, not significant enough to warrant public policy or social interventions (Markus et al., 2000). As detailed throughout this discussion, this places reasons for disproportionate outcomes of students' individual behaviour, rather than on institutional and structural biases that are substantive throughout society. McCoy and Major (2007) argue that proponents of meritocratic worldviews can also be guilty of promoting stratification by explaining social inequities and disproportionate outcomes as personal failings and shortcomings of those in low-status groups rather than the result of systemic barriers.

Over the past few years, a few studies employing TDSB data have identified stratified access to programming offered throughout the board. French Immersion, the International Baccalaureate program, Advanced Placement opportunities, Gifted and Special Education programming, Elite Athletics program, Ontario Youth Apprenticeship, and Specialist High Skills Major programs are subject to varying degrees of disproportionate demographic participation rates (Parekh, 2014; Robson et al., 2014). In research undertaken by Gaztambide-Fernández and Parekh (2017) around the student population composition of Specialty Arts Programs (SAP) in the Board, it was found that the SAPs, when compared to student populations across the school board are less diverse environments in which disproportionate numbers of white students with higher levels of economic capital have access to these schools.

These findings reinforce the global discourse around talent and skills discussed across this review. In this instance from a board perspective across the SAPs, the arts are mobilized to promote



equal opportunity and social justice, while serving to limit opportunity for many (Caillier, 2006; Gaztambide-Fernández et al., 2016). Similarly, the interest in French Immersion program is high and growing. However, seats are limited for French immersion programs. Researchers Gillian Parekh, Isobel Killoran, and Cameron Crawford (2017) mapped French Immersion programs in the TDSB onto the city's neighbourhoods and found that the majority of high schools offering them are found in the city's more affluent neighbourhoods (70 per cent) rather than in low-income areas (30 per cent). Thereby, leading to an overrepresentation of white children, children from high income families, and students born in Canada in French Immersion program (Winton, 2022; Sinay, 2015).

The United Nations has noted that persistent educational barriers, including differential treatment and a lack of curricular and staff representation, affect Black Canadians (United Nations, 2017). To redress these injustices, policy cannot only aspire towards more equitable schools and a more equitable society; it must grapple with racism as a historical, structural, and ideological construct and reality, accounting for inequalities and taking concrete steps to effect change. However, these negative effects can be obscured through merit-based perspectives in which differences in educational outcomes are the result of individual failings, rather than of racial systemic inequality (Gillborn, 2005). Hence, a look at what happens in schooling and education necessarily requires critical examination of notions of meritocracy, fairness, and neutrality 'by centering the discussion of inequality within the context of racism' (Howard 2008; Schroeter & James, 2015).



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Hicks Morley Hamilton Stewart Storie LLP
 77 King St. W., 39th Floor, Box 371, TD Centre
 Toronto, ON M5K 1K8
 Tel: 416.362.1011 Fax: 416.362.9680

NJERI DAMALI SOJOURNER-CAMPBELL
 njeridamali-sojournercampbell@hicksmorley.com
 Direct: 416.864.7018

Toronto
 Waterloo
 London
 Kingston
 Ottawa

File No. 2622-5242
 May 9, 2023

SENT VIA EMAIL - Paul.Koven@tdsb.on.ca
STRICTLY PRIVILEGED & CONFIDENTIAL

Paul Koven
 General Counsel and Executive Officer (Interim)
 Toronto District School Board
 Legal Services
 5050 Yonge Street
 Toronto, ON M2N 5N8

Dear Mr. Koven:

Re: Central Student Interest Program Opinion

Thank you for the opportunity to assist the Toronto District School Board.

You have asked us to provide a legal opinion to the Toronto District School Board ("TDSB" or "Board") with respect to its Central Student Interest Programs ("CSI Programs") admissions process. We understand that TDSB aims to ensure equitable access to educational opportunities, and, in keeping with this aim, has reserved spaces in CSI Programs for underserved and underrepresented students.

TDSB's specific inquiry relates to whether the admission priorities and manner of student selection followed by the Board in the CSI Programs are consistent with applicable Human Rights Commission policies and the provisions of the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (the "*Code*"). In particular, TDSB has requested that we consider whether the CSI Programs are consistent with the section 14 Special Programs provisions of the *Code*, both from the perspective of non-Code-protected students as well as Code-protected students who do not fall within one of the groups identified by TDSB.

Background Facts

TDSB offers students with an interest and passion in a particular area to participate in CSI Programs in specialized areas, such as Arts, Elite Athletes, Exceptional Athletes, Integrated Technology, International Baccalaureate, Leadership Pathway, and Math, Science and Technology.

TDSB students who wish to be considered for participation in a CSI Program must submit an online application, as program enrollment is limited, and student demand may exceed available spaces. To reflect the diversity of TDSB and the City of Toronto, the Board has created a tiered eligibility framework, informed by demographic data of TDSB's student population and the City of Toronto.

Where the number of applicants exceed the number of spaces available in a particular CSI Program, all eligible applicants will be included in a random selection process that prioritizes underserved and underrepresented student groups in the following manner:

- 20% of spaces are reserved for students from historically and currently underserved communities (students self-identifying as First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Black, Latin American, and Middle Eastern); and
- 50% of spaces in Math, Science and Technology programs are reserved for students self-identifying as female.

We understand that no distinctions are made between applicants within groups once they have been identified as belonging to either or both groups above.

Discussion

TDSB's need for this opinion arises from a concern that the tiered eligibility framework described above results in discrimination against those students who do not belong to either of the groups identified by the Board as admission priorities. In real terms, this includes students who are white and racialized students who are not First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Black, Latin American, and Middle Eastern; and in the case of Math, Science and Technology programs, students who are male. This concern cannot be addressed without discussion about what constitutes discrimination under the *Code* and, importantly, what does *not*.

Special Programs

As a starting point, section 1 of the *Code* entitles every person to 'equal' treatment in goods, facilities and services without 'discrimination' based on fifteen prohibited grounds.¹

The reference under section 1 to the term "equal" is not colloquial. Rather, "equal" is defined in section 10 of the *Code* as "subject to all requirements, qualifications and considerations that are not a prohibited ground of discrimination,"² which, in the case of

¹ race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability.

² *Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19, s.10(1).

service delivery, provides service providers with the ability to place parameters around the services provided.

A service provider will violate section 1 of the *Code* if it can be established that the delivery of its service created (i) differential treatment, (ii) based on a protected ground, (iii) that causes discrimination in the substantive sense.

However, human rights tribunals and courts have long established that differential treatment of one sort or another is often a necessary component for the redress of historical disadvantage. In the words of the Supreme Court of Canada:³

In other words, not every distinction is discriminatory. By their very nature, programs designed to ameliorate the disadvantage of one group will inevitably exclude individuals from other groups. This does not necessarily make them either unconstitutional or “reverse discrimination”. Andrews requires that discriminatory conduct entail more than different treatment. As McIntyre J. declared at p. 167, a law will not “necessarily be bad because it makes distinctions” [Emphasis added].

It is for this reason that nearly all Canadian human rights statutes contain equity mechanisms that allow strategic exclusions for the purpose of eliminating structural disproportionality.

Section 14, the “Special Programs” provision, is Ontario’s equity mechanism.

Found in Part 2 of the *Code*, which houses the Code’s interpretive provisions, section 14 provides for the creation of “special programs.” A “special program” is a program designed to:

1. relieve hardship or economic disadvantage;
2. assist disadvantaged persons or groups to achieve equal opportunity; and/or
3. contribute to the elimination of the infringement of rights under Part I of the *Code*.

A program that meets one or more of these criteria will be deemed not to infringe upon the right to be free from discrimination in any of the social areas (i.e. Services, Employment, Accommodations, Contracts, Membership in Vocational Associations) contained in Part I of the *Code*. This includes, for our present purposes, the right to “equal treatment” in goods, facilities and services provided by section 1 of the *Code*.

Stated plainly, “special programs” exclude but are *not* discriminatory. In this way, the *Code* protects equity-focussed, or affirmative action type initiatives that might otherwise meet the legal test for discrimination.

³ *R. v. Kapp*, 2008 SCC 41 (CanLII), [2008] 2 SCR 483 at para 28.

To date, the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario has only had one opportunity to consider the application of section 14 of the *Code* to a program delivered by a school board that distinguishes based on race. The Applicant in *Lisikh v. Ontario (Education)*⁴ alleged that a school board's summer program that limited its leadership and personal development program to Black youth breached the *Code* because it discriminated against white students. In a brief, but pointed, decision by Member Eva Nichols,⁵ the Tribunal found that the program met the criteria of a "special program" citing the Ontario Human Rights Commission's policy on Race and Racism, in particular its recognition that "Black students are disadvantaged and experience hardship in accessing equal educational opportunities, as compared to their non-racialized fellow students."⁶

There exist outside of the education sector several examples of programs and initiatives that have achieved section 14 protection:

- In *Carter v Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario*,⁷ the Tribunal found that a program that limited training to women and reserved spaces for women on an executive committee constituted a "special program" under the *Code* because the respondent had discovered a pattern of underrepresentation of women in leadership positions.
- In *Sauve v Ininew Friendship Centre*,⁸ the Tribunal found that an employer's express hiring preference for Indigenous persons to deliver Indigenous programming was not discriminatory because the organization provided unique services tailored to the needs of Indigenous individuals; and
- In *Young v Lynwood Charlton Centre*,⁹ the Tribunal accepted that a program intended to support single mothers did not discriminate against a male applicant who was a single father.

These decisions demonstrate that the Tribunal will protect programs designed to achieve equity, and where a special program can be established, section 14 will be a full answer to claims of "reverse" discrimination.

⁴ *Lisikh v. Ontario (Education)*, 2022 HRTO 1345 (CanLII).

⁵ Member Nichols is recognized as a member of The Child and Youth Division of the Tribunal for her expertise in education-related matters.

⁶ *Lisikh* supra note 3 at para 29.

⁷ *Carter v Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario*, 2011 HRTO 1604.

⁸ *Sauve v Ininew Friendship Centre*, 2010 HRTO 720.

⁹ *Young v Lynwood Charlton Centre*, 2012 HRTO 1133.

Analysis

The CSI Program Admissions Process meets the criteria of a “Special Program”

It is our view that TDSB’s CSI Program admissions process meets all three criteria for a “special program” under s.14 of the *Code*:

1. **Relieve hardship or economic disadvantage:** The program design anticipates that knowledge, skills and opportunities gained from participation in these programs will yield benefits throughout the rest of participants’ academic careers into employment thus affecting economic outcomes for the students, their families and communities.
2. **Assist disadvantaged persons or groups to achieve equal opportunity:** The admissions process assists disadvantaged students to achieve equal opportunity by providing unique, specialized learning to students from groups that have not had the benefit of accessing such programming in the past. In the case of Math, Science and Technology programs, the admission process also responds to the general underrepresentation of women and girls in science, technology, engineering and math (“STEM”).
3. **Contribute to the elimination of the infringement of rights under Part I of the *Code*:** The admissions process contributes to the elimination of the infringement of rights under Part I of the *Code* by addressing racial and sex-based systemic discrimination in education, as revealed in TDSB data, in accordance with TDSB’s equity commitment.

Furthermore, by designing a central admissions process, TDSB has attempted to mitigate the impact of neighbourhood stratification that can be caused by school board catchment areas.

Application to excluded students, who are not members of Code-protected groups

Having opined that TDSB’s CSI Program admissions process meets all three criteria for a “special program” under the *Code*, it follows that any differential treatment or exclusion of students who are not members of a *Code*-protected group would not constitute discrimination under the *Code* by operation of section 14.

As explained above, this is a function of the “deeming effect” of section 14 on the impugned admissions process. Applied to the CSI Programs specifically, this means it would be legally incorrect to characterize the exclusion of white students as “discrimination” or “reverse’ discrimination” even though they may experience (i) differential treatment (applications excluded from consideration); (ii) based on a

protected ground (race); and (iii) that causes discrimination in the substantive sense (lack of access to a program designed to achieve equity).

We appreciate that this message may not land well in some cases. To that end, we note the Tribunal's observation in *Likish* at paragraph 19:

It is important to note in the Tribunal's jurisprudence that an allegation of racial discrimination or discrimination on the grounds of colour is not one that can be or has been successfully claimed by persons who are white and non-racialized."

The analysis above would apply to male students who claim discrimination on the basis that they are excluded from consideration for the 50% of spaces in Math, Science and Technology CSI Programs that are reserved for students who identify as "female".

Application to students who are members of Code groups that are not among TDSB's priority categories

In our view, the fact that an excluded student may otherwise belong to a *Code*-protected group does not change the result. Such a student's exclusion from consideration for the CSI Program will not escape the "deeming effect" of section 14 of the *Code* unless a student can show that they are a member of a group that also experiences the historical disadvantage addressed by the "special program".

Based on our research, the Tribunal has not yet dealt with an allegation of discrimination made by a person who can claim protection under the ground of race but is not of the racial group prioritized by the "special program".

However, guidance may be taken from the Tribunal's analysis in *Casey v. Anishnawbe Health Toronto*.¹⁰ The applicant in *Casey* alleged that the respondents discriminated against him based on creed and ethnic origin when it denied him paid time off under the corporate respondent's Aboriginal Cultural Development Policy to observe Jewish holidays. The Tribunal accepted that the respondent's policy accorded with its mandate to provide services primarily to Aboriginal persons and to integrate traditional Aboriginal approaches to address the dire health needs of Aboriginal communities and did not "privilege one faith or culture over all others" as alleged by the Applicant. While the Tribunal did not address whether "Aboriginal culture" constitutes a "Creed" under the *Code*, it held that even if it were to find that the policy had a differential effect on the applicant, this differential effect would not be discriminatory, stating at paragraph 25:

Section 14 permits the implementation of special programs designed to relieve hardship or economic disadvantage or to assist disadvantaged persons or groups to achieve equal opportunity. Section 14 has been held to promote, rather than hinder, substantive equality. It

¹⁰ *Casey v. Anishnawbe Health Toronto*, 2013 HRT0 1244 (CanLII).

insulates special programs from review where the challenge is from a disadvantaged person whose characteristics the program was not designed to benefit. See for e.g. *Ball v. Ontario (Community and Social Services)*, 2010 HRTO 360. Similarly, AHT's Aboriginal Cultural Development policy promotes the organization's mission to provide services to a disadvantaged group in a culturally appropriate manner. The policy does not elevate one creed or ethnicity over another. Instead, it promotes the organization's equality-seeking goals in relation to Aboriginal communities who are the primary clients of its services. [Emphasis added.]

The Tribunal's analysis in *Casey* affirms that in a proceeding the Tribunal would be solely concerned with the group at the focus of TDSB's ameliorative initiative: students self-identifying as First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Black, Latin American and Middle Eastern and self-identified females.

That said, two cautions are in order: First, TDSB must ensure that it maintains current data to justify the continued appropriateness of the groups it has prioritized. We note that the TDSB is aware of this approach, as the description of the admissions selection process on the website states that TDSB will adjust the prioritized groups commensurate with demographic shifts:

As further demographic and registration data is gathered through the Student Census and the School Information System, additional groups of underserved students may be identified and data will allow for future prioritization through this process.

This monitoring is critical, and consistent with the expectations set by the Tribunal to ensure that special programs remain structured in a way that accords with their initial purpose. In *Ball v. Ontario (Community and Social Services)*,¹¹ at paragraph 6, the Tribunal found that where a challenge to a "special program" is raised by a Code-protected individual, a determination of whether the program is discriminatory will depend on the definition of the purpose of the program, whether the complainants' circumstances fall within this purpose, and whether they experience substantive discrimination as compared with others who receive a benefit. For that reason, as the composition of underserved and/or underrepresented groups changes over time, so too should the admission priorities for CSI Programs.

Second, the Tribunal will take issue with discriminatory effects *within* groups prioritized through a "special program". In *Ball*, cited above, the Tribunal also held that special programs cannot internally discriminate against the people they are meant to serve. Special programs must meet the same non-discrimination standard as other services that are not special programs.¹² Therefore, for example, distinctions between Métis and Inuit students or transgender and cisgender female-identifying students that create adverse outcomes will not benefit from the "deeming effect" of section 14.

¹¹ *Ball v. Ontario (Community and Social Services)*, 2010 HRTO 360 (CanLII).

¹² *Ibid* at para 76.

Practical Considerations

As a practical matter, we note that the Ontario Human Rights Commission no longer approves “special programs”. Therefore, the program could only be challenged through a human rights application filed by a person who receives services from the school board. In the event that such an application is filed, the initial onus will rest with those challenging the CSI Programs to establish that they meet the test for discrimination outlined above.

Should the Tribunal accept that, on their face, the CSI Programs meet that test, the onus would shift to TDSB to establish that the CSI Programs meet the definition for a “special program” under section 14 of the *Code*, and, thus, that the distinctions created under these programs are permissible. For this reason, it is important that TDSB continues to self-monitor its compliance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, and in particular, the principles underlying s.14 of the *Code* to advance a strong defence.

Conclusion

A program must only satisfy one of the “special program” criteria to benefit from the protection afforded by section 14 of the *Code*. In this case, it is our view that TDSB’s admissions process for its CSI Programs meets all three criteria for a “special program” and is therefore compliant with the Ontario Human Rights *Code* under its “special programs” provision.

Based on this conclusion, we are of the view that exclusion of *Code*-protected and non-*Code*-protected students caused by the process are insulated by the “deeming effect” of section 14 of the *Code*, which would serve as a defence to a human rights application at the Tribunal, subject to the currency of TDSB’s data.

That said, we appreciate that equity initiatives like these are often subject to the court of public opinion long before they are determined by an adjudicative body. To the extent that we can assist any further in that regard, it would be our pleasure.

We hope this opinion assists. Dolores, Andrew, Abiola, and I would be pleased to support the Board with strategic advice and/or representation should this matter evolve further.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Njeri Damali Sojourner-Campbell

NDSC/np

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2022 RBC Canadian Open: Permit Use at Richview Collegiate Institute

To: Planning and Priorities Committee

Date: 17 May, 2023

Report No.: 05-23-4542

Strategic Directions

- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being

Recommendation

It is recommended that the report on the RBC Canadian Open – Permit Use at Richview Collegiate Institute be received.

Context

The Canada Golf Association (CGA) organizers of the RBC Canadian Open approached the Toronto District School Board in 2019 and expressed an interest in using the football field at Richview Collegiate Institute to host a two-day concert event in June 2020 as part of the Professional Golf Association (PGA) tour. A Special Event permit for June 2020 was approved for Richview CI, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was cancelled and rescheduled to June 2022.

Richview CI is located just 600 metres from the front of St. George's Golf and Country Club. St. George's did not have the appropriate amount of space required to host this concert event, which was part of the RBC Canadian Open. The two-day concert event was held June 10 and June 11, 2022 and was well attended, well-managed, and a successful event.

In September 2022, the Board approved a written notice of motion that the Director present a report to the Planning and Priorities Committee in the Spring 2023 summarizing:

- permit revenue from the RBC Canadian Open event;

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- modifications, if any, required at Richview Collegiate Institute to host the RBC Canadian Open event;
- community and Board commitments made by RBC, and the success of such commitments, if applicable.

Revenue

The total amount of all payments received was \$92,031.60. The money received was distributed as follows:

- Canada Golf Association made a direct donation to Richview Collegiate Institute for \$25,000.00
- TDSB recovered all the labour costs associated with the permit and preparing the site to host the activities \$53,528.10 (including HST)
- TDSB collected the following facility rental fees totaling \$13,503.50* (including HST) as follows:
 - a) Field Rental for Richview CI (12 days) - \$9,969.99
 - b) Field and parking lot 2 days - \$1,250.91
 - c) St George PS - Volunteer training - \$1,604.60
 - d) Site utility locates - \$678

*Note: this amount was transferred to general revenue

Requirements of Hosting the RBC Canadian Open Event

Process

It was determined through discussions and planning with the CGA, that Richview Collegiate Institute would be used for the following activities:

1. Pick up and drop off for Golf Patrons
2. Volunteer orientation
3. Use of the school's soccer field as the concert venue for the Friday and Saturday evenings

Initially there was lack of clarity as to whether the event would fall under a permit, follow regular facilities permit procedures, or if the event would be covered under an Access Agreement. In the end, it was determined that both a temporary access license and permits would be used for the event. The Temporary Access License outlined schedules for the permit(s), Parking Lot Operations Plan, Concert Series Operational Plan, Traffic Management Plan, Emergency Management Plan, and Scope of Work for use of property and restoration.

The CGA also received an exemption to Policy P095 and received permission to sell alcohol on Board property during the concert series.

Board Requirements

- Temporary Access License outlining both parties' responsibilities, limitations, and roles
- Permit Agreement
- Permission to Serve Alcohol on Board Property – policy revision or Board Waiver
- Liability Insurance certificate - \$5 million

Modifications to Richview Collegiate Institute

There was event preparation which required some modifications to the site. The following work was done by TDSB staff (as required by the Collective Agreement) and paid for by the CGA as Event Preparation Costs:

- Supervise all work carried out by Golf Canada;
- Install & Remove Modulock temporary fencing (Golf Canada supplied);
- Remove & Replace Goal Posts;
- Remove & Replace Bleachers;
- Repair potholes and remove curbs in parking lot.

Resource Implications

Staff from various departments were involved in the planning and coordination of activities both leading up to and during the event, as well as after the event.

Executive Office of Facility Services and Planning ensured that the Board permission was granted and provided guidance to the staff, all Board procedures were followed , that everything completed was within the Board's expectation, and provided overall leadership.

The Permit unit processed all the permit requests and ensured that all the required information and document proof such as Policy Clearance, the Noise Exemption permit from the City, Permission to sell Alcohol, and Insurance were provided. The Permit unit also provided communication and documentation on the process.

Design and Renewal provided a Project Supervisor who ensured that the construction needs for the event were met, that all work schedules were carried out safely without compromising the safety of students or Board employees, and aligned construction work with Board's labour practices and agreements with inhouse skilled trades

Risk Management ensured that insurance and safety requirements were met, and provided leadership on insurance and liability issues.

The school site team provided schedules and information to ensure student safety and activities were not impacted and student safety needs were met, communicated with school community regarding the schedule and impacts on school and site access during

the event. The school principal was the main point of contact for the school during the event.

Toronto Lands Corporation (TLC) drafted the Agreements between TDSB and Vendors.

Future Considerations

The amount of staff time required to plan and coordinate various aspects of the event was greater than anticipated as this was something never undertaken before by TDSB staff. If TDSB is approached by CGA or other organizations for similar events of this nature, there are some areas for consideration and improvement:

- An event of this scale requires significant support of TDSB staff. Consideration should be given to increase revenue and account for central and school staff support
- Have all the parties/stakeholders agree to a clearly defined critical path, with regularly scheduled progress meetings and milestone targets
- Have all parties/stakeholders agree to the scope of work in advance to avoid last minute additional work, which impact costs and resources
- Establish the lead person for each department with main contact information and clear definition of roles/responsibilities, not only for TDSB but also for the external stakeholders that may be involved (for example, City Roads and Transportation, Security, Emergency Services and the Police as well as various event vendors and organizers)
- Use this experience to create checklist and reference document for future events of this nature
- Develop some contingency or backup plans to support both the event, but also the school in the event of delays or disruptions
- Onsite meetings and visits by all parties should be encouraged for large and/or special events
- Expand participation and learning opportunities for all students at TDSB, not only the students that are attending schools in the area.

Communications Considerations

Overall, the CGA team was effective, well organized, and responsive. The team responded quickly when there were any concerns or questions raised, and they shared information regarding the broader tournament plans with TDSB staff and school administrators. Site management and the event planning was well done, including the restoration of field and cleanup of the school property. CGA made a direct donation to Richview Collegiate Institute for \$25,000.

Communication amongst TDSB departments was excellent. There were regular meetings scheduled to discuss the progress, the response times were swift to most of the requests, the support of Senior team assisted in accomplishing tasks quickly as they provided guidance/direction to Staff, and the school was highly supportive of the permit

and viewed the experience as a learning opportunity for students. Additionally, students were able to enroll for Community participation credits and were paid student employment.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

- Policy P011 - Community Use of Board Facilities (Permits)
- Policy P095 - Restrictions on Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use

Appendices

NIL

From

Maia Puccetti, Executive Officer, Facility Services and Planning at
Maia.Puccetti@tdsb.on.ca or 416-393-8780

Jonathan Grove, Senior Manager, Operations, Maintenance and Community Use at
Jonathan.Grove@tdsb.on.ca or at 416-394-4942

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A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety – Board Update - May 2023

To: Planning and Priorities Committee

Date: 17 May, 2023

Report No.: 05-17-4531

Strategic Directions

- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being
- Create a Culture for Student and Staff Well-Being
- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students
- Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs
- Transform Student Learning

Recommendation

It is recommended that this report be received.

Context

On December 9 2022, Toronto District School Board Trustees received the report “*A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety- Report 1*”. The Action Plan contained within the report intends to address the issue of school and community violence with urgency and intensity. As is reflected in the title of the report, this Action Plan is evolving and being adapted based on the ongoing work. The Action Plan is framed by the Toronto District School Board’s commitments to Truth and Reconciliation and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights, Equity, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression.

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It is of critical importance to again highlight the fact that school and community safety goes beyond the work of any single entity or organization. It is the collective responsibility of all levels of government, community agencies and other organizations, faith-based groups and all Greater Toronto Area School Boards.

The attached report *A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety Update – May 2023* (Appendix A) provides an update on the Action Plan that was received by the Board on December 9, 2022.

Significant progress has been made in many of the areas identified within the Action Plan including the hiring of staff, professional learning, the engagement of communities through partnership development, additional programming and school safety infrastructure.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

Implementation of the Action Plan items will continue throughout the spring and summer months, as outlined in the Update (Appendix A). As noted previously, the plan will continue to evolve and will be revised based on feedback and input from students, staff and communities.

Staff will continue to update the Board in a timely manner on progress made related to the fulfillment of the Action Plan.

Resource Implications

The TDSB has made an additional \$2.7 million in investments to support work being done in the following areas related to school and community safety: staff to support schools, resource development and training and community engagement.

The Ministry of Education has provided an additional \$1.8 million for the continuation and expansion of the programming delivered by community agencies in collaboration with TDSB. This includes the presence of agencies working in schools during the regular school day and tutoring and recreational program offerings outside of regular school hours. Also, an additional \$175,000 has been allocated to TDSB for Focus on Youth (FOY) which supports Caring and Safe Schools programming through student employment. This specific allocation is being used during the school year. The Focus on Youth allocation for the summer months is approximately \$3 million.

At present, existing resources are being used to fund all other areas of the Action Plan.

Communications Considerations

TDSB staff continue to work closely with community agencies, organizations and faith-based groups to provide ongoing, timely and transparent communication. Additionally, this update will be shared with key stakeholders through existing TDSB communication channels and posted publicly on the TDSB's website

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

P037 Equity

P031 Human Rights

P051 Caring and Safe Schools

P069 Accessibility

PR523 Access to School Board Premises

PR540 Non-Discretionary and Discretionary Student Transfers

PR585 Board Code of Conduct

PR586 Programs for Students on Long Term Suspension or Expulsion

PR602 Hearing of and Appeal Under Section 265(1)(m) of the Education Act

PR608 Sexual Misconduct by Students

PR694 Video Surveillance

PR695 Threat to school Safety

PR697 Promoting a Positive School Climate Procedure

PR698 Police-School Board Protocol

PR703 Bullying Prevention and Intervention

PR702 Progressive Discipline

PR710 Reporting of Suspected Wrongdoing

PR728 Reporting and Responding to Racism and Hate Incidents Involving or Impacting Students in Schools

PR724 Refusal to Admit

Other Reference Documents

[TDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#)

Appendices

- Appendix A: A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety Update – May 2023
- Appendix B: March Break Tutoring

From

Executive Superintendent, Caring and Safe Schools and Indigenous Education [Jim Spyropoulos](#) or at 416-397-3678

Appendix A

A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety

Update May 2023

Context

On December 9, 2022 the Board received the report “*A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety- Report 1*”. The report and the Action Plan contained within it were created in response to data which shows an increase in violent incidents impacting young people within the City of Toronto. Schools are a reflection of the communities within which they exist, and as such there has also been an increase in violent incidents in TDSB schools.

Based on the Ministry of Education *Policy and Program Memorandum 120: Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education*, the term violent incident is defined as the occurrence of any one of the following:

1. possessing a weapon, including a firearm (note: this includes any object used as a weapon and replicas)
2. physical assault causing bodily harm requiring medical attention
3. sexual assault
4. robbery
5. using a weapon to cause or to threaten to cause bodily harm to another person
6. extortion
7. hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences

Violent incidents that occur on school premises during school-run programs must be reported to the Ministry of Education, whether the incident was committed by a student of the school or whether it was committed by any other person.

Using this definition, the number of violent incidents on TDSB school premises since 2018-19 is as follows:

| School Year | Reported to Ministry of Education |
|-------------------|---|
| 2018 - 19 | 267 |
| 2019 - 20 | 212 |
| 2020 -21 | 65 |
| 2021 - 22 | 223 |
| 2022 – April 2023 | 323 (to be reported at the end of June) |

The figures represent the number of students involved in “violent incidents” as opposed to the number of occurrences. What this means more specifically is that any one occurrence may generate multiple violent incident reports depending on the number of students involved.

The Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety and the accompanying Action Plan intend to address the issue of school and community violence with urgency and intensity.

The Action Plan is framed by the Toronto District School Board’s commitments to Truth and Reconciliation and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights, Equity, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression. The plan continues to evolve based on feedback and learnings garnered through implementation.

TDSB recognizes the role that systemic racism and other forms of oppression play in relation to school and community violence. TDSB staff will continue to engage in anti racism, anti oppression training and work closely with the Urban Indigenous Education Centre and the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement to address these issues as we strive to build caring, safe, inclusive, and welcoming schools and workplaces for all.

This Action Plan is being implemented across the Board on multiple fronts. This implementation highlights the fact that school and community safety is the collective responsibility of all levels of government, community agencies and other organizations, faith-based groups and all Greater Toronto Area School Boards.

This report provides an update on the Action Plan as it as received at the December 9, 2022 Board meeting.

Additional Investments

On February 1, 2023 the Board received *A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety Report 1 – Budget Implications* which specified additional investments associated with the Action Plan presented at the Special Board Meeting on December 9, 2022.

As a follow up to the additional investment allocated by the Board on February 1, 2023 the following positions have been hired:

- Two teachers
- One Caring and Safe Schools Advisor
- Two Child and Youth Counselors
- Twenty-Two Additional School Based Safety Monitors

Additional Investments have also recently been made in the following:

- Eleven Child Youth Counsellors
- Twelve Social Workers
- One Child Youth Worker
- Consultant costs for Caring and Safe School Safety Audits

Compulsory Learning and Compliance Training

The first phase of training has included school administrators, Superintendents of Education and Executive Superintendents and is nearing completion. This training included learning related to PR 695 Threat to School Safety, PR 697 Promoting a Positive School Climate and emergency preparedness. Thus far, approximately 85% of the intended staff have completed this training. The final dates of training for this school year have been scheduled to achieve full compliance.

This learning has been extended to include staff at Administrative Sites. Administrative Sites will also be undertaking emergency preparedness practice drills before the end of the school year.

Twenty TDSB staff have received Threat Assessment training. Additionally, eight Caring and Safe Schools staff were certified in level 1 and level 2 *Threat Assessment* training offered through the Center for Trauma Informed Practices in March 2023. Senior Team staff will receive Threat Assessment training through the Centre for Trauma Informed Practice in July and August of 2023. This training will lead to level 1 certification.

Restorative Practice and Restorative Justice

Restorative Practices have taken on greater significance and are being used more often throughout the TDSB as part of preventing, managing, responding to and resolving situations of conflict. Training has been ongoing and consists of learning related to restorative practices frameworks and the effective use of restorative circles.

This work is being coordinated by Centrally Assigned Principals in Caring and Safe Schools, Student Well-Being and Innovation and Teaching and Learning in collaboration with the Student Equity Collective, the Urban Indigenous Education Centre, the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement and the TDSB RESTORES group.

At present, 2821 employees have completed Part 1 Restorative Practice training and 1952 employees have completed Part 2 from the International Institute for Restorative Practices. Our goal is for every school to have access to trained staff on site.

Additional training dates are in place for May (May 9 and 25) led by TDSB current and retired Administrators, who are certified trainers. This training will continue as part of the 2023 Summer Institute course offerings.

These learning opportunities have become customized to address the needs of different job classifications e.g. Lunchroom Supervisors, School Administrators, Child and Youth Workers, Teachers, Child and Youth Workers, Designated Early Childhood Educators, Special Needs Assistants, Social Workers.

Audit Function

The TDSB is introducing a Caring and Safe Schools audit process for all schools in the Board. This process is intended to heighten system and school accountability and to create the safest possible schools by examining school climate, physical plant and compliance to the Board's policies and procedures.

Two schools from every Learning Centre have been scheduled to go through the Caring and Safe School audit process before the end of the 2022-2023 school year.

Audit teams are comprised of school administrators, Caring and Safe Schools staff, Superintendents of Education and Occupational Health and Safety Officers. Audit teams will work closely with school staff through a process designed to collaboratively and supportively improve Caring and Safe School practices.

Expected Practices Guide for Caring and Safe Schools

The Expected Practices Guide for Caring and Safe Schools has been created in draft form with the insights from school based and central staff. This guide has been created to ensure that staff recognize the key areas of focus related to creating caring, safe, inclusive, and accepting schools.

The guide will also support the Caring and Safe Schools Audit process and is organized into three specific areas, Policy and Procedure, Creating Positive School Climate and Physical Plant. The guide will be revised based on the learning from the first set of eight Caring and Safe School Audits.

Expert Reference Panel on School Safety and Student Well-Being

Currently the Expert Reference Panel on School Safety and Student Well-Being is in the midst of reviewing data from Toronto Public Health, SafeTO, and TDSB to help inform their planning. The Panel has formed seven working groups to address the Action Plan that the TDSB committed to in December 2022. The seven working groups are as follows:

Expanding Caring Adults

Student Voice and Programming

Investing in Security Infrastructure

Supporting Positive Conflict Resolution

Enhancing Caring, Inclusive and Safe School Cultures

Providing Ongoing Emergency Preparedness Training

Increasing Student and Community Engagement and Intergovernmental Partnerships

The upcoming meeting on May 31, 2023, will be the fourth meeting of the Expert Reference Panel on School Safety and Well-Being.

The working groups will continue examining data, considering evidence-based research, and then begin to develop recommendations. Also at the May 31, 2023 meeting the Expert Reference Panel will:

- Examine data and research to broadly understand the scope of school safety and its impacts on student well-being;
- Examine who is affected and the multiple impacts;
- Identify risk and protective factors; and

- Use current evidence and research, to propose policies and program solutions/strategies, to the Director and/or the Board, with the sole focus of making schools safer by reducing violence, improving mental health, and promoting well-being that is grounded in adherence to Indigenous Rights, Human Rights, and equity.

Programs and Partnerships

Many elements go into the creation of caring and safe schools and workplaces. The most critical component is working through relationships with all internal and external stakeholders to build positive school climates where students feel valued, heard and cared for irrespective of identity or social standing.

In response to student and community voice, the Toronto District School Board has been working very closely with community partners to expand learning and recreational program offerings (including tutoring, mentoring and the provision of nutrition services) outside of regular school hours; these programs have already begun at certain sites after school and on Saturdays to address urgent need. To facilitate this programming the TDSB continues to expand partnerships with local culturally responsive community organizations and faith-based groups in support of school and community safety; the selection of these groups has been made with input from parents/guardian/caregivers, students, school leaders, local Trustees and community members.

Over the March Break, TDSB worked with community partners to deliver programming which serviced 1860 students and employed 284 TDSB secondary school students (Appendix B).

The number of students served has been broken down as follows:

Grades 1-3: 954 students

Grades 4-6: 363 students

Grades 7-10: 352 students

Grades 11-12: 390 students

The programming was delivered through effective collaboration between Caring and Safe Schools, Continuing Education, Facility Services and Virtual Learning and Re-Engagement. These programs have been very well received and staff have received many requests for their extension.

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To support the extension, the Ministry of Education has responded to a TDSB request by allocating an additional \$1.8 million for the continuation and expansion of these programs. This has included the presence of agencies working in schools during the regular school day and tutoring and recreational program offerings outside of regular school hours.

To facilitate the connection between schools and community partners local safety tables are being established. The mandate of these tables will be to undertake a collaborative approach to school and community safety including the mandate of building a safe learning environment with the support of students, staff and parents/guardians/caregivers along with stakeholders in the community. Community stakeholders include but are not limited to community agencies, faith groups, police services, recreational services, cultural groups and representatives from all levels of government.

These safety tables are meeting throughout the spring of 2023 and their development will be ongoing based on local community dynamics as well as need.

Toronto Police Service

TDSB continues to work with Toronto Police Service (TPS) in ways which promote school and community safety. The central focus of the joint work is strengthening local models which bring schools and local Toronto Police divisions together.

The Toronto Police Service continues to facilitate learning for TDSB, TCDSB and community partners related to emergency preparedness and threat assessment.

On May 12, 2023 TDSB participated in SafeTO's school summit which brought Toronto Police Service together with other local school boards as a way of further developing productive working relationships. There were approximately 360 participants. Planning is underway for another meeting between the groups in August of 2023.

TDSB continues to work closely with TPS on matters which necessitate police involvement.

City of Toronto

TDSB continues to partner with the City of Toronto and multi-sector partners on the implementation of SafeTO place-based approaches to violence reduction and improving school/community safety and well-being. The TDSB's participation in integrated Safety Coordination Teams has enhanced responsiveness to incidents that have occurred and have enabled additional supports for local prevention initiatives.

The City is assessing the viability of investing in TDSB's involvement in SafeTO through the proposed creation of a number of positions which will help to coordinate the work of TDSB and the City of Toronto in the area of school and community safety.

In response to increasing school/community safety and well-being challenges resulting in calls for services to Toronto Police Service, TDSB and TCDSB co-designed with SafeTO partners a conversation with School Administration to providing clarity on the mandate of Toronto Police Service related to schools when called, who to call at the local division when required, and to provide clarity on what responses look like. The conversation that occurred on May 12, 2023 also provided school administrators with an overview of relevant City supports.

A professional development workshop was facilitated at Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute with TDSB, the City and the Social Solutions Institute (SSI) a UK-based organization specializing in violence disruption. SSI values the important role of educators in violence prevention, outlining lived experience for failed and successful disruption that took place in other jurisdictions. The discussion also explored the expansion of the City's TOwards Peace violence disruption model and considerations for expansion to Scarborough.

Data and Technology- Updated Video Equipment

Currently, TDSB is facing challenges at many sites which are dealing with outdated video equipment which may no longer be functioning and cannot be repaired.

Staff from a cross-section of Board departments have been working together to address this issue. This process has been delayed due to supply chain and manufacturing issues. The final phase of the procurement process, to install and operate the video equipment of the highest scoring proponent at two pilot schools, has now been completed. The evaluation committee, made up of staff from Caring and Safe Schools, Facility Services, Information Technology and Business Services are satisfied with the results of the proof-of-concept installations.

The recommendation to proceed with the next phase of the work is being considered by the Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee on May 15, 2023.

Installation of new equipment will continue in the days ahead and will continue through the summer. A School Selection Committee is being established to determine the order of installations across the system.

Resource Implications

The TDSB has made an additional \$2.7 million in investments to support work being done in the following areas related to school and community safety: staff to support schools, resource development and training and community engagement.

As noted above, the Ministry of Education has provided an additional \$1.8 million for the continuation and expansion of the programming delivered by community agencies in collaboration with TDSB. This includes the presence of agencies working in schools during the regular school day and tutoring and recreational program offerings outside of regular school hours. Also, an additional \$175,000 has been allocated to TDSB for Focus on Youth (FOY) which supports Caring and Safe Schools programming through student employment. This specific allocation is being used during the school year. The Focus on Youth allocation for the summer months is approximately \$3 million.

At present, existing resources are being used to fund all other areas of the Action Plan.

Conclusion

The action items contained within *A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety- Report 1* which are intended to enhance school and community safety, are progressing on multiple fronts. Collaboration with both internal and external partners continues to inform the work that is occurring presently as well as plans for the future.

The impact of this work is being felt by students and communities. The importance of maintaining the momentum that has been created in recent months has been highlighted through the relationships that have been established and enhanced. By continuing to work relentlessly in creative ways, which centre the voices of students, families, staff and communities we will move closer to our goal of creating the safest, most welcoming and inclusive schools that we can.



March Break Tutoring Camps

The following organizations are offering March Break Tutoring Camps. For more information, please contact the organizations directly.

| Organization | Location | Link |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| ACCN | GTA area | ACCN TORONTO |
| CanTYD | Scarborough | vathanan@cantyd.org |
| Frontlines | Weston | www.frontlines.to |
| Go Green Youth Centre | Valley Park MS & Marc Garneau CI | March Break Camp Go Green Youth Centre (ggyc.ca) |
| Masjid El Noor | York Memorial CI | Masjid El Noor March Break Camp 2023 |
| Motion Ball Sports | West Humber CI | Programs – Motion Ball Sports |
| Play Forever | North/West part of Toronto | Play Forever - Registration Link |
| Ripple Effect Circle/ Midaynta | Ryerson CS & Greenholme JMS | Ripple March program flyer |
| Scarborough Muslim Association | Abu Bakr Siddique | Scarborough Muslim Association March Break Tutoring Form |
| Sports4All | Donwood Park P.S. Lawrence Heights MS & Victoria Park CI | REGISTER (sports4all.ca) |
| Taking Kids Out Of Poverty | Rose Ave. PS | TKOP Academic Enrichment Program |
| The Ubuntu Village | Cedarbrae CI & John McCrae PS | The Ubuntu Village March Break Camp: Registration Form |



Online Tutoring



Need help with homework after school?

Need someone to review your essay before you show your teacher?

TDSB is excited to offer free unlimited, on-demand, 24/7 tutoring services to all TDSB students (K to Grade 12) in all subjects through two companies: Paper and Brainfuse.

Sign up here, it's easy!

[Paper Registration](#)

[Brainfuse Registration](#)



Written Notice of Motion (Trustees and MacLean and Ehrhardt)

From: Denise Joseph-Dowers, Senior Manager, Governance and Board Services

In accordance with Board Bylaws 5.15.45, the following motion is submitted as notice at this time and for consideration at the next regular meeting of the Planning and Priorities Committee

5.15.45 Motions must first be introduced as a Notice of Motion to provide advance notification of a matter, ...

5.15.51 A Notice of Motion submitted to a Committee, will be considered at a subsequent Committee meeting.

Intentional Enhanced Efforts to Create Improved Levels of Civility

Whereas, some students and staff are still suffering the effects of the pandemic; and

Whereas, some students and staff are struggling with their mental health and well-being; and

Whereas, decreasing levels of respect, compassion and civility can create some challenging environments for students, educators and administrators; and

Whereas, incidents of bullying, hate and racism persist TDSB schools; and

Therefore, it be resolved:

- (a) That the Director present a report to the Planning and Priorities Committee in the fall 2023, providing system data and evidence illustrating trends of respect, compassion, citizenship, well-being and belonging;
- (b) That the report at Part (a) inform the work of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan with the intention to support students and staff.



Our Mission

To enable all students to reach high levels of achievement and well-being and to acquire the knowledge, skills and values they need to become responsible, contributing members of a democratic and sustainable society.

We Value

- Each and every student's interests, strengths, passions, identities and needs
- A strong public education system
- A partnership of students, staff, family and community
- Shared leadership that builds trust, supports effective practices and enhances high expectations
- The diversity of our students, staff and our community
- The commitment and skills of our staff
- Equity, innovation, accountability and accessibility
- Learning and working spaces that are inclusive, caring, safe, respectful and environmentally sustainable

Our Goals

Transform Student Learning

We will have high expectations for all students and provide positive, supportive learning environments. On a foundation of literacy and math, students will deal with issues such as environmental sustainability, poverty and social justice to develop compassion, empathy and problem solving skills. Students will develop an understanding of technology and the ability to build healthy relationships.

Create a Culture for Student and Staff Well-Being

We will build positive school cultures and workplaces where mental health and well-being is a priority for all staff and students. Teachers will be provided with professional learning opportunities and the tools necessary to effectively support students, schools and communities.

Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students

We will ensure that all schools offer a wide range of programming that reflects the voices, choices, abilities, identities and experiences of students. We will continually review policies, procedures and practices to ensure that they promote equity, inclusion and human rights practices and enhance learning opportunities for all students.

Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs

We will allocate resources, renew schools, improve services and remove barriers and biases to support student achievement and accommodate the different needs of students, staff and the community.

Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being

We will strengthen relationships and continue to build partnerships among students, staff, families and communities that support student needs and improve learning and well-being. We will continue to create an environment where every voice is welcomed and has influence.

Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands

We acknowledge we are hosted on the lands of the Mississaugas of the Anishinaabe (ANISH NA BEE), the Haudenosaunee (HOE DENA SHOW NEE) Confederacy and the Wendat. We also recognize the enduring presence of all First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

Planning and Priorities Committee Mandate

The Planning and Priorities Committee shall make recommendations to the Board on:

- (a) the development and coordination of a strategic plan for the Board, in consultation with the Director and the standing Committees;
- (b) the Board's inter-governmental relations;
- (c) matters relating to meetings of the Board and the standing Committees;
- (d) the Board's Bylaws and procedures;
- (e) professional development for members of the Board;
- (f) planning and other related matters; and,
- (g) facility and property matters, including property disposition, major capital projects, boundary changes; and,
- (h) other issues referred time to time by the Board or the Chair of the Board or Committee.

Funding Information Requirement

At the special meeting held on March 7, 2007, the Board decided that to be in order any trustee motion or staff recommendation that would require the Board to expend funds for a new initiative include the following information: the projected cost of implementing the proposal; the recommended source of the required funds, including any required amendments to the Board's approved budget; an analysis of the financial implications prepared by staff; and a framework to explain the expected benefit and outcome as a result of the expenditure.

[1]Closing of certain committee meetings

(2) A meeting of a committee of a board, including a committee of the whole board, may be closed to the public when the subject-matter under consideration involves,

- (a) the security of the property of the board;
- (b) the disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a member of the board or committee, an employee or prospective employee of the board or a pupil or his or her parent or guardian;
- (c) the acquisition or disposal of a school site;
- (d) decisions in respect of negotiations with employees of the board; or
- (e) litigation affecting the board. R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2, s. 207 (2).

(2.1) Closing of meetings re certain investigations – A meeting of a board or a committee of a board, including a committee of the whole board shall be closed to the public when the subject-matter under considerations involves an ongoing investigation under the Ombudsman Act respecting the board