



Program and School Services Committee Agenda

PSSC:003A

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

4:30 p.m.

Boardroom, Main Floor, 5050 Yonge Street, Toronto

Trustee Members:

Deborah Williams (Chair), Alexis Dawson, Malika Ghous, Debbie King, Alexandra Lulka Rotman, Farzana Rajwani, Rachel Chernos Lin, Neethan Shan

	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. Community Advisory Committee Reports	
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1. Elementary School Schedule: Monday to Friday Versus Five-Day Cycle	
5.2 Early Years Community Advisory Committee Report, March 22, 2024	3
1. Child Care Centres: Membership and Communication With Local Caring and Safe Schools Committees	
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7. Adjournment	

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Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC)

Statutory Committee

Name of Committee: Parent Involvement Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: Tuesday, February 20, 2024

A virtual meeting of the PIAC convened on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, from 7:00 pm to 9:30 pm with Zena S. & Sharon G. (Co-chair) presiding

Attendance: Zena S.(Co-chair), Sharon G (Co-chair) Erin Clarke (W1), Sarah Ali (W2), Jessica Ruiz (W4), Tamasha Grant (W4), Crystal Stewart (W6), Mercy Charles (W6), Kaydeen Bankasingh (W8), Melanie Medeiros-Sims (W9), Manna Begum (W10), Janice Barnett (W11), Susan Lee (W12), Jenny Zeng (W13), Melanie Ward (W14), Mohammad Yousuf (W15), Eden Hagos (W16) Nicole Williams (W17), Tanya Stephens(W17); Tanya Ono (W17), Seema Mitchell (W18), Shanti Chand (W19), Moosa (W19) Chris Levien (W20), Abdul Azeem Mohammed (W21), Nadia Judunath (W22),), Sharon Grant (PIAC Co-Chair), Zena Shereck (PIAC Co-Chair), Towhid Noman (Community Liaison Group (CLG))

Also present were: Trustee Dan Maclean, Shirley Chan, Executive Superintendent, Uton Robinson, Executive Superintendent, Michelle Munroe, Central Coordinator, PCCEO

Regrets: Alice Romo (W7), Liesha Earle (W12)

Part A: Recommendations

TDSB directs the Director of Education to implement the Monday to Friday 5-day cycle schedule with the appropriate number of switching days (usually 7 days) to maintain a balance of the schedule days for elementary schools either system-wide or providing it as an option to be allowed at schools where there is support from parents/caregivers, students, and educators for the 2024-2025 School Year at the earliest or within a reasonable period of time and with recognition that buy-in from Elementary Teachers of Toronto (ETT) local of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) is essential.

Part B: For Information Only

During the discussion of the agenda item, staff provided advice as to the appropriate process for providing advice on procedure to the Director of Education. The committee approved a motion requesting direction from the Director, who will provide a written response at the March 26, 2024 meeting, and a recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

Part C: Ongoing Matters

State matters that are ongoing (in full sentences)

Report Submitted by: [Audley Salmon, Associate Director, Shirley Chan, Executive Superintendent Uton Robinson, Executive Superintendent, Michelle Munroe, Central Coordinator, PCCEO]



Community Advisory Committee Standing Committee Report

Name of Committee: Early Years Community Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: 22, March 2024

A virtual meeting of the **Early Years Community Advisory Committee (EYCAC)** convened on **March 22, 2024**, from **10:00 a.m. to 12:06 p.m.** with **Community Co-Chairs Patricia Chorney Rubin and Jill Oakes and Trustee Co-Chair Deborah Williams** presiding.

Attendance:

Trustee Deborah Williams, (Trustee Co-Chair, Ward 10); Patricia Chorney Rubin, (Community Co-Chair/ George Brown College); Jill Oakes, (Community Co-Chair/ YMCA Child Care); Anh Lam, (Woodgreen Child Care); Nicola Maguire, (LEF); Pam McArthur, (Runnymede Adventure Club); Naama Ofra, (Policy Development Officer, Toronto Children's Services); Kim Rogers, (Sunshine Child Care); Irena Setnik, (Silver Creek Pre-School); Patrina Stathopoulos, (Dandylion Daycare); Rosemary Stiglic, (PLASP Child Care Services); Donna Spreitzer, (Executive Director, Toronto Community for Better Child Care); and Amy Van Camp, (Toronto Children's Services).

Also present were: Cynthia Grundmann, (Senior Policy Advisor/Manager Early Years and Child Care Services); Trustee Dennis Hastings, (Ward 1); Liz Hoang, (Child Care Services Manager); Jim Spyropoulos, (Executive Superintendent, Indigenous Education, Caring and Safe Schools); and Lynn Strangway, (Executive Superintendent, Learning Centre 3).

Regrets:

Michelle Dutra, (Woodgreen Child Care); and Audley Salmon, (Associate Director, Learning Transformation and Equity).

Part A: Recommendations

Whereas, each TDSB school must have a Caring and Safe Schools Committee responsible for fostering a safe, inclusive, and accepting school climate and that should include at least one student and must include at least one parent, one teacher, one non-teaching staff member, one community partner, and the principal.

Whereas, the TDSB Early Learning and Care Policy P022 Section 6.2.2 includes the provision that school leaders, program supervisors and classroom educators have responsibility for co-creating the conditions necessary for productive working relationships to thrive among various early years professionals working in exclusive and shared space in schools.

Whereas, the TDSB Early Learning and Care Policy P022 Section 6.3.12 includes the provision that structures will be established to ensure regular and accessible communication with stakeholders to share information, address issues, and improve system planning and service delivery.

Therefore, be it resolved that:

1. Child care centres and stakeholders (including licensed Before- and After- School Program service providers) located in or operating in TDSB schools be included by school administrators as members (e.g. community partner members) of the local school Caring and Safe School Committee.
2. Central TDSB staff provide annual communications to child care centres and stakeholders (including licensed Before- and After- School Program service providers) about the procedures and forms pertaining to Caring and Safe School policies, procedures and best practices, including but not limited to Emergency and Crisis Response Plans, Toronto Emergency Safe School Strategy Form and Institutional Preparedness Form.

Part B: For Information Only

Part C: Ongoing Matters

Report Submitted by:

Audley Salmon, Associate Director, Learning Transformation and Equity

Lynn Strangway, Executive Superintendent, Learning Centre 3

Cynthia Grundmann, Senior Policy Advisor/Manager, Early Years and Child Care Services



Annual Indigenous Education Report, 2023

To: Program and School Services Committee

Date: April 3, 2024

Report No.: 04-24-4693

Strategic Directions

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

Recommendation

It is recommended that the *Annual Report 2023: Indigenous Education in the Toronto District School Board*, as described, be received.

Context

In March 2014, the Ministry of Education released an updated Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework Implementation Plan to guide the work of school boards through to 2016. In a subsequent memo to all Directors of Education in November 2017, the Ministry further directed school boards to develop plans for responding to the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action, 2015* as they relate to education.

Aligned with the Ministry of Education, the Toronto District School Board's current Indigenous education strategy is grounded in supporting the following six priorities in Indigenous education: student achievement and preparing students for the future; Indigenous language revitalization; Indigenous land-based education; engagement and collaboration with local Indigenous partners, communities, and organizations; improving/expanding knowledge of all students and educators on Indigenous histories,

contemporary contexts, perspectives, contributions, achievements, and ways of knowing; and culturally-responsive well-being supports .

Implementation of the Board's Indigenous Education strategy is the mandate of staff at the TDSB Urban Indigenous Education Centre.

Collectively, UIEC staff develop and deliver a broad range of programs, initiatives, resources and services to students, staff, and communities across the Board, covering the Seven Canopies of Indigenous Education:

- Student Well-Being and Voice
- Professional Learning
- Community Engagement
- Programming, Curriculum Development and Implementation
- Research, Development and Innovation
- Partnerships
- Reconciliation, Relationships, and Governance

For a comprehensive overview of the UIEC team's current activities, please see the annual staff report, *Annual Report 2023: Indigenous Education in the Toronto District School Board* (Appendix A, attached).

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

UIEC staff will continue develop and implement strategies to support the achievement and well-being of Indigenous students throughout the Board, including

- culturally relevant curriculum, enhanced learning opportunities, direct wrap-around supports (counselling, youth empowerment, etc.) that focus on the unique needs of urban Indigenous students, families, and communities; and
- system-wide professional learning to enhance staff capacity by building understanding of Indigenous sovereignty, perspectives, histories, and contemporary contexts, as well as trauma informed practices and cultural safety.

Resource Implications

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, 2015 and Indigenous Education has been highlighted as priority through a Board resolution in June 2022. This is an important step in ensuring that budget funding decisions support Indigenous Education in the TDSB. UIEC staff will continue to work collaboratively with TDSB central departments and Indigenous community partners to provide supports and develop enhanced learning opportunities for Indigenous students across the system.

Appendices

- Appendix A: *Annual Report 2023: Indigenous Education in the Toronto District School Board*

From

Jim Spyropoulos, Executive Superintendent Caring and Safe Schools and Indigenous Education at Jim.Spyropoulos@tdsb.on.ca

Tanya Senk, Indigenous Education, System Superintendent and Board Lead at Tanya.Senk@tdsb.on.ca



Annual Report 2023

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Part 1: Supporting Students

Aanse: Student Well-Being and Achievement Strategy - Focus School Wrap-Around Collaboration

The UIEC continued to provide direct wrap-around supports to schools with the highest numbers of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students through Anse: Indigenous Student Well-Being and Achievement Strategy. This includes the: **Native Learning Centre East (NLC East), Native Learning Centre Downtown (NLC Downtown), Kapapamahchakwew Wandering Spirit School (KWSS, elementary and secondary), Eastview Public School, Bowmore Public School, and Queen Alexandra Middle School.** Alongside Indigenous Education funded site-based staff, such as Indigenous Food Sovereignty Chefs (NLCs and KWSS) and a Child and Youth Worker or Child and Youth Counsellor, these schools receive ongoing services from UIEC Anse Teams to help create spaces that centre and affirm First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students' lived experiences. UIEC Anse Teams include: Indigenous Education Learning Coaches, Indigenous Social Workers, a Student Success Teacher, Indigenous Graduation Coaches, Cultures and Traditions Instructors, Community Liaisons, an Itinerant Resource Teacher, and Itinerant Indigenous Language Coach.

Actions and Impact:

Classroom engagement in each school has increased significantly since last year through intentional actions and supports to enhance students' sense of belonging with a focus on culture and language. The consistent provision of Indigenous Language programming in 2023 has created opportunities for all students and staff to come together to learn Anishinaabemowin and receive cultural teachings from Elders and other knowledge holders from Indigenous communities.

- Increase in access to mental health supports and agency services
- Increase in access to Special Education services and teacher capacity for addressing student special education needs
- Increased access to Indigenous cultures and traditions
- Decrease in food insecurity
- Increase in teacher capacity for Indigenous Education practices direct instructional supports for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students
- Since September 2023, increases in student attendance and sense of belonging

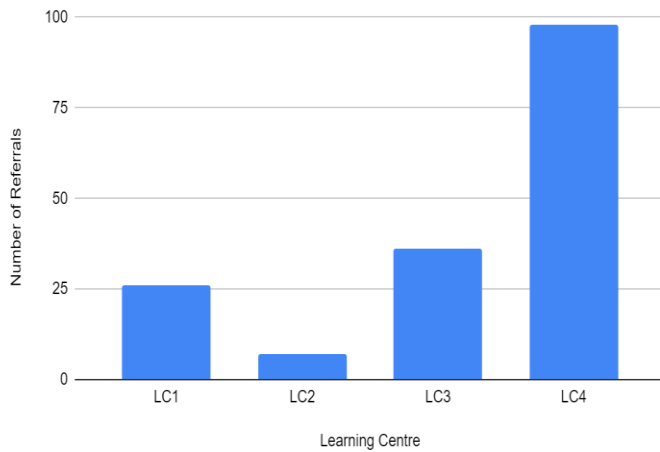
Based on Initial findings from student sharing circles at Anse Focus Schools, students report:

- Increases in direct and consistent positive teacher interactions and relationship building opportunities
- Appreciation of nutrition and food sovereignty programs
- Appreciation of focus on land-based learning

UIEC Student Success Team

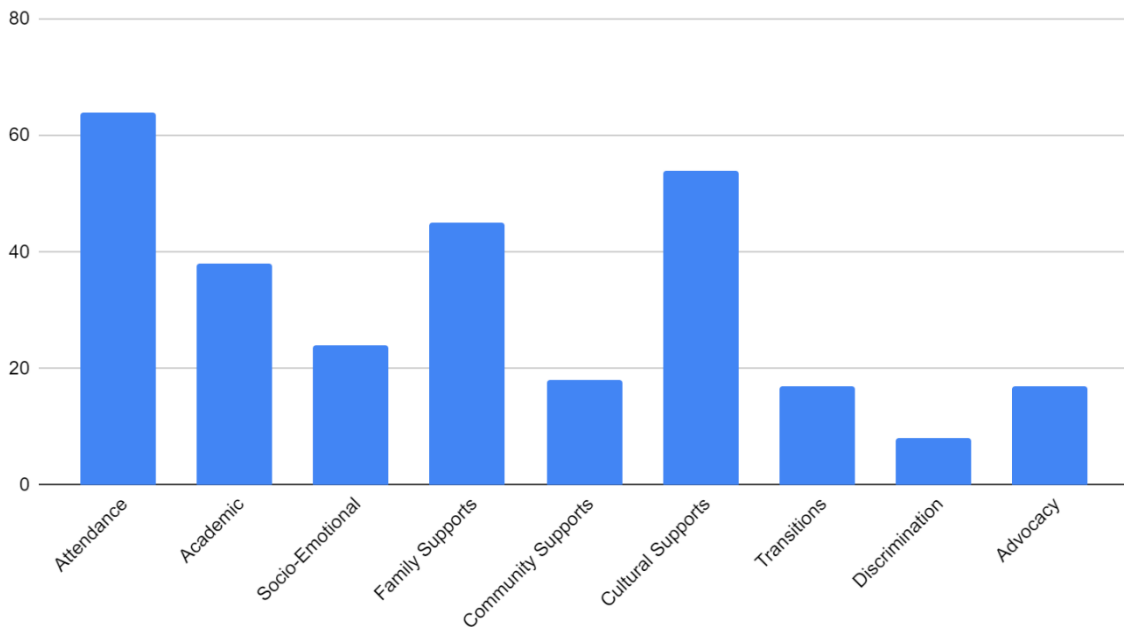
The UIEC Student Success Team centres the social and emotional well-being of Indigenous students throughout the TDSB. Through the Access to Services Referral Process, the team receives three to six referrals per week to support Indigenous students from across the TDSB. The referrals include requests for advocacy, counselling, academic supports, cultural

Number of Referrals by Learning Centre



education on preventing sex trafficking, attendance, accessing mental health supports, and navigating the school system. The Student Success Team consists of an Indigenous Child and Youth Counsellor, Indigenous Social Workers, an Itinerant Student Success Teacher, and an Itinerant Resource Teacher. Alongside their student-focused supports, the Student Success Team planned and delivered a series of professional learning sessions for all frontline staff members, focusing on the unique intersections of Indigenous histories, current realities, mental health, trauma, and education.

Reasons For Referrals



Student Success Team: Positions, Referrals, Actions and Impacts

	Social Workers	Child and Youth Counsellor	Student Success Teacher
	Advocacy and capacity building in schools are at the forefront of Indigenous Social Work and Child and Youth Counselling in the TDSB. This is achieved through providing life-altering, one-to-one student counselling, providing professional learning for staff, facilitating student groups, advocacy for families, and outreach to the broader Indigenous community across the GTA.		The Student Success Teacher promotes approaches to Indigenous student success that centre Indigenous student well-being.
Number of Positions	2	1	1
Number of Referrals	99	26	48
Actions and Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated secondary year-long student groups with approximately 30 students in three schools. Fostered positive peer relationships, developed social skills, gained new experiences and knowledge, and amplified student voice. Workshop topics included: The impacts of colonization on healthy relationships, human trafficking, and missing and murdered Indigenous women and Two-Spirit. Responded to 123 student crisis (including suicidal ideations, homelessness, community violence and self-harm). Provided in-class student circles with at least 30 students, raising awareness amongst classroom communities about Indigenous cultures and teachings and fostering better peer-to-peer relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Worked in collaboration with social workers, teaching, and support staff to build capacity and enhance the conditions to better serve First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students. 		

Itinerant Resource Teacher

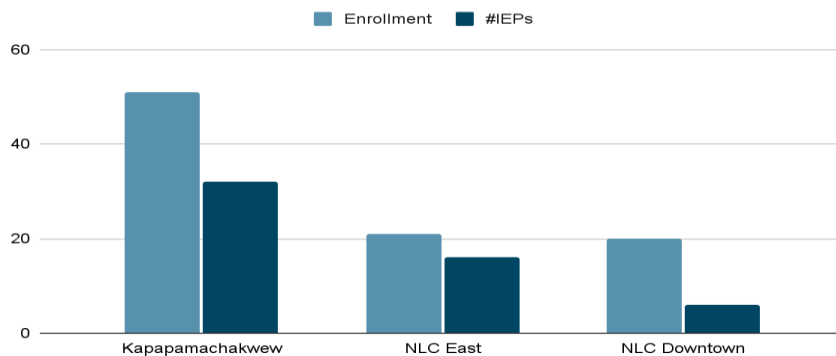
Recognizing the overrepresentation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students in Special Education, including at the three secondary Aanse Focus schools, the position of Itinerant Resource Teacher (IRT) was implemented at the beginning of September 2023 to support Special Education processes at the three Aanse secondary schools. Through a strength-based and trauma-informed approach, the intent of the IRT position is to collaborate with, and build the capacity of school-based staff, improve school structures surrounding Special Education, and engage with TDSB and community supports servicing students and families while also challenging the overrepresentation of Indigenous students in Special Education.

Actions and Impacts:

- Collaboratively with the school-based Special Education teacher at Kapapamachakwew/Wandering Spirit to deliver literacy-based assessments to all students and create an Indigenous Cultural and Sensory Space
- Across three secondary Aanse Focus Schools staff:

- Developed and implemented a process to enhance student voice and increase student capacity/advocacy about their learning and IEPs across UIEC affiliated secondary schools
- Analyzed and challenged the current overrepresentation of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students, specifically the disproportionate representation of students on non-exceptional IEPs
- Implemented 15 secondary school-based assessments for all students to inform instruction and overall programming
- Engaged with community partners and organizations to support the transition of students between programs and build knowledge for the development of professional learning for staff

Points scored



Indigenous Graduation Coaches

Indigenous Graduation Coaches provide support to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students to increase the number of Indigenous students obtaining an Ontario Secondary School Diploma and successfully transitioning into post-secondary education, training, or labour market opportunities. Within their role, Indigenous Graduation Coaches act as mentors, advisors, and advocates to students. They help students create pathways through the education system and facilitate access and referrals to academic support and community resources to maximize a student’s support system.

Actions and Impacts

- Indigenous Graduation Coaches acted as mentors, advisors, and advocates for 200 First Nation, Métis, Inuit students from Grades 7-12 (individually and in groups) in 2023.
 - Grade 7 and 8 Students:
 - **10:** Number of elementary schools in which Indigenous Graduation Coaches built relationships with students and staff to develop transition supports for Grade 7 and 8 students and facilitated transition processes for students leaving Grade 8 and entering Grade 9
 - Secondary School Students:
 - **22:** Number of secondary schools in which Indigenous Graduation Coaches built relationships with students
 - **81:** Number of non-graduating students served to access employment, housing, work/volunteer opportunities and health services
- Graduating Students:

- **41: Number of Graduating Indigenous Students served**
 - 12 per cent of graduates successfully accepted to colleges.
 - 34 per cent of the graduates accepted to Universities with full-funding
- In December 2023, an Indigenous Student Opportunities Fair created access for more than 100 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students from across the TDSB to 30 universities, trades organizations, colleges, and employment opportunities
- Over the course of the 2022-2023 school year, the Indigenous Graduation Coaches organized and facilitated board-wide learning opportunities accessed by Indigenous students



Toronto Indigenous Youth Council

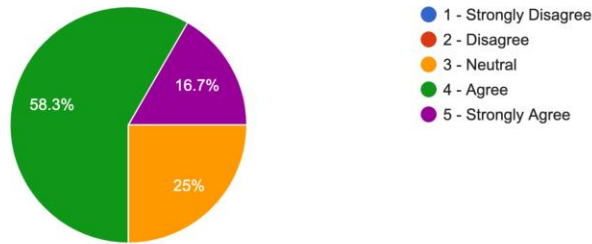
The Toronto Indigenous Youth Council (TIYC) brings together First Nations, Métis and Inuit Youth from across the Toronto District School Board weekly with the focus of making positive change in their schools and communities, and to support one another in the process. In collaboration with the TDSB’s Continuing Education Department, TIYC provides Grade 11 and 12 students the opportunity to earn a credit in either NDA3M (Contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Issues and Perspectives) or NDW4M (Contemporary Indigenous Issues and Perspectives in a Global Context), with support from an Indigenous Graduation Coach and Indigenous Learning Coach.



Actions and Impacts:

Total Number of Students	Number of Students Enrolled in Courses	Achieved Credits	Number of Students Earning Community Volunteer Hours
18	14	12	4

My involvement in TIYC contributes positively to my wellbeing and relationship to school
12 responses



(This information is from the end of year student survey. Note: 0 students selected Strongly Disagree or Disagree)

In June 2023, TIYC sharing circles were held to amplify student voices to guide the direction of TIYC. Students highlighted the following impacts of TIYC:

- *“My overall emotions are better, which boosts my overall motivation to make new friends. I feel better at home.”*
- *“I’d rather be here than at my regular school.”*
- *“I’ve learned a lot about my ancestry that I didn’t have before. I bring this back to my family.”*
- *“Helps with self-determination, learning to take matters into my own hands.”*
- *“I really appreciate this space. It has helped frame the other things going on in my life and pushed me further in all other aspects of my life.”*
- *“It’s been a great experience and has inspired growth I didn’t know I had in me. I hope TIYC continues to celebrate youth and support them in bettering themselves and one other.”*

Indigenous Student Summer Leadership Program

The Indigenous Student Summer Leadership Program offers leadership opportunities, credits, and paid work experiences for Indigenous secondary school students across the TDSB. The program provides Indigenous students with the opportunity to access leadership experiences in a variety of Indigenous and non-Indigenous owned agencies and companies, as well as opportunities to gain a co-operative education credit.

Actions and Impacts:

Overall, **22** students participated in the Indigenous Student Summer Leadership Program. They all received:

- Mentorship from Indigenous mentors within Indigenous communities, including Elders
- Employment or volunteer experience at community projects with Indigenous mentors
- Increased connections and relationships between Indigenous students from across the TDSB
- Increased access to postsecondary pathways, including, for example, Nikibii Dawadinna Giigwag Indigenous Youth Program at the University of Toronto and the Legal, Communications and Equity departments at the Toronto Transit Commission(TTC)

Indigenous Student Summer Leadership Program - Impacts

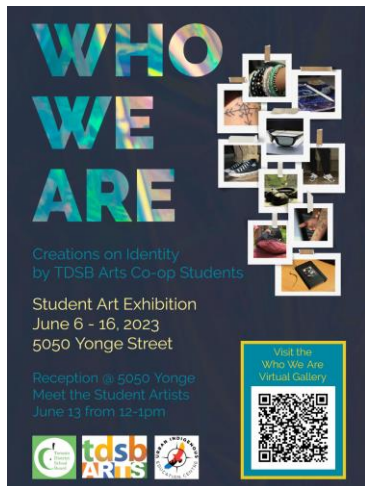
<p><i>Number of Students Who Earned a Co-Op Education Credit</i></p>	<p>22</p>	<p>Highlighting Success:</p> <p><i>“As a Indigenous Graduation Coach my role is to mentor Indigenous students. This summer there was an opportunity to provide mentorship and encourage students to participate in the UIEC summer co-op program with a placement at Wigwam Chi-Chemung. Students were given the opportunity to work with Elder Dr. Duke Redbird. There are two students in particular who benefited greatly from the program.</i></p> <p><i>One of the students enrolled in this summer lost a close family member in the spring. This tragedy affected her mental health; she became depressed and was isolated. The effects of the tragedy prevented her from engaging in school and as a result, she was unable to attain any semester 2 credits. This paid co-op opportunity provided the student re-engagement with school in an alternative way. This culturally safe and trauma-informed environment created an environment for a student to begin healing, while obtaining credits.</i></p> <p><i>A second student who was enrolled in the same co-op placement was able to overcome their anxiety about travelling on public transportation and meeting new peers. This student is a talented artist, and through this co-op experience was able to connect with an expansive network of artists. She was asked by world recognized Indigenous artist Bonnie Devine to collaborate and create an art installation at Nuit Blanche called Circle of Enquiry for a Dish with One Spoon.”</i></p> <p>Indigenous Graduation Coach</p>
<p><i>Number of Students Engaged in Paid Employment</i></p>	<p>22</p>	
<p><i>Number of Students Who Earned Additional Credit through Math Credit Recovery:</i></p>	<p>3</p>	
<p><i>Overall Attendance Rate</i></p>	<p>More than 80%</p>	

UIEC and TDSB Arts Department Student Arts Co-Op

In 2023, the Arts Co-op returned to being in-person and on site at the Urban Indigenous Education Centre (UIEC). It was a full day, four-credit opportunity with a multi-disciplinary arts focus. This program is a collaboration between the UIEC and TDSB Arts Department. This program focused on arts leadership, the creative process, Truth and Reconciliation, and Indigenous education. It was an immersive experiential learning program where students:

- Built their capacity in many forms of creative expression
- Engaged in learning opportunities in a variety of Toronto Arts spaces
- Received mentorship from local Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists in support of Truth and Reconciliation

Actions and Impacts:



[Arts Co-Op Culminating Exhibit at 5050 Yonge Street](#)

12: Total number of Credit-Receiving participants

4: Total number of self-identified Indigenous participants

Anishinaabemowin Language Learning

UNESCO declared 2022-2032 the Indigenous Languages Decade, and Article 13 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states that Indigenous Peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their languages, oral traditions, writing systems and literatures. To this end, the Urban Indigenous Education Centre (UIEC) supports Indigenous Language programming, specifically Anishinaabemowin Language teaching and learning. This occurs in eight different schools across the system, while also offering online instruction for students beyond those schools. With Indigenous student population growth and the demand for Indigenous Language learning, we continue to strategize to recruit Indigenous language teachers and instructors.

Actions and Impacts:

Number of <i>Elementary Schools</i> Offering Anishinaabemowin Classes	6 (1 new program in 2023/24) Eastview PS, Humewood CS, Bala CS, Kâpapâmahchakwêw/Wandering Spirit School, Bowmore PS, Queen Alexandra Middle School (2023/24)
Number of <i>Elementary Students</i> Enrolled	328
Number of <i>Secondary Schools</i> Offering Anishinaabemowin Classes	4 Native Learning Centre Downtown, Native Learning Centre East, Kâpapâmahchakwêw/Wandering Spirit School, and Riverdale CI (2022/23)
Number of <i>Secondary Students</i> Enrolled	80
Number of Indigenous Language Teachers	8

Indigenous Food Sovereignty Program

The UIEC Indigenous Food Sovereignty Program was founded in 2019 by System Superintendent of Indigenous Education, Tanya Senk, with the support from the Indigenous Education Office of the Ministry of Education, Ontario. It is the first of its kind in a publicly funded school board across the province. Currently, the program is located at three sites: UIEC – Kapapamahchakwew Wandering Spirit School, Native Learning Centre East, and Native Learning Centre Downtown. Food Sovereignty Chefs at each site ensure First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students have access to food prepared based on holistic understandings of sustainability, the restoration of land-based cultural practices, and the protection of Indigenous food systems (Pimatisiwin). The Native Learning Centre East and Downtown are first and second on the Learning Opportunities Index(LOI), and the Food Sovereignty program is a direct response to student experiences of food insecurity. In September of 2023, formalized curriculum connections were developed through pairing the Food Sovereignty Chefs with teachers in HFN2O (Food and Nutrition) and HFC3M (Food and Culture) courses.



Actions and Impacts:

- Increased credit opportunities through co-operative education placements and through connections made to HFN2O and HFN3M
- Development of Food Sovereignty Professional Learning series
- Increased food security for more than 180 students across three sites

Part 2: Supporting Educators

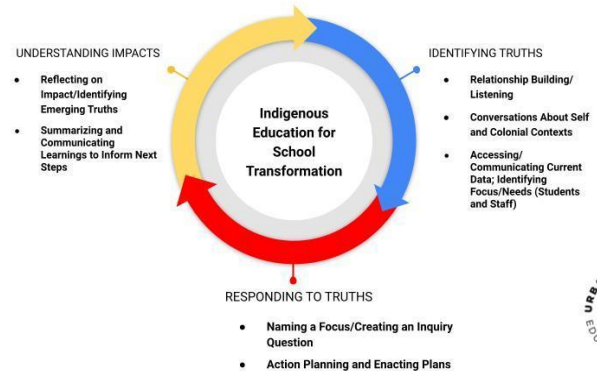
Biidaaban: Truth and Reconciliation Project & Aanse: Indigenous Student Well-Being and Achievement Project

The UIEC collaborates with schools and leaders across the TDSB to embed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (TRC Calls to Action), including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) to create a distinct goal for all school improvement plans. The UIEC has developed an Indigenous Education for School Transformation model that informs work with leaders across the system. Ongoing system wide initiatives, such as the **Biidaaban: Truth and Reconciliation Project** (Year 2) and **Aanse: Indigenous Student Well-Being and Achievement Project** (Year 5) continue to engage professional learning for system and school leaders to enhance leadership capacity in Indigenous Education, alongside ongoing Indigenous Education Learning Coach supports.

The focus of professional learning is to find ways to leverage school improvement planning processes to enhance the promotion of Indigenous knowledge, self-determination, strength, contributions, and resistance across district school cultures. This was accomplished through centering the voices of Indigenous students, Elders, scholars, and community leaders.



Indigenous Education for School Transformation



Actions and Impacts:

Self-Reported Overall Learning:

“I have gained a deep understanding of the importance of valuing and integrating Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into my lessons. I recognize the need to decolonize my content, assessment, and evaluation methods, as well as the physical setup of my classroom. It prompts me to reflect on whether I am mindful of all the students in my classroom, particularly those with Indigenous lived experiences.”

-Biidaaban Teacher Participant

“It is deep personal and professional learning. There must be ongoing, creative, and collaborative (students, families, staff, community) work to accomplish goals. Different than any other leadership capacity building and practices in my career, and more challenging for me to measure success.”

-Biidaaban School Administrator Participant

“The learning I value most was the time spent building meaningful relationships with the UIEC staff and Indigenous leaders during this school year and PL journey. I have come to understand (as it reveals itself as a theme for me this year) the integral importance of building trusting relationships, with students, with colleagues, and community, and Indigenous leaders and elders.”

-Aanse School Administrator Participant

System School Transformation Focused Project Participation		
Biidaaban 2023/24	Biidaaban 22/23	Aanse 2022/23
25 Learning Network Superintendents 90 School Administrators 140 Teacher Leaders	25 Learning Network Superintendents 48 School Administrators 110 Teacher Leaders	20 School Administrators 40 Teacher Leaders

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies (Revised 2019) Professional Learning Series

Secondary educators teaching courses from the [First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies Curriculum](#) attend four required professional learning days at UIEC. As part of the collaborative inquiry learning cycle, participants are asked to keep a reflective journal/sketchbook, and provide feedback on key learnings in the form of a written and/or visual piece they create and share with each other in June.

Expressions of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Cultures Course (Revised 2019), NAC10

Over a four-part professional learning opportunity, the UIEC facilitated opportunities for educators to learn from and alongside Indigenous artists, speakers, Elders, and UIEC teaching and learning staff with the goal of enhancing practices in curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. The theme for the professional learning was *Responsible Relationships with Indigenous Artists*. In 2022/2023, more than 3,000 students in 53 secondary schools were enrolled in NAC10 (Expressions of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Cultures). Teachers were provided with book bundles focused on Indigenous art and artists to support classroom learning.

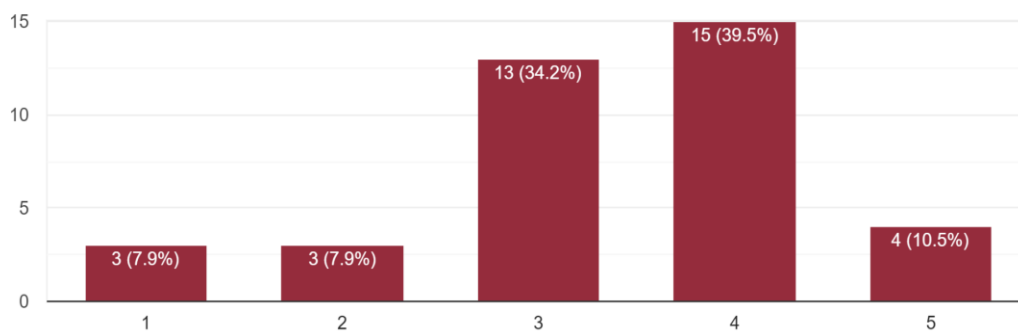
Actions and Impact:

- **65:** Number of professional learning participants
- **54:** Number of schools offering NAC10
- **3,000+:** Number of students enrolled across all schools

Self-reported increase in teacher capacity to embed Truth and Reconciliation and Indigenous Sovereignty in their NAC10 course:

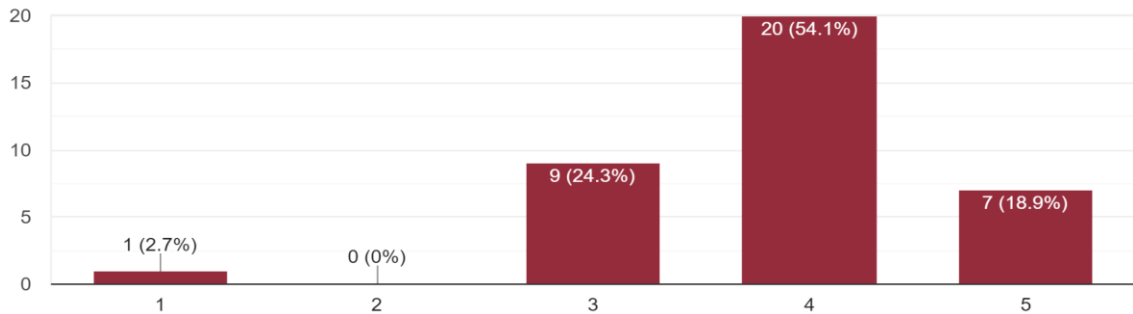
How would you describe the ways you embed Truth and Reconciliation, and Indigenous Sovereignty in NAC10?

38 responses



How would you describe the ways you embed Truth and Reconciliation, and Indigenous Sovereignty in NAC10?

37 responses



Collaborative Inquiry Question:

How might we effectively implement Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action 83 in our Expressions of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Cultures (NAC10) course to impact students learning about responsible relationships with Indigenous Peoples and Land?

Teacher Created Response Based on Overall Learning:



First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in Canada Course (Revised 2019), NAC20

This course emphasizes historical and contemporary relationships between Indigenous Peoples and Canadian governments. Teachers participating in the four-part professional learning series had opportunities to learn from guest speakers and UIEC staff to increase their capacity to implement curriculum, enhance pedagogical approaches that consider land-based learning, and differentiated between approaches to assessment.

Actions and Impact:

15: Number of teacher participants

13: Number of schools offering the course

Collaborative Inquiry Questions:

What happens to student learning, engagement, and understanding of Indigenous brilliance in NAC2O when students are offered opportunities to demonstrate their understandings using a selection of creative tasks? What happens to student practices of historical inquiry and historical thinking when NAC2O teachers deliver content in other-than-chronological ways?

- **Self-Reported Teacher Learning and Shifts-in-Practice:**

“I felt challenged and nourished. I feel a lot more confident delivering curriculum.”

“I loved the land-based learning in-person/outdoors. It makes me want to get my students out of the classroom more. The team did an excellent job of integrating our resources into lessons, so we understood how to use them well.”

“I learned from the deep commitment and care of the Instructional Leaders and land experts. My teaching practice and opportunities grow exponentially with each session.”

“I have rethought about my assessment practices, so they are more student-centred and differentiated.”

Contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Voices Course (Revised 2019) NBE3

Guided by Elder Dr. Duke Redbird, guest speakers and Indigenous protocols using Kirkness and Berhardt’s [Four Rs of Indigenous Education](#) and Joanne Archibald’s 7 [Indigenous Storywork Principles](#), UIEC teaching and learning staff developed and facilitated professional learning opportunities for NBE3 teachers, focused on enhancing their capacity to deliver the curriculum in ways that effectively centred Indigenous voices and perspectives. There was also emphasis on pedagogical documentation as an assessment strategy to make students’ thinking visible.

In Spring 2023, a three-part professional learning series was held specifically for teachers new to teaching NBE3 in the 2023/34 school year. The focus of this learning was to build educator capacity in understanding and delivering the curriculum, accessing resources, and enhancing their learning strategies (UDL, DI, student choice, pedagogical documentation).

Actions and Impact:

150: Number of participants.

27 to 63: Increase in number of secondary schools offering *Contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Voices*, NBE3 as the compulsory English course from spring 2023 to fall 2023.

Collaborative Inquiry Question:

What happens to student engagement, learning, and understanding of Indigenous voices when teachers intentionally offer opportunities for creative practice that allows students to show their understanding in multiple ways that: Are personally authentic, respectful, and insightful; Inspire increasingly responsible relationships between First Nations, Métis, Inuit Peoples, and non-Indigenous people now and into the future; and/or challenge and disrupt past and present colonial narratives?

- **Self-Reported Teacher Learning and Shifts-in-Practice:**

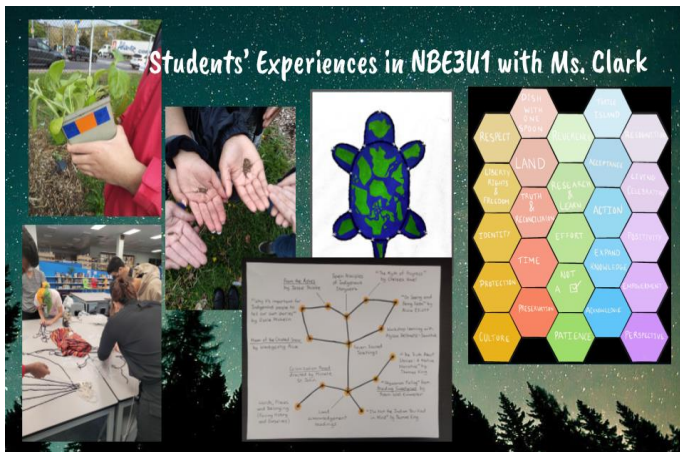
“The global perspective on what Indigeneity means. The questioning of what constitutes good essay writing practices.”

“Respectful, and insightful creative work of my students (inspired & informed by your work of UIEC staff and the use of many inspiring mentor texts) has produced responsible understandings of the relationship between First Nations, Métis, Inuit Peoples, and non-Indigenous people in my classes.”

“I am happy to say I believe my student's work challenged and disrupted past and present colonial narratives.”

“It interestingly allows me to build a more dynamic, harmonious rapport with my students.”

Examples of impact on NBE3 educator learning through journaling and professional learning:



Collaborative Learning

This semester, I learned so much from my students and co-workers. My students have allowed me to grow and develop as an educator. My students also allowed me to learn more about their own culture and identities, I thank my students, Harbord co-workers, and all of those who have touched my heart, mind, body and soul through these PD sessions and my time with the UEIC. Miigwetch!

(the following photos are my students sharing cultural text forms from their own culture after learning about cultural text forms from local nations)

-Madeline Barker



Indigenous Education Professional Learning Course Offerings - Winter to Spring 2024

In 2023, the UIEC unveiled a powerful suite of professional learning offerings open to all TDSB staff. Topics were determined from UIEC staff observations of system learning needs based on their work with school-based staff to support First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students and families. Indigenous staff developed and facilitated seven multi-session professional inquiry-based learning opportunities for educators, professional support staff, and other non-educator staff.

Actions and Impacts:

Seven Professional Learning Offerings:

- *Indigenous Centred Approaches to Teaching in the Early Years*
- *Leadership in Indigenous Education: Focus on School Transformation*
- *Confronting Anti-Indigenous Racism*
- *Indigenous STEAMMD*
- *Creating Safer Spaces: Trauma → → Informed Practices and Cultural Safety in Schools*
- *Revisioning History: Indigenous Futurisms*
- *Two-Spirit and Indigequeer Identities*

Number of Participants:

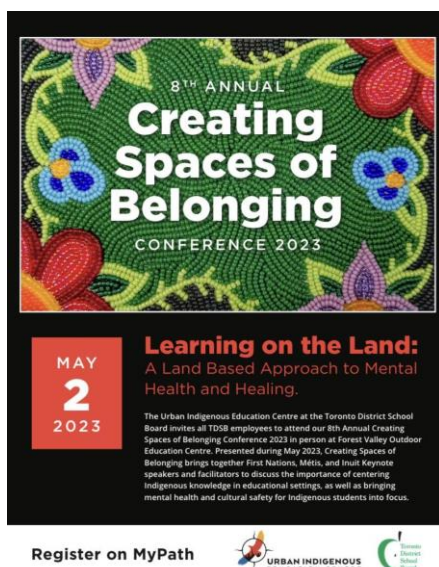
- 25-30 participants per offering

- Approximately 200 staff participants across all offerings

Overall Impacts

- Increased capacity in diverse areas of Indigenous Education for TDSB staff
- Increase in differentiated access of various employee groups to relevant Indigenous Education learning

Creating Spaces of Belonging Conference, Spring 2023



The Urban Indigenous Education Centre’s Student Success Team offered the 8th annual *Creating Spaces of Belonging: Learning on the Land* conference in-person at Forest Valley Outdoor Education Centre. This year’s conference theme was land-based approaches to mental and healing and was opened up by Elder Dr. Joanne Dallaire. Workshops included Indigenous Food Sovereignty, Indigenous perspectives on wellness, and land-based pedagogy.

Action and Impact:

- **Number of Participants:** 100 staff across TDSB departments
- Participants gained knowledge of Indigenous approaches to wellness, land-based pedagogies and how to access UIEC student success supports

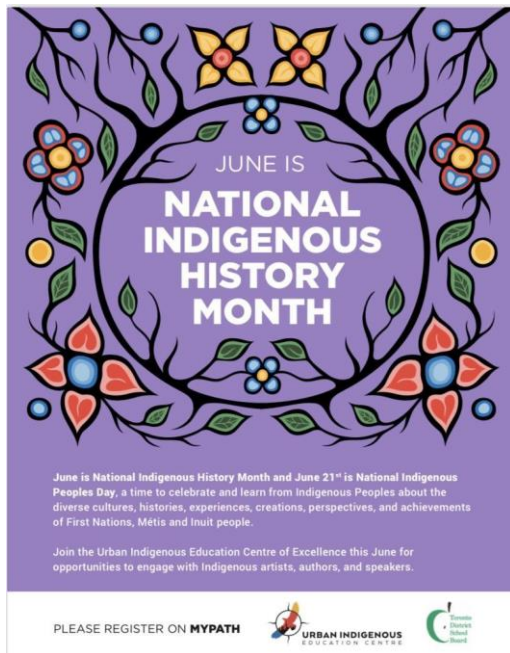
Supporting Beginning Teachers in Indigenous Education, Summer and Fall 2023

Through the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP), UIEC Staff engaged newly contracted elementary and secondary teachers in learning about their responsibilities to Indigenous Education at the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)’s Calls to Action. During this professional learning, teachers were introduced to TDSB’s Strategic Direction of Truth and Reconciliation along with TDSB’s commitment to Indigenous Education through the *Multi-Year Strategic Plan*, connections to curriculum, finding resources to support K - 12 student and staff learning, and about the work of the UIEC to support Indigenous students and their families.

Actions and Impacts:

- **Number of Participants:** Approximately 500 Beginning Teachers
- Participants reported:
 - Understanding the context of Indigenous Education and teachers’ roles in Truth and Reconciliation in Education
 - Knowledge of where to access Indigenous Education resources to support their classroom practices

Indigenous History Month, June 2023



During the month of June, the TDSB recognized National Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21) and National Indigenous History Month. The UIEC provided opportunities for staff, students, and educators to engage with Indigenous artists, authors, and speakers through various virtual workshops and panel discussions. Some guests included David A. Robertson, Tasha Spillett, and Elder Albert McLeod. As part of the virtual experiences, educators had access to additional learning through suggested learning activities and resources to further the learning in classrooms.

Action and Impacts:

- **Number of Virtual Sessions:** 5
- **Number of Participants:** 500+ students and educators
- Increases in:
 - Cross-system access for students and educators to learning from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit voices
 - Educator capacity in engaging conversations on significant topics related to National Indigenous History Month and Day

Indigenous Education Month, November 2023

During November 2023, the UIEC offered virtual workshops/events for K-12 students and teachers to listen to, and learn from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples. Speakers this year shared learning about Inuit experiences, Métis history, Indigenous veterans, and Treaties. As part of the virtual experiences, educators had access to additional learning through suggested learning activities and resources to further the learning in classrooms.

Action and Impacts:

- **Number of Virtual Sessions:** 6
- **Number of Participants:** 500+ students and educators
- Increases in:
 - Cross-system access for students and educators to learn from Indigenous voices
 - Educator capacity in engaging conversations on significant topics specific to Indigenous experiences.

Minecraft Level Up Toronto: Students Imagining Our City's Future

Students Imagining Our City's Future is a world created by Microsoft as a collaboration between the UIEC, TDSB's Global Competencies Department, and Microsoft. It is also supported by the TDSB's STEM Department. Participating students are given the prompt, "Considering the past and present of the Land in different parts of Toronto, how might we reimagine former TDSB school sites to serve human and other-than-human communities now and into the future?" To help students playing the game to understand Indigenous perspectives on Land, Water, and Other-Than-Human beings, they meet Elder Dr. Duke Redbird, Nokomis Pauline Shirt, System Superintendent Tanya Senk, and other community members.

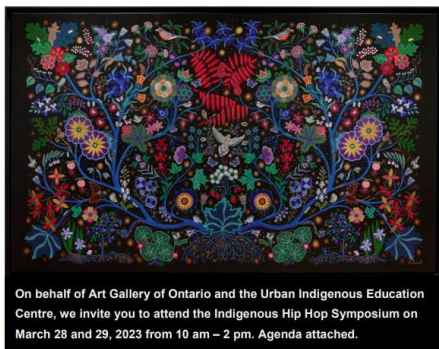
Actions and Impacts:

- In Fall 2023, two groups of classroom teachers were supported to begin using this game with their students. One group of 25 educators, did two full-day sessions focused on "Indigenous Understandings in Minecraft: Level Up Toronto." These 25 educators were from schools working with the UIEC through the Biidabaan initiative or are schools identified as Aanse schools because of high numbers of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students
- Following the board wide launch of *Minecraft: Level Up Toronto*, students from Duke of Connaught Public School were quoted on CityNews saying, "We really wanted to respect the Indigenous ideas" in the game and that their ideas can be "based on Indigenous things so people can know about them."

Indigenous Hip Hop Symposium

During the 2021-2022 academic year, NAC10 teachers engaged in professional reading using the readings from, *In This Together: Blackness, Indigeneity and Hip Hop* (Eds., Audrey Hudson, Awad Ibrahim and Karyn Recollet, 2019) as a mentor text.

AGO x UIEC
**INDIGENOUS
 HIP HOP
 SYMPOSIUM**
 March 28 & 29, 2023 at the Art Gallery of Ontario



On behalf of Art Gallery of Ontario and the Urban Indigenous Education Centre, we invite you to attend the Indigenous Hip Hop Symposium on March 28 and 29, 2023 from 10 am – 2 pm. Agenda attached.

This was the inaugural Indigenous Hip Hop Symposium - a biennial student event where the UIEC collaborates with community and educational partners. Situated at the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Indigenous Hip Hop Symposium brought together Hip-Hop artists, 300 secondary students (including most students from the Native Learning Centres and Kapapamahchakwew Wandering Spirit School), and educators to engage in learning from Indigenous artists using Hip Hop pedagogies. Students and educators engage in panel discussions and hands-on workshops to engage in the creative process through the elements of Hip Hop.

Actions and Impacts:

Self-Reported Teacher Learning and Shifts-in-Practice:

“There was an increase in my own personal knowledge and in student engagement.”

“I had excellent new examples of Toronto-based contemporary photographers, Indigenous hip hop artists and a song list to apply to my own curriculum and to share with our colleagues at school as well.”

“The depth of learning, profound life-changing insights, bringing alive Indigenous voices, Indigenous stories, and all through an industry, an art that the students care so much about, cannot be understated.”

“This was a great connection to music in Indigenous Arts, not my strength so this was really helpful in rounding out student experience and new learning for me.”



Teacher-Reported Impacts on Student Learning:

“I not only had students creating poetic responses and other artistic creations as responses to their experience at the Indigenous Hip Hop Symposium, they continued to reflect upon the learning and experiences throughout the course. During their final reflections, looking back at the joys, learning, struggles, and triumphs of the year, they continue to reach back and reference specific artists and creators and how they’ve played a role in the way they see and experience their own lives. That is something so special that I struggle to put words to it!”

“This content was a good connection for the kids and spoke to them. They told me that it was the best thing they had done in their Grade 9 year!”

Part 3: Working with Community

Indigenous Educational Partnerships

The UIEC continued to focus 2023 on building strong relationships with community members by increasing the number of Indigenous Educational Partnerships in collaboration with the Educational Partnerships Office. Multiple and diverse Indigenous focused educational partnerships can help ensure access for schools seeking to engage learning from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit artists, organizations, Elders, scholars/ researchers, and Knowledge Keepers.

Actions and Impacts:

- Increase in Indigenous-focused educational partnerships from 36 in 2022 to 50 in 2023
- Indigenous Educational Partner Celebration:
 - More than 50 representatives from 30 current and prospective partners were in attendance



Community Powwows: Kapapamachakwew and SouthEast Community Powwows

Article 31 of UNDRIP states that Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions. Organised by caregivers, staff, students, various community members and UIEC staff, under the guidance of Elders, these large community Powwows focused on ensuring Indigenous rights to cultural heritage and traditional cultural expressions. Students, caregivers, TDSB staff, and community members all came together to create powerful and memorable cultural expressions of Indigenous brilliance.

**16TH ANNUAL
SOUTH EAST SCARBOROUGH POW WOW**
MONDAY, JUNE 12TH, 2023

**"HONOURING OUR MISSING AND FALLEN SISTERS
MMIWG2S"**

Eastview Public School Grounds
20 Waldock Street, Scarborough

RAIN OR SHINE

Admission **Free**

CRAFT AND FOOD VENDORS

Agenda:

- ✓ Sunrise ceremony - 5:30am w/ Jimmy Dick and Marie Gaudet
- ✓ Doors open - 11:00am
- ✓ Grand Entry - 1:00pm
- ✓ Feast - 4:00pm
- ✓ Evening Grand Entry - 5:30pm
- ✓ Giveaway - 7:00pm

Vendor inquiries: Barbara-Ann Felschow@tdsbon.ca
General inquiries: gizagasweidimin@gmail.com

**KAPAPAMACHAKWĒW
WANDERING SPIRIT SCHOOL
POWWOW**

THURSDAY
JUNE 15,
2023

16 PHIN AVE
TORONTO

Head staff

- MC - Bob Goulais
- ADs - Isaiyah Shafiqat & Michael Peters
- Nokom - Pauline Shirt
- School Veteran - Tanya Senk

Invited Dancers:

- Luana Harper - Shirt - Traditional
- Cedar Smoke - Jingle
- Deanne Hupfield - Fancy shawl
- Athena Tomez - Hoop
- Kehew Buffalo - Chicken
- Ascension Harjo - Fancy bustle
- Sonny Robbins - Northern traditional
- John Hupfield - Grass

Invited drums

- All Nations Jrs.
- Eagle Heart
- Moon Sisters
- Asinily
- Sun Spirit

Youth Head Dancers:

- Dakota Robinson - Grass
- Niimin Hupfield - Fancy

Host Drum:

- Young Tribe

Agenda:

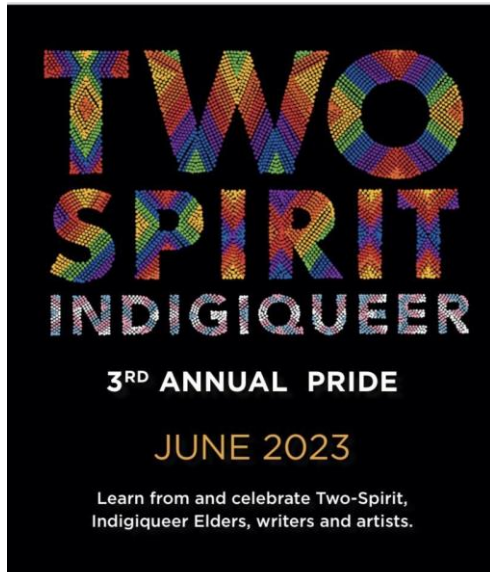
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- ✓ Giveaway - 7:00pm

Admission **Free**

CRAFT AND FOOD VENDORS

Vendor inquiries: Barbara-Ann Felschow@tdsbon.ca
General inquiries: gizagasweidimin@gmail.com

Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer Pride: System Student Learning Opportunities, Four-Part Course, Two-Spirit Powwow, and Envision



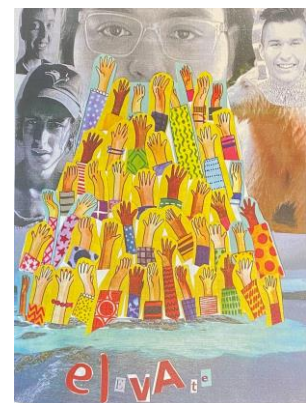
The 3rd Annual Two-Spirit, Indigiqueer Pride had a multi-audience approach to engage student and teacher learning and well-being and engage the community during the months of May and June. Through virtual sessions, K- 12 students and staff had the opportunity to learn from Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer writers and artists about their experiences, lives and perspectives. There were four virtual events attended by more than 250 students and educators.

Included in this year's learning was a four-part course for elementary and secondary teachers that focused on Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer identities in the classroom. This learning culminated in teachers co-creating a 'zine that expressed their learning and affirming Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer identities. (See images below).

REGISTER ON [KEY TO LEARN](#)



In addition to the professional learning, in partial collaboration with Two -Spirited People of the First Nations, the UIEC participated in the Two-Spirit Pow Wow at Downsview Park with the support of the community liaison team to connect to Toronto's Indigenous communities in May 2023. To engage with the TDSB community, UIEC collaborated to run the EnVision conference - a student conference for 2SLGBTQ+ students and their allies.

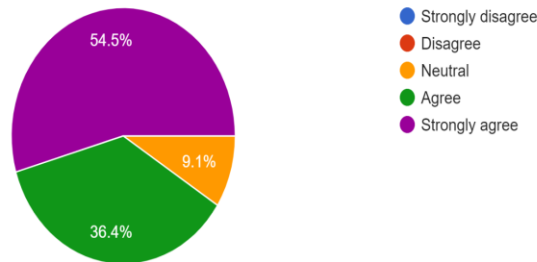


Actions and Impact

- Four-part course teacher-reported learning:

I feel I have the capacity to apply my learning from this professional learning to the classroom and/or school?

11 responses



Urban Indigenous Education Centre and York University Faculty of Education Office of Professional Learning Partnering to Provide Additional Basic Qualifications

The TDSB elementary and teaching staff across TDSB engage in learning about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit historical and contemporary realities from Indigenous perspectives to apply to their practice through taking either the *Intermediate Basic First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies* or the *Senior Basic First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies* additional basic qualification courses. This supports Grades 7 - 12 teachers to plan, teach and assess the following courses:

- Revised (2018) Social Studies, History and Geography curriculum
- Revised (2019) Grades 9 - 12 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies curriculum (NAC10, NAC20, NBE3)
- Revised (2023) Language Curriculum
- New Grade 9 (2023) ENL1W

Number of Participants: 90 educators

Part 4: Research and Governance

Indigenous Student Trustee - Ozaawaamukwaikwe Secord

The work of the Indigenous Student Trustee is guided by the Elders Council, Truth and Reconciliation, UNDRIP and Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing. One of the primary roles of the Indigenous Student Trustee at TDSB is to engage with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students across the Board and represent their successes, joy, creativity, concerns, and challenges. Indigenous students are underrepresented in student voice and engaging Indigenous youth is of critical importance to shifting current conditions that adversely impact Indigenous student well-being. The Toronto Indigenous Youth Council (TIYC) is an advisory body to the Indigenous Student Trustee and is composed of Indigenous youth who want to share their perspectives on issues affecting them. Ozaawaamukwaikwe Secord has served as Indigenous Student Trustee since September of 2023, with her term coming to an end in August of 2024. Throughout her time as Indigenous Student Trustee, she has worked closely with the Urban Indigenous Community Advisory Council, Student Senate, UIEC, TIYC and more. Ozaawaa has worked to amplify Indigenous student voices and has openly shared her brilliance and lived experiences with educators and administrators from across the TDSB to enhance their learning in order to facilitate the creation of conditions that better serve First Nations, Métis and Inuit students across the system.



English: Understanding Contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Voices NBE3 Becomes Compulsory Grade 11 English Course at TDSB

In January 2023, the Toronto District School Board passed a motion put forth by Indigenous Student Trustee Isaiah Shafqat to make English: Contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Voices NBE3U/C/E the compulsory Grade 11 English course for all TDSB students. (See article). The motion aligns with the Board’s strategic direction and commitment to the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls To Action* (TRC) and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP).

Related Articles:

- [Toronto school board adopts mandatory Indigenous education in Grade 11](#)
The Toronto Star
- [Behind “First Voices,” TDSB’s mandatory course on Indigenous studies- an interview with student trustee Isaiah Shafqat](#)
- *School Magazine*
- [TDSB makes Indigenous authors course mandatory for Grade 11 English credit](#) *CBC News*

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Student Demographics and Learning Opportunities Index Rankings in French Immersion Programs

To: Program and School Services Committee

Date: 3 April, 2024

Report No.: 04-24-4671

Strategic Directions

- Transform Student Learning
- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students
- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being
- Embed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in policies, bylaws and Board governance structures

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Student Demographics and Learning Opportunity Index (LOI) Rankings in French Immersion Programs report be received.

Context

This report aims to provide an overview of the social demographics of students enrolled in French Immersion within the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). It will compare the representation of socio-economic status, racial identity and religion (creed) to that of the overall student population in TDSB based on the regularly collected information on this topic. Additionally, it will analyze the data of students in dual track elementary schools whose LOI ranking shifted from below one-hundred fifty (150) to above one-hundred fifty (150) since 2017, resulting in a change from Model Schools for Inner Cities (MSIC) status and the potential connection to the presence of French Immersion in the school.

Data from the [Student Census \(2023\)](#) was used; the analysis includes students enrolled in French Immersion programs across all grade levels within the TDSB. Analysis of dual track elementary schools was conducted based on student demographics and the position on the LOI and any changes to that ranking.

The TDSB, being the largest and most diverse school district in Canada, is dedicated to ensuring that all students have equitable access to educational opportunities to acquire the fundamental skills necessary for success in any future path they choose. Learning an additional language, such as French, is one of these fundamental skills. We know that learning French can open up opportunities for students in the future, enabling them to live, work, and study wherever they choose across Canada, and abroad.

The TDSB hosts French Immersion programs in several schools. Both Early French Immersion (EFI) and Middle French Immersion (MFI) are French-as-a-Second Language (FSL) programs in which French is not only taught as a subject, but also serves as the language of instruction in other subjects. Currently, every home address in TDSB is connected with an English home school and all of those home addresses make-up what is called a catchment. Each English school catchment is associated with an EFI school and a MFI school defining the catchment of that particular French Immersion program. Presently, there are seventy-nine (79) sites that host the EFI Junior Kindergarten entry point and forty (40) sites that host the MFI Grade 4 entry. In most cases, a school’s French Immersion program area is inevitably larger than that of the regular English program. Since French Immersion is not available in every school, students who reside in the address area of a “feeder” school (i.e., a local school with no French Immersion program) are regarded as belonging to the French Immersion school in the same way that the students living in the English area of that school do.

Findings

French Immersion students in the TDSB exhibit a diverse socio-economic background. At the system level, data indicates that TDSB French Immersion programs have a higher proportion of students from high-income households suggesting it may attract a slightly more affluent demographic. When looking at Wards, the higher the ratio of high-income households, the more probable French Immersion programs will be available in that Ward. This results from procedural drivers of area demand and guaranteed placement. More recently, new programs have been introduced, outside procedural process, in historically and currently underserved areas in recent years (Table 1) to support the equitable distribution of French Immersion programs, in response to the French Review. However since Junior Kindergarten is the entry point for these programs, there is currently no data on substantial changes in neighborhood income or French enrollment patterns.

Table 1: New French Immersion Programs Opened to Address Gaps in Service

School Name	Ward	Program - Grade	Year
Brookhaven Public School	York South-Weston – Ward 6	EFI - JK-5	2022/2023
Fraser Mustard Early Learning Academy	Don Valley West – Ward 11	EFI - JK/SK	2022/2023
Thornccliffe Park Public School	Don Valley West - Ward 11	EFI - 1-5	2023/2024
George B Little Public School	Scarborough-Guildwood – Ward 19	EFI - JK-8	2022/2023

Mason Road Junior Public School	Scarborough Southwest – Ward 18	EFI - JK-6	2022/2023
Bloordale Middle School	Etobicoke Centre – Ward 2	EFI - 6-8	2022/2023
Robert Service Senior Public Senior	Scarborough Southwest – Ward 18	EFI - 7-8	2022/2023
Gracedale Public School	Humber River-Black Creek – Ward 4	EFI - JK-5	2023/2024
Kingsview Village Junior School	Etobicoke North – Ward 1	EFI - JK-5	2023/2024
White Haven Public School	Scarborough North – Ward 21	EFI - JK-8	2023/2024
Lakeshore Collegiate Institute	Etobicoke - Lakeshore - Ward 3	EFI - 9-12	2024/2025

Based on information from the [Student Census \(2023\)](#), the racial identity of French Immersion students closely mirrors that of the overall TDSB student population as outlined in [Appendix A, Table 3](#). Most racial groups are represented in French Immersion programs to a similar degree that they are represented in the TDSB as a whole, noting overrepresentation of white students and underrepresentation of South Asian students, but overall data reflects the diversity of the Toronto population. The new programs, as listed in Table 1 above, are intended to address some of the underrepresentation by decreasing distance to French Immersion schools for families in previously less well-served areas.

Students from various religious backgrounds participate in French Immersion programs, reflecting Toronto’s diversity and the TDSB's commitment to inclusion. The representation of different religious and cultural backgrounds among French Immersion students closely aligns with the broader student population in the TDSB as outlined in [Appendix A, Table 4](#). The proportion of various religious groups (e.g., Hindu, Muslim) in French Immersion programs may differ slightly from the broader student population, but overall representation remains diverse.

Dual track elementary schools are those that offer both regular English programs and French Immersion programs. Of the one-hundred fifty (150) identified as MSIC schools, thirty-seven (37) of them host French Immersion programs and most have not experienced a change in their MSIC status. The ranking of schools on the LOI fluctuates both up and down after each recalculation. In the case of the thirty-seven (37) schools that host the French Immersion program whose ranking is below one-hundred (150), schools with longstanding French Immersion programs have demonstrated both greater and lesser relative need according to these rankings during the period of 2017 - 2023, independent of the introduction of French Immersion programs. In fact, most of these schools have demonstrated a greater need based on the LOI ranking during this time period. For example, the LOI ranking for General Crerar PS went from 110 to 86, Valley Park MS went from 148 to 97 and Melody Village JS went from 154 to 78. The ranking for some schools with French Immersion remained largely unaffected, for example Topcliff PS went from a ranking of 17 to 18 and O’Connor PS went from 67 to 64.

In the most recent recalculation of the LOI in 2023, there is a small number of schools (five) with French Immersion programs whose status on the LOI has indicated less relative need according to these rankings resulting in changes in MSIC status. This change cannot solely be attributed to the implementation or expansion of French Immersion programs within these schools, it is just one of the factors that may contribute. Some of the other factors may be attributed to urbanization and gentrification. It must be noted that, at these schools who have left the one-hundred and fifty (150) MSIC status, the largest French Immersion program comprises the majority of students from within the English boundaries of the school. In fact in one (1) case the French Immersion program is 100% composed of students from within its own boundaries, so it would be difficult to attribute changes in status to an “influx” from another neighbourhood. Regarding the LOI ranking since 2017, the movement on the LOI is independent of French Immersion, and is seldom dependent on French Immersion programs.

When the enrollment in French Immersion programs hosted at the schools that no longer were categorized within 1-150 of the LOI in 2023 is examined, it is clear that the impact of French Immersion enrollment in a school on its standing on the LOI is neutral or results in ranking to a lower number. For example, 97% of the students in the French Immersion program at Secord ES are students from the local English catchment of the school. When considering schools with broader service areas (i.e., more catchment schools), the majority of students in French Immersion live within the school’s English catchment and students attending from English catchment areas that demonstrate a greater level of need based on the criteria of the LOI. For example, at Blake Street JPS, 58% of the French Immersion students live in Blake Street JPS’s catchment area and 72% of students attending French Immersion at Blake Street JPS live in areas that are ranked at the same position (i.e., Blake Street JPS itself) or one demonstrating greater need than Blake Street JPS. Similarly, Ellesmere-Statton PS, whose French Immersion enrollment represents students from twelve (12) English catchment areas, 89% of students live in an area of similar or greater need than Ellesmere-Statton PS itself. It is evident from these examples, and the others examined, that the enrollment in French Immersion at a given school has limited impact on its LOI ranking.

The Toronto District School Board's French immersion program welcomes students from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, racial identities, and creeds. While there may be slight variations compared to the overall student body, French Immersion programs remain accessible to students from various backgrounds. The analysis of dual track elementary schools highlights the potential impact of French Immersion programs on school demographics, emphasizing the importance of monitoring and addressing any disparities that may arise. However, the impact of French Immersion programs on the LOI remains just one of many factors contributing to the rankings of the LOI. Continued efforts to promote inclusivity and accessibility are crucial to ensuring equitable access to French Immersion programs within the TDSB.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

[PR597: French Immersion/Extended French](#)

[P080: French-as-a-Second Language](#)

Appendices

- [Appendix A: Demographics of TDSB Students in French Programs](#)

- [Appendix B: Analysis of Learning Opportunities Index](#)
- [Appendix C: Executive Summary](#)

From

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Appendix A

Demographics of TDSB Students in French Immersion Programs

Contextual Background

The data summarised in Appendix A includes information related to representation of students in Toronto District School Board (TDSB) French Immersion programs. The data includes:

- [Student Census \(2023\)](#) information related to race and religion (creed) comparing representation in French Immersion programs to the TDSB overall.
- Using median income information from Environics Analytics, an overview of representation of socio-economic status (SES) compared to the TDSB overall population.

French Programming, Enrolment Overall

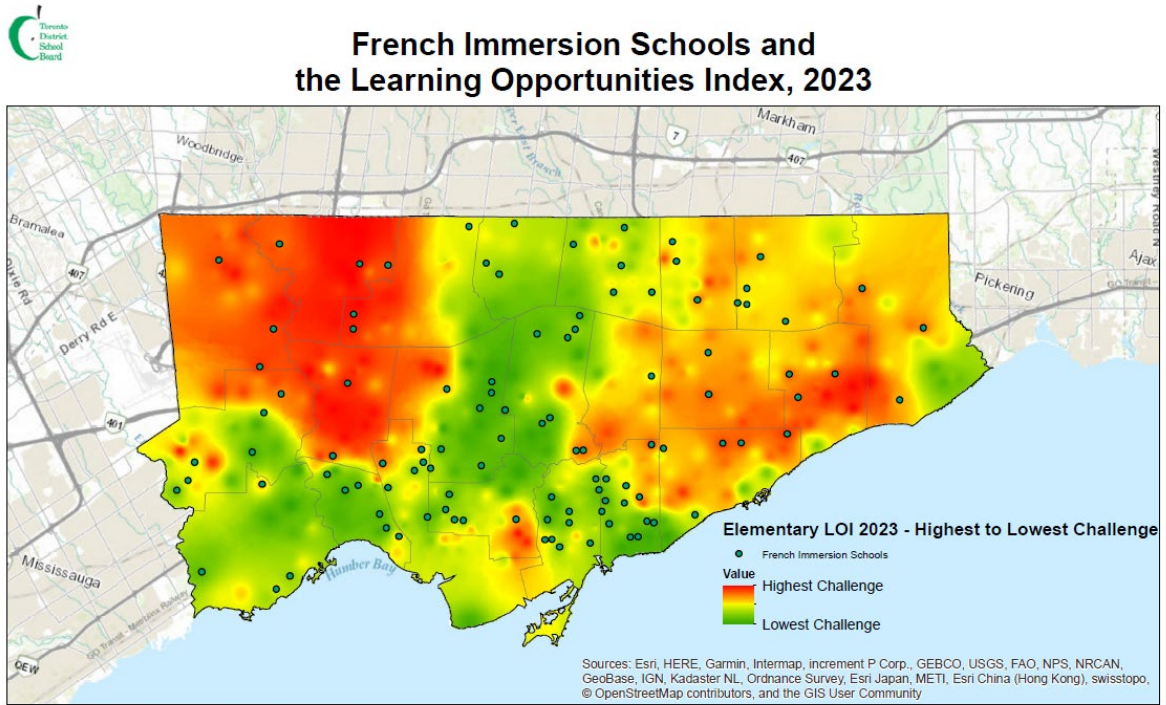
At the TDSB, there are 20,526 elementary students in French Immersion programs and 5,119 secondary students in French Immersion Programs (25,645 students total). Table 1 shows the number of students enrolled in French programs by ward (French program includes Early Immersion, Mid Immersion, and Extended French) as of October 31, 2023. 11% of TDSB students are enrolled in French Immersion Programs. These schools are spread out across the city (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 shows the location of all French Immersion Programs in schools overlaid on top of the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI) Map. Red represents high challenge and green represents lower challenge.

Table 1: French Programs Enrollment

Ward	% of Students in French Programs		
	Elementary	Secondary	Ele & Sec Total
TDSB Total	13%	7%	11%

Figure 1: French Immersion Programs across the TDSB.



Socioeconomic Status, TDSB and French Programs

At an overall system level, the data shows that TDSB French programming has a consistently greater percentage of students from high income households (Table 2).

When looking at Ward level, the greater the percentage of high income households, the more likely there is to have French programming in the respective Ward. There is little out of ward movement to attend French Immersion programs.

To support equitable distribution of French programs, in recent years, new programs have been established; however, as the entry to these programs is in Junior Kindergarten, significant changes in neighbourhood income and French enrollment patterns are not yet available.

Table 2: Income Information, TDSB and French Programs 2017 to 2023

Years	Overall TDSB			Overall French Programs		
	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income
2023	32%	34%	34%	21%	31%	48%
2020	34%	33%	33%	23%	31%	45%
2017	33%	33%	33%	23%	30%	47%

Notes:

- Table 2 shows income information. This information is calculated based on income terciles¹ from Environics and postal code data from student enrollment data. The table presents income information for TDSB overall and French programming across Wards.
- Income ranges in 2023 are: Low income: \$6607.92 to \$79,889.19, Middle income \$80,000 to \$112,346.76, and High income \$112,369.65 to \$1,738,956.81.

Race and Religion (Creed)

Recent information about students' race and religion is available from the 2023 Student Census. In total, 138,240 TDSB students (Grade 4 to 12) and parents/guardians/caregivers of Junior Kindergarten (JK) to Grade 3 participated in the Census. This was an overall response rate of 58%. Based on analysis of TDSB grade proportions, student geographic proportions, and proportions of socioeconomic status, a 58% response rate is a strong representation of the student population and we can be confident in system level analysis.

Tables 3 and 4 presents students self-identified race and religion across the TDSB overall and French Immersion Programs. When comparing TDSB overall proportions, French Immersion programs are over-represented with white students (20%), and are under-represented with South Asian students (10%). However, all other racial groups reflect the TDSB's proportions within 1 or 2%.

When comparing students' religious identity between the TDSB overall and French programs, Hindu students and Muslim students are underrepresented in French programs.

¹ Tercile - A set of data arranged in order with values that put the data into three groups, each containing one-third of the total data.

Note, as individual Wards represent varying community identities, these dis-proportions are not consistent across wards.

Table 3: Students Racial Identity and French Programming

	Black	East Asian	Indigenous	Latin	Middle Eastern	Southeast Asian	South Asian	White
TDSB Overall	13%	18%	1%	5%	9%	7%	22%	37%
French Programs	12%	19%	1%	4%	7%	5%	12%	57%

**12,316 students in French programming could be matched to the 2023 Student Census information*

Table 4: Students Religious Identity (Creed) and French Programming

	Buddhist	Christian	Hindu	Indigenous Spirituality	Muslim	Jewish	Sikh	Religion is not part of my life
TDSB Overall	3%	28%	10%	0.40%	18%	4%	1%	30%
French Programs	2%	30%	4%	0%	10%	6%	0%	41%

**12,437 students in French programming could be matched to the 2023 Student Census information*

Note: students' racial and religious identity percentages do not add to a 100% as students are counted in each of the categories they selected. This calculation better represents proportions of students and their self identified racial categories as it does not include the category "More than one".

Analysis of the Learning Opportunities Index

Contextual Background

The data summarised in Appendix B includes information related to an analysis of the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI) and French Immersion programs.

The Model Schools Program

The Model School Program recognizes that families and communities have varied access to economic opportunities and social support. A Model School is one of 150 schools as determined by the TDSB Learning Opportunities Index (LOI). Schools with French Immersion programs represent 25% (37 of 150) of MSIC schools. Although historically, the data showed that French Immersion programs have enrolled fewer racialized students and fewer students from low-income households, MSIC data would suggest that French Programs are serving students across the city.

The Learning Opportunities Index

The LOI ranks each school based on measures of external challenges affecting student success. The school with the greatest level of external challenges is ranked number one and is described as highest on the index. It is important to acknowledge that students in all schools have some external challenges, even those schools that are ranked very low on the LOI. The LOI measures relative need and compares all schools on exactly the same set of data collected in a consistent, reliable, and objective manner. The LOI removes the subjectivity that may shape perceptions of individual school needs.

Every 3 years the LOI is recalculated and updated as demographic shifts and other elements of external challenge change. Most often minor rank changes occur over a staggered period as gentrification alters the socioeconomic makeup of the school neighbourhood, where typically the majority of students live. As income, education, and proportion of single parents are the main components of the LOI, gentrification will have a strong effect on the calculation of the score and rank. Usually there is a pattern or trend for schools moving up and down the LOI over time.

The addition of new programming can also be a driver for an influx of students from outside of the traditional school boundaries. This can alter a school's LOI ranking depending on what neighbourhoods the students are travelling from. Some change to a school rank on the LOI is typically due to this reason, as new students who may not have a similar socioeconomic background as the existing student body enters the student population.

Changes in the LOI does not mean that students in a school are any less in need or are experiencing less challenges. It means that the LOI compares relative need - for a school to shift out of the MSIC 150 means that another school is experiencing more need.

The LOI, Model Schools for Inner City, and French Immersion Programs

The following section examines the number of MSIC schools that have English and French Programming in the same school and that have experienced a shift in their [Learning Opportunities Index \(LOI\)](#)¹ rankings from 2017.

Within each calculation cycle there is fluctuation in schools' LOI rankings; all schools experience shifts in LOI rankings, not only schools with French Immersion programs. Schools shift in and out, and back into, MSIC over time. Overall, the least fluctuation has happened in 2023. Consistently with each calculation cycle there is a shift in schools (between mid-teens to mid-twenties on the LOI). To see a historical view of all schools' LOI rankings please see: [LOI Full report](#) which is published for the public after each calculation.

Considering TDSB's MSIC, for each calculation cycle there is fluctuation in schools' LOI rankings. In the most recent 2023 calculation, 11 schools in total shifted out of the MSIC 150. Five of these schools had French and English programs. One French Immersion school shifted into the MSIC 150 in 2023.

Schools with French Immersion programs represent 25% (37 of 150) of the MSIC schools.

The table below outlines the schools that shifted out of the MSIC 150 for the last three LOI calculation cycles (2017 to 2023).

Table 1: Schools leaving the MSIC 150 Since 2017

Schools that left MSIC in 2023	Has French Immersion Programs
Blake Street Junior Public School	yes
Dorset Park Public School	
Ellesmere-Statton Public School	yes
Emily Carr Public School	yes
F H Miller Junior Public School	
George Anderson Public School	
Guildwood Junior Public School	
Heather Heights Junior Public School	
Hunter's Glen Junior Public School	yes
Secord Elementary School	yes
Warren Park Junior Public School	
Schools that left MSIC in 2020	
Ancaster Public School	
Charles H Best Junior Middle School	yes
D A Morrison Middle School	yes
Downtown Vocal Music Academy of	

¹ The LOI includes schools that have English and French students.

Toronto	
Dundas Junior Public School	yes
Edgewood Public School	
Fairbank Public School	
Henry Hudson Senior Public School	
J G Workman PS	
J R Wilcox Community School	
John A Leslie Public School	yes
Parkdale Junior and Senior Public School	yes
Ryerson Community School	yes
Twentieth Street Junior School	
Winchester Junior and Senior Public School	yes
Queen Alexandra MS	yes
Schools that left MSIC in 2017	
Anson Park Public School	
Beverley School	
Charles G Fraser Junior Public School	
Chester Elementary School	yes
Essex Junior and Senior Public School	
George B Little Public School	yes
General Brock Public School	
Guildwood Junior Public School	
Hunter's Glen Junior Public School	yes
Leslieville Junior Public School	
Ogden Junior Public School	
Parkside Elementary School	
Rawlinson Community School	yes
Second Street Junior Middle School	yes
Queen Victoria Public School	

MSIC Shifts 2023, Income Comparison

Table 2 outlines information for the five schools that experienced a shift in their LOI ranking after the 2023 recalculation. This information is compared to MSIC overall and TDSB overall. Table 2 shows that since 2017 the five MSIC schools have seen a trend in a slight shift in income distribution. When compared to MSIC overall, the five schools have a slightly higher percentage of students from high income households and a slightly lower percentage of students from low income households.

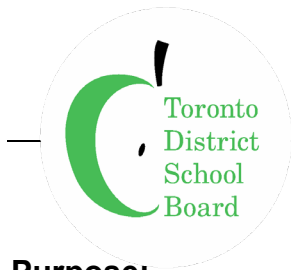
Table 2: Model Schools for Inners City, Income Comparison Overtime

School Group	2017			2020			2023		
	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income
5 Schools	45%	38%	17%	39%	39%	22%	39%	39%	22%
MSIC Overall	53%	35%	12%	56%	33%	11%	54%	33%	12%
TDSB Total	33%	33%	33%	34%	33%	33%	32%	34%	33%

*Note, there are approximately 50,790 students enrolled at Model Schools in 2023-24

*Note, income tertiles have changed slightly over time.

2017 tertials	Low income: [7992.22, 46115.38]; Middle income [46119.53, 84194.41], High income [84196.03, 2272193.58], all based on income median.
2020 tertials	Low income: [8020.34, 60000]; Middle income [60245.71, 100000], High income [100070.90, 4019679.41], all based on income median.
2023 tertials	Low income: [6607.92, 79889.19]; Middle income [80000, 112346.76], High income [112369.65, 1738956.81], all based on income median.



Purpose:	For Information	Appendix C
Developed By:	Audley Salmon, Associate Director Learning Transformation and Equity Angela Caccamo, Centrally Assigned Principal French Language Programs, Classical & International Languages Dr. David Cameron, Senior Manager, Research and Development	
Date:	April 3, 2024	

Executive Summary - Student Demographics and LOI Rankings in French Immersion Programs

Introduction

The report provides an overview of the social demographics of students enrolled in French Immersion programs at the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). Furthermore, it analyzes data from students in dual track elementary schools whose Learning Opportunity Index (LOI) ranking has shifted from below one-hundred fifty (150) to above one-hundred fifty (150) since 2017, resulting in a change from Model Schools for Inner Cities (MSIC) status and a possible link to the presence of French Immersion in the school.

Outline of the Report

The findings in the report highlights the following information.

TDSB Student Demographics in French Immersion Programs:

- Most racial groups are represented in French Immersion programs to a similar degree that they are represented in the TDSB as a whole, noting overrepresentation of white students and underrepresentation of South Asian students, but overall data reflects the diversity of the Toronto population.
 - New programs have been introduced, outside of procedural process, in historically and currently underserved areas to support the equitable distribution of French Immersion programs to address underrepresentation.
- The representation of different religious and cultural backgrounds among French Immersion students closely aligns with the broader student population in the TDSB.

- At an overall system level, the data shows that TDSB French programming has a consistently greater percentage of students from high income households.

Model Schools for Inner City and the Learning Opportunities Index:

- The LOI ranks each school based on measures of external challenges affecting student success. The school with the greatest level of external challenges is ranked number one and is described as highest on the index.
- Most often minor rank changes occur over a staggered period as neighbourhoods change and these changes alter the socioeconomic makeup of the school population, where typically the majority of students live. As income, education, and proportion of single parents are the main components of the LOI, gentrification will have a significant effect on the calculation of the score and rank. Usually there is a pattern or trend for schools moving up and down the LOI over time.
- This change cannot solely be attributed to the implementation or expansion of French Immersion programs within these schools, it is just one of the factors that may contribute. Some of the other factors may be attributed to urbanization and gentrification.
- The enrollment in French Immersion at a given school has limited impact on its LOI ranking.

Please see the subsequent Board report and Appendices for further details.

Conclusion

The impact of French Immersion programs on the LOI remains just one of many factors contributing to the rankings of the LOI.

The French immersion program offered by the TDSB welcomes students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, racial identities, and creeds. Although there may be minor differences in comparison to the general student population, French Immersion programs continue to be inclusive and available to students from various backgrounds.

Continued efforts to improve equity of access and inclusion to French Immersion programs are critical.

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Science and Technology, STEM and Robotics 2023-2024 Annual Report

To: Program and School Services Committee

Date: 3 April, 2024

Report No.: 04-24-4692

Strategic Directions

- Transform Student Learning
- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students
- Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs
- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being
- Embed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in policies, bylaws and Board governance structures

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Science/STEM and Robotics Report for 2023-24 be received.

Context

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) Science & Technology, STEM, and Robotics Department supports educators and school communities to enable all students to achieve high levels of success and well-being. This commitment aligns with the goals outlined in the Ontario Science & Technology curriculum (2022), focusing on developing crucial skills and acquiring the necessary knowledge, expertise, and values to become responsible, active members of society. Key focus areas include scientific research, experimental design, engineering, ethical problem-solving, critical thinking, and scientific literacy. The department offers professional learning, robotics and STEM education support, and safety training, using culturally relevant and responsive pedagogical principles. Additionally, the department's Science Resource Centres enrich the educational experiences across the Board by providing equipment loans, free presentations, and educator training sessions.

In TDSB's ongoing commitment to enhancing educational outcomes, the department actively focuses on supporting STEM Achievement Trajectories, particularly from Grade 4 to Grade 9. These initiatives are designed to strengthen the foundation and continuity of STEM education, ensuring that students are equipped with the essential skills and knowledge needed to excel in these critical areas of learning as they transition from elementary to secondary education and beyond. Teachers participating in professional learning opportunities provided by the Science & Technology, STEM, and Robotics Department report an increased understanding of the curriculum and an increased confidence in implementing hands-on learning experiences in their classrooms.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

The TDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) lays out a comprehensive roadmap toward achieving its strategic goals. The Science and Technology, STEM and Robotics department provides teachers and schools with a range of elementary and secondary professional learning opportunities and supports. Moreover, TDSB educators have access to a wealth of resources throughout the year from TDSB's Canadian Space Resource Centre, and the Science & Technology Resource Centre. These resources and collaborations underscore the TDSB's commitment to fostering a rich, interdisciplinary approach to education, emphasizing the integration of STEM into various learning areas to prepare students for the future.

TDSB's Canadian Space Resource Centre

The Science & Technology, STEM, and Robotics Department operates the Canadian Space Resource Centre (CSRC), which provides immersive virtual tours of the solar system using a Digital Star Lab, an inflatable, mobile planetarium enabling virtual solar system tours. Additionally, the CSRC offers vital safety guidelines, educational materials and system resources related to astronomical events, such as solar eclipses and the Artemis II mission (e.g., eclipse resources developed and available through the Library and Learning Resources public landing page). It further enriches learning with 25 unique, grade-tailored virtual space presentations covering topics from orbits and rotations to galaxies and nebulas.

As of March 1, 2024, the CSRC has delivered 227 in-person presentations using the Digital Star Lab (DSL) and 17 virtual presentations to TDSB students and staff. By the end of the 2023-24 school year, it is anticipated that the Centre will have hosted over 450 presentations, reaching more than 13,175 students.

Feedback from participants underscores the positive impact of these interactive and educational presentations:

- "My students were captivated by the visuals and deeply engaged in the presentations. They continue to discuss the experience months later."

- "The presentation served as an excellent introduction to our space unit, sparking considerable excitement among the students about learning more about our solar system."

The CSRC remains open for bookings from schools across the district. This year, presentations were made available to all grade 6 and 9 classes in the top 30 schools identified by the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI), demonstrating our commitment to enhancing science education across the TDSB.

Bringing STEM to Life

The Science & Technology, STEM, and Robotics Department collaborates closely with the Kindergarten to Industry (k2i) Institute at the Lassonde School of Engineering, York University, through the *Bringing STEM to Life* initiative. This partnership has enabled students from over 50 schools to engage in various aspects of the program, enhancing STEM education.

In-School Program

The *Bringing STEM to Life: In-School Program* empowers educators with the necessary training and provides schools with electronic equipment kits (including micro:bits, breadboards, motors, and sensors) to facilitate hands-on STEM learning experiences for students. Annually, six to nine schools in underserved areas are chosen to participate in this transformative project, impacting 3-8 teachers per school who teach between 5 to 18 class sections/classes each.

For the 2023-2024 academic year, the first-semester cohort engaged in comprehensive professional learning and benefitted from in-class support, with the second cohort scheduled to commence in March 2024. Additionally, the program extends professional learning opportunities to teachers of the destreamed Grade 9 Science, and the grade 10 Science programs and their students, emphasizing the integration of coding and STEM technologies to bolster scientific literacy in Earth & Space, Ecology, and Physics units. Based on current real world challenges, the activities appeal to a diverse group of learners and are ideal for use in destreamed classrooms.

Feedback indicates that the "Bringing STEM to Life: In-School Program" has significantly enhanced teachers' STEM competencies, leading to more interactive and hands-on student learning experiences, notably in coding and using Micro:bits. The positive reception and outcomes have motivated many participating schools to invest in technology kits beyond the program's conclusion. Furthermore, the Science & Technology, STEM, and Robotics Department have provided kits to some schools, further supporting the initiative's goals and expanding its impact.

Work-Integrated Learning Experience

The *Bringing STEM to Life: Work-Integrated Learning Experience* provides students with an opportunity to work in a research laboratory, where they gain valuable skills and earn academic credit for Grade 11 Physics or Grade 12 English, alongside an honorarium. This

initiative promotes participation among underrepresented groups in STEM fields, including girls, Indigenous youth, and Black youth, to foster their interest in further STEM education and career paths.

During the summer of 2023, the *Work-Integrated Learning Experience* summer program enabled 64 students from 29 schools to engage in research-based laboratory work, offering them hands-on experience in a real-world setting. The program has proven highly successful, boasting a 100% completion rate and impressive course averages of 91% for 3U Physics, 95% for 4C Physics and 93% for 4U English. Students earn senior credits with TDSB teachers and through practical work under the guidance of a professor and York University Mentors in a lab assistant role. The program's focus is to open pathways for people underrepresented in STEM, so last summer, 27.5% of the students self-identified as Black and 64% self-identified as girls. The feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive, with students appreciating the acquisition of new skills and work experience within a post-secondary environment. A notable reflection from one TDSB student stated,

“Participating in hands-on activities truly transformed my learning experience. Being someone who learns best through practical engagement, the lab sessions and research project not only allowed me to perform experiments but also engage in discussions with my classmates and mentors about the concepts.”

Path2STEM for Black Youth

The *Path2STEM for Black Youth* initiative is a new, innovative one-day STEM program for grades 5-10 students. This year, over 375 students from nine TDSB schools located near York University had the unique opportunity to immerse themselves in a five-day educational experience on the York campus. Under the guidance of Engineering Graduate Student mentors, participants explored the real-world applications of robotics, electronics, and coding.

All students participated in a variety of hands-on experiences, including projects on Autonomous Vehicles Powering Space Exploration, Robotics to Optimize Space Missions, Designing Safety Systems for Vehicles, Developing Smart Roads for the Future, Engineering Accessible Mobility Solutions, Rapid Prototyping for Global Challenges, Electric Vehicles and SARIT, and engaging with the STEM with Canadian Black Scientists Network (CBSN).

For secondary students, participation in the program also contributed to their Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs, enriching their academic and career pathways.

Educators who accompanied their students gained valuable insights and inspiration from the activities, encouraging them to integrate STEM concepts into their classrooms. Additionally, 24 educators were selected to return for a comprehensive full-day workshop focused on STEM, coding, and robotics. This workshop aimed to enhance their

understanding and ability to draw curriculum and pedagogical connections, further enriching the educational landscape for TDSB students.

Professional Learning

The TDSB offers many professional learning opportunities focused on Science & Technology, STEM, and Robotics education. These initiatives include specialized science safety courses, such as Chemical Safety for Secondary Science and Hand and Power Tools training for Intermediate teachers, alongside access to a spectrum of professional development sessions, webinars, and job-embedded learning experiences in STEM, coding, and robotics across various platforms (e.g., Spike Prime, Vex, micro:Bits, Phidgets, Dash).

The Science & Technology, STEM, and Robotics department actively engages in collaborative system-wide projects with numerous other departments. These cooperative ventures span a wide range of projects, such as working with:

- Assistive Technology on projects like integrating Mindomo in Science classes and incorporating Dash robotics in Intensive Support Programs (ISPs),
- Outdoor Education to support lending kits for schools,
- EcoSchools to provide climate education resources,
- Global Competencies and the Urban Indigenous Education Centre (UIEC) through initiatives like *Level Up Toronto* MinecraftEDU project,
- Experiential Learning on introducing skilled trades in elementary settings and power tool training,
- Arts department on STEAM kits (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math),
- Library and Learning Resources on Event Guides (e.g., Eclipse),
- Pathways department to support transitions to the grade 9 destreamed Science,
- UIEC and the Mathematics Department on an Indigenous STEAMMD project in which teachers (e.g., STEM) learn about Indigenous innovations and create transdisciplinary units and activities for students,
- Science, Mathematics and Global competencies departments on professional learning for MST (Math, Science and Technology) Central Student Interest Programs, and
- initiatives with Digital Lead Learners and Beginning Teachers.

Robotics Subsidies

The Science & Technology, STEM, and Robotics Department provides subsidies annually to elementary and secondary schools, prioritizing integrating robotics into classrooms, particularly in underserved communities. This year, the subsidies will include robot classroom packs alongside a day of professional learning to facilitate their effective use in

the classroom. While some schools may allocate these funds towards competitive robotics endeavours, including challenges emphasizing social and environmental justice, the primary aim of the subsidy is bringing STEM education through robotics in every classroom, especially targeting underserved communities and schools new to using robotics.

The department is supporting 80+ schools this year with robotics subsidies, enabling new STEM learning opportunities for thousands of students. This initiative emphasizes hands-on experiences in STEM. These efforts have significantly improved teachers' coding skills and boosted student participation in collaborative projects, such as constructing robots and electronic circuits. Schools benefitting from this subsidy must formulate a two-year implementation plan and provide progress reports showcasing the impact on teaching and learning experiences. This year, we have also included 20 teachers in robotics training to prepare them to serve as lead teachers and mentors for their colleagues later in the year.

Additional professional learning opportunities will be made available in spring 2024 to further bolster the adoption of robotics in education. These sessions will enable educators to learn how to seamlessly integrate a chosen robotics platform into their curriculum, with lead teachers offering mentorship, sharing their classroom experiences, and providing lesson ideas.

Feedback indicates that the robotics subsidies have markedly improved teachers' technological proficiency and heightened student engagement, nurturing essential learning skills such as collaboration, responsibility, initiative, and organization. The initiative has been praised for providing students with hands-on coding experiences, including robot, circuit, and game development. The expansion of coding education across different grades and subjects and targeted efforts to promote STEM skills among those underrepresented in STEM fields (e.g., girls, racialized students). Notably, two schools have launched their own robotics competitions, fostering inter-school collaboration.

***Eureka!* Conference**

The Science & Technology, STEM, and Robotics Department collaborates annually with the Mathematics Department to organize a full day *Eureka!* Conference designed for grade 7-10 teachers. This year, the conference was scheduled on the Professional Activity Day in February 2024 at SATEC@W.A. Porter. With the engaging theme "STEM: Many Ways of Knowing and Doing" and featuring keynote speaker Tanya Senk, System Superintendent of Indigenous Education, the conference attracted over 275 participants this year.

This educator-led conference offers a platform for teachers to explore the integration of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, demonstrating how these disciplines can interlink to foster rich and profound learning opportunities for students.

Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, rating the conference as good-to-excellent across all facets. Participants highlighted the valuable insights and inspiration they gained with comments such as:

- "The facilitator brought great knowledge into the classroom, leaving me inspired to integrate more lab activities."
- "A wonderful approach to developing units through student-led questioning and inquiry."

These teacher reflections underscore the conference's success in inspiring educators to further enrich their teaching practices with hands-on, inquiry-based learning experiences.

Skills Ontario

The Science & Technology, STEM, and Robotics Department, in collaboration with the Experiential Learning Department, provides students in grades 4-8 from across the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) the opportunity to engage in hands-on STEM competitions. These competitions are designed to hone a broad spectrum of technological problem-solving skills, focusing on using hand tools and construction materials to address a real-world problem. Annually, the department organizes qualifying competitions, advancing successful teams to the provincial contests hosted by Skills Ontario. All schools are invited to participate, and teachers new to the competitions are supported through job-embedded professional learning.

Each year, students from about 50 schools across all four learning centres apply to participate in TDSB qualifying contests, with approximately 320 students participating in the challenges. Among these, around 64 students move on to compete in various Skills Ontario provincial contests, which include:

- Technology Challenge for grades 4-6 and 7-8,
- Green Energy Challenge for grades 7-8, and
- Construction Technology Challenge for grades 7-8.

Additionally, 44 students have the opportunity to participate in provincial robotics contests, such as:

- Vex Robotics for grades 4-6 and 7-8, and
- Lego Robotics for grades 4-6 and 7-8.

These initiatives foster the development of critical STEM skills among students and encourage teamwork, creativity, and innovation, preparing them for future challenges and opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Resource Implications

The Toronto District School Board provides funding to support the initiatives outlined previously aimed at bolstering the Science & Technology curriculum across grades K-12.

This investment enhances educators' pedagogical expertise and content knowledge in areas such as Science & Technology, STEM, coding, and robotics. Additionally, the department equips teachers and students with essential tools and resources, facilitating an improvement in student engagement, confidence, and learning outcomes through its resource centres.

Project and Staffing	Source of Funding
Science & Technology, STEM and Robotics projects and staffing	TDSB Funds

Communications Considerations

The Science & Technology, STEM, and Robotics Department is developing a new communications plan to establish formal processes for internal reporting, system and public engagement. Central to this initiative is a redesign of the department's website, including updates to the websites of the Canadian Space Resource Centre (CSRC) and the Science & Technology Resource Centre, to provide a more visual and accessible interface. Additionally, the department's newsletter, titled "STEM Files," has increased its frequency (monthly) and is designed to keep teachers informed about the latest developments and opportunities. The strategy also encompasses an active presence on various platforms, including Twitter, Brightspace, MyPATH, and Direct Line, to facilitate broader communication and community engagement. The department is also collaborating with Professional Library Services to create an event guide for the upcoming solar eclipse.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

- Procedure PR601 - Safe Use of Power Tools
- Policy P088 - Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources

From

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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 (A NISH 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 peoples.

Reconnaissance des terres traditionnelles

Nous reconnaissons que nous sommes accueillis sur les terres des Mississaugas des Anichinabés (A NISH NA BAY), de la Confédération Haudenosaunee (HOE DENA SHOW NEE) et du Wendat. Nous voulons également reconnaître la pérennité de la présence des Premières Nations, des Métis et des Inuit."

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