

P100 - Student Interest Program Policy (TDSB, 2022)

RATIONALE: This Student Interest Programs Policy (the “Policy”) was developed to support the Board’s ongoing commitment to improve access to special programs based on student interest, and to support its commitment to offer a range of program opportunities for all learners.

OBJECTIVE: To affirm the Board’s commitment to providing strong programming in local schools and to ensure equitable educational access, experiences, and opportunities for all students.

Early Shifts in Representation

After the first year of the central application process for secondary CSIPs, it is evident that racial proportions have shifted. Of the four priority groupings, students’ racial identity more closely aligns with TDSB student body, with the biggest shift being with students who identify as Black.

In both 2022 and 2023, applicants from the priority groupings made up 22% of all Grade 9 CSIP applications. Larger numbers of First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Latino/a/x students have been seated for September 2024 entry than were seated in September 2023 though the overall number of applications was smaller.

The TDSB is permitted to gather personal information, including racial identity for “legitimate, limited and specific purposes” ([Source: IPC, Your Privacy Rights](#)). Racial backgrounds other than the four priority groups were not used in the seating process, and therefore the information was not requested.

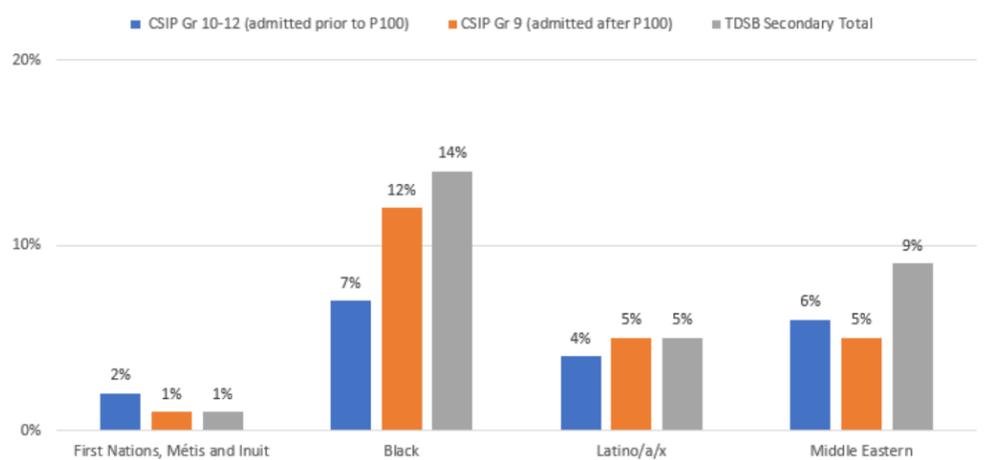
Improved Access and Opportunities for Students

The intention of P100 was to increase equitable access and opportunities for all students. There were two significant shifts in practice made to achieve this goal:

- The removal of admissions processes that prevented access and opportunities for some
- The prioritization of applicants from disadvantaged racial groups as described below.

The TDSB strives for “substantive equality” which means “*understanding and meeting the needs of disadvantaged persons or groups using historical, legal and social contexts*” (also known at TDSB as *historically and currently disadvantaged/ underserved/ underrepresented*). It takes into account *discriminatory barriers in their many forms, not all of which are obvious or intended*” (Source: [OHRC, A Guide to Special Programs](#))

Figure 1: Students’ Racial Identity for CSIP Priority Groupings, Student Census 2023 Data

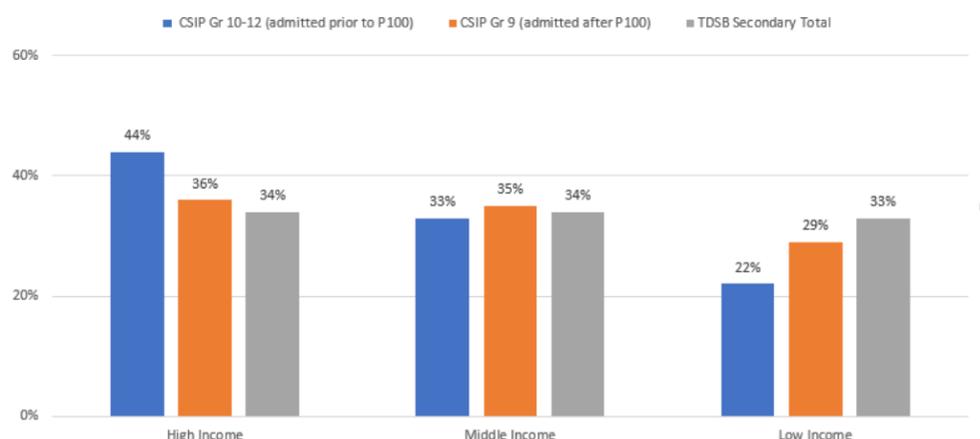


Percentages of Indigenous students should be viewed with caution. It is important to note, the actual number of Indigenous students in the TDSB is likely much higher than what is reported in the Census. It is estimated that “Toronto’s Indigenous population is approximately 2-4 times larger than estimates reported by Statistics Canada” (Smylie et al., 2022).

Early Shifts in SES Distribution

Though family income was not used to prioritize applicants, early evidence positively shows that students in grade 9 CSIP programs, more closely reflects the TDSB population overall.

Figure 2: CSIP Median Household Income



Note the income ranges: 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.

Increase in CSIP Seats

TDSB has increased in the number of seats available in Central Student Interest programs.

- 2,315 Grade 9 seats were filled in September, 2022 (not including Elite Athlete programs)
- 2,576 Grade 9 seats allocated for September 2023 (increase of 261 seats or 11%)
- 2,785 Grade 9 seats allocated for September 2024 (increase of 209 seats or 8%)

Summary: TDSB’s overall results are promising and provide early evidence suggesting that the policy has “opened doors” that were previously closed.

A three-year data cycle is vital to a meaningful evaluation process and will allow us to see the policy’s impact. This will enable communities to see progress in the policy’s goal of achieving a more representative demographic balance in the CSIPs compared to the TDSB student population.

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