



Update: Affirming Jewish Identities and Addressing Antisemitism and the Combatting Hate and Racism Strategy

To: Planning and Priorities Committee

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Strategic Directions

- Commit to the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action
- Achieve – All students reach high levels of achievement, success, and personal development.
- Thrive – All students graduate with the confidence, skills, and knowledge to thrive.
- Belong – All students belong, are engaged, and valued in an inclusive environment.
- Revitalize – All students and staff learn and work in inclusive, safe, and modern environments.

Equity as a guiding principle: Equity is foundational to all TDSB work and will be embedded throughout the strategic directions.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Update: Affirming Jewish Identities & Addressing Antisemitism and the Combatting Hate and Racism Strategy be received.

Context

In March 2023, the TDSB approved the Anti-Hate and Anti-Racism Strategy. The strategy fits within the *Belong* Strategic Direction of the Toronto District School Board

(TDSB) Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) 2024-2028 and relates to the other four strategic directions.

A meaningful way to support the belonging, achievement and success of all students is to notice, name and address the discrimination, hate and racism students experience in schools and the wider society. The Anti-Hate and Anti-Racism Strategy takes intersectional and systemic approaches with students' success as the primary focus. It encompasses six pillars:

- 1. Affirmation of Identities
- 2. Student Learning Strategy
- 3. Professional Learning
- 4. School-Community Relationship
- 5. Employment Equity
- 6. School Culture and Climate

The TDSB is committed to developing and implementing a distinct plan to address the incidents of discrimination, hate, and racism that continue to occur within the district as evidenced through data obtained by the Racism, Bias and Hate Portal. With staff support, the strategy aims to be responsive to communities' voices by developing tailored action plans based on the pillars noted above. This plan will allow communities to see themselves in the actions and require ongoing collaboration and support from families, communities, partner organizations and staff.

The TDSB has set a phased approach to developing the different two-year working plans identified in the Anti-Hate and Anti-Racism Strategy (2023) and the Combatting Hate and Racism: Student Learning Strategy Update (2024).

The following table represents the phased approach the TDSB has taken:

PHASE	2-YEAR WORKING PLAN
PHASE I (started in 2023/2024 school year)	Anti-Islamophobia Antisemitism
PHASE II (started in 2024/2025 school year)	Anti-Asian Racism Anti-Black Racism Homophobia & Transphobia
PHASE III (starts in 2025/2026 school year)	Ableism Anti-Palestinian Racism

The working plan for Anti-Indigenous Racism is being developed through the work of the Urban Indigenous Education Centre.

This report updates the Anti-Hate and Anti-Racism Strategy presented to the Board in March 2023. It also shares the draft recommendations for the two-year antisemitism working plan developed by the Addressing Antisemitism working group. Various TDSB Departments will review the recommendations to determine each action's feasibility and develop an actionable implementation framework.

Phase I Working Groups

All working groups in Phase I are formed and are in various stages of development. Below is a list of actions that have taken place to date and the next steps:

Anti-Islamophobia

- Initial updates were reported to the Planning and Priorities Committee on December 4, 2024
- The Working Group is conducting system-wide in-person and virtual community consultations in collaboration with community partners, families, caregivers and students

Next Steps:

- The Working Group will present the recommendations to the Board of Trustees in April 2025

Timeline:

- Spring 2025

Actions on Addressing Antisemitism

The Addressing Antisemitism working group was convened in January 2023 to support the development of recommendations and action and monitoring plans. Subsequent working group meetings focused on consulting with over 30 community partners throughout the City. Members included community groups, faith leaders, students and TDSB Jewish Heritage committee members.

The working group prioritized goals and actions aligned with the pillars of the Anti-Hate and Anti-Racism Strategy (2023). Their recommendations centred on identifying actionable, system-wide objectives for classroom implementation and broader District-wide initiatives. The working group's recommended actions requiring an implementation plan are outlined in Appendix A.

The Antisemitism Working Group's recommendations are organized within the six pillars of the Anti-Hate and Anti-Racism strategy. The recommendations outline specific support for students, the community, and families.

The consultation process included a robust representation of diverse Jewish community organizations across Toronto, providing space for diverse perspectives from within the

Jewish community to be meaningfully included. During each consultation session, participants were provided with a brief context of the Board's Combatting Hate & Racism (CHR) Strategy, an overview of the work of the Jewish Heritage Committee, the working group's purpose and the pillars identified within the strategy.

Following the context-building segment, community members were encouraged to share priorities and concerns for the communities and organizations they represent. This allowed key issues to surface and amplify the voices of those directly impacted by anti-Jewish hate and racism. Participants highlighted the challenges and feedback they consistently hear within their communities and contributed ideas about the focus and direction of the strategy to be considered by the TDSB.

Student voices were gathered through affinity group sessions at their respective schools, Jewish Student Association (JSA) meetings, and centralized gatherings. Students shared their experiences and provided strategic recommendations for the board. Their contributions emphasized the importance of addressing antisemitism within schools. They underscored the need for actionable strategies to foster an inclusive and supportive environment where they feel safe expressing their identities and views.

Below is a selection of key recommendations from the full set presented by community members to the Addressing Antisemitism Working Group.

1. Ensure anti-oppression and equity work includes Jewish voices and experiences, emphasizing the intersectionality of Jewish identities with other forms of discrimination.
2. Monitor and support schools in investigating, understanding and responding to antisemitic incidents, ensuring transparency, accountability, and appropriate follow-up (e.g., all incidents are entered into the portal, ensuring they are acknowledged and appropriately addressed). Reports of incidents must be entered into the Racism, Bias and Hate Portal.
3. Maintain a Jewish-identifying Equity Coach position and ensure that there is representation of Jewish-identifying staff at middle and senior management levels to support and address antisemitism and other forms of hate.
4. Develop resources to support curriculum expectations related to Jewish identities, ensuring content extends beyond the Holocaust.
5. Situate antisemitism within Human Rights including ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, ancestry and all intersections of these protected grounds.
6. Provide professional learning for staff to deepen understanding of antisemitism, including modern manifestations such as anti-Zionism, intersectionality, and Jewish identity diversity.
7. Support the Jewish Heritage Committee initiatives, including International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Jewish Heritage Month, and student leadership development.

For a comprehensive list and detailed context, please refer to Appendix A.

Phase II Working Groups

Staff are organizing consultation sessions that entail collaborating with diverse community groups (internally and externally). The timeline for completion of these working plans is Spring 2025. Some examples of work currently taking place include:

Anti-Asian Racism

- Ongoing in-person and virtual consultations with community agencies and partners, as well as families, caregivers and students. The focus is to ensure a broad representation of the Asian diaspora
- Based on feedback from Board deputations, one group that the working group will be connecting with is Asian identifying international students in TDSB schools. Focus group discussions will be held with the international students in collaboration with the International Students and Admissions Office.

Next Steps:

- Continue in-person and virtual consultations throughout the TDSB
- Submit draft recommendations to the Planning and Priorities Committee in May 2025

Timelines:

- Spring 2025

Addressing Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia

- Continue consultations with community partners and agencies, Community Advisory Committee members, families, staff and students to identify recommendations for key actions the District can make to address homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in schools
- Efforts continue to ensure that student voices are meaningfully integrated into the discussions of the working group
- Efforts continue to ensure that intersectional voices are integrated into the discussions of the working group

Next Steps:

- Continue consultations to identify actions aligned with the six pillars of the Anti-Hate and Anti-Racism Strategy
- Submit draft recommendations to the Planning and Priorities Committee in May 2025

Timelines:

- Spring 2025

Anti-Black Racism

- Staff are consulting with community members, other education partners (e.g., students, families, etc.) and council advisories (e.g., BSACAC, African Heritage Month, and Somali Heritage Group)

Next Steps:

- Staff will implement the recommendations described during previous consultations at the TDSB to broaden the discussion with the community and align with the six pillars identified under the Anti-Hate, Anti-Racism umbrella strategy.
- After further community engagement, staff will anticipate bringing forward actions that focus on the six pillars

Timelines:

- Spring 2025

Phase III Working Groups

The working groups for phase 3 have yet to start forming their work with community groups. They will begin their entry into the process shortly.

NEXT STEPS

Action	Timeline
Initiate Community Consultation throughout the District	Spring 2025
Meet with internal TDSB departments attached to the actions noted in the work plan to identify which are already being worked on and currently being considered.	Spring 2025
Develop accountability and implementation framework for 2025-2026.	Spring 2025
Publication of the final Addressing Antisemitism work plan.	Fall 2025

Resource Implications

Additional human and financial resources will be needed to bring these strategies to light. As each working group submits their recommendations, TDSB departments will

review the actions outlined in the work plan. They will assess the feasibility of the proposed actions, evaluate progress to date, and identify which actions are already underway or currently under consideration.

Continuous support and resources are based on the approval of the budget annually by the Board of Trustees.

Communications Considerations

As the work plan is finalized into concrete, phased actions and approved by the Board of Trustees, a communications plan will be created in collaboration with Communications and Public Affairs. The plan will include publishing and making the work plan publicly accessible to TDSB communities.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

P029 Employment Equity & Inclusive Employment

P031 Human Rights Policy

P034 Workplace Harassment Prevention for Non-Human-Rights-Code Harassment

P037 Equity Policy

P051 Caring and Safe Schools

P078 Community Engagement

PR515 Workplace Harassment Prevention and Human Rights

PR704 Community Engagement

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

PR735 Social Media and Online Content

Appendices

- Appendix A: Affirming Jewish Identities & Addressing Antisemitism

References

Toronto District School Board. (2023, March 1). *Update on Toronto District School Board's Anti-Hate and Anti-Racism Strategy*.

Toronto District School Board. (2024, June 5). *Combatting Hate and Racism: Student Learning Strategy*.

Toronto District School Board. (2024, April). *Inspiring Minds & Shaping Futures: Our Multi-Year Commitment to Student Success 2024-2028*.

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