

Written Notice of Motion for Consideration as Emergency Business (Trustees Story and Aarts)

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

In accordance with the Board's bylaws, emergency business is defined as:

a situation, or the threat of a situation, adversely affecting health, safety and/or well-being, or resulting in significant legal risk or financial damage or loss, which by its nature and seriousness requires an immediate response...

Further,

5.12.7 A matter not on the agenda or directly related to matters arising from discussion cannot be introduced by a trustee at a Board or Committee meeting, or after the notice of agenda has been circulated to members, unless the item qualifies as emergency business and is confirmed by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present.

Use of Outdoor Spaces for Instructional Time

Trustees Story and Aarts have submitted the following as a matter of urgency and for consideration as emergency business;

Therefore, be it resolved:

A. That the following matter be deemed as emergency business;

and, if approved (requires a two-thirds majority vote of the members present to be considered);

B. That the following be considered:

Whereas, outdoor play and learning has been shown to help mitigate the risk of COVID-19 infection as well as support healthy child development;¹ and

Whereas, outdoor play offers critical opportunities for learning, development and well-being;² and

Whereas, access to open outdoor spaces while adhering to public health guidance (e.g., physical distancing, careful and regular hand-washing) has been recommended

¹ <https://www.outdoorplaycanada.ca/should-i-go-outside-in-the-covid-19-era/>

² [Source: Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play](#)

by Toronto Public Health,¹ is important to help maintain both physical and mental health, and is one of the best ways Canadians can [increase their defence](#)² against COVID-19;³ and

Whereas, during times of crisis, children benefit from play as a means to explore their emotions as well as to make sense of and cope with environmental anxiety, and through this process, develop resilience and build self-confidence to help them navigate life's challenges;⁴ and

Whereas the TDSB has prioritized outdoor learning as part of the 2020 Return to School plans;

Therefore, be it resolved:

- (a) That the Director **present a report outlining** a plan for encouraging and supporting **all** schools to use outdoor spaces for instructional time throughout the day:
- (b) That the plan at Part (a):
 - (i) be based on approaches used in the Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) program successfully piloted at TDSB schools;
 - (ii) include support for an initial group of up to 24 schools (six per Learning Centre) as soon as possible, using an equity lens, **including the use of disaggregated race-based data** to determine which schools will be eligible;
 - (iii) include consistent and clear messaging to all schools that helps to remove barriers and supports the use of temporary, low-cost and volunteer-supported approaches to the use of outdoor learning spaces;
 - (iv) include collaboration between the Sustainability Office and Outdoor Education in supporting schools with this work;
 - (v) **include concrete steps for how outdoor learning can be encouraged at the secondary level as well;**
 - (vi) **include costs and funding source for implementation.**
- (c) The Director provide an update in the February-March 2021 cycle of meetings.

¹ (<https://www.toronto.ca/home/covid-19/covid-19-reopening-recovery-rebuild/covid-19-reopening-guidelines-for-businesses-organizations/covid-19-guidance-elementary-secondary-schools/>)

² <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1471489216300479>

³ <https://www.outdoorplaycanada.ca/pandemic-play-child-centred-policy-in-a-global-crisis/>

⁴ <http://www.ipacanada.org/covid-19/statement-play-in-the-time-of-covid-19/>

