

Revised Draft Board Self-Assessment Tool

Submitted to:

Self-Assessment Sub-Committee
Toronto District School Board

Submitted by:

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24 November 2020



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Introduction to the Self-Assessment Tool

A self-assessment is an educational exercise that is designed to help improve performance.

The self-assessment approach approved by the SASC is a multistage exercise that involves the Board of Trustees in all stages. This is the data gathering stage. The next stage is to represent the results so that they can be interpreted by the Board. That stage is typically followed by a Board session in which the Board develops plans for improving Board performance. The key stage is acting on the plans that the Board has made.

This survey is a vehicle for gathering data from members of the Board of Trustees. The instrument is lengthy. The survey will be available to trustees from DATE to DATE. Trustees can complete the survey in a single session or multiple sessions.

Trustees who wish to respond to the survey over several sessions can use the “Save and Continue” button that appears on each page of the survey. Please make a note of the LINK or CODE so that when you return to the survey it will allow you to continue from where you stopped. Please complete the survey on the same computer.

The survey has been set up to protect the anonymity of the respondents. Neither I, nor you, nor staff know who the respondents are unless they identify themselves in some way. Please avoid doing that.

Suggestion: Be thoughtful about your responses, but do not agonize about them. The survey responses are stimulus material for interpretation and discussion by the Board.

Values and Goals of the Board

This section of the assessment is intended to reveal the different priorities that trustees place on the values and goals expressed Board policy.

Values

Even when they share the same values, people differ in the relative priority they place on the values they hold. The Board's policy framework included eight values. Please rank the values below from 1 (most important to you) to 8 (least important to you). I have taken the liberty of adding text [in brackets] to better render the phrases into value statements.

Values: The TDSB	Rank
[attempts to meet] each and every student's interests, strengths, passions, identities, and needs.	
[is or seeks to be] a strong public education system.	
[fosters] a partnership of students, staff, family, and community.	
[fosters] shared leadership that builds trust, supports effective practices, and enhances high expectations.	
[supports] the diversity of our students, staff, and our community.	
[takes pride in] the commitment and skills of our staff.	
[is known for] equity, innovation, accountability, and accessibility.	
[provides] learning and working spaces that are inclusive, caring, safe, respectful, and environmentally sustainable.	

Please use the space below to clarify responses or makes comments pertinent to the VALUES section.

Goals

The Board has several goals, including those set out in the Multi-Year Strategic Plan. Please indicate how well the Board is working toward the realization of each goal.

Goal: The TDSB works to	Consistently well	Well	Adequately	Poorly	Not at all
transform student learning.					
create a culture for student and staff well-being.					
provide equity of access to learning opportunities for all students.					
allocate human and financial resources strategically to support student needs.					
build strong relationships and partnerships within school communities to support student learning and well-being.					
advocate on behalf of the TDSB and the communities it serves.					

Please use the space below to clarify responses or makes comments pertinent to the GOALS section.

Board Governance

Governance is the core responsibility of the Board of Trustees. The items below address most of responsibilities of the Board. Please read each of the responsibilities and indicate how well the Board (as a corporate entity) carries out the responsibility. [*randomize the list*]

Board of Trustees – Part 1

The Board of Trustees	Consistently well	Well	Adequately	Poorly	Not at all
gives direction to the Director only by formal, recorded votes.					
uses student achievement results to evaluate the performance of the organization.					
advocates for the TDSB and the students it serves.					
maintains a constructive two-way dialogue with students, employees, parents, and citizens as a means of engaging them in the work of the TDSB.					
has written policies that address the outcomes that TDSB students will achieve.					
has written policies about the matters delegated to the Director of Education.					
has written policies defining the Board's work and how it will accomplish its work.					
has written policies defining the role of the Director of Education.					
approves budgets within the sustained fiscal limitations of the TDSB.					
regularly reviews Board policies.					
evaluates the performance of the Director of Education.					
evaluates its own performance on a regular basis.					

The Board of Trustees	Consistently well	Well	Adequately	Poorly	Not at all
appoints an independent auditor to conduct an annual review of the TDSB's financial position.					
advocates on behalf of the TDSB with outside bodies and senior government.					
receives regular reports about student achievement and well-being.					
puts the interest of the TDSB at the centre of the decision-making process.					
reviews a range of alternatives before authorizing a course of action.					
approves the bargaining mandate for collective bargaining with unionized employees and the agreements reached with them.					
approves the total compensation packages for all exempt employees of the TDSB.					
completed a board governance orientation program for the education sector after the most recent election.					
directs the operational organization through and only through the Director of Education.					
informs the citizens of Toronto about the achievement and well-being of students.					
is responsible for protecting the interests, image, credibility, and financial viability of the TDSB.					
ensures that all students receive the programs and services to which they have a right under provincial legislation.					
acts in the best interest of the TDSB.					

The Board of Trustees	Consistently well	Well	Adequately	Poorly	Not at all
has a Board professional development plan.					
protects privacy and maintains confidentiality.					
maintains relationships with external agencies and superordinate bodies.					
spends more time on strategic planning than on immediate issues and problems.					
works collectively to instill public confidence in the TDSB.					

Please use the space below to clarify responses or makes comments pertinent to the BOARD OF TRUSTEES – PART 1 section.

Board of Trustees – Part 2

The Board members	Always	Often	Sometimes	Infrequently or not at all
arrive at meetings having read and thought about the items on the agenda.				
understand the rules of procedure governing meetings.				
support decisions of the Board publicly even if they were not in favor of the decision.				

The Board members	Always	Often	Sometimes	Infrequently or not at all
do not allow differences of opinion and perspective to damage their relationships with colleagues on the Board.				
can explain to their constituents the Board's obligation to act in the best interest of the TDSB.				
maintain confidentiality and protect privacy.				
can voice their opinions and their perspectives at meetings without fear of being ostracized.				
employ evidence and logic in defending my perspective on issues.				
possess the confidence to chair Board or its Standing Committee meetings.				
can explain and defend Board decisions with which they did not agree.				
understand the legislative and regulatory framework within which the Board must operate.				
are comfortable saying publicly that they do not understand an issue.				
can see issues from perspectives other than their own.				
fully understand their role as Board members.				
can read and understand a school board financial statement.				
can tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty.				
resist the temptation to give operational direction.				
refer community members to the appropriate Board officials when they have encountered problems rather than trying to solve the problem themselves.				

The Board members	Always	Often	Sometimes	Infrequently or not at all
avoid public criticism of one another.				
can fulfill their responsibilities under the School Act and still advocate for their wards.				

Please use the space below to clarify responses or makes comments pertinent to the BOARD OF TRUSTEES – PART 2 section.

Responsibilities of Board and Committee Chairs

Board Chair

The Chair of the Board <i>[randomize list]</i>	Always	Often	Sometimes	Infrequently or not at all
monitors the Board’s actions to ensure the actions are consistent with the Board’s policies and procedures.				
monitors the Board’s actions to ensure that the actions comply with the Board’s obligations to external and superordinate authorities.				
conducts Board meetings to ensure that they are focussed on issues within the Board’s purview as set out in Board policy.				
ensures that discussions of the Board are productive, efficient, and orderly.				

conducts debriefings and self-assessments with the Board and Director of Education on a timely basis to improve Board deliberations.				
ensures that there is an annual summative evaluation of the Director of Education.				
represents the Board as its official spokesperson about Board official business as determined by the Board as a whole.				
executes all documents authorized by the Board, except as prescribed or proscribed by law.				
develops proposed agendas for Board meetings in cooperation with the Director of Education.				
does not exercise authority as an individual.				
does not give direction to the Director of Education without Board authorization.				

Please use the space below to clarify responses or makes comments pertinent to the VALUES section.

Chairs of Standing Committees of the Board

Please respond to the items only for those Committees on which you sit as a member or a member *ex officio*.

Finance, Budget, and Enrolment Committee

The Chair of the Finance, Budget, and Enrolment Committee of the Board	Always	Often	Sometimes	Infrequently or not at all
monitors the Committee’s actions to ensure the actions are consistent with Board and Committee policies and procedures.				
conducts Committee meetings to ensure that they are focused on issues within the Committee’s purview as set out in Board policy.				
ensures that discussions of the Committee are productive, efficient, and orderly.				
conducts debriefings and self-assessments with Committee members on a timely basis to improve Committee deliberations.				
reports in a regular and timely manner to the Board.				
develops proposed agendas for Committee meetings in cooperation with the Board Chair.				
does not exercise authority as individuals.				
does not give direction to the Director of Education or any Board employee.				

Please use the space below to clarify responses or makes comments pertinent to the FINANCE, BUDGET, AND ENROLLMENT COMMITTEE section.

Program and School Service Committee

The Chair of the Program and School Service Committee of the Board	Always	Often	Sometimes	Infrequently or not at all
monitors the Committee’s actions to ensure the actions are consistent with Board and Committee policies and procedures.				
conducts Committee meetings to ensure that they are focused on issues within the Committee’s purview as set out in Board policy.				
ensures that discussions of the Committee are productive, efficient, and orderly.				
conducts debriefings and self-assessments with Committee members on a timely basis to improve Committee deliberations.				
reports in a regular and timely manner to the Board.				
develops proposed agendas for Committee meetings in cooperation with the Board Chair.				
does not exercise authority as individuals.				
does not give direction to the Director of Education or any Board employee.				

Please use the space below to clarify responses or makes comments pertinent to the PROGRAM AND SCHOOL SERVICES COMMITTEE section.

Governance and Policy Committee

The Chair of the Governance and Policy Committee of the Board	Always	Often	Sometimes	Infrequently or not at all
monitors the Committee’s actions to ensure the actions are consistent with Board and Committee policies and procedures.				
conducts Committee meetings to ensure that they are focused on issues within the Committee’s purview as set out in Board policy.				
ensures that discussions of the Committee are productive, efficient, and orderly.				
conducts debriefings and self-assessments with Committee members on a timely basis to improve Committee deliberations.				
reports in a regular and timely manner to the Board.				
develops proposed agendas for Committee meetings in cooperation with the Board Chair.				
does not exercise authority as individuals.				
does not give direction to the Director of Education or any Board employee.				

Please use the space below to clarify responses or makes comments pertinent to the GOVERNANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE section.

Board Code of Conduct

Instructions: Consider the following statements drawn from the Board Code of Conduct and appraise the Board's adherence to the statement:

Code provision	The board follows the provision in the Code of Conduct			
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Infrequently or not at all
Transparency, accountability, and public confidence are fundamental components for the effective governance of school boards as public bodies responsible to their communities and to the provincial government. The conduct of the members of the Board of Trustees must be of the highest standard to maintain the confidence of the public.				
Members of the Board shall serve and be seen to serve their school communities in a constructive, respectful, conscientious, and diligent manner.				
Members of the Board shall recognize the public trust in the expenditure of TDSB funds efficiently and in the best interests of students.				
Members of the Board should be committed to performing their functions with integrity and to avoiding the improper use of the influence of their office, and conflicts of interest, both apparent and real.				
Members of the Board are expected to perform their duties in office and arrange their private affairs in a manner that promotes public confidence and will bear close public scrutiny.				
Members of the Board shall seek to serve the public interest by upholding both the				

Code provision	The board follows the provision in the Code of Conduct			
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Infrequently or not at all
letter and the spirit of the laws of the Federal Parliament and Ontario Legislature, and the bylaws and policies adopted by the Board.				
No member of the Board shall disclose or release by any means to any member of the public any confidential information acquired by virtue of their office, in either oral or written form, except when required by law or authorized by the Board to do so. This is a continuous obligation that extends beyond the member's term of office.				
Members of the Board should not access or attempt to gain access to confidential information in the custody of the Board unless it is necessary for the performance of their duties and not prohibited by Board policy.				
Members of the Board are expected to carry out their duties with impartiality and objectivity. Members must decline from accepting a gift, benefit, or hospitality because of the risk that this will compromise the objectivity of the member of the Board or lead to an appearance of lack of objectivity, bias, or influence on the part of the member.				
No member of the Board should use, or permit the use of Board staff members, Board events, Board facilities, Board funds, Board information, and Board infrastructure or other resources (e.g., Board-owned materials, websites, and social media				

Code provision	The board follows the provision in the Code of Conduct			
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Infrequently or not at all
platforms) for activities other than the business of the TDSB.				
No member of the Board may obtain personal financial gain from the use or sale of Board-developed intellectual property (e.g., inventions, creative writings and drawings), computer programs, technical innovations, or other items capable of being patented, since all such property remains exclusively that of the Board.				
No member of the Board shall use the facilities, equipment, supplies, services or other resources of the Board (including newsletters, social media sites and websites linked through the Board's website, contact information including email addresses obtained as a result of the member's performance of his or her duties as a Trustee) for any election campaign or campaign-related activities.				
No member of the Board shall undertake campaign-related activities on Board property unless permitted by Board policy.				
No member of the Board shall use the services of persons for election-related purposes during hours in which those persons receive any compensation from the Board.				
No member of the Board shall use the influence of his or her office for any purpose other than for the exercise of his or her official duties.				

Please use the space below to clarify responses or makes comments pertinent to the BOARD CODE OF CONDUCT section.

Beliefs of the Board

Please select the response that comes closest to your belief.

Statement of Belief <i>[randomize list]</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	I do not know
Community groups/organizations should have fair and equitable access to Board facilities when they are not being used for educational purposes.					
Students should have the right to access programs and schools that best meet their needs, interests, and aptitudes.					
Trustee newsletters or similar trustee publications produced and paid for by the Board and intended for mass distribution to constituents should not contain criticisms of other trustees or statements that could cause the Board embarrassment or liability.					
Parents and community members should have opportunities to participate in the school system, and the Board should provide the support necessary to achieve that goal.					
The Director of Education should not be obligated to follow direction from individual					

Statement of Belief <i>[randomize list]</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	I do not know
trustees, or committee chairs unless such authority has been specifically delegated by the Board as a whole.					
There should be demonstrable evidence that the TDSB is committed to Employment Equity.					
There should be demonstrable evidence that hiring, employment, and promotion practices in the TDSB are equitable.					
The Board should abide by its established Communications Protocol and Information Flow Protocol when posing questions to the Director of Education.					
Systemic barriers to equitable recruitment, selection, hiring, training and development, career counselling, transfer processes, performance assessment, and promotion in the TDSB should be identified and eliminated.					
The Board should never give direction to any employee of the Board who reports directly or indirectly to the Director of Education.					
The TDSB's outreach activities and affirmative action strategies (e.g., encouragement, mentoring, training, and staff development) should ensure that there is equitable representation in all occupational groups within the TDSB.					
The TDSB should maintain an environment respectful of human rights and free of discrimination and harassment for all persons.					

Statement of Belief <i>[randomize list]</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	I do not know
The Board should not formally or informally evaluate any employee of the Board except for the Director of Education.					
The TDSB should provide a safe, nurturing, and positive learning and working environment, free of harassment and discrimination, where every individual is treated with dignity and respect.					
Being accountable for and finding ways to improve student achievement should be of paramount importance to the TDSB.					
The performance of the TDSB should be synonymous with the performance of the Director of Education.					
The TDSB should enable all students to reach high levels of achievement and acquire the knowledge, skills, and values they need to become responsible members of a democratic society.					
The TDSB should hold high expectations for all learners.					
Environmental literacy for all students should be integral to the TDSB's mission to help prepare our students to become responsible members of a democratic society.					
The TDSB should have a performance management process it uses to develop clear objectives for the Board and the Director of Education and to provide an annual evaluation of the Director's work.					

Please use the space below to clarify responses or makes comments pertinent to the BELIEFS section.

Equity and its Application

Issues of equity are a prime concern for TDSB. Most everyone can agree in principle with equity. The challenge arises in attempting to apply one's conception of equity. The exercise below describes in broad terms a fictional school board (the Metropolitan School Board), its policy about ensuring equity, and decisions that the (fictional) Director has made.

The task for Members of the Board of the TDSB is to decide if the Director was or was not in compliance with the Metropolitan School Board's equity policy and to explain his/her reasons for the judgment made. We will distill your responses and present them to you in a manner that will illustrate the various ways that trustees conceive of equity without linking either the judgments or the justifications with specific individuals.

Is the Director in compliance with the Board's equity policy?

The Metropolitan Board of Education serves a very diverse citizenry. Its student population is approximately 120,000 and its annual budget is approximately \$1.2B.

There is a 6-member Board of Trustees. Each trustee represents citizens in one of the six regions. Each region serves approximately the same number of pupils but differs in other ways.

Regions 1 (Centre City) and Region 2 (Parkland) encompass part of the city's downtown core and extend out to the suburbs. Centre City's population includes many of the workers who are part of the City's large hospitality industry as well as the clerical and technical staff that work in the City. Parkland's population includes many retirees who have returned to the City's core, younger families, and the residents of a suburban area that has developed in the last 15-20 years because of construction of a major freeway. That suburb is home to many of the service workers and clerical and technical workers who are employed downtown.

Regions 3 (Metro Ville) and 4 (City Island), like Regions 1 and 2 are each located in the city. Metro Ville includes a large population of apartment dwellers roughly divided between renters

and residents of the City's social housing. Located in City Island are the light industries that remain in the community (plumbing and electrical supply and repair companies, a server-farm, a manufacturer of chains and fasteners, etc.) and the homes of those who work in those industries – residents living in semi-detached row houses. About half of City Island's families live in apartments that have been built where the warehouse district was once located.

Region 5 (University Hills), as its name implies, is the site of a major research university. The population of the region is, compared to the other regions, quite affluent. The population includes many of the non-academic staff at the University and its affiliated hospital and most of its professional staff.

Region 6 (Middleton) is a region primarily populated by middle-income families and individuals. Some reside in single-family homes and others in older apartments and newer condominiums. Many of the school-age children in in Middleton come from two-income families.

Metropolitan Board of Education has two priorities. Improving outcomes for students and reducing or eliminating educational inequalities.

One of the Board's policies states ***“The Metropolitan Board of Education (MBE) believes that public education is an important force for overcoming social and educational inequalities. Therefore, The MBE expects that the Director of Education (Director) will work to ensure equity among students and in the treatment of students, parents, staff, and community.”*** The Director of Education proposed, and the Board accepted, the interpretation of equity to mean ***“the impartial assignment of opportunities, rewards, and punishments in light of the careful consideration of the needs and circumstances of students, schools, and school communities.”***

Decisions about programming and operations are the purview of the Director and the Director's team. Trustees must decide whether the Director of Education is following its policy as stated above, considering the Director's justification for the decisions made.

1. When Clara Rose, a chemistry teacher, received the Governor General's Award for Excellence in teaching the publicity it attracted (television, Facebook, podcasts, Twitter, newspapers) prompted a flood of requests from parents to allow their offspring to enroll in her Chemistry 11 classes. To manage the flood of requests, the school proposed, and the Director approved, the following criteria (in priority order) for determining eligibility to enroll.
 - a. Grade attained in Science 10
 - b. Recommendation of the guidance counsellor that the nominee had a good chance of having honour roll status in grade 11 and 12
 - c. Participation in extra-curricular activities

Response format for each case: The director is following the Board's equity policy The director is NOT following the Board's equity policy

Please explain your response:

2. The hospitality industry in the City is booming and there are employment opportunities for qualified high school students to begin a career in culinary arts. There is only one high school, located in the far eastern part of the city, that is equipped with a commercial kitchen for providing such a program. The Director approved the location of the program in that school. The program accommodates 140 students per year. Students in the school will be given priority access and the places will be open to any student in any region of the school district, but every applicant must provide her or his own transportation.

 The director is following the Board's equity policy The director is NOT following the Board's equity policy

Please explain your response:

3. Over the years, the Metropolitan Board of Education has seen attrition of high-performing high school students whose parents have enrolled them in private schools that offer the International Baccalaureate Program. The principal of University Hills High School has proposed, and the Director approved that University Hills Secondary School can offer the

International Baccalaureate program. The Director argues that, although the MBE will have to license the right to offer the program, the retention of market share will be worth the additional expense that she feels confident can be raised by the parents' committee.

The director is following the Board's equity policy

The director is NOT following the Board's equity policy

Please explain your response:

4. There are several courses offered throughout the MBE that are materials intensive (photography, furniture design, culinary arts, film production). The Director has decided that students enrolled in those courses must pay a materials fee equivalent to the wholesale cost of the consumable materials required.

The director is following the Board's equity policy

The director is NOT following the Board's equity policy

Please explain your response:

5. The MBE has excellent music programs the students in which have won accolades. Enrollments have increased steadily over the years. The district's stock of instruments is aging, but the MBE does not have the resources to refresh them. It plans to announce that,

beginning in two years' time, students who wish to enroll in the music programs will need to supply their own instruments.

The director is following the Board's equity policy

The director is NOT following the Board's equity policy

Please explain your response:

6. The Director has approved a breakfast program for all elementary school students in the four regions of the MBE that are in the centre of the City because the Director believes provision of a breakfast program will benefit elementary school students whose families experience food insecurity. The program will require \$20M/year. Although costly, the Director believes strongly that such a program will produce better school attendance and more positive educational outcomes.

The director is following the Board's equity policy

The director is NOT following the Board's equity policy

Please explain your response:

7. The Director has authorized the establishment of a Mom & Tots program in Region 3 (Metro Ville) that has the largest population of newcomers who speak languages other than English. The Director believes that having such a program will smooth the transition to

kindergarten for students that often struggle in their initial entry to school, hastening their language development and the language development of their mothers so the toddler's language English language skills are reinforced by an adult in the home.

The director is following the Board's equity policy

The director is NOT following the Board's equity policy

Please explain your response:

8. The MBE offers a suite of alternative programs, several which are designed to retain students who, in the absence of those programs, might leave prior to graduation. The class sizes at these alternative schools are set below the contractual limits in the teachers' collective agreement to allow the teachers more time to meet the needs of the students.

The director is following the Board's equity policy

The director is NOT following the Board's equity policy

Please explain your response:

9. The Director has approved the establishment of an outdoor-adventure school experience for middle school students. But, to provide sufficient supervision, parents must volunteer and pay for their own food and accommodation.

- The director is following the Board's equity policy
- The director is NOT following the Board's equity policy

Please explain your response:

10. For a variety of reasons there are schools in the MBE that are sought by parents of students from outside their catchment areas. Provision is made for cross-catchment enrollment on a space-available basis. The Director authorizes a plan to allow schools to prioritize applications on a first come first served basis after accommodating parents of children whose siblings attended the same school (legacy registration).

- The director is following the Board's equity policy
- The director is NOT following the Board's equity policy

Please explain your response:

11. For many years, the MBE has offered full-day kindergarten for students in school located in communities faced by economic challenges. A disproportionate number of the children in these schools come to school without knowledge of their colours, shapes, numbers, and letters. These communities are also ones in which newcomers to Canada initially settle. Many of the children of these newcomers do not speak English. A significant proportion of the children in these schools are Indigenous.

The MBE research department has been following the educational trajectories of these students. It has found that the initial gains made by the students in these schools fade by the beginning of grade three and they graduate from school in the same proportion as their peers who have only had the benefit of half-day kindergarten, the norm in most of the schools in the MBE. Having learned of these results, the director decides that the MBE will no longer support a full-day kindergarten program. The Director decided to use the savings from cancelling the full-day kindergarten program to mount a professional learning program for all primary teachers intended to build their capacity for developing early literacy and numeracy.

The director is following the Board's equity policy

The director is NOT following the Board's equity policy

Please explain your response:

12. Parent fund-raising occurs in most of the schools in the MBE. A few schools raise quite large sums of money each year. The majority raise moderate amounts, and a few very little. In keeping with the Board's equity policy, the Director of Education has announced that, beginning in the next school years, all schools in the MBE will be taxed 25% of the funds raised by parents. Those funds will be re-allocated to schools to create greater equity among schools.

The director is following the Board's equity policy

The director is NOT following the Board's equity policy

Please explain your response:

Please use the space below to comment on any facet of the survey.