



2021 Summer Programs Report

To: Program and School Services Committee

Date: 6 October, 2021

Report No.: 10-21-4171

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

Recommendation

It is recommended that the 2021 Summer Programs Report be received.

Context

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, all Toronto District School Board (TDSB) programs for the 2021 summer term were again offered remotely. While both in-person and remote instruction had been planned in anticipation of changing Toronto Public Health and Ministry of Education guidelines, the TDSB decided in early May to deliver a fully remote summer program due to safety concerns for students and staff.

Nearly 37,400 children, youth, and adult learners from across the city benefited from Continuing Education's wide range of online remote program offerings.

Elementary Opportunities

Early Years

Across 13 TDSB sites, over 150 students, ages 3 to 6, participated in the remote 'Inspired to Excel Early Years Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten Summer Learning' Program. Inspired to Excel connects play and learning to children's identity, lived experiences, and interests while affirming the cultural capital of families and their communities as partners within the learning journey. This summer learning experience focused on play and inquiry-based experiences while embedding strong

literacy and numeracy practices for student development through Africentric and Culturally Relevant and Responsive frameworks.

A special component of this remote learning program was a backpack/resource package filled with rich and intentional resources that each participating family received. The resource package was centered around their child(ren)'s unique lived experiences, identity and culture and included a variety of picture books and materials to support literacy and numeracy development through play and inquiry. Alongside the curricular experiences, Inspired to Excel students and families had the opportunity to engage in rich and relevant cultural learning opportunities in partnership with community-based arts educators. Each site participated in virtual African Drumming, Storytelling, Visual Arts, West African Dance and Reggae sessions where children were able to extend their understanding of self and explore methods of creative expression. Throughout the summer learning program, capacity-building sessions were provided to educators to deepen their understanding of Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP), principles of Africentricity, teaching and learning using online platforms, and establishing responsive relationships through remote learning environments. Educators also had opportunities to further build their capacity and reflect on their practice within their educator teams, in collaboration with learning coaches throughout the program.

Special Education

Special Education programs welcomed 280 students remotely at five virtual school sites. The summer school programs offered included Physical Disability classes Grades 1 to 8, Deaf Hard of Hearing classes Kindergarten to 8, and Developmental Disability classes Grades 1 to 12. Each remote summer school program was supported by a Principal, between 8 and 10 teachers, two Educational Assistants (EAs) and two Child and Youth Workers (CYW). In addition, four Focus on Youth students supported each site. Each site published a weekly newsletter which included educational resources, links to community agencies, TDSB Virtual Library and technology support. Each student was given a sensory kit that was used throughout the program. To provide students, as well as families/caregivers, with multiple means by which to engage and participate in distance learning, both synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning opportunities were embedded throughout the program. A predictable weekly schedule was created and implemented at each site whereby each day included a variety of activities such as a morning circle, drop-in activities, target teaching, self-directed learning, a movement break, and goodbye circle. Many virtual field trips and online presenters enhanced the programs. CYW staff members offered weekly drop-in sessions focusing on social skills and self-regulation to each team for a total of four sessions each week.

Elementary Literacy and Numeracy

This year, 8,850 students participated in the Remote Learning Elementary Summer School Program offered to students in grades K to 8. Programs were locally developed to best respond to the needs and interests of each school community. Literacy and Numeracy learning was embedded within a variety of subject areas such as STE(A)M, Arts, Global Competencies, and Indigenous Education. Students had the opportunity to engage in rich and relevant learning with community-based

arts educators through storytelling, visual arts, African drumming, and reggae/socasize. All these experiences were grounded in an equitable, culturally relevant and Africentric standpoint.

This summer, students had the opportunity to participate in an Indigenous Day assembly conducted by TDSB Focus on Youth students and supported by TDSB Indigenous Culture & Traditions Instructor, Thunder Jack. This presentation discussed the history of Residential Schools, the impact on Residential School Survivors, and the importance of raising awareness to honour the Spirits who did not make it home.

Additionally, the Continuing Education Department facilitated a new summer webinar series for parents and caregivers, aimed at building skills and knowledge needed to support student success at home. The 'Parent/Caregiver Summer Webinar Series' brought together subject expert presenters, for a three-part series in the month of July, focused on Reading, Math and Early Years.

Grade 7 and 8 Math Action Research Project

The TDSB is committed to supporting all students by creating inclusive learning environments with high expectations that meet the needs of all students and support all future education pathways. As part of the Summer Learning Program, the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement launched a 7/8 Math Action Research project with the aim of collectively supporting the TDSB's vision of ending academic streaming in mathematics and ensuring high levels of achievement for all students. Action researchers documented the co-learning experience of their work with host educators in relation to specific self-directed inquiries pertaining to conditions connected to building positive racial mathematics identity in conjunction with the TDSB's de-streaming mathematics plan. These self-directed inquiries had specific areas of focus, which guided the ongoing collaboration and partnership throughout the Summer Learning Program.

In total, eight summer school sites with a total of ten educators were involved in this grade 7/8 Math Action Research project.

International Languages Elementary and African Heritage

The summer International Languages Elementary & African Heritage programs offered half-day instruction remotely in 32 languages to more than 4,200 students from across the city. Arabic, Armenian, American Sign Language, Azerbaijan, Bengali, Bulgarian, Cantonese, Dari, Farsi, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Macedonian, Mandarin Simplified, Mandarin Traditional, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian Russian, Sanskrit, Sinhalese, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil, Telugu, Tigrinya, Twi and Urdu were offered. New languages offered this year included Azerbaijan, Macedonian, Sinhalese, Twi, and Tigrinya. The African Heritage program highlighted culture and contributions of people of African descent.

Secondary Opportunities

International Education - Integrated Orientation and Summer School

The TDSB offered online orientation and summer school for new international students joining the TDSB for the 2021-2022 school year. More than 250 new international high school students completed this online program. Academic programming included courses in English as a Second Language, Drama, Family Studies and Designing Your Future through BrightSpace. Engagement programming was also part of the program through the online platform. A total of 232 credits were earned.

Secondary Credit Remote Summer School

More than 5,700 students across the city attended secondary credit summer programs. Students were able to earn credits, change pathways, earn missing credits, reach ahead, or receive credits not available in their day schools. Fourteen secondary credit schools offered online credit courses to the system including reach-ahead credits to incoming Grade 9 students. Opportunities for students also included experiential learning through summer co-op, and partnerships with York University, University of Toronto, Humber College, Seneca College, George Brown College and Centennial College. Students successfully earned a total of 4,852.5 credits.

Secondary Credit e-Learning

Enrolment in the e-Learning Summer School program remained strong in both July and August with 11,800 students from across Ontario enrolling in high school courses. There was increased interest of teachers in being part of the e-Summer program and their experience in July/August prepared them well for engaging their day school students in online learning opportunities. Areas of study of our courses included Business, English, Career Studies, Civics, Computer Science, Canadian Studies, Family Studies, French, Mathematics, Physical Education, Social Sciences, and Sciences. Many of the Grade 11 and 12 courses were offered at three levels to meet a wide variety of learning needs. This year we introduced a tailor-made course for Grade 8 students about to enter Grade 9. This popular course gave students a positive introduction to high school while adding a credit to their transcript before high school begins for them. Overall, 9,314 credits were earned by students in the July and August sessions

Remote Summer Credit Recovery

Over 2,400 students participated in the TDSB's Remote Summer Credit Recovery Program. The intent of this program was to support students in credit accumulation. Students who earned credits in this program were not successful in one or more courses over the last two years. Students were provided individual 1:1 teacher curriculum support, check-ins, crisis support, advocacy and student-teacher mediation by Child and Youth Counsellors. A total of 2,094.5 credits were recovered.

Focus on Youth

In 2021, the TDSB's Focus on Youth program concentrated on academic and financial supports to over 600 students through work placements, paid co-op placements, and paid training opportunities. The summer program ran both remotely (online) and in-person, in July and August. Paid co-op placements were supported during the school year, in partnership with the Co-op Department and Alternative Schools, in Quadmester 4. In addition to employment, identified student groups were provided with summer nutrition support through grocery gift cards.

Adult Opportunities

Adult High School

Online credit courses were offered to more than 1,100 adult students who enrolled in two of the five adult high schools. These programs enabled adult students working on their Ontario Secondary School Diploma requirements to continue their learning through the summer. A total of 801 credits were earned.

Adult ESL

Close to 1,500 adult learners enrolled in the four-week remote learning Adult ESL program this summer. Classes were held Monday to Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., and a variety of topics were covered according to student needs. Adult Learners also completed two Portfolio-Based Learning Assessment (skill assessment) tasks for their language learning portfolios.

Community Programs - General Interest

More than 550 learners registered and participated in a variety of online courses which included Gentle Yoga, Mediterranean Cooking, Essential French, and Investment Planning. Learners were excited to keep mentally and physically active and engaged, as they learned new hobbies and skills through the summer month.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

N/A

Resource Implications

N/A

Communications Considerations

N/A

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

P019 – Continuing Education

Appendices

N/A

From

Jim Spyropoulos, Executive Superintendent – Human Rights and Indigenous Education at jim.spyropoulos@tdsb.on.ca or at 416-397-3678.

Peter Chang, System Superintendent – Continuing Education, Alternative Schools, Educational Partnerships, International Languages and Summer Programs at peter.chang@tdsb.on.ca or at 416-393-8937.