



**Planning and Priorities Committee
(Special Meeting)
Report No. 01**

PPC:001A
Tuesday, January 4, 2022
Electronic Meeting

Members Present Alexander Brown (Chair), Michelle Aarts, Rachel Chernos Lin, Stephanie Donaldson, Trixie Doyle, Shelley Laskin, James Li, Dan MacLean, Christopher Mammoliti, Chris Moise, Patrick Nunziata, Zakir Patel, Robin Pilkey, Yalini Rajakulasingam, Jennifer Story, Chris Tonks, Manna Wong and Student Trustees Isaiah Shafqat and Evan Woo

Regrets Regrets were received from Trustees Harpreet Gill, Parthi Kandavel, Alexandra Lulka, David Smith and Anu Sriskandarajah

Trustees participated by electronic means in accordance with [amendments to Section 7 of Ontario Regulations 463/97, Electronic Meetings](#)

Part A: Committee Recommendations

1. Students First: A Safe Return to In-Person Learning

The Committee considered the following, moved as business arising following the presentation from staff on the reopening of school (see attached).

Moved by: Trustee Chernos Lin

Seconded by: Trustee Pilkey

The Planning and Priorities Committee **RECOMMENDS:**

Whereas, the Provincial Government has announced a two-week period of virtual learning until at least January 17, 2022; and

Whereas, the memo to Boards of Education from the Ministry of Education, dated December 30, 2021, listed changes to many COVID-19 protocols in schools, including no longer requiring Provincial reporting of COVID-cases, changes to masking requirements, and allowing cohort changes; and

Whereas, Public Health Ontario along with Health Canada and Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) has acknowledged that Omicron is a rapidly spreading, airborne virus and that medical masks and respirators provide better protection than cloth masks; and

Whereas, a variety of education stakeholders have issued calls for a return to in-person learning that prioritizes student and staff safety, including the Ontario Student Trustees' Association- l'Association des Elèves Conseillers et Conseillères de l'Ontario (OSTA-AECO), the Ontario Principals' Council, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, and the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, of which the Toronto District School Board is a member; and

Whereas, throughout the pandemic, child development experts have stressed the primary importance of in-person learning for the sake of student mental health, well-being and cognitive development;

Therefore, be it resolved:

- (a) That the Chair write a letter to the Chief Medical Officer of Health of Ontario, Dr. Kieran Moore, the Minister of Education, Stephen Lecce, the Premier of Ontario, Doug Ford, and Medical Officer of Health for the City of Toronto, Dr. Eileen DeVilla, emphasizing the importance of implementing a variety of important actions in order to ensure school can resume safely, in-person, on January 17, 2022;**
- (b) That the letter in part (a) above, outline the Toronto District School Board's support of Ontario Public School Boards' Association's January 2, 2022 statement, which emphasizes the importance of getting students back to in-person learning safely by providing:**
 - i. Priority access to vaccinations for students and school staff;**
 - ii. Continued access to PCR testing;**
 - iii. N95 masks to school staff as soon as possible;**

iv. Adding COVID-19 to the list of vaccines in the *Immunization of School Pupils Act*;

(c) That the letter in part (a) above, note the importance of a quick and safe return to in-person learning by also ensuring:

- I. That principals continue to report cases of communicable diseases and refuse admittance to students showing symptoms of disease, as per the *Education Act*, and that families and staff continue to be informed of COVID-19 cases in individual classrooms;**
- II. That the Province:**
 - i. continues its commitment to student and staff access to PCR testing in cases of high risk of exposure and suspected COVID-19;**
 - ii. supports and implements a “*Test to Return*” strategy following COVID-19 illness and exposure;**
 - iii. provides funding and supplies of medical masks and respirators (such as N95 and KN95 masks) for students in the same way that they are now providing for education staff;**
 - iv. reimburses all school-board pandemic-related costs and provides enhanced funding for ventilation upgrades, beyond portable HEPA units, to ensure a long-term commitment to student and staff health;**
 - v. commits to fully funding the TDSB COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery Plan and provides enhanced funding for additional staff to ensure its full implementation, which is now more important than ever given the ongoing closures and multiple transitions for students.**

Carried

Part B: Information Only

2. Call to Order and Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands

An electronic meeting of the Planning and Priorities Committee was convened on Tuesday, January 4, 2022 from 4:32 to 6:16 p.m., with Alexander Brown presiding.

3. Declarations of Possible Conflict of Interest

No matters to report

4. Delegations

re Special Education and School Reopening

1. John Weatherup, President Toronto Education Workers/Local 4400

5. Report From the Director of Education on the Reopening of School

The Committee heard a presentation from the staff providing an update on the return to school (see attached).

6. Report From the Chair of the Board

No matters to report

7. Report From Representative on the City's Board of Health

No matters to report

8. Report From the Directors on the Ontario Public School Boards' Association

No matters to report

9. Report From the Chairs of the Governance and Policy Committee, the Program and School Services Committee, the Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee

No matters to report

10. Report From Representatives on the Parent Involvement Advisory Committee and the Special Education Advisory Committee

No matters to report

11. Reports From Student Trustees

The Committee heard a report from Student Trustee Evan Woo providing an update to students, thanking staff and trustees for their effort and hard work over the winter break and spoke about a recent statement from the Ontario Student Trustees Association (OSTA-AECO) unanimously calling for improved communication and guidance from the Ministry of Education.

12. Emergency Motions

No matters to report

13. Other Questions, Insights and Advice From Trustees to Staff

No matters to report

14. Adjournment

On motion of Trustee Moise, seconded by Trustee Story, the meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Part C: Ongoing Matters

No matters to report

Submitted by: Alexander Brown

Update on the Reopening of School

Planning and Priorities Committee

January 4, 2022





Agenda

- Remarks from Director of Education
- Guiding Principles
- Student Learning and Well-Being
- Supporting Students with Special Education Needs
- Health and Safety
- Technology
- Timelines to Switch to Virtual Learning
- Future Updates



Guiding Principles

- Continue to build on the successes from our previous remote learning experiences
- Support staff to ensure remote learning is engaging and supportive of students
- Focus on incorporating mental health and well-being resources and activities into programs
- Prioritize equity of access, outcome and experience
- Affirm and respect student identity at the centre of our teaching and learning



Student Learning

More than 240,000+ students and staff will shift to remote learning until at least January 17.

The [Guidelines for Moving From In-Person to Remote Learning](#) support administrators in moving to remote learning covering:

- Expectations
- Attendance
- Communication
- Device Distribution

Elementary and Secondary Virtual Learning Classes continue.

Fostering meaningful learning and engagement every day through:

- Authentic real-world challenges into learning
- Well-being activities
- A variety of groupings to allow students' voices and ideas to be shared
- Mini-lessons with direct instruction and time to practice and deepen understanding of key concepts
- Critical and creative thinking and problem-solving
- Assessment for/as learning

Student Mental Health and Well-Being

- Participating in virtual daily well-being activities
- Students/School Staff/Caregivers/Families having access to culturally relevant/responsive community agencies
- Additional Social Work/Child and Youth Care/Child and Youth Workers
- Immediate well-being supports for students right in the virtual classroom
- Virtual Lounges that students/caregivers/families/educators and use, during school and at home, for calm and wellness.
- Virtual Office Hours for Caregivers/Families Tues 10am-11am; Tues 7-8pm; Students with Special Educational Needs/Complex Needs Wed 7-8pm
- [Winter Well-Being Guide](#) – available in TDSB top 18 spoken languages





Supporting Students with Special Education Needs

TDSB is committed to providing in-person instruction for students with complex medical and/or special education needs who cannot be accommodated remotely.

- Schools are currently contacting families to engage in discussions on how students can be accommodated remotely.
- For the limited number of students where accommodation is not possible via remote-learning, Principals will ensure a plan is in place (including appropriate staffing, PPE, transportation etc.)

Supporting Students with Special Education Needs

- Beginning January 5, remote learning will be available for all students
- For those students who can only be accommodated in-person, Elementary and Secondary congregated sites and ISP classes (other than Gifted) will be ready to welcome and receive students based on school readiness at the end of this week/early next week



Health and Safety

- While medical masks remain the standard, N95 masks have been provided to all schools and administrative sites for TDSB staff working on site
- PCR tests remaining in schools are for symptomatic students and staff
- Rapid Antigen Tests are available for non-vaccinated staff
- Screening tool is being updated based on Ministry and Toronto Public Health



Technology

- Remote Learning Technology Strategy:
 - Device lending for Students
 - Device needs of Staff
 - Vendor Readiness
 - IT Services Readiness
 - Student Virtual Learning help line
 - Google Form intake process to collect parent/student questions
- Devices unreturned from students will be temporarily unlocked



Timelines for Switch to Virtual Learning

Elementary

- No change to Switch Form dates and process.

Secondary

- Re-open Switch Form from January 5 - 7
- May impact calendar of hubbing planned for Semester 2
- Communication to Trustees, Admin, Teachers, Parents/Guardians, and Students



Future Updates

- Case Management & Reporting
- Testing
- Staff Absences
- Short-term Virtual Learning
- Music
- Extracurricular