Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin

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Toronto District School Board
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Dear friends,

On November 15th, the new Board of Trustees was sworn in for the 2022-2026 term. I am so grateful for the support and trust given to me by Ward 11 constituents, and am really looking forward to serving students, families and communities over the next four years.

After all trustees were sworn in, our Board held its annual Organizational Meeting, where our Chair and Vice Chair were elected and trustees were appointed by the board to committees and to seats on outside boards.

I am pleased to announce that as the first order of business at that meeting, I was elected Chair of the Board. I am thrilled to take on this new leadership role and am looking forward to working together with my Vice Chair, Neethan Shan (Ward 17, Scarborough Centre), our Director of Education, and the rest of our Board of Trustees -- half of whom are returning, and and half of whom are newly-elected -- to move our Multi-Year Strategic Plan forward in support of all students and the TDSB.

As Chair of the Board, I now have an automatic seat (and vote) on all Standing Committees, as opposed to a seat on just one, as well as a seat on the Audit Committee. In addition, at our Organizational Board meeting, I was appointed to represent the TDSB at the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (aka OPSBA -- this time as an alternate, not a Director), and I will continue in my role as Co-Chair of the French as a Second Language Committee (FSLAC). I have chosen to cut down on some of the other committee work that I loved and worked on in my first term (such as the Inner City Community Advisory Committee), but with the additional work that comes with being Chair of the Board, it seemed prudent to take a step back to ensure that I could continue to deliver on my commitment to the students, families and communities of the 24 schools in Don Valley West. I know it will be a challenging and busy year, but I am excited and optimistic about what lies ahead!

Below you will find information regarding changes to my coffee mornings (at least for December), upcoming deadlines (Early French Immersion and Student Interest Programs), and board-wide news and events. So grab a comfy seat and a beverage of your choice, and read on! And as always, feel free to reach out to me by email at Rachel.Chernoslin@tdsb.on.ca.

Warm regards,

Rachel

Rachel Chernos Lin
Chair, TDSB Trustee, Ward 11, Don Valley West
Rachel.Chernoslin@tdsb.on.ca

New Term, new coffee meeting plans!

I am excited to announce that I have decided to hold my first coffee event of the new term IN PERSON at the Leaside Longos, upstairs in the loft. Many of you will remember these Longo's coffee morning gatherings pre-pandemic.

My intention is to alternate between in person and virtual as the year goes on, but I thought it would be nice to try for an in-person gathering before the winter break and to start the new term seeing new and old faces in person.

Please note, I have had to choose an afternoon for this event as it was almost impossible to find a time that worked between now and the winter break for both me and our Ward 11 Superintendents, Andrew Howard and Roni Felsen.

As a result, our upcoming Winter Holiday Coffee will take place Friday, December 9th from 1:00pm to 2:30 pm at the Leaside Longos Loft (upstairs kitchen).

For those of you who are new to our coffee events, these are round-table, informal gatherings where our superintendents and I will give short updates, and then open the floor to discussion about all things education in Ward 11 and the TDSB. Coffee, tea and treats will be provided!

Please register/RSVP

I hope to see many of you on December 9th!

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Labour Update

The Toronto District School Board was happy to see that the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and the Government of Ontario reached a tentative agreement past Sunday, averting a strike and school closures past Monday.

Ontario Public School Boards' Association

Leading Education's Advocates

We thank eveybody for their patience and understanding as we move through these labour developments. We'd also like to thank all staff for their hard work to prepare the system for all possible scenarios.

Please note that this is a tentative agreement and still needs to be ratified by the Union.

Read more in the news release below from OPSBA (the Ontario Public School Boards' Association).

OPSBA News Release (Nov.21): Tentative agreement reached with CUPE

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) is pleased to announce that the Council of Trustees'/School Board Associations (CTA) and the provincial government have successfully negotiated a tentative settlement on central terms of a collective agreement with Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) education workers.

"We're very pleased that students will be in the classroom tomorrow," said OPSBA President Cathy Abraham. "This tentative agreement recognizes the important contributions of our vital education workers and the significant roles they play in our schools."

The details of the agreement remain confidential until ratified by all parties. CUPE has agreed to stop all job action while awaiting ratification of the deal.

OPSBA will continue to negotiate a fair and fully funded agreement with the other unions representing teachers and education workers, with the best interests of students in mind.

Click to read the full media release

Toronto Public Health Update

Last week, Toronto Public Health issued an important message with regard to a number of steps that can be taken to help keep children and others safe from an increase in respiratory viruses among children including Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), Influenza and COVID-19.

Please note that Toronto Public Health, together with Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, **strongly recommends** the wearing of a well-fitted mask in indoor public settings, including in schools and childcares.

Please read the full TPH message here. Topics covered include masking, vaccinations, staying home when sick, cleaning hands, cleaning surfaces - and includes links to further resources. ***Please note, a representative from TPH will be coming to our upcoming Board meeting on December 7th to present their latest data and advice.***

Combatting Hate

According to the first study of antisemitism and Holocaust knowledge — conducted by Western University and Liberation75 in 2021 — 42 per cent of students surveyed said they have unequivocally witnessed an antisemitic event. This study also found that one in three students think the Holocaust was fabricated, exaggerated or are unsure if it actually happened.
On November 9th, Ontario became the first jurisdiction in North America to make Holocaust education compulsory in Grade 6 beginning in 2023. In addition, the Ministry of Education will work with the Ontario College of Teachers to develop professional leaning, also known as an Additional Qualification to prepare teachers so they can further support efforts to educate students on the Holocaust.
You can read the news release here: Ontario Strengthening Holocaust Education to Counter Rising Antisemitism.

As it happens, I had the pleasure of attending this historic announcement along with students from St. Andrews Middle School and Northern Secondary School (two Ward 11 schools). Students had the opportunity to attend a round-table discussion and Q and A with the Minister of Education and two Holocaust survivors, and our students demonstrated curiosity, empathy, and a genuine interest in connecting with each other and the adults at the table (see picture). Grade 6 is a crucial time to introduce this topic in the curriculum as our data shows that the majority of antisemitic events in our schools occur in Middle School years. The hope is that by providing this education earlier, we will prevent this from happening.

We know there is much work to be done addressing all forms of hate and bias, and while we are thrilled to see this curriculum change for 2023, we will continue to advocate for curriculum to address all forms of hate and bias in our schools.

Early French Immersion (JK Entry) Application: DEADLINE November 25!

Early French Immersion now begins in Junior Kindergarten. For families interested in the Toronto District School Board's system-wide French Immersion Program, we offer an online process to apply for Early French Immersion to those who will be entering JK in September 2023. An offer of placement in the program (not a specific school) is guaranteed to all on-time applicants. To apply to the Early French Immersion program for September 2023, please complete an online application - the deadline is Friday, November 25, 2022.
Visit the TDSB website for more information about Early French Immersion and the Application Process.

Preparing for High School - Information

To support our Grade 8 students and families, the TDSB provides various information and sessions to prepare for High School.

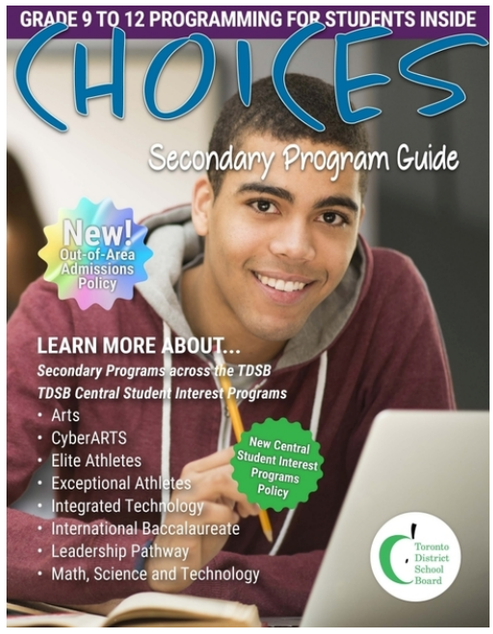
A Grade 8 to 9 Transition Information Session took place on November 1, 2022, The recording to re-watch it at your leisure is on the Parent & Community Engagement Offfice (PCEO) Youtube Channel, here: youtu.be/oGcLBuX67M0

These are links that were shared with families:

- Open Houses and Information Sessions
- TDSB Beyond 8 website
- Beyond 8: Transitioning from Grade 8 to 9 video
- Choices: Planning for Grade 9
- Central Student Interest Programs (also see item below)
- Out of Area Admissions
- Alternative Schools in the TDSB (also see link below)
- Community Involvement
- TDSB Grade 8 Course Selection with myBlueprint
- Grade 8 Transition Year - At a Glance

Also, make sure to check out the Grade 8 to 9 Seconday Alternative Schools Fair video!

Central Student Interest Programs: DEADLINE November 25, 4pm



The online application for central student interest programs is open! Visit the TDSB web pages for elementary programs (arts-focus, cyberarts, and elite athlete programs; application information) and secondary programs (including Arts, IB/International Baccalaureate, Math/Science/Technology and others; application information), to learn about each of the programs, review program and application requirements, get dates for upcoming open houses and webinars and all application timelines.

On November 3, Board staff hosted a Student Interest Program Webinar. Over 5,000 people were in attendance and it has been watched on YouTube an additional 5,100+ times. The video is available on the (secondary) Central Student Interest Program Website (www.tdsb.on.ca/CSIP) along with the webinar slides, a list of the links shared through the chat and links to a comprehensive Q & A.

The application launched on the afternoon of Monday, November 7. Students and their parents/guardians and caregivers are encouraged to attend Open Houses to learn more about various programs before submitting their final application. *An application received on Friday, November 25 has equal standing with the first application submitted*.

Please note, the application process closes at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, November 25. Late applications will not be accepted.

Post-Secondary Information

Check out the following upcoming events for students preparing for their post-high school years!

- Dec.1: **Ontario Universities Fair** - Virtual Info Session
- Dec.12: **Skilled Trades and Manufacturing - Career Fair & Training Expo** - Sheraton Centre Toronto (123 Queen St W)

Update Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week: November 20-26

The TDSB recognizes Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week (BAPW) runs from November 20-26, 2022 with school boards across the province. This week is an opportunity to remember the impact that bullying can have on a school community and to talk about the ways we can report, support and prevent bullying in our schools.

As a system, the TDSB focuses on prevention efforts and creating a welcoming school community – both in-person and online. Staff and students are engaged through events, activities and prevention programming and encouraged to take on leadership roles to enhance the school community. Supporting a positive school climate is one of the most important ways to support students' well-being. The TDSB is committed to working to strengthen relationships between students and school adults and improving overall school climate to create inviting and engaging learning spaces where student want to be.

We have a responsibility to respond to incidents of bullying, to support the affected individuals, hold students accountable and address issues that may have contributed to the situation and help prevent them from happening again. This work is supported by a number of TDSB policies and procedures, including:

- Promoting a Positive School Climate Procedure
- Caring and Safe Schools Policy
- Respectful Learning and Working Environment Policy
- Student Attendance and Safe Arrival Policy
- Board Code of Conduct Procedure
- Programs for Students on Long-Term Suspensions and Expulsions Procedure

To support the TDSB and the Ministry's commitment to the prevention of bullying and cyberbullying, we are pleased to share that the ministry is launching a new section on the Virtual Learning Environment called the Safe and Healthy Schools Hub. The Hub will include policies and legislation, resources created or funded by the ministry and links to external community organizations. The Hub will support educators, by making resources easier to find and more accessible. To access the Hub, including resources to assist with planning for BAPW activities, please visit community.elearningontario.ca/d2l/le/discovery/view/course/21515424

Learn more about how we support students, bullying prevention programs that we offer and the educational partners we work with to support anti-bullying initiatives in our schools and classrooms. Follow along on social media with #TDSBbekind and join the conversation with stories of kindness.

2022-2023 School Council Innovation Grant

The 2022-2023 School Council Innovation Grant (formerly PRO Grant) application opened to all School Councils on November 21st, 2022. Application Deadline is December 9 (5pm). To learn more about the grant, please visit School-Council-Innovation-Grant.

PIAC Conference: Postponed

In light of various challenges, the 16th annual parent/caregiver Ready - Set - Engage conference from PIAC (the Board's Parent Involvement Advisory Committee) has been postponed until the Spring (the event was originally scheduled for Sunday, November 27).

Titled *Bridging the Gap*, this virtual conference will offer (among other things) free, curated workshops that are designed to build and strengthen greater positive experiences for parents, guardians, and caregivers alike, while navigating the elementary and secondary years at the TDSB, Canada's largest school board. Workshops span a diverse range of subjects such as: School Council 101, Parent Engagement, TDSB Consultations, Student Advocacy, School Improvement Plans, and more.

Mental Health and Well Being

The TDSB's Professional Support Staff (PSS) are here to help with anything you need to support your mental health and well-being and to help you navigate the tools and resources you may need. During these times it is especially important.
For more information, please click www.tdsb.on.ca/Elementary-School/Supporting-You/Mental-Health-and-Well-Being-Professional-Support-Staff-PSS.
Please note the staff holds regular virtual office drop-in sessions (see the calendar on the same web page).
Kids Help Phone is available 24/7 for ages 5-29 for anonymous care from professional counsellors. Call 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868

Input from over 2,400 students across Ontario indicated that students want greater access to tools & resources to support their mental health, cope with stress and navigate peer support safely. School Mental Health Ontario has this latest report online in addition to many resources - click smho-smso.ca/blog/online-resources/hearnowon-2021-student-voices-on-mental-health-final-report/.

Image Everybody (by Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation):

Exciting news: Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital recently launched it's disability inclusion campaign, ***Imagine Everybody.***

Image Everybody is part of Holland Bloorview's ongoing effort to confront stigma and amplify the voice of its patients and families. Imagine Everybody builds on the success of our award-winning Dear Everybody campaign that brought widespread attention to the importance of disability inclusion. This year, Holland Bloorview kids and youth were asked what they imagine for themselves - highlighting some of their stories to help people rethink and change our perceptions of disability. We want to spark the world's imagination so we can all work together to create a world that is inclusive, accessible, and free from ableism.

As part of its campaign, Holland Bloorview offers FREE and interactive, educational workshops on disability inclusion and ableism that are delivered by young people with lived experience with disability. Their team is available to present live or virtually at workplaces, schools or community groups.

You can check out www.imageeverybody.ca for more information, or follow Holland Bloorview on Twitter (@HBKidsHospital) or Instagram (@HollandBloorview)

Spread the word, and check out the opportunities to contibute!

Active School Travel webinars

Green Communities Canada, in partnership with the Clean Air Partnership's The Centre for Active Transportation (TCAT), is hosting a series of webinars to provide key insights from their policy recommendations report, sharing best practices for traffic calming and winter maintenance. The remaining two sessions will take place at noon ET on November 25, and December 2, 2022.

- ***November 25: Traffic Calming and Active School Travel in Ontario***
  This session will explore Ontario-based case studies where traffic calming measures have been harnessed to enhance and encourage active school travel.
  Info & Register here.
- ***December 2: Winter Snow Maintenance and Active School Travel***
  This session will explore snow maintenance and its critical role in encouraging active school travel during winter months.
  Info & Registration here.

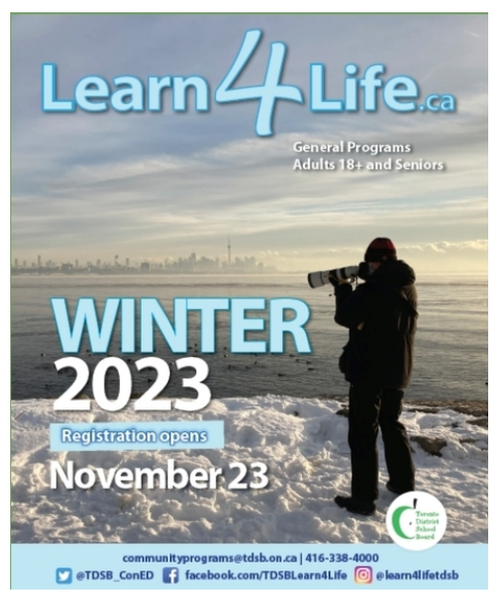
It is recommended to read the Investigation of Supportive Policy for Active School Travel Report in advance of the sessions.
Note: the first webinar, "Policy Recommendations to Support Active School Travel " was held November 18.

TDSB Learn 4 Life : Registrations open

Learn4Life (Adult General Interest Courses) registration opened Wednesday, November 23.

A list of courses is posted on the website (full brochure), with remote and in-person courses available. Courses will start January 2023

For more information - learn4life.ca.



TDSB Winter Outerwear Drive: Donations needed!

It is never too early to help families prepare for the winter season. The TDSB holds an annual Winter Outerwear Drive to help ensure that all students have warm winter outerwear to get to and from school, and are prepared to participate in all of the fun outdoor activities winter has to offer. You can support our students and their families by donating warm winter coats, pants, hats, gloves, and boots

Our need for winter outerwear is greater this year. Canada is welcoming newcomer families from Ukraine & Afghanistan, to name a few, and the TDSB is welcoming many of these newly-arrived students into our schools. Newcomer students are adjusting to their first Canadian winter and can benefit from your generous support. The students need proper winter outerwear such as coats, boots, mitts and hats to be able to attend school.

This year's Winter Outerwear Drive will run from October 2022 to the end of February 2023

To learn more (including how to donate money via schoolcashonline) on the TDSB website.

Policy Consultations

Everybody is always welcome to read the draft policies from the TDSB, provide your comments, including suggestions on the wording and provisions, questions or recommendations. Please use the contact information below. For more information surf to www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Policies-Procedures-Forms/Policy-Consultations.

- Sexual Misconduct Policy - To prevent sexual misconduct from taking place and to investigate and respond to incidents and complaints of such behavior in an accountable, timely and effective manner.
  - Draft Policy (Word; PDF)
  - Survey
  - E-mail comments until January 8, 2023 to Maria.Valente-deSa@tdsb.on.ca

Youth Climate Action Grants: Application Deadline December 5

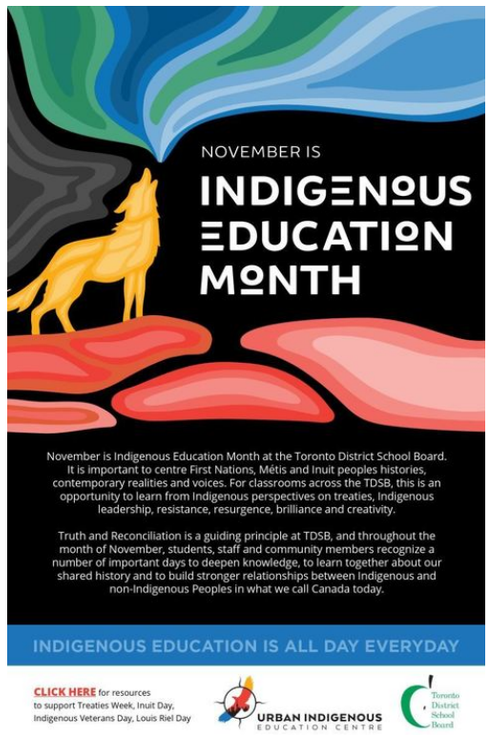
Calling all TDSB students! City of Toronto grants of up to $1,000 are available to student groups who want to foster climate action projects in their schools and communities. Applications for grant funding are now open and the deadline to apply is December 5, 2022.

The TDSB's EcoSchools team is available to support student groups develop their action projects and assist with best practices for grant writing proposals. For more information about the grant program, visit Youth Climate Action Grants.

2023 Prime Minister's Teaching Awards: nominations open!

Do you know a terrific teacher or early childhood educator? Consider nominating them for a 2023 Prime Minister's Award! This program honours the remarkable educational achievements and commitment of elementary and secondary school teachers, as well as early childhood educators. Looking for inspiration? Check out previous teaching and early childhood education award recipients.
For nomination information, see 2023 nomination packages. The nomination deadline is January 27, 2023.

Heritage & History Months



The Toronto District School Board is proud to celebrate the following heritage and history months in November.

- **Indigenous Education Month**: an important reminder to centre First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives, voices, histories, and contemporary realities across the TDSB. It is an opportunity to learn from Indigenous perspectives on treaties, Indigenous leadership, achievements, resurgence, futurities, and creativity.
  For more information please read this TDSB news release and surf to the web pages for the TDSB Urban Indigenous Education Centre.

- **Hindu Heritage Month**
  This year's theme as selected by the TDSB Hindu Heritage Month Volunteer Planning Committee is: Bhoomi Devi: Our Sacred Mother Earth. For more more information read this TDSB news item and follow @tdsb_HHM on Twitter.

2022-2023 School Year Calendar

Mark your calendars! Upcoming Professional Activity and Professional Development days are December 2 and January 13 (elementary only), February 2 (high schools only) and then February 17 (both elementary and high schools).

There are no classes for students on the dates listed above (also check out the Days of Significance Calendar and the key school calendar dates listed below).

KEY DATES - SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR
2022-2023

The official school year calendar for the Toronto District School Board runs from September 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, inclusive.

Professional Activity Days	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	June
Elementary Schools	6	7	18	2	13	17,	2
Secondary Schools	6	7	18			2, 17	29, 30

Designation of Professional Activity Days	
Elementary	**Secondary**
1. September 6, 2022 – Professional Development 2. October 7, 2022 – Professional Development 3. November 18, 2022 – Parent Teacher Conferences 4. December 2, 2022 – Professional Development 5. January 13, 2023 – Assessment and Reporting 6. February 17, 2023 – Parent Teacher Conferences 7. June 2, 2023 – Assessment and Reporting	1.September 6, 2022 – Professional Development 2.October 7, 2022 – Professional Development 3.November 18, 2022 –Professional Development 4.February 2, 2023–Professional Development 5.February 17, 2023–Professional Development 6.June 29, 2023- Professional Development 7.June 30, 2023 – Professional Development

EQAO: - The following dates have been established:

Gr. 9 Math: TBD
Gr. 9 Math: TBD
OSSLT: TBD
Primary/Junior EQAO: TBD

Dates to Remember - School Year Holidays (as per Ministry of Education)	
Labour Day:	September 5, 2022
Thanksgiving:	October 10, 2022
Winter Break:	December 26, 2022 – January 6, 2023
Family Day:	February 20, 2023
Mid-Winter Break:	March 13 - 17, 2023
Good Friday:	April 7, 2023
Easter Monday:	April 10, 2023
Victoria Day:	May 22, 2023

As always, feel free to reach out to me with any questions, comments or concerns!

~Rachel

Rachel Chernos Lin, Chair, Toronto District School Board and Ward 11 Trustee,

Don Valley West

Rachel.Chernoslin@tdsb.on.ca

If you notice anything at a school that concerns you, please call the TDSB 24-hour Call Centre (416) 395-4620, 311 Toronto, and/or Toronto Police Services Dispatch (non-emergencies via 416-808-2222).

If you or a family member is in crisis, please contact Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 or get support right now by texting CONNECT to 686868.

Toronto District School Board

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