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October 2019 Newsletter

Labour Update: CUPE Job Action

On Monday, Sept. 30, 2019, CUPE members began job action (work-to-rule), which involves the partial withdrawal of services. At the TDSB, CUPE represents school support staff, such as caretakers, lunchroom supervisors, office/clerical staff and Designated Early Childhood Educators.

The job action of partial withdrawal of services includes (but is not limited to):

- Not sweeping hallways, office areas and gymnasiums
- Not doing school compost or recycling programs
- Not cutting grass, shovelling or completing other ground maintenance duties
- Not collecting or accepting money for school-related initiatives and fundraising

Schools will remain open during this work-to-rule and instructional programs will continue to run. We will continue to update parents/guardians and staff with new information as soon as it becomes available.

For more information, read the [full list of job actions](#), [work-to-rule instructions by job classification](#) and the [letter to parents/guardians](#) from Chair Pilkey and Director Malloy. For on-going labour updates, please visit the TDSB webpage for [Labour Negotiations](#) and follow [@tdsb](#) on Twitter.

Share Your Voice: Exemption on Health and Physical Education Curriculum

On August 21, 2019, the Ministry of Education issued a memo ([PPM 162](#)) regarding exemption from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health Expectations in the Ontario Curriculum: Health and Physical Education, Grades 1-8, 2019.

To help us develop a procedure to implement this, we want to hear from our school communities.

The [online consultation](#) is now available until **Saturday, Oct. 12, 2019**.

TDSB Releases EQAO and OSSLT Results

On Wednesday, Sept. 25, the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) released achievement results and the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is proud that results remain strong.

When compared to the province, [2018-19 EQAO results for TDSB students in Grades 3 and 6](#) show that a higher proportion are performing at or above the provincial standard in five of the six assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. This has been a consistent trend over the past five years, with a higher proportion of TDSB students continually performing at the highest level of EQAO.

To learn more, please read the full [news release](#) and visit the TDSB webpage for [Achievement and EQAO](#).

French-as-a-Second-Language: Question and Answers

At the June 2019 Board meeting, recommendations to change the Intensive French-as-a-Second Language programs in the TDSB were passed. For your information, please see the [FSL Program Review Recommendations Q & A](#) that has been prepared.

Additional details regarding TDSB French programs, including the application process and information on who to contact with any further questions, can be found on the [TDSB French Programs](#) webpage.

French Programs Application Deadline

For families interested in the Toronto District School Board's French Immersion or Extended French programs, we offer an online process for applying to:

- Early French Immersion (EFI) which begins in Senior Kindergarten;
- Junior Extended French (JEF) which begins in Grade 4

At this time, we guarantee an offer of placement in the program (not a specific school) to all on-time applicants. The timelines for applying for these programs for September 2020 are:

- Applications for Early French Immersion (for a Junior Kindergarten aged child), must be completed online between November 4, 2019 and November 29, 2019.
- Applications for Junior Extended French must be completed online between January 6, 2020 and January 31, 2020.

Offers of placement within your chosen program will be made to all on-time applicants in the weeks following the close of the application window.

Please note that families with an older sibling currently in a French program are still required to complete an online application for the new student.

For further information about French as a Second Language programs, the application process and important dates, please visit [www.tdsb.on.ca/french](#).

High School Information Nights

To help you make an informed decision when choosing a high school, TDSB schools host information nights for parents and grade 8 students each year between October and January. Learn everything you need to know about our incredible variety of schools, programs and courses. The dates and times for all [High School Information Nights](#) are available online.

Reminder to Call school if Your Child will be Late or Absent

One measure of keeping our students safe is to ensure we can account for any absences or reasons for being late to school. We would like to remind you that if your child is going to be absent or late for any reason, we ask that you contact the school immediately and report the reason for the absence. If we are not informed about the absence, we will make attempts to contact you through our [automated call-out system](#) to determine the reason for the absence.

Please let the office know by calling the school if your contact information, including phone number, changes at any time throughout the school year.

Thank you for your continued cooperation to keep your children safe and accounted for.

Lockdown and Fire Drills

At the beginning of each school year, our students and staff prepare for the year ahead by establishing the foundations for a successful year. One of the ways we know we can help students be successful is to create a safe environment in which to learn. Though no one ever wants to see an emergency happen at a school, it's important for school staff to be equipped to deal with those situations, should these occur.

The safety of students and staff is a top priority at our school and to that end, as with all emergency drills, it is essential that we are prepared and understand the importance of procedures that will help ensure the safety of everyone in our school.

The TDSB has taken steps to ensure your child's safety while in school. Each school has developed emergency preparedness plans that include steps staff will take in the event of an emergency, how staff will get students away from possible dangers, and how students' families will be contacted.

One aspect of emergency preparedness is the lockdown and fire drill. All schools are required to conduct a minimum of two lockdown drills and six fire drills each school year. Lockdown drills, like fire drills, are an essential component to ensuring student and staff safety. It is important that all staff and students are prepared and know how to respond in cases of emergencies. The drills last approximately 5 minutes and ensure plans are effective and can also systematically identify any safety concerns.

Communication is also very important in any emergency situation. The emergency contact information kept on file is important in helping this happen. It lists the people who can pick up a student from the school. If you have not yet provided this information to the office or have updates to the information on file, please make sure our office staff have that information as soon as possible.

Keeping Kids Safe

Drivers are reminded to do their part to keep children safe near school buses.

Drivers should follow these tips:

- Stop and never pass a school bus when its red lights are flashing.
- Leave space around school buses and avoid blocking school bus loading zones so children can enter and exit safely.
- Be prepared to stop for a school bus at any time, not just during school hours.
- Always obey the rules of the road and watch for children, especially in school zones.
- Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks and school crossings.

Parents can also help keep their children safe by reminding them to be aware of their surroundings when they are on or near school buses.

Halloween Safety Tips

Halloween provides an opportunity for parents and children to spend time together creating costumes, carving pumpkins, planning trick or treat activities and participating in family parties. Halloween is a big event at schools and provides opportunities for parties, creative activities, art programs and impromptu history lessons. Halloween is also a time for students, parents, and schools to take extra care to ensure safety and security.

If parents are concerned about trick or treating, here are some basic safety rules to follow:

- Children should NEVER eat any treats until parents have had a chance to go through them and inspect them. Parents should look for tampering of packages and discard any they believe to be unsafe or unknown.
- Have your child carry a flashlight.
- NEVER go into a stranger's house.
- NEVER trick or treat with people you do not know.
- Trick or treat only at homes you know.
- Children should always stay in groups if no parent is present.
- Younger children should ALWAYS be accompanied by an older person.
- Accompany your child when trick or treating.
- If you cannot accompany your child then know the route your child will take.
- Flame resistant (retardant) costumes are in order. Keep costumes short and remind children to stay away from pumpkins with candles in them.
- Remind children to stay away from pets they do not know.
- Remind children of road safety rules. Cross only at corners. Do not criss-cross the road. Go up one side of the road and down the other side. Never cross between parked cars. Walk facing on-coming traffic if there is no sidewalk
- If adults are driving their children, drive slowly, with lights on and be cautious when pulling to the side of the road.
- Children should wear their own shoes when trick or treating. Wearing costume shoes/binds can be dangerous and uncomfortable.
- Remind children that not everyone celebrates Halloween, and to avoid any homes that have no lights on. Also remind children not to run through neighbours yards or gardens.
- With older children, be sure to know what other events (such as parties) they plan on attending.

Set time limits when children should return home.

Celebrate and Recognize

- [October is Somali Heritage Month](#)
- [October is Islamic Heritage Month](#)
- [TDSB Recognizes Orange Shirt Day](#)

TDSB Update

Sign-up for [TDSB Update](#) and stay informed about recent Board decisions and district-wide news.

Follow the TDSB

Join the conversations happening on TDSB's social media communities. You'll find the most up-to-date information about us on our Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts.

- [Twitter @TDSB](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram @Torontodsb](#)