

Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin

Ward 11 • Don Valley West
Toronto District School Board
416-395-8787 • Rachel Chernos Lin@tdsb.on.ca

Dear friends.

It's hard to believe that March Break is finally upon us! I know many of our students, staff and families are looking forward to some downtime, fun and a break from all the routines of school. My family certainly is ready!

As you are likely aware, this week brought a major announcement from the Chief Medical Officer of Health in Ontario (CMOH), Dr. Kieran Moore, with respect to Covid. The detailed memorandum that followed for all Boards of Education included many changes to the risk mitigation measures in schools that help prevent the spread of Covid-19. These include the removal of cohorting, allowing for in-person assemblies, proms and graduations, and the wearing of masks becoming optional as of March 21st.

In my opinion, we are ready for many of these changes now -- including the removal of cohorts (especially outside!), and I am very pleased to see the goahead given for proms and in-person graduations. When it comes to masking, I am keenly aware that personal opinions vary tremendously on these becoming optional -- some never want to see a mask again, while others feel terrified at the thought of them not being required. Over the past two days, I have heard from countless parents, citizens and staff on this issue in particular and know that people have strong feelings on this issue.

At the TDSB, Trustees have always made every effort to ensure as safe and caring a learning environment as possible, as is our duty under the Education Act, while taking into account parent, community and stakeholder advice. While trustees are aware that we must implement the directives laid out by the CMOH, based on a variety of factors we considered last night, I put forward a motion asking the Miniser of Education and Chief Medical Officer of Health to allow the TDSB a little bit more time to implement a phased-in approach to the changes outlined in the memorandum. The motion also asked for specific direction on masking requirements when working with medically-fragile students as this was absent from the directives. With March Break upon us, and many families and staff travelling outside the country, we know a 14 day federal masking requirement will be in effect for some, and it seemed prudent to ensure we took this into account,

as well to allow families and staff time to adjust to these new changes. Some of you are more than ready, while others need more time to understand and prepare. My hope is that the government will consider our measured and practical approach, and that Toronto Public Health can support us in this work with education and advice on implemention of the new directives, as they have throughout the pandemic. I am pleased to say that trustees voted overwhelmingly in favour of this motion, and we will hopefully have an answer from the Province by early to middle of next week. To read the motion passed last night, please click here. Should the Ministry allow the TDSB to alter timelines, more information will be communicated to parents & caregivers.

COFFEE MORNINGS: Please note I have now scheduled three more coffee mornings for the remainder of the school year. Please join me and my Ward 11 Superintendents, Andrew Howard and Roni Felsen, for a casual morning of conversation (9:30-11:30am) about all things education and TDSB. Dates are as follows:

- March 29 (virtual -- details will be provided in next newsletter)
- May 3 (hopefully in person)
- June 7 (hopefully in person)

Finally, I wish everyone a safe, relaxing and fun-filled March Break!

In This Newsletter

- Supporting Ukranian Communities
- Antisemitism and hate
- TDSB Human Library Podcast 2:2 Unpacking Ourselves in Anti-Oppression Work
- Virtual Learning for 2022-23: Registration Deadline March 21
- Covid-19 Vaccination
- Transportation Update: driver shortage and Annual Report
- FSLAC Newsletter: resources, activities, camps, news, and more
- <u>Launched: Towards Independence Newsletter</u>
- CEBSA Newsletter
- Let's Connect About Mental Health and Well-Being
- Parent/Caregiver Academy workshops
- <u>University of Toronto Math for March Break camps</u>
- Backpack and Supply Drive
- Summer Jobs: City of Toronto, Toronto Elections, Centreville
- OPSBA Awards: Nominations Open
- 2021-22 OPSBA Public Property Assessment Network Scholarship
- <u>Skilled Trade Bursary: Nominations For Semester 2 Due March 11</u>
- Learn4Life Adult General Interest Program

- Free Skills Upgrading Classes for Adults in Toronto
- Free Enhanced Language Training for Newcomers
- English Instruction for Adult Newcomers with Free Childcare
- Free Employment Services for Job Seekers in the GTA
- Winter Well-Being Guide
- Mental Health & Well-Being Supports (incl. drop-in hours)
- Hearts & Minds Newletter
- March is Greek Heritage Month
- Sikh Heritage Month & Latin-America History Months Contests
- School Year Calendar

Worth repeating

- February is Kindergarten Registration Month
- Winter Clothing Drive
- Policy Consultation: Naming Schools, Special-Purpose Areas, and Teams (P047)
- New Google Calendar with Events & Activities

Supporting Ukranian Communities

As the world watches the shocking developments in Eastern Europe, our thoughts are with the people of Ukraine and the Ukrainian community here in Toronto. Read the <u>full</u> statement from the Director of Education, and read tips that may be helpful for parents/guardians whose children are experiencing difficulties.

Antisemitism and Hate

Hate and racism in any form has no place in schools and workplaces and we are committed to interrupting and confronting racism, discrimination and hate, in all of its forms when we see or hear it.

Every day, there is an incredible amount of work happening in classrooms and schools every day to support this commitment through professional learning, curriculum resources, encouraging and supporting critical conversations and building connections with each other as well as community organizations to support this important work. Trustees also partake in this learning -- this week we attended a professional development opportunity on Antisemitism and look forward to additional opportunities to learn as part of our own work.

To <u>learn more about the TDSB's strategy</u> and see the associated <u>Action Plan</u>, please click <u>here</u>.

Last month our Director of Education, Colleen Russell-Rawlins, also issued a statement after two recent shocking displays of anti-semtic hate in TDSB schools, including in Ward 11 (acts since then repeated in Toronto schools). On behalf of the entire TDSB, apologies were issued to teachers, students, staff and families who are impacted by these horrific situations.

Please read the <u>full February 22 statement on the TDSB website</u>.

TDSB Human Library Podcast 2:2 - Unpacking Ourselves in Anti-Oppression Work

The <u>Second episode in Season 2 of the TDSB Human Library Podcast Series</u>, **Unpacking Ourselves in Anti-Oppression Work**, is now available.

In this episode, host Shayle Graham sits down with Dr. Nicole West-Burns in this week's episode, to discuss the importance of continuously locating and unpacking ourselves as educators while doing anti-oppression work. Dr. Nicole West-Burns uses Dr. Sealey-Ruiz's work, The Archeology of Self, as one component of understanding this process.

The Beyond the Podcast link for this episode is also available here.

This season of the TDSB Human Library Podcast is grounded in the <u>mandates</u> of the <u>Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement</u> and will introduce audience members to leading scholars, emerging thinkers, and fellow educators passionate about creating learning spaces dedicated to Black student success, well-being and positive racial identity.

Last season's episodes are also still available online

Virtual Learning for 2022-23: Registration Deadline March 21

The Government of Ontario recently announced that all school boards must provide a Virtual Learning option for all elementary and secondary students for the 2022-23 school year.

While we expect a larger number of students to attend In-Person Learning next year, we recognize that some parents/caregivers and students will choose Virtual Learning to meet their needs.

With plans and staffing already underway for September, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is asking families interested in requesting Virtual Learning for the entire 2022-2023

school year to complete a Virtual Learning Registration Form.

If your child will be attending school in-person next year, no action is required.

The <u>Virtual Learning Registration Form</u> is available online now and the deadline to complete is **Monday, March 21 at 11:59 p.m.** Please note, there will be no opportunity to switch in either direction between In-Person and Virtual Learning once the Registration Form closes.

To learn more about Virtual Learning for the 2022-23 school year, including details around program availability, technology, extracurricular activities, etc. please visit www.tdsb.on.ca/VirtualLearning.

If you have more than one child in a TDSB school (Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12), please complete a separate Virtual Learning Registration Form for each child using this same link.

Covid-19 Vaccination

On February 3, I organized a Ward Forum with special guest dr. Janine McCready about Vaccination of Children. Please check out the <u>meeting notes</u>.

Learn more about vaccination for children 5-11:

- Toronto Public Health
- Ministry of Health

How to book an vaccine appointment:

- Book an appointment online at the dark blue "Book a Vaccine" button on toronto.ca/covid-19 or by calling the provincial vaccine booking line at 1-833-943-3900 (TTY 1-866-797-0007).
- Watch for emails from your school for information about school pop-up clinics in your neighbourhood.
- Michael Garron Hospital and East Toronto Health Partners oversees the Thorncliffe
 Hub Vaccination Centre and a variety of pop-ups clinics in Thorncliffe Park and
 Flemingdon Park as well as East Toronto.

For more information, click: <u>wwww.tehp/VaccinePopUps</u>. Upcoming local clinics:

- March 4-20: Thorncliffe Park Community Hub (45 Overlea Blvd). Times vary.
- Mon. March 14: Grenoble Public School (9 Grenoble Dr). 4 8pm or as supply last
- <u>Vaccine Hunters</u> Do-it-yourself resource for finding vaccine related info. Find details
 on eligibility, appointments, walk-ins, pharmacy search tools, vaccine receipts + more!





Transportation Update: driver shortage and Annual Report



The student transportation providers continue to recruit and train drivers on an ongoing basis to maintain sufficient drivers for all routes. A driver shortage typically occurs when a driver is on a COVID-related self isolation leave as mandated by Toronto Public Health. This has forced the temporary cancellation of some bus routes for a period of up to 5 days (if the driver is asymptomatic for 24 hours before returning). To date, there have been relatively minimal service interruptions caused by these driver shortages.

For your information: please find attached the <u>2020-21 TSTG Annual Report</u>, which summarizes activities and plans of the Student transportation group.

FSLAC Newsletter: resources, activities, camps, and news



FSLAC Newsletter March 2022

The French as a Second Language Community Advisory Committee - FSLCAC has published its <u>latest FSLAC newsletter</u> which is again chock full of interesting information, including:

1. New French eBooks in TDSB Virtual Library

- 2. March 10th FSL Youth Leadership Program
- 3. March Break French Fun Ages 6-12
- 4. Workshops for Teens: Brain Boosting
- 5. Concours d'Art Oratoire
- 6. Tweet Out!
- 7. Spotted on Facebook!
- 8. Tandem Exchanges
- 9. Camerise FSL Hub
- 10. Summer Plans?
- 11. Right to Read
- 12. Encore Again Encore
- 13. Rendez-vous!

Towards Independence Newsletter

Welcome to the first edition of the Blind/Low Vision quarterly newsletter *Towards Independence*. This newsletter is written primarily by students, and for students, in the TDSB Blind/Low Vision Program. It is produced in accessible formats including braille, large print, and AODA compliant formatting for screen readers.

There is a visual celebration of braille on the front cover, using SimBraille. SimBraille is a visual



representation of the raised dot formation of braille. The format does not use blocks of print or columns, as typically found in newspapers. This is for ease of access for text-to-speech

CEBSA Newsletter

Check out the fabulous February Newsletter of the

Centre of Excellence for Black Stuent

Achievement, including news about:

- African Heritage Month
- Broadcast Staff and Student Learning Experiences
- Black Girls' Book Club
- Black Student Summer Leadership Program.



Parent/Caregiver Academy workshops

Model Schools for Inner Cities is hosting several <u>Parent/Caregivers Academy Workshops</u> open to all parents, caregivers, and school staff:

- Wed. April 20: Food Security (part 2)
- Wed. May 25: FUN! Hip Hop Dance, Toronto Parks/Rec and Toronto Public Library summer programs.



University of Toronto - Math for March Break camps

Registrations for U o T's Math+ March Break Programs are now open. This online, projectfocused program, for students in grades 1-10, is designed to keep students engaged in learning math and explore math in real-life scenarios. Campers will spend 1.5 hours learning fun math concepts and regroup for another 1.5 hours in the afternoon working on the hands-on aspect by creating projects. Themes:

- grade 1/2: Math All Around Me
- grade 3/4: Financial Mathematics
- grade 5/6: Design & Mathematic Designing your own Theme Parks
- grade 6/7: From Algebra to Patterns
- grade 7/8: Mystery Adventure
- grade 9/10: Mathematical Perspective on Engineering Projects

Check online for all <u>courses</u>, <u>schedules and detailed descriptions</u> and <u>registration</u>. For questions, e-mail <u>outreach@math.toronto.edu</u>.

Backpack and Supply Drive

All students should have access to backpacks and school supplies to help them get the most out of their school experience – and you and/or your business can help our students and families in need with a donation to the TDSB's Backpacks & School Supplies Drive!

This year's Backpacks & School Supplies Drive will run from March 1, 2022 to the end of September 2022. Individual donors and companies can help our students by making a monetary donation and/or a donation of new backpacks and school supplies. Tax receipts are available for these donations.

Learn more.

Summer Jobs

With Spring & March Break soon upon us, many high school students (and others) are

considering their summer plans and spring/summer jobs.

Check out the following options (courtesy of LHS Guidance):

City of Toronto Community Recreation (including camps, aguatic, sports &

fitness): www.toronto.ca/recjobs (various information sessiosn coming up).

Toronto Election Services offers high school students across the city the

opportunity to take part in the upcoming 2022 Municipal Election. By working in one

of 1,500 voting places, students will benefit from a hands-on paid experience that will

enhance their education and reinforce their civic responsibility. To learn more about

Student Connect, join the next online WebEx information session scheduled for

March 23 at 3:30 p.m. Please rsvp to electionsoutreach@toronto.ca and you will be

sent the meeting link. If you have any questions, please contact Sabrina Salmeen,

Project Coordinator, Recruitment, by email at sabrina.salmeen@toronto.ca or by

phone at 416-338-6572.

Centreville Amusement Park: positions include food services attendants, ticket

sales and cashiers, servers, line cooks, prep cooks, ride attendants, retail and games

attendants and more. Virtual Interviews will be held on March 16 & 17 between 10

am & 2 pm. Apply at apply@centreisland.ca.

OPSBA Awards: Nominations Open

Do you know an amazing trustee, teacher, education worker, school administrator, student

or community member who deserves to be recognized for making a difference in their local

school or community? Nominations are now open for the 2022 OPSBA (Ontario Public

School Boards Association) Awards.

More information is available on the OPSBA website.

2021-22 OPSBA Public Property

Assessment Network Scholarship

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) was pleased to announce that applications are now open for the third and final year of its Public Property Assessment Network Scholarship. This scholarship will be awarded in the amount of \$1,000 to one recipient in the OPSBA Central East Region (which includes TDSB). Scholarship recipients are students of strong character, who care deeply about their communities and furthering their own learning.



The deadline for receipt of application packages is May 20, 2021.

Check out the <u>flyer</u>.

Skilled Trade Bursary: Nominations For Semester 2 - Due March 11

An exciting opportunity for financial support for students in Grades 11 or 12, the Skilled Trades Bursary Program provides a \$1,000 bursary to students who:

- have financial and other barriers to completing their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD),
- are enrolled in a cooperative education program (2 credit minimum),
- have plans to pursue the skilled trades pathway (OYAP),
- have demonstrated leadership in the skilled trades (such as mentorship, participation in conferences or competitions, contributing to the school community through skilled trades based clubs/teams, etc)

A student may earn a maximum of one Skilled Trades Bursary which will be distributed in the same year that the student completes their second credit of cooperative education in a skilled trades placement. Nomination Forms are due to Matthew Bradley, Coordinator, OYAP-Secondary Pathways by: March 11, 2022 for Semester 2

Please share this opportunity with staff and students. For additional information please contact <u>Denise De Paola</u>, Centrally Assigned Principal, Leadership, Learning and School Improvement or <u>Matthew Bradley</u>, Coordinator, OYAP-Secondary Pathways.

Learn4Life Adult General Interest Program

Learn a new skill or take up a hobby this spring with courses in art, computers, food, languages, fitness and much more! Both in-person and online classes are available.

Registration opene February 23, 2022, but ample time remains before most classes start.



For more information: view the online Learn4Life brochure.

Free Skills Upgrading Classes for Adults in Toronto

Community Services is operating free Essential Skills Upgrading (ESU) classes remotely for adults in the community. Individuals seeking to upgrade math, reading/writing or computer skills so they can pursue more education or employment should visit <u>upgrademyskills.ca</u>.

Free Enhanced Language Training for Newcomers

Continue your professional career in Canada! Internationally Experienced/Educated

Professionals new to Canada can sign up for the Community Services' Enhanced Language

Training (ELT) program. Trainees receive in-class instruction on their sectors and gain the

opportunity to secure work placement in their related industry. Learn more at www.elt4employment.ca.

English Instruction for Adult Newcomers with Free Childcare

The TDSB's Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) classes is the largest LINC provider in Canada. All sites provide free care for newcomer children, so adult newcomers can gain English instruction without worrying about costly childcare.

Visit linctoronto.ca to learn more.

Free Employment Services for Job Seekers in the GTA

For free, job seekers can access employment services and resources to get a job; secure the training you need for a new career; and so much more. The TDSB's Community Services Unit operates seven convenient Next-Steps Employment Centres across the GTA. Visit www.next-steps.ca to learn more.

Winter Well-Being Guide

As parents and caregivers, we may be wondering what we can do to help keep our children active and healthy, and to positively support their mental



health and well-being. Within this guide (<u>click to download the online document</u>) you find a variety of culturally responsive resources and accessible activities to help make this winter a little easier and fun for you and your family. Information on where and how to reach out for help is also included.

The guide is <u>available in 18 languages</u>.

Join our Virtual Drop-ins Tuesdays 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. Thursdays 7 p.m. – 8 p.m. www.tdsb.on.ca/virtualsupport Loss of the complete of the comp



Mental Health & Well-Being Supports

TDSB Professional Support Services offers virtual drop-in hours for parents and caregivers to

Mental Health and Well-Being Supports and Resources

discuss strategies to help support the mental health and well-being of your child.

There are sessions open to all (Tuesdays 10-11am; Thursdays 7-8pm) and a special dropin for parents/caregivers of students with special/complex needs (Wednesdays 7-8pm).

<u>Learn more about Virtual Mental Health Support</u> and/or click on the images above for the session links.

Hearts & Minds Newletter

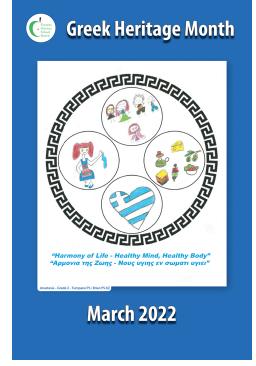
With February having been Psychologie Month,
the Hearts & Minds Winter Newsletter from TDSB
Psychological Services is full of information that
remains very useful, including:

- Addressing Pandemic Fatigue
- Dealing with Uncertainty & Change
- Learning Loss in the Pandemic
- "When our cups are empty": Compassion fatigue
- Community Corner



The Toronto District School Board is proud to recognize Greek Heritage Month (GHM) during the month of March. Several activities will be shared to mark the occasion. A poster contest was held and all students from the Toronto District School Board were invited to submit images that best reflected this year's theme, which is based on healthy living: "Harmony of Life - Healthy Mind, Healthy Body" ("Αρμονία της Ζωης - Νους υγίης εν σωματί υγίει")

<u>Visit the GHM website</u> for information and resources. This year's website includes "Word of the Day" and "Daily Announcements" along with featured focussed days with activities: "Movement Mondays", "Travelling Tuesdays", "Wellness Wednesdays", "Thoughtful Thursdays", and "Foodie Fridays".



Check out the <u>Greek Heritage Month - Calendar of Activites</u>: this Friday's dish is Greek Chickpea Soup!

Sikh Heritage Month & Latin-America History Months Contests

Throughout the school year, the TDSB recognizes 14 Heritage/History Months (check the <u>full list of Heritage/History Months</u>).

Sikh Heritage Month is proudly recognized at the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) during the month of April since 2016 as the Board of Trustees voted to designate April of each year as Sikh Heritage Month making the TDSB the first school board in Canada to do so. This designation matches the recognition by the Province of Ontario that proclaimed Sikh Heritage Month Act in December 2013 and matches the recognition proclaimed by the Government of Canada on April 30, 2019. Sikh Heritage Month is recognized nationally across Canada.

As part of the celebrations to mark Sikh Heritage Month, all TDSB students are invited to be creative and submit their images or video to a Poster/Video Contest. All details are in the contest poster.

Deadline: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 by 4:00 pm. For further information, please contact Sikh Heritage Month planning committee member Gurjeet Kahlon at gurjeet.kahlon@tdsb.on.ca

Latin-America History Month is recognized as Latin-America History Month at the Toronto District School Board. This year our theme is (DeColonizing) Latin-America History Month & Beyond: Learning about our collective pasts through the art of healing.

An invitation is being extended to all TDSB students (from Kindergarten to Grade 12) to submit a creative art piece that reflects on this year's theme. Submissions of creative art

may include all forms of expression - i.e. painting, drawing, architecture, sculpture, literature, music, performance (spoken word, poem, dance, etc.) or submitting an image that may be used for a poster during Latin-America History month promotions. We encourage you to use colour, shapes, patterns, textures or anything else that you find creative!

Deadline: April 1st, 2022 by 4:00PM. Should you require further information, please contact Flor Aviles, Co-Chair, Latin-America History Month at flor.aviles@tdsb.on.ca or Dani Carnevale, Service Co-ordinator at dani.carnevale@tdsb.on.ca.

2021-2022 School Year Calendar

March Break is March 14-18.

The last day of classses is June 30 (for elementary students) or June 29 (for secondary students).



Days of Significance Calendar

There are no classes for students on the dates listed below.

PA Days 2021-2022

PA Days	September	November	January	February	June
Elementary	2,3,8	19	14	18	3
Secondary	2,3,8	19		2,18	30
CUPE and PSSP school-based staff	3,7,8	Professional Development days during this period are the sa as other employee groups.			are the same

PA Days & Holidays	Date			
Winter Break	December 20, 2021 – December 31, 2021			
Elementary PA Day	January 14, 2022			
Secondary PA Day	February 2, 2022			
Board-wide PA Day	February 18, 2022			
Family Day	February 21, 2022			
March Break	March 14 - 18, 2022			
Good Friday	April 15, 2022			
Easter Monday	April 18, 2022			
Victoria Day	May 23, 2022			
Elementary School PA Day	June 3, 2022			
Secondary School PA Day	June 30, 2022			

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

~Rachel

Rachel Chernos Lin, Ward 11 TDSB Trustee, Don Valley Wes

Rachel.Chernoslin@tdsb.on.ca

If you notice anything at a school that concerns you, please call the TDSB Security Call Centre (416) 395-4620 and the Toronto Police - non-emergencies can be reported by calling 416-808-2222.









Manage your preferences | Opt out using TrueRemove™
Got this as a forward? Sign up to receive our future emails.

View this email online.

5050 Yonge Street Toronto, Ontario | M2N5N8 CA

This email was sent to . To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.



Subscribe to our email list.