



Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin

Ward 11 • Don Valley West

Toronto District School Board

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Dear friends,

I know virtual learning isn't the start we had hoped for as students returned to classes in January. But this is the situation we find ourselves in, and I want to assure all of you that everyone here at the TDSB is committed to working together in support of all of our students. I have already heard many reports about great things happening in these first days of 2022 virtual classes, and I hope our students have enjoyed reconnecting with peers and teachers, despite the new format.

As you all are now likely aware, on January 3, 2022, the Premier of Ontario announced that schools would not open to in-person learning on January 5th as previously announced on December 30, 2021. Instead, all school boards were required to move to virtual learning until at least January 17th, 2022.

Many parents, caregivers and students have contacted me on this new return to remote learning, and I completely appreciate the wide range of emotions and worries this development has generated. While the Provincial decision to close schools brought relief for some, it engendered anger or sadness in others. But even for those in favour of a temporary return to virtual learning, they, together with virtually every sector of our various communities recognizes that we must do all we can to get kids back to in-person learning as quickly and as safely as possible.

This of course is, and always has been, the goal of the TDSB as well. It was therefore surprising and disappointing that the provincial plans announced on December 30 not only failed to include enhanced safety measures the TDSB has called for in the past, but even intended to remove some of the effective risk mitigation measures already in use. Given the current high rate of Omicron transmission and the pressing need to make our concerns and the concerns of our constituents known, I brought forward an advocacy motion to the Board on January 4th, calling on the Province to commit to many measures that have been publicly requested by our stakeholders, such as the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA – of which we are members), the Ontario Student Trustee Association (OSTA-AECO), the Ontario Principals' Council (OPC) and others, including parents, caregivers, and students. The motion also requests that the chair write a letter to the Premier, the Chief Medical Officer, the Minister of Education, and Toronto's Chief Medical Officer, calling for, among other things: priority access to vaccinations/boosters for students and staff; a commitment to ensure Principals continue to report cases

Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin invites you to

DON VALLEY WEST COMMUNITY COFFEE & PIAC/FSLCAC ELECTIONS



**Wednesday, January 12, 2022
9:00 - 10:30am**

The Ward 11 Community Coffee Meetings have gone virtual! Grab your favourite mug, and join us from the comfort of your own home for a special Community Coffee where we will be electing our Ward 11 Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC) Representatives and our French as a Second Language Community Advisory Committee (FSLCAC) Alternate Rep.

To learn more about PIAC and FSLCAC, and to nominate yourself please fill in the form here: <https://forms.gle/vBpzkaMbhWZUqTPA>

If you are interested in attending and/or voting for your Ward 11 reps, please register here: <https://forms.gle/mwumiTFPiILSszUY6>

Meeting links and dial-in numbers will be shared with registrants the day before the meeting.

of communicable disease and refuse admittance to students showing symptoms, as per the Education Act, so that families and staff continue to be informed of COVID-19 cases in classrooms; a commitment to continue PCR testing for students and staff in cases of high-risk exposure and suspected cases of COVID-19; a "Test to Return" strategy following COVID-19 exposure and illness; the provision and funding of medical masks and respirators for students in the same way that they are now being provided for staff (these are expensive and hard for families to procure if they wish for their kids to wear them). These are just some of the items called for -- to read the entire text of the motion, please click [here](#). **I am pleased to report that this motion passed early this afternoon at a Special Board Meeting. Once this advocacy letter is written and sent, I will share it in a newsletter.**

Although this is only the first week of school, this newsletter has a lot of important information about coming events, so please sit back, grab your favourite drink, and enjoy reading the updates and notices provided below, including a few with imminent and some with slightly later deadlines (like requests for switching learning models and applications for Middle French Immersion).

I'd also like to take this opportunity to draw your attention to a column I write for *Leaside Life*. My most recent article focused on after-hours gatherings at Leaside Schools, but this trend is not solely a Leaside experience. We've seen similar events in other areas of the Ward, and I've heard concerns from constituents and schools across our Ward. To read this article, please click [here](#).

Coffee Morning and PIAC/FSLCAC elections

Finally, please remember that on Wednesday, January 12th, I will be holding my first Virtual Ward Coffee Morning of 2022. **Please note that I have had to move the start time for this meeting -- it is now scheduled to start at 9am so that we can have our two Ward 11 superintendents join us for part of the meeting.**

We will also be holding elections for representatives for the Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC) and the French as a Second Language Committee Advisory Committee (FSLCAC) at this meeting. Nominations for these positions will be closing at **midnight tonight (Jan 6)**, so if you are interested, please feel free to reach out to me by [email](#) or [register](#) to run!

To join the coffee morning, we ask that you [register](#) (a Zoom link will then be sent the day before the meeting). I hope you can join us for coffee and discussion on the 12th, and in the meantime, happy reading!

Warm regards,

Rachel

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

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Elementary Switch Form (due January 7)

To switch between in-person and virtual learning for February 2022, parents/caregivers and students requesting a change must complete an Elementary Switch Form between Friday, December 3 and Friday, January 7.

A form must be completed for each student requesting a switch.

Parents/caregivers and students who do not wish to make a change do not need to complete a form.



If you are considering a switch, please speak with your child before submitting a Switch Form. We expect that parents/caregivers with shared decision-making responsibilities will come to an agreement before completing the form.

We recognize that we are asking for this decision well in advance of February and thank you for your understanding, as this process takes time to complete. While we cannot guarantee that all switch requests will be met, it is our goal to accommodate as many as possible based on available programs and space (e.g. French Immersion, Extended French, Specialized Programs, Alternative Schools, other limited circumstances).

Elementary classes will reflect changes due to switches beginning on February 22, 2022.

Whether you choose a switch in learning model or not, your child's teacher or class (or school for virtual learning classes) may change due to a possible re-organization.

For more information, please visit www.tdsb.on.ca/switchform and/or contact the Principal at your child's school with any questions.

Secondary Switch Form Reopened: New Deadline Jan 7th

On January 3, the [Government of Ontario announced](#) that all students will be learning remotely until at least January 17 because of increasing case counts of COVID-19 and uncertainty surrounding the Omicron variant. The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is committed to being responsive to the changing needs of secondary students and caregivers and will re-open the [Secondary Switch Form](#) for Semester 2 between **Wednesday, January 5 and Friday, January 7.**

The switch request will be for the entire duration of Semester 2.

What to Do:

1. Log-in to the [Secondary Switch Form](#) to see the method of instruction (Virtual or In-Person) selected for Semester 2.
2. If satisfied with the method of instruction (Virtual or In-Person) for Semester 2, do **NOT** complete the Secondary Switch Form.
3. If a student would like to change method of instruction (Virtual or In-Person) for Semester 2, please complete the Secondary Switch Form by Friday, January 7.

It is our goal to accommodate as many requests as possible based on available programs and space (e.g., French Immersion, Extended French, Specialized Programs, Alternative Schools, and other limited circumstances).

Student engagement is enhanced when students see one another as they interact with their teacher and peers. Students learning virtually in Semester 2 are expected to have their cameras on during class time. By having cameras on, we will build human connection with one another which supports learning and a strong sense of community. Students can speak with a guidance counsellor, Vice-Principal or Principal if there are concerns. If a student does not have a device with a camera and mic, please indicate that a device is needed on the Switch Form. If a student is already learning virtually and does not have a device with a camera and mic, they can speak with their Principal or Vice-Principal to request an appropriate device.

For Semester 2, to minimize the use of simultaneous learning (teachers instructing students learning in person and virtually at same time), schools will:

- Reduce optional course offerings at grade 9 and 10 where most of the program consists of compulsory courses (e.g. All Grade 9 students would take Art as their optional course rather than choose between Visual Arts, Drama, or Music)
- Offer courses virtually in specialized programming (e.g. TOPS, MAST, IB, AP, Extended French and French Immersion, etc.) where a viable cohort of virtual learners in the school exists
- Form "hubs" with other schools, where possible. Virtual Learning students may be taught by a teacher from another TDSB secondary school as students are shared across schools in a simultaneous and/or fully virtual class.
- Offer courses that are primarily experiential/'hands on' only in-person which includes many Technology and Physical & Health Education courses. Please check with your local school for the list of In-Person courses.

Courses Offered In-Person:

Sculpture	Physical Education (not including Kinesiology, Personal Fitness, and Leadership)	Construction Engineering
Fashion	Electrical / Network Cabling	Architectural Design
Hospitality and Tourism	Robotics and Control Systems	Hairstyling and Aesthetics
Baking	Computer Engineering Technology	Green Industries

Manufacturing Technology	Transportation Technology	Custom Woodworking
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All changes due to switches will take effect beginning Semester Two, on February 3, 2022.

Middle French Immersion Program - Application Information (January 3-28)

For families interested in the Toronto District School Board's system-wide Middle French Immersion Program (which begins in Grade 4), we offer an online process to apply. To apply for the Middle French Immersion Program (Grade 4 entry) for September 2022, applications for current grade 3 students must be completed online **between January 3 and January 28, 2022**.



An offer of placement in the program (a specific school) is guaranteed to all on-time applicants and will be made in the weeks following the close of the application window.

Please note: Families with an older sibling currently enrolled in a French program and who will be in attendance next year are still required to complete an online application for the new student. Please select the “sibling option” within the online application.

For more information about the Middle French Immersion (Grade 4) application process, please join us for a [Virtual Webinar Session](#) on one of the following dates:

DATES, TIME & LINK TO WEBINARS

ALTERNATE WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

January 6, 2022 – 10 am

Webinar ID: 957 9470 9338

[CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE WEBINAR ON JANUARY 6](#)

Phone one-tap: Canada: +6473744685,,95794709338# or +16475580588,,95794709338#
Dial: Canada: +1 647 374 4685 or +1 647 558 0588

January 13, 2022 – 1 pm

Webinar ID: 965 0951 9491

[CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE WEBINAR ON JANUARY 13](#)

Phone one-tap: Canada: +6475580588,,96509519491# or +16473744685,,96509519491#
Dial: Canada: +1 647 558 0588 or +1 647 374 4685

January 17, 2022 – 7 pm

Webinar ID: 998 7090 8992

[CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE WEBINAR ON JANUARY 17](#)

Phone one-tap: Canada: +16473744685,,99870908992# or +16475580588,,99870908992#
Dial: Canada: +1 647 374 4685 or +1 647 558 0588

Families can request interpretation services for this event in advance, by completing this [online form](#) before December 17, 2021.

Information flyers about the Middle French Immersion Program are [available in multiple languages](#). For details, please see the [information package](#). For more information about French programs, the application process and important dates, please visit www.tdsb.on.ca/french or click on [Application Process](#).

Covid-19 Vaccines for children ages 5-11

Prior to the winter break, Trustee Trixie Doyle (Don Valley East) and I organized a Joint Ward Forum about the Covid-19 Vaccine for children aged 5-11. Supported by Michael Garron Hospital (MGH)/Toronto East Health Network (TEHN), it was geared to the Thorncliffe Park and Flemingdon Park communities.

However, almost all information included is of interest to everybody with children of those ages, so please feel free to check out the [Joint Forum Meeting Notes/Q&A](#)

Learn more about vaccination for children 5-11:

- [Toronto Public Health](#)
- [Ministry of Health](#)
- [Statement from the Council of Chief Medical Officers of Health](#)
- [Statement from Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health](#)

How to book an 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 Thorncliff Hub Vaccination Centre and a variety of pop-ups clinics in Thorncliffe Park and Flemingdon Park as well as East Toronto. Vaccines for children aged 5 and up are available for all M postal codes at these pop-ups but boosters for adults are for priority postal codes only, so please read requirements to ensure eligibility. For more information, click: [all East Toronto Health Partners/Marc Garron Hospital Mobile and Pop-up Clinics](#)

[Vaccine Hunters](#) - Do-it-yourself resource for finding vaccine related info. Find details on eligibility, appointments, walk-ins, pharmacy search tools, vaccine receipts + more!

Update on Implementation of COVID-19 Vaccination Procedure

Based on recent guidance from the [Ministry of Health](#) and the [National Advisory Committee on Immunization \(NACI\)](#), Toronto Public Health is now updating its recommendation on the [optimal interval](#) between vaccine doses to eight weeks. As a result, the TDSB is also updating its timelines for staff who still need to have their vaccination. The date for employees who attested that they had received their first dose by November 19, is now midnight on January 21, 2022 to attest that they have received their second dose.

City clinics <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/>
Or call: 1-888-999-6488
(TTY 1-866-797-0007)

Hospital clinics www.vaccineto.ca
Or call: 1-888-385-1910

Visit <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/> to find a pharmacy
Or call your local pharmacy / website

Mobile & pop-up clinics
Host organizations will promote clinics directly to the target community

- **Provincial Vaccine Confidence Centre**
 - 1-833-943-3900 Open 7 days/week from 8am-8pm
 - Staffed with Health Specialists and available in over 300 languages
- **VaxFacts Clinic: One-to-One Phone Consultation with a Doctor**
 - Schedule a phone conversation with a doctor to help make an informed decision about the COVID-19 vaccine.
 - Book an appointment online at <https://www.shn.ca/VaxFacts/> or call 416-438-2911 ext. 5738
- **SickKids: COVID-19 Vaccine Consult Service**
 - By appointment phone service only (youth 12+ or a parent/caregiver/legal guardian of a child or youth, an Ontario resident)
 - Registered Nurses will answer questions and discuss the COVID-19 vaccines for children and youth
 - Available in multiple languages, using over-the-phone language interpretation
 - To book: <https://www.sickkids.ca/en/care-services/support-services/covid-19-vaccine-consult/#book> or call 437-881-3505



Mass Immunization Clinics



Hospitals / Ontario Health Team Immunization Clinics



Pharmacies and Primary Care Providers



Mobile Teams & Pop-up Clinics

Interactive map available online:
toronto.ca/covid19vaccinemap

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 ([click to download the online document](#)) 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.



Virtual Drop-in hours

Join our Virtual Drop-ins

Tuesdays 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.
Thursdays 7 p.m. – 8 p.m.
www.tdsb.on.ca/virtualsupport

Connect with Professional Support Services staff to explore ideas related to your child's mental health and well-being



Parents/Caregivers of Students with Special/Complex Needs: Virtual Drop-in Hours

Join our Virtual Drop-ins

Wednesdays 7 p.m. – 8 p.m.
www.tdsb.on.ca/virtualsupport

Connect with our Professional Support Services staff to talk about taking care of yourself as a caregiver and other ideas related to your child's mental health and well-being



Mental Health & Well-Being Supports

TDSB Professional Support Services offers virtual drop-in hours for parents and caregivers to 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 drop-in for parents/caregivers of students with special/complex needs (Wednesdays 7-8pm).

[Learn more about Virtual Mental Health Support](#) and/or click on the images above for the session links.

Mental Health and Well-Being
Supports and Resources

Out of School Programming

International Languages: Elementary and African Heritage (ILE-AH)

This free online program welcomes JK to Grade 8 students to learn a language (except for English and French) for 2.5 hours a week. [Learn more and register online today.](#)

Adult ESL Program

Adult learners will have an opportunity to improve their English online this fall/winter. A broad range of English as a Second Language classes will be available, from beginner to advanced levels. [Learn more by visiting our program website.](#)

Learn4Life Adult General Interest Program

Learn a new skill or take up a hobby in-person or online this winter with courses in art, computers, food, languages, fitness and much more! Registration for our winter 2022 is now open!

[Visit the Learn4Life website](#) for more information and to browse through the online brochure.

Staff Census in Spring 2022

In addition to Censuses for Students and Parents, TDSB will conduct its fourth Staff Census in Spring 2022. All staff, including permanent, casual, occasional, temporary, part-time and full-time, will be encouraged to complete the census. Results and data from the staff census contribute to important improvements at the TDSB and help to make it a better place to work for all employees.

Consultations are now underway and more information and details will be shared in the new year as plans are finalized.

TDSB Winter Clothing Drive

One in every three children lives in poverty in our city, and too many children come to school without proper clothing to keep them warm during the winter months. In addition, many TDSB students are new to Canada and this may be their first time experiencing a Canadian winter.



The TDSB holds an annual [Winter Clothing Drive](#) to help ensure that all students have warm winter clothing to get to and from school, and are prepared to participate in all of the fun outdoor activities winter has to offer. This year's Winter Clothing Drive will run from October 2021 to the end of February 2022. Donations help provide warm winter coats, pants, hats, gloves and boots for our students.

Our need for winter outerwear is greater this year. Canada is welcoming newcomer families from Afghanistan and the TDSB is welcoming many of these newly arrived students into our schools. The newcomer students are adjusting to their first Canadian winter and need proper winter outerwear.

Monetary donations can be made through [School Cash Online](#). We will also accept **new winter outerwear items**. Due to potential health & safety, hygiene, sorting and storage limitations, the TDSB can only accept **new clothing items**. Contact the Business Development department at BusinessDevelopment@tdsb.on.ca for more information about how to donate new outerwear items. **100% of all proceeds and in-kind donations go to benefit our students.** For more information, please contact Marisa Chiu, Interim Executive Officer, at marisa.chiu@tdsb.on.ca.

Sikh Heritage Month: Invitation to participate in Planning Committee

Throughout the school year the TDSB proudly recognizes 14 Heritage/History Months. Sikh Heritage Month is recognized at the TDSB in April. This is a call-out for individuals to join a volunteer planning committee to develop system-wide activities for students, staff and the TDSB community. The mandate of the volunteer planning committee is to provide learning opportunities for students, staff and the TDSB community, as well as to enrich the curriculum resources through a collaborative approach of TDSB staff, community members and Trustees. Details of the first planning meeting are as follows, we hope you will be able to join us:



Sikh Heritage Month Planning Committee

Date: Monday, January 10, 2022

Time: 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm

Zoom: <https://tdsb-ca.zoom.us/j/92636759267>

Should you require additional information on Sikh Heritage Month, please contact Peter Singh, Executive Officer, Information Technology and Information Management, and Executive Lead, Sikh Heritage Month at peter.singh@tdsb.on.ca.

New Google Calendar with Events & Activities

NEW: TDSB families can find scheduled events from the Mental Health & Professional Support Staff, the Parent & Community Engagement Office (PCEO), and tdsbHUB.ca (Model Schools Community Support Workers) plus other TDSB events and activities all in one calendar at <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/School-Year-Calendar>



Click on specific events for details or to add them to your calendar. You can also use the +GoogleCalendar button on the bottom right to add all events to your calendar at once.

2021-2022 School Year Calendar

The last day of class 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 same as other employee groups.			

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

Wishing everyone good health, and hope to "see" many of you virtually at my [Coffee Morning](#) next **Wednesday**,

January 12 at 9am!

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 West

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.



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