

# TAB 5

Program Priorities

## The Context for TDSB

Building innovation in the program area and developing program priorities is an evolving process that supports what students need to be successful both at school and beyond. Equity of access and opportunity, fair distribution of specialized schools and programs, and program viability continue to be drivers that underpin the work done in the Program area.

As a diverse system with approximately 238,600 students (October 31, 2023), it is essential that students see themselves reflected in their schools and their learning. Along with that, we need to create learning spaces that are effective, respectful, and celebrate and honour students as well as their families and their diverse communities.

### Multi-Year Strategic Plan and Vision for Learning

The renewed Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) was approved by the Board of Trustees in April 2024. The MYSP sets direction and identifies four strategic directions:

- **Belong:** All students belong, are engaged, and valued in an inclusive environment
- **Achieve:** All students reach high levels of achievement, success, and personal development
- **Thrive:** All students graduate with the confidence, skills, and knowledge to thrive
- **Revitalize:** All students and staff learn and work in inclusive, safe, and modern environments.

Equity is a principle that will continue to guide the TDSB in all that it does. Equity will be foundational to all TDSB work and will be embedded throughout the four strategic directions. Truth and Reconciliation is also embedded throughout the four strategic directions and reinforces the Board's commitment to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action.

The Multi-Year Strategic Plan is a plan and set of strategic guiding principles that will allow the Board to realize its vision: To enable all students to reach high levels of achievement and well-being and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and values they need to become responsible, contributing members of a democratic and sustainable society.

Together, the Multi-Year Strategic Plan and its strategic directions guide how we work but the real change happens when each unique school and each unique department examines their specific data, determines actions for their improvement, measures impact and communicates progress. The entire system improves when classrooms, schools, and departments focus their improvement efforts within the context of system direction.

The Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy is an important part of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan. It advances the strategic direction to ensure that all students and staff learn and

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work in inclusive, safe, and modern environments, and embeds equity of access as a guiding principle.

**The following program priorities will be discussed in more detail below:**

- Secondary Program Review
- Building the Workforce of Tomorrow
- French Language Review
- Elementary and Secondary Alternative Schools
- Elementary Academies
- Indigenous Education
- Special Education and Inclusion

### Secondary Program Review

#### How Do We Support Secondary Program Review?

Staff conducted the Secondary Program Review to develop a new vision for secondary program and access which will include fewer schools, stronger programming, and increased access to courses that support all pathways, including apprenticeship and the workplace. Further, the vision supports the revitalization of neighbourhood secondary schools with a breadth of programs, many of which, over time, have experienced significant enrolment declines.

Current and projected enrolments at the secondary panel do not support the number of facilities currently in operation. The vision addresses both under and over-utilized schools since changes to any delivery model will have some degree of impact on all schools in a geographic cluster.

#### 2023-24 Update

- Eight Pupil Accommodation Reviews were included in the most recent LTPAS document to take place over a 2-year period.

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- The moratorium on Pupil Accommodation Reviews remains in place. The eight Pupil Accommodation Reviews continue to be slated over the next two years. In April 2024 an application for an exemption was submitted to the Ministry of Education, a formal response was not received.
- Approximately 500 elementary and over 1,000 secondary students were seated in schools through the revised Out-of-Area Attendance process for admission in September 2024.
- Changes to Central Student Interest Program offerings:
  - 280 grade 9 students were seated in the various new program locations for the Arts and Math, Science and Technology in September 2024.
  - The percentage of primary applicants in the entry grade offered seats in all Central Student Interest Programs has been calculated and shared as ranges on the various program pages in the Central Student Interest Program website. This information will help to better inform applicants seeking admission in September 2025.
- After a rich and thorough public consultation, the TDSB Board of Trustees approved the staff recommendation to dissolve the legacy technical and commercial boundaries.
- Central Technical School, Central Toronto Academy, Danforth Collegiate and Technical Institute and Western Technical Commercial School have become “Secondary Schools without a Boundary”. Following a three-year implementation plan, applicants from across the city can apply to attend one of the schools in September 2025 (in addition to Northern Secondary School, which does have a small collegiate boundary) through a newly developed application within the Secondary Out-of-Area Admissions Application. Applicants may opt to apply for one Out-of-Area option, one Secondary School without a Boundary option, or both.
- In May 2024, staff presented early data showing that after the first year of the central application process for secondary Central Student Interest Programs the racial proportions of students have shifted toward greater representation across the TDSB student body with the biggest shift being with students who identify as Black. Without any explicit prioritization, there has been a shift in SES distribution as well.

#### Next Steps

- The landscape for secondary schools and programs across the City may experience a shift over time as the revised Out-of-Area Attendance and Student Interest Programs policies take effect.

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- Based on Board decision, staff are initiating a review of the Student Interest Program Policy (P100). The Work Plan will be shared with the Governance and Policy Committee in early 2025.
- Staff will continue to undertake program coherence studies for 2024-25. These studies will ensure that Student Interest Programs meet the criteria outlined in the policy. Additionally, the program coherence studies will support the review of delivered curriculum through a lens of equity, ensuring that content is culturally relevant and reflective of the students in the TDSB. The study for the Exceptional Athlete program at Birchmount Park CI was started in June 2024 and recommendations will be brought forward to the Director of Education in the 2024-2025 school year. The following programs will be reviewed in Year 3:
  - Leadership Pathway
  - CISCO/Nortel (currently a local program)
  - Professional Learning plans have been established and continue for schools offering Math, Science and Technology programs and schools offering Arts-focus programs (Elementary and Secondary).

### Building the Workforce of Tomorrow

The Ontario government continues to introduce new policy and legislative measures to attract more young people to the skilled trades, including adding a new apprenticeship pathway and an online job-matching platform. These initiatives are designed to promote the skilled trades to youth and workers and help set them on a path to rewarding, well-paying careers as electricians, plumbers, carpenters and other skilled trades. (News release – Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, and Education – May 1, 2024)

Further, The Ontario government is updating high school courses in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), including learning related to the skilled trades to ensure students have the cutting-edge digital literacy and modern technological skills to lead the global economic, scientific and societal innovations of tomorrow.

These changes to the Computer Studies and the Technological Education curriculum also support the government’s plan to align curriculum changes with the province’s economic needs and place an emphasis on critical life and job skills, needed in the fast-growing skilled trades. (News Release – Ministry of Education – December 12, 2022)

These two initiatives outline how the province will prepare Ontario’s current and future workforce for the technology and skilled trades based jobs of today and tomorrow by:

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- Building stronger partnerships between educators and employers to drive solutions for skills and talent development, and for experiential learning;
- Increasing access to job market information;
- Expanding opportunities for learning by experience by expanding flexibility in graduation requirements under the new OYAP-FAST program
- Introducing a mandatory grade 9 or 10 technological education credit with a revised emphasis on careers in the skilled trades
- Promoting both traditional and non-traditional career paths by increasing students' exposure to options including the arts, science, engineering, technology, skilled trades and entrepreneurship; and
- Closing gaps in skills and competencies by finding ways to teach and recognize the skills that students learn, such as teamwork, problem solving and entrepreneurial spirit.

### How do we Support a Highly-Skilled Workforce?

- By expanding the number of Specialist High Skills Major Programs available to students in schools as well as the TDSB Facilitated Access to Skilled Trades (F.A.S.T.)
- By expanding Co-operative Education and Dual Credit Programming
- By promoting careers in technology and skilled trades as a viable pathway to students in Grades 5 to 12
- By expanding participation in Skills Competitions

### 2023 – 2024 Update

- Due to facility constraints, skilled trades-based courses are not available in all secondary schools. In order to better support student access to skilled trade-based SHSM programs, the TDSB has the Facilitated Access to Skilled Trades (F.A.S.T.) application. Students in Grades 10, 11 and 12 who are interested in a skilled trade-based SHSM can apply through a central application, outside of Out-of-Area Admissions, to join programs in schools where space is available. 2022-2023 was the first full year of the F.A.S.T program. Families, students, and educators expressed interest in learning more about the program. A small number of students applied for access to Skilled Trades based SHSM programming through F.A.S.T.
- Expansion of Specialist High Skills Major Program

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- The Ministry's Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program provides secondary students an opportunity to focus on a career path that matches their skills and interests. It also helps with their career development by exposing them to opportunities in the workforce. SHSM programs are offered in 17 sectors including ICT, Arts & Culture, Transportation, Sports, Construction, Health & Wellness, and Environment.
- In the 2023-2024 school year, five new SHSM programs were approved by the Ministry of Education to be launched in the 2024-2025 school year. One of the programs is in a first time SHSM school. This brings our total number of programs operating during 2024-2025 school year to 135 in 56 secondary schools.
- There is an on-going review of the distribution and location of SHSM programming across the District.
- Expansion of Experiential Learning Opportunities
  - The Connected Community Experiential Learning (CCEL) Grant, is designed to increase the amount of experiential learning opportunities that students and teachers can engage with, by providing funding to enable student- based experiential learning projects and learning opportunities from Kindergarten through to Grade 12. Recent TDSB examples include the creation of outdoor learning spaces that embed Indigenous perspectives, supporting robotics in the classroom, pollinator and food gardens, and revitalization of existing/creation of new learning spaces that incorporate skilled trades and technology career exploration for students.
- Expansion of Co-operative Education Programming
  - The SPEEL (Special Education Experiential Learning) program and Project SEARCH provide cooperative education opportunities for students with low-incidence exceptionalities to support increased access to employment upon graduation. The Experiential Learning Department, in collaboration with the Special Education and Inclusion Department, has partnered with community agencies (e.g. Discover Ability and Abilities Centre) to enhance Cooperative Education Programming which supports the transition to employment for students with special education needs.
  - The Experiential Learning Department, in collaboration with the Special Education and Inclusion Department, Professional Support Services (OT/PT) and Central TDSB Departments, has developed a cooperative education pilot project to provide students with special education needs with supported placements.

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- The Experiential Learning Department continues to support schools in the development of work-site visits and work experiences that prepare all students for Cooperative Education placements and support career exploration prior to Grade 11.
- In collaboration with GTA Colleges, the TDSB has developed programming which further enhances cooperative education experiences by pairing the placement with sector specific Dual Credit courses. Students gain valuable work skills while also gaining post-secondary experience and credits at the college. For example, students attending the STEP to Construction or STEP to Transportation central Cooperative Education program also earn a Dual Credit in Health and Safety which prepares them for employment.
- Promoting careers in technology and skilled trades as a viable pathway to students in Grades 5 to 12.
  - The Experiential Learning and OYAP Departments continues to work in collaboration with Science, STEM and Robotics Department to increase awareness and participation in career exploration of technology and the skilled trades through professional learning opportunities for educators, community outreach, the provision of learning resources for classrooms and facilitation of student participation in activities through skills competitions, work experience opportunities, partnerships with industry and post-secondary institution partners.
  - The TDSB continues to work in consultation with the Ministry of Education regarding the revised graduation requirement of one mandatory grade 9 or 10 technological education credit which began implementation in September of 2024. TDSB has identified only ten schools that are not currently offering any Grade 9 or 10 technology-based courses. Supports will become available to ensure that all Grade 9-12 OSSD-granting secondary schools are able to provide the required technological programming.

Some additional logistical implementation challenges include:

- Classroom space to address the significant increase in the number of tech courses that will be required to meet the needs of all students.
- The Technological Education staffing shortage that is being experienced across the province.
- Ministry Funded Experiential Professional Learning for Guidance-Teachers Counsellors in the Skilled Trades focused on improving access to up-to-date information about the skilled trades and apprenticeship opportunities available to students in TDSB. 2023 2024 was year two of this project. Secondary school guidance counsellors attended several immersive experiences at local



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- apprenticeship training facilities including Centennial College, Local 27- The Carpenter's Union, and George Brown College. Elementary school guidance counsellors were provided with the opportunity to attend a workshop at George Brown College delivered in partnership with Honour the Work.
- Central Experiential Learning and Student Success Departments support schools to provide access to workshops and learning sessions to students in Grades five to eight through our college partnerships. These opportunities range in variety and could include experiences that are:
    - Virtual or In Person in the school or on college campus
    - Trades or Skill based
    - Focused on Pathway Planning
  - Expansion of Participation in Skills Competitions
    - The skills competitions provide SHSM students with the opportunity to receive a certification and reach ahead for the SHSM components. Students in technological education courses are provided with authentic learning opportunities where they apply their learning from the classroom. The skills competitions help prepare students for future career opportunities.
    - In 2023-2024, TDSB students performed exceptionally well with 75 students advancing to the provincial championships and 4 of those students advancing to the Skills Canada National Competition. The TDSB was also awarded the School Board Award of Distinction for the second year in a row which is presented to the School Board that shows dedication to the promotion of skilled trades and technology careers. Staff will continue to capitalize on the opportunities, student interest and SHSM programming and careers in the skilled trades to continue to increase and support participation in the skills competitions for secondary students and challenges for elementary students.

### Next Steps

- Continued increase in awareness and promotion of the F.A.S.T. program across the district for 2024-2025.
- Professional Learning opportunities for educators (K-12) to support early awareness of careers in the Skilled Trades, STEM, and the Apprenticeship Pathway through connections to curriculum will be made available throughout the school year.
- Implementation of the revised OYAP-FAST program pathway to apprenticeships as more details are released by the Ministry of Education.

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### French Immersion and Extended French

#### How Do We Support French Immersion and Extended French?

- French is one of Canada's official languages and it is a language used widely around the world.
- Proficiency in French is a valuable skill and an element of student achievement.
- Teaching and learning French as an additional language strengthens English language skills, enhances reasoning, problem-solving and creative thinking skills and develops understanding and respect of other cultures.
- Learning an additional language not only enhances general learning skills but also broadens career prospects, fosters cultural understanding, and helps develop plurilingual global citizens.

Having over 921,000 students in Core French and another 268,000 students in French Immersion/Extended French programs comes with system successes and challenges. We are proud of the Board's successes in retention rate, inclusion of students with special education needs as well as accessibility, transportation, and streamlining of entry points. At the same time, challenges include geographical include, geographical accessibility equity of access, and transportation.

#### 2023-2024 Update

- In September 2023, three four (34) new Early French Immersion Programs opened in Wards 1, 4, 21 6, 11, 18, 19 to increase geographical accessibility and equity of access, reduce catchment size and travel distance.
- In September 2022, two (2) middle school pathways were introduced in Wards 2, 18 to reduce some of the longest student commutes.
- In September 2023, three (3) additional new Early French Immersion Programs opened in Wards 1, 4, 21 to increase equity of access, reduce catchment size and travel distance.
- Completed two local Feasibility Team processes to identify new secondary pathways for French programs to increase geographical accessibility.

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### Next Steps

- Identify opportunities to make efficient use of Early FI resources in areas that have larger enrolment where there is more flexibility in program offerings.
- Continue to work through the next steps in balancing program distribution and the limitations of guaranteed placement in order to support the growth of FI programs in an intentional manner; this change will require revisions to Operational Procedure PR 597.
- Continue to work through the process of shifting from a series of associated catchment areas to an address-based system. Staff will undertake an analysis of the address-based system and possible implications regarding implementation. This change will require revisions to Operational Procedure PR 597 once complete.
- To provide staff with the tools necessary to increase geographical accessibility equity of access to Early French Immersion programs, additional procedural changes may be necessary. The impact of the shift to an address-based system will be reviewed to determine if additional procedural changes may be necessary.
- After reviewing the impact(s) of these changes, consider other changes which allow for higher growth of programs in areas that are underserved relative to areas that are currently well served by the current distribution of programs.
- Moving forward, staff will continue to engage in Local Feasibility Team processes to identify areas of Toronto for potential new Early French Immersion programs, as required. Monitoring the impact of opening seven (7) new programs is critical to implementation.

## Elementary and Secondary Alternative Schools

### How Do We Support Elementary and Secondary Alternative Schools?

Alternative schools are highly engaged, smaller school environments. These schools are characterized by community collaboration, choice, inclusivity, and flexibility. Alternative schools use flexible methods of teaching in distinct learning environments to meet the needs of learners. They use diverse hands-on approaches to learning the required Ontario Ministry of Education Curriculum.

Each school has its own identity and focus, such as democratic education, holistic learning, physical art, mindful living, entrepreneurship, social justice, community outreach and more. These schools are ideal for students seeking an alternative to mainstream education and who want to take an active role in their own learning.

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Alternative schools provide students with an opportunity to succeed in a different educational setting that emphasizes student-centred and differentiated methods in teaching and learning.

### 2023-2024 Update

- A review of Secondary Alternative Schools began in the Fall of 2023.
  - Included an environmental scan of the Secondary Alternative Schools, including demographics and history, and
  - An analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by students, staff and communities connected to Secondary Alternative Schools.

### Next Steps

- An update report on the review of Secondary Alternative Schools will be presented to Trustees in January 2025. The final report will be presented to Trustees in late spring 2025.
- Etobicoke Secondary Alternative School will be relocated from its current location to allow for the demolition of the building and construction of a new elementary school.
- Review of admission procedures for Elementary and Secondary Alternative Schools to complement the revised Alternative Schools Policy (P062) that was approved by the Board in October 2022.

## Elementary Academies

### 2023-2024 Update

- The elementary academies were introduced in 2012 to increase the number of choices available for families.
- A total of nine programs were established: four 'standalone' schools; Boys Leadership Academy, Girls Leadership Academy, and two Vocal Music Academies.
- Five involved a rebranding of existing neighbourhood schools to infuse a theme, health and wellness or sports and wellness.
- Standalone academies were established as their own schools and were accommodated at locations with available space. Transportation was not provided.

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- Enrolment at the four standalone academies has declined since 2014, only two years after they were introduced. For the 2023-24 school year, none of the standalone academies will have any students enrolled.
- The schools that were infused with a theme continue to operate as neighbourhood elementary schools and operate like any other within the city. Admission into these schools is governed by the attendance boundary and the Out-of-Area Admissions process.

### Next Steps

- Staff will undertake a system-wide study of the Elementary Academies during the 2024-25 school year. The study will include both standalone and those where themes have been embedded within neighbourhood schools.
- Recommendations will be presented to Trustees in the Spring of 2025.

## Indigenous Education

### 2023-2024 Update

The TDSB's Multi-Year Strategic Plan has been renewed. Among the strategic directions is Indigenous Education as well as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, 2015, and The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

On June 29, 2022, the Board of Trustees passed the following motion regarding the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action.

Whereas, the Urban Indigenous Community Advisory Council met on Tuesday, May 17, 2022;  
and

Whereas, the Elders Council passed a motion that was unanimously supported by the representatives of the Indigenous communities of Toronto (UICAC); and

Whereas, it is the stated goal of the Toronto District School Board to ensure that Indigenous staff and students are not deprived of their rights and are provided with a learning and working environment that is free from racism and discrimination of any kind;

Therefore, be it resolved:

- (a) That the Toronto District School Board commit by resolution to the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, including the United

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Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the governing framework for reconciliation;

- (b) That the TDSB acknowledge that Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) are distinct with inherent rights, laws, and institutions;
- (c) That the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples be embedded in policies, bylaws and Board governance structures;
- (d) That Truth and Reconciliation be set in the Board's strategic directions.

### Next Steps

- Continue to move forward with the identification of a capital funding source for the construction of a new, standalone Kapapamahchkwew Wandering Spirit School with the Urban Indigenous Education Centre.
  - A new, standalone, and fully Indigenized facility has been proposed to provide a truly decolonized environment for Indigenous students and Communities across Toronto. The new facility would accommodate Kapapamahchkwew - Wandering Spirit School and the Urban Indigenous Education Centre (UIEC).
  - The funding previously allocated for the project in 2018 (\$11M) reflects the standard approach to Capital Priorities funding allocations. The grant was allocated based upon a proposal to retrofit and expand the existing building at 16 Phin Avenue. Through the course of design, and informed by the Indigenous Communities, the original proposal to invest in the 16 Phin Avenue building is no longer appropriate due to its resemblance to a residential school.
  - A standalone facility used exclusively by Indigenous programs and services is required. Additional capital funding is required to support the cost of the new facility. This will provide a truly decolonized environment where Indigenous programs can exist without the interference of other user groups with colonial practices.
  - This project was submitted during the 2022 Capital Priorities process but was not funded. Since that time, staff, working together with input from the Superintendent and others close to the school and Indigenous Communities to revise the scope of the project. The project has been phased, beginning with the replacement school and child care, which will be the focus of the capital submission. Future phases include a new facility for the UIEC, potential pool and future expansion.

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- Continue moving forward with the Boyne as a site of Indigenous Land -Based Pedagogy led by the Urban Indigenous Education Centre and guided by the Elders Council.
- Gradually implement the Grade 11 NBE 3 English: Understanding Contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Voices course across the system.
- Continue to engage community through the Urban Indigenous Community Advisory Committee.
- Provide mandatory training to all formal leaders on The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Integrate professional learning about anti-Indigenous racism, trauma informed approaches and cultural safety into all leadership development opportunities learning from and working with Indigenous peoples and perspectives.
- Initiate and lead Indigenous Education Administrator Collaborative Inquiry in order to support the enhancement of Indigenous Education in schools, as well as support to inform School Improvement Plans.
- Support school leaders with the creation of Indigenous Education foci in School Improvement Planning.
- Continue to build upon the Indigenous Aspiring Leadership Network for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit staff.
- Develop and implement focused professional learning inquiries for Principals, Vice Principals, and teachers on creating conditions for enhancing Indigenous student well-being and achievement within Grade 7-10 classrooms.
- Create and provide ongoing access for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students to Indigenous Student Leadership Groups.
- Develop structures, in collaboration with the Urban Indigenous Community Advisory Committee and the Council of Elders, for peer and community mentorship programs.
- Continue and enhance system-wide referral process through the Urban Indigenous Education Centre.
- Establish communication processes to ensure the presence of an Indigenous advocate (e.g., UIEC Student Success Team member) at all IPRC meetings that involve First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and families.

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- Create supports for non-Indigenous Special Education staff to work with Indigenous holistic approaches.
- Continue to build and enhance professional learning for all staff in trauma informed practices and cultural safety from Indigenous perspectives.
- Provide professional learning for all central Special Education staff on anti-Indigenous racism.
- Work with the Urban Indigenous Education Centre and the Urban Indigenous Community Advisory Committee to identify barriers and develop strategies for removing systemic processes that impede First Nations, Métis and Inuit well-being and learning.
- Provide professional learning for Caring and Safe Schools Centrally Assigned Principals and Advisors on Indigenous Education contexts, anti-Indigenous racism, and Indigenous approaches to restorative practices and student engagement.
- Provide professional learning for school leaders on Indigenous Education contexts, anti-Indigenous racism, and Indigenous approaches to restorative practices and student engagement with a focus on decision making.
- With the support of families and community partners, support Principals and Vice Principals in developing whole-school Indigenous approaches to restorative practices.
- Work with community partners to create an Indigenous focused pre-Kindergarten program for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and families.
- Support the mobilization of Indigenous community members and Indigenous Early Years educators with expertise in Indigenous approaches to Early Years education in order to create and implement professional learning for all early years educators.
- Work with the Urban Indigenous Community Advisory Committee to develop and share strategies to support First Nations, Métis, and Inuit families with formal school-entry processes.
- Provide culturally-relevant resources and access to the Council of Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Indigenous language speakers.
- Create Early Years curriculum writing opportunities that centre Indigenous perspectives.
- Provide all Early Years practitioners (school-based teams – Designated Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten teachers, administrators) with professional learning on how to engage with and support Indigenous students and their families/caregivers with reference to an anti-Indigenous racism framework.



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### Special Education and Inclusion

The Vision of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), as outlined in the TDSB's [Special Education Plan](#), in line with Regulation 181/98, is that students with disabilities and special education needs and intersecting identities be welcomed, included and supported in well-resourced neighborhood schools. We recognize that some students with unique strengths and needs may require more specialized or intensive programs and supports, and provide these in consultation with parents/guardians/caregivers. It is our goal that these intensive programs and supports will be available in sites that are equitably located throughout the district.

The Vision includes a commitment on the part of the TDSB to make, where possible, facilities fully accessible to students, families, staff and communities. [Policy on Accessible Education for Students with Disabilities](#).

A further commitment is made to continue to search out effective practices as evidenced in research and practice in collaboration with the departments of the Board and in partnership with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) to ensure equity of access and equity of outcome for students with special education needs.

The Integrated Equity Framework for Special Education and Inclusion includes the following Equity Goals:

Students are successfully included, supported, and empowered when:

- All students experience a sense of belonging and social citizenship (e.g., membership, inclusion, shared power and value (Parekh, 2014))
- The learning environment is modified to fit the student, not the student to fit the environment (Parekh & Underwood, 2016)
- All identities and cultures are celebrated within the learning environment (Parekh & Underwood, 2016)
- The right to participation and establishing a positive climate where social engagement and friendships can be promoted is prioritized (Underwood, 2013)
- Deficit thinking is rejected and students are not organized within and outside the classroom by perceived ability (Parekh & Underwood, 2016).

#### Next Steps

- Continue our commitment to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students, especially students with disabilities and special education needs and intersecting identities. This includes our ongoing commitment to human rights, equity,

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anti-ableism, anti-racism, anti-oppression, and our commitment to combating anti-Indigeneity and anti-Black racism. This commitment is the foundation of the TDSB Equity Policy. It is the basis of everything we do and underpins all programming across all grade levels.

- Continue to implement inclusion practices:
  - We will work to optimize professional learning that promotes inclusive models of education and that deepens awareness of anti-oppression, anti-ableism, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Differentiated Instruction (DI) and Culturally Relevant and Responsive (CRRP) pedagogy and teaching practices.
  - We will work to confront and challenge unconscious bias within our schools, and work closely with principals and superintendents to interrupt, interrogate and strategize to ensure that students from historically marginalized groups are treated equitably. This strategy will be closely informed by data and shaped in close collaboration with all stakeholders.
  - We will implement a variety of communication strategies to provide parents/students and the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) with information about services and programs offered by Special Education and Inclusion and the Education and Community Partnership Programs (ECP).
- Increase employment opportunities and outcomes for all students with Low Incidence Exceptionalities (Intellectual Disabilities, Physical Disability, Low Vision, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Health/Medical) by:
  - Reviewing data to better understand the post-secondary pathways of students with special education needs;
  - Supporting school leaders and liaise with community partners to explore creative ways of increasing the number of students served through the Special Education Experiential Learning Program and continue to seek out opportunities for additional partnerships with business and various levels of government;
  - Continuing to provide staffing and collaborating with partners in Project SEARCH to support our school-to-work transition initiative;
  - Working with support staff to better support students with Developmental Disabilities in experiential learning settings; and
  - Leveraging the Continuous Intake Co-op (CIC) Program and investigating additional co-op opportunities for students with Intellectual Disabilities.
- Review Congregated Special Education Sites in Phase 2 of the Secondary Program Review (2025-26):

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- This review will explore further opportunities for inclusion into the network of secondary schools across Toronto
- This review will consider whether K-21 models are appropriate
- Review Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) (ongoing):
  - Opening/closing/moving programs will align with student enrolment changes in these programs
  - In following with the TDSB commitment to inclusion, our focus will remain on ensuring appropriate levels of service based on individual student needs, and as per Regulation 181/98, always looking at placement in the regular class with support before placing a student in an ISP