



## **A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety – Board Update - May 2023**

**To:** Planning and Priorities Committee

**Date:** 17 May, 2023

**Report No.:** 05-17-4531

### **Strategic Directions**

- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being
- Create a Culture for Student and Staff Well-Being
- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students
- Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs
- Transform Student Learning

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that this report be received.

### **Context**

On December 9 2022, Toronto District School Board Trustees received the report “*A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety- Report 1*”. The Action Plan contained within the report intends to address the issue of school and community violence with urgency and intensity. As is reflected in the title of the report, this Action Plan is evolving and being adapted based on the ongoing work. The Action Plan is framed by the Toronto District School Board’s commitments to Truth and Reconciliation and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights, Equity, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression.

It is of critical importance to again highlight the fact that school and community safety goes beyond the work of any single entity or organization. It is the collective responsibility of all levels of government, community agencies and other organizations, faith-based groups and all Greater Toronto Area School Boards.

The attached report *A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety Update – May 2023* (Appendix A) provides an update on the Action Plan that was received by the Board on December 9, 2022.

Significant progress has been made in many of the areas identified within the Action Plan including the hiring of staff, professional learning, the engagement of communities through partnership development, additional programming and school safety infrastructure.

## **Action Plan and Associated Timeline**

Implementation of the Action Plan items will continue throughout the spring and summer months, as outlined in the Update (Appendix A). As noted previously, the plan will continue to evolve and will be revised based on feedback and input from students, staff and communities.

Staff will continue to update the Board in a timely manner on progress made related to the fulfillment of the Action Plan.

## **Resource Implications**

The TDSB has made an additional \$2.7 million in investments to support work being done in the following areas related to school and community safety: staff to support schools, resource development and training and community engagement.

The Ministry of Education has provided an additional \$1.8 million for the continuation and expansion of the programming delivered by community agencies in collaboration with TDSB. This includes the presence of agencies working in schools during the regular school day and tutoring and recreational program offerings outside of regular school hours. Also, an additional \$175,000 has been allocated to TDSB for Focus on Youth (FOY) which supports Caring and Safe Schools programming through student employment. This specific allocation is being used during the school year. The Focus on Youth allocation for the summer months is approximately \$3 million.

At present, existing resources are being used to fund all other areas of the Action Plan.

## **Communications Considerations**

TDSB staff continue to work closely with community agencies, organizations and faith-based groups to provide ongoing, timely and transparent communication. Additionally, this update will be shared with key stakeholders through existing TDSB communication channels and posted publicly on the TDSB's website

## **Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)**

P037 Equity

P031 Human Rights

P051 Caring and Safe Schools

P069 Accessibility

PR523 Access to School Board Premises

PR540 Non-Discretionary and Discretionary Student Transfers

PR585 Board Code of Conduct

PR586 Programs for Students on Long Term Suspension or Expulsion

PR602 Hearing of and Appeal Under Section 265(1)(m) of the Education Act

PR608 Sexual Misconduct by Students

PR694 Video Surveillance

PR695 Threat to school Safety

PR697 Promoting a Positive School Climate Procedure

PR698 Police-School Board Protocol

PR703 Bullying Prevention and Intervention

PR702 Progressive Discipline

PR710 Reporting of Suspected Wrongdoing

PR728 Reporting and Responding to Racism and Hate Incidents Involving or Impacting Students in Schools

PR724 Refusal to Admit

## **Other Reference Documents**

[TDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#)

## **Appendices**

- Appendix A: A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety Update – May 2023
- Appendix B: March Break Tutoring

**From**

Executive Superintendent, Caring and Safe Schools and Indigenous Education [Jim Spyropoulos](#) or at 416-397-3678

## Appendix A

# A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety

Update May 2023

### Context

On December 9, 2022 the Board received the report “*A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety- Report 1*”. The report and the Action Plan contained within it were created in response to data which shows an increase in violent incidents impacting young people within the City of Toronto. Schools are a reflection of the communities within which they exist, and as such there has also been an increase in violent incidents in TDSB schools.

Based on the Ministry of Education *Policy and Program Memorandum 120: Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education*, the term violent incident is defined as the occurrence of any one of the following:

1. possessing a weapon, including a firearm (note: this includes any object used as a weapon and replicas)
2. physical assault causing bodily harm requiring medical attention
3. sexual assault
4. robbery
5. using a weapon to cause or to threaten to cause bodily harm to another person
6. extortion
7. hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences

Violent incidents that occur on school premises during school-run programs must be reported to the Ministry of Education, whether the incident was committed by a student of the school or whether it was committed by any other person.

Using this definition, the number of violent incidents on TDSB school premises since 2018-19 is as follows:

School Year	Reported to Ministry of Education
2018 - 19	267
2019 - 20	212
2020 -21	65
2021 - 22	223
2022 – April 2023	323 (to be reported at the end of June)

The figures represent the number of students involved in “violent incidents” as opposed to the number of occurrences. What this means more specifically is that any one occurrence may generate multiple violent incident reports depending on the number of students involved.

The Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety and the accompanying Action Plan intend to address the issue of school and community violence with urgency and intensity.

The Action Plan is framed by the Toronto District School Board’s commitments to Truth and Reconciliation and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights, Equity, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression. The plan continues to evolve based on feedback and learnings garnered through implementation.

TDSB recognizes the role that systemic racism and other forms of oppression play in relation to school and community violence. TDSB staff will continue to engage in anti racism, anti oppression training and work closely with the Urban Indigenous Education Centre and the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement to address these issues as we strive to build caring, safe, inclusive, and welcoming schools and workplaces for all.

This Action Plan is being implemented across the Board on multiple fronts. This implementation highlights the fact that school and community safety is the collective responsibility of all levels of government, community agencies and other organizations, faith-based groups and all Greater Toronto Area School Boards.

This report provides an update on the Action Plan as it as received at the December 9, 2022 Board meeting.

### **Additional Investments**

On February 1, 2023 the Board received *A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety Report 1 – Budget Implications* which specified additional investments associated with the Action Plan presented at the Special Board Meeting on December 9, 2022.

As a follow up to the additional investment allocated by the Board on February 1, 2023 the following positions have been hired:

- Two teachers
- One Caring and Safe Schools Advisor
- Two Child and Youth Counselors
- Twenty-Two Additional School Based Safety Monitors

Additional Investments have also recently been made in the following:

- Eleven Child Youth Counsellors
- Twelve Social Workers
- One Child Youth Worker
- Consultant costs for Caring and Safe School Safety Audits

### **Compulsory Learning and Compliance Training**

The first phase of training has included school administrators, Superintendents of Education and Executive Superintendents and is nearing completion. This training included learning related to PR 695 Threat to School Safety, PR 697 Promoting a Positive School Climate and emergency preparedness. Thus far, approximately 85% of the intended staff have completed this training. The final dates of training for this school year have been scheduled to achieve full compliance.

This learning has been extended to include staff at Administrative Sites. Administrative Sites will also be undertaking emergency preparedness practice drills before the end of the school year.

Twenty TDSB staff have received Threat Assessment training. Additionally, eight Caring and Safe Schools staff were certified in level 1 and level 2 *Threat Assessment* training offered through the Center for Trauma Informed Practices in March 2023. Senior Team staff will receive Threat Assessment training through the Centre for Trauma Informed Practice in July and August of 2023. This training will lead to level 1 certification.

## **Restorative Practice and Restorative Justice**

Restorative Practices have taken on greater significance and are being used more often throughout the TDSB as part of preventing, managing, responding to and resolving situations of conflict. Training has been ongoing and consists of learning related to restorative practices frameworks and the effective use of restorative circles.

This work is being coordinated by Centrally Assigned Principals in Caring and Safe Schools, Student Well-Being and Innovation and Teaching and Learning in collaboration with the Student Equity Collective, the Urban Indigenous Education Centre, the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement and the TDSB RESTORES group.

At present, 2821 employees have completed Part 1 Restorative Practice training and 1952 employees have completed Part 2 from the International Institute for Restorative Practices. Our goal is for every school to have access to trained staff on site.

Additional training dates are in place for May (May 9 and 25) led by TDSB current and retired Administrators, who are certified trainers. This training will continue as part of the 2023 Summer Institute course offerings.

These learning opportunities have become customized to address the needs of different job classifications e.g. Lunchroom Supervisors, School Administrators, Child and Youth Workers, Teachers, Child and Youth Workers, Designated Early Childhood Educators, Special Needs Assistants, Social Workers.

### **Audit Function**

The TDSB is introducing a Caring and Safe Schools audit process for all schools in the Board. This process is intended to heighten system and school accountability and to create the safest possible schools by examining school climate, physical plant and compliance to the Board's policies and procedures.

Two schools from every Learning Centre have been scheduled to go through the Caring and Safe School audit process before the end of the 2022-2023 school year.

Audit teams are comprised of school administrators, Caring and Safe Schools staff, Superintendents of Education and Occupational Health and Safety Officers. Audit teams will work closely with school staff through a process designed to collaboratively and supportively improve Caring and Safe School practices.



## **Expected Practices Guide for Caring and Safe Schools**

The Expected Practices Guide for Caring and Safe Schools has been created in draft form with the insights from school based and central staff. This guide has been created to ensure that staff recognize the key areas of focus related to creating caring, safe, inclusive, and accepting schools.

The guide will also support the Caring and Safe Schools Audit process and is organized into three specific areas, Policy and Procedure, Creating Positive School Climate and Physical Plant. The guide will be revised based on the learning from the first set of eight Caring and Safe School Audits.

### **Expert Reference Panel on School Safety and Student Well-Being**

Currently the Expert Reference Panel on School Safety and Student Well-Being is in the midst of reviewing data from Toronto Public Health, SafeTO, and TDSB to help inform their planning. The Panel has formed seven working groups to address the Action Plan that the TDSB committed to in December 2022. The seven working groups are as follows:

Expanding Caring Adults

Student Voice and Programming

Investing in Security Infrastructure

Supporting Positive Conflict Resolution

Enhancing Caring, Inclusive and Safe School Cultures

Providing Ongoing Emergency Preparedness Training

Increasing Student and Community Engagement and Intergovernmental Partnerships

The upcoming meeting on May 31, 2023, will be the fourth meeting of the Expert Reference Panel on School Safety and Well-Being.

The working groups will continue examining data, considering evidence-based research, and then begin to develop recommendations. Also at the May 31, 2023 meeting the Expert Reference Panel will:

- Examine data and research to broadly understand the scope of school safety and its impacts on student well-being;
- Examine who is affected and the multiple impacts;
- Identify risk and protective factors; and

- Use current evidence and research, to propose policies and program solutions/strategies, to the Director and/or the Board, with the sole focus of making schools safer by reducing violence, improving mental health, and promoting well-being that is grounded in adherence to Indigenous Rights, Human Rights, and equity.

## **Programs and Partnerships**

Many elements go into the creation of caring and safe schools and workplaces. The most critical component is working through relationships with all internal and external stakeholders to build positive school climates where students feel valued, heard and cared for irrespective of identity or social standing.

In response to student and community voice, the Toronto District School Board has been working very closely with community partners to expand learning and recreational program offerings (including tutoring, mentoring and the provision of nutrition services) outside of regular school hours; these programs have already begun at certain sites after school and on Saturdays to address urgent need. To facilitate this programming the TDSB continues to expand partnerships with local culturally responsive community organizations and faith-based groups in support of school and community safety; the selection of these groups has been made with input from parents/guardian/caregivers, students, school leaders, local Trustees and community members.

Over the March Break, TDSB worked with community partners to deliver programming which serviced 1860 students and employed 284 TDSB secondary school students (Appendix B).

The number of students served has been broken down as follows:

Grades 1-3: 954 students

Grades 4-6: 363 students

Grades 7-10: 352 students

Grades 11-12: 390 students

The programming was delivered through effective collaboration between Caring and Safe Schools, Continuing Education, Facility Services and Virtual Learning and Re-Engagement. These programs have been very well received and staff have received many requests for their extension.

To support the extension, the Ministry of Education has responded to a TDSB request by allocating an additional \$1.8 million for the continuation and expansion of these programs. This has included the presence of agencies working in schools during the regular school day and tutoring and recreational program offerings outside of regular school hours.

To facilitate the connection between schools and community partners local safety tables are being established. The mandate of these tables will be to undertake a collaborative approach to school and community safety including the mandate of building a safe learning environment with the support of students, staff and parents/guardians/caregivers along with stakeholders in the community. Community stakeholders include but are not limited to community agencies, faith groups, police services, recreational services, cultural groups and representatives from all levels of government.

These safety tables are meeting throughout the spring of 2023 and their development will be ongoing based on local community dynamics as well as need.

### **Toronto Police Service**

TDSB continues to work with Toronto Police Service (TPS) in ways which promote school and community safety. The central focus of the joint work is strengthening local models which bring schools and local Toronto Police divisions together.

The Toronto Police Service continues to facilitate learning for TDSB, TCDSB and community partners related to emergency preparedness and threat assessment.

On May 12, 2023 TDSB participated in SafeTO's school summit which brought Toronto Police Service together with other local school boards as a way of further developing productive working relationships. There were approximately 360 participants. Planning is underway for another meeting between the groups in August of 2023.

TDSB continues to work closely with TPS on matters which necessitate police involvement.

### **City of Toronto**

TDSB continues to partner with the City of Toronto and multi-sector partners on the implementation of SafeTO place-based approaches to violence reduction and improving school/community safety and well-being. The TDSB's participation in integrated Safety Coordination Teams has enhanced responsiveness to incidents that have occurred and have enabled additional supports for local prevention initiatives.

The City is assessing the viability of investing in TDSB's involvement in SafeTO through the proposed creation of a number of positions which will help to coordinate the work of TDSB and the City of Toronto in the area of school and community safety.

In response to increasing school/community safety and well-being challenges resulting in calls for services to Toronto Police Service, TDSB and TCDSB co-designed with SafeTO partners a conversation with School Administration to providing clarity on the mandate of Toronto Police Service related to schools when called, who to call at the local division when required, and to provide clarity on what responses look like. The conversation that occurred on May 12, 2023 also provided school administrators with an overview of relevant City supports.

A professional development workshop was facilitated at Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute with TDSB, the City and the Social Solutions Institute (SSI) a UK-based organization specializing in violence disruption. SSI values the important role of educators in violence prevention, outlining lived experience for failed and successful disruption that took place in other jurisdictions. The discussion also explored the expansion of the City's TOwards Peace violence disruption model and considerations for expansion to Scarborough.

#### **Data and Technology- Updated Video Equipment**

Currently, TDSB is facing challenges at many sites which are dealing with outdated video equipment which may no longer be functioning and cannot be repaired.

Staff from a cross-section of Board departments have been working together to address this issue. This process has been delayed due to supply chain and manufacturing issues. The final phase of the procurement process, to install and operate the video equipment of the highest scoring proponent at two pilot schools, has now been completed. The evaluation committee, made up of staff from Caring and Safe Schools, Facility Services, Information Technology and Business Services are satisfied with the results of the proof-of-concept installations.

The recommendation to proceed with the next phase of the work is being considered by the Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee on May 15, 2023.

Installation of new equipment will continue in the days ahead and will continue through the summer. A School Selection Committee is being established to determine the order of installations across the system.

## **Resource Implications**

The TDSB has made an additional \$2.7 million in investments to support work being done in the following areas related to school and community safety: staff to support schools, resource development and training and community engagement.

As noted above, the Ministry of Education has provided an additional \$1.8 million for the continuation and expansion of the programming delivered by community agencies in collaboration with TDSB. This includes the presence of agencies working in schools during the regular school day and tutoring and recreational program offerings outside of regular school hours. Also, an additional \$175,000 has been allocated to TDSB for Focus on Youth (FOY) which supports Caring and Safe Schools programming through student employment. This specific allocation is being used during the school year. The Focus on Youth allocation for the summer months is approximately \$3 million.

At present, existing resources are being used to fund all other areas of the Action Plan.

## **Conclusion**

The action items contained within *A Collaborative Approach to School and Community Safety- Report 1* which are intended to enhance school and community safety, are progressing on multiple fronts. Collaboration with both internal and external partners continues to inform the work that is occurring presently as well as plans for the future.

The impact of this work is being felt by students and communities. The importance of maintaining the momentum that has been created in recent months has been highlighted through the relationships that have been established and enhanced. By continuing to work relentlessly in creative ways, which centre the voices of students, families, staff and communities we will move closer to our goal of creating the safest, most welcoming and inclusive schools that we can.



## March Break Tutoring Camps

The following organizations are offering March Break Tutoring Camps. For more information, please contact the organizations directly.

Organization	Location	Link
ACCN	GTA area	<a href="#">ACCN TORONTO</a>
CanTYD	Scarborough	<a href="mailto:vathanan@cantyd.org">vathanan@cantyd.org</a>
Frontlines	Weston	<a href="http://www.frontlines.to">www.frontlines.to</a>
Go Green Youth Centre	Valley Park MS & Marc Garneau CI	<a href="#">March Break Camp   Go Green Youth Centre (ggyc.ca)</a>
Masjid El Noor	York Memorial CI	<a href="#">Masjid El Noor March Break Camp 2023</a>
Motion Ball Sports	West Humber CI	<a href="#">Programs – Motion Ball Sports</a>
Play Forever	North/West part of Toronto	<a href="#">Play Forever - Registration Link</a>
Ripple Effect Circle/ Midaynta	Ryerson CS & Greenholme JMS	<a href="#">Ripple March program flyer</a>
Scarborough Muslim Association	Abu Bakr Siddique	<a href="#">Scarborough Muslim Association March Break Tutoring Form</a>
Sports4All	Donwood Park P.S. Lawrence Heights MS & Victoria Park CI	<a href="#">REGISTER (sports4all.ca)</a>
Taking Kids Out Of Poverty	Rose Ave. PS	<a href="#">TKOP Academic Enrichment Program</a>
The Ubuntu Village	Cedarbrae CI & John McCrae PS	<a href="#">The Ubuntu Village March Break Camp: Registration Form</a>



## Online Tutoring



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[Paper Registration](#)

[Brainfuse Registration](#)