



TRUSTEE James Li MBA CPA CMA

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August 31, 2020

Dear Community Members,

Thank you for attending another virtual meeting revisiting the TDSB's school re-opening plans. Please note that another preregistration survey was released earlier last week and should reflect your intentions on how you would like to continue your child's schooling this year. I look forward to sharing your feedback for future planning in the upcoming school year with the Board. I would also thank parents, students, and staff for your patience during these challenging times.

Please see a below for the minutes from our meeting.

Meeting Date/Time: August 24, 2020 6:30 PM

Meeting Location: WebEX Online Meeting hosted by Trustee James Li

Number of Attendees: Approx. 440 participants

Non-School Councils Members In Attendance: James Li (Trustee), Aretha Phillip (Ward 13 PIAC Rep), Kiki Zhang (Trustee's Office Shared Services Liaison), Tania Jabbar (Trustee's Office Shared Services Liaison)

Items Discussed:

1. **TDSB's Return to School Guide:** <https://jamesli.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Returning-to-School-Guide-Aug-10.pdf>
2. **Planning ahead for September 2020:** https://jamesli.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Return-to-School-Presentation_August-21.pdf
 - a. Toronto Public Health Recommendations include:
 - i. 2m spacing between desks
 - ii. Masks/face coverings where physical distancing is not possible
 - iii. Open space whenever possible
 - iv. Regular hand washing and sanitizing
 - v. Incorporate outdoor activities whenever possible for distancing and relief from mask/face coverings
 - vi. Active screening of symptoms prior to entry

- vii. Delay start of school year or have staggered starts to allow time for public health measures to be incorporated
- b. Pre-registration surveys
 - i. School Messenger was used to conduct an automated telephone survey to find out how many students are intending to participate in learning in school or remote learning.
 - ii. The average response rate was 67%, a total of 169,312 responses. There were 82,286 non-respondents
- c. Pre-Registration Response Rates by LOI and TPH Priority Neighbourhoods
 - i. Across LOI rankings, response rates at the elementary level show a slight difference between the most challenged and least challenged schools, but overall high response rates across neighborhoods.
 - ii. Response rates at the secondary level shows more variability across LOI school rankings when compared to elementary
 - iii. Toronto Public Health ranked schools by neighbourhood based on COVID-19 risk score. Survey response rates for TPH neighbourhoods ranked most at risk align with our overall response rate (range: 48% to 74%)
- d. Pre-Registration Survey Responses
 - i. Elementary student findings from the survey indicates that 71% of parents intend to send their children to a regular school day, while 77% indicated their interest to send their children to school with smaller classes.
 - ii. Secondary student findings indicate that 83% of parents intend to send their child to an Adapted In-School Day Model.
- e. Staff Survey results:
 - i. A survey was sent to all permanent staff on August 15, 2020 after consultation with all TDSB Bargaining Units
 - ii. The survey will give us data on staff ability to return to work and potential needs to support a full time and safe return to work. This data will be by employee classification, location, etc.
 - iii. The survey also provided details on contact information for requesting medical accommodation due to a disability and contact names for requesting non-medical accommodation (i.e. childcare/elder care) accommodation. Staff in Employee Services will work with employees, Union representatives and Principals/Managers to respond to these requests on a case-by-case basis.
- f. Virtual School for K-12 Remote Learning
 - i. Through the Ministry of Education, TDSB is requesting a BSID (Board School Identification) number to create a central “virtual school” for all students choosing fully remote learning for the 2020-21 school year
 - ii. The school will be staffed with Superintendent, principals, vice-principals, teachers, guidance counsellors

- iii. TPH letter to TDSB states that: “We recommend that the priority for allocation of resources should be schools within high incidence areas.”
- iv. Identify available spaces within school (gym, cafetorium, library) to support increased distances between students
- v. Work with external partners to identify, secure and set up alternative space for student learning (i.e. City of Toronto)
- vi. On August 18, we received an updated list from TPH re: schools in high incidence areas and continue to work with TPH to develop more precise modelling of school configurations in the coming days
- g. Elementary Class Size Limitations In Person:
 - i. The TDSB does not have sufficient funds available to support class sizes which would allow for 2m distancing between students in every class.
- h. Remote Learning:
 - i. Delivered through a central virtual school model as there are not sufficient resources to provide for an individual school-based model.
- i. Optional Attendance For Regular Schools, Specialized Programs, Alternative Schools and French Programs:

Staff is finalizing the process and messaging for Principals and Superintendents on:

 - i. Parents’ requests to have their children attend their designated school by address instead of their Optional Attendance school.
 - ii. Parents’ requests for re-admission/re-entry to FSL programs.
- j. Technology Devices Principals and Superintendents will receive details on:
 - i. Devices that were distributed to the system in the spring
 - ii. Devices that will be returned to them
 - iii. How they can purchase additional devices for staff and students
 - iv. How parents will be able to ask for devices in September
- k. Transportation:
 - i. Toronto Student Transportation Group (TSTG) approved a staggered start to transportation All students with Special Education needs (excluding gifted program) will be transported in the first week of school
 - ii. Barring any significant issues, bussing would begin for all other students, including French and gifted, in week 2
 - iii. Transportation to remote sites would be subject to availability of transportation and where available would not be in place for start of school year.
- l. Delayed Start and Staggered Entry:
 - i. As part of a recent update from the Ministry of Education, the concept of delaying the start of school has been suggested and staff are currently looking at this option given the ongoing evolution of plans that are happening.
 - ii. Further, staff is considering how a staggered start within each school might occur.



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- iii. For example, to build experience with new routines, a few grades will start for a couple of days and additional grades would begin school on a staggered basis.
- m. Next Steps Pre-registration: All elementary and secondary families will be surveyed again once all school model information has been finalized.
- n. Returning to School: A Guide to Safely Reopening TDSB Schools: Update this guide for staff, students, parents, education partners and the community. Create additional documents and resources for staff to provide the necessary information for implementation.
- o. Protocols for Principals:
 - i. Two 'Return to School Working Groups' of Principals, Senior Managers, Staff and Superintendents at the elementary and secondary levels have been working to create elementary and secondary guidelines for school operations as well as teaching and learning for both in-person as well as the fully remote settings
 - ii. Superintendents will engage Learning Network Principals and Vice-Principals in almost daily conversations to monitor and support safe reopening and school experiences with close attention paid to addressing local contexts across the TDSB
 - iii. Principals will continue to engage parents and School Councils in a variety of ways so that student and parent voice inform climate and decision-making at the local level

3. Roundtable discussion

- a. Although the new opening date is September 15, each school has a 3 day grace period where they can get themselves ready.
- b. Each school will contact families regarding their start date
- c. Remote learning will begin on time on September 15
- d. Specialized programs (Arts, Stem, Tops, IB, AP) will not be offered through the remote learning option, however they will be offered in the home school
- e. There is no cap on French immersion
- f. There are caps on gifted programs
- g. Schools cannot know timetables until parents offer their final decision through the survey
- h. Remote learning is conducted through a central virtual school where a central guidance counselor will be available for secondary students
- i. Class sizes will be bigger in remote learning
- j. Online versions of textbooks should be offered in remote learning
- k. Your child will not lose their spot in their homeschool should they move on with remote learning
- l. Classroom caps are not determined by the TDSB, but determined by TPH with consideration to high-risk neighborhoods
- m. The province will ultimately decide if schools need to be closed again

Please let me know if you have any questions to the meeting minutes as recorded above. I look forward to meeting you in our next Ward Council Meeting.



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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Li", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James Li

Trustee, Ward 13 Don Valley North