



**DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

**NOTICE OF MEETING**

**STANDING COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC SESSION**

**Monday, January 6, 2025**

Chair: Deb Oldfield

Vice-Chair: Kelly Miller

Director of Education and Secretary to the Board: Camille Williams-Taylor

Recording Secretary: Gillian Venning

**DATE:** Monday, January 6, 2025

**TIME:** 7:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Boardroom

**ATTACHMENTS:** Agenda

**Copies to:**

All Trustees

Director of Education

All Superintendents

**STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**  
**Monday, January 6, 2025**  
**7:00 p.m.**

		PAGE
1.	<u>Call to Order</u>	Verbal
2.	<u>Land Acknowledgement</u>	Verbal
	<p>The Durham District School Board acknowledges that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships, both historic and modern, with the territories upon which our school board and schools are located. Today, this area is home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We acknowledge that the Durham Region forms a part of the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, the Mississauga Peoples and the treaty territory of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation. It is on these ancestral and treaty lands that we teach, learn and live.</p>	
3.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u>	Verbal
4.	<u>Motion to Approve Agenda</u>	Verbal
5.	<u>Community Presentations</u>	
	(a) OSSTF/FEESO District 13 Occasional Teachers' Bargaining Unit (Julia McCrea)	Verbal
	(b) Common Sense Classrooms (Patricia Poku-Christian)	Verbal
6.	<u>DDSB Presentations: Strategic Implementation</u>	
	(a) Early Reading Screener Results: Building Meaningful Learning (Superintendent Erin Elmhurst)	1-6
7.	<u>Recommended Actions</u>	
	(a) Approval of the Standing Committee Minutes, December 2, 2024 (Trustee Deb Oldfield)	7-9

8. Information Items
- (a) Student Trustee Report 10-11  
(Student Trustees K. Hoare, N. Poopalasundaram, S. Vijayakumar)
  - (b) OPSBA Update Verbal  
(Trustees Donna Edwards, Kelly Miller)
  - (c) Ignite Durham Learning Foundation (IDLF) Update Verbal  
(Trustee Michelle Arseneault)
9. Memos
- (a) 2425:61, School Year Calendar Consultation Process 12-16
  - (b) 2425:62, Secondary Staffing and Enrolment Update 17-19
10. Adjournment

**DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD  
ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

**REPORT TO:** Durham District School Board

**DATE:** January 6, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Early Reading Screener Results:  
Building Meaningful Learning

**PAGE:** 1 of 6

**ORIGIN:** Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board  
Erin Elmhurst, Superintendent of Education

The Durham District School Board recognizes Indigenous rights are distinct. In the exercise of those rights, Indigenous staff and students shall not be subjected to actions with the aim or effect of depriving these distinct rights.

The Durham District School Board is committed to providing learning and working environments that centre human rights and equity and are safe, welcoming, respectful, equitable, accessible, inclusive, and free from all forms of discrimination, oppression, harassment, and harm.

## **1.0 Abstract**

This report provides an update on the Early Reading Screener results for students in Year 2 Kindergarten through Grade 2, outlining a strategic and inclusive approach to strengthening foundational literacy while fostering meaningful learning and engagement. The Early Reading Screener, mandated by [Policy/Program Memorandum 168](#) (PPM 168), emphasizes early identification of literacy strengths and needs.

These results guide a multi-tiered approach that integrates engaging, evidence-based teaching practices, targeted interventions, and collaborative professional development for educators. Families are provided with individualized results and resources to support literacy at home, promoting a shared commitment to learning.

This work aligns with the Durham District School Board's (DDSB) strategic priorities of Meaningful Learning, Connected Communities, and Well-Being, fostering equitable and confident literacy development across the system. This report is provided for information.

## **2.0 Purpose**

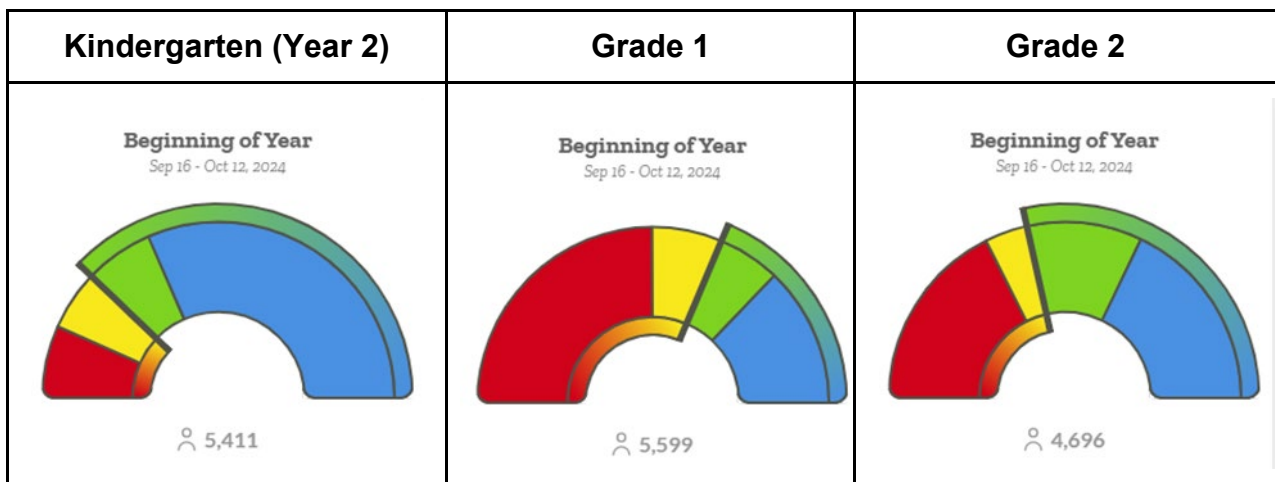
The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Trustees with an update on the Early Reading Screener results and to present an actionable plan for fostering meaningful learning and engagement in literacy. This plan emphasizes building strong foundational skills while creating inclusive, engaging, and supportive learning environments for all students.

### 3.0 Background

The DDSB recognizes foundational literacy as critical to student success and lifelong learning. Guided by PPM 168, annual Early Reading Screeners are conducted to identify students' literacy strengths and areas requiring support.

From mid-September to mid-November 2024, the first screening cycle provided valuable insights into literacy development across DDSB elementary schools.

### 3.1 Early Reading Screener Results (November 2024)



- **Blue** - Well Above Benchmark
- **Green** - Above Benchmark
- **Yellow** - Below Benchmark
- **Red** - Well Below Benchmark

#### Key Findings

- 76% of Year 2 Kindergarten students performed at or above benchmark.
- 38% of Grade 1 students performed at or above benchmark, highlighting a greater need for targeted interventions.
- 57% of Grade 2 students reached benchmark.

These results underscore the importance of responsive, engaging, and evidence-based literacy instruction, particularly during the critical early years.

### 4.0 Analysis

The Early Reading Screener results, combined with classroom assessments and the 2023 EQAO data (71% of Grade 3 students meeting or exceeding the provincial standard in reading and 63% in writing), provide a detailed view of foundational literacy development across the District. These insights highlight areas of strength — such as foundational readiness in Year 2 Kindergarten and progress in Grade 2 — as well as

opportunities for targeted improvement, particularly in Grade 1. This data underscores the importance of an explicit, targeted, and engaging approach to literacy instruction, aligned with the DDSB's strategic priorities of *Meaningful Learning*, *Connected Communities*, and *Well-Being*.

To address the identified needs and leverage areas of strength, the DDSB is implementing a multi-tiered approach to literacy instruction that ensures students receive the right support at the right time while fostering meaningful engagement in literacy learning. This approach incorporates data-driven decision-making and builds educator capacity to deliver high-quality, responsive instruction.

#### **4.1 Three-Tiered Model of Support**

##### **a) Tier 1: Engaging Classroom Instruction:**

- This approach is beneficial to all students, providing systematic and explicit instruction that supports the development of essential language and literacy skills.
- Whole-group instruction that is responsive to students' next steps in learning aligns with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to ensure lessons are inclusive, interactive, and relevant.
- Screener and classroom-based assessment data inform classroom instruction, enabling teachers to create meaningful learning experiences for all students.

##### **b) Tier 2: Targeted Small-Group Interventions:**

- Students receive more intensive instruction and interventions in the classroom within small groups from the teacher.
- Literacy Specialists collaborate with educators to design and implement interventions in small groups and model engaging, explicit teaching strategies.

##### **c) Tier 3: Intensive Individualized Support:**

- Students receive more intensive instruction and interventions in smaller groups or one-on-one from the teacher.

##### **d) Building Educator Capacity:**

- Training sessions emphasize evidence-based strategies and engaging instructional practices.
- Drop-in sessions with facilitators, job-embedded learning, and collaborative learning sessions provide ongoing opportunities for educators to examine the data, share best practices, and refine their approaches.
- By focusing on practical, engaging methods, educators are better prepared to inspire student confidence and enthusiasm for literacy.

##### **e) Meaningful Learning and Engagement at the Core:**

- UDL-aligned instruction promotes active participation and curiosity, ensuring students feel connected to their learning experiences.
- Individualized screener results and resources equip families to support literacy development at home, reinforcing a culture of collaborative learning.

- Meaningful engagement opportunities and success in literacy enhance students' sense of achievement and belonging.

**f) Data-Informed Decision Making:**

- Screener results identify areas for focus across grades, guiding system planning, school planning, and classroom planning with a focus on responsive, engaging, and explicit teaching and learning.
- Progress monitoring ensures that the impact of interventions is continually assessed and adjusted.

## **4.2 Risks and Opportunities**

**a) Risks:**

- Without effective instructions and interventions, students performing below benchmark may experience frustration, reduced self-esteem, or disengagement, impacting their well-being and long-term success.
- Gaps in foundational literacy skills can compound over time, resulting in long-term academic challenges.

**b) Opportunities:**

- Success in literacy can boost students' self-esteem and foster a positive attitude toward learning, improving their overall well-being and engagement in school.
- Targeted interventions help students develop foundational skills that lead to better performance in reading, writing, and overall learning across subjects.
- Strengthening early literacy equips students with critical skills that support their academic journey and future success beyond school.
- Meaningful, engaging instruction fosters a love of learning, benefiting students academically and emotionally.

## **5.0 Financial Implications**

Funding for Early Reading Screeners and Literacy instruction is tied directly to the operating budget, which prioritizes classroom resources, teacher salaries, and instructional materials. Funded by the Learning Resources Fund (LRF) and targeted funding for literacy programs ([DDSB 2024-2025 Budget Booklet](#) - page 16), the budget includes screener licenses, 22 Literacy Specialists, and literacy training which provide the financial framework for this initiative.

## **6.0 Strategic Links**

Effective and responsive literacy instruction advances the DDSB's Multi-Year Strategic Plan by aligning with the following priorities:

- **Meaningful Learning:** Provides students with engaging, evidence-based instruction tailored to diverse learning needs, ensuring all students build confidence and competence in literacy.

- **Connected Communities:** Strengthens partnerships between educators, families, and administrators to create supportive, collaborative learning environments.
- **Well-Being:** Fosters student confidence and a sense of belonging through high-quality, engaging, and meaningful inclusive literacy instruction.

## 7.0 Communication/Implementation Plan

### a) **Communication:**

The Early Reading Screener results have been communicated to system leaders, school leaders, and educators to inform and enhance responsive, evidence-based instruction. Families have also received individualized information about their child's screener outcomes, along with home support resources, fostering a shared commitment to improving foundational literacy skills.

### b) **Implementation Plan:**

The roll-out of the Early Reading Screener and interventions will follow a phased, system-wide approach:

- **Phase 1: Preparation (Spring 2024 - ongoing)**
  - Teachers, Literacy Specialists, and administrators received professional development in implementing the screener, interpreting data, and designing responsive instructional strategies.
  - Training sessions emphasized meaningful learning approaches, including UDL and evidence-based teaching methods.
  - The Early Reading Screener was administered to all students in Year 2 Kindergarten through Grade 2, with results compiled for analysis.
- **Phase 2: Targeted Implementation (November 2024 - ongoing)**
  - Teachers are incorporating UDL-aligned strategies into daily classroom instruction to create engaging, inclusive literacy experiences.
  - Lesson plans are responsive to screener and classroom-based assessment data focusing on engaging, interactive learning and real-world connections to literacy concepts.
  - Educators and Literacy Specialists deliver targeted small-group and one-on-one instruction.
- **Phase 3: Monitor and Respond (December 2024 - ongoing)**
  - Student progress is monitored through a combination of classroom assessments and screener follow-ups. Data is reviewed regularly to ensure interventions are effective.
  - Instructional strategies are continuously adjusted based on progress monitoring results, ensuring all students receive the support they need to thrive.
  - The second screener administration in March 2025 for students who did not meet benchmark on the first screener will provide updated data to measure growth and inform next steps.



## 8.0 Conclusion

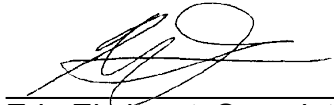
This report is presented for information to the Board of Trustees. It highlights the DDSB's commitment to fostering meaningful learning and engagement in literacy.

Report reviewed and submitted by:



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Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board



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Erin Elmhurst, Superintendent of Education

## **Report of the Durham District School Board Standing Committee Public Session December 2, 2024**

A meeting of the Standing Committee of the Durham District School Board was held on this date.

### 1. Call to Order:

The Chair of Standing Committee, Deb Oldfield called the meeting to order at 8:38 p.m.

Roll Call: Chair Deb Oldfield

Members Present: Trustees Michelle Arseneault, Tracy Brown, Emma Cunningham, Donna Edwards, Mark Jacula, Stephen Linton, Kelly Miller, Carolyn Morton, Shailene Panylo, Christine Thatcher, Student Trustees Kayla Hoare, Nitishan Poopalasundaram

Regrets: Student Trustee Shampavi Vijayakumar

Officials Present: Director of Education Camille Williams-Taylor, Associate Director David Wright, General Counsel Patrick Cotter, Superintendents Michael Bowman, Georgette Davis, Erin Elmhurst, Mohamed Hamid, Margaret Lazarus, Andrea McAuley, Heather Mundy, Stephen Nevills, Martine Robinson, Kandis Thompson, Senior Manager Dervla Kelly

Recording Secretary: Gillian Venning

### 2. Land Acknowledgement

Chair Deb Oldfield gave the Land Acknowledgment: The Durham District School Board acknowledges that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships, both historic and modern, with the territories upon which our school board and schools are located. Today, this area is home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. We acknowledge that the Durham Region forms a part of the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, the Mississauga Peoples and the treaty territory of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation. It is on these ancestral and treaty lands that we teach, learn and live.

### 3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this time.

### 4. Motion to Approve the Agenda

2024:SC27

MOVED by Trustee Stephen Linton

Standing Committee Meeting Minutes  
December 2, 2024

THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED.

CARRIED

5. Recommended Actions

(a) Approval of the Draft Standing Committee Minutes, November 4, 2024

Trustee Deb Oldfield presented the minutes from the November 4, 2024 Standing Committee Meeting.

2024:SC28

MOVED by Trustee Shailene Panylo

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 4, 2024 STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING BE APPROVED.

CARRIED

6. Information Items

(a) Report: Approved April 2, 2024 Violence in Schools Ad Hoc Committee Minutes

Trustee Deb Oldfield shared the minutes and provided an overview of discussion that took place at the April 2, 2024 Violence in Schools Ad Hoc Committee meeting.

There were no trustee questions.

(b) Interim Report: Violence in Schools Ad Hoc Committee

Superintendent Heather Mundy provided an overview of the work being undertaken by the Violence in Schools Ad Hoc Committee and shared that in accordance with the Terms of Reference of the Committee, it will be extending its mandate through December 31, 2025 in order to continue to consider the issues and the recommendations that it may make in its final report.

There were no trustee questions.

(c) Student Trustee Report

Student Trustees Kayla Hoare and Nitishan Poopalasundaram shared an update on their recent participation in the Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA) Fall General Meeting in Toronto.

On November 7, 2024, the Student Senate General Assembly meeting took place, where discussion around key issues affecting students took place, including the School Climate Survey and Student Census.

On November 26, 2024, a virtual Student Trustee Information Session took place where interested secondary students had an opportunity to learning about the role and

Standing Committee Meeting Minutes  
December 2, 2024

responsibilities of Student Trustees. A second session is being offered and will also include information about the upcoming Student Trustee Election for 2025-2026.

There were no trustee questions.

7. Adjournment

2024:SC29

MOVED by Trustee Stephen Linton

THAT THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m.

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Chair

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Secretary



**Durham District School Board**

**Student Trustee Report**

**January 6, 2025 Standing Committee**

**Ignite Learning**

After further discussions with our Student Senate, it has become clear that a significant barrier to student learning exists in select schools, particularly in math classes. This barrier stems from the use of levelled questions on tests. As highlighted in the November Standing Committee Meeting, we are aware that the board has introduced a 2024-2025 Math Achievement Action Plan, which aims to “outline strategies that promote meaningful learning experiences in mathematics”. However, students have expressed that the leveled system in math creates difficulties in achieving the high grades they aspire to receive. The difference in difficulty impacts students' mental health and well-being, as conversations after tests about the questions each student answered can lead to feelings of inferiority. For instance, a student who answered a Level 1 question might feel less confident compared to peers who answered a Level 4 question. This leads to disengagement and students setting lower expectations for themselves. Furthermore, students have pointed out that there is no leveled system in post-secondary education; in these settings, all students are held to the same standard. While this system reduces opportunities for failure, students across Durham have indicated that it limits their potential for academic success.

We believe it is essential to explore new ways to gather feedback from students on this topic and identify any other barriers they encounter during their high school experience. Many factors, beyond the grades the Board collects, should be considered when creating a new learning plan, while maintaining a focus on ministry alignment. Students' perspectives should be valued, as there may be underlying mental health impacts that we are not fully aware of. Specific quotes gathered from students have been provided to give board members further insight into their thoughts on the current system.

## **Ignite Connection**

Recently, one of our senators took the initiative to organize a Durham-wide charity drive to support struggling youth across Ontario. The Vice-President of our Student Senate, Viktor Cvetkovic, along with other interested senators, reached out to the Durham Children's Aid Foundation (DCAF) to promote the "Youth Supporting Youth" campaign in our region. Six of our high schools participated in the DCAF Holiday Hope Program, where each school raised funds to be donated to DCAF. These funds were then used to purchase gift cards for youth in need. The gift cards were distributed during the holiday season, allowing the youth to buy essentials or enjoy a special treat. Viktor and his committee's hard work and dedication to this charity drive are truly inspiring, and we are incredibly grateful for the outstanding turnout of \$930.

Additionally, as we mentioned in our previous report, the Student Trustee elections are underway. We are currently in the midst of our municipal elections, with students from each school advancing to the campaign stage in their respective municipalities. Municipal elections are taking place in Oshawa, Whitby, Ajax, and Pickering, while the Northern Region will proceed directly to Board-wide elections, which is scheduled for February.

## **Ignite Well Being**

During our December Student Senate General Assembly Meeting, we introduced Mentimeter, a platform we discovered at the OSTA-AECO conference in November. This interactive tool allows us to gather real-time feedback from students on the challenges they face in education and their school environments. By asking questions like, "What are the biggest issues/barriers in the DDSB?" We were able to gather valuable answers to concerns such as mental health, lack of guidance and academic support, violence, vaping and drug use, discrimination, poor communication with administrators, low engagement, student-teacher relations, and stress. These insights are incredibly important, as they reflect the lived experiences of students across the district.

Student Trustees frequently receive comments about issues students want to change or improve, but keeping track of everything and determining where to start can be challenging. Mentimeter helps by capturing feedback through word clouds, polls, and other visual aids, allowing us to identify key themes and focus areas. This enables us to bring these issues to the board table for further discussion and action.

We plan to continue using Mentimeter as an engaging way to gather direct feedback from Senators and all DDSB students at upcoming Student Senate events, ensuring we capture a broad range of perspectives from both elementary and secondary levels.



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Trustees **Memo: No. 2425:61**

**From:** Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary to the Board  
 Jim Markovski, Associate Director of Equitable Education  
 David Wright, Associate Director of Corporate Services  
 Chris Conley, Manager of Research and Strategic Analytics  
 Denise Nickerson, System Lead, Operations/Teaching and Learning Math Strategy K-12

**Date:** December 18, 2024

**RE:** School Year Calendar Planning 2025-2026

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The purpose of this memo is to provide the Board of Trustees with information about the planning and consultation process to develop the 2025-2026 school year calendars. District staff will provide reports and updates to the Board of Trustees as the calendar development process continues, as follows:

- January 6, 2025 (current): Preliminary information on the school year calendar process, including requirements, considerations, and planned community engagement and consultations;
- February 18, 2025: Recommendation for the draft school year calendars comes to the Board of Trustees' for consideration and approval;
- March 1, 2025: Submission of school year calendars to the Ministry of Education for approval.

### Developing School Year Calendars

#### *Legislative and Contractual Requirements, Collective Agreements*

In addition to the DDSB's responsibilities under the Human Rights Code, the DDSB must also meet requirements under the Education Act and related regulations. Regulation 304 of the Education Act states that:

- A regular school year is the period between September 1 and June 30;
- The school year shall include a minimum of 194 school days. Of these 194 school days:
  - Three days must be designated as professional development/activity (PA) days that are devoted to specific provincial education priorities;
  - School boards may designate up to four days as board-designated PA days; and
  - The remaining school days shall be instructional days. A school board may designate up to ten (10) instructional days as examination days for secondary schools.

For the 2025-2026 school year calendars, Regulation 304 requires school boards to submit proposed school year calendars to the Ministry for approval on or before March 1, 2025.

In addition to the requirements set out in Regulation 304, Professional Development days within the school year calendar are placed to align with the requirements of collective agreements. Specifically, these are intended to support the cycles of teaching and learning that take place throughout the school year, including but not limited to:

- Preparing and collaboratively planning for the school year.
- Professional learning.  
Staff engagement and team building.

## **Indigenous and Human Rights Considerations**

The DDSB acknowledges that the education system and related structures may perpetuate dominant narratives and perspectives. This includes school year calendars, which reflect:

- The Gregorian (solar) calendar; and
- National and provincial statutory holidays, which include some days of significance for Christian people<sup>1</sup>.

School year calendars<sup>2</sup> can therefore create barriers for, and have a negative effect on, DDSB community members who may require time away from school or work to observe days of faith, spiritual, or cultural significance that fall on instructional days.

Given the DDSB's commitments to upholding Indigenous rights and human rights, District staff are closely examining historical and ongoing practices for potential barriers that may negatively or inequitably affect the diverse communities the District serves. The DDSB has responsibilities under the Ontario Human Rights Code and DDSB policies to identify, prevent and address potential discriminatory barriers, and to meet its legal duty to accommodate Human Rights Code-related needs (including needs based on the protected grounds of creed/religion and ancestry).

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<sup>1</sup> The Ontario Human Rights Commission's *Policy on preventing discrimination based on creed* states that "work and service schedules in Ontario have traditionally been structured around a Christian calendar. Many creeds require their members to engage in specific acts of worship and celebration at particular times of the [...] year. When these observances do not coincide with existing work or service schedules [...] and statutory holidays, people may be adversely affected. Organizations have a duty to accommodate sincerely held creed observances to the point of undue hardship, including by providing time off for religious holidays, leaves, [...] and observances."

<sup>2</sup> This also applies to modified calendars, which are an effort to move away from typical school year schedules to better support families' changing needs, circumstances, and preferences. It is important to note that for modified calendars, the District must also factor in statutory holidays, requirements set out in Regulations, and other considerations outlined in this report.



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## Days of Religious Significance for DDSB Community Members

The DDSB's Student Census and Workforce Census data indicate that the DDSB currently serves and employs people from many diverse religious, faith, and spiritual communities.

Within specific faith communities, there may be variations in which day(s) are significant, which specific day(s) should be observed, and how they are observed. In addition, dates of significance for some faith communities may not fall on a single day, or on the same day, in the same month or at the same time of year (for example, because the observance is based on a lunar calendar).

### Supporting Days of Creed-Based Significance

#### *Human rights, Inclusive Design, and Accommodation*

The DDSB has set out its commitments and responsibilities for preventing discriminatory barriers, including barriers based on creed/religion, and the duty to accommodate in its:

- [Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy](#) (the “Human Rights Policy”);
- [Human Rights Inclusive Design and Accommodation Procedure](#) (the “Accommodation Procedure”), which includes a specific section on creed-based inclusion and accommodating days of religious/creed-based significance; and
- [Accommodating Creed in Schools: An Inclusive Design Approach](#) guideline (the “Creed Accommodation Guideline”) which provides further information and guidance on flexible and inclusive creed-based practices and accommodations in schools.

#### *Current Practices*

The Human Rights Policy, Accommodation Procedure and the Accommodation Guide set out current expectations and ongoing processes for school teams to engage local communities, and to work with students and families to identify dates of significance they wish to observe.

To minimize potential barriers and maximize inclusion and participation, school staff are encouraged to:

- Know students, families, and communities, reach out to inquire about potential dates of significance, and provide opportunities for families to identify needs.<sup>3</sup>
- Review dates identified by families as well as the Days of Significance Calendar with their respective communities before planning and scheduling school-based activities (including tests/exams, events and meetings, excursions, graduation ceremonies, etc.).

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<sup>3</sup> Note: Information about the availability of Ontario Human Rights Code-related accommodations is also promoted and shared with DDSB community members at the start of the school year, and at various other points throughout the year.

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In addition, the District continues to facilitate creed-based accommodations for students and staff who require time away from school or work to observe days of religious significance:

- Parents/guardians can enter a special code for religious days when reporting a student absence related to a day of religious/creed-based significance.
- Staff may work with the People & Culture Department to request accommodation for religious dates of significance.

## **Purpose of Professional Development Days**

Professional Development days are mandated by regulation to provide opportunities for school teams to learn and engage on:

- Provincial priorities such as the implementation of new or revised curriculum, Ministry of Education policy directives and initiatives that directly support student learning and well-being, etc.
- Board and District priorities (i.e., Multi-Year Strategic Plan, Student Achievement Plan, Operational Plan, school learning plans, policies, procedures, etc.).

Professional Development is critical for staff in schools because it directly supports:

- Enhancing student learning and well-being.
- Ongoing learning and growth in teaching and learning practices, including but not limited to requirements under professional standards for educators and other accredited professional staff who work in schools (i.e., requirements under respective governing bodies).
- The expectations for roles, responsibilities, accountability, and performance.

School staff are required to participate in Professional Development days to fulfill Ministry, Board, District, school, and professional commitments and expectations.

As noted, Professional Development days are scheduled to support specific educational tasks and touchpoints with families throughout the school year (i.e., report cards, parent/guardian and teacher interviews, etc.).

Professional Development days need to align with key dates within semesters to build in time for assessments and exams prior to developing progress, mid-term, and final report cards, and to conduct parent/guardian and teacher interviews.

## **Engagement and Consultation Process**

As part of the consultation process for the school year calendar, the four proposed calendars (elementary and secondary, regular, and modified) will be shared with DDSB communities for input and feedback, utilizing an online survey tool.

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The calendars and survey tool will be shared for consultation with:

- Individual schools (both in-person and DDSB@Home), will share the appropriate calendar and consultation tool with their respective School Community Council, parent/guardian groups, and school staff;
- Student Senate;
- All employee groups (including CUPE, DSAA, DESA, ETFO, OPC, OSSTF, and MPA);
- Employee Affinity groups;
- DDSB Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC);
- Anti-Oppression Department;
- DCDSB (to attempt to align calendars and PA/PD/Board Designated Holiday days as closely as possible). As our busing arrangements are integrated with the DCDSB, there is a financial cost of \$147,123.00 per day if the DDSB runs school buses without DCDSB's participation. The DDSB works with DCDSB and Durham Student Transportation Service (DSTS) to minimize transportation impacts and costs, wherever possible.

School year calendars are also posted on the DDSB's webpage, and on social media platforms in order to share information and invite feedback. The results of the community consultation will be used to help finalize the calendar, including recommended Professional Development days, within the limitations described above.

In past consultations, families have shared feedback indicating that they appreciate, wherever possible, some consistency in school calendars year over year to help plan ahead for childcare, other family responsibilities and needs, work schedules, etc. Some working families also plan their vacation days around statutory holidays and typical school calendars. Staff recognizes that these considerations may not apply to all families and that addressing discriminatory barriers based on all Human Rights Code grounds is a priority.

## **Conclusion**

The development of a school year calendar is a collaborative process. While partner input is important, District staff must also adhere to the placement of statutory holidays and regulations. Additionally, staff must consider contractual requirements and additional operational factors to inform the process.

The District therefore has very limited flexibility when developing school year calendars. Despite these constraints, staff continue to engage with DDSB community members for their input and feedback to help inform decisions within this restricted scope.

The results of the engagement and consultation process and recommendation for the draft school year calendars for the Board of Trustees' consideration will be shared at the February 18, 2025 Board Meeting for approval.



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Trustees **Memo: No. 2425:62**

**From:** Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education and Secretary to the Board  
 Jim Markovski, Associate Director of Equitable Education  
 David Wright, Associate Director of Corporate Services

**Date:** December 20, 2024

**RE:** **Secondary Staffing Update – January 2025**

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This memo is provided to Trustees for information purposes to communicate the current enrolment and staffing reality in DDSB secondary schools for Semester 2.

### Enrolment and Staffing

The DDSB relies on enrolment projections each Spring as we begin staffing preparations for the upcoming school year. These projections are carefully prepared utilizing forecasting measures, which include current enrolment figures, new housing developments, and potential population fluctuations in our region. This data is drawn from multiple sources.

The following chart provides an overview of the OEP compared to our actual enrolment. The decrease in enrolment between September 30th and December 2nd falls within the annual expected percentage fluctuation. This number typically reflects those students who have accepted employment, began apprenticeships, moved out of the area, or began post-secondary schooling.

OEP (Spring 2024)	September 30, 2024	December 2, 2024
25,527	24,103	23,960

Difference from OEP: 1,567 fewer students than projected

The Official Enrolment Projections (OEP) for the 2024-2025 school year have not been realized primarily because the number of anticipated new build housing developments has not yet materialized. Secondly, a manual error occurred which resulted in the double counting of some secondary students in the initial projections.

As a result of the lower than projected student enrolment numbers, we have engaged in a review of our secondary staffing allocation to determine areas for adjustments that will improve the balance between the allocated staffing complement with the current student enrolment.

Additionally, we remain mindful of the impact on student timetables and prioritizing student pathways and specialty programming.

## **Communication and Planning**

DDSB staff engaged in a collaborative approach as a plan of action was developed. Discussions between staff and the following partners took place to provide information, answer questions, and/or consider feedback:

- Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, (OSSTF) Occasional Teaching
- OSSTF (Permanent)
- Durham Secondary Administrators Association (DSAA) representatives
- School Principals and System Leaders
- Family of Schools Superintendents and members of Administrative Council
- Internal DDSB departments (e.g., ITS, People & Culture, Student Success, etc.)

Principals have communicated with staff at the school level, students and families to inform them about staffing and timetable adjustments for semester 2. Additional communication will go out in January once timetables have been finalized.

## **Mitigating Student Impact**

School staff will work with students to ensure that all pathways remain viable with minimal disruption to student timetables. Specialty programming (i.e., Indigenous Studies, Black Studies, Queer Studies, SHSM, SAL, Credit Recovery) will not be compromised by these staffing reductions.

## **Implementation and Impact Across DDSB Secondary Schools**

The following measures have been implemented as part of the adjustments to improve the balance between staffing complement and the current student enrolment. The chart below provides a summary of the measures taken and the impact on each secondary school. A 1.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) is a position for a full year, and so the FTE referred to in the chart represents one semester which is half of a school year.

- Some anticipated positions for Semester 2 were absorbed, which will now not require the hiring of these positions (17.5 FTE);
- Revision of some full-year LTO positions will result in some Occasional Teachers returning to the daily Occasional Teacher (OT) pool at the end of Semester 1, in alignment with the parameters outlined in the Collective Agreement. These staff members continue to be on the OT roster and are eligible for emerging occasional teaching work (14.5 FTE);
- Permanent staff volunteering for Alternative Teaching Assignments at their home school for Semester 2 (8.25 FTE).
- Permanent staff on a leave of absence for the remainder of the school year will not be backfilled during Semester 2 when no timetable has been assigned.

- Any LTO staff will continue as needed for permanent staff on partial semester leave of absences (i.e., medical, parental).
- Any LTO contracts required for specialty program areas (i.e., French, Tech Studies) will be maintained.

School	Number of Positions not hired for Semester 2 (LTO and Permanent)	Number of LTO Positions Released for Semester 2	Number of Volunteer Permanent Staff for ATAs in their home school
Ajax H.S.	3.5	0	0
Anderson C.V.I.	1	0	3
Brock H.S.	0	0	2
Brooklin H.S.	2	1	0
DA Wilson S.S.	3	2	0
Dunbarton H.S.	0	3	4
Eastdale C.V.I.	1	4	0
GL Roberts C.V.I.	1.5	1	0
Henry H.S.	3	0	1
JC Richardson	3	3	0
Maxwell Heights S.S.	1	2.5	2.5
O'Neill C.V.I.	0	2.5	3
Pickering H.S.	0	2	0
Pine Ridge S.S.	5	2	0
Port Perry H.S.	1	1	1
RS McLaughlin C.V.I.	3	3	0
Sinclair S.S.	6	0	0
Uxbridge S.S.	1	2	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>35 (17.5 FTE)</b>	<b>29 (14.5 FTE)</b>	<b>16.5 (8.25 FTE)</b>

The combined reduced staffing for the second semester 2025 will reflect a decrease of 40.25 FTE.

A more comprehensive representation of the financial impact will be outlined in greater detail in the Revised Estimates Report that will come before Trustees in the February Board Meeting.

If you have any specific questions, please direct them to Associate Director Jim Markovski.