

# Trustee Sara Ehrhardt



## *Welcome Back to School!*

Dear Toronto-Danforth Resident,

I am Sara Ehrhardt, your elected public school board trustee. I represent our community at the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) in support of public education.

Everyone is welcome at the TDSB, including Adult learners and English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. As the 2024-25 school year gets underway, I would like to highlight the following:

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- Despite budget deficits I continue to advocate for school-based supports for students. If your child is struggling, please reach out to the contacts on the back of this flyer.
- The TDSB offers a wide range of Adult General Interest and Seniors Daytime classes through the Learn4Life program. These classes provide an excellent opportunity to learn new skills, stay active, and connect with others in our community. Visit [learn4life.ca](http://learn4life.ca) for more.
- I encourage best practices to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses. This includes staying home from school when sick, wearing a well-fitted mask in crowded settings, and keeping up to date on vaccinations. COVID-19 vaccines are available for those 6 months and older, more information is available at [www.toronto.ca/covid-19](http://www.toronto.ca/covid-19). The TDSB continues to provide medical masks to students who want to wear one.
- For school security issues, please contact your school directly. Outside of school hours, contact the TDSB security operation centre at 416-395-4620

School Board trustees are not full-time positions in Ontario. Beyond serving as your Trustee, I work full-time and am a parent of a school-age child. I seek to respond to messages received within one week. I invite you to subscribe to my email newsletter for community updates and information on board decisions through [www.tdsb.on.ca/Ward15](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Ward15). You can also follow my social media through @TrusteeSara

Take care,

Sara Ehrhardt  
TDSB Trustee Toronto-Danforth

Toronto  
District  
School  
Boa

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Although Trustees approve school board budgets, funding levels are set by the province. Provincial education funding has not even kept pace with inflation, so each year there is less spending power than the year before. The Ontario Public School Boards Association has shared that for 2024-25 there is \$2,300 less per student in education funding than there was in 2018-19 (adjusted for inflation). Alarming almost every school board in the province now has a deficit due to this provincial underfunding.

It is unrealistic to continue to ask schools to do more with less. Our children and our community deserve better. As your trustee, I have opposed cuts at the school board. I have advocated for increases in school staffing, and I have fought to save swim programs, international languages, and community programs like Learn4Life. I encourage you to sign up for my updates and visit [fundourschools.ca](http://fundourschools.ca) to join us in this advocacy.

## Community & Advocacy

This year I was proud to work with Chair Rachel Chernos Lin to advance a motion to update TDSB policy on use of mobile devices and social media. I was pleased the provincial government then followed our lead and adopted a province-wide approach. Starting this fall, these new policies restricting cellphone use in schools will be in effect. You can find out more at [tdsb.on.ca](http://tdsb.on.ca).

TDSB has also joined a lawsuit against social media giants Meta, Snapchat, and TikTok to hold these companies accountable for the harms they are creating. It is important to note that school boards are not using education funds to pay for this lawsuit. You can find out more information at [schoolboardsforchange.ca](http://schoolboardsforchange.ca).

I have also championed the development of a provincial strategy to tackle the emerging use of AI in schools, I hope to see more progress on this next year.

## Capital Modernization

Our schools are aging and desperately need capital funding to meet the needs of the 21st century: elevators, air conditioners, modern ventilation. This year trustees approved a Capital Modernization Strategy. Several Toronto-Danforth schools have repair projects this summer, including to HVAC systems, because of this commitment. But so much more is needed.

Sadly, federal, and provincial governments ended dedicated funding to improve ventilation, and there is no targeted funding for other needed upgrades. As your trustee, I have called for board-wide advocacy to both federal and provincial governments to update standards to meet evolving safety, public health, accessibility, and climate realities, and to provide ongoing capital funding to make and maintain these building updates.

Locally, I have also worked to improve information sharing about school infrastructure projects with school councils. This included hosting an event on how to advance play yard updates within the TDSB.

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## Drop-in

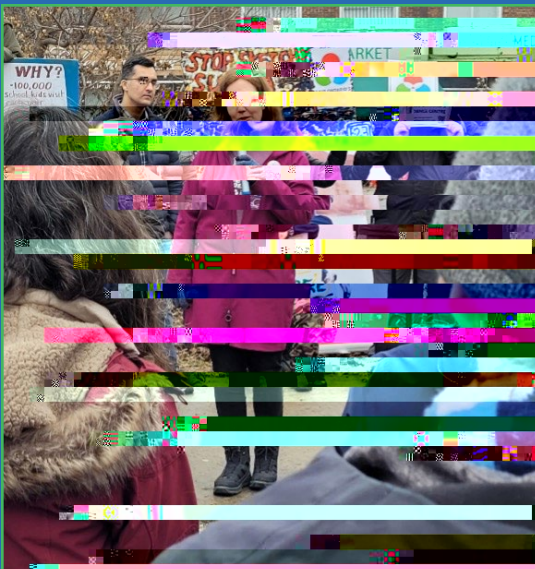
I am always happy to connect with our community through events. This year I hosted a fall meet and greet, a session on school playgrounds, and a drop-in on the TDSB budget. Thank you to everyone who joined these important events!

I will again hold drop-in hours over the 2024-25 school year. The dates will be available starting in September at [tdsb.on.ca/Ward15](https://tdsb.on.ca/Ward15) and through my listserv.

## Community Engagement

I so appreciate the work of our area representatives on issues of importance to our school communities:

- I worked with our City Councillor Paula Fletcher to co-host sessions on the traffic impacts of the Ontario Line, and to advocate for increased information-sharing by Metrolinx with our community. I continue to work with the Councillor to advance traffic calming initiatives around schools.
- I joined our MPP Peter Tabuns on sessions to discuss the impact of provincial child care policies on the availability of child care in our community.



## Community Action

