

OUR MISSION

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ.
We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.

OUR VISION

At Toronto Catholic we transform the world
through witness, faith, innovation and action.



AGENDA ADDENDUM THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL BEING, CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

PUBLIC SESSION

Nancy Crawford, Chair

Michael Del Grande, Vice-Chair

Tuesday, April 5, 2022

7:00 P.M.

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10. Delegations	
10.a. Thushara Rodrigo regarding to Recognize Sri Lankan New Year Day on April 14	1 - 4
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13.a. From Trustee Tanuan regarding Sri Lankan New Year Day April 14, 2022 (REVISED)	9 - 10



DELEGATION REGISTRATION FORM FOR BOARD, STANDING OR OTHER COMMITTEES

Response Summary:

First Name:

Thushara

Last Name:

Rodrigo

Please select the applicable Board, Standing, Statutory, Sub or Ad Hoc Committee at which you are requesting to depute.

Student Achievement and Well-Being Catholic Education Human Resources Committee

Do you wish to Delegate by electronic means?

Yes

Do you require assistance from the Recording Secretary's Office? If yes, please contact the Recording Secretary's Office at delegations@tcdsb.org or the Recording Secretary at sophia.harris@tcdsb.org.

No

Do you wish to make your deputation in private session because the matter involves the disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a member of the Board or Committee, an employee or prospective employee of the Board or a pupil of his or her parent or guardian?

No

Date of Deputation:

04-05-2022

Topic of Deputation:

To recognize Sri Lankan New Year Day on April 14



DELEGATION REGISTRATION FORM FOR BOARD, STANDING OR OTHER COMMITTEES

Key Issue(s):

Annual acknowledgement of Sri Lankan New Year by the TCDSB.

Brief Summary of the Topic of Deputation:

There are many students of Sri Lankan heritage that attend schools in the TCDS and celebrate the Sri Lankan New Year Day. It is the biggest festival in the Sri Lankan community as it brings all cultures and ethnicities of Sri Lanka together. It would be of great value and significance to the Sri Lankan students, families and employees of the TCDSB to see the New Year day acknowledged annually.

Action Requested:

1. Permit the addition of a banner on the school board website to announce Sri Lanka New Year Day every year.
2. Offer the TCDSB community some background information about the culture and traditions for New Year as a gesture of inclusivity and as a learning opportunity to students.

Please select one of the following options:

I am here as a delegation to speak on my own half.

Submission Date:

03-23-2022

*Statement by the Consul General of Sri Lanka
on the Motion to Recognize Sri Lankan New Year Day*

As the Consul General of Sri Lanka, I thank you for this opportunity to speak here today. I am aware that recently, a Sri Lankan-Canadian delegate spoke passionately to request that Sri Lankan New Year Day be recognized by the Toronto Catholic District School Board. I feel inspired as a fellow Sri Lankan by Kumari's courage to speak for all the Sri Lankans who are part of this community. Tonight, I wish to tell you why this celebration is so important to all the Sri Lankan people in Canada and around the world.

Back home in Sri Lanka, this festival is better known as the Sinhala-Tamil New Year. Despite its name, it is the highlight of the year for all Sri Lankans regardless of ethnicity or faith. The culture and values of Sri Lanka are reflected in our diversity. There are multiple ethnicities, religions and languages spoken in Sri Lanka. Sinhalese, Moor, Tamil, Muslim and Burgher are a few. In Sri Lanka you will find mosques, kovils, temples and churches built side-by-side reflecting the diversity and friendship that exists among our people.

Sri Lankans enjoy a unique, humble and artistic lifestyle. We deeply value entertaining and are known for our warm hospitality. Plates of home-made sweets are exchanged between neighbors and tradition dictates that those plates must not be returned empty. Customs and traditions have been deeply ingrained and passed down from one generation to the next for over 2,500 years. These traditions are lovingly intertwined in day-to-day life among all our people.

The underlying message of the New Year celebration are the tenets of unity and hope for the future. Leaving behind any resentments and misunderstandings of the past and ushering in a new beginning is the key to the future of our nation. Sinhala-Tamil New Year has always been annually celebrated in the spirit of unity and inclusivity, fostering positive transformation of the heart and the mind.

Recognizing the Sri Lankan New Year Day would be a wonderful step forward to acknowledging the diversity of the Sri Lankan population in your community and to fostering unity among all who live here.

I thank you for your consideration of this Motion.

by Thushara Rodrigo



SRI LANKAN HERITAGE MONTH

April 2022

WHEREAS, Ottawa is home to a large and vibrant Sri Lankan community; and

WHEREAS, since the first Sri Lankans arrived in Canada in the 1950s, Sri Lankan-Canadians have made significant contributions to many industries ranging from civil service, university academia, medical and engineering professions, agriculture and agri-business, computer sciences, banking, arts and crafts, service, manufacturing and many other industries. Their contribution to Canada and to Ottawa is immeasurable; and

WHEREAS, "Aluth Avurudu" or New Year is the biggest of all celebratory festivals in the Sri Lankan community and it falls in April; and

WHEREAS, Sri Lankan Heritage Month will bring Canadians together to express their civic pride and to express their commitment to Canada by performing artistic activities, taking part in Canadian celebrations, sharing Canadian values and enriching the Canadian society with their practices of colourful heritage;

THEREFORE, I, Jim Watson, Mayor of the City of Ottawa, do hereby proclaim **April 2022 Sri Lankan Heritage Month** in Ottawa.

Jim Watson
Mayor / Maire

MOIS DU PATRIMOINE SRI-LANKAIS

Avril 2022

ATTENDU QU'Ottawa abrite une communauté sri-lankaise importante et dynamique; et

ATTENDU QUE depuis l'arrivée des premiers Sri-Lankais au Canada dans les années 1950, les Canadiens d'origine sri-lankaise ont apporté d'importantes contributions dans divers domaines allant de la fonction publique aux universités, en passant par les professions médicales et l'ingénierie, l'agriculture et l'agroalimentaire, les sciences informatiques, les activités bancaires, l'artisanat d'art, les industries de services, la fabrication et de nombreuses autres industries. Leur contribution au Canada et à Ottawa est incommensurable; et

ATTENDU QUE « Aluth Avurudu » ou Nouvel An est le plus grand de tous les festivals dans la communauté sri-lankaise et qu'il tombe en avril; et

ATTENDU QUE le Mois du patrimoine sri-lankais réunira les Canadiens pour exprimer leur fierté civique et leur engagement envers le Canada en effectuant des activités artistiques, en participant à des célébrations canadiennes, en partageant les valeurs canadiennes et en enrichissant la société canadienne avec leurs pratiques patrimoniales hautes en couleur;

PAR CONSÉQUENT, je, Jim Watson, maire de la Ville d'Ottawa, proclame par la présente, **avril 2022 Mois du patrimoine sri-lankais** à Ottawa.





DELEGATION REGISTRATION FORM FOR BOARD, STANDING OR OTHER COMMITTEES

Response Summary:

First Name:

Ellen

Last Name:

Walton

Please select the applicable Board, Standing, Statutory, Sub or Ad Hoc Committee at which you are requesting to depute.

Student Achievement and Well-Being Catholic Education Human Resources Committee

Do you wish to Delegate by electronic means?

Yes

Do you require assistance from the Recording Secretary's Office? If yes, please contact the Recording Secretary's Office at delegations@tcdsb.org or the Recording Secretary at sophia.harris@tcdsb.org.

No

Do you wish to make your deputation in private session because the matter involves the disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a member of the Board or Committee, an employee or prospective employee of the Board or a pupil of his or her parent or guardian?

No

Date of Deputation:

04-05-2022

Topic of Deputation:

TCDSB Gifted Withdrawal Program



DELEGATION REGISTRATION FORM FOR BOARD, STANDING OR OTHER COMMITTEES

Key Issue(s):

- virtual learning limits opportunities for IEP-mandated academic enrichment
- virtual learning limits a teacher's ability to identify the potential need for mental health supports
- the TCDSB has removed the need for cohorting, masking, and physical distancing
- gifted withdrawal students are the only ones who are still being forced to cohort even though this practice is no longer in line with TCDSB guidelines

Brief Summary of the Topic of Deputation:

- sharing of the current virtual learning experiences of gifted learners
- reviewing of the added need for mental health supports for gifted learners
- analysing the possible implications for continuing to unnecessarily cohort gifted learners
- sharing of insights as an educator

Action Requested:

Reinstate the in-person gifted withdrawal program by the proposed date of April 18th, 2022 in alignment with the TCDSB mandate that has removed the need for student cohorting and physical separation as protective measures against Covid-19.

Please select one of the following options:

I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf.

Submission Date:

03-31-2022

Delegate Presentation Proposal

Ellen Walton

Good evening. My name is Ellen Walton. I am a TCDSB parent of a gifted learner and an Ontario Certified Teacher with over 20 years of teaching experience. I have spent my entire career supporting special education students and over 10 years working specifically with gifted learners.

As a parent, I have been able to witness firsthand the benefits of a gifted special education program. Before this experience, my son was engaged at school but was not receiving the academic and social enrichment that he needed to grow. Unfortunately, the pandemic has resulted in my son again experiencing what it feels like to be restricted in a program that was not designed for his needs. Some may argue that students like my son should not be a priority because their intellectual ability reduces the chances that they will be adversely impacted by a less-than-optimal learning model. For those with this exceptionality, the reality could not be farther from this perception. Gifted learners often experience other learning needs caused by things like learning disabilities and autism. The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario states that “intellectually gifted individuals with specific learning disabilities are the most misjudged, misunderstood, and neglected segment of the student population and the community”. The LDAO argues that these twice exceptional students could have increased experiences with depression, anxiety, withdrawal, aggression, or disruptive behaviour. For most students, a return to in-person learning has improved the overall schooling experience. This is not the case for gifted withdrawal students who are still being forced to learn virtually. Meeting in person also allows educators to identify the need for various supports that simply cannot be identified virtually. Even as a very experienced professional, there is no way I or any other educator can adequately assess students’ needs through comments in a chat box one day a week. My small cohorts of gifted students have required more mental health supports than all of my regular program students combined.

I recently had the privilege of getting to know a student named Lisa whose beautiful and brilliant mind at times made it difficult for her to cope. As a gifted learner in a program geared to her needs, Lisa was able to access the academic enrichment and mental health interventions that she needed. Due to circumstances beyond her control, Lisa ended up in a regular program path for high school. Her

new path could not provide adequate support. It has been two years and two months since Lisa died by suicide. I have lost track of the times I wondered what the outcome would have been had she been in a program where her teachers could not only support her needs, but also literally *see* her on a daily basis and be an added physical presence. Specialized programs like the Gifted Withdrawal Program are not just about academics. They can literally be a lifesaver for a student in need.

As a parent and an educator, I am asking you to reinstate the in-person gifted withdrawal program by the proposed date of April 18th, 2022 in alignment with the TCDSB mandate that has removed the need for student cohorting and physical separation as protective measures against Covid-19. There is no reasonable explanation as to why a small percentage of students should be forced to learn virtually when this measure is no longer in line with provincial guidelines. I welcome any opportunities to answer questions and hope for your support in ensuring that all TCDSB students are afforded the opportunity for in-person instruction



*Garry Tanuan
Trustee Ward 8*

E-mail: Garry.Tanuan@tcdsb.org

Voicemail: 416-512-3408

To: Student Achievement and Well-Being, Catholic Education and Human Resources Committee, April 5, 2022

From: Garry Tanuan, Trustee Ward 8

Subject: COM: SRI LANKAN NEW YEAR DAY APRIL 14, 2022

MOVED BY: Garry Tanuan, Toronto Catholic District School Board

WHEREAS: Toronto is home to a large and vibrant Sri Lankan community. According to the 2016 Census, **152,595** people reported themselves as being of Sri Lankan ethnicity; and

WHEREAS: New Year is the biggest of all celebratory festivals in the Sri Lankan community and falls in the month of April; and

WHEREAS: Since the first Sri Lankans arrived in Canada in the 1950's, Sri Lankan-Canadians have made significant contributions to many industries ranging from Civil Service, University Academia, Medical and Engineering Professions, Agriculture and Agri Business, Computer Sciences, Banking, Arts and Crafts, Service, Manufacturing, and many other Industries. Their contribution to Canada and to Toronto is immeasurable; and

WHEREAS: Sri Lankan culture has been embraced in Ontario since at least 1898 when a town in Ontario was named Ceylon; and

WHEREAS: Sri Lankan New Year acknowledgement will create a fitting opportunity to showcase the contributions made by Sri Lankan Canadians to the advancement of the TCDSB while it will also create a forum for ALL students of Sri Lankan heritage, regardless of ethnicity, to feel involved and acknowledged.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: The TCDSB declare and recognize April 14, 2022, as Sri Lankan New Year Day and to annually recognize Sri Lankan New Year Day.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Recognition in the form of a poster be displayed on the TCDSB website and where appropriate, flyers provided to schools for display. On this digital poster, approved by the Asian Canadian Heritage Committee, a link is provided to access information on traditions and customs related to the Sri Lankan New Year tradition. Also, this year, since April 14 falls on Holy (Maundy)Thursday, the following prayer for love and unity shall be offered as an expression of our Catholic faith:

Today we celebrate Holy Thursday which is also known as Maundy Thursday of Holy Week. It is the day of the Last Supper when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and established the sacrament known as the Eucharist. The night of Maundy Thursday is the night on which Jesus was betrayed by Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane. The word Maundy is derived from the Latin word “command” and refers to Jesus’ commandment to the disciples to “Love one another as I have loved you.” Also, today, members of our community who are of Sri Lankan Heritage usher in their New Year. Also known as Sinhala-Tamil New Year Day, it bears the tradition of letting go of past resentments and welcoming new beginnings with hope and love. Let us pray that all the people of Sri Lankan heritage in our school, our communities and around the world are blessed with the peace and love that Jesus commanded of us on the first Holy Thursday.

Garry Tanuan
Trustee Ward 8
