

## APPENDIX A

### TCDSB External Research Applications: Approved in 2017-2018

#### 1. *Coding Quest Program Impact Study*

- **Purpose:** Coding Quest is designed to help students in Grades 4 to 6 develop coding skills, creativity, critical thinking and computational thinking which are essential 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies. The research is an evaluation of the impact of this initiative implemented in collaboration with TCDSB 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning & ICT.
- **Method:** Teacher and student online surveys; review of samples of student work.

#### 2. *Turning Points Program Impact Study*

- **Purpose:** Turning Points Program is designed to help build character awareness and literacy, and provide students in Grades 6 to 12 an opportunity to read, write, and think about fundamental values. The program facilitates a process of self-reflection and discussion with teachers and peers and supports writing a narrative essay about a significant event (a turning point) in which students organize and express their thoughts about the principles that guide them. The research is an evaluation of the impact of this initiative implemented in collaboration with TCDSB 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning & ICT.
- **Method:** Teacher and student online surveys; teacher interviews; review of samples of student work.

#### 3. *Real Talk Impact Study*

- **Purpose:** The Real Talk Program is a new and engaging career exploration tool to support the journeys of students. Students in Grades 9 and 10 develop career skills such as communication, critical thinking, collaboration and making presentations. The research is an evaluation of the impact of this initiative implemented in collaboration with TCDSB 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning & ICT.
- **Method:** Teacher and student online surveys; teacher interviews.

#### 4. *Investigate! Invent! Innovate! (I-cubed) Impact Study*

- **Purpose:** The I-cubed Program is designed to help students in Grades 7 and 8 develop innovation competencies, critical thinking and creative thinking skills which are essential 21<sup>st</sup> Century competencies. The research is an evaluation of the impact of this initiative implemented in collaboration with TCDSB 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning & ICT.
- **Method:** Teacher and student online surveys; teacher interviews.

### **5. *Entrepreneurial Adventure Program Impact Study***

- **Purpose:** The Entrepreneurial Adventure Program is designed to contribute to students' discovery and engagement with entrepreneurship and its component 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. The research is an evaluation of the impact of this initiative implemented in collaboration with TCDSB 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning & ICT.
- **Method:** Teacher and student online surveys; teacher interviews; review of samples of student work.

### **6. *I'm a Great Little Kid! Evaluation of a Primary Prevention Program for School-aged Children***

- **Purpose:** The program *I'm A Great Little Kid!* aims to increase children's knowledge and skills in reducing their risk for abuse and violence. This primary prevention program for children is delivered in the classroom over the course of six weeks, using storybooks and follow-up activities to enhance children's competency across six domain areas (i.e., self-esteem, communication, making choices, friendship, touch, and getting help). The research is an evaluation of the impact of this initiative implemented in collaboration with the TCDSB Social Work Department.
- **Method:** Interviews with students and teachers.

### **7. *Implementing the Joint Protocol for Student Achievement to Promote Education Success in Foster Care Youth***

- **Purpose:** The Joint Protocol for Student Achievement (JPSA) is a provincially funded initiative that serves K-12 students in Ontario who are receiving services from child welfare programs. The direction of the JPSA is under the Ontario Ministry of Education and Ministry of Children and Youth Services. Education and child welfare agencies throughout Ontario implement regional joint protocols based on the provincial template to guide their responses and practices to improve outcomes for youth who are receiving welfare services. The research is an evaluation to describe and explain how the JPSA functions in practice across Ontario.
- **Method:** In-depth interview with those leading the implementation.

### **8. *Impact of Early French Immersion on Language and Cognitive Development in a Diverse Population***

- **Purpose:** Since the first French Immersion program in 1965, a large body of research has demonstrated positive effects of immersion education on children's language development and academic achievement. However, since the original research was conducted, two changes have occurred: (i) an increase in the diversity of children in terms of linguistic, socioeconomic, and cultural background in these programs and (ii) an accumulation of evidence

showing positive effects of bilingualism on cognitive development. The purpose of this project is to examine the outcomes of these programs for this new demographic and to investigate the effect of children's emerging bilingualism on cognitive development.

- **Method:** 3-year longitudinal study in French Immersion schools; repeated measures (nonverbal and verbal individually administered tasks) on students from Grade 1 to Grade 3.

#### **9. *Feedback from Students and School Staff on the YouthSpeak Presentation***

- **Purpose:** The aim of *YouthSpeak* is to empower youth with mental health challenges through leadership training to increase their social and emotional strengths by sharing their personal stories in assemblies and workshops. The study is designed to collect feedback in the following areas: positive changes in attitudes and behaviour among students; awareness and insight for staff on how to respond and support youth who are struggling; features of the program that stand out in meaningful ways and aspects that need to be added; alignment with mental health goals of the school boards.
- **Method:** Online survey for students and staff following the *YouthSpeak* presentation.

#### **10. *Effectiveness of Built Environment Interventions in Improving Road Safety around Schools and Increasing Active School Transportation***

- **Purpose:** In July 2016, the City of Toronto committed to a Vision Zero approach with the goal to eliminate deaths and serious injuries due to road traffic. School children, pedestrians, and aggressive driving are areas of focus and one strategy has been to create 'school safety zones'. Specific changes in the environment to improve safety around schools may include speed reduction, separating the times of use for pedestrian and vehicles in time. The study explores the impact of various interventions over time.
- **Method:** Observations take place in the environment outside of selected schools.

#### **11. *Health Behaviour in School-aged Children***

- **Purpose:** The research is a cross-national health study conducted in collaboration with public health agencies and the World Health Organization. It enables researchers to increase understanding of the social context of the health behaviours and attitudes of young people and associated social determinants of health. The study is conducted every four years, and results are used to monitor the health trends of young Canadians. Participants are students from randomly selected schools across all of Canada.
- **Method:** A questionnaire for students in Grades 6 to 10

## **12. The Use of facilitated group activity to support school readiness skills in pre-school children with hearing loss**

- **Purpose:** The benefits of group activities for children is well documented in the research literature. The goal of the research is to demonstrate the possible benefits of integrating group activities including music, movement and crafts into traditional listening and spoken language therapy for pre-school children with hearing loss. The researchers are interested in learning how these activities might influence skill development in preschool children with hearing loss, particularly in the areas of language, pre-literacy, social interactions and self-regulation.
- **Method:** Parents and teachers to complete child development checklists.

## **13. CAT5 Field Test Study**

- **Purpose:** The fifth edition of the Canadian Achievement Test (CAT5) will be published in the fall of 2022. CAT5 will be aligned with current Ontario curricula for Language and Mathematics and will be web-based. All subtests will be administered online using tablets or computers. Students will respond on devices using fill-in-the-blank and/or multiple-choice format; subtests will be scored automatically by an on-line system. The study is a field test of questions to be included on the CAT5 and participating schools will receive feedback regarding the performance of their students.
- **Method:** Teacher and principal questionnaires regarding the field-testing experience.

## **14. Research on Improving School-based Supports for Students with Autism**

- **Purpose:** The Ministry of Education has initiated a pilot project to improve school-based supports for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). One component of the school-based support is providing a dedicated on-site space for external Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA) service providers to conduct therapy with students with ASD. Another component is offering voluntary online ABA training for educational assistants (EAs). The purpose of the study is to identify what aspects of the pilot are working well and what may be recommended for expansion.
- **Method:** A school visit and interviews with staff in different roles.

## **15. Feasibility Study of the STRONG Program for Refugee Children and Youth Experiencing Trauma symptoms**

- **Purpose:** The STRONG program is a 10-week intervention designed to address the needs of refugee children and youth who may be experiencing trauma symptoms. The program was introduced in collaboration with the TCDSB Mental Health Lead and includes ongoing weekly ratings by students regarding their well-being. Facilitators (psychologists and social workers)

participate in focus groups to discuss challenges and effective strategies. The study aims to document the acceptability, implementation, and practicality of the STRONG program in the initial pilot.

- **Method:** Students complete the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire pre- and post program; facilitators participate in interviews and focus groups.

#### **16. Gathering of Nations Summer Camp for Indigenous Students**

- **Purpose:** The Gathering of Nations Summer Camp aims to educate students on current indigenous cultures and provide an example of a successful story of education by an Indigenous post secondary student. It was offered to Grade 9 and 10 students in collaboration with TCDSB teachers. The research study aims to learn about the strengths and challenges of the Gathering of Nations Summary Camp Program in supporting FNMI students in the Expressions of First Nation, Metis and Inuit Cultures course (NAC10).
- **Method:** Feedback surveys; focus group; a group interview.