



REPORT TO

REGULAR BOARD

TCDSB GRADE 9 STUDENT CENSUS - PILOT UPDATE

"So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another."
Romans 12:5

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
April 26, 2021	May 20, 2021	Click here to enter a date.
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INFORMATION REPORT

Vision:

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

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.



Brendan Browne, PhD
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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Plans are underway to implement a TCDSB student census. This report provides an update regarding the Grade 9 Student Census, *we Belong, we Believe, we Become*.

The cumulative staff time dedicated to developing this report was 16 hours.

B. PURPOSE

1. The *Anti-Racism Act, 2017* (ARA) mandates that all Public Service Organizations (PSOs) collect identity-based data by 2023 in order to provide evidence-based disaggregated data regarding students. The information that the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) collects will then inform decisions supporting more equitable outcomes for marginalized groups.
2. The student census asks students to provide more background about themselves, so that more welcoming and inclusive schools can be created.

C. BACKGROUND

1. In 2018, the Government of Ontario issued a directive under the *Anti-Racism Act, 2017* to provide for consistent data collection of race-based data by Public Service Organizations, including school boards. *Ontario's Anti-Racism Data Standards* (Standards) apply to questions on Indigenous Identity, Ethnic Origin, Race and Religion. The Standards set out the required list of responses for these questions.
2. The *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the *Code*), protects the right to equal treatment in education, without discrimination. The Ministry of Education (Equity Secretariat) is funding school boards to collect data on the following grounds which are directly or indirectly related to protected grounds under the *Code*. These include: Indigenous identity, race, ethnic origin, religion, first language, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, status in Canada and socioeconomic status.
3. It is an expectation that all Boards collect data on the ten identity categories protected under the *Code* for the Ministry of Education funding in 2020-21. Boards are required to use the content provided by the Ministry for their

student census. Public Sector Organizations are required to collect information under the *Anti-Racism Act, 2017* by 2023.

4. The TCDSB Education Three-Year Equity Action Plan (2018-2021) has four domains. One of these is data collection, integration and reporting. The TCDSB Student Census is a significant initiative in the domain of data collection, integration, and reporting. The project is an inter-departmental collaboration between Equity and Research, with support from the following departments: Communications, Privacy and Freedom of Information, Legal, and Technical Services.
5. In May/June 2021, the Grade 9 Student Census, *we Belong, we Believe, we Become* will be implemented as a pilot. There will be ten identity categories on the census. Additionally, there will be questions regarding the learning environment/student engagement to provide context. Where applicable, data collected from this pilot will be linked to other data already available in the TCDSB Student Information System for further analysis.
6. All research conducted by the Educational Research department is consistent with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans - TCPS (2018)*. This would include data collection and analysis procedures with suppression rules where applicable.
7. It should be noted that the TCDSB Grade 9 Student Census is separate and distinct from the Canadian National Census coincidentally being rolled out at the same time.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. The Grade 9 Student Census, *we Belong, we Believe, we Become* was developed in a manner that is consistent with Ontario's *Anti-Racism Data Standards* and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.
2. There was consultation with the following:

African-Canadian Advisory Committee (ACAC), Filipino-Canadian Advisory Committee, Spanish-Speaking Communities Advisory Committee, Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC), Portuguese-Speaking Communities Advisory Committee, Ukrainian-Canadian Advisory

Committee, Education Council, OAPCE, CPIC, and the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee.

3. The Census has two parts (see Appendix A):
 - a. Part 1: Identity Questions (Indigenous Identity, Ethnic Origin, Race, Religion or Spiritual Affiliation, Language(s) First Spoken, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Disability, Status in Canada, Socioeconomic Status)
 - b. Part 2: Learning Environment/Student Engagement (high expectations, feeling reflected in the school culture/curriculum, belonging, choice of courses).
4. The student census is an online survey that will take place in class. This survey should take no longer than twenty minutes to complete.
5. All participation is voluntary; students can choose not to participate in the survey, or only answer some of the questions. They will have an opportunity at the beginning of the survey to provide consent and/or opt out of the census. They can stop participating if they change their mind. All responses will be analyzed anonymously and will be kept confidential; students will not be identified by their name. All reporting will be at the group/aggregate level.
6. Parents/Guardians will receive an information letter (see Appendix B) advising them of the student census.
7. The TCDSB Grade 9 Student Census, *we Belong, we Believe, we Become* will be implemented on June 1, 2021. The Grade 9 students represent a pilot for the overall TCDSB Census.
8. Prior to implementing the student census in all schools, there will be a trial in two secondary schools during the month of May to work out logistics.
9. The Communications department will implement a communications strategy that includes:
 - a. targeted communications for school administrators, classroom teachers, students, and families
 - b. social media posts and posters to encourage student participation

- c. student video to encourage participation and importance of completing the census
10. The Research Department will be responsible for data collection, storage, and analysis of the TCDSB Grade 9 Student Census, *we Belong, we Believe, we Become*. Data analysis from this pilot will provide a picture of who our students are and where applicable, examine any emerging disproportionalities among groups (e.g., in achievement, course selection etc.). Suppression rules will apply where sample sizes are small (and anonymity cannot be maintained).

E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

There will be a report summarizing the results of the TCDSB Grade 9 Student Census, *we Belong, we Believe, we Become*, and what was learned from the data collection. This pilot will inform the future roll-out of the census to other grades.

F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.