



# Supporting

## Parents as Partners in Education



E-newsletter from DDSB Parent Involvement Committee (PIC)



### Message from PIC Co-Chairs

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As the school year ends, we would like to take the opportunity to thank the members of our Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and the greater DDSB community for all of their hard work and support this past year. The 2022-23 school year has been filled with engagement that has allowed for growth within the School Community Councils (SCC) and their respective communities. We are currently taking steps to ensure we start off the next school year efficiently and hope you too will continue to be involved within your respective school communities.

Since our last communication, the PIC hosted its second parent engagement session with Dr. Makokis, entitled *The Amazing Journey Continues*.

In addition, the Parent Reaching Out (PRO) Grant funding distributed amongst various elementary and secondary schools has allowed for parent engagement at the local level throughout the DDSB.

After a three-year hiatus, the PIC successfully hosted the annual Durham Partners Symposium on May 27, entitled *Fostering Resilience in Children: Supporting Mental Health & Social Well-Being*. It was a morning filled with learning and engagement with the goal of equipping caregivers with the tools needed to support their children in their educational journeys.

We wish you all a safe and relaxing summer break and encourage you to take time to enjoy the outdoors with your families and connect with nature.

Thank you,

**PIC Co-Chairs**

Huma Choudhary & Jim Van Allen

# Parent Engagement Series

**The Parent Engagement Speaker Series welcomed two Indigenous presenters this year.**

In March, we were honoured to have **Dr. Pam Palmater**, a Mi'kmaw lawyer, professor, author, and social justice activist from Ugpi'ganjig (Eel River Bar First Nation) who spoke about Indigenous rights, social justice, and human rights. Professor Palmater welcomed and answered many questions across a range of topics from an enthralled audience.

In early May, we were joined by **Dr. James Makokis**, a Cree Two-Spirit physician and strong advocate for marginalized populations, particularly Indigenous and 2SLGBTQIA peoples. He has been recognized both nationally and internationally for his approach to medicine by combining traditional Cree and Western medicine in his practice. With his partner Anthony Johnson by his side, Dr. Makokis also won Season 7 of The Amazing Race Canada. He gave a deeply moving presentation that encompassed Indigenous learning, respect for the land, and an empathetic understanding of the challenges faced by the 2SLGBTQIA community.

Both speakers presented Indigenous ways of knowing, learning, and an understanding that enriched all attendees. The Parent Engagement Committee would like to thank everyone involved in the logistics, planning, backstage work, and countless tasks who worked together seamlessly so that the virtual sessions appeared effortless!



**We look forward to more speakers next year and welcome your suggestions for topics and presenters.**

# The Living Compendium: An Evening of Engagement and Reciprocity

In June 2020, after sharing the census data with the community, the DDSB made a commitment to the Black community to report on the work being done to challenge, address, and dismantle anti-Black racism. On May 18, the DDSB welcomed parents, guardians, caregivers, community members, staff, and students to an engaging evening of sharing and continuing the conversation in shaping the “how” guided by the DDSB’s Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy. The theme for the evening was The Living Compendium: An Evening of Reciprocity.

The event was held at the Abilities Centre in Whitby with more than 200 people in attendance. High school and elementary students and staff talked about and demonstrated the ways in which race is being affirmed and protected in schools and classrooms. Black families and caregivers had the opportunity to inquire about how this intentional and focused work has positively impacted school



climate, curriculum content, and student success. The elementary and secondary forums exhibited a wide array of booths that featured the DDSB’s many race-affirming programs and initiatives for students from early years through Grade 12 as well as student-led groups.

Ontario Court Justice Donald McLeod, the keynote for the event, began the evening by encouraging parents, guardians, and caregivers to be fervently and proactively involved and present in all aspects of their children's lives. The evening ended with an

open forum facilitated by Justice McLeod, where attendees had the opportunity to provide feedback on the work displayed during the event and give input on next steps for the DDSB.

## **Parents commended the DDSB for the work done and recommended the following:**

- ▶ Continued work to embed Black excellence throughout all subjects
- ▶ Accountability by educators to parents and community
- ▶ More partnerships between home and family
- ▶ Greater Trustee involvement and advocacy

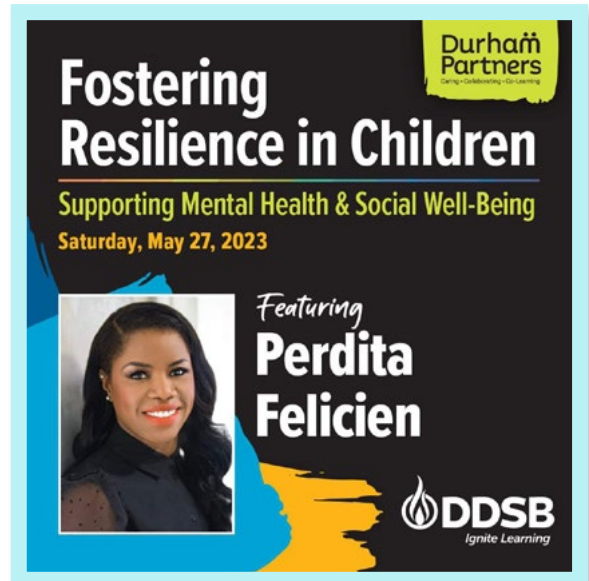


# Durham Partners Symposium

On Saturday, May 27, Parent Engagement hosted the annual Durham Partners Symposium. We were joined by Perdita Felicien, the keynote speaker and a former DDSB student, along with Holly Richard, Saroya Tinker, Alyson Schafer, and Natasha Halliday. Speakers presented various topics relating to fostering resilience in children and supporting their mental health and well-being. Feedback from the event was beyond what could have been imagined, and all of the speakers were so well received. Everyone who registered received a copy of Perdita's book, *My Mother's Daughter*, and had the opportunity to speak with the guest speakers.

Parent Engagement would like to offer special thanks to the culinary students from Sinclair Secondary School who provided attendees with delicious pastries, scones, and fruit, as well as the high school volunteers who assisted throughout the event.

We look forward to hearing from families on what topics are important to you as we move toward the new school year. Please watch for a survey in the coming weeks.



# Summer Learning Programs

This summer, the DDSB is offering **in-person Summer Mathematics, Literacy, and French Immersion Camps** for students currently enrolled in Grades 1 to 8 (French Immersion to be offered for Grades 1 to 3). Spaces are limited, and as a result, we are asking school leaders to assist in selecting students who would benefit from the consolidation of foundational current grade level literacy and numeracy skills. The summer learning program will be held Monday to Thursday starting at 9 a.m. and ending at 2 p.m., July 10 to August 3.

**FREE!**

**JULY 10 TO AUGUST 3, 2023**  
**MONDAY TO FRIDAY**  
**9:00AM - 2:00PM**

**REGISTER ONLINE BY JUNE 9, 2023**

Glengrove PS • Altona PS • Rosemary Brown PS • Carruthers Creek PS  
Viola Desmond PS • Chris Hadfield PS • Julie Payette PS • Sir William Stephenson PS  
Captain Michael VandenBos PS • Willows Walk PS • Northern Dancer PS  
Elsie MacGill PS • Vincent Massey PS • Lakewoods PS • Stephen G. Saywell PS  
S.A. Cawker PS • Sunderland PS



# Summer Family Fun in Durham

Check out the online event calendar in your area to find a variety of local summer activities:

## **PICKERING EVENTS CALENDAR**

- Summer concerts: Free for all to attend in the evenings at local parks
- Farmers' market with informational sessions and activities each week

## **AJAX EVENTS CALENDAR**

- Movies in the park: A unique, outdoor, family cinema experience projected on a giant inflatable movie screen; admission is free
- Summer in the square: Enjoy music, kids activities, entertainment, and Zumba
- On August 26, [Durham Family & Cultural Centre](#) is offering a Back to School Movie and Information Night

## **WHITBY EVENTS CALENDAR**

- Farmers' market
- Music & Movies in the park
- National Indigenous Peoples' Day Event: June 17 at Celebration Square

## **OSHAWA EVENTS CALENDAR**

- 19th Annual Peony Festival: June 10 to 11 at Oshawa Valley Botanical Gardens
- Events in the park: Bring chairs and blankets for summer fun at a park near you!

## **UXBRIDGE EVENTS CALENDAR**

- Historical walking and driving tours
- Step back in time and take a ride on the York-Durham Heritage Railway
- Visit Leaskdale Manse, the home of Canadian author Lucy Maud Montgomery, and learn more about our literary history



# Best Wishes

## from the PIC Newsletter Team

*This year has been filled with a variety of exciting programs and initiatives that were organized and supported by the PIC. Events aimed to bring the DDSB community together to support student well-being and success as well as to encourage parents to become more involved in their children's education at various levels. The PIC newsletter committee has strived to bring these events and activities in an informative and timely manner so that you can make the best decisions for your family. It has been a wonderful opportunity to celebrate student achievement and all of the incredible events and activities happening in DDSB schools.*

*At this time, the PIC would like to express its gratitude to members that support this committee throughout the year with their submissions and voice. Your input, time, and experiences are greatly appreciated. A special thank you to the Creative Services and Communications teams at the DDSB Education Centre. Your patience and creativity has allowed us to effectively communicate all of the wonderful information in pleasant, accessible, and interactive ways. Your dedication and hard work has not gone unnoticed.*

*As we begin to plan for September, our goal is to continue to support our diverse communities by developing more effective strategies that aim to further discuss how we can be the centre of information and community engagement. Updating specific, measurable, accessible, relevant, and timely communication strategies will ensure that information continues to be effectively distributed throughout the DDSB.*

*Have a wonderful and restful summer!*



# HAVE YOUR SAY!

## DDSB's Next Multi-Year Strategic Plan

Visit the Multi-Year Strategic Plan website for more information.



# DDSB STUDENT CENSUS: KNOW EVERY STUDENT, GROW EVERY STUDENT

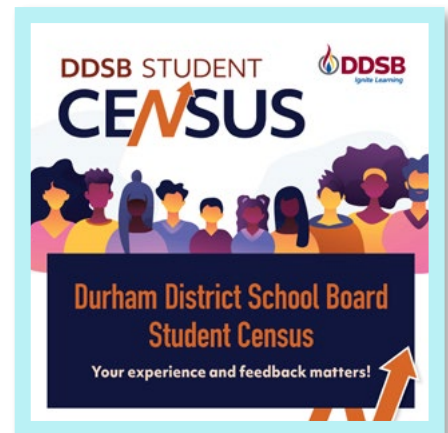
## Have you completed the DDSB Student Census?

The student census will help the DDSB:

- Better understand students & school communities
- Identify & address barriers to student success, engagement & well-being
- Improve experiences & outcomes for students

***Your experience & feedback matters!***

Visit the Student Census website for more information.



**Connect with Us**



DDSB Engagement



@ParentsDDSB



engagement@ddsb.ca