

## **Question & Answers Regarding Newcomers and TDSB Supports**

**Q #1.** How is the TDSB ensuring that reopening procedures, registration and any ongoing communication is reaching newcomer parents in particular, especially those who are vulnerable – have language barrier and limited access/knowledge to technology?

**Answer:** TDSB staff continue to plan diligently and thoughtfully to ensure the needs of all of our students and community members are considered. The following are translated versions of all the services provided to English Language Learners in TDSB [Parent Brochure](#) English , [Farsi](#), [Hungarian](#), [Tamil](#), [Chinese](#), [Somali](#), [Urdu](#)

Updated information regarding registration can continue to be found on the TDSB public website and has been translated in various languages that can be found here: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Registration>

For those families arriving and being supported through various partners (such as COSTI), we continue to work with those managers to communicate and to support registration at local community schools.

The SWIS program also continues to support newcomer families and students with an array of virtual and in-person support.

During school closures, schools and TDSB staff worked diligently in order to provide all families with access to technology. ESL staff used google translate and other supports like over-the-phone interpretation services to communicate and set families and students up for success.

**Q #2.** Are there any special needs you believe newcomer parents/students have once schools reopen, and how will those be accommodated?

**Answer:** Needs vary depending on individual circumstances. We continue to focus all of our planning, whether remote or in-person, to include support for our English Language Learners and Newcomer Families. Identifying student and community needs once schools reopen will be determined at each school site and case by case. Once needs are determined, support will be put in place as they always have been and using the resources we have available and are able to use while following all Toronto Public Health and TDSB guidelines. For example, during school closure, newcomers at the secondary level were able to participate in assessments to support their school registration through our reception centres in a virtual session rather than in person. We continue to accommodate and adapt our practices to meet the needs of our newcomers.

**Q #3.** Many newcomer parents rely on after school programs – will those programs continue to be permitted to run in the schools, and what safety measures will be in place?

**Answer:** Welcoming Communities has staff available to support online. Staff is awaiting further direction as to the model of delivery that will be available to support in person at up to 120 schools. We see a strong role to support students that are studying remotely and also engaging others who have access to technology at their school or at home. We have a model that can flexibly adapt to their needs.

SWIS will continue to run virtual programs for students and families. In person services will be available on an as needed basis.

**Q #4.** Will ESL instruction continue to be provided to newcomer students? If so, will this take place in person or remotely?

**Answer:** Our English Language Learners will continue to be able to access supports and instruction tailored to their needs whether in-person or remotely. TDSB staff continue to work diligently to put programs into place while following all Toronto Public Health guidelines.

**Q #5.** Will programs specifically targeting newcomer family/children/youth, including SWIS (Settlement Worker in School) and Community Connections be permitted to run in person in the schools? If not, how newcomer students can be connected to such programming?

**Answer:** Staff are awaiting board direction on whether we are permitted to operate out of schools. Staff will continue to identify schools/communities with the highest needs, Welcoming Communities has approximately 15 staff that can provide support virtually and/or in person in some targeted schools pending board direction.

SWIS will be operating virtually but will provide in person services on an as needed basis.

**Q #6.** Will there be any additional support provided to those newcomer parents who opt for remote learning, but who might require additional support to assist their children with the work due to language and other barriers?

**Answer:** Our staff continue to use resources like google translate and over-the-phone interpretation services to communicate and support all newcomer families and English Language Learners.

Welcoming Communities is also available to support students in a variety of ways such as English conversation circles, fostering safe connections among peers and some homework help.

SWIS will also work with staff and school principals to support newcomer students and families who are registered in virtual schools.

TDSB Teachers in the Virtual School will ensure delivery of the following daily minimum synchronous (live/online) learning times that align with the Ministry of Education’s [guidelines for virtual learning](#):

Expectations for Synchronous Learning by Grade

Grade	Maximum Class Size	Daily Minimum Synchronous Learning Time Requirement*
JK/SK	29	180 minutes
Grades 1-3	20	225 minutes
Grades 4-8	35	225 minutes
Grades 9-12	*** see below	The higher of 60 minutes for each 75-minute class period** or 225 minutes per day for a full course schedule

\* This is in addition to asynchronous (independent work) learning time.

\*\* The synchronous learning time requirement for any period that is not 75 minutes should be adjusted to reflect this ratio.

For more information, please refer to the following link:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Learning-and-Instruction/Elementary>

**Q #7.** We anticipate that there will be constant changes in how schools will provide education in the next few months, how can newcomer parents access the most current information in a timely manner?

**Answer:** Schools and school boards continue to take direction from the Ministry of Education. Communication of changes can be found on our TDSB website. However, all parents/families registered with TDSB will also continue to receive regular updates via email notifications and phone calls using information registered at each school.

For more detailed information, please visit our website(s) below at:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Learning-and-Instruction>

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Learning-and-Instruction/Elementary>

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Operations/Transportation>

**Q #8.** Settlement Workers are unsure whether newcomer parents have all the information they need to make informed decisions. Are there any additional resources available about the process in multiple languages, including the registration (and possibly de-registration) options?

**Answer:** Information has been translated in various languages. For additional information, please visit: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Registration>

Welcoming Communities can help answer questions from students. SWIS will be able to support students and families as well.

**Q #9.** Settlement Service Providers are unsure how to support Newcomer parents who have questions and concerns about safety. Is there a centralized place/a resource to direct newcomer parents to regarding all aspects of safety? (PPE availability, numbers in classrooms, exams, playground/after school protocol, buses, consequences for not following protocols, etc).

**Answer:** A number of videos and resources can be found at the links below:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Resources-for-Preparing-for-Back-to-School>

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Health-and-Safety/Health-and-safety-measures>

**Q #10.** A few registrants mentioned concerns about Mental Health for kids during Return to School, as well as mental health for their parents. Are there any resources available that we can share with them?

**Answer:** A number of resources can be found at the link below:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Well-Being-and-Supports>

A number of Mental Health and Well-Being Resources can be found here:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Resources-During-Covid-19>