

# Weekly Update March 31, 2023

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## 11th Annual African Heritage Educator's Network Black Student Awards

The 11th annual African Heritage Educators' Network - Toronto Black Educators' Network (AHEN-TBEN) Black Student Awards will be in-person on Thursday, May 25, 2023. We will recognize students from grades 5-12, for outstanding achievements based on their ENTRY POINTS in one of the following five categories: Academic, Aspiration, Athletics, School and Community Involvement, and STEAM.

Students can be nominated using the following link: [Students Nominations](#)

Nomination closes promptly on April 14, 2023, at 4:00 pm. If you are a staff/teacher nominator, please coordinate with the Principal of your school when nominating students. There are a maximum of two nominations per school.

If you have further questions, please contact [aheninfo@gmail.com](mailto:aheninfo@gmail.com)

Valarie Taitt (AHEN-TBEN Chair)

Sampson Ayeh (Communication & BSA Lead Learner)

Grace Ocloo (Chair of BSA Lead Learner)

Simone Crooks-Mckenzie (Secretary & BSA Co-Lead Learner)

## Attention Team and Group Staff Advisors

From Nico Birch and the Yearbook Committee:

Could you please fill out this google form to write a very brief summary of your team's season this year? This will go next to the team's section in the yearbook, and we would love to be able to remember each team properly.

<https://forms.gle/hSEk6NcrCKUR4ENs8>

## Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement

Please see the following upcoming opportunities for students, staff and community offered by the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement.

Film Screening: Scarborough

You're invited! Join the Urban Indigenous Education Centre, the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement, and the Equity, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression team for a virtual screening of [Scarborough](#) followed by a conversation with the author and screenwriter of the novel and adapted film Catherine Hernandez!

Scarborough the novel employs a multitude of voices to tell the story of a tight-knit neighbourhood under fire: among them, Victor, a Black artist harassed by the police; Winsum, a West Indian restaurant owner struggling to keep it together; and Hina, a Muslim school worker who witnesses first-hand the impact of poverty on education.

Scarborough shows the love and perseverance communities can foster, lifting up families to overcome the obstacles placed in their way.

Audience: Caregivers, Community, Staff

Date: April 17, 2023

Time: 6 – 9 p.m.

Register [here](#)

**Subjects of Desire**

Join the Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement for a virtual screening of Subjects of Desire hosted by our very own Black Girls' Book Club!

Subjects of Desire explores the cultural shift in North American beauty standards towards embracing Black female aesthetics and features while exposing the deliberate and often dangerous portrayals of Black women in the media.

Told from the point of view of women who aren't afraid to challenge conventional beauty standards, the film explores the positive and negative portrayals of Black women in media and asks what is the impact today?

Audience: TDSB students/ Gr. 9 – 12 classrooms.

Date: April 4, 2023

Time: 9:30 - 11:40 a.m.

Platform: Zoom link shared with registrants only.

Register [here](#)

## Christie Pits Riot 90th Commemoration Project

If you are a Grade 8 or Grade 10 teacher please join us for this live, interactive theatre production in the park – dates are in May and June. This is a collaboration between the TDSB's Jewish Heritage Committee and Italian Heritage Committee. For registration information please view link -

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vxjSvzwmJT8aWzTcsNRq5pO\\_mBxJNzdS\\_JSaH376x5g/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vxjSvzwmJT8aWzTcsNRq5pO_mBxJNzdS_JSaH376x5g/edit). For teaching resources - please view [attachment](#).

## Greek Heritage Month at the TDSB - Closing Ceremony - April 1

In March, the Toronto District School Board has been recognizing and celebrating Greek Heritage Month. This year's theme was based on TDSB on TDSB's priorities: "Joy, Engagement and Belonging"

Unfortunately, we were not able to have our Opening Event on March 4th due to the severe winter weather.

We are happy to share that we will be having a Closing Ceremony on Saturday, April 1, 2023, at the Greek Community of Toronto (30 Thorncliffe Park Dr.) from 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm. This afternoon of music, dance, and photo displays will include entertainment from TDSB students and community members. Light refreshments will be provided.

We look forward to celebrating the end of Greek Heritage Month with you! OPA!!

GHM Steering Committee

For more information or details, please contact [anna.epitropou@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:anna.epitropou@tdsb.on.ca)

# Latin-America History Month at the TDSB - April 2023

Latin-America History Month is proudly recognized at the TDSB during the month of April because of a motion passed through our Board of Trustees in 2016. This year the theme to mark Latin-America History Month is (Decolonizing) Latin-America History Month & Beyond: Honouring & Uplifting the Real Hxstories and Multiplicities of our Identities.

The "x" in HXSTORIES was chosen to decentre patriarchal HIsTories and tell our multiples stories-historical, lived, and living. "The X is intended to reflect the many distinct identities struggles, an intersectionalities as a inclusive and progressive term. The X is a way of recognizing our untold histories and pushing forward collectively to recover what has been stolen from us."

(<https://sites.google.com/nhusd.k12.ca.us/essj-blanca-rios/home#h.lcnwoat1t09t>)

Since it's creation of the Latin-America History Month Volunteer planning committee in 2016, the membership, comprised of educators, community organizers, parents and TDSB staff and alumni continues to ensure that we are reflective of all intersectional differences within our communities of Latin-America/Abya Yala / Pachamama and its diaspora.

This year we focus on centring, honouring and uplifting our real hxstories, both pre-colonial, and the realities of present-day due to colonization. We also centre, honour and uplift the multiplicities of our identities-recognizing fundamentally that our communities are not monolithic across all intersectional identity markers. We collectively push back on the "boxes" that have imposed on our communities and take up the transformative power there is when we honour and uplift ourselves and each other in our totality. Several activities are being planned for students, staff, and community members. We invite everyone to join us at the Latin-America History Month virtual launch: Save the Date: Thursday, April 13, 2:00 - 3:00 pm.

TDSB students from all grade levels were invited to participate in a Creative Arts Contest. All students will also be provided with the opportunity to learn about the connections across the continent of the Americas through the Condor and Eagle Prophecy, learn through the storytelling of pre-colonial hxstories through the uplifting of Afro-Indigenous roots, and the realities of present-day through the powerful tool that music brings with Ruben Beny Esguerra (Canadian musical artist/poet based in Toronto and has been nominated twice for a JUNO Award.)

We're also extremely proud to have author Leonarda Carranza read her recent book to our young students, *Abuelita and Me* in both English and Spanish and lead us through a discussion in alignment with this year's theme.

Students will also have the opportunity through a Beyond Just a Career: Latin-America/Abya Yala/Pachamama Diaspora in K-12 Education panel to connect with leaders and learn about their intertwined personal, educational, and professional journey towards intentionally choosing to follow their calling into an educational space.

Please follow us on twitter: @TDSBLAHM

Please visit the Heritage/History Month website page for Latin-America History Month for additional resources including daily quotes, etc. (Link: <http://tdsbweb.tdsb.on.ca/equity/Heritage-History-Months/2022-2023> )

## #PrideTDSB Committee Call Out!

As part of TDSB's long standing commitment to celebrating June as Pride month. Across the Board we are beginning preparations for #PrideTDSB 2023. As part of honouring student and staff feedback and in order to make our work more impactful, we are happy to announce the creation of two #PrideTDSB sub-committees. One which will focus on the Academic side of the organization and one which will focus on the Operations side.

While two groups will focus on the promotion of #PrideTDSB within their respective areas the committees will collaborate on system initiatives and creative ways to engage our staff, students, and allies during #PrideTDSB month.

The first meeting for the Academic and Operations Committee will be on Wednesday, April 5 at 4:00pm via [Zoom](#).

We encourage all staff and students who are interested in recognizing #PrideTDSB join us for these meetings. Together, we can make Pride month a memorable and inclusive event for everyone in our community.

We look forward to seeing you there!

## Student Sign-IN in the AM

It has been brought to our attention that students are signing in the office after the 9:30AM arrival and then NOT making their way to class. The office will, in period one, call in to the classroom if a student has signed in to the office. If the student does not make it to class, it is expected that the classroom teacher will call to inform the office. This will help mitigate situations where students have been signed in as late, but are otherwise absent from class.

## Sikh Heritage Month

Sikh Heritage Month has proudly been recognized at the TDSB during the month of April since 2016. The TDSB became the first school board in Canada to designate April of each year as Sikh Heritage Month. This designation matches the recognition by the Province of Ontario that proclaimed the Sikh Heritage Month Act in December 2013, and the recognition proclaimed by the Government of Canada on April 30, 2019. Sikh Heritage Month is recognized nationally across Canada.

Sikh Canadians have lived in Ontario since the turn of the twentieth century. They have made significant contributions to the growth and prosperity of Ontario and their traditions and culture continue to be a vibrant part of every aspect of life of Canadians today.

This year our theme is Kes. Kes is one of five Kakaars, indicators that Sikh individuals must acknowledge as part of their faith. The five Kakaars are five sacred articles of faith prescribed by Guru Gobind Singh Ji. They are also known as the 'Five Ks' because each one starts with letter K representing Kakka in the Punjabi language. The five K's are:  
i) Kes; ii) Kirpan; iii) Karra; iv) Kangha; v) Kacchera.

We are inviting all TDSB community, students, and staff to join our virtual Sikh Heritage Month launch to recognize the contributions of Sikh Canadians. Join us for a remarkable morning of information and celebration on April 12, 9:30 - 10:30 am at <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/stream/LiveWebcast-Sikh-HeritageMonth.html>

We're proud to showcase the results of our Sikh Heritage Month Poster/Video Contest which will be posted on the TDSB public website (to follow). Kudos to all our students for their submissions. As part of the celebration to mark Sikh Heritage Month we're proud to share a [three-part Podcast series](#) with staff, students and the TDSB community on:

- [Episode 1](#): looks at SEVA: Selfless Service;
- [Episode 2](#): discusses Oneness: Equity and Justice for All; and
- [Episode 3](#): talks about Chardi Kala: External Resilience: Optimism and Joy.

Lastly, during the month of April Sikh Canadians recognize Vaisakhi, also known as Khalsa Day, which celebrates the Sikh New Year across Ontario. This year Khalsa Day will be celebrated on Sunday, April 30th in downtown Toronto at Exhibition Place. This celebration is the third largest parade in Canada. We hope you're available to join us!

Please visit the Heritage/History Month website page for Sikh Heritage Month for additional resources including daily quotes, a power point and video on Kes. (Link: <http://tdsbweb.tdsb.on.ca/equity/Heritage-History-Months/2022-2023>)

## Sikh Heritage Month: Online /Bhangra Dance & Talk Session / Workshop with Gurdeep Pandher

Sikh Heritage Month is proudly recognized at the TDSB during the month of April since 2016 as the Board of Trustees voted to designate April of each year as Sikh Heritage Month making the TDSB the first school board in Canada to do so. This designation matches the recognition by the Province of Ontario that proclaimed Sikh Heritage Month Act in December 2013 and matches the recognition proclaimed by the Government of Canada on April 30, 2019. Sikh Heritage Month is recognized nationally across Canada.

As part of the celebrations to mark Sikh Heritage Month at the TDSB during the month of April, virtual education opportunities are being offered to classroom teachers from each panel (Kindergarten to Secondary) to further learn about the Sikh heritage and customs.

Currently we are excited to offer all students in Kindergarten to Grade 8 the opportunity to hear Gurdeep Pandher ([see flyer](#)). Please join us!!

Monday, April 3, 2023

1:00 pm - 1:45 pm

No pre-registration is required.

Please click the link to join the webinar: <https://tdsb-ca.zoom.us/j/92342473345>

Gurdeep Pandher is a Yukon based, Bhangra dance artist. He lives in a small off-the-grid cabin in the wilderness near Lake Laberge. He creates dance videos in nature/outdoors and performances that bring people together. He is best known for spreading joy, hope and positivity during the pandemic. Millions of viewers throughout the world have watched his wilderness videos. There will be an opportunity to ask questions. More information on Gurdeep Pandher may be found by following his twitter account @GurdeepPandher.

We encourage all TDSB classes K-8 to participate in this amazing learning experience with Gurdeep Pandher!

For any questions, please email TDSB Sikh Heritage Month Committee Member Sukhwinder Bual at [Sukhwinder.bual@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:Sukhwinder.bual@tdsb.on.ca)

## Worth Repeating

## Direct Line

Please check out [Direct Line](#) for opportunities and information from the Board

## Employee Family Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program is a complimentary resource for all full-time employees.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a voluntary, confidential counselling and information service for TDSB Employees and their families.

<http://tdsbweb.tdsb.on.ca/section23program/employee-assistance-program>

## Hyperlinks

A reminder that the [Hyperlinks page](#) has a consolidation of frequently used links, forms, etc.