

Largest Proportion of Ethnic or Cultural Backgrounds Reported on Census



Source: Peel Board of Education, Student Census 2018: Secondary School Report Torstar graphic

Largest Proportion of Single Racial Backgrounds Reported on Census



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SURVEY'S GOAL TO REMOVE BARRIERS TO EDUCATION

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The Peel District School Board (PDSB) has released the results of Student Census 2018: Secondary School Report, a breakdown of results for more than 39,000 students in Grades 9 to 12.

"With a response rate of over 92 per cent, this report helps paint a clearer, detailed picture of Peel secondary students' identities and experiences," said Peter Joshua, director of education, in a statement.

The Peel board launched the first board-wide student census in November 2018.

Students in Grades 4 to 12 completed the census in class, while parents/guardians of students in

kindergarten to Grade 3 received a questionnaire to fill out on behalf of their children. The census was voluntary and confidential.

Questions in the questionnaire dealt with: ethnic background; gender identification; country of birth; educational expectations and sense of belonging and acceptance.

"To help students succeed, we need to truly understand who they are and how they feel," said Poleen Grewal, associate director of instructional and equity support services. "We have a responsibility in education to provide every student with learning environments and supports that help them excel."

The board will dig deeper into the results and explore how specific identities experience school life,

said Grewal, with the goal of removing barriers and improving programming to better meet the needs of the students.

Peel District School Board is the second-largest school board in Canada, with more than 155,000 students in 257 schools.

The secondary report is available at www.peel-schools.org/StudentCensus and includes a breakdown of responses for each question for secondary students. The report is required by the Anti-Racism Directorate for any school board taking part in identity-based data collection.

Data from the student census reveals the top five single racial backgrounds reported by high school students are: South Asian (45.3 per cent), white (16.8 per cent), black (10.2 per cent), Middle Eastern (5.6

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per cent) and East Asian (5.4 per cent).

Less than one per cent, or 261 high school students, identify as First Nations, Métis, Inuit or another Indigenous identity.

The report also reveals the most frequently ethnic or cultural backgrounds self-reported by high school students are: Indian (26.3 per cent), Canadian (20.7 per cent), Pakistani (11.5 per cent), Jamaican (6.6 per cent) and Chinese (6 per cent)

The most common reli-

gions, faiths, spiritualities or creeds of PDSB high school students are: Islam (22.4 per cent), Christianity (20.7 per cent), Sikhism (15.6 per cent), Hinduism (12.6 per cent) and no religion (9.5 per cent).

Throughout the 2019-20 school year, PDSB will re-

lease a series of student census reports, including the results of elementary students, a full board report and in-depth reports examining the experiences of specific identities within the Peel board.

In Spring 2020, school administrators will receive school-specific data.

The census is part of the province's Education Equity Action Plan for identifying and eliminating discriminatory practices, barriers, and biases from schools and classrooms. Elementary and board results are to be made available by March 2020.

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