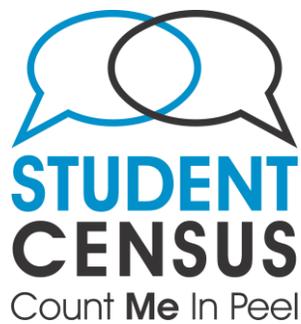




Peel District School Board

Student Census 2018: Count Me In Peel



2019 NSPRA National School Communications Award
Gold Medallion Award Entry
Special Communications Project

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SYNOPSIS

Over the past decade, the Peel District School Board—with 163,000 students across 259 schools—has built a reputation as an equity leader. The district is committed to continuous progress towards equity and inclusion of all through a wide range of projects to support marginalized groups. As this work evolved, it became clear that data—demographic and perceptual—was needed to best serve the district’s growing population.

To truly understand the needs of students and families, the Board of Trustees passed a motion in November 2016 to complete a district-wide *Student Census* by December 2018. Its purpose was to:

- better understand student populations and school communities;
- identify and eliminate barriers to student success, inclusion and well-being, and;
- establish effective programs and reallocate resources to where they are needed most.

To capture the voices of *all* students, the census evolved into a complex project, with four English questionnaires (K-3, 4-6, 7-12 and adult learners), including adapted versions and accommodations to support students with special education needs. To optimize participation, the census was rolled out differently by grade level and questionnaires were translated in our top 20 languages, resulting in over 60 questionnaires.

Faced with the task of engaging all teaching staff to successfully administer the census, while also building buy-in from families and students—all during a changing, tense provincial political environment—the successful implementation of the district’s first *Student Census* required a comprehensive, strategic communications plan.

The communications plan’s aim was to build awareness, trust and support for the *Student Census* among staff, students and families. Strategies and tactics, including letters, training materials, a social media campaign, translated documents, and dedicated websites, focused on the need for the census to better serve Peel students and families.

Student Census: Count Me In Peel successfully launched during *Student Census Weeks* in November 2018. All schools participated, including 6,719 unique home forms and 8,000 staff, with a preliminary secondary school response rate of 80 per cent. Currently in the scanning and analysis stage, the *Student Census* is anticipated to provide the district with invaluable data and understanding of students to inform future decision-making.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Background and Research

The Peel District School Board is Canada's second largest public school board with more than 163,000 students in 259 schools, including more than 18,000 students who receive special education support. The district serves 1.4 million residents in three municipalities (Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga) in the Peel Region, located immediately west of Toronto. The region is one of the most diverse, fastest growing regions in Canada, with a population growth rate of 10.2 per cent from 2011 to 2016, and 38 per cent of residents who speak a language other than English at home.

To best serve this diverse population, the board is committed to achieving inclusion for all through continuous progress in equity. To support this work, Trustees approved a motion in November 2016 to conduct a voluntary *Student Census* across all Peel schools. The census would be the first of its kind for the district, as it would collect and link demographic and race-based data with students' perceptions of their well-being, identity, family and school experiences.

In order to capture the voices of *all* students, including students with special education needs, English Language Learners and adult students, the census quickly grew into a complex research project. It included four hard-copy English questionnaires (for K-3, 4-6, 7-12 and adult learners), as well as adapted versions for each grade set for students with special education needs. To optimize participation, the census was rolled out differently by grade level and questionnaires were translated in our top 20 languages, resulting in more than 60 questionnaires total.

Through consultation with staff, families, advisory committees and colleagues at other districts, we learned to anticipate:

Complexity of a district-wide census: With 259 school and program locations, each with unique needs, it was clear that there would be significant challenges to implement a district-wide census. Staff would need to be trained quickly to ensure that student responses were reliable, authentic and kept confidential. A plan was also needed for classroom supply teachers, as these staff members would need to use training materials on the fly. We were also mindful of workload challenges experienced by staff, who saw the additional training as "one more thing."

Privacy concerns: It was determined that the census would link individual student's responses to their existing attendance, grade, and registration information to provide richer data to identify school and district-wide trends. However, this also meant that the census could not be anonymous. Students would be assigned an identification code linked to their student number; they would be required to fill out only their specific questionnaire with this code. As a result, training materials needed to address the greater room for error in the census implementation.

History of delayed surveys with low response rates: To prepare for our first census, staff consulted with other districts who had conducted similar projects. Only one school district had completed a similar district-wide census successfully; however, they had achieved this success after two other launches of the census, and did not launch system-wide or provide adapted versions of the census for students with special education needs. Another school district had attempted a system-wide census, but were delayed by the government's Information and Privacy Commissioner for five months when families filed public complaints, garnering negative media attention, saying that the district had not been transparent in their research process and violated student privacy legislation.

Response rates for the Peel board's own research surveys are traditionally low, with staff and families citing survey fatigue and lack of purpose as rationale. The board's climate survey, *Your Voice Counts*, has had a response rate of under 10 per cent for many years, with little to no buy-in from school staff to implement the research.

Changing political climate: When trustees first requested a district-wide *Student Census*, the provincial government was led by a political party who strongly supported public education, and encouraged the collection of race-based statistics to better understand and support students. In June 2018, shortly before the launch of the census, a Conservative government and premier were elected. The new party reversed changes to the Health and Physical Education curriculum that had taught students about gender and sexual identity and expression. They instated a call-in line for parents/guardians and community members to use if they believed teaching methods in their child's class did not align with the revised curriculum. Since the *Student Census* asked students to voluntarily disclose their sexual and gender orientation, many staff members were hesitant to deliver the census in their classrooms.

Communication and operational restrictions: The provincial and federal government set strict rules for the collection of student demographic information, including the use of particular vocabulary when referring to cultural, racial, gender and sexual identities. Many of these terms did not align with those used and supported in our district, which had the potential to lead to confusion among staff and students. For example, we were told we had to use the term *First Nations, Metis and Inuit (FNMI)* in questionnaires, instead of *Indigenous*, a term that our district had begun using in all district materials following consultations with our Peel Indigenous Network.

To overcome these challenges, the district's Communications department worked closely with Research & Accountability staff to develop a thorough communications plan that would align with the project's implementation plan.

Goal: To build awareness, support and understanding of the Peel board's first Student Census to capture authentic student responses, resulting in the successful implementation of the census at all 259 school sites.

Objectives

- 1) To build awareness and understanding of the *Student Census* amongst all staff, parents/guardians and students, resulting in zero public complaints to the province's information and privacy commissioner
- 2) To build buy-in from staff to implement the *Student Census* in all 259 school and adult education sites, with zero union/federation/employee association grievances
- 3) To implement the *Student Census* system-wide, including participation from students with special education needs and English Language Learners, resulting in a response rate of 30 per cent for parents of K-3 students, and 80 per cent for grade 4 to 12 students
- 4) To generate 20,000 page visits to www.peelschools.org/studentcensus from October to December 2018
- 5) To generate at least 25,000 positive engagements (views, likes, retweets) on the board's social media channels
- 6) To generate one million positive media impressions and zero negative media coverage for the *Student Census* leading up to its launch in November 2018

Analysis/Planning

This research-based initiative relied heavily on the strategies and tactics outlined in the communications plan, which itself was rooted in extensive research with internal and external stakeholders.

Regular consultation with key stakeholders

- The Peel board formed a **Student Census Steering Committee**, consisting of central staff, trustees, school administrators and teaching union/federations to ensure full understanding of all perspectives around the implementation of the board's first census. Feedback informed message and material development.
- **Trustees, senior administration and principal/vice-principal associations** were consulted regularly to establish key strategies to implement a successful campaign, and provide feedback on template materials.
- Parent members of the board's **Parent Involvement Committee**—a board-level committee representing all parent councils—was consulted on the board's communications strategy and materials prior to distribution. This group also participated in a kindergarten to grade 3 census pilot to ensure questions and materials were easy to follow.
- Peel staff attended regular meetings of the district's various employee groups to share information, consulted with staff on messaging and garnered support from **employee unions, federations and associations**.
- Consultation sessions with the district's **Special Education Advisory Committee and staff** were held throughout the census development process to help remove any barriers of participation for students with special education needs. They provided insight on accommodations required based on ability, ranging from custom versions and extended time to complete the census, to assistance from teaching assistants or family members.
- Through consultations with **Student Activity Councils and Peel Student President Council**, we heard that most students welcomed the opportunity to participate in the census. These student leaders agreed to serve as ambassadors amongst their peers to encourage participation at their secondary schools.
- The Peel board's **Communications Advisory Committee**, including communications staff, union leaders, principals and superintendents, provided input from schools regarding the implementation of a district-wide campaign.

- Through the Peel board's regular **Faith Leader Meetings**, attended by faith leaders from all major faiths practiced in Peel, we heard that families needed communication materials that were in simple, easy-to-understand and that they preferred to have translated information, if possible.
- Board staff met regularly with **neighbouring school district staff** who had conducted large-scale research projects. They shared strategies to successfully implement a district-wide census, including: translation in multiple languages; providing families with simple, key messages and ample time to understand the purpose of the census; and engaging with parent councils and other community ambassadors to build buy-in among families.

Target Audiences

Internal audiences

- senior administration
- trustees
- principals and vice-principals
- managers and supervisors
- all teaching staff
- superintendents of education
- district equity and curriculum staff
- employee unions, federations and associations

External audiences

- all parents/guardians of Peel board students, including newcomer families and parents of students with special education needs
- Parent advisory groups: School Councils, Parent Involvement Committee, Special Education Advisory Committee
- Students, including those with special education needs and English Language Learners
- Trustees
- Education and community partners, including faith leaders
- local, ethnic, and Toronto- and Ontario-based media

Key messages

- At the Peel District School Board, we are committed to providing the very best learning environments so that all students can achieve personal excellence. To help us in this work, we will launch the Peel District School Board's first *Student Census* in November 2018.
- The census responses will help the board and schools:
 - better understand student populations and school communities;
 - identify and eliminate barriers to student success, inclusion and well-being; and
 - establish effective programs and reallocate resources to where they are needed most.
- Participation in the *Student Census* is voluntary. However, it is important the *Student Census* reflects the voices of all students—the more responses we receive, the more effective the data will be to help inform and improve programming and instruction.
- The *Student Census* will provide a snapshot of the current composition of our students so we can identify and address barriers to learning in our schools.
- The *Student Census* is confidential, but it is not anonymous. Census questionnaires are labelled with a unique code linked to each student's ID number. This unique code allows the board's Research Department to analyze responses while also using other previously collected data (ex. address, languages spoken at home, grades, etc.), resulting in a more thorough understanding of Peel students.
- All collected responses will be stored in a secure, confidential database and will only be accessed by authorized Research staff to identify and summarize trends. Individual parent questionnaires will not be analyzed.
- Once responses are processed and analyzed, the Peel board's Research Department will produce a series of reports to help inform board and school decision-making for programs and instruction.
- Peel board is committed to the highest levels of privacy and confidentiality in collecting student information and follows privacy requirements outlined in the Municipal Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).

Budget

The communications budget for this project was approximately \$3,500 USD for translated letters and FAQs. No staff costs were incurred—all work was undertaken by district employees.

Communication/Implementation

Strategies

In a school system spread over 259 sites in three communities, it was important that the focus of the communication plan be on consistent message delivery to optimize participation. The following strategies were implemented:

- **Create a theme that clearly communicates the district's goal to hear from all students and families.** The theme, *Student Census 2018: Count Me In Peel*, reinforced the board's approach to building connections with families.
- **Connect the project to provincial government and district goals.**
- **Engage all teaching staff, school administrators and teaching unions/federations as key partners.**
- **Build trust, awareness and support of families and students to encourage authentic participation by:**
 - being transparent and open about the research collection process
 - clearly explaining why the data is being collected and how it will be used
 - ensuring families are well-informed on the option to opt out of the census as failing to do so could result in a complaint to the privacy commissioner which would negatively impact project timelines
 - providing reminders and assistance to help families successfully complete the questionnaire
- **Remove barriers for participation** by consulting with faith groups, community partners and special education staff.
- **Empower parent councils, faith leaders, community partners and trustees to serve as advocates** in their communities to help build community interest, trust and understanding of census.
- **Position the district as a leader in equity and inclusion** with both internal and external stakeholders.
- **Strategically work with media to minimize confusion** or misinformation about the census, limit negative coverage, and position the Peel board as a leader in equity and inclusion.
- Align messaging and **work collaboratively with the province's information and privacy commissioner** to ensure all materials meet legal and ethical obligations.

Chronological timelines of tactics

November 2017 to March 2018

- **Established a Student Census Steering Committee** with representation from trustees, central staff and all employee federations, unions and associations. A **one-page summary** was provided at each monthly meeting for members to use to communicate back to their union/federation/associations.
- **Created a logo and brand** to use on all census materials.
- Collaborated with the district's Research department and Steering Committee members to [develop Student Census questionnaires and easy-to-follow instruction sheets](#) for each grade bracket.
- **Developed information materials** targeted to families and staff, including [FAQs](#), [notification letters](#) and a training guide. These materials were tested in the *Student Census Pilot* in March 2018.
- Developed and shared **key messages/FAQs** with trustees, senior administration and administrators.
- Held a **pilot census** in March 2018 at three schools, testing the reliability of the questionnaires and the effectiveness of communication and training materials. Staff and parent materials were adjusted based on feedback.

April to July 2018

- Provided superintendents with a **high-level presentation** to inform administrators of the upcoming census.
- **Co-constructed an Educator's Guide** with teaching staff, and Equity and Curriculum staff, to help teaching staff guide their students through each census question. A customized version was created for K-3, 4-6 and 7-12.
 - A hard-copy guide would be provided with each classroom set of questionnaires during *Student Census Weeks*, as well as part of the training materials for teaching staff in advance of the census.
 - Content was written in easy-to-understand language, and included key messages to address pilot concerns.
- **Held information sessions with trustees and community partners**, including the district's Parent Involvement Committee, Special Education Advisory Committee and faith leaders.

August to September 2018

- Shared information about the upcoming *Student Census* in the **director of education's start-of-year address** to all school administrators. This message was also shared on the district's [website](#), intranet page and in the director's "welcome back" email to all staff and letter to all families.
- **Contacted local and provincial reporters** to position the district as a leader in equity, resulting in multiple online, print and television media stories mentioning the upcoming *Student Census* (see [supplementary materials](#)).
- **Presented information sessions** to over 300 principals and vice-principals at association meetings, highlighting the materials that would be provided to families and staff in the following month.

- **Provided trustees and senior administration with an information package** to help them respond to public and staff questions, including targeted FAQs, key messages and briefing notes.

October 2018

- Created a dedicated section on the district's external website—www.peelschools.org/studentcensus—to share resources for families, including census questionnaires and translated materials.
 - The website was promoted as the main source of *Student Census* information.
 - Information was emailed to website subscribers and posted on school websites.
- Engaged parent councils with a **keynote presentation at School Council orientation event**, and provided a **School Council toolkit**, including FAQs, copies of letters to families, and a scripted PowerPoint for their next meeting.
- Launched **intranet site to house support materials for staff**, including all versions of the questionnaire.
- Created, monitored and responded to feedback received through a **dedicated email (studentcensus@peelsb.com) and phone line** to field questions from families and staff after school hours.
- **Held presentations at Family of School meetings** to address specific school concerns or questions.
- Implemented a **social media campaign** on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram (@Peelschools). Schools and families were encouraged to use the hashtag, #CountMEinPeel, once they had completed the census.
- Drafted and shared **notification letters to all families**. Schools followed up with a **broadcast phone/email message** to ensure families were aware of the letter, which was shared on district and school websites and social media.
 - Schools sent letters home with report cards to increase the likelihood of it reaching parents/guardians.
 - Messaging was transparent and simple, and included mandatory language to meet privacy legislation; the back page of the letter included frequently asked questions.
 - All notification letters and FAQs were **translated** into the board's top 20 languages and made available on the district's website as well as in the school office.
- Held two **video teleconference sessions** for all elementary and secondary administrators to share key messages and review operational aspects of the census. Followed up with a **staff training package** for November staff meetings, which included a **scripted presentation**, **Educator Guides** (specific to each grade set) and staff FAQs.
- Shared a reminder of the *Student Census* launch in the **director's monthly email message** to all staff.

November 2018: *Student Census* launches in all schools

- **Emailed** school administrators with step-by-step instructions and reminders for successful implementation of census, as well as a **census communications package**, including:
 - Scripted draft tweets for schools to use to inform their communities of the census
 - Camera-ready school newsletter articles
 - Template messaging to use on school signs
 - Template email/phone messages
- **School administrators led training sessions** for teaching staff during November staff meetings.
- **Parent questionnaire sent home** with instructions on how to return in a confidential, timely manner.
- **Reminders** shared on district/school websites and social media to encourage participation and census completion.
- Distributed a **news release** for the launch of the *Student Census*. The Communications department followed up with any media requests to minimize negative coverage.

December 2018

- Provided schools with resources to remind families of students in kindergarten to grade 3 to complete and return the census, i.e. phone/email script, template social media posts and a camera-ready newsletter article.

Evaluation

To evaluate the success of the district's first system-wide census, we conducted focus groups and surveys with trustees, administrators and staff, and de-briefed with the district's Parent Involvement Committee, Special Education Advisory Committee, and Student Census Steering Committee. Consultation findings are included in the following outline of the campaign's success in reference to its objectives:

1) To build buy-in from staff to implement the *Student Census* in all 259 school and program sites, with zero union/federation/employee association grievances.

During the district's *Student Census Weeks* in November 2018, the project was successfully implemented in 259 schools, 6,719 unique home forms and delivered to 163,053 students. The Student Census staff intranet page was accessed over 15,000 times. We did not receive any complaints from staff or unions/federations/associations; rather, staff shared that they found the Educator's Guide *very helpful* in administering the census, and appreciated the after-hours support via the dedicated email and phone line set up to offer clarification.

2) To build awareness and understanding of the *Student Census* amongst all staff, parents/guardians and students, resulting in zero public complaints to the province's privacy commissioner.

As a result of ongoing communication and interactions with stakeholders through letters, social media, face-to-face meetings and consultations, we were able to build a strong understanding of the purpose for the census to optimize participation. The *Student Census* email and phone line received 100 emails and 150 calls, respectively, with only two negative emails and one call that was not resolved. The majority of interactions were positive and were resolved by referral to existing resources. No public complaints were received by the province's privacy commissioner.

3) To implement the *Student Census* system-wide, including participation from students with special education needs and English Language Learners, resulting in a response rate of 30 per cent for parents of K-3 students, and 80 per cent for grade 4 to 12 students.

The processing and scanning of the questionnaires is expected to take several months, as any handwritten response and all translated questionnaires will need to be manually inputted. However, a preliminary scan of grade 9 to 12 questionnaires found there to be an **80 per cent response rate** from secondary school students, not including translated versions of the census. A similar response rate is expected for elementary students.

Most importantly, the census provided students with special education needs and English Language Learners with the opportunity to participate with all other students. Accommodations were provided at all vocational schools and sites with programs for students with development delays. The use of three adapted questionnaires and targeted communication materials supported this participation. Many teaching and special education staff and parents reached out to thank the district for capturing these students' voices.

4) To generate 20,000 page visits to www.peelschools.org/studentcensus from October to December 2018

We promoted the *Student Census* website, www.peelschools.org/studentcensus, in all campaign materials and through social media. As a result, the site received over 30,000 hits within a three-month span. The majority of users remained on the page for at least five minutes. Materials on the website were accessed over 15,000 times.

5) To generate at least 25,000 positive engagements (views, likes, retweets) on the board's social media channels

The #CountMeInPeel social media campaign was engaging and informative, resulting in over 38,000 views, likes and/or retweets, with the majority of interactions being positive. Only a handful of concerns were made via the district's social media channels. These were addressed by staff to alleviate concerns. In some cases, parents or staff jumped in to express the need for this project. Staff used the hashtag to join the conversation and show how they implemented the census in their classrooms ([see supplementary materials](#)).

6) To generate one million positive media impressions and zero negative media coverage for the *Student Census* leading up to its launch in November 2018

The *Student Census* generated over 1.2 million media impressions in tier one newspapers and television stations from the announcement of the census to its launch in November 2018. News media ran multiple stories mentioning the upcoming census and connected the Peel board as a provincial leader in equity and inclusion (see [supplementary materials](#)). The tone of the coverage was overwhelming positive. Leading up to and during the launch of the census, there was no negative media coverage, something uncommon to other districts who ran similar research projects.

Next Steps: Following a successful launch, the next communications phase of the *Student Census* will be to share results with staff and the Peel community, once Research staff have developed school and district reports (expected by spring 2020). Evaluation findings will be used for future implementations of the census.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS: Research/Background

Primary research

In addition to consultations with staff, the *Student Census* Steering Committee, Parent Involvement Committee and Special Education Advisory Committee, a ***Student Census Pilot*** was also conducted in March 2018 to test the validity and use of census materials, including the questionnaire, instruction sheet and training materials. The district's Research department produced a [report with the findings](#) to inform the system-wide implementation and communications, including the need for a step-by-step resource for educators to administer the census in their classrooms.

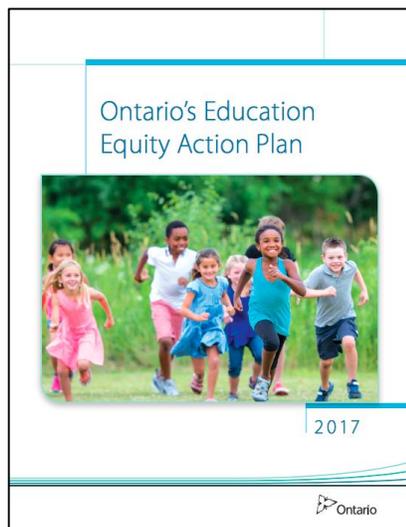
Secondary research

To build our implementation and communications plan, we referred to the following resources and expertise from nearby school districts:

- Toronto District School Board census publications: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/research/Research/Parent-and-Student-Census/Census-Publications>
- Toronto District School Board adult census: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/research/Research/Adult-Student-Census>
- Ottawa-Carleton District School Board student survey: https://ocdsb.ca/about_us/departments/equity_and_diversity/student_survey

The following provincial and federal resources were helpful in the development of the *Student Census* communications plan and supporting materials:

- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90m56>
- Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan: http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/education_equity_plan_en.pdf
- Ontario's 3-Year Anti-Racism Strategic Plan: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/better-way-forward-ontarios-3-year-anti-racism-strategic-plan>



SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS: Implementation/Communications

Student Census questionnaires and easy-to-follow instruction sheets

The Communications department worked closely with Research & Accountability staff to ensure language and branding were consistent throughout all census questionnaires. An instruction sheet was included with every questionnaire, which required clear, consistent language that could be easily translated into the board's top 20 languages without losing key information in the process.

View all census questionnaires, including instruction sheets and translated versions, at www.peelschools.org/studentcensus



STUDENT NAME:

If this is **not** your child's name, please return the package to your school and request the questionnaire with your child's name.

TEACHER NAME:

HOMEROOM:

As a parent/guardian of a student in **kindergarten to grade 3**, you are invited to complete the Peel District School Board's Student Census on behalf of your child. This questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete, and will help the Peel board to:

- better understand student populations and school communities.
- identify and eliminate barriers to student success, inclusion and well-being.
- establish effective programs and reallocate resources to where they are needed most.

Participation in the Student Census is voluntary. However, the higher the completion rate, the richer and more reliable the information will be for school improvement and program planning.

If you have multiple children in kindergarten to grade 3, please fill out a **separate questionnaire for each child**, using the questionnaire labelled with that child's name. You can get a translated version of this questionnaire by contacting your child's teacher or visiting www.peelschools.org/studentcensus.

Here are some reminders before you start:

- Please make sure **your child's name** is at the top of this page. If your child's name is not at the top of this page, please return the package to your child's teacher and request the correct questionnaire.
- This is not a test—there are **no wrong answers**. Just what is right for you and your child.
- You are encouraged to complete the census **with your child** to capture their thoughts and experiences.
- Use a **dark pencil or pen** to fill in circles completely, so they look like this: ●
If you make a mistake, **erase** the filled-in circle **completely** and then circle the chosen answer. If you used a pen, put an X over the wrong choice, and circle the correct choice. ✘ ○ ○ ○
- You may **skip** any question and move on to the next one.
- When you are finished, keep this page with you. Place **ONLY** your completed Student Census in the envelope provided, and **seal** the envelope. Your completed census now has **no name on it**. This is so we can keep your answers **private and confidential**. If you did not receive an envelope with this questionnaire, you may use any envelope you have available.
- If you have a translated version of the census, please include it in the provided envelope **as well as the blank English version**.
- Return your completed questionnaire in a sealed envelope to your child's school **by November 30**.

The Student Census is confidential, but it is not anonymous. Your child's school will not view or have access to your answers. Your sealed envelope will be shipped by each school to a secure, external company contracted by the Peel board to scan and process responses. The data will **only** be accessed by authorized Peel board research staff to identify and summarize trends among Peel students. Individual parent questionnaires will not be analyzed.

The Peel board is committed to the highest levels of privacy and confidentiality in collecting information about students and follows all privacy requirements outlined in the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA). The information gathered through the Student Census is collected under the legal authority of the Education Act (R.S.O. 1990, c. E. 2, as amended) for educational and research purposes only.

For more information, please visit www.peelschools.org/studentcensus or contact the Peel board's Research and Accountability department at 905-890-1010 ext. 3523 or studentcensus@peelbo.com.

Thank you for your continued support as we inspire success, confidence and hope in each student.




ID
Parent/Guardian Questionnaire

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR CHILD

1. What is the **first language(s)** your child learned at home and still understands? (Select all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> American Sign Language	<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Hindi	<input type="checkbox"/> Inuktitut	<input type="checkbox"/> Somali
<input type="checkbox"/> Arabic	<input type="checkbox"/> French	<input type="checkbox"/> Italian	<input type="checkbox"/> Ojibwe	<input type="checkbox"/> Spanish
<input type="checkbox"/> Bengali	<input type="checkbox"/> Greek	<input type="checkbox"/> Korean	<input type="checkbox"/> Persian or Farsi	<input type="checkbox"/> Tagalog
<input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese	<input type="checkbox"/> Gujarati	<input type="checkbox"/> Mandarin	<input type="checkbox"/> Punjabi	<input type="checkbox"/> Tamil
<input type="checkbox"/> Dari	<input type="checkbox"/> Hebrew	<input type="checkbox"/> Michif	<input type="checkbox"/> Russian	<input type="checkbox"/> Urdu

Other, please print in the box:

2. What language(s) does your child **speak** most often at home? (Select all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> American Sign Language	<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Hindi	<input type="checkbox"/> Inuktitut	<input type="checkbox"/> Somali
<input type="checkbox"/> Arabic	<input type="checkbox"/> French	<input type="checkbox"/> Italian	<input type="checkbox"/> Ojibwe	<input type="checkbox"/> Spanish
<input type="checkbox"/> Bengali	<input type="checkbox"/> Greek	<input type="checkbox"/> Korean	<input type="checkbox"/> Persian or Farsi	<input type="checkbox"/> Tagalog
<input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese	<input type="checkbox"/> Gujarati	<input type="checkbox"/> Mandarin	<input type="checkbox"/> Punjabi	<input type="checkbox"/> Tamil
<input type="checkbox"/> Dari	<input type="checkbox"/> Hebrew	<input type="checkbox"/> Michif	<input type="checkbox"/> Russian	<input type="checkbox"/> Urdu

Other, please print in the box:

3. What is your child's **ethnic or cultural** background? (Please print in the box. You can print more than one.)

- Examples: Afghan, American, Arab, Argentine, Arab, Bengali, Canadian, Chinese, Colombian, Cree, Cuban, Dutch, East Indian, English, Ethiopian, Filipino, French, French Canadian, German, Greek, Guinean, Haitian, Hawaiian, Hungarian, Indian, Inuit, Iranian, Irish, Italian, Jamaican, Jewish, Korean, Korean, Lebanese, Maltese, Mexican, Moroccan, Ojibwe, Pakistani, Polish, Portuguese, Roma, Russian, Scottish, Somali, Sri Lankan, Syrian, Trinidadian, Ukrainian, etc.

4. Does your child identify as **First Nations (Status or non-Status), Métis, and/or Inuit**? (Select all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not know
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, First Nations (e.g., Cree, Mohawk, Ojibwe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Another Indigenous identity. Please print in the box: <input style="width: 100px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Métis	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Inuit	

5. Which of the following **best describe** your child's **social background**? (Select all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Black (e.g., African, Afro-Caribbean, African-Canadian descent)	<input type="checkbox"/> South Asian (e.g., Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi descent)
<input type="checkbox"/> East Asian (e.g., Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese descent)	<input type="checkbox"/> Southeast Asian (e.g., Filipino, Vietnamese, Malaysian descent)
<input type="checkbox"/> First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit descent	<input type="checkbox"/> White (e.g., English, Italian, German, European descent)
<input type="checkbox"/> Latin American (e.g., Brazilian, Mexican, Cuban, Chilean descent)	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not know
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle Eastern (e.g., Egyptian, Emirati, Syrian, Saudi Arabian descent)	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please print in the box: <input style="width: 100px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>

6. What is your child's **gender** identity? (Select all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer
<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> I am not sure what this question is asking.
<input type="checkbox"/> Intersex	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please print in the box: <input style="width: 100px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Questioning	<small>(e.g., Gender fluid, Nonbinary, Gender non-conforming, Transgender, Two-spirit)</small>

7. What is your child's **religion** and/or **faith**? (Select all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agnostic (Agnostic)	<input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous spirituality	<input type="checkbox"/> Wicca
<input type="checkbox"/> Atheist (Atheist)	<input type="checkbox"/> Islam (Muslim)	<input type="checkbox"/> Zoroastrianism
<input type="checkbox"/> Bahá'í (Bahá'í)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jainism (Jain)	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer
<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhism (Buddhist)	<input type="checkbox"/> Judaism (Jewish)	<input type="checkbox"/> No religion
<input type="checkbox"/> Christianity (Christian)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sikhism (Sikh)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please print in the box: <input style="width: 100px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Hinduism (Hindu)	<input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual (but not religious)	

8. Does your child have any of the following **disabilities/health concerns/difficulties**? (Select all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Chronic health condition (e.g., epilepsy, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, cystic fibrosis, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Memory (e.g., difficulty remembering information)	<input type="checkbox"/> Speech (e.g., difficulty speaking and/or being understood)
<input type="checkbox"/> Developmental (e.g., Down syndrome, autism or general delay, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental health (e.g., depression, anxiety, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Vision (e.g., difficulty seeing)
<input type="checkbox"/> Dexterity (e.g., difficulty using hands/fingers to grasp/hold small objects, such as pencils or scissors)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobility (e.g., difficulty walking on flat firm surfaces like sidewalks or floors)	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not know
<input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (e.g., difficulty hearing sounds)	<input type="checkbox"/> Pain (e.g., chronic aches or discomfort caused by illness, injury or condition)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please print in the box: <input style="width: 100px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning (e.g., difficulty learning due to attention problems, hyperactivity or dyslexia, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychological (e.g., emotional or behavioural conditions)	<input type="checkbox"/> No, none of the above

Notification letters to all families

In consultation with teaching staff and school administrators, notification letters were developed for K-3, grades 4-6, grades 7-12 and adult education students. The letters included the purpose of the census, privacy information and instructions on how families can opt out of the voluntary census. Frequently asked questions were listed on the back of the letter to help alleviate concerns. Families were encouraged to learn more by calling the district's Research department, emailing studentcensus@peelsb.com or visiting the *Student Census* website.



October 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians of Kindergarten to Grade 3 Students,

At the Peel District School Board, we are committed to providing the very best learning environments so that all students can achieve personal excellence. In order to do this, we must truly understand the needs of students and their families. To help us in this work, we're excited to announce that next month we will launch our first Student Census.

In November, parents/guardians of students in kindergarten to grade 3 will receive the Student Census to fill out on behalf of their child(ren). If you don't receive a copy by mid-November, please contact your school.

The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. If you have more than one child in kindergarten to grade 3, you will be asked to fill out a separate questionnaire for each child. The questionnaire will also be available from your child's school or on the Peel board's website: www.peelschools.org/studentcensus

The census findings will assist the board and our schools to:

- better understand student populations and school communities.
- identify and eliminate barriers to student success, inclusion and well-being.
- establish effective programs and reallocate resources to where they are needed most.

The Student Census is confidential, but it is not anonymous. All collected responses will be stored in a confidential database and will only be accessed by authorized Research staff to help improve Peel students. Individual parent questionnaires will not be analyzed. The highest levels of privacy and confidentiality in collecting information about students are required by the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (R.S.O. 1990, c. E. 2, as amended) for educational and research purposes only.

Participation in the Student Census is voluntary. However, it's important to note that the richer and more reliable the information will be for school improvement.

If you have any questions, please review the fact sheet on the back of this letter. You can also contact the Peel board's Research and Assessment Department at 890-1010 ext. 3523 or studentcensus@peelsb.com.

As always, we thank you for your continued support as we inspire success, confidence and achievement.

Peter Joshua
Director of Education



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of the Peel District School Board's Student Census?

The census findings will help the board and our schools to:

- better understand student populations and school communities
- identify and eliminate barriers to student success, inclusion and well-being
- establish effective programs and reallocate resources to where they are needed most

What types of questions are included in the Student Census?

The Student Census consists of approximately 30 multiple choice questions about student identity, family characteristics, school experiences and student well-being.

Do I need to answer every question on the census?

The Student Census is voluntary. You may choose to skip questions if you do not wish to provide answers, or choose not to participate at all. However, it's important to note that the higher the completion rate, the richer and more reliable the information will be for school improvement and program planning.

I have multiple children in kindergarten to grade 3. Do I need to fill out a separate census for each student?

Yes, you will need to fill out a separate census for each child. Each questionnaire has a unique, specific code linked to each student's ID.

Does my child need to be present when I fill out the questionnaire?

The aim of the Student Census is to capture the voice of all students. You are encouraged to complete the census with your child to capture their thoughts and experiences.

How will my responses be kept confidential?

Your census questionnaire will include an insert with your child's name—this is the only page with your child's name or any other identifiable information. The instructions provided with the census will ask you to remove this insert before placing your completed census in an envelope and sealing it. These sealed envelopes will be shipped by each school to a secure, external company contracted by the Peel board to scan and process responses. This confidential database will be accessed by the Research Department only for analysis and research purposes. These steps comply with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).

What is the difference between a confidential census and an anonymous census?

The Student Census is confidential, but it is not anonymous. Census questionnaires are labeled with a unique code linked to each student's ID number. This unique code allows the board's Research Department to analyze responses while also using other previously collected data (ex. address, languages spoken at home, grades, etc.), resulting in a more thorough understanding of Peel students. No personal identification—such as a student name or ID number—will appear on the questionnaire to ensure that the information provided by parents/guardians remains confidential.

How will census data be used?

Once responses are processed and analyzed, the Peel board's Research Department will produce a series of reports to help inform board and school decision-making for programs and instruction. Summarized data may also be shared with community partners and government agencies to help them improve their services to best meet the needs of their communities. Data reports or analysis will never single out a student. By law, the Peel board cannot reveal individualized information for any student/parent who completes the census.

Staff training materials: Staff meeting presentation

A staff meeting presentation was provided to all school administrators, along with a slide-by-slide script, FAQs and a copy of the Educator's Guide to distribute to staff. The presentation included approximately 30 slides outlining the purpose of the census, the types of questions included in the census, instructions for anticipated scenarios (ex. students absent during the census, students filling out the wrong questionnaire), as well as a step-by-step guide to administering the census in the classroom. View the full presentation [here](#).



Why are we doing a census?

- To **better understand** all student populations and school communities in Peel
- To **identify and eliminate barriers** to student success, inclusion and well-being
- To **establish effective programs** and **reallocate resources** to where they are needed most



What is the Student Census?



It is voluntary and confidential, but not anonymous.

- A parent/guardian consent letter will be sent home in October for students participating in class.
- Each student is assigned a questionnaire labelled with a unique code linked to the student's ID. Students will **only** be identified by a middle page insert, which will be removed once they begin the census.
- All data will be stored and kept confidential, accessed only by the Research Department.



Kindergarten to Grade 3



Parents of K-3 students will be invited to fill out the census on behalf of their child in **November**.

- Parents received a 'Coming soon' letter in mid-October.
- Questionnaires with clear instructions will be sent home with K-3 students in early November.
- Parents are to seal the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided and return it to the school
- Schools will receive translated versions of the census in the top 10 languages. Additional copies in the top 20 languages can be found on the Intranet and www.peelschools.org/studentcensus

Grades 4 to 12



Grade 4 to 12 students will participate in class during **Student Census Weeks (Nov. 19 to 30)**

- Age-appropriate questionnaires have been developed for grades 4 to 6 and 7 to 12.
- Schools can choose which day(s) to participate during these two weeks.
- Parents were sent a consent letter in mid-October. If they **do not** want their child to participate, they must return the cut-off portion of the letter.



Five steps to complete the Student Census

1. Hand out the questionnaires
2. Go over instructions
3. Complete the census
4. Collect the Census
5. Debrief with students



?

What if...

You have been given questionnaires for students who are no longer in your class?

- Cross out the name of the student on the tracking sheet.
- If you know the student is in another class, give the student questionnaire with the middle insert to their teacher. Otherwise, just return the blank questionnaires along with the other completed forms.
- If the student has moved, write **MOVED** next to their crossed out name.

List No.	Student Name
1.	student 1
2.	student 2
3.	student 3
4.	student 4
5.	student 5
6.	student 6
7.	student 7
8.	student 8 MOVED
9.	student 9
10.	student 10



Staff training materials: Educator's Guide to the Student Census

Co-constructed with teaching staff, the Educator's Guide provided step-by-step instructions to successfully administer the census, along with a read-along guide to help staff clarify questions with students using grade-appropriate language. Guides were used as training tools in advance of the census, and were also provided to full-time and supply teaching staff during *Student Census Weeks*. Three versions of the guide were produced and distributed: [kindergarten to grade 3](#), [grades 4-6](#), and [grades 7-12](#).



An Educator's Guide to the Student Census: Grade 4 to 6



At the Peel District School Board, we are committed to providing the best learning environments so that all students can achieve personal excellence. To do this, we must truly understand the needs of students and their families. To help us in this work, grade 4 to 12 students will be invited to complete a *Student Census* during **Nov. 19 to 30**. The information provided in this guide will help you to successfully administer the *Student Census* in your classroom.

If you have any questions, please contact the Peel board's R email studentcensus@peelsb.com.

Your *Student Census* package includes:

1. this educator's guide which outlines the steps invol
2. a tracking sheet (see sample A) which lists all studer
3. a *Student Census* questionnaire labelled with a uniq middle insert (see sample B) in each questionnaire v
4. an envelope for each student
5. a larger envelope for the completed questionnaires
6. extra copies of the *Student Census* questionnaire

Step 1: Hand out the Student Census

Hand out the *Student Census* to each student, along with an of the middle insert of the questionnaire (see sample B). It i the right student, as this questionnaire will be linked to th

All grade 4 to 12 students will participate in the *Student Cen* off portion of the consent letter that was sent home in Octo participate. Please have students without parent/guardian c the class completes the census.

- If a **student is absent**, hold on to their census and arran Nov. 30. If a student will be absent beyond Nov. 30, writ and place the blank questionnaire in the larger envelop
- If a student has **moved to another class in your school**, sheet. If you know what class this student is in, give the the appropriate teacher in your school.
- If a student has **moved outside of the school**, cross out write MOVED next to the student's name. Place the blan the *Student Census* package.

Educator's Read-Along Guide: Grade 4 to 6

This guide provides educators of grades 4 to 6 students with prompts and talking points to help administer the *Student Census*. If students do not understand a specific question, you may refer to the prompts below or use your own professional judgment to help students. Keep in mind, to ensure the confidentiality of the census, you may help a student understand the question, but do not view or influence their responses.

QUESTIONS ABOUT ME

1. What is the **first language(s)** you learned at home as a child and still understand? (*Select all that apply*)
A first language is the language that your parents/guardians used to communicate with you or exposed you to from birth to three years of age. It can also be called your primary language(s) and you may have more than one.

Remember to select all that apply. For example, if your dad speaks Spanish to you and your mom speaks Cantonese to you, you would select both languages.
2. What language(s) do you **speak most often at home**? (*Select all that apply*)
Select the languages that you most often hear and use at home or in your daily life outside of school.

Remember to select all that apply. For example, if your grandparents who live with you speak Ojibwe to you and your mom speaks Arabic to you, you would select both languages.
3. What is your **ethnic or cultural background**? (*Please print in the box. You can print more than one.*)
An ethnic group is a group of people who see each other as having similarities, such as traditions, country of origin, history, language, religion, society and culture. Your ethnicity/culture is not always based on where you were born or where you live.

You may use the examples listed below the box to help you. For example, if you participate in Nigerian traditions passed down from your mother and Jamaican traditions passed down from your father, then you would write both backgrounds.
4. Do you identify as **First Nations (Status or non-Status), Métis, and/or Inuit**? (*Select all that apply*)
This question refers to Indigenous people of Canada who have ancestors who lived here for thousands of years before the first explorers arrived.
5. Which of the following **best describes your racial background**? (*Select all that apply*)
Race refers to the way society organizes people into groups, based on how you look. Race does not have to be related to your country of origin. The examples provided are simply a guide. Choose your racial background based on how you self-identify.

If you have a mixed racial background, you can select more than one. For example, if your mom is Black and your dad is White, you would select both.

Social media campaign

To further engage families, students and staff, a social media campaign, *#CountMEinPeel*, was launched on the district's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram channels. The campaign began when notification letters were sent home to families (October 2018) and concluded in December 2018. The campaign promoted the census and encouraged participation during *Student Census Weeks* using consistent key messages, videos and the campaign logo. Below are some sample tweets and posts from the campaign.

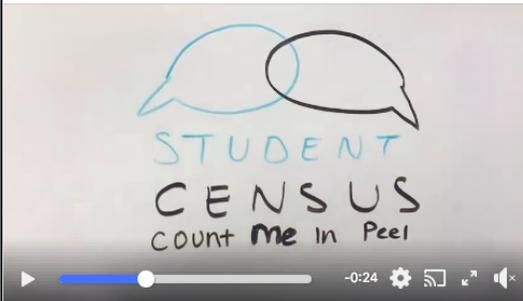
Facebook

Peel District School Board
October 18, 2018

In November, we will launch our first board-wide Student Census—a way for us to better understand the needs of Peel students and their families.

Parents—a letter will be going home this week with more information. We'll be sharing more info here over the next few days too!

During Nov. 19 to 30, students in grades 4 to 12 will be invited to complete the Student Census in class. Parents of K - 3 students will receive a Student Census questionnaire to fill out on behalf of their child(ren). [#CountMEinPeel](#)



People have watched this video for a total of **566** minutes

16 likes, 14 Comments, 8 Shares

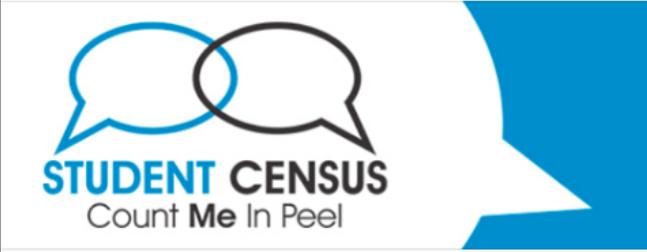
Peel District School Board
October 19, 2018

The Student Census consists of about 30 multiple choice questions about student identity and well-being, family characteristics and school experiences. Find a copy of the questionnaire (and translated versions) on our website: www.peelschools.org/studentcensus

We want to capture the voices of all students - the more Student Census responses we receive, the more effective the data will be to help inform and improve programming and instruction.

Have questions? Let us know or email studentcensus@peelsb.com

[#CountMEinPeel](#)



2,942 people reached

Peel District School Board
November 29, 2018

K-3 parents: Your child's Student Census is due tomorrow. Don't forget to return them to your child's school. [#CountMEinPeel](#)

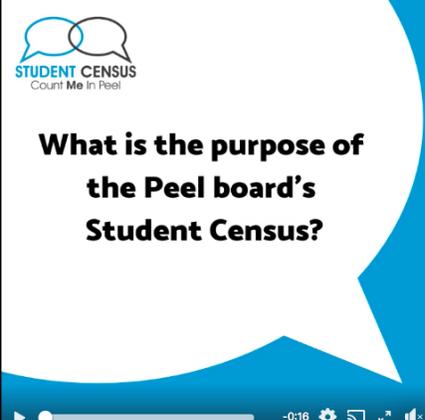


STUDENT CENSUS
Count Me In Peel

K-3 Families:
Return your questionnaire to your child's school by Nov. 30.

Peel District School Board
November 7, 2018

ATTN Grades 4 to 12 parents - Participation in the Student Census is voluntary. If you decide NOT to have your child participate in the Student Census, please complete the slip on the bottom of the letter that was sent home & return it to the school before Nov. 14. [#CountMEinPeel](#)



STUDENT CENSUS
Count Me In Peel

What is the purpose of the Peel board's Student Census?

Your video is popular in Ontario

Peel District School Board
October 18, 2018

Want to learn more about the upcoming Student Census? Check out the FAQ section at www.peelschools.org/studentcensus [#CountMEinPeel](#)



QUESTIONS?

STUDENT CENSUS
Count Me In Peel

4,704 people reached

LP Raj, Azra Jillany-Hasan and 10 others

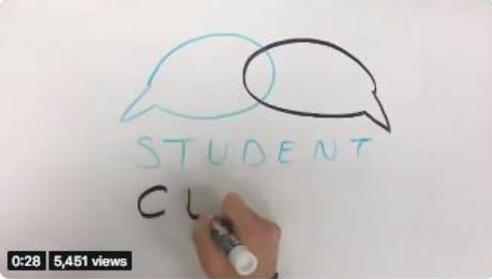
9 Comments 3 Shares

Twitter

Peel District School Board @PeelSchools · 18 Oct 2018

In November, we will launch our first board-wide **Student Census**—a way for us to better understand the needs of Peel students & their families.

Parents—a letter will be going home this week w/ more details. We'll be sharing more info here over the next few days! #CountMEinPeel



0:28 5,451 views

4 replies 121 retweets 123 likes

Show this thread

Peel District School Board @PeelSchools · Nov 13

ATTN Grades 4-12 parents: If you've decided NOT to have your child participate in the **Student Census**, don't forget to complete and return the form tomorrow.



Peel District School Board @PeelSchools

Grades 4 -12 parents: If you've decided NOT to have your child participate in the Student Census, please fill out the form on the letter that was sent home and return it to your child's school before Nov. 14. #CountMEinPeel

29 retweets 16 likes

Peel District School Board @PeelSchools

Thank you #Peelfam for your participation in our first #CountMEinPeel Student Census. Over the next few months, we will scan and analyze all responses to produce a series of research reports to help inform school and board decision-making. Stay tuned for more updates!

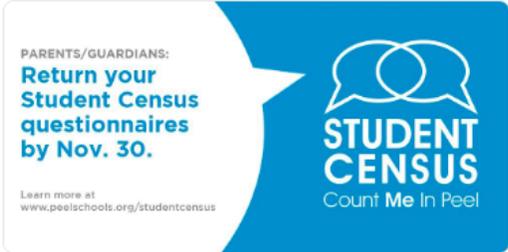


6:00 PM · 30 Nov 2018

29 Retweets 50 Likes

Peel District School Board @PeelSchools

Hey #Peelfam! If you received a Student Census questionnaire to fill out at home, tomorrow is the deadline to return it to your child's school. #CountmeinPeel



2:23 PM · 29 Nov 2018

7 Retweets 4 Likes

Instagram

K-3 Families:

Completed questionnaires are due back to your child's school by **Nov. 30.**



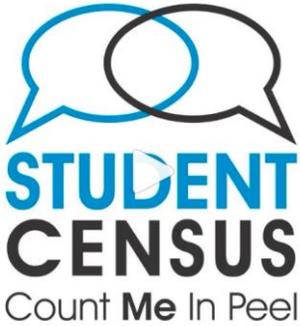
peelschools · Following

peelschools K-3 parents: Have you completed your child's Student Census yet? Remember to return them to your child's school before November 30. #CountMEinPeel

Liked by rstrang and 43 others

NOVEMBER 21, 2018

Add a comment...



peelschools · Following

peelschools During Nov. 19 to 30, students in grades 4 to 12 will complete the Student Census in class. Schools will choose their own days to hold their Student Census.

Parents of K - 3 students – let us know if you've completed your child's Student Census by using #CountMEinPeel.

510 views

NOVEMBER 16, 2018

Add a comment...

External website for families

The Student Census website, www.peelschools.org/studentcensus, was designed to be easy to navigate, with simple content that could be easily translated. Users could select their language from the drop down menu to view translated materials in the board's top 20 languages. FAQs were regularly updated with questions received via the *Student Census* email or phone line.

peel District School Board

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ اردو ہندی العربية ڈیجرائی more

Staff login | BYOD login | A A A | f t v i | Search

About Us | Calendar | Schools | Continuing & Adult Education | Jobs | Media | Contact Us | Parents | Students | New to Peel | Trustees

About Us

- Empowering Modern Learners
 - BYOD - Bring Your Own Device
 - Use of Wi-Fi
- Accommodation Review
 - South of the 401
 - Caledon Elementary
- Annual Planning Document
- Annual Report
- Archives
- Britannia Farm Master Plan
- Broader Public Sector Documents
- Budget & Financial Statements
- Commitment to Accuracy
- Community Planning and Partnerships
- Director's Message
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- Plan for Student Success
 - French as a Second Language Goals
- Partnerships
 - Partnership Policy
 - Tip Sheets
- Peel Learning Foundation
- Purchasing
 - Bid Results
 - General Conditions
 - Staff Contacts
 - Terms & Conditions
- Rent School Space
 - Contact Us
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 - Frequently Asked Questions
 - Not For Profit Status
 - Outreach
- Research & Accountability
 - Student Census
- Safe & Caring Schools
 - Bullying Prevention

STUDENT CENSUS
Count Me In Peel

At the Peel District School Board, we are committed to providing the very best learning environments so that all students can achieve personal excellence. In order to do this, we must truly understand the needs of students and their families. To help us in this work, we launched our first *Student Census* in November 2018.

During Nov. 19 to 30, 2018, students in grades 4 to 12 were invited to complete the *Student Census* in class. The questionnaire took approximately one class period to complete, and included questions that asked students about themselves and their experiences in and outside of school. Parents/guardians of students in kindergarten to grade 3 received a questionnaire to fill out on behalf of their child(ren) in early November to be returned by Nov. 30, 2018.

The Peel board's Research department is currently processing and analyzing completed *Student Census* questionnaires to produce school and board-specific reports. The census findings will assist the board and our schools to:

- better understand student populations and school communities.
- identify and eliminate barriers to student success, inclusion and well-being.
- establish effective programs and reallocate resources to where they are needed most.

To view a copy of the *Student Census* and helpful resources, select your child's grade and your preferred language below.

Select a grade below:

English

K-3
4-6
7-12

Resources

Kindergarten to 3

English

Parent/Guardian Letter and FAQs

This letter was sent home with K-3 students during the week of Oct. 15.

Download

View a translated copy of this letter by selecting the preferred language in the above menu.

Student Census Questionnaire (K-3)

A copy of the K-3 Student Census Questionnaire was sent home in early November to fill out with your child(ren). The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. If you have multiple children in kindergarten to grade 3, you will be asked to fill out a separate questionnaire for each child.

Translated versions of the census are available by selecting your preferred language in the above menu.

Download

Frequently Asked Questions

Have questions about the *Student Census*? Check out our FAQs or contact the Peel board's Research and Accountability department at 905-890-1010 ext. 3523 or studentcensus@peelsb.com

View FAQ

Grades 4 to 6

English

Internal website for staff

All staff resources were shared on a dedicated *Student Census* website on the district's intranet. This page was designed for staff use only, and included additional resources that weren't available on the external webpage, such as adapted versions of the census and the Educator's Guide. It was promoted on the homepage of the intranet, and via the *Student Census* video teleconferences, training resources and email memos. The webpage had a similar design as the external site so that staff would be comfortable navigating both pages with families.

The screenshot shows the internal website for staff, titled "Student Census" under the Peel District School Board logo. The page features a navigation menu with "Home", "Departments", "Policies and OPs", "Forms", "Who's Who?", and "Help". A sidebar on the left contains "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)", "All Documents", "Department", "Calendar", and "Who's Who?". The main content area is titled "Student Census" and includes a logo with two overlapping speech bubbles and the text "STUDENT CENSUS Count Me In Peel". Below the logo, there is a commitment statement from the board, a description of the census process for Nov. 19 to 30, 2018, and a list of goals for the census findings. A section for selecting a grade below includes a dropdown menu set to "English" and buttons for "K-3", "4-6", and "7-12". A "Scroll for more" button is located on the right. The "Resources" section is highlighted in blue and contains four items for "Kindergarten to 3" in English: "Parent/Guardian Letter and FAQs", "Student Census Questionnaire (K-3)", "Educator's Guide (K-3)", and "Frequently Asked Questions". Each item has a "Download" or "View FAQ" button. A small blue arrow icon is visible in the bottom right corner.

peel District School Board

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

All Documents

Department

Calendar

Who's Who?

Student Census

STUDENT CENSUS

Count Me In Peel

At the Peel District School Board, we are committed to providing the very best learning environments so that all students can achieve personal excellence. In order to do this, we must truly understand the needs of students and their families. To help us in this work, we will launch our first *Student Census* in November.

During Nov. 19 to 30, 2018, students in grades 4 to 12 will be invited to complete the *Student Census* in class. The questionnaire will take approximately one class period to complete, and will include questions that ask students about themselves and their experiences in and outside of school. Parents/guardians of students in kindergarten to grade 3 will receive a questionnaire to fill out on behalf of their child(ren) in early November to be returned by Nov. 30, 2018.

The census findings will assist the board and our schools to:

- better understand student populations and school communities.
- identify and eliminate barriers to student success, inclusion and well-being.
- establish effective programs and reallocate resources to where they are needed most.

Select the appropriate grade below to view a copy of the *Student Census* as well as resources to support you at your school. You can also access translated versions of the questionnaire and parent consent letter by selecting the preferred language below.

If you have any questions regarding the *Student Census*, please contact the Research and Accountability department at 905-890-1010 ext. 3523 or studentcensus@peelsb.com.

Select a grade below:

English

K-3

4-6

7-12

Scroll for more

Resources

Kindergarten to 3

English

Parent/Guardian Letter and FAQs

This letter was sent home with K-3 students during the week of Oct. 15.

View a translated copy of this letter by selecting the preferred language in the above menu.

Download

Student Census Questionnaire (K-3)

In early November, each elementary school will receive a *Student Census* questionnaire for each K-3 student at the school. These questionnaires will be sorted by classroom with the child's name on it.

You can access translated versions of the census by selecting your preferred language in the above menu. If you know a child's family requires a translated copy, please print and send it home, along with the English version provided to your school.

Download

Educator's Guide (K-3)

This helpful guide provides all the information you need to know to successfully administer and send home the *Student Census* with your K-3 students.

Download

Frequently Asked Questions

Have questions about the *Student Census*? Check out our [FAQs](#) or contact the Peel board's Research and Accountability department at 905-890-1010 ext. 3523 or studentcensus@peelsb.com

View FAQ

News release

We distributed a news release to media and families prior to the launch of the *Student Census*. Using key messages, the release's primary purpose was to evade negative media coverage by clarifying any remaining concerns or questions about the upcoming census.



Media

Media Contacts

→ News Releases

Spotlight on Schools

November 6, 2018

Peel board builds connections with first board-wide Student Census

In November, the Peel District School Board will launch its first board-wide *Student Census* to gain a better understanding of Peel students to help improve school programming and instruction. Students in grades 4 to 12 will be invited to participate in class during *Student Census Weeks* (Nov. 19 to 30), while parents/guardians of students in kindergarten to grade 3 will receive a questionnaire to fill out on behalf of their child(ren).

"We are committed to providing the very best learning environments so that all students can achieve personal excellence. To do this, it's important that we truly understand the needs of students and their families," says Director of Education Peter Joshua. "The *Student Census* will provide invaluable insight on student experiences, identity and well-being to help us establish effective programs and reallocate resources to where they are needed most."

The *Student Census* questionnaire will take approximately one class period to complete for most students, and will include questions that ask students about themselves and their experiences in and outside of school. Families with students in kindergarten to grade 3 will receive a questionnaire to complete at home with their child(ren) in early November, to be returned by Nov. 30, 2018.

Questionnaires can be viewed at www.peelschools.org/studentcensus. Additional copies of the questionnaires are available in the board's top 20 languages as well as in adapted form for students with special education needs.

"Our goal is to hear from all students to paint a clearer picture of the communities we serve. The more *Student Census* responses we receive, the more comprehensive the data will be to help improve programming and instruction," says Poleen Grewal, associate director of instructional and equity support services. "By learning more about the identity demographics of students and their families, we can better understand, identify and eliminate barriers to student achievement, well-being and inclusion."

A letter was sent home in mid-October to all Peel families informing them of the upcoming *Student Census*. Families who do not want their child to participate are asked to return the tear-off form on the letter to their child's school.

The Peel board is committed to the highest levels of privacy and confidentiality in collecting information about students and follows all privacy requirements outlined in the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA). The *Student Census* is voluntary and confidential, but it is not anonymous. Completed questionnaires won't have the student's name or identification number on it, and will be sealed in an individual envelope to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the responses. Census questionnaires will be labelled with a unique code linked to each student. Once a student completes their census, their responses will be scanned and linked to previously collected data (e.g. attendance, report card grades, graduation rates). Once this scanning has taken place, responses will be de-personalized so that they are no longer tied to a student's name or identification number.

All scanned responses will be stored in a secure, confidential database and will only be accessed by authorized Peel board research staff to identify and summarize group trends among Peel students. This database will be de-personalized, so individual students cannot be identified. In 2019, a series of reports will be made available to help inform board and school decision-making for programs and instruction.

To learn more and view the *Student Census* questionnaires, visit www.peelschools.org/studentcensus. Parents/guardians may also email studentcensus@peelsb.com or call 905-890-1010 ext. 3523 if they have any questions.

Media contact: Poleen Grewal, Associate Director of Instructional and Equity Support Services, 905-890-1010 ext. 2232, poleen.grewal@peelsb.com

Reference: Kayla Tishcoff, Senior Communications Officer, 905-890-1010 ext. 2239, kayla.tishcoff@peelsb.com

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS: Evaluation

Social media engagement, #CountMEinPeel

Facebook: 24,000 views, 90 comments, 400 likes

Twitter: 9,496 views, 535 retweets, 500 likes

Instagram: 3,103 views, 250 likes

School social media accounts: Buy-in at the school level was evident by the many tweets and posts on Twitter and Facebook sharing key messages about the *Student Census*. Below is a sample of the engagement by school social media accounts.

The collage features seven social media posts:

- Janet I. McDougald P.S. (@jmcDougaldps):** A text post asking parents to return Student Census forms to their child's teacher by Nov 22. Includes a graphic for the Student Census.
- Peel District School Board (@PeelSchools):** A graphic with two overlapping speech bubbles and the text "STUDENT CENSUS Count Me In Peel".
- Plowman's Park P.S. (@PlowmansPS2016):** A text post about the census on Nov 26 for grades 4-6, accompanied by a photo of students.
- Judith Nyman S.S. (@JudithNymanSS):** A text post about the census for VOC 2 students at JNSS from Nov 19-30.
- Humberview S.S. (@HumberviewSS):** A text post explaining the census consists of 30 questions about student identity and well-being, with a link to the website.
- EdenwoodMiddleSchool (@EdenwoodMS):** A text post for grades 7 and 8, including a link to the website and a large yellow smiley face with "COUNT ME IN!" written below it.
- Miller's Grove PS (@MillersGrovePS):** A text post stating that K-3 questionnaires are due back on Nov 30 to help improve programming.

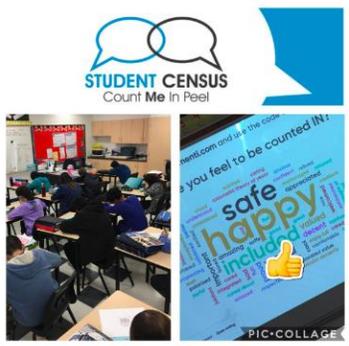
Staff social media accounts: Staff also shared key messages to help raise awareness of the upcoming *Student Census* in their school communities.

The collage features five social media posts from staff:

- suefried (@suefried):** A text post for grade 9-12 students participating on Nov 19th, with a link to the website.
- Nica (@NicaAga):** A text post for FairlawnPSPDSB families to return questionnaires by Nov 30th.
- Meena Grewal Retweeted Ms. J. Allen (@JAllenite):** A text post reminding parents to return their child's census form by Nov 30th.
- Angelo Kontos (@AngeloKontos):** A text post for Attn Chargers participating on Wednesday, Nov 21, with a link to the website.
- Camilla Persaud liked Wonder with Us! (@ThornKs107):** A text post asking parents to check their child's backpack for the census form and return it by Nov 30th.

Support on social media: During the *Student Census*, community parents, staff and parents shared their support of the project on social media.

Mr. F @GFerrinPDSB
 After the #studentcensus today, I used @Mentimeter to do a #thinkpairshare about how @woodlandsrams students felt to be counted in. They appreciated being included and having their voices & opinions heard! @PeelSchools @MrJRobertson @kerry_everitt @carolcoyle19 #CountMEinPeel



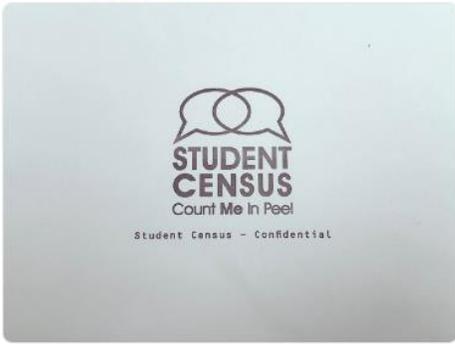
3:41 PM · 22 Nov 2018
 2 Retweets 16 Likes

Ms.Badovinac @BadovinacL
 Kids say it right...when completing the @PeelSchools census today with some fifth graders..."I get why we are doing this, it's so we have the information to take care of each other." #kidsarethebest @castleoaksp



9:41 AM · 21 Nov 2018
 8 Retweets 48 Likes

Ms Toor @misstoor_
 The @PeelSchools Student Census allowed my grade 6 Ss the opportunity to express themselves and feel included in the Peel community. A rich and inclusive discussion followed the completion of the census to debrief. #CountMeInPeel



4:42 PM · 28 Nov 2018
 2 Retweets 10 Likes

Eugene Uyeda @EugeneUyeda · 3h
 First order of business for 7A - complete the Student Census! @MountainashPS



1 Retweet 1 Like

Antonella Kalaitzis @a_kalaitzis · 29 Oct 2018
 Looking forward to this opportunity for our @PeelSchools. The data will help us further understand & support the needs of the Ss & communities we serve. #CountMeInPeel @ClimatePeel @PeelEquity

Peel District School Board @PeelSchools
 In November, we will launch our first board-wide Student Census—a way for us to better understand the needs of Peel students & their families....
 Show this thread

1 Like

Muslim Council of Peel @mcpeel4u · Nov 18
 #CountMEinPeel > 1 Q will relate to #bullying. Parents should take time to discuss various forms of bullying. It is not always physical. Hurtful comments or subtle forms of exclusion based on ethnicity or religion = BULLYING. #inclusion #peel #equity @skcentre @ISNA_Canada

1 Retweet 1 Like

Muslim Council of Peel @mcpeel4u · Nov 18
 PEEL STUDENT CENSUS > 1Q will ask students about their #Faith. It is important that they identify as Muslim when asked. The Board is gathering a snapshot of how many students it services from various backgrounds. This data will help support inclusion initiatives. #CountMEinPeel

1 Retweet 1 Like

Staff and Steering Committee survey results

School administrators and Steering Committee members were invited to participate in a de-brief survey following the *Student Census* launch. Find a full report of the findings [here](#). The following are some of the comments made by staff:

"The census was concise and took little time for completion."

"It gave students the chance to be heard."

"Everyone who participated demonstrated accountability and responsibility to complete the survey."

"Positive reception to the idea from staff and students."

"No calls, no difficulties expressed through staff at schools."

"Easy to locate materials and resources."

"The opting out consent worked to ensure that most students were given the census which means the data will be more fulsome."

"We appreciated the central meeting (via phone)."

"Great tool to service our community."

"It was delivered to use in a very organized manner; process was smooth."

"Teleconference really helped set the tone and get the system on the same page."

"The presentation shared helped ensure the whole system got the same message."

"The Educator's Guide was well laid out, with simple, easy to implement instructions."

"The guide provided consistency of implementation procedures across our school."

"Very smoothly in the junior/intermediate grades, teachers followed the guide as directed."

"The availability and quick reference to resources was excellent."

Positive media coverage

Toronto Star: [New head of Peel school board vows to support marginalized students](#)

Education News Canada: [Peel board builds connections with first student census](#)

Toronto Star: [Peel school board launches plan to support black male students](#)

Mississauga News: [Student census coming to Peel board, data on race, sexual orientation could be collected](#)

Toronto Star: [Peel school board plans to collect race-based data on students](#)

Toronto Star: [Schools must collect more race-based data on students, report urges](#)