

TO: The Chairperson and Members of the
Program Standing Committee

FROM: Associate Director / Superintendent of Student Achievement (7-12)

SUBJECT: **2020-2021 SIMCOE COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD STUDENT
CENSUS COMPOSITIONAL REPORT**

1. **Background**

This report links directly to the [Simcoe County District School Board's Strategic Priorities](#) under the pillars of Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Well-being, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and Community.

As defined in the [Anti-Racism Act, 2017](#) (ARA) public service organizations, which include Ontario school boards, are required and authorized to collect personal information related to programs, services and functions. This includes the collection of personal information related to Indigenous identity, race, religion, ethnic origin, and other demographic data. The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) fulfilled its obligations under the ARA to collect voluntary, demographic, and identity-based data through its 2020-2021 SCDSB Student Census (the census). The purpose of the census is to enhance the SCDSB's capacity to understand areas of strength and need for our student population. Additionally, the census focuses on the following:

- i. intentional efforts to identify and remove barriers within our system that impact equity, achievement, and well-being of students; and,
- ii. intentional efforts to ensure that all students are offered supportive, inclusive and respectful learning environments.

The SCDSB is required to follow the [Ontario Data Standards](#), which establish consistent, effective practices for the proper collection, use, disclosure, de-identification and management of the personal information collected. In addition to fulfilling the obligations under the ARA, the Ontario Data Standards also outline the requirements for protection of privacy, data security and reporting processes. Collecting personal information about race and ethnicity is important and necessary work within all Ontario school boards.

2. **Overall Results**

In April 2021, 51 percent (or 26,978 students) participated in the census. Fifty-two percent of students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 had a parent/guardian participate in the census on their behalf, while 50 percent of students in Grades 7-12 participated in the census themselves.

Please note, some results below will not add up to 100 percent if the type of census question was multiple select (i.e. participants were able to select more than one response option).

Key findings from the census include:

- i. Fifty percent of students selected female as part of their gender identity and 49 percent selected male. Two percent selected a gender diverse identity.
- ii. Students in Grades 7-12 identified their sexual orientation as heterosexual/straight (78 percent), LGBTQ+ (23 percent) and/or another sexual orientation not listed (less than one percent).

- iii. Five percent of students identified as Indigenous and of these participants 59 percent were First Nations, 40 percent Métis and three percent Inuit.
- iv. The racial backgrounds identified by students included: Black (five percent); East/Southeast Asian (five percent); Indigenous (four percent); South Asian (five percent); and, White (84 percent). Latino, Middle Eastern and additional racial backgrounds were each identified by less than two percent of students.
- v. The top five ethnic or cultural origins identified by students included: Canadian (75 percent); English (21 percent); Irish (13 percent); Scottish (12 percent); and, German (seven percent).
- vi. The top five languages students speak at home included: English (96 percent); French (five percent); Spanish (two percent); Russian (two percent); and, Urdu (one percent).
- vii. Fifty-nine percent of students reported they do not have a religious or spiritual affiliation. Thirty-three percent identified as Christian, four percent as Muslim, two percent as Hindu and one percent as Jewish.
- viii. Twenty-three percent considered themselves (or their child) to be a person with a disability or condition. The top three disabilities or conditions identified by these participants included: Mental Health (45 percent); Learning (38 percent); and, Developmental (18 percent).

3. Action

In collaboration with the SCDSB's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion team, Research and Decision Support Services will continue to explore and analyze the data from the census. Once the data has been fully analyzed, the results will be used to guide the board's focus on programs, supports, and resources that support equitable outcomes for all students. Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, reports will be released related to particular themes from the census.

4. Report Status

This report is provided for information.

Respectfully submitted by:

Dawn Stephens
Associate Director / Superintendent of Student Achievement (7-12)