

# The Grove Community School



## 2020 Application Package

We are delighted that you have decided to apply to our school.

*Your family is welcome here!*

The application for our school includes the following 3 documents:

1. The Grove Community School **Parent/Guardian Questionnaire**
2. The Toronto District School Board **Student Registration Form**
3. The Toronto District School Board **Optional Attendance Form**  
[Important note: The principal at your home school must sign this form. Find your home school here:  
<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Findyour/School/Byaddress.aspx>]

These documents can also be downloaded from our website:

<http://thegrovecommunityschool.ca/>

All three documents must be completed to apply to our school. It is your responsibility to deliver the application to the school and to make sure all three documents are complete (including signatures). If an application is incomplete or if it is returned after our deadline, it will not be entered into our lottery.

The application deadline for our 2020 admissions lottery is at **4pm on Friday February 14<sup>th</sup>**.

We will begin taking applications on Thursday January 30<sup>th</sup>.

Please bring your complete application to our main office, located on the first floor next to the building entrance at 108 Gladstone Avenue.

You will be notified by March 6<sup>th</sup> if your child has a spot at The Grove. Children who do not have a spot will be placed on the wait list and families will be contacted should a spot become available.

Questions about our application process can be directed to our Office Administrator, Sharon Nodello, at 416-393-9150 (mornings only).

Questions about parent council can be directed to our Parent Council Executive at [executive@thegrovecommunityschool.ca](mailto:executive@thegrovecommunityschool.ca).

Thank you,  
The Grove Community School Parent Council

# **The Grove Community School**

## **2020 Open House Package**



Please read the following information to learn if our school is the right choice for your family.

### **Who we are**

The Grove Community School is a public alternative elementary school of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), with students from Junior Kindergarten (JK) to Grade 6. We are a community of students, parents and teachers working together to support the core values of our school (our “three pillars”):

- Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice
- Ecological Sustainability and Environmental Justice
- Community Engagement and Activism

The Grove’s full-day JK program is popular, as with all optional attendance schools, entrance is by lottery.

Families of all compositions and backgrounds are welcome at our school!

Our teachers have worked hard to incorporate an Indigenous perspective throughout the curriculum, and create new lesson plans around our core values (e.g., "Gender Splendour" week). Our school has a gender-free washroom. Teachers have worked with parents, caregivers and community members to develop Black History Month programming inspired by Black Lives Matter TO and the Freedom School.

We acknowledge that we do better in some areas than others, that our (un)learning is continuous, and that the work we need to do is always evolving.

### **What this means for students**

As a community of teachers and parents, we try to raise awareness of social justice and injustice by learning from the people most affected by oppressive systems in our society.

Students are encouraged to see how their individual experiences often mirror those in the larger world and how they can learn to have agency to make positive change. At The Grove, the whole community is our classroom. Learning can come from the experiences of students and teachers (as well as families and other community members) when combined with meaningful dialogue. This helps our school community recognize and critically engage with all forms of social injustice, and to learn and work together towards building a more equitable community and larger social change.

## **Is this school right for your family?**

As a community, we question the world we live in and encourage our students to do the same. Together, we try to think of ways in which we can contribute to making this world better. Part of our commitment to social justice is the recognition and reflection of the ways in which oppression, privilege, and opportunities are in our own lives, and the lives of those around us.

Parents are an integral part of the process of building our community collectively. We acknowledge that we as a community are continuously learning and part of that process is failing and making mistakes. We commit to learning together as a community of parents, students, teachers and administrators.

Some examples of issues we care about and work towards examining as a community are:

- We recognise that our country is founded on colonialist policies and those of us who are non-Indigenous settlers on this land are complicit in, and have benefited from, historical and contemporary systems of oppression
- We believe that Black Lives Matter
- We celebrate gender diversity and work to create safe spaces for LGBTQ2+ students and families
- We challenge ourselves to think about the impact of our actions on the natural world and how that connects to a sustainable environment and society
- We possess full agency to do good and effect positive change
- We are open to examining the words that we use and their impact on others. We work hard to change our language so that it is inclusive, reflective and current.

## **Our core values in action:**

Every year we have numerous examples of our core values in action. These examples often occur during the school day and are jointly led by teachers and parents. Many of these examples/activities would not happen without dedicated parent volunteers.

Here are some examples of how our school curriculum has been enriched with our three pillars:

### **Ecological Sustainability and Environmental Justice --**

- ✓ We are a Platinum status Eco School (<https://www.ontarioecoschools.org/>)
- ✓ The Wildflower Stomp connects JK/SK Grove and Alexander Muir/Gladstone students to their school and the natural world

- ✓ Students can join in our yearly food garden projects through our garden club
- ✓ Students participated in the Yellowfish Road program to enhance awareness of water issues in the local neighbourhood
- ✓ Students are participating in a school-year long study of water across the country
- ✓ Students have had environmental education field trips to High Park Nature Centre, Humber Valley (and many more!)
- ✓ The Earth Festival is a 1-day celebration of eco-stewardship that brings our entire community together as students work on curriculum-related themes in multi-aged groupings
- ✓ Seeds of Change is a rotary class exploring ecological sustainability and environmental justice through inquiry and experiential learning

### **Community Engagement and Activism -**

- ✓ Our daily Welcome Circle invites families to participate in school activities and is a symbol of our commitment to community building and an opportunity for collaboration
- ✓ Grove gatherings and special events use multi-age groupings to promote community
- ✓ Weekly Community Unity meetings with multi-aged groupings
- ✓ Students used a letter-writing campaign to advocate for clean drinking water in Grassy Narrows First Nation
- ✓ Students prepared welcome cards for refugee families that were delivered to Parliament Hill by a Grove student representative
- ✓ After a week of workshops by Leslie McCue, artist and educator from Curve Lake First Nation, students, teachers and parents from The Grove and Alexander Muir/Gladstone participated in a 500-person round dance for National Indigenous Peoples Day
- ✓ We are working towards restorative practices in the classroom and in our weekly community unity meetings

### **Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice -**

- ✓ Our school year begins with a Peace Week devoted to a variety of activities, projects and presentations exploring issues of conflict resolution and social justice
- ✓ A school-wide honouring of residential school survivors takes place on Orange Shirt Day
- ✓ We celebrate Black culture and achievements inspired by the Black Lives Matter - Toronto Freedom School throughout Black Liberation Month
- ✓ We examine and challenge gender stereotypes and their link to homophobia and oppression using age appropriate games/texts/activities during our Gender Splendour week (learn more here: <http://thegrovecommunityschool.ca/gender-splendour/>)

- ✓ Our teachers use Anti-bias curriculum to challenge discrimination and oppression, including anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-Asian racism, homophobia, transphobia, and the discrimination faced by students with physical and intellectual disabilities

### **Examples of other events/programs at The Grove:**

- Clubs offered during lunch and before/after school: Rainbow Club, Newspaper, LEGO Robotics, Choir, Soccer, Gardening, Chess, Track & Field, Eco Club, Art Club, Knitting, (the list goes on and changes every year depending on parent and teacher skills and volunteer capacity – new families are welcome to suggest and volunteer to run new clubs!)
- Afternoon snack program: We partner with Foodshare and Ontario Natural Food Company to deliver a low allergen whole food healthy snack every afternoon, subsidized through parent contributions and grants, and balanced according to our dietician.
- Holiday concert: We celebrate the winter holidays in all their diversity.
- Skating party: After our skate exchange, parents and caregivers are welcome to join us for community skating for all grades and abilities at our neighborhood rink.

## **Open House: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is an ‘alternative school’?**

‘Alternative Schools’ in the TDSB are free public schools that offer something different from mainstream schooling. Each school has a distinct identity and approach to curriculum delivery. All alternative schools have their own unique mandate, which students and families are expected to support. The Grove, like most alternative schools, is a fairly small school of 130 students. Most alternative schools feature small student populations, a commitment to innovative and experimental programs, and depend on families to help fulfill their mandates.

### **Do children still learn what they would in a regular (non-alternative) TDSB school?**

Yes. Our teachers deliver Ontario Core Curriculum and students are encouraged (and expected) to meet curriculum requirements. Our teachers are continuously working to weave the three pillars of social justice, environmental sustainability, and community activism into the curriculum, and shape the direction of the school. This work cannot be done without parent volunteers.

### **What is expected of Grove parents?**

Parent involvement is key to the success of our school (and our goal as a “community” school). Families will be called on often! This work we do as a community can be challenging. It involves a commitment of time, a willingness to work together, and personal reflections on our historical and individual privileges, but it is also very rewarding. Parents work with teachers and administration, and

with the larger community to support our three pillars of social justice, environmental sustainability, and community activism.

There are many different ways that parents support our school, both during and outside of regular school hours. We are committed to working with new families to help identify ways they can contribute to the school without impacting their work and family commitments.

### **Why do I have to fill in the parent/guardian questionnaire?**

This form is to help prospective families clarify FOR THEMSELVES whether the school will be a good fit. It will not be reviewed prior to the lottery, and does not determine who is entered into the lottery. There are no wrong answers. After you have accepted a spot at The Grove for your child, the information that you provide in this questionnaire will be shared with our Parent Council so they can help identify ways that your family may contribute to The Grove community.

### **Is there extended care (before & after school)?**

Yes, we have three programs: (i) YMCA operates on the main floor and provides before and aftercare for children in junior kindergarten through Grade 6, (ii) Boys and Girls Club operates on the main floor and provides aftercare for children in Grade 1 through Grade 6, and (iii) Mary McCormick Recreation Centre provides offsite aftercare for children in Grade 1 through Grade 6.

### **My child is a child of colour, is The Grove as diverse as regular public schools?**

Like other optional attendance schools and alternative elementary schools in the TDSB, The Grove does not have the same diversity of racialized students that regular public schools have. We are attempting to change this by improving the culture within the school and also by participating in an equity admissions pilot project that began in 2019. We know we have work to do on this front as a school community.

### **What if I want to send my child to French Immersion in SK?**

We understand that some students may leave our school to attend French Immersion in senior kindergarten, but please consider that admission is by lottery and there are always many children on our wait list. If you are fully committed to sending your child to French Immersion, please consider that if your child takes a spot at The Grove, then leaves after one year, another child who does not get in for JK may not have another opportunity. It can also be a challenge for families who plan to stay only one year to feel they are able to engage meaningfully in the type of community building that the school strives for.

### **What if my child has special needs and/or needs extra support in the classroom?**

All learners are welcome to The Grove. Teachers will make the best possible efforts to modify and accommodate for students that require extra support in order to access the curriculum. However, The Grove has only one half-time resource (special education) teacher that supports all of the students who have Individual Education Plans (IEPs). There is a school team process that takes place in order for students to

qualify and be offered support through the resource program. If you have specific questions around your child's learning needs then please contact our Vice-Principal Catherine Munro (catherine.munro@tdsb.on.ca) to answer any specific questions that you may have.

**What if I (or my child) has accessibility issues?**

The Grove Community School is not an accessible school for those with mobility issues. Alternative elementary schools in Toronto have no say over where the TDSB places them, and The Grove is located on the third floor of our host school, Alexander Muir/Gladstone, with one door at ground level and all other doors with multiple steps. The school was originally built in 1888, with renovations/additions in 1925, 1954 and the most recent in 1961, and like many schools in the TDSB, the building has a long-standing and overdue list of renovations for which we continue to advocate.

**What if my child is not “toilet trained”?**

As in all TDSB schools, Kindergarten students are expected to go to the washroom independently. There is a washroom in the larger of our two kindergarten classrooms. Teachers do not wipe bums. If a child has an accident, they can be assisted to change into their extra clothes kept in their cubbies.

**How do applications work for twins?**

If parents choose to have twins attend together and only together, they submit ONE application that counts for both twins. This must be made clear on the application form. Should that application be drawn, two pupil placements in the class will be taken. If parents choose to have twins apply as separate students, regular lottery rules apply. If in the case of the latter choice, one twin is chosen, the other twin is not automatically granted acceptance by virtue of being a sibling.

**Is my child likely to get in, given that there is always a lottery?**

Historically, there is a good chance of getting in, even if you are fairly far down on the waitlist. We sometimes have spaces open later in the summer, or after the start of the school year.



## The Grove Community School - Parent/Guardian Questionnaire

This questionnaire is intended to help prospective families clarify for themselves if our school will be a good fit for their family. This questionnaire does not determine who is entered into the lottery, and there are no wrong answers. After you have accepted a spot at The Grove for your child, the information that you provide in this questionnaire will be shared with our Parent Council so they can help identify ways that your family may contribute to the Grove community.

One of the ways our school and community is unique is the high level of parent involvement. We expect that new parents will commit to spending time each month volunteering at the school. Please don't let this dissuade you from applying as we always work with parents to find ways for them to help out the school without it unduly impacting work and/or family commitments. With your help, we can make a difference!

1. What is your child's full name? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please tell us why you feel that The Grove is a good fit for your child:

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3. Please share how you might volunteer your time as a community member:

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4. How did you hear about The Grove? \_\_\_\_\_

*Please confirm:*

- I/we have read The Grove Community School Open House Package.
- I/we support and agree to help uphold The Grove Community School's core values of: **(i) Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice, (ii) Ecological Sustainability and Environmental Justice, and (iii) Community Engagement and Activism.**

Parent/Guardian 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name (please print) Signature Date

Parent/Guardian 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
(if applicable) Name (please print) Signature Date

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**The Grove Community School - Equity Admissions Pilot Program**

*\*Please note: this section is entirely optional\**

The Grove Community School encourages applications from families that represent the full diversity of communities in Toronto. Many alternative elementary schools in Toronto are not proportionally representative of the diverse student population that exists in our city. In an effort to make our school more reflective of the Toronto population, and to honour our commitment to diversity, we are participating in a pilot Equity Admissions process.

If you feel comfortable, please check all the boxes below that apply to your child.

*Please let us know if your child identifies as:*

- Racialized / a child of colour:  
please specify:      \_\_\_ Black      \_\_\_ Latino      \_\_\_ South Asian  
                             \_\_\_ Middle Eastern      \_\_\_ East/Southeast Asian  
                             \_\_\_ Mixed Race (please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)

- Indigenous:  
please specify:      \_\_\_ First Nations      \_\_\_ Métis      \_\_\_ Inuit

- Gender independent

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*Thank you!*



# Optional Attendance Form

Application for an **Elementary** program at a school outside the resident area

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Name of Requested School:</b> <input type="text"/>  <b>Home or Sending School:</b> <input type="text"/>	Requested Start Date: _____
	For Grade : _____
	Does a sibling presently attend the requested school?    Yes / No  <b>If Yes:</b> Name of Sibling _____

**Parents please note: Transportation is not provided for Optional Attendance students**

### Applicant's Information:

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Given Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ (DD/MM/YY)

Student's Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Present Grade/Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Student School I.D. Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the applicant under **Optional Attendance** at the present school? Yes / No

### Parent/Guardian Information:

Parent/Guardian's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's e-mail address (Print Clearly): \_\_\_\_\_

### Child Care Information:

Will the child be attending Day Care?     Yes     No

Name of Day Care: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone of Day Care: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Day Care: \_\_\_\_\_

### Schools and Programs Applied for under Optional Attendance:

Specialized Programs/ Schools	Regular Programs/ Schools
1.	1.
2.	2.

Conditions on the reverse of this form have been read and agreed to:

Parent/Guardian **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Current School Principal (or Designate) **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

### For Office Use Only:

Requested School's Decision:     Accepted     Not Accepted

Signature of Requested School Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Distribution:	1 copy: To Parent/Guardian when decision is made 1 copy: To TDSB Home or Sending School
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**Please Note the  
Following:**

- 1) Priority of placement in the requested school will be based on a lottery if applications exceed the space available at the requested school.
- 2) If admitted, a student is expected to continue at the requested school until graduation.
- 3) To return to the home school by address:
  - a) Regular Programs: Student must apply through Optional Attendance to return to the home school.
  - b) Specialized Programs: If the Specialized program does not meet the student's needs, the student is free to return to their home school at an appropriate intake opportunity without reapplying through the Optional Attendance process
  - c) Alternative Schools: If the Alternative school does not meet the student's needs, the student is free to return to their home school at an appropriate intake opportunity without reapplying through the Optional Attendance process.

**IMPORTANT DATES FOR SCHOOL ADMISSION BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 2020**

- (a) Optional Attendance forms will be made available on the first Monday of November. Applications may be submitted to the school following release of the Optional Attendance forms, but no offers of admission can be made prior to February 17, 2020. Any offers of admission before February 17, 2020 will be considered null and void.
- (b) Applications must be received by **Friday, February 14, 2020.**
- (c) A lottery, if necessary, will be held **to determine the successful applicants.**
- (d) Parents/guardians will be informed of acceptance or non-acceptance **no later than March 6, 2020.**
- (e) Parents/guardians must inform the requested school of their acceptance of the offer by **Friday, March 20, 2020.**

**Note:** It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to deliver this application to the school or schools of choice.

**Notice of Collection**

The Toronto District School Board (the "TDSB") collects, uses, retains, and shares personal information for the purposes of planning, administering, and delivering its educational programs and services. The purpose of this collection is to provide the information needed to offer admission to students applying from outside the assigned attendance catchment area should pupil spaces be available in the school. The collection, use and disclosure of personal information for these purposes are expressly authorized under the authority of sections 36(1), 39(1), 49(4)(5) and 58(5) of the *Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.E.2. as amended and its regulations*. The information is retained in accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M. 56*. This information will be shared with the school administrator, office assistants, school Superintendent of Education, School Council chair(s) and local Trustee in order to administer the above noted purposes. Questions about this collection should be directed to the school principal.



# STUDENT REGISTRATION FORM

(PLEASE PRINT)

## STUDENT INFORMATION

Legal Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred Surname: \_\_\_\_\_  
Legal Middle Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred First Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Legal First Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gender: Male  Female  Date of Birth (yyyy/mm/dd): \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Legal Name as shown on legal document (i.e. birth certificate, passport, change of name order, etc.) and will appear on all school Official Records

## STUDENT ADDRESS INFORMATION

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number Street Apt/Unit/Suite Number  
City/Town Province Postal Code  
Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Listed: Yes  No

## STUDENT LANGUAGE, CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION INFORMATION

Country of Citizenship: \_\_\_\_\_ Province of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(If born in Canada)*

Languages Spoken *(indicate all languages including English)*

1) \_\_\_\_\_ First Language  Spoken at Home   
2) \_\_\_\_\_ First Language  Spoken at Home

**Fill in the section below ONLY if country of birth is something other than Canada**

Birth Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Country of Last Residence: \_\_\_\_\_  
Status is Canada: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Arrived in Canada: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Name of Previous School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Previous School Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/Town Province  
Previous School Board: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last Date of Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_ Reason for Transfer: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Has the student ever been registered at a school within the Toronto District School Board?** Yes  No   
If **Yes**, provide the name of the school: \_\_\_\_\_ Last grade attended: \_\_\_\_\_  
Has the student previously received Special Education Support? Yes  No   
Type of program *(if known)*: \_\_\_\_\_



**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION** (if parent/guardian cannot be reached)

**CONTACT 1**

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Male  Female

Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency priority: 1 2 3 4 School Closure priority: 1 2 3 4  
circle your choice: 1=high priority, 4=low priority

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACT 2**

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Male  Female

Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency priority: 1 2 3 4 School Closure priority: 1 2 3 4  
circle your choice: 1=high priority, 4=low priority

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**INDIGENOUS STUDENT SELF-IDENTIFICATION**

All parents/guardians of Indigenous students, and students where they are 18 years of age or older, have the right to voluntarily self-identify. **Please check the most appropriate single box to indicate Indigenous Identity (if applicable).**

First Nation Ancestry (Status or non-Status)  Indigenous person outside of Canada   
Métis Ancestry  Inuit Ancestry  Other

**ADDITIONAL STUDENT INFORMATION** (if required for school)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

All information provided above is correct and true. All admissions are conditional pending receipt of required documentation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian \_\_\_\_\_  
yyyy/mm/dd

Personal information on this form is collected under the authority of the *Education Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.E.2 and the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O., 1990, c.M.56, and will be used by School Administration in the creation of the Emergency Calling Network and for school registration purposes. The Ontario Health Card number will be shared with local public health authorities. All personal information collected on this form will be stored on the Office Index Card. This information is updated annually. Questions or concerns about this collection should be directed to the Privacy Office, Toronto District School Board, 1 Civic Center Court, 4th Floor, Etobicoke Ontario, M9C 2B3 or (416)394-2344.

\*Email address will be used to provide information such as student progress and information nights and information from Board officials or the Board of Trustees that relate to the education of students or operation of schools.  
\*\*Email address will also be used to provide information of a commercial nature. Canada's new Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) took effect on July 1, 2014. CASL prohibits the sending of any type of electronic message that is commercial in nature unless the recipient has provided consent first. As a result, Toronto District School Board requires your consent to send you emails which contain advertising or promotions regarding school fundraisers, lunch programs, field trips, the sale of yearbooks, purchasing of student photos, books, prom or dance tickets, athletic events with an entry fee or similar events and offers.