



NORTHERN SECONDARY SCHOOL

• *The Pride* • *The Spirit*

851 MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD • TORONTO, ONTARIO M4P 2L5 • TELEPHONE: 416-393-0284
Principal: Adam Marshall FAX: 416-393-0294

August 31, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

We hope this letter finds you safe and well. As we approach the start of the new school year, we are working hard to ensure that Northern Secondary School has robust health and safety processes in place to create a learning environment that is safe and welcoming for all students, staff and families. Students, we are excited to welcome you back into our classrooms and we are looking forward to a year of engaging and meaningful teaching and learning together.

In advance of the return to school, we also want to share some information about an important issue that has emerged in our community. As you may know, part of the City of Toronto's response to the COVID-19 pandemic included establishing temporary shelters to support physical distancing between shelter beds. Two temporary shelters were created in midtown near our school — Roehampton Residence at 808 Mount Pleasant Avenue and 55/65 Broadway Avenue. The interim shelter at 55/65 Broadway Avenue was closed by the City of Toronto on August 28, 2020. The Roehampton Residence building has been leased by the City for two years, with the possibility to extend for a third year.

As a school community, we recognize the importance of creating emergency shelter space to protect vulnerable people and to help stop the spread of COVID-19. We are also committed to ensuring that Northern Secondary School is a safe and secure place for students, staff and families.

Over the summer, concerns have been raised about a number of issues that impact the safety and well-being of those in our school community. Some of the primary concerns include: drug use and paraphernalia on school property, loitering, sleeping on school property in doorways and in tents, public urination and defecation, and safe routes along the street to school.

In order to address these concerns, the City of Toronto is developing tailored School Safety Plans for Northern Secondary School and other affected schools in our community. In order to ensure this plan meets the needs of students and families, our school administration team, Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin, our School Council Chairs Tania Osmond and Rita Czarnecki and TDSB Superintendent of Education John Chasty are actively involved in ongoing discussions with City staff – as part of the Steering Committee established in August by the City of Toronto – to express our concerns and to problem solve and find solutions together. For more information please visit the City's [Community Engagement for Roehampton Residence & Broadway Residences](#) webpage, which has background information, a recording of the initial community meeting, as well as Community Bulletin Updates with current information about these programs. The City of Toronto Safety Plans are currently in development and will be completed next week. Once they have been finalized, following review by the TDSB Trustees, TDSB staff and our School Council, we will share this information with you.

Within our school, we also continue to follow established and enhanced safety and security measures. These include conducting a full sweep of school grounds each morning by our Caretaking staff, locking all entry doors during the school day (there will be three access doors for students each morning until class begins), additional security cameras are currently being installed at the

school, and constant monitoring and adjusting to changes in the neighbourhood. We will have an action plan with our three hall monitors, staff, and administration team to manage scenarios as they arise. Finally, we will work to educate and inform students and families on measures they can take to minimize risk when not on school property.

In addition, an important step we can all take is to report any concerning behaviours or issues that occur on and around school property. Here is a list of important contacts:

- **Police:** Emergency 911, Non-Emergency 416-808-2222
- **Roehampton Shelter:** Non-Emergency 437-247-2287

We value your continued partnership and collaboration in keeping our school community safe and we welcome your thoughts, ideas and concerns. As always, if you have any questions please contact us at (416) 393-0284.

Sincerely,

Adam Marshall- Principal