

City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2
February 22, 2021

Purpose: Letter of Support for “Art Connects Us. Poems Delight.”

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you to encourage your participation, and that of your TDSB school, in a unique public art project in which your students’ artwork and poetry will become part of a larger digital art projection upon the exterior of your school building.

Although the launch of [ArtworxTO: Toronto’s Year of Public Art](#) has been delayed until September 2021 by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are striving to embrace and deploy public artwork in the meantime, and forging ahead in our efforts to encourage a sense of community when we need it the most.

We are supporting a far-reaching digital project anchored in schools and children called “**Art Connects Us. Poems Delight.**” This project is designed by the principal of CaST School, with intended outreach to, and inclusion of, TDSB principals and K12 schools across Toronto. The plan is to solicit [creatively and artfully designed plague masks](#) made by schoolchildren that, once completed, will be photographed and digitally projected onto the sides of participating schools across the city, potentially including yours.

While this project is voluntary for those schools who wish to participate, and would require immediate connections between “Art Connects Us” staff and your English and art teachers, we encourage you to be in contact with CaST School in order to have your students and their art and poetry involved in the project. Should you decide to participate, you can write directly to CaST’s principal, Dr. Kelvin Sealey, at kelvinsealey@castschool.org. You can then discuss with him how to involve your students, English and art teachers in this project. Some funding will be available for student art materials.

Your participation will have at least three potential benefits. The first would be including your students in public art-making, strengthening their connection both to their city and to art. It would also connect students across the city in a single beneficial event, something that does not often happen across the entire citywide K12 continuum. Third, there is no doubt that pleasure will be gained by teachers, students and their families once student art and poetry appear projected upon the sides of school buildings across the city, surely cultivating a sense of ownership, pride and belonging. That these feelings will be shared by Torontonians across the entire city only multiplies the sense of community that is this project’s objective, one that will be particularly welcome during these hopeful days of vaccination and re-emergence from COVID-19 hibernation.

This program will be in association with the City of Toronto's ShowLoveTO, a campaign designed to bring joy to residents along with supporting local businesses and artists, and encouraging the exploration of local city neighbourhoods. [BigArtTO](#), part of ShowLoveTO, produces city-wide art activations using projection mapping and animation. The “**Art Connects Us. Poems Delight**” project speaks to the values of the City of Toronto's 10-Year Public Art

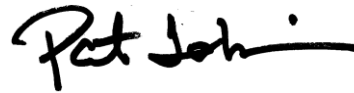
Strategy, and will be promoted through the noted BigArtTO, ShowLoveTO, and CultureTO channels.

So please do consider reaching out to Dr. Sealey and suggesting that your teachers and students participate in **“Art Connects Us. Poems Delight.”** The City of Toronto will be a better place for your participation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Thompson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Michael Thompson
Deputy Mayor
City of Toronto

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Tobin". The signature is cursive and includes a small dot above the 'i'.

Pat Tobin
Director, Arts and Culture Services
City of Toronto