

January 25, 2024

**TORONTO YOUTH CABINET (TYC), TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD (TDSB) AND
TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD (TCDSB) JOINT STATEMENT
ADVOCATING FOR A YOUTH - FRIENDLY CITY BUDGET**

To: Her Worship Olivia Chow, Mayor of Toronto, and Toronto City Council,

The 2024 Toronto budget presents a pivotal opportunity to prioritize Toronto youth.

With escalating youth unemployment and increasing youth violence, the demand for robust youth programs and community support in Toronto, particularly in underserved areas such as Scarborough and north Etobicoke, has never been more critical. Our city's young people deserve to thrive in environments rich with opportunities, not beset by poverty and violence.

On behalf of the Toronto Youth Cabinet and the approximately 324,000 students of the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board, we are jointly calling for immediate investment in the following key areas:

1. Allocate \$3 million towards the creation of 15 more enhanced youth spaces and youth hubs while working to ensure every Neighborhood Improvement Area has one.
2. Double the funding to violence prevention grants (e.g. Identify 'N Impact program) which have been successful in enhancing opportunities for youth and promoting broader community safety.
3. Implement additional investments into city-funded youth employment initiatives (e.g. TCHC YouthWorx) with a commitment towards the creation of a Summer Youth Employment Program to ensure youth have access to mentorship, opportunities, and jobs. We must also ensure that youth have access to employment year-round.
4. Implement additional municipal funding towards Student Nutrition Programs to deal with rising child food insecurity.
5. Address the urgent need for after school, community-led and accountable programming for youth 11-18 all year round.

Acknowledging the budget constraints that are present this year, it reinforces the need to prioritize evidence-based solutions that will ensure that Toronto's youth are prioritized and meaningfully supported in the 2024 Budget to ensure the long-term prosperity of Toronto.

We strongly urge you and all members of City Council to address these critical needs in the budget, ensuring our youth receive the support and opportunities they rightly deserve. Every Torontonians, particularly our youth, should have the means to realize their full potential

We are ready to discuss these issues further at your earliest convenience.

Stephen Mensah
Executive Director, TYC

Rachel Chernos Lin
Chair, TDSB

Nancy Crawford
Chair, TCDSB

CC: Paul Johnson, City Manager. Stephen Conforti, Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer