

East Asian Parent Conference: Multiple Pathways to Success

Organized by *Across U-hub* and Co-sponsored by *Toronto District School Board*

October 16, 2010 (9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.)

Venue: Earl Haig Secondary School, TDSB

Across U-hub and the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) are proud to present an East Asian Parent Conference: Multiple Pathways to Success on October 16, 2010 (Saturday) at Earl Haig Secondary School in North York. For the first time, the TDSB and Across U-hub partner together to serve the unique needs of immigrant youth, especially those of East Asian descent. As Donna Quan, Deputy Director of TDSB, put it, “The Toronto District School Board is pleased to partner with Across U-hub. TDSB is proud of the focused efforts shown by our community partners supporting our schools. Together, we will better ensure that our students, including our East Asian students, are provided with the emotional and social supports required for success.”

What are the options for high school graduates? Are there multiple ways to success other than the university pathway? This Parent Conference attempts to explore these questions with experts from different fields - including educators, psychologists, university and college representatives, professionals, entrepreneurs, and youth workers. These experts will speak in a series of bilingual workshops – English and Chinese (including Cantonese and Mandarin). Parents and young people can join the workshops in the language they feel comfortable with.

Traditionally, there has been a strong emphasis within the Asian immigrant community that university entry is the only ticket to their child’s future success. Although one’s credentials do often count in the marketplace, there are many other factors that would determine one’s success in the long run. These include abilities to discern and manage change as well as social and emotional intelligence. How our youth can develop these important life skills and how parents could help alongside are the issues to be addressed in the parent conference.

As Maria Yau, Research Co-ordinator from TDSB, writes, “With proper education, training, nurturing and opportunities, young people should have a good chance to succeed, and, down the road, to make a meaningful impact in an area that they really feel passionate about. After all, a healthy society requires talented people in different fields, sectors and professions. And in Canada, we are fortunate to have such a rich variety of post-secondary options, possibilities, and pathways that could help our youth to realize their potential and to eventually flourish in the field that are meant for them.”

Jason Lun, a first-year student studying hotel management at George Brown College, experienced immense pressure in the past year when he decided to enter college education. Most of the pressure was from his relatives and people around him. According to Jason himself, "The Hotel and Tourism Management Program offered by the college is one of the most reputable programs in the field. It consists of both the theoretical and practical components. It will fit me well." However, Jason's relatives advised him otherwise that college education was inferior to university education, "College graduates will have no problem finding a job, but it's always harder for them to get a promotion. Why don't you try to apply for university?" Jason was discouraged and confused; luckily he finally got the support of his father, "I'll support your decision as long as you think you are getting what you need from the program whether it's college or university."

What is the difference between college and university education? What challenges would post-secondary students be facing? In this conference, the organizers hope to stimulate parents to rethink with their teenagers about the definition of future success, to discover together their children's unique strengths and diverse interests, and to explore different possible pathways that best fit the individual's temperament and natural abilities. The selection of workshops offered in this conference would help equip parents with valuable information and knowledge to support their high school children achieving real life success. These workshops include: Mapping out Career Paths; Work Smart – Skills for Managing Change and Developing Life Skills for Career Success; Understand Your Child's Multiple Intelligences; A Different Pathway to Success – A College Education; University Admission and Course Selection; and Coping with the Challenges of University Life.

Admission to this conference is free but registration is required. For inquiries, please contact Across U-hub at 905-944-1944 or email info@acrossuhub.com. Online registration is also available at <http://www.acrossuhub.com>.