

ETFO Thames Valley Reporting System Survey Results and Recommendations

Numerous concerns regarding TVDSB's new reporting system were received at the local office. In an attempt to gain succinct information from a representative population, the Local office distributed a survey to all of its members.

Survey Questions

Training

1. Did you have access to the report card program and receive at least 25 minutes of training at the October staff meeting? (Y/N)
2. Was the individual training at the Staff Meeting an expert of the new reporting system? (Y/N)
3. Was the training you received for the new reporting system adequate? (Y/N)

Experiences with the Reporting System

1. In your opinion is the new system more or less user friendly than the previous TWEA reporting program? (More/Less)
2. What are the top three concerns you had while using the system? (3 responses – 2-3 sentences in length max)
3. What software improvements do you suggest for the program. (open-ended)

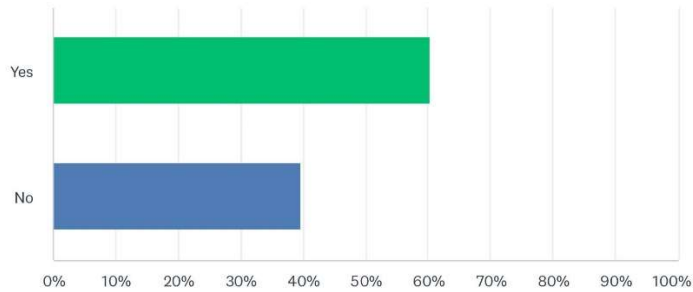
With over a thousand responses, we had a representation group of teachers work with the local released officers to review the survey results and compile a list of the main concerns. The group had regional representation and included teachers representing specialist teachers, Developmental Education classes and Kindergarten, Primary, Junior and Intermediate divisions.

The reporting of student achievement is a time-consuming process and the program provided to teachers greatly enhances or detracts from their working conditions. The Aspen program hindered our members' ability. The challenge to produce meaningful reports were severely hindered by the inadequate program TVDSB provided. It is our hope that real and meaningful changes will come as the result of the Board's employees clear and concise concerns they have expressed.

Survey results

Q2 Did you have access to the report card program and receive at least 25 minutes of training at the October Staff Meeting?

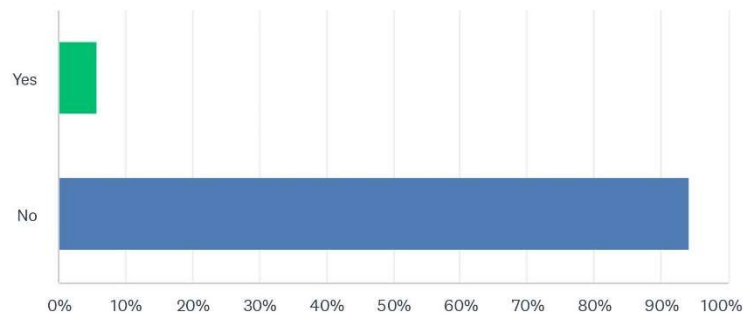
Answered: 1,001 Skipped: 13



60% of the teachers did not receive the minimal guaranteed training from the Board is concerning. The failure to provide adequate training likely caused many of the subsequent concerns.

Q3 Was the individual training at the Staff Meeting an expert of the new reporting system?

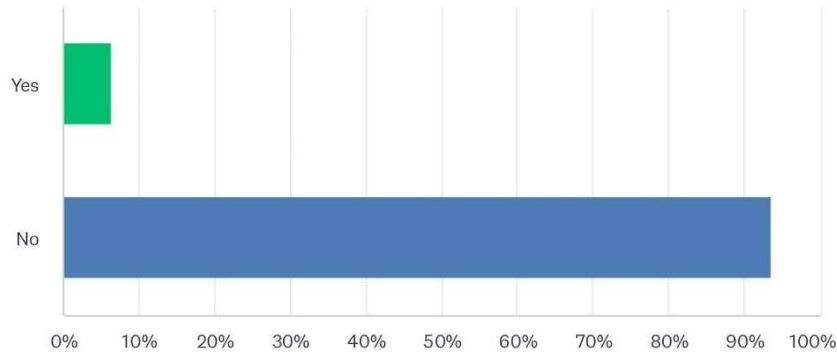
Answered: 999 Skipped: 15



Training needs to be more than a video. There needs to be an expert present to facilitate training and answer questions.

Q4 Was the training you received for the new reporting system adequate?

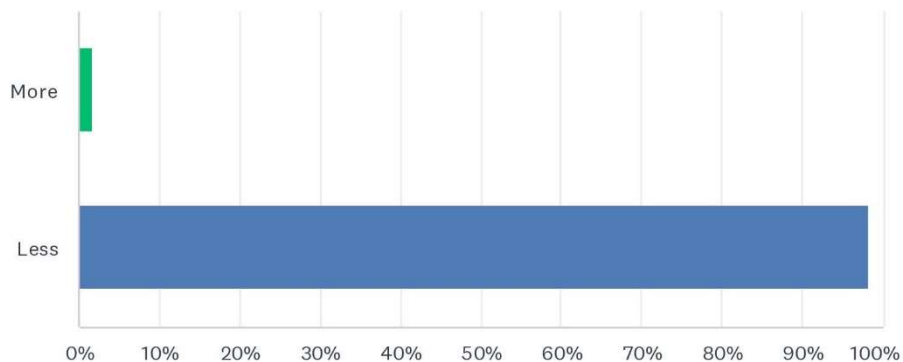
Answered: 1,008 Skipped: 6



The above graph clearly depicts the concerns of the membership about training.

Q5 In your opinion is the new system more or less user friendly than the previous TWEA reporting program?

Answered: 961 Skipped: 53



The committee's discussion about this result was insightful. Comments were made about how Teacher's Partner (saved to a floppy disk) in the early 2000s was more user-friendly and how they wished they had access to the editing tools of 1993 WordPerfect.

Discussions with other Boards have brought to light that many options, available within Aspen, have not been provided for teachers in TVDSB. This includes comment banks, variables (codes for he/she/they), find and replace and other editing tools. Why hasn't TVDSB provided these options that are available within Aspen?

Other Boards provide superior, 21st century reporting programs for their employees to use. Perhaps TVDSB should consider investing in a better system. The superior reporting program provided in York District is Edsby (<https://edsby.com>). This program is user friendly and meets all the expected tools of a reporting software program.

Top Concerns While Using the Reporting System

- No Comment Bank
- No Comment Builder
- Unable to preview report card and edit without going through multiple steps
- Unable to replace pronouns and names (these are called variables and are available from Aspen, but is not provided to our members)
- Too time consuming
- Too many steps to complete simple tasks
- No copy to all option (or to a selected few students)
- Codes non-functional and/too long
- System inaccessible too often
- Accessing boxes take too much time
- Accessing the program is tedious
- No automatic saving
- No find and replace option
- Unable to see prep teachers' comments
- Completed comments deleting while writing or disappearing once submitted
- Unable to see entire class in a split class
- Font size not AODA compliant
- Attendance incorrect on a legal document (students missing many days had perfect attendance)
- Comments deleted when two teachers are working on the same section
- Character count is not accurate when cut and pasting.
- Character count not operational at times
- PW, PWD, PVW poorly labelled
- The minimal features available in some views, but not others
- Secretaries frustrated with system
- Listing of classes and subjects in no logical order (different than printed report)
- System turns off at deadline making it difficult to edit
- Having to post the same comment individually (no post to all)
- Time consuming and challenging to edit
- Overuse of drop downs and codes
- Having to create comments in a separate program. Unacceptable with 21st century software options.
- Printing is not easy
- Instructions given at staff meeting, on the video and what worked were different than the instruction manual
- Strange language – no 'save' only 'post'
- No warning before running out of space (most programs turn colour or give a warning)
- Terrible interface
- User coder/IT language, not user-friendly language
- Inability for principal edit
- Classes listed by room numbers – confusing for specialty prep teachers – split classes not listed together

Top Concerns While Using the Reporting System – *continued...*

- Some Members report IT going to other boards to find person with knowledge of program to debug (after trying with principal and IT)
- Program help option, not helpful

Required Improvements

The present reporting program is not an acceptable tool in its present state. The Thames Valley Local suggests the following:

1. Scrap the program and invest in a user-friendly program such as Edsby.
2. If replacing the program is not an option, then the following are required:
 - a. Meaningful training for teachers by trained experts
 - b. Provide all available options on Aspen to teachers (comment banks, variables for names/pronouns, editing features, find and replace, send comments/marks to multiple students, etc.). TVDSB is the fourth largest school Board. The fact that they provide sub-par options, when better options are available, shows a disregard for your employees.
 - c. AODA compliant font size
 - d. No requirement to use a second program
 - e. Fix bugs – font size, character count, disappearing comments, Canadian/French dictionary, etc.
 - f. Provide a link/app interface so teachers can go directly to just report cards, without navigating EBase
 - g. Ensure sharing of a box, like the Arts, is operational with multiple users
 - h. Fix attendance
 - i. Make accessible at more times – turn off deadlines
 - j. Ensure no comments are deleted by the program without permission