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UGDSB collecting data with new census

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The Upper Grand District School Board is collecting data on their students through a new census aimed at making systemic changes.

The local school board launched the ?UGDSB Counts Student Census? on Monday (Sept. 19) for all students in grades Kindergarten to Grade 12. The student census looks to get a better understanding of the cultural, social, and demographic diversity of students.

?The UGDSB recognizes the disproportionate impact on students who are racialized and have identities connected to the margins,? the UGDSB said in Monday's press release. ?The school board will use the results of the survey to better understand these impacts, to make positive change.?

Students who chose to participate in the census survey will be asked questions about first languages, Indigenous status, ethnicity/cultural origins, racial background, religious/spiritual affiliation, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, citizenship, and socio-economic status.

For students in Kindergarten to Grade 8 the survey will be completed on behalf of, or with a parent or caregiver, and will be sent to their email address. Students in Grades 9 to 12 will complete the survey on their own, with the survey link sent to their student UGDSB email address. Time will be provided in class for completion. While the census is a confidential and voluntary survey, the UGDSB said it is not anonymous.

?It is not anonymous because, to be able to analyze the data, we need to collect the data using a personal identifier. We will us this personal identifier to join the census data with the data sets we would like to analyze,? explained the UGDSB.

The Ontario Ministry of Education mandated school boards across the province to complete a student census. School boards are required to complete a census by 2023.

The UGDSB Counts Student Census will be open until October 9. For more information about the student census, visit ugdsb.ca/census.