

July 2026

2025-2026 Report

DOCS_{FOR}Schools



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Hot Docs is a registered charity (895921880-RR0001)

Thank You!

Conversations around youth and screen time are increasingly focused not only on reducing consumption, but on improving the quality of engagement—prioritizing experiences that foster dialogue, participation, and meaningful connection. As media consumption becomes more individualized, the need for structured environments that support shared engagement and media literacy continues to grow. Enter the **Hot Docs Docs For Schools** program!

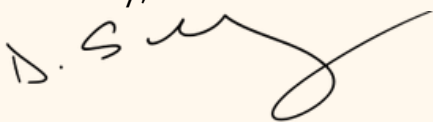
We are very proud of the impact this year's GTA-based program has made. Our freely offered initiative serviced over 6000 students and their teachers at our Hot Docs Cinema, with 92 unique schools participating. Demand was immediate, with screenings reaching capacity shortly after registration opened, a strong indicator of the program's value and reach. Students consistently cite these field trips to Toronto's third-oldest independent cinema as highlights of their school year.

Nationally, with support from the Rossy Foundation, we engaged directly with over 750 educators spanning all provinces and territories by offering workshops and presentations promoting classroom use of our online Citizen Minutes short film series and resources.

The **Hot Docs Docs For Schools** program is back stronger than ever and positioned for future growth and innovations. We are currently in the planning phase for next year's program, focused on sustainable expansion to meet growing demand and building new partnerships to further strengthen and scale our impact.

Thank you for supporting this important work.

Sincerely,



Diana Sanchez
Executive Director



Jackie Garrow
Director, Philanthropy & Impact

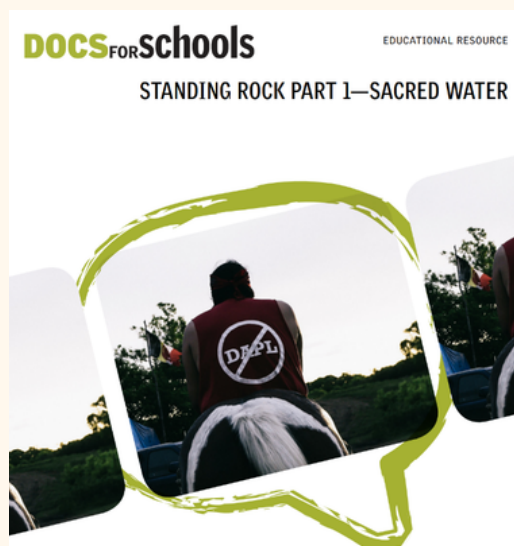
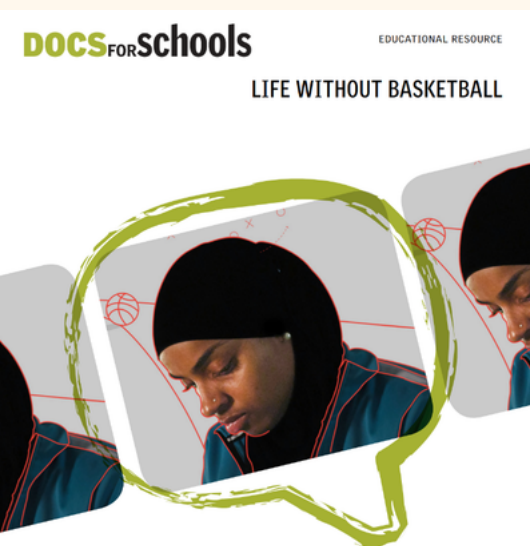
Introduction

From February to June 2026, we delivered **four** successful screenings reaching 1649 students during the festival.

Outside of the festival we reached 4627 attendees over **nine** screenings.

Each screening was supported by:

- Entertaining and thoughtful post-screening Q&As with filmmakers and special guests
- Curriculum-aligned Educators' Guides, distributed to teachers in advance, offering discussion questions and classroom activities designed to spark group dialogue and collective reflection.



13

total in-person
screenings

6,276

students and educators
attended

“Thanks for the amazing support and organization for the screening of "Northern Beats". My students loved the film—as did I—and certainly appreciate the opportunity to get out to the theatre to see something so relevant and exciting.”

JASON KENEMY - TEACHER, EASTDALE C.I.





DFS Year-Round screenings

Feb 24: CBC's Black Life: Untold Stories (Northern Beats)

Northern Beats offers a compelling and engaging look at the Canadian roots of arguably the most dominant music genre in the world today: Hip-Hop.



of attendees: 595

Special Guest: Dr. Mark V. Campbell, Associate Chair in the Arts, Culture and Media department at the Afrosonic Innovation Lab, a Connaught Early Career Fellow at the University of Toronto, DJ and curator.

Feb 25 – CBC's Black Life: Untold Stories (Northern Beats)

of attendees: 634

See above

Feb 26: Teenage Wasteland

A group of teenage misfits, inspired by a renegade English teacher Fred Isseks, embark on a student film project and uncover a vast conspiracy that is poisoning the ground beneath their feet.

of attendees: 545

Special Guest: Fred Isseks - Middletown, New York teacher and main subject of *Teenage Wasteland*



March 4: TVO's The Pitch

When Olympic soccer star Diana Matheson retires, she sets out—alongside fellow players—to build something that has never existed: a professional women's soccer league in Canada.

of attendees: 595

Special Guests: Director Michèle Hozer, with soccer legends Diana Matheson & Christine Sinclair



March 26: Citizen Minutes Series 3

Hot Docs presents Citizen Minutes, a series of short documentaries highlighting ordinary Canadians doing extraordinary things to improve their communities.

#of attendees: 474

May 12: Citizen Minutes 3

See above

of attendees: 430



May 14: Becoming Ourselves Programme in partnership with the NFB

King's Court - Two friends and basketball lovers talk family, community and brotherhood in this raw coming-of-age documentary shot in Toronto's downtown neighbourhood of Bleecker Street.



Maybe Elephants - Three teenaged sisters and their parents move to Kenya and find themselves changed forever.

of attendees: 489

Special Guests: Marley Zion, Change the Narrative founder, artist, creative visionary, and community builder; director Serville Poblete; & Laurie Townshend, teacher, documentary filmmaker



May 27: The Tower That Built A City

A look at how Toronto's skyline-defining CN Tower, now celebrating its 50th anniversary, helped launch decades of urban transformation.

of attendees: 332



May 28: təm kʷaθ nan Namesake

Follows the heated debate that unfolds when the Tla'amin Nation requests that the city of Powell River, BC, change its name.

of attendees: 533



Participating Schools

As of June 12, 2026, **92 unique schools have participated in this year's Docs For Schools (DFS) program.** Each screening attracts a significant number of new schools, with attendance patterns indicating approximately **80% new schools** and 20% returning participants per event.

This year, we welcomed students from a broad range of educational communities, including the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB), Halton District School Board (HDSB), and homeschool co-operatives. Unless otherwise noted, all participating schools listed below are affiliated with the TDSB.

LIST OF PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Albert Campbell CI	John A. Leslie Public School
Alexander Muir Gladstone	John Buchan Sr PS
Annette Street Junior and Senior Public School	John Polanyi Collegiate Institute
Avondale Secondary Alternative School	King Edward Junior and Senior Public School
Beverley Heights Middle School	Lanor Junior Middle School
Birchmount Park Collegiate Institute	Lawrence Park Collegiate Institute
Bloor Collegiate Institute	Martingrove Collegiate Institute
Bowmore Ps	McMurrich Jr PS
Bruce Public School	Megan Patterson-mclean Household
Cedarbrae Collegiate Institute	Monarch Park Collegiate
Central Technical School	Oakwood Collegiate Institute
Central Toronto Academy	Orde Street Public School
Changemakers Homeschool co-op	Park Lawn JMS
Charles H. Best Junior Middle School	Pierre Laporte Middle School
Chester Elementary School	Queen Alexandra Middle School
City View Alternative School	Rawlinson Community School
CW Jeffery's Collegiate Institute	Richview collegiate institute
D.A. Morrison Middle School	Riverdale Collegiate Institute
Danforth Collegiate and Technical Institute	RJ Lang Elementary and Middle School
Delta Alternative Senior School	Rosedale Heights School for the Arts
Dixon Grove Junior Middle School	Runnymede Collegiate Institute
Don Mills Collegiate Institute	Samuel Hearne Middle School
Don Mills MS	SATEC @ W.A. Porter Collegiate Institute
Downsview Secondary School	Scherman School

LIST OF PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Dr. Norman Bethune Collegiate Institute	Jean Lumb Public School
Dr. Rita Cox - Kina Minagok	SEED Alternative School
Dublin Heights E & MS	Senator O'Connor College School
Earl Beatty Junior and Senior Public School	Sir John A. Macdonald C.I.
Earl Grey Senior PS	SOLE Alternative
East York C.I.	St. Anthony Catholic School
Eastdale Collegiate Institute	St. Louis Catholic Elementary School
École secondaire Michelle-O'Bonsawin	St. Monica Catholic Elementary School
Etobicoke Collegiate Institute	Stephen Leacock C.I.
Etobicoke School of the Arts	Subway Academy II
Faywood Arts Based Curriculum	Taylor Creek Public School
Fern Avenue Public School	Timiskaming District Secondary School
Garth Webb Secondary School	Toronto District Secondary school
George Webster Elementary School	University of Toronto Schools
Glenview Senior Public School	West Humber Collegiate Institute
Harbord Collegiate Institute	Westview Centennial Secondary School
Heydon Park Secondary School	Winona Drive Senior Public School
Highcastle Public School	Woburn Collegiate Institute
Highland Creek Public School	YMCA Academy
Hillcrest Community School	York Memorial Collegiate Institute
Horizon Alternative Senior School	
Humberside Collegiate Institute	
Jack Miner Senior Public School	
Jarvis Collegiate Institute	

“Docs For Schools is an amazing opportunity for educators to screen documentaries related to contemporary topics, and to provide an arena for opening up discussions on topics such as social justice, the environment, and mental health.

These topics are all curriculum related at the secondary school level, helping educators make connections to issues such as equity, equality, diversity, and inclusion.”

CATHERINE GREGORIO - TEACHER, BIRCHMOUNT PARK COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE*, TORONTO

***Birchmount Park Collegiate Institute has taken part in Hot Docs' Docs For Schools programming for over seven years.**

DOCSFOR**schools**

DFS Festival Screenings

April 24: It's Dorothy

A vibrant and imaginative exploration of the cultural legacy of Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz*.

of attendees: 376

Special Guest: Director Jeffery McHale



April 24: Nekai Walks

The inspiring story of Nekai Foster's survival and recovery, revealing how gun violence shapes bodies, families, and communities.

of attendees: 268

Special Guest: Director Rico King



Nekai Foster & director Rico King from NEKAI WALKS

Nekai Walks was the recipient of the 2026 Docs For Schools Student Choice Award, a distinction chosen entirely by student votes.

April 30: t̩m kʷaθ nan (NAMESAKE)

See description on page 5

of attendees: 467

Special Guests: Directors Evan Adams & Eileen Francis

May 1: The Tower that Built a City

See description on page 5

of attendees: 538

Special Guest: Director Mark Myers

Citizen Minutes DFS National Outreach

Commissioned by Hot Docs, **Citizen Minutes** is a short doc collection that highlights ordinary Canadians doing extraordinary things to better their communities. Our mission is to inspire engagement in Canadian democracy by celebrating stories of civic participation across the country. Generously supported by the Rossy Foundation, Citizen Minutes screenings are a cornerstone of our DFS program, and currently the only aspect of the program that has both films and resources available to stream and download online for easy classroom use. The Citizen Minutes program has allowed us to take our Docs For Schools program to educators at a national level. **Visit citizenminutes.ca.**

"Thank you! I am looking forward to integrating these into our year to shift school culture."

Montreal teacher attending the online workshop

"Thank you so much for this presentation, it was impactful and will help my classroom."

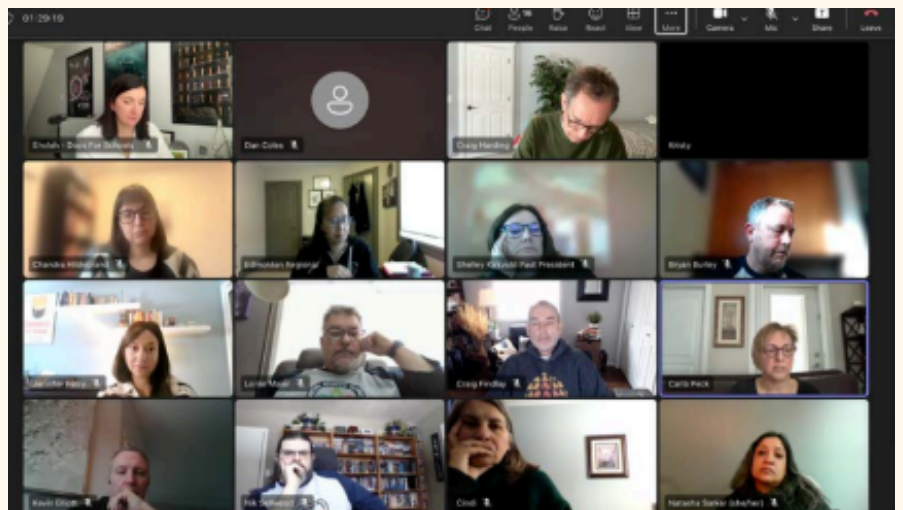
Samanta T. New Brunswick Teachers' Association Conference

"That [workshop] was so good. I love Citizen Minutes."

Nikki Pun, Calgary Catholic School District



Teachers from the Calgary Catholic School District



GMP presenting virtually to the Alberta Teacher Association Social Studies Council.

Citizen Minutes DFS National Outreach

From January to May 2026, our Citizen Minutes impact team embarked on a national outreach campaign and significantly expanded educator engagement and visibility across Canada, reaching all 10 provinces and three territories. More than 775 educators participated in presentations and workshops promoting the Citizen Minutes series while targeted outreach and newsletters extended visibility to over 13,700 educators nationwide.

Curriculum guide downloads increased by 214%, surpassing the campaign's goal to double usage. Growth occurred in distinct spikes, closely tied to professional development sessions and live presentations underscoring the impact of direct engagement.



Overall, results demonstrate that educator-facing outreach—particularly presentations, workshops, and screenings—was the primary driver of awareness and uptake, outperforming passive distribution channels and establishing strong foundations for continued growth.



Director Quan Luong presenting his film to Manitoba Social Science Teacher's Association in Winnipeg.

A special thank you to our donors for all of your support!

DOCSFORschools

Lead Partners



Additional support is provided by Donner Canadian Foundation, Makeway Foundation-Harbinger Fund, National Film Board, Pitblado Family Foundation, Founders Circle Executive Producer Members, and through contributions by individual donors.

DOCS FOR SCHOOLS

Generously supported by



Additional support is provided by

Donner Canadian Foundation, Makeway Foundation - Harbinger Fund, National Film Board, Pitblado Family Foundation, and Founders Circle Executive Producer Members

APPENDIX A

CONFERENCE, WORKSHOP, AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

In-Person Presentations

1. Calgary Catholic School Board PD Day — Calgary
2. Marymount Academy Montreal — Montreal
3. Parkdale Junior and Senior Public School — Toronto
4. Pte. Buckam Singh Public School — Brampton
5. West Island College (Independent School, Grades 7–12) — Calgary

1:1 Presentations

1. Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) Social Studies
2. ATA Social Studies Edmonton Regional President
3. Bruce County Museum & Cultural Centre
4. Calgary Catholic Social Studies
5. Calgary Social Sciences Council
6. Chief Sunrise Education Center, Katlodeeche First Nation (NWT)
7. Connected North | TakingITGlobal – Resource for Nunavut Teachers' Association
8. Department of Education and Early Years, Government of Prince Edward Island
9. English Montreal School Board
10. Halifax Regional Centre for Education
11. Home Base: Saskatchewan Province-Wide Youth Group
12. Manitoba Social Studies Association
13. Robert Bateman Public School, Ottawa
14. Social Studies Network of Canada Executives
15. Yukon First Nation School Board

Filmmaker-led presentations (in person)

1. Hommes Relais: Concordia Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling
2. Crossing the Divide & Red Girl Rising: Marymount Academy
3. Becoming Ruby: Manitoba Social Sciences Teachers' Association
4. Red Girl Rising: Huntsville High School (post-poned until September)

Conferences

1. Central Alberta Teachers' Convention
2. Greater Edmonton Teachers' Convention
3. New Brunswick Teachers' Association (NBTA) Council Day
4. TDSB EnVision Conference

APPENDIX A CONTINUED

CONFERENCE, WORKSHOP, AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Webinars / Group Presentations

1. Alberta Teachers' Association Social Studies Council — Alberta
2. British Columbia Teacher Librarians Executive Council — British Columbia
3. British Columbia Teacher Librarians (All members) — British Columbia
4. Edmonton Social Sciences Council – Alberta
5. English Montreal School Board — Montreal
6. Government of Newfoundland and Labrador — Program Specialist for English Language Arts and Social Studies — Newfoundland and Labrador
7. Manitoba Social Sciences Teachers' Association — Manitoba

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