

Written Notice of Motion For Consideration (Trustees Aarts and Donaldson)

From: Denise Joseph-Dowers, Manager, Board Services, Governance and Board Services

In accordance with Board Bylaw 5.15.2, notice of the following motion was provided at the regular meeting of the Committee of the Whole on January 29, 2020 and is therefore submitted for consideration at this time.

5.15.2 A notice of motion will be introduced by a member who is present as an advance notification of a matter to be considered at a subsequent Board or Committee meeting. A notice of motion will not be debated at the meeting at which it is introduced...

5.15.2 (c) A notice of motion submitted prior to, or at a committee meeting, will be considered at a subsequent committee meeting...

Information on Immunization

Whereas, the World Health Organization has declared vaccine hesitancy as one of the top ten global health threats in 2019¹ and that measles, a vaccine preventable, serious disease, has recently seen a global increase of 30 percent, and

Whereas, in September 2019 the Toronto Medical Officer of Health and the Toronto Board of Health reported on the growing risk of vaccine hesitancy in the City^{2,3}; and

Whereas, vaccine hesitancy stems, in part, from communication gaps about vaccine safety and efficacy and misinformation that is spread via the internet and social media; and

Whereas, low vaccination rates can also stem from limited access to information and resources and insufficient access to medical services; and

Whereas, vaccine hesitancy reduces herd immunity (the critical immunization level required to prevent disease outbreaks) and therefore increases the risk of serious disease outbreak in TDSB schools, posing a risk to students, staff and their families; and

Whereas, every school board in the province works with a local public health unit to administer those school-related requirements of the Immunization of School Pupils Act⁴ that:

- (i) allow students to register for school only once they have disclosed their immunization record, and
- (ii) issue suspension notices each year for non-compliance with the legislation;

and

Whereas, the TDSB issues approximately 4000 non-compliance suspensions each year representing an unnecessary administrative burden; and

Whereas, absenteeism due to suspensions can negatively impact student success; and

Whereas, the TDSB is a strong partner of Toronto Public Health and is committed to communicating critical information to families on topics that impact student health, well-being, and achievement; and

Whereas, the World Health Organization and the Toronto Board of Health report that health workers, especially those in communities, remain the most trusted advisors of vaccination decisions, and can be supported to provide trusted, credible information on vaccines;

Therefore, be it resolved:

- (a) That the Chair write to Ontario's Minister of Health, the Minister of Education, and Health Canada to request:
 - (i) that the Provincial and Federal governments provide resources and funding to enhance digital record-keeping that will reduce the administrative burden on schools and streamline notification to families;
 - (ii) that the Provincial and Federal governments provide resources and funding for enhanced education for parents and school communities about immunizations, including but not limited to, resources targeted specifically at the most vulnerable communities;
- (b) That the Director strengthen the Board's communications to support the provision of information about immunizations, such as:
 - (i) updating the Board's website and resources for Kindergarten and General Registration to include links to the Toronto Public Health online vaccination reporting website ⁵,
 - (ii) working with Toronto Public Health to facilitate greater access to public health community resources, including existing educational resources and school-based supports for parents, teachers and schools.

Note:

1. World Health Organization - "Ten Threats to Global Health in 2019" (<https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/ten-threats-to-global-health-in-2019>)
2. (September 9, 2019) Report from the Medical Officer of Health on Moving to Acceptance: Toronto Public Health's Strategy to Address Vaccine Hesitancy (<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2019/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-137355.pdf>)
3. (September 23, 2019) Presentation from the Associate Medical Officer of Health on Moving to Acceptance: Toronto Public Health's Strategy to Address Vaccine Hesitancy (<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2019/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-138045.pdf>)
4. Immunization of School Pupils Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. I.1: (Immunization of School Pupils Act, RSO 1990, c. I.1)
5. Toronto Public Health - Report Student Immunization (<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/health-wellness-care/health-programs-advice/immunization/get-immunized-children-youth/report-student-immunization/>)