

**Notice of Possible Business Arising**

Planning and Priorities Committee

April 6, 2021

*Trustees Donaldson and Aarts might move the following during consideration of Item 5.1 OPSBA Director's Update*

**Stop the Plans for Radical Changes to Remote Learning in Ontario**

Whereas the Toronto District School Board gathers much data on student achievement, well-being and preferences and regularly surveys students, parents and staff;

Whereas February 2021 data collected by the TDSB indicates that 84% of our students surveyed said they learn better in-person compared to virtual learning;

Whereas recent surveys have also shown a marked increase in mental health concerns and feelings of isolationism among students learning remotely during the pandemic;

Whereas the proposal put forward by the Ministry of Education as reported in the Globe & Mail is not supported by any data and recent studies from the US show increasing poor outcomes, high attrition and digital inequality in online programs delivered outside of district school boards;

Whereas the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) has already made a statement that the government's plan is not in the best interests of students and that there are significant negative implications including impacts on reduced funding levels, students' ability to attend small, rural and remote schools, and diminished local influence on education;

Whereas the Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA-AECO) also expressed concerns that the proposed plan to make remote learning a permanent option would present many negative impacts for the student body and does not prioritize the success and wellbeing of students strongly encourages the government to proactively seek students' perspectives as the primary stakeholder in education;

Therefore, be it resolved:

- (a) That the Chair of the Toronto District School Board write to the Minister of Education to express this board's vehement objection to the rushed and radical changes to remote learning that we understand the government is proposing and that the letter include the following:

- i. There is no evidence to support that this policy change will improve student achievement or well-being;
  - ii. TDSB data shows that students and families prefer local in-person learning – which is the opposite of this proposal;
  - iii. Rushing through these radical changes to remote learning after a year of isolation and instability created by the COVID-19 pandemic risks causing real harm to our students; and
  - iv. The government must immediately stop its consideration of this proposal until the full impacts of remote learning on students during this pandemic are known.
- (b) That the letter be shared with all Toronto-area Members of Provincial Parliament, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association and the Ontario Student Trustees' Association.