

Chair's Report

March 20, 2019 Board Meeting

As you know, the Government of Ontario has announced various changes that will impact the Toronto District School Board, including changes in class sizes and curriculum.

Although staff are continuing to analyze this information to fully understand the impact of these Ministry changes, I want to be clear about the impact of higher class sizes on teacher job losses at the TDSB at the end of the four year phase-in.

This morning, Minister Thompson appeared on CBC Metro Morning and questioned our projections by saying that these numbers could not be identified without knowing the Grants for Student Needs – which have not been announced yet.

This is incorrect. We already know the key factors right now – our projected number of students, what our average class sizes are now and what they will be after four years. When you increase class size, you need fewer teachers.

For example, under the government's new class-size plan we can project the loss of 800 high school level teachers over the next four years.

In fact, the Ministry would know the calculation of projected teacher job losses as a result of the new class size plan on a province-wide basis and

they would likely know this information for every school board.

So again, I want to be clear that although we are still analyzing this information to the fullest, the projections that we have put forward thus far are accurate.

Staff will continue to provide us with accurate and timely updates and, in return, we will ensure that our communities receive this information as well.

It's important that we fully understand the extent of these changes in order to best prepare how to support all of our students moving forward, and to clearly communicate these changes to our parents, guardians and communities.

In fact I call on the Ministry to be open and accountable to parents, students and teachers and release the projected teacher job losses province-wide and on a board-by-board basis. With such a dramatic jump in class size, it is important that we all know what it means. What does it mean for high school program choices? What does it mean for new, young teachers, especially high school teachers looking for employment in Ontario? There are many, many questions and implications.

Only with the facts, can we understand the implications.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to thank everyone who worked so swiftly to keep us informed about these announcements, and who continue

to work on bringing us clarification.

Thank you.