

## Our Response to the TDSB's Updates dated February 9, 2023

Dear sir/madam

We refer to our letter titled "*A Public Appeal Against TDSB's Proposed Boundary Change for Whitney Jr PS*" sent to the TDSB on February 7, 2023 ("Public Appeal Letter"). Definitions in the Public Appeal Letter have the same meanings herein.

We also refer to the updates made to the TDSB website on February 9, 2023, in respect of the TDSB Proposal, including, inter alia, the updated "*Questions and Answers*" (together "TDSB Feb 9 Updates").

After reviewing the TDSB Feb 9 Updates, we are writing to reiterate **our disapproval of the TDSB Proposal and to request the TDSB to rescind or modify the TDSB Proposal in accordance with our suggested solution in the Public Appeal Letter (and below).**

### **The TDSB continues to operate in opacity and omits important information in its communication**

While the TDSB has provided some previously missing details in the TDSB Feb 9 Updates, it skirts around the more important questions and criticisms raised in the Public Appeal Letter in respect to the injustice and inequity of the TDSB Proposal.

It is particularly disappointing that the TDSB continues to operate in opacity and chooses to omit critical information in the TDSB Feb 9 Updates that would significantly impact how families and stakeholders evaluate the TDSB Proposal.

In June 2022, the TDSB has approved the proposed redevelopment at Eglinton Jr PS ("Eglinton Redevelopment"). Phase 2 of the Eglinton Redevelopment has been estimated to begin in 2026 and is expected to span multiple years.

During Phase 2 of the Eglinton Redevelopment, students at Eglinton Jr PS will be hauled to 529 Vaughan Road, an abandoned secondary school ("Vaughan Site"). The Vaughan Site is approximately 6 km away from Eglinton Jr PS, doubling the distance between Eglinton Jr PS and Whitney Jr PS.

Under the TDSB Proposal, not only would families residing at the Affected Addresses **be forced to send their children to a less preferable school, their children would also have to endure longer travels to and from the school** beginning in 2026.

### **The TDSB Proposal disproportionately impacts the most vulnerable part of the Whitney Jr PS Community**

To garner support for the TDSB Proposal, the TDSB has been reassuring parents that existing students and their siblings will not be affected by the TDSB Proposal.

**This was a lie.**

As stated in our Public Appeal Letter, “[within] the current school boundary of Whitney Jr PS, the Affected Addresses have a significantly larger proportion of people of color, new immigrants, families that do not speak English as their first (or second) language, and lower-income families”.

According to the new details provided in the TDSB Feb 9 Updates, were the TDSB Proposal to be approved, these families would be forced to either stay at their current residences, or move to 2221 Yonge St or 5 Soudan Ave, for the entire time their children remain at Whitney Jr PS.

The TDSB Proposal would in effect **reduce the choices for these families of existing students from the current ten (10) buildings to only two (2)**, further disadvantaging the underprivileged and vulnerable part of the Whitney Jr PS community.

TDSB's stated commitment to equity, anti-racism, and anti-oppression would devolve into nothing more than lip-service and virtual signaling if the TDSB Proposal was approved. Furthermore, the equitableness of the TDSB Proposal should not and cannot be judged by those who are privileged and in power.

### **Reiterated solution: let parents choose what is best for their children**

Repeating what we have proposed in the Public Appeal Letter:

*“We believe the most just and equitable solution would be to **allow all existing and future parents at the Affected Address to freely choose** between Whitney Jr PS and Eglinton Jr PS (or John Fisher Jr PS).*

*Parents care about their children’s wellbeing the most. If the TDSB truly believes that families at the Affected Addresses do not have a preference for Whitney Jr PS, then they would naturally gravitate towards the local schools and organically solve the alleged capacity issue at Whitney Jr PS.*

*Otherwise, the TDSB should dedicate its effort and resources into improving Eglinton Jr PS to make it more attractive to the families at the Affected Addresses, instead of ham-fisting them into a school that these families did not sign up or pay for.”*

We urge the TDSB to listen to the community it claims to serve and to restore the community’s faith in the TDSB and its stated values.

Regards

Concerned Parents, Stakeholders, and Members of the Community