

Our Response to the TDSB's Report dated February 24, 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"), and our second letter titled "*Our Response to the TDSB's Updates dated February 9, 2023*" sent to the TDSB on February 10, 2023 ("Our Feb 10 Response"). Definitions in the Public Appeal Letter and Our Feb 10 Response have the same meanings herein.

We also refer to the TDSB's report titled "*6.4 Attendance Boundary Changes for Eglinton Junior Public School, John Fisher Junior Public School and Whitney Junior Public School*", which was uploaded to the TDSB website on February 24, 2023 ("TDSB Feb 24 Report").

The TDSB Feb 24 Report lays bare the inequitableness of the TDSB Proposal

It is telling that the TDSB describes Whitney Jr PS as "*small*" in the TDSB Feb 24 Report.

At 2.89 acres, the Whitney Jr PS site is 80% larger than the Eglinton Jr PS site, which is only 1.60 acres [Source: TDSB 2022]. With both schools currently having approximately the same number of ~450 students, **students at Whitney Jr PS are enjoying almost double the space per child compared to those at Eglinton Jr PS, even before the projected influx of students from the Affected Address** under the TDSB Proposal, and the additional 27 condo buildings currently under development.

We find it infuriating that the TDSB considers children living at the Affected Addresses deserve less than half the space of those from the rest of the Whitney Jr PS community.

In the TDSB Feb 24 Report, the TDSB acknowledges parents' preference for Whitney Jr PS over Eglinton Jr PS: "*Based on the feedback received, most parents living in the impacted addresses are interested in their children attending Whitney Jr PS; staff are concerned that the enrolment at the school will not decrease if choice is offered indefinitely to future parents*".

How the TDSB evaluates the two schools is irrelevant, the undeniable fact remains that **the TDSB Proposal is taking something valued and treasured by families away from the most vulnerable and disadvantaged part of the Whitney Jr PS community.**

Equally undeniable are the injustice and inequitableness of the TDSB Proposal.

Existing students WILL BE impacted

The TDSB continues to claim in the TDSB Feb 24 Report that "*none of the existing students residing at the affected addresses and attending Whitney Jr PS will be impacted – they and their younger siblings can remain part of the Whitney Jr PS community*".

We urge the TDSB, as respected educators, to **please stop lying.**

As set out in Our Feb 10 Response, the TDSB Proposal would “**reduce the choices for these families of existing students from the current ten (10) buildings to only two (2)**”.

In addition, the TDSB Proposal would **restrict these families’ freedom to work and travel abroad** when compared to other families of Whitney Jr PS. Younger siblings with large age gaps would also be denied a place at Whitney Jr PS.

Clearly, the existing students residing at the Affected Address **will be impacted and suffer unfair treatment** under the TDSB Proposal.

The TDSB Proposal should be put on hold while under OHRC review

A request for intervention has been submitted to the Ontario Human Right Commission (“OHRC”) on February 11, 2023. The request is currently under review by the OHRC.

In the spirit of fairness and justice, we request that the TDSB Proposal be put on hold until the review has been completed and a conclusion has been reached by the OHRC.

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

Repeating what we have proposed in the Public Appeal Letter and Our Feb 10 Response:

*“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