



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEES 2008-2009		
Wards		
1. Joseph Martino		416-512-3401
2. Ann Andrachuk, Vice-Chair		416-512-3402
3. Sal Piccininni		416-512-3403
4. Mary Cicogna		416-512-3404
5. Maria Rizzo		416-512-3405
6. Rob Davis		416-512-3406
7. John Del Grande		416-512-3407
8. Oliver Carroll		416-512-3408
9. Catherine LeBlanc-Miller, Chair		416-512-3409
10. Barbara Poplawski Honorary Treasurer		416-512-3410
11. Angela Kennedy		416-512-3411
12. Paul John Crawford James Dempsey, Student Trustee		416-512-3412 416-512-3413

Supervision Team Issues Official Statement to TCDSB Trustees

“It is now almost eight months since Mr. Forma and I arrived at the Toronto Catholic District School Board to rebuild public trust and confidence in the governance of this organization.

“In our view, rebuilding that trust and confidence required a meaningful public role for trustees. This included the opportunity to:

- continue working with their constituents on local issues and advocate on their behalf;
- receive reports on issues requiring decision;
- offer advice to the supervision team;
- provide a leadership role for the Chair;
- have a voice in the selection of that person, and
- work with the Ontario Catholic School Trustees’ Association on how their role could support a school system focused on increasing student achievement.

“For their part, Trustees were expected to demonstrate that they could work together in the public arena, be prepared to trust one another, treat each other with respect and act in the best interest of students rather than for parochial or personal reasons.

“These expectations were shared between students, parents, faith leaders, your trustee colleagues across the province, the general public and the supervision team. Unfortunately, trustees’ behaviour continues to fall considerably short of these expectations. The community as a whole is once again dismayed and disappointed by the actions of the board. The conduct of trustees continues to undermine confidence in Catholic education and our publicly funded education system as a whole.

“Many of you are under the impression that supervision will end in June or at some time in the short-term. On this point the Minister has been very clear. Supervision will not end while this board is in its current financial situation.

“The Minister’s objectives have been unchanged from the outset of this process. The supervisory team’s role is to get this board back on track, provide financial stability and restore public confidence so that TCDSB students continue to experience success and student achievement rates continue to increase. Furthermore, as a supervisory team, we have the expectation that board members conduct themselves with civility and act in a way that treats the interests of students and the Board as a priority.

“Further, the Minister has heard from other Catholic stakeholders, parents and community members that the actions and statements of TCDSB trustees demonstrate that you are unable and unwilling to focus on student achievement, improved financial operations and restoring public confidence.

“There are times when clarity of focus and actions reach the point where it becomes impossible to achieve desired objectives. We have reached that point. At such times, it is prudent to step back, to be calm, to reflect, to re-focus on the objectives and their original purpose and to get things back on track. This is the time. Prudence dictates that during this period of reflection, the roles and responsibilities of trustee will be limited to those required under the vesting order and no decision will be made on the appointment of a Chair.

“We urge you to begin this period of stepping back and reflecting by focusing on the words of Archbishop Thomas Collins in his letter to you at the beginning of supervision:

“You work under the Education Act and other laws of the Province of Ontario to ensure that Catholic education is provided to the children of Catholic parents. You are called to be role models by the way in which you conduct yourselves individually and collectively. You are also representatives of the Catholic community. You are called to be examples. And the standard to which you are held is high, because we are called to be witnesses to the faith, which is the highest standard. You are accountable not only to the Catholic community but also to the people of Ontario. Your practices must be beyond reproach. Consistent both with the law and with the ideal of Christian stewardship.”

“Parental and stakeholder involvement is a cherished principle of the TCDSB. The Supervision Team is committed to establishing a process for parents and Catholic stakeholders to continue providing input into matters affecting their school communities.”

The Board meeting originally scheduled for this evening has been cancelled.

For dates and times of upcoming meetings, please refer to the Board’s website at www.tcdsb.org.

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The Toronto Catholic District School Board educates more than 90,000 students from diverse cultures and language backgrounds in its 201 Catholic elementary and secondary schools and serves 474,876 Catholic school supporters across the City of Toronto.