



*Office of the Director of Education*

July 7, 2006

Dr. Ben Levin  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Education  
Mowat Block  
900 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON  
M7A 1L2

Dear Dr. Levin:

**RE: LEASES OF ST. JOSEPH MORROW PARK HIGH SCHOOL AND  
ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE SCHOOL (WELLESLEY)**

We are writing to you today to inform you of a situation that has severely impacted the community of the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) and has far-reaching implications for the Board, its parents and existing and potential, future students.

TCDSB leases the two subject properties from "The Sisters of St. Joseph for the Diocese of Toronto in Upper Canada". Both of these twenty year and seven months leases terminate July 31, 2006. The lease for St. Joseph Morrow Park HS (Morrow Park), a single gender female high school, has been extended to July 31, 2010; the lease for Wellesley, also a single gender female high school, has been extended to just July 31, 2007. These two situations are problematic.

For the past two years TCDSB senior management and staff have been trying to negotiate longer term leases for these properties and even their acquisition but these negotiations have, as stated above, met with limited results. TCDSB has recently been informed that Morrow Park has been sold to Tyndale University College and Seminary and will cease to be a Catholic school as of July 31, 2010. This will result in the displacement of 800 students and the Board does not have the capacity to accommodate these students in existing secondary schools.

As you know, TCDSB has a significant number (i.e. 17%) of students which are accommodated in leased facilities, many of which are at risk of displacement if those leases are not renewed. This urgent matter had been brought to the attention of the previous Minister of Education and senior Ministry of Education officials.

TCDSB has been successful in reducing the number of leased facilities that accommodate its students. However, 15,000 are still accommodated in leased schools. The challenges associated with these leases are more fully articulated in the attached brief presented to Ministry staff March 31, 2006. As mentioned above, meetings have been held with EDU staff to request assistance from the Ministry to help provide the means for TCDSB to acquire its leased facilities including Morrow Park, Wellesley and Neil McNeil CSS (see letters to Minister Kennedy attached). The severity of the instability of tenure at each of the TCDSB leased sites has now come to the attention of the community-at-large. Without the ability to acquire its leased schools, TCDSB will continue to be placed in the potentially precarious position of not being able to provide stable, long term accommodations for its students. The worst case scenarios would have extremely negative effects throughout the whole of the TCDSB.

Although your staff has met with us on the accommodation issues, no solution has been offered. On behalf of our Chairman, Oliver Carroll, I would ask you to arrange for a meeting with the Minister. This meeting would include the Chairman and appropriate Board staff. TCDSB is in need of the prompt assistance of the Ministry to find a solution to this dilemma. We look forward to hearing from you to arrange a meeting at the earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,



Kevin Kobus  
Director of Education

Enclosure