



Mary Cicogna
Trustee Ward 4

September 19, 2006

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome back to a new school year with the Toronto Catholic District School Board. To our new parents and guardians, welcome to our family and thank you for your commitment to Catholic education – it is sincerely appreciated.

In June we wrote to you providing an update on our financial situation. With our final budget figures now available we project that we will have a deficit of \$34.6 million this year. This is due mainly to fundamental flaws in the government funding formula.

First and foremost, we do not intend to reduce staff or services this year. Protecting programs and appropriate staffing levels that service and support our student population will always remain a priority throughout the discussions.

According to the funding formula, we would have had to cut Special Education programming by \$9 million to file a balanced budget by next August 31st. We would also have had to cut \$10.4 million from school operations and maintenance, \$5 million for teachers and \$3 million in transportation. This was not acceptable to the Board of Trustees. We are working to find a solution that does not jeopardize children's programs and services.

Here's what's happening now:

- We congratulate and welcome the newly appointed Minister of Education, the Honourable Kathleen Wynne. We look forward to working with her in our efforts to find solutions to the many unresolved issues in education.
- The former Education Minister granted us an extension beyond the August 31st deadline to allow us to collaborate with a Special Assistance Team.
- The Team will examine the feasibility of our Budget Plan options, to give the Board and the Ministry confidence that all reasonable budgetary options have been considered and to ensure a sound timeline is in place to file a budget.
- The Team is expected to comment on the potential impact of any reductions required to align expenditures with grants and indicate shortfalls where they might occur.
- The Team has also been asked to provide a high level analysis of an integrated capital plan (Toronto Solution) and its potential costs and savings.

Consultation Process

As soon as we receive the Team's report we will provide further information on our next steps in addressing the funding issues. This board is committed to consulting and we will let you know further details as this process continues. Please watch the Board's website at www.tcdsb.org for more budget updates, or call the Board's 24-hour information line at 416-222-8282 ext 2873.

Our top priority is to maintain TCDSB's high level of service and provide a quality Catholic education to our students. As a new school year begins, we wish each and every one of you a very successful year.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Cicogna".

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