

January 11, 2005

The Hon. Gerard Kennedy
Minister of Education
22nd Floor, Mowat Block
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

Dear Minister:

Media reports today outline a plan by the Toronto Catholic District School Board (T.D.C.S.B.), approved in November 2004, to launch a \$750,000 advertising campaign to solicit students for enrolment in the T.D.C.S.B.

I trust that you will agree that the entire concept of this "recruitment program" is not only inappropriate, but will have serious ramifications for the stability of Ontario's education system.

Additionally, I would hope that you, as Minister of Education, would agree that this expenditure is an unacceptable use of taxpayer funds by the T.D.C.S.B., and that you will demand that the Board reconsider what may have been a well-intentioned initiative, but will have potentially negative unintended consequences. I would call on you to exercise your responsibility in this matter, as you did recently in dealing with the Toronto District School Board's policy relating to Trustee expenses. Further, I would ask you to provide me with an explanation of how the Board can justify the allocation of \$750,000 of taxpayer dollars for this advertising campaign under the currently established Education funding formula.

As was pointed out by **Trustee Maria Rizzo**, these funds would be better directed to infrastructure renewal or direct spending in the classroom for textbooks and supplies.

Prior to assuming office, you and your colleagues denounced consultant spending as unnecessary and assured Ontario taxpayers that on your watch any such spending would be curtailed. Can you advise me as to whether or not this "promise" extends to those boards over which you have jurisdiction?

Finally, I would ask that you confirm for me if you or any of your Ministry officials were aware of this initiative before it became public today. I look forward to your prompt reply outlining the steps you are taking to immediately remedy this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Frank Klees, MPP
Oak Ridges