



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Communications
Department
80 Sheppard Avenue East
Toronto, Ontario
M2N 6E8

Media Contact:

Emmy Szekeres Milne
Acting Sr Coordinator of
Communications, Public and
Media Relations
416-222-8282 ext. 2356
emmy.szekeresmilne@tcdsb.org
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Toronto Hydro Takes \$100,000 from Students

Toronto Hydro has sent an unexpected bill to the Toronto Catholic District School Board that will add an unforeseen cost of more than \$100,000 per year starting next month; money that should be spent for children in classrooms. Toronto Hydro, without any consultation or warning, will implement a new charge effective January 2019 on all hydro vault access appointments.

"This money will need to come straight from the board's operating budget", says TCDSB Chair Maria Rizzo. "This is disgraceful, as it means less money for our schools, and students in our classrooms."

The TCDSB is obligated to test their hydro vaults as part of the requirements to obtain current fire certificates and keep school communities safe for students and staff.

Current arrangements with Toronto Hydro allow for one free access appointment per vault each year. These free annual visits would be eliminated by Toronto Hydro, with the Board being charged \$400 an hour for all appointments, which will result in the estimated additional cost of at least \$100,000.

"It is shameful that Toronto Hydro did not notify TCDSB about this change to the existing procedures until now," Rizzo explained. "It came as a complete surprise to the Board of trustees who are responsible for the budget. At Wednesday's board meeting the trustees unanimously agreed to fight this grab of public education dollars by Toronto Hydro."

"We will definitely be taking our concerns to the Toronto Hydro Board, the Mayor and Toronto City Council, and we will be enlisting the support of our colleagues at Toronto District School Board, as this issue will impact all students in the City of Toronto," says Vice-Chair, Mike Del Grande.

"As a Board, it is our duty to safeguard and spend education money wisely, and not to take from one level of government to give to another," Rizzo said. "After all there is only one taxpayer. We are determined that money not be diverted from school and classroom needs."

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The Toronto Catholic District School Board educates close to 90,000 students from diverse cultures and language backgrounds in 195 Catholic elementary and secondary schools, approximately half-a-million Catholic school supporters across the City of Toronto. As the world's largest publicly funded Catholic school system, we educate students in an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ. We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity. At Toronto Catholic we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.

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