



TECT Delegation to the Board of Trustees August 14, 2020

The TCDSB Reopening Action Plan states that the Board will take every precaution, following the guidance of Toronto Public Health, to ensure the Health and Safety of staff and students. At this time, TECT does not believe that this plan will ensure the health and safety of staff and students as three key protective requirements will not be fully realized in elementary schools.

Health experts maintain that the following are critical in reducing the spread of the virus and creating a safer environment: smaller class sizes to allow for physical distancing, mask wearing, and proper ventilation.

The action plan will not allow for physical distancing as class size is not reduced.

Mask wearing is not mandatory for all students.

The plan does not remedy the many schools that have poor ventilation and/or a limited ability to open windows.

How then will schools be safe if the plan does not fulfil these necessary safety conditions?

The government stated on August 13 that Boards will now have funding to achieve these safety requirements.

However, it is not feasible for the Board, in three weeks, to determine and then address risks at 164 schools/worksites.

I ask that you work with TECT to implement a phased-in reopening with the following:

- Smaller class sizes to allow physical distancing;

- Mandatory medical grade mask wearing for all students;
- Risk assessments to be completed for each worksite to determine and correct any deficiencies in ventilation, windows and HVAC systems;
- The development of a precise safety plan for each school based on the number of students returning to in-school learning;
- Ongoing and authentic consultation with the union.

As leaders of the largest Catholic Board in Ontario, you have the power to implement a safe reopening. Do not allow the government to dictate unrealistic and dangerous expectations, that will seriously jeopardize the health and safety of students, staff and their families. Take the time, consult and then act to ensure a safe reopening. By doing so you will protect so many in our TCDSB communities.

Let us all find strength in the words of Saint John Paul II:

You too be courageous! The world needs convinced and fearless witnesses. It is not enough to discuss, it is necessary to act.