



TECT Delegation to the Board of Trustees
November 4, 2020

Thank you to the Trustees for all your efforts.

Due to the ongoing movement of students to and from St. Anne, significant reorganization will occur. Almost every elementary school will be impacted. Over ninety teachers will be declared surplus and hundreds of classrooms will be reorganized, impacting thousands of students within the next two weeks. Similar disruptions will most likely occur once again in February.

The justification for these disruptions is based on parents having the freedom of choice.

Saint John Paul II stated, “Our freedom is not diminished but expanded and fulfilled when we employ it to bring about a true good.”

How “good” or fair is this freedom of choice? Parents who freely choose to move their children to and from St. Anne are imposing a negative outcome on other parents and students. Specifically, three months into the school year, through no fault of their own, or no action by their parents, thousands of students will have their class reorganized, and be taught by a new teacher. Many more students will be placed in combined grades. In the brick and mortar schools, class sizes will increase, and safety will decrease. This is not a good outcome for so many students.

The Board must reconsider the fairness of allowing these opportunities for constant movement.

TECT recommends the following:

- Delay reorganization if possible. If not possible, minimize the disruption and foster safer schools by hiring more teachers. Fiscal responsibility is important, but throughout this pandemic the Trustees have acted to better safeguard the the health and safety of our school communities.
- Put a moratorium on movement of students for the rest of this school year as this movement unfairly impacts other students.
- Do not solve this issue by implementing a hybrid model of simultaneous online and in school instruction. In the Boards where this has been implemented, the parent, teacher and student backlash has been significant. Further, the instructional effectiveness of this model is being questioned and criticized.
- Where the TCDSB has implemented a hybrid teaching strategy, such as with Special Education, a recommendation should be made to pause such approaches and allow for further discussions with TECT on these delivery models.

I appreciate that the operational challenges are overwhelming, and I am confident that these recommendations, if implemented, will bring greater stability to our TCDSB school communities, and enhance the learning conditions of our students.