

Student Achievement Delegation

March 4th

Stephanie De Castro

Good evening trustees, staff, and attendees. I am truly grateful to be able to express both my opinions and student voice tonight. I would like to first and foremost applaud the actions taken in order to integrate the LGBTQ+ community into our school board. Actions taken such as the LGBTQ+ advisory committee at the board level, the lgbtq+ student-led committee at CSLIT, and the resources found on the TCDSB website that are accessible to our student body. We have witnessed great progress in acceptance and inclusivity within this board and it means so much to see as an ally of this community. Although already impactful and meaningful steps are being taken, this does not mean we should slow down. Acknowledging the past systemic homophobia at this board, we have chosen to take accountability for our mistakes and grow from them. But these actions are not enough, we have to keep the momentum going. We have to realize that there is a greater need for the representation of this community more than ever. When creating a natural environment where students can feel safe, when negative stereotypes are erased and when opening the closed minds can be achieved step by step, what's stopping us from taking a big leap this year. Today we ask that the board sees fit that this June 2021 be recognized in all Toronto Catholic District Schools as Pride month as a step in the right direction to develop solidarity in this fight to end homophobia. To allow students to see representation in their own school walls by allowing the pride flag to be raised sending a clear message that we, as a Catholic community are accepting of others. May we also acknowledge IDAHOT, the international day against homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia in consideration of the past and present members of our school community who have faced hate speech, ignorance, and discrimination in their daily lives.

Doing this will help support our student body into standing up for human rights both online and offline and to raise awareness on these issues that affect our generation every day. Personally combatting against homophobia and transphobia in a school setting, it would only feel appropriate to ask for your support to allow the recognition of pride month board-wide as a response that we do not tolerate discrimination of any kind. It is one thing to say you are not homophobic, but it is another thing to show action. I thank you for your time and hope you see this motion fit in the best interest of our student body.