



Good evening.

I am here tonight to endorse the staff recommendation in the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee Report that the TCDSB declare June as Pride month every year, starting in 2021 and that the Pride flag be flown at the CEC and all TCDSB schools.

Flying the flag not only signals that our schools are safe places for everyone but aligns with the TCDSB Mission statement regarding inclusion, staff and student well-being and our Equity Plan.

The approximately five thousand (5000) elementary Catholic teachers of Toronto Catholic District School Board Community strive every day to create safe and welcoming environments for our students, and their families. We promote equity, inclusion and respect for diversity. And yet, despite all of this, some students and staff in our schools who identify as LGBTQ2S1+ continue to feel unwelcomed, excluded and marginalized.

Our TCDSB community prides itself in its belief in the worth and dignity of every person.

The Pride flag is a symbol of the dignity of all people including those in the LGBTQ2SI+ community.

It is a way of recognizing the struggles endured by people who identify as LGBTQ2SI+, while tangibly demonstrating our Catholic school community's support for the human rights of all.

It is a meaningful gesture showing our belief in the unconditional love of God for us all. And it is a small step toward creating a culture that respects the health and well-being of LGBTQ2SI+ people.

I strongly urge the Toronto Catholic District School Board to endorse the declaration of June as Pride month and the flying of the Pride Flag at the CEC and all of our schools.

Thank you.