



TORONTO CATHOLIC DESIGNATED EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS



An Open Letter to Chair Trustee Mr. Joseph Martino and the Trustees for Toronto Catholic District School Board

May 3, 2021

Toronto Catholic DECE Local affiliated with Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario and its members are writing this letter in support to fly the Pride Flag to mark Pride month. I am writing on behalf of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) and our 83,000 members, to ask that our school board designate the month of June as LGBTQ2S+ Awareness Month and require that our school board observe it as such.

The Pride Flag was born from and of the LGBTQ2S+ community. It is an important marker of belonging, acceptance, affirmation, and love for members of the LGBTQ+ communities. It is used by LGBTQ+ people all over the world to say, **"I see myself"**. It is used by communities, institutions, and governments all over the world.

The Pride Flag serves the important role of "voice" for LGBTQ+ people and communities. Importantly, supporters and families of LGBTQ2S+ people are also encouraged by seeing the flag. You need to decide and make the right choice to fly the Pride Flag.

As Early Childhood Educators, community members, educators, and leaders within our TCDSB we know that LGBTQ2S+ individuals already experience far too much isolation, violence, and erasure. It is an important step towards creating a culture that respects the health and well-being of LGBTQ+ people. **"Everyone—whether straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender—should be allowed to show their true colors and be accepted and loved for who they are."**

Cyndi Lauper

Flying the Pride Flag would be a strong message that our school board values and loves all. We strongly urge you to consider flying the Pride Flag and its impact on our community for all.

Sincerely,

Diego Olmedo

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TDECE President

CC : Mr. Joseph Martino Chair of TCDSB Trustee

CC: Dr. Brendan Browne Director of Education