

Good Evening Trustees,

For those of you who do not know me, my name is Val Di Gregorio and I am the President of CUPE Local 3155 representing International Languages at the TCDSB. As always I would like to thank the Trustees for their continued support of the International Language program. This evening on the agenda is a board report challenging policy S.P.05 which references the International Language Program. I have spoken to this before and I will continue to advocate for our program and for policy and procedure to be adhered to.

The International Language Elementary (ILE) program is taught to thousands of students annually and has operated for more than forty years at the Toronto Catholic District School Board.

The cognitive benefits of learning languages include improved memory, critical-thinking, problem solving, enhanced concentration, ability to multitask, better listening skills and better performance in other subject areas.

In today's connected world, proficiency in other languages is a vital skill.

Parents, educators and advocates of International language learning know that children need more, not fewer language skills to compete in a global marketplace. In most European countries languages are a pre requisite to graduating and obviously Canada lags behind.

The IL program is an easy target and is often threatened. by those that do not understand the benefits for students and families. Our instructors have lived without the security of the program since the preferred mode of delivery through the extended day was eliminated.

Following that decision, a survey was concluded of all TCDSB schools in January 2019 and as you know the return rate was the highest ever in recorded history - 25,000 families.

We are not saying that no one has the right to be surveyed we are asking that policy be adhered to at this time.

With 26 days to the end of the school year the report is stating that two schools be surveyed because they feel it takes away from the 300 minute day which it does not. This issue was brought forth two weeks ago at a previous meeting through a

notice of motion and it was defeated. I am at a loss why it is on the agenda again today. It should not be.

The review of the current policy is in consultation and began in January 2021 and the process must take its course.

If policies are in place and they ~~be~~ are adhered to; then why are you considering adopting this board report?

The board has policies and committees in place for a reason and the process should be followed. Please respect and comply with your existing policies until such time as the present policy review is complete. It is only fair to do so. Every school community should be treated the same.

Thank you again for your support of the International Language Program.