

I am coming to you today to respectfully request that you put a pause on increasing class sizes, dissolving cohorts, and in effect tearing apart our schools during the 4th wave of the covid 19 pandemic, the most dangerous wave to unvaccinated children under the age of 12 years old.

Our parents have gone to considerable lengths to get to the bottom of the logic for this decision and its incredible ill-timing. Responses from numerous different stakeholders have been unclear and, at times, contradictory:

1. We have been told that the board must fill classes to the maximum cap and that these mandated numbers meet the objectives of public health and more specifically the directive from the CMOH, and that all the board is doing is adjusting the system to what public health has said is ok. However on Tuesday morning the CMOH said that any reorganizations must be done in consultation with TPH and must take into consideration the risk of increasing class sizes and mixing cohorts. information from the science table and recommendations from the Hospital for Sick Children assert that smaller class sizes are vital to protect our unvaccinated children.
2. Then we are told that Boards need to reconcile student enrolment and staffing alongside the Union rules and collective agreement, but in our exploration of this issue I have yet to encounter an educational professional who would be against a smaller class size, nor have I heard of any schools that will be gaining staff or adding classrooms and receiving relief on class size. So where are all of these teachers going and how is it saving any money?

We are not seeing logic or problem-solving. When we have staff going on the record and saying that there is no scientific proof that smaller class sizes mitigate Covid spread, we know our board is in absolute chaos. And how are we to have any faith in their decision-making? How do you explain to a child that it is safe to sit less than 20cm apart, in a room of 100% unvaccinated children from up to 30 different households and eat lunch?

Board staff assert that even if more funding were to come from the provincial government they would still proceed with the reorganization exercise with the primary objective being to align with pre-pandemic algorithms used to set class size, and use the Covid relief funds from the provincial government to repay the contingency reserve fund at the Board.

The very clear message that the TCDSB is sending to parents is that money is more important than student health, safety, education, mental health and stability, and that refilling the contingency reserve fund is of the highest priority.

At this time we are asking you to:

- pause the reorganization until a satisfactory public health plan is presented that specifically deals with mitigating covid risk involved in the dissolving of cohorts and mixing of students
- make vaccination mandatory for all teachers and staff working in the TCDSB
- consider the actual ability of students to physically distance - particularly in older school buildings - when removing teachers and staff from schools

This is the **WRONG** time to “Right-size” the system. There is too much at stake and everyone in this room must take personal responsibility for the negligence this will result in. You have access to the funds, you need to step up and do the right thing. Our children’s health depends on it.