



DELEGATION REGISTRATION FORM FOR BOARD, STANDING OR OTHER COMMITTEES

Response Summary:

First Name:

Leila

Last Name:

Ouji Stamatakis

Please select the applicable Board, Standing, Statutory, Sub or Ad Hoc Committee at which you are requesting to depute.

Student Achievement and Well-Being Catholic Education Human Resources Committee

Do you wish to Delegate by electronic means?

Yes

Do you require assistance from the Recording Secretary's Office? If yes, please contact the Recording Secretary's Office at delegations@tcdsb.org or the Recording Secretary at sophia.harris@tcdsb.org.

Yes

Do you wish to make your deputation in private session because the matter involves the disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a member of the Board or Committee, an employee or prospective employee of the Board or a pupil of his or her parent or guardian?

No

Date of Deputation:

03-03-2022



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Topic of Deputation:

TCDSB & individual schools within the Board are mandating restrictions on children well beyond provincial restrictions, causing harm to overall child well-being.

Key Issue(s):

1. Children told to face the wall when they ask to drink water during gym (both indoors and outdoors). 2. Masks required outdoors, even during outdoor gym, for JK/SK students when we know that the province doesn't mandate masks for kindergarten children indoors, let alone outdoors. 3. "No mask, no voice" approach wherein children are told they cannot speak without a mask. 4. Designated zones drawn outside on the pavement where cohorts are not permitted to step outside that space while outdoors.

Brief Summary of the Topic of Deputation:

My name is Leila Stamatakis and I am the mother of a kindergarten child in the TCDSB. While we have always followed all school COVID protocols and encouraged our child to do so, over the past year, the restrictions in schools are being taken much further than those set by the province and are hindering overall child well-being. This is happening at the board level, as well as via individual schools that are taking these restrictions to the point where harms (both potential and real) are overshadowing potential benefit of controlling COVID spread. Here are some examples from my child's school. Before I list them, I emphasize that my child's main classroom teachers have been very warm and understanding, and I am grateful for them. However, the school has enforced the below measures which are of deep concern to me. 1. Children told to face the wall when they ask to drink water during gym (both indoors and outdoors). In our child's case, this happened on more than one occasion. This led my child to stop drinking water all together at school thinking that facing the wall was a punitive response to her basic bodily need to drink. While I was told that this was a school policy based on TPH guidance, I was not provided with any policy in writing from TPH to justify this. 2. Masks required outdoors, even during outdoor gym for kindergarten students when the province doesn't mandate masks for kindergarten indoors, let alone outdoors. I



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was told children can step aside 6 feet away from others to take a mask break - something they shouldn't need to request outdoors. 3. "No mask, no voice" approach wherein children are told they cannot speak without a mask. Even this phrasing is concerning to me as a mother of a young child. Children internalize such messages in harmful ways – my child has asked me to not speak at our own dinner table saying I will spread COVID. Our children should never be made to believe that their voices are dangerous, or worse, that their voices don't matter. 4. Designated zones drawn outside on the pavement where cohorts are not permitted to step outside that space while outdoors. The school calls these "fun zones" when there's nothing fun about limiting children's social play outdoors. My child comes from a privileged and loving home, and yet is struggling with these extreme restrictions that are overshadowing her education. I shudder to think how children from more difficult circumstances are enduring this. Children with speech delays and hearing loss are masked, exacerbating inequities for these kids. Children in K to grade 2 are falling behind in sound recognition and early reading. It's time for child well-being to return to the forefront again. While the above measures may have been implemented with good intentions, they are no longer justifiable and are impacting many children – including mine – very negatively. We have access to vaccines, boosters and rapid tests. If the board wishes to advocate for the vulnerable, funding efforts should be directed towards better quality masks to allow very effective

Action Requested:

As the province removes restrictions in various settings, it is important that the school board and individual schools refocus on achieving the well-being of the whole child. It is imperative that the board adhere to the guidance set forth by the Chief Medical Officer of Health. Board trustees and educators are not public health experts, and they should not be taking it upon themselves to interpret public health guidance from TPH and develop and apply policies based on these interpretations.



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I call on the board to adhere to provincial health guidelines for schools, and for the board to ensure that individual schools not be permitted to apply health protocols beyond provincial health guidelines set by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Please select one of the following options:

I am here as a delegation to speak only on my own behalf.

Submission Date:

03-01-2022