



J. Paul Dubé, Ombudsman

**VIA EMAIL:** [brendan.browne@tcdsb.org](mailto:brendan.browne@tcdsb.org)

Toronto, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025

Brendan Browne  
Director of Education  
Toronto Catholic District School Board  
Catholic Education Centre  
80 Sheppard Avenue East  
Toronto, ON  
M2N 6E8

**Subject: Progress report on implementation of recommendations**

Dear Director Browne:

I am writing with regard to my office's ongoing monitoring of the Toronto Catholic District School Board's work in implementing recommendations from my 2017 investigation report, *The Route of the Problem*.

My report examined the oversight of student transportation issues at the start of the 2016-2017 school year by the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB), and their transportation consortium, the Toronto Student Transportation Group (TSTG). My investigation found that the boards' oversight of student transportation and the response to the busing delays and disruptions at the start of 2016 was unreasonable, and I made 42 recommendations, all of which were accepted.

Since then, the Boards and your transportation consortium have made significant progress in addressing the issues raised in my report and improving the provision of school bus services.



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In response to my recommendations, the Consortium has made several process improvements including updating its Request for Tenders process in 2023, in respect of current busing contracts. The updated process required bus operators to bid on routes within defined geographic zones and prioritized operators with experience operating in urban areas. Additionally, the consortium has introduced a new "Incident Reporting" protocol to ensure a clear process for identifying and responding to safety incidents on the bus and refined its portal for communicating with parents. There has also been ongoing training for the "Purple Equals Parent" program, which ensures that children with purple tags on their bags are not dropped off unless their responsible adult is present. The program now imposes penalties on operators who fail to comply. This change will help ensure ongoing child safety.

Given the time that has elapsed since I released my report and the considerable progress made in implementing my recommendations, I have determined that going forward, formal written progress reporting by the boards and the consortium is no longer necessary. My team will continue to communicate directly with the consortium on any outstanding recommendations and any issues and individual complaints that may require escalation.

I would like to acknowledge the excellent co-operation and professionalism that Kevin Hodgkinson and his team have offered to my office over the last eight years and look forward to the continued collaboration on this file.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Dubé', written over a light blue circular background.

Paul Dubé  
Ombudsman

cc. Kevin Hodgkinson, General Manager, Toronto Student Transportation Group (TSTG)  
Clayton La Touche, Director of Education, Toronto District School Board (TDSB)



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