

Written Delegation: TCDSB Mental Health and Special Services Policies

Meeting Date: June 12, 2025, By: Nicole Richard

Dear Trustees and Director of Education,

I am submitting this to formally register my concern with the recently GAP-approved *Mental Health and Well-Being Policy* now on your agenda for final review, and the parent *Special Services Policy*, which is currently under review and at GAP in September.

Despite repeated input, your mental health policies fall short of meeting the minimum standards outlined in PPM 169. While the footnotes of an unfulfilled Action Plan are present, the policy excludes mandated language related to mandatory identity-affirming, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive practices. It does not refer to the Ontario Human Rights Code and omits any mention of students most impacted by mental health challenges. While professional development is noted, it lacks any detail tied to the expectations outlined in the Ministry policy.

Worse, the accompanying Special Services Policy explicitly ties supports delivered by regulated professionals like social workers and psychologists to “Catholic doctrine” alone. This sends a chilling message about the limitations placed on student care within the Board, especially when policies avoid explicit commitments to inclusive practice.

Viewed together, these policies represent a systemic failure to uphold the rights and well-being of students. These are not administrative oversights—they are deliberate, structural decisions made in full view of existing provincial requirements.

This Board can no longer claim alignment with Ministry policy while excluding the foundational elements required by those policies. This moment is not just a policy gap—it is a breach of trust with the students and families the TCDSB serves.

Respectfully,

Nicole Richard