

Melissa Giglio

Response to the Proposed St. Gregory Boundary Changes and support for The Director's Report to keep status quo

This proposed boundary change puts the lives of children, my children at risk. I understand that there are overcrowding concerns at the school but redirecting a community is not the answer. I support the Director Of Education's recommendation to leave the boundaries status quo and find alternative solutions to the overcrowding issues at St. Gregory.

As set out in board report:

Bussing across major highways is NOT acceptable. I understand that there is overcrowding concerns but that does not mean you can put our most vulnerable people at risk forcing elementary aged students across the 427. When looking at meeting notes, from the beginning of this process it seems that not one person brought up the fact that this is extremely dangerous. However, someone did bring up the fact it would be dangerous for the students crossing Eglinton to get to St. Marcellus. It seems to me that the committee sat down and said this community is going to be redirected over the highway as all scenarios at the start of this process redirected this area across the highway with no thought of how dangerous this would be. I was also surprised to hear at the last meeting that the board was only now looking into police reports regarding the safety risk of our children.

Moving special needs programs is detrimental and disruptive to our child. I am a teacher and I cannot believe that this was even considered an option. Again, putting our most vulnerable at risk.

I realize that there is a real problem in schools when enrolment numbers are too high. I agree that it is important the board come up with a long term solution. As mentioned in the board report and discussed at previous meetings, what this area needs is a new school.

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I would like to take a moment to share with you my personal experience crossing the 427 bridge. When my son was born my mother and I decided to get out of the house and take a walk. We crossed the bridge with my stroller and I was terrified the whole time. I ran with my stroller across both on and off ramps, waiting till there was an opportunity to cross, terrified that a car would turn the corner and head for the ramp. When I walked over the bridge and the cars were racing below me I started to have a panic attack. By the time we were halfway across, I turned around with my mother and said I can't do this. We went across that on ramp again. I said to my mother that day there is no way I will ever go near that ramp again. When I first heard about the potential boundary change I immediately recalled that experience and thought I cannot believe that this is even an option.

Before you vote of this boundary change I ask that each and every one of you, drive down to The East Mall and Rathburn, park your car and walk across the Rathburn bridge over the 427. While you are crossing ask yourself would I be ok with sending MY children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews across this bridge? Will I be ok having this on my conscientious should anyone be hurt or killed crossing this bridge to receive their Catholic education?

Thank you for your time.