

Dear Catholic Trustees

Although unable to attend tonight's board meeting, we would like to add our voices to support the recommendation of Director Gauthier to leave the boundary as is for now.

Ironically, the originally proposed boundary review created much angst and divisiveness within the St. Gregory community and really would not have resolved the long term pressure on schools in central Etobicoke. The two community meetings and ensuing discussions created much tension and conflict. Good will and support for Catholic education is something we can't afford to compromise. Why raise so much anger and resentment when it would be only a band-aid solution to the real problem? An enduring and sustainable solution will be to add another elementary school in this area and we are pleased to hear that this is a consideration for the board to undertake.

Clearly there are enrolment pressures on the schools in our community—while this is problematic, isn't it a good problem to have? It means that Catholic education is still valued and wanted by parents in the area. As TCDSB retirees, we know how hard our TCDSB members work to make the schools wonderful centres of learning and belonging and it is affirming to see that parents want their children to attend their local Catholic school—an extension of their local Parish. The suggestion of dividing the St. Greg's community whereby children's safety to and from school risked being compromised made the TCDSB look like student safety was less than important.

Another Catholic elementary school in the area will undoubtedly relieve some pressure on St. Gregory, Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of Peace—hopefully the proposed boundaries will look at proximity to home and travel routes among the many considerations in any new boundary proposals. A more comprehensive, consultative approach will go far in building and growing support for Catholic education in our communities. Our parent groups can be great partners in this process—let's keep communication open and respectful!

Once again, we appreciate the opportunity of expressing support to keep the St. Gregory boundary as is and look forward to a sustainable long-term solution that we can all embrace.

Warmest regards  
Albert and Carmela Giardini