

I would like to submit the following regarding the proposed boundary change for St. Gregory school. I will not be able to attend the meeting personally but would like to have the opportunity to submit my question. My family will be there on my behalf in attendance.

I wanted to reiterate the question I posed to the boundary review committee during the first public input meeting:

My question was along the lines of personal accountability. Making a decision to send kids to attend elementary school across the 427 is a big concern of my families. I realize that you have proposed busing as a solution however, there are many concerns with the reliability of this solution along with the potentially fatal outcome should a child miss the bus and have to walk home from their elementary school. This is not a normal boundary review, as the major concern is creating a migration path across a 400 series highway, with no alternate routes or choices. Additionally, there are no options to control any of the four uncontrolled on or off ramps that enter or exit the highway.

That being said, my question was around the personal accountability of each member of the committee and the TCDSB. You have a very difficult decision to make that, in this rare case, takes the safety and lives of children in your hands. While we trust you will make a decision to keep our children safe, should you decide otherwise and decide to force children across the 427, are you, each of you, personally ready to live with the consequences that a child may be injured or killed while walking across the highway? This is not your typical boundary review and forcing children to cross a highway, with four uncontrolled intersections will, at some point, cause injury to a child, parent or caregiver.

The reason this question is personal to my family is that on November 11th, 2015, our Grandmother was walking across Lawrence Avenue and was struck and killed by a distracted driver. When the police arrived on scene, she was still breathing and died shortly after, in the middle of the street, before the ambulance could arrive. I apologize for being graphic but it's something my family and I have had to live with since the accident. We miss her everyday. While she was our Grandmother, I couldn't even imagine if this were to happen to a child.

Please, take this message seriously. It's inevitable that a child will, at some point, miss their bus and decide to walk to or from school. All it takes is one child, to make this decision, and walk across the highway for a fatal accident to happen.

My question again is, should the committee make the decision to send children walking across the highway to their elementary school, is each committee member prepared to live with the consequences should a child be injured or killed while walking to or from their elementary school?

Again, thank you for your time and we, as a community, trust that many of you as parents yourselves, will make the right decision to keep our kids safe.

Regards,

Mark Schmidt