

To: The Board of Trustees, Toronto Catholic District School Board

RE: Opposition To Admission & Placement of Elementary Pupils Policy ("Policy")

1. Policy Will Have Negative Long-Term Impact On The OLPH & Catholic Community

- Rather than deal with the exclusion of one child from OLPH, many families in the catchment area will choose to educate their children in a non-Catholic system. We know of 15-20 families who were turned away from OLPH last year and **not one family** has stayed within the Catholic board.
- Minimizing disruption to a young child's education & development is a priority for families. Once the children begins a non-Catholic program, it is less likely that they will return to the Catholic board or OLPH, even if spots become available in later grades
- We currently have a daughter currently in JK at OLPH who has a younger sister that is eligible for JK next year. Our children's parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles attended OLPH and received the sacraments at the parish. As long-time members of the school, church and Moore Park communities, we have a vested interest in maintaining the sense of faith, family and education that make OLPH special.

2. Policy Discriminates Against Younger Siblings Of OLPH-Enrolled Students Of In-Boundary Families

- The Policy will deny younger siblings of current students from receiving the same Catholic education in the same community afforded to the elder sibling
- Many families, including our own, purchased a home in the OLPH catchment area in part to ensure that their child would receive a Catholic education at OLPH as part of OLPH community
- Apart from logistical challenges that the policy will pose to families as they transport children between schools, younger siblings will be forced to attend a school away from their community, siblings and friends

3. Policy Is Inconsistent With OLPH Parish Values

- The OLPH community values faith, family and education. This is clearly evidenced by the fact that the families of OLPH students are also active members of the OLPH parish, where they celebrate baptism, communion, confirmation, weddings & funerals
- Forcing the younger sibling of an existing student to attend a Catholic school in a different neighborhood is disruptive to these values and the sense of community that is important to OLPH

4. Poor Timing & Execution – Advance Dialogue With Families Regarding The Policy Was Appropriate

- The fact that so many families made submissions and attended this meeting on a short time frame indicates how strongly we feel about the Policy and its impact on our families
- While the Policy was approved October 23, 2014, families were only made aware of the Policy beginning mid-December, prior the holidays (our family became aware of the policy on December 15)
- Applications for JK enrolment are this Thursday, January 8, and yet the only opportunity to voice our concerns regarding the Policy is tonight, January 6
- The ‘last minute’ communication of the Policy by the Board inhibits appropriate debate, consideration and dialogue between with OLPH stakeholders. Earlier communication and discussion of the Policy would have fostered goodwill & co-operation, and potentially a more viable solution.