APPENDIX B

Secondary Admissions Consultation Sample of Comments submitted

1. **(a) Each grade 8 student shall be directed to one (1) secondary school based on the boundary of the elementary school to the secondary school. Each grade 8 student shall have the option of selecting two (2) other secondary schools, and may be considered for placement based on the proximity of the secondary school of choice to the home address of the student, program and space availability.**

YES/AGREE = 29.51 %

I agree you should attend your closest high school, however when different programs are offered at different schools, then grade 8 students should be given the option of attending those schools if those programs fit their educational choice.
This if fine as long as the school in the child's area is a "regular" high school, I would feel sorry for children who are forced to attend a high school like Mary Ward where the kids learn at their own pace without the same level of instruction that regular high schools offer. Only excellent learners can excel in a school like that.
Agree with have option based on home address

NO/DISAGREE = 69.46%

Taking away the choice from parents is arrogant. Forcing students to schools will only push them to the public board or private schools. Shame on us for this type of arrogance!
This process is very restrictive and eliminates choice for the student to select a school that is best suited for their individual needs and interests. The proposed changes does not offer best fit for each individual student. It is the responsibility of the TDCSB to ensure that students are placed in a learning environment where they can flourish to their

greatest potential. The proposed changes eliminates any such opportunity. I will consider removing my children from the TCDSB.
This type of arrogant thinking will encourage parents to send their children to either public schools or private schools. Disappointing to see the TCDSB considering this narrow-minded thinking!
I'd like my children to have more than one option when it comes their secondary education.
there should be freedom of choice
gr 8 students applying for regional specialty programs should be able to choose the school with the specialty program as their first choice, regardless of geographic boundaries. What's the point of having specialty programs if the only kids that can attend are the kids in the geographical boundary of that specialty program? Kids that have an interest, are competent and skilled, they should be in specialty programs. Perhaps the Board should invest in putting specialty programs in more schools
Each grade 8 student shall have an option of selecting secondary school of his choice and may be considered for placement based on his academic achievements and space availability.
If a school has a special program that a student is exceptional at, they should have access. Further, in the spirit of Catholic Education & inclusivity, there are a host of reasons why we should open our doors to all. Geographic regional concerns usually work themselves out organically.
The admissions requirements/boundaries should NOT be changed. I have two children attending St. Pius and I want them to attend Bishop Allen. We moved to this area for these schools.

OTHER COMMENTS/CONSIDERATIONS:

Mary Ward is Self-Directed Learning. Mary Ward is *unique* in the TCDSB, the GTA, and the Province of Ontario. Mary Ward does not have a Self-Directed Learning *program* the way other high schools have an Advanced Placement program or an International Baccalaureate program or a Regional Arts program where *some* students participate in the program and other students attend "regular" secondary school. Given that 100% of the student body at Mary Ward is immersed in Self-Directed Learning, it is inconceivable that a student who does not want to participate in Self-

Directed Learning would be forced to attend Mary Ward. The first principle for success at Mary Ward is that the student has to freely choose to attend and be immersed in SDL. To do otherwise will guarantee failure. No student from any elementary school identified as a feeder school for Mary Ward CSS should be forced to attend Mary Ward. While a student from an elementary school traditionally identified as a feeder school should have priority status and a reserved space, any student from across the TCDSB who *wants* to attend Mary Ward, given available space, should be admitted. A paragraph reflecting Mary Ward's unique status as a Self-Directed Learning school, not strictly a geographically-based secondary school, neither a "specialty" program with specified admission criteria, needs to be added to the Regulations to reflect this reality.
Need to explain how the factors are weighed: are they all weighted the same? Is the effect of the policy that if there is space and the school has a special program then students closest to the school will have preference to get into the special program? If so, this does not seem to be fair or effective at reaching the best students - especially given that specialty programs which should be looking for talent rather than proximity to the school.

2. **As an alternative to consultation question #1, applicants for single gender secondary schools, priority for admission will be given to applicants attending the closest elementary schools, pending program and space availability.**

YES/AGREE = 33.09 %

I am opposed to single gender schools in a publicly funded system. However, if they continue to exist then I believe priority should be given to applicants from local elementary schools.
I believe elementary schools need to be the feeder schools for secondary. The closest elementary school should get first priority to the high school closest to them. This provides a consistent process for the students and their families.
Not sure why the rules would be different for single gender secondary schools?
Single gender schools should be populated by local students first because this is beneficial for extra-curriculars, programming, events, etc... Seeing that students who live in the area will more likely contribute to the activities that occur outside of class time because they live nearby.

NO/DISAGREE = 64.76%

This is unfair to St Joseph's College School which is located in downtown Toronto. Currently SJCS students come from 48 elementary schools. Only 25% from feeder schools.
This policy will disproportionately affect St. Joseph's College School, which has a long history of girls' education. It draws on a population from across socio-economic backgrounds and from across Toronto.
I disagree this this. I feel that if a student wishes to attend a single gender school, priority should not be given to feeder schools. It is unfair to a student given the new very strict boundaries in the elementary panel. A student should not be denied entry to specialized school because of what elementary school they attended or did not attend.
Single gender schools should be considered as Specialty Schools and applicants should be considered regardless of home or Gr 8 school location.
Students should be able to go to the school that will provide them with the best chance to succeed after secondary school is complete. That is not always the school that is closest to the elementary school they went to.

OTHER COMMENTS/CONSIDERATIONS:

How are you going to fill the single gender schools only from the surrounding areas? You are making a questionable assumption that this will fill your single gender schools.
If a child is choosing to go to a single gender school, they should have more than one. For girls there are a number of schools again looking at the rating I would not want my child attending the school that you force my child to attend. Also for boys there are only 3 school, maybe the board needs to review the all boy’s school need, and maybe add a new all boy’s school. I am sure that the board will see an increase of registration for elementary schools that feed into certain single gender high schools.
Ask yourselves...is this "rule" put in place to benefit the student learning? or to benefit those in administration? At the end of the day, if this does not benefit student learning then it should not even be considered

3. **Each grade 8 student shall be provided a list of Regional program options (as listed below) based on the boundary of the elementary school to the secondary schools which offer these Regional programs.**
    - **French Immersion**
    - **Extended French**
    - **Congregated Advanced Placement**
    - **Regional Arts Program**
    - **STEAM, STEM, MST, MSE**
    - **International Baccalaureate Program**

YES/AGREE = 44.22 %

Yes, but these should not be used to choke out (historically... Regina Pacis, Brother Edmund Rice, Marian Academy and more recently Don Bosco). Some schools are getting smaller and smaller while schools in 'nice' neighbourhoods are overflowing.
While I agree with offering students choices in all streams available I am concerned that the benefits of maintaining a community and "life-long" friendships nurtured in elementary school will be lost.
I agree as long as there is a high school in each area offering each of these programs. Again I feel it is unjust to deny entry to specialized school because of what elementary school they attended or did not attend.

NO/DISAGREE = 54.28%

By limiting choices, the TCDSB will lose hundreds of students to the TDSB and private schools. Parents want to be able to send their children to the school that best suits their child's potential.
This change does not allow for programs to use best and brightest students at their disposal. Will likely see a drop in excellence in such programs if proximity is given such a high weighting to acceptance.
Admission should never be based on perimeter. It’s shortsighted and discriminatory.

If a specialized program is deemed a child's "best fit" and parents can find a way to ensure they can get to the school, these opportunities should not be dictated by the TCDSB. TCDSB should not deny admittance geographically - there are enough checks and balances for these specialized programs. IF the TCDSB offers the program it MUST employ qualified professionals and have the physical space to house these programs.
I strongly disagree with all boundaries placed on Regional program options, especially CAP and RAP. Applying to more than two secondary schools with Regional program options must be permitted, particularly in RAP. Acceptance into Regional programs should be based on merit NOT geographical location. Directing students to only one school within a boundary greatly reduces the potential and viability of the Regional program. Implementing boundaries greatly reduces the number of qualified students to sustain an exceptional program. Students must be allowed to apply to more than two Regional program option. When applying to a school with multiple Regional programs, such as RAP and CAP, qualifying students must be permitted to enroll in joint programs. Limiting the full reach and potential of exceptional and motivated students is a disgraceful oversight of the TCDSB staff and trustees.

OTHER COMMENTS/CONSIDERATIONS:

Schools have started offering "specialty programs" just to boost numbers. Each school should provide the basics for all students. SHSMs should NOT be considered. Just like Fast Forward it will be replaced in a few years. Schools jumped on these as a way to get funding and the SHSM does not help for post-secondary education
What about the schools that offer these programs informally and non-congregated. Also, is the programming available 9-12? This should be a consideration.
I would prefer to have an exhaustive list of available programs; again this privileges certain areas with greater access to programs to learn more about those programs while keeping other families out of the loop. I hazard to guess that areas with limited programming will receive a shorter list of available programming and be unaware that they can access programming elsewhere. Either make all programming available in each jurisdiction or allow parents to know all programming that is available- this survey is demonstrating that education is not equitable for certain areas of Toronto and by placing these restrictions, certain families will be more privileged or less privileged simply because of their area code.

4. **Students who register for Regional programs and reside outside their identified secondary school boundary, and who withdraw from a Regional program, may be redirected to their designated secondary school for regular program.**

YES/AGREE = 37.02 %

For the most part, this idea works. I understand you are trying to 'weed out' those applicants that apply only to gain access to a school they otherwise would not be able to attend. In the case of students who have honestly given their best effort in programming of choice, and it seems to have not been the right decision, these need to be evaluated on a case by case basis. If there is room in the school for them to stay (undersubscribed), or if removing the student from a 'comfort' zone, and sending them to a location to start over without a network of friends, could be detrimental to the success of that student.
Yes if you say you are going for program and you go for program or you leave. Yes this is what I'm talking about. It's called follow the rules. Oh you don't live in the area you just moved wink-wink OK no problem in September you go to school x in your designated boundary.
Without this rule in place children may apply to a regional program only to get into the school. The place that student held can be given to someone else who will be in a regional program throughout high school.

NO/DISAGREE = 61.24%

Just because a student attempts a special program and decides it's not for them doesn't mean they should be penalized and have to move schools. What are we teaching these kids...if you try and fail you will be punished....shame on you!!!!
Once a child has established roots in a particular secondary school, "punishing" them by moving them to another school if they are struggling in the program is not appropriate.
I believe that sometimes the program in which the student is enrolled in does not always end up being a good fit for the student. Things change, and I believe that we should support the students and not punish them. The school is their home away from home, their safe place and they should not be forced to leave.
This has social as well as emotional impacts on children - removing them from the school, teachers and friends that they know for purposes of accommodating a policy seems to forget that people are involved here - these children are not numbers to be shifted around like chess pieces as the Board or MOE feel appropriate. So you would kick a student out of a school they are already attending? Maybe the program was not what they thought it was, maybe something in their

personal life has changed their situation and the program is too intensive. But you would take them away from the personal connections and friendships they have built because they do not live in the area?

OTHER COMMENTS/CONSIDERATIONS:

Perhaps that they remain in the program for a minimum number of years and consultation should occur with the student to ensure that the student is dropping out of a program because it was not suited for them. Sometimes students come into a program and it is not what they expected or something that compliments their strengths as a learner
There should be a time limit on how a forced transfer can occur based on years enrolled. For example, if a student has been in a school for 2 years or more while in the program and withdraws from it, forcing a move so far into their career would be detrimental to their social and academic development. Allowing students to stay if they drop from the program after 2 years would prevent the obvious loophole of enrolling in a program just to get into the school they want and then dropping once accepted.
I do not totally agree nor disagree. I believe it is appropriate to utilize may as there are many reasons why students may decide to withdraw. While some may feel that students apply so they can just get into that school, i do not believe that this is a majority of students. I really do not believe a student who have truly made an effort in a specific program who now is in grade 11 and decides they do but wish to proceed given marks, after investing 2 years at the school to start over at a new school does not really make sense here. There are further issues that can arise. Generally there are more spaces in grades 11 and 12 so I believe they should be able to stay. What are the number of students who drop, what grades and why? I believe this information should be reviewed before you consider this. How much of a problem is this? Is it localized to some areas? Are there other ways to handle this?
I believe every parent wishes for their child to remain in the program for which they were accepted. Entry to these programs comes because children work hard to achieve their grades and artistic abilities. Why should they be penalized if for example there are injured and can no longer dance, or a circumstance arises where they are no longer able to fulfill the requirements of AP (despite all efforts). In addition, to uproot a child in the middle of their high school years, and force them to make new friends and have new teachers would bring on even greater issues for that child.

5. **Siblings currently enrolled in an elementary school with an older sibling at a secondary school will be grandfathered from this policy until the last sibling graduates.**

YES/AGREE = 63.53 %

We need to grandfather these students because it will be possibly disruptive to the families in whole. Because the boundaries are not truly defined in secondary. Families living outside the boundary that are sending one child to the school will most likely need to send a second or third. We should accomodate b/c we sent a precedent to leave the first one attend.
Reduces stress from the parent(s) having to get 2 or more children to different schools each day. No conflict when it comes to plays, sporting events, award ceremonies; report card review nights, concerts, etc. Also provides financial relief (same gender; reuse the uniform).
Family considerations are important. Also avoids significant immediate impact on schools when the policy is implemented. A phasing in, in a sense.
Keeping a family together is a great aid for parents and for the unit. A common schedule and knowledge of one system is a great benefit especially when parents are working to support initiatives, sports teams and other activiites within a school community.
The sibling rule provides an opportunity for students who would otherwise be unable to attend their top choice school to do so. IT should remain.
This has always been the case and is a good option for parents and commuters. Also helps with the transition from elementary school if an older sibling is present to guide younger sibling.
As parents we strongly feel that when a sibling attends a high school, a younger sibling should be able to apply to the same school - PERIOD! There is a very good reason that the first child has been placed at a particular secondary school and we would want our younger child to have same opportunity. Also, WE DO NOT WANT TO HAVE TO DEAL WITH 2 DIFFERENT HIGH SCHOOLS BECAUSE OF A POLICY. THIS WOULD NOT BE FAIR OR EQUITABLE. IF my children COULD NOT attend the same high school, then We WOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER REMOVING our children from the TCDSB/Catholic Education and place them in another board or PRIVATE SCHOOL. After living in our community for over 50 years, this would be very upsetting but necessary. We strongly feel that a sibling should have the opportunity to attend same school - clause or no clause. Siblings SHOULD NOT be SEPARATED and made to attend different schools.
This is completely fair as it would cause undue hardship to the parents.

We do not want to separate families and make issues more difficult. Separating siblings will increase stress on students and families should they be forced to attend different schools.

NO/DISAGREE = 23.27%

This is not fair for those single child family!!!!!
We need a new school in our area!!! I do not agree with this new change!
This is not a fair policy to other children who do not have a sibling in that high school but want to attend
I disagree with this policy! This is secondary school. Parents don't need to drop off and pick up as they do in elementary school. I don't think it's fair to grandfather this because some students who live in the area may not get in because other siblings from far away are taking the spots. If the family doesn't like it, they can move all of their children in secondary school to their local school to keep them together.
Why is it a "right" to have access to a school were a sibling attends to the exclusion of others. This discriminates against single child families.

OTHER COMMENTS/CONSIDERATIONS:

INCLUDING MEDD students. TCDSB treats its Spec Ed department like it doesn't exist - more change needs to be done. It is not fair that these special people are being mistreated and not included like everyone else.
I think this needs to be clarified. The LAST SIBLING is the youngest of my children (hence the last sibling) BUT they are 4 grades apart - in our case Grade 8 and Grade 4. Hence my oldest daughter will be in Grade 12 when my youngest daughter is applying for a high school. Can she get into my daughter's school or not based on the rule as written?
I do not believe in this policy change so I don't think there needs to be a grandfather policy. If this policy is imposed then there should be a grandfathering of this policy and considerations should be done as to the implications to those students that are grandfathered. For example if a student is part of an AP program, the AP program and courses offered need to remain status quo as they current stand until the last student graduates.
This policy must be extended to AP, RAP and other regional specialty programs as well. Otherwise, the board is unnecessarily treating students differently (why should one kid be grandfathered while another whose sibling is I. A specialty program is not). That is an equity issue which the board needs to address!!!!

6. **Grade 8 students who have a sibling currently attending and returning to secondary school, where the sibling is in a Regional Program, will not be granted automatic admission under the sibling rule. The grade 8 student will be required to apply through the specified process for admission to be considered for placement to the same school.**

YES/AGREE = 30.40 %

I agree but requires a GRANDFATHERING caveat. This caveat applies to ALL secondary students and their siblings regardless of program. A sibling, currently in an elementary school, of a student in a secondary school will be automatically admitted to the same secondary school, provided the older sibling is returning to that school and regardless of what program the secondary sibling is currently registered. This grandfathering statement provides time for parents to understand and plan for their families given the implementation of a new policy that will impact their children.
Agree that the sibling should also apply through normal procedures, but the application should allow the student to identify themselves as a sibling, as a factor to be considered
Specialized programs have criteria....audition, grades, etc.... Being a blood relation is not a valid criteria and compromises the integrity of the specialized program

NO/DISAGREE = 68.47%

It is very clear that the province and the board is not thinking of preserving Catholic Education. You should be encouraging students to come to your schools. The moment you start making things more difficult and stressful for parents, they will take the easy way out. That will mean choosing to walk down the street to the nearest public high school.
This contradicts the TCDSB's core values of family. Siblings should be able to attend school together. There is much demand on parents to be involved in school communities, and 'spreading' their children out amongst a number of schools makes that difficult if not impossible. The actual number of younger siblings attending schools for regular

programming in which an older sibling attends a Regional program, couldn't be so high as to skew numbers one way or another. I am sure this number is negligible. I would like to be provided with that statistic.
This will likely frustrate the already busy and complicated lives that most families lead. Again, school choice should be based on the needs of the students and not a maze of rules unrelated to student needs. The above potential rule may separate siblings for no reason other than geographical rules.
This is a VERY unhealthy policy for families, and must not be put into place! As a Catholic School Board that is supposed to be forming students according to the Catholic faith, I am shocked that the board would not respect the needs of families to keep siblings together for ease of commute and for emotional support. Children in a family benefit from being together where they can support one another. One of the Catholic graduate expectations is to be a "caring family member". How can this school board justify teaching this to students, while failing to respect vital family networks itself?!?!
Siblings are siblings, regardless of the program, and should not now be separated by this proposed new boundary system which has changed some catchments quite dramatically.
This divides families as well as parish communities. What are you thinking?? This will be the end of fabulous programs such as at Father John Redmond. My child might as well go to Public School.
You want to bring communities ('family of schools') together, yet split families apart. Is that the Catholic way?

OTHER COMMENTS/CONSIDERATIONS:

Can it not be a tiered approach with those who qualify via admission process and have a sibling enrolled given priority over those who just qualify via the admission process?
This seems like it is going to destroy the future of most children. What happens when the school district is in a poor demographic? Do these children have to attend a school in their area as opposed to a school in a different economical demographic. Seems like a very American thing. What you are proposing works well for some but not all. What this did do was prompt me to look into the TDSB as those schools are actually better in respect to performance then Catholic schools - (in my area and rhe schools area) which also means I will change funding options on my property taxes to TDSB