B09 Memo CPPG inputs from some W8 schools

Presented by Yvonne Yeung, CPIC Rep for Ward 8 on Nov 9, 2017

Consolidated feedback/concerns regarding the formulation of any new PARG/CPPG process:

1. Any new PAR process should include alternate or different opportunities for parents and families to express their views.

2. Should a third party with more knowledge of demographics and/or factors that influence school closure be involved in the process?

3. Can parent communities be involved in the decision to create PAR clusters before they're finalized?

4. Should schools at or near capacity even be involved in these types of processes?

5. Can more definite timelines for these processes be provided in order to reduce stress on the school communities involved?

6. the new guidelines should include doing a "FEASIBILITY STUDY" not just for the TCDSB properties but all the affected community. (such as the neighbouring schools, parishes, municipal buildings e.g. library, recreational centres, community centre) Safety should be the priority. The geographical effect of any future school closures.

note: the original recommendation in one of the cluster was to close 2 schools to transfer 200 students to a 100% utilized school (300 students)which does not have the physical space to allow for such expansion.

closing schools will also close 2 thriving day care centres, leaving the community to scramble for licensed child care

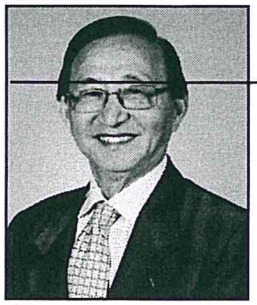
7. community stakeholders will be an integral part of the plan to properly utilize our school space

-MPP, councillors and a senator have voiced their support of our community-their involvement in the process is important

call for an immediate moratorium (stop) on the PAR review process currently underway and link it to the new Ministry PARG/CPPG consultation review process that the Scarborough schools want to participate and contribute before TCDSB submits its responses to the Ministry's questions.

MPP Raymond Cho, Councillor Chin Lee , and Councillor Neethan Shan aptly characterized it in their letters.

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Dr. Raymond Cho
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Scarborough-Rouge River

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November 9, 2017

Trustee Angela Kennedy
Chair of Toronto Catholic District School Board
80 Sheppard Avenue East,
North York, Ontario M2N 6E8

Re: Moratorium on School Closures

Dear Ms. Kennedy,

As a Member of Provincial Parliament for Scarborough Rouge River and a former Toronto City Councillor for 25 years in the same area; I have taken the liberty of writing this letter to categorically support the moratorium on the closure of three schools in my riding - St. Gabriel Lalemant Catholic School, The Divine Infant Catholic School and St. Rene Goupil Catholic School. Further, based on Ministry memorandum B09, dated June 28th, 2017, I ask that you choose to halt the current PARG review process as it is one of the options provided by the Ministry memorandum, and keep all the schools open.

During the past year, I attended several community meetings held at different schools together with TCDSB School Trustee, Mr. Garry Tanuan of Ward 8, school Parent Council leaders, parents at the schools under review including staff from TCDSB. It was clearly apparent the frustration and deep concerns being experienced by the parents and students of these schools. The last thing that everyone wants is to have their schools closed and have to move to somewhere away from their community.

Earlier this year, I raised the concerns of our residents at the Legislature and asked the Minister to redress this issue. On June 28th, 2017, the Ministry issued the memorandum B09 which permits the Board to halt the PARG process if the process is still underway and has not reached a verdict.

By placing an immediate moratorium on the school closure process, you will stop the uncertainty in the minds of the parents & students about the future of their schools that led to a decline in enrollment and allow time for the schools to rebuild & motivated community to grow.

The uncertain atmosphere created by this process has had an adverse effect on our schools. A case in point is St. Gabriel Lalemant; the school's enrollment was at a healthy 90%. The latest capacity number is significantly lower, 22% lower at 69%. Parents uncertain about their local school's future have found alternative options. A large number of the parents & students have migrated to the local Public School system. The process itself is causing schools to lose students.

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As a 25-year City Councillor, I can attest that the schools are an integral part of our communities. Beyond being the central part of the education venue for our kids, the schools provide the community space for our communities to meet and participate in the electoral process. It is very vital that our children live in close proximity to their schools. For years we have been asking that kids return to walking to school to alleviate the vehicular traffic congestion around the schools during the drop off and pick up. Increasing the pupil numbers per school would unintentionally increase the vehicular traffic around the school and cause further unsafe areas around the schools.

While I understand the challenges that the Boards and the Ministry of Education face in the rural parts of the province, I don't understand why the Ministry lumped the rest of the school boards in urban settings in the same vein. The anxiety that the report from the Ministry has created and the vagueness of their Memorandum dated June 28th, 2017 is reprehensible. The uncertainty surrounding the future of the school is further exasperating the situation when frustrated parents uncertain of the future of their local school are making the drastic moves and finding alternatives to the Catholic schools.

In the meantime, I urge you to halt this process of school closures within the Toronto Catholic District School Board.

Should you need any further information please feel free to contact myself at any time.

Sincerely,

Raymond Cho

Dr. Raymond Cho
Member of Provincial Parliament
Scarborough-Rouge River

cc: All TCDSB Trustees
TCDSB Director of Education

APPENDIX 'H'

Councillor Chin Lee

Scarborough Rouge River – Ward 41



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November 8, 2017

TCDSB
TCDSB Board of Trustees

Dear Board and Trustee Members:

I wish to add my voice to the concerns surrounding an issue that is presently impacting many of the constituents in ward 41, their families and those of their children. The TCDSB led Pupil Accommodation Review initiative underway in conjunction with the Ministry of Education's Public Accommodation Review Guideline (PARG) and Community Planning and Partnership Guideline (CPPG) process is an important one and its effect significant and long lasting.

I have, by way of my staff, expressed concern surrounding the ongoing safety of commuting children as it pertains to tabled decisions of school closures, and have some assurances through discussions that safety measures remain paramount.

At this time, however, and with the understanding that you have the ability to choose and suspend the PAR process, I respectfully request the Toronto Catholic District School Board consider a stay in any further strategic decision making in order to facilitate further community stakeholder (school communities') participation in providing feedback (concerns and recommendations) as encouraged by the Ministry surrounding the PARG and CPPG reviews before them, with submissions required no later than Wednesday December 6, 2017.

I appreciate that this issue is a weighted one, as many layers and criteria need to be and have been carefully and most caringly considered, but with such an important impact on our communities hanging in the balance, it is my hope that you will defer and take into consideration the imminent changes anticipated by the Ministry's reviews of the above guidelines, that will encourage greater joint responsibility for integrated community planning, and stronger collaboration among school boards, municipal governments and community partners.

Thanking you in advance for your kind consideration of this request to support our communities with a moratorium on school closings.

Sincerely,

Councillor Chin Lee
Ward 41, Scarborough-Rouge River

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TORONTO Councillor Neethan Shan

Ward 42, Scarborough–Rouge River

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9 November 2017

Dear TCDSB Director Rory McGuckin; Chair of the Board Angela Kennedy, and Board of Trustees:

I am writing this letter to request that you place an immediate moratorium on school closures in Scarborough based on Ministry of Education memorandum B09 that indicates that the PARG/CPPG review process is undergoing an overhaul as directed by the Ministry.

I would like to request that you keep St. Gabriel Lalemant Catholic School open.

Schools are the heart of our communities. Apart from the vital education that children need in close proximity to their homes, schools bring families and neighbours together, provide community city services and represent the strength and the social bonds of our neighbourhoods. The impact of school closures on communities is enormous and at times devastating.

St. Gabriel Lalemant for example, is at 69 per cent capacity now which demonstrates a healthy number of students and a vibrant surrounding community with many families. However, the school utilization has been reduced from 91 per cent two years ago, since the school closure process began. The process itself is causing schools to lose students because it puts the future of the school in question.

By placing an immediate moratorium on the school closure process, you will stop the uncertainty in the minds of the parents, guardians and students about the future of their schools that leads to a decline in enrollment, and allow time for the schools to rebuild and motivate the community to grow.

Therefore I ask that you choose the option provided by the Ministry of Education 2017: B09 memorandum to halt the Pupil Accommodation Reviews underway and allow the school communities to provide input to the Ministry's call for feedback to the new Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline (PARG) and the Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline (CPPG).

If the provincial government recognizes that the Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) process for all school boards "*requires an overhaul*", and the Ministry of Education is beginning the process of revising its PARG to "promote inclusion of community impact alongside the focus on student achievement and well-being", then now is the time to stop any more school closures in Scarborough.

I understand that the Ministry of Education is revising its Community Planning and Partnerships Guidelines (CPPG) to "encourage joint responsibility for integrated community planning, with a focus on communication between school boards, municipal governments and community partners." Therefore, I look forward to working with the TCDSB on this matter.

Sincerely,

Councillor Neethan Shan
Scarborough-Rouge River
Ward 42

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