



Parents Advocating for Safe, Well-Maintained Schools
in the Toronto District School Board (TDSB)

SUBJECT: Governance panel simply distracts from the more urgent issue of inadequate funding

April 13, 2015

Dear Premier Wynne, Minister Sandals, Deputy Minister Zegarac:

While governance of school boards is an important topic, the TDSB Governance Advisory Panel seems merely a distraction from the more urgent issue of funding.

This panel will not include any discussion of funding and, as such, will not address the real issues that impact TDSB student safety, wellbeing and ability to learn. Instead, this panel seems only to distract from the pursuit of funding solutions that would resolve urgent issues such as the \$3.3-billion repair backlog, cuts to special education and overcrowding at 146 TDSB schools.

This panel will also not include the Province's role in governance, even though the Province has power over both the money and major policy decisions pertaining to public education. This approach conveniently absolves the Province of any responsibility for the issues plaguing TDSB schools and continues to place all blame on the TDSB. In refusing to take any accountability, the Province is undermining public confidence in the TDSB. As such, will you please:

1. Stop blaming the TDSB and start working with the TDSB and the City of Toronto to find funding solutions to resolve key issues such as the \$3.3-billion TDSB repair backlog, cuts to special education and overcrowding at 146 TDSB schools?
2. Stop citing selling off public schools as the funding solution for outstanding repairs and improving student programs and, instead, commit to your mandate of using schools as community hubs? Even if the TDSB were to immediately sell off all 130 schools operating at 65% utilization or lower (as per provincial calculations), there would be over \$1-billion of repairs in the remaining 458 schools.
3. Release emergency funding immediately to repair all leaking roofs and complete every "urgent" repair currently outstanding at TDSB schools to ensure children attend school in safe, well-maintained buildings?
4. Commit to using information from the TDSB Governance Panel in a manner that does not subject TDSB children to a massive reorganization at this time, such as splitting up the TDSB into smaller boards, which will only continue to delay the pursuit of funding solutions?

Kind regards,
Krista Wylie – on behalf of Fix Our Schools