

April 3, 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We would like to update you on the John Fisher Junior Public School’s placement process.

As you are aware, the TDSB hired an independent expert, Environmental Consulting Occupational Health (ECOH), to conduct a risk assessment in relation to the proposed development adjacent to the school. Phase 2 of the risk assessment is expected to be completed by mid-April, 2017.

This risk assessment is part of a comprehensive risk management strategy, which was outlined in our letter to parents dated March 21, 2017. While it is the intention of the TDSB that the risk mitigation strategy will allow the school to continue operating at its current location during construction, a final decision will be made following the review of Phase 2 of the risk assessment. If the TDSB determines that it is not safe to remain at the current location, it will relocate the school to the Vaughan Road site.

The intent of the TDSB is to maintain and support a viable French immersion program. Nonetheless, many parents have indicated that even if the TDSB determines that it is safe to operate the school at its current location, they may withdraw their child/ren from French Immersion and seek placement at an English school in the local area.

The Board’s current policy does not consider the possibility that a large number of students would withdraw at once from the same program. In addition, there is the possibility that the TDSB may need to temporarily close a school due to unavoidable circumstances.

Therefore, the Board of Trustees passed a motion on March 22, 2017 to address the placement of students in exceptional circumstances. This was an important step to address these potential outcomes and provide a transparent and fair process for the accommodation of students. In developing and implementing a special placement process, TDSB staff will consider space available, grade, siblings, distance, child care and necessary staffing adjustments. A copy of the Board’s resolution on the motion may be found in the document entitled “Summary of Decisions – March 22, 2017” (see: Agenda Item 18.2), which is posted on the school website.

Parents/guardians who choose to withdraw their child/ren from French Immersion at John Fisher JPS would normally be enrolled at an English school based on their home address. Under normal circumstances, schools would be able to accommodate the few students who apply for admission each year.

The special placement process stated in the motion does not strip any legal rights from parents and does not provide TDSB staff with open-ended or arbitrary powers to place students. The motion sets out specific criteria that staff will consider when facilitating student placement at local schools.

The Director has designated the situation at John Fisher JPS as an exceptional circumstance. Therefore, the TDSB is developing and implementing a special placement process.

It is anticipated that most students will be accommodated at their home English schools such as Bedford Park PS, Blythwood JPS, John Wanless JPS and Hodgson SPS. However, because many students currently attending John Fisher JPS live in the Eglinton Junior Public School’s catchment area, which is over-capacity on a site that cannot accommodate portables, they are likely to be the most impacted. The following schools are being considered to accommodate students living in the Eglinton Junior Public School’s catchment area: Maurice Cody JPS and Whitney JPS.

The TDSB would like to get your feedback on our draft placement process which will be available online, after it is shared at the School Council meeting on April 4, 2017. You may share your feedback with Principal Marlene Harroun by April 10, 2017.

We will communicate the final process to all parents once we receive and review Phase 2 of the risk assessment. For regular updates, please visit the [school website](http://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/johnfisher/Home.aspx).

Sincerely,





Beth Butcher Carla Kisko
Executive Superintendent LC1 Associate Director, Finance & Operations