

# YORK MEMORIAL COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

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Update, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Dear current and incoming students and parents,

We've completed our first week in our new setting and I'm pleased that we are back on course to complete the year. We've experienced a few bumps, and will likely encounter others, but overall it's remarkable that we have been able to regroup in such a short time and after such an unexpected and upsetting event. Again, I want to thank our staff and students for their tenacity and spirit in getting us to this point. Those same qualities will serve us well and see us through to the end of the school year.

On Tuesday, we hosted a meeting for families. It was a terrific turnout. We heard from TDSB staff who have worked around the clock to help us get settled back into school routines. On behalf of the entire York Memo community, I again want to say how appreciative we are for those efforts. To our friends in the George Harvey school community in particular, your generosity and graciousness is something we will never forget. On Tuesday, we also heard from a good number of students and parents. They asked important questions about what happened, how we arrived here, and what comes next. We heard some answers, but for other questions the answers are still, understandably, pending. For those who were not able to attend, accompanying this communication you will find some of those questions we received before, at, and since Tuesday night's meeting.

In the immediate aftermath of the devastating fire at the York Memorial CI building, the collective focus was very intentionally on helping our students and staff process what happened and on preparing to welcome students back to classes. This demanded a tremendous amount of dedication and attention to detail. Now that we are on a solid path to a successful conclusion of the year, we are ready to turn our attention to the second phase of this experience.

TDSB staff have been carefully reviewing viable options for the next school year. Next week, these options will be shared for input from students and parents, including incoming grade 9 families, and from staff. We want to hear your voices. The next meeting of the York Memorial school council takes place at George Harvey CI on May 28 at 6:00 pm. TDSB staff will work with the school council to provide parents an opportunity to review the options and receive feedback before finally

determining where York Memo will be operating in September 2019. We expect to arrive at a decision about September 2019 before the end of this school year.

There is a third, longer-term phase to consider as well. Late on Tuesday afternoon, the York Memorial CI building was released back to the TDSB after having been under the control of Toronto Fire Services and Toronto Police. Staff are now beginning the arduous task of assessing the significant damage, which will then help to inform what happens beyond the 2019-2020 school year. This is a bigger question that will likely involve considerable more time and additional consultation. We do not have an estimated date when that initial assessment will be completed, and then carefully analyzed. However, when we have more information about that, we will share it with you.

Thank you for your patience and understanding. It's important that we continue to take one step at a time and hear from all those impacted so that we are collectively making the best decisions for our students, staff, and school community now and for the future.

Sincerely,

Donna Drummond  
(Principal)