

August 11, 2022

Dear Colleen Russell Rawlins,

We are writing to express our strong concern about, and condemnation of, the TDSB's plan to jeopardize the health and safety of staff as well as students through planned massive staffing cuts to the TDSB Health and Safety Department.

It is inconceivable that the TDSB would cut the number of Health and Safety Inspectors from 20, to 13 without any consultation or rationale, during this time of an on-going public health and safety crisis. We are in the seventh wave of the pandemic, and experts continue to raise serious concerns about the fall. In addition to the pandemic, other health and safety concerns like violent incidents and infrastructure issues are on-going.

We call on the TDSB to prioritize the health and safety of all staff and students who work and learn in the TDSB and reverse these planned cuts immediately.

Currently, the TDSB, the largest school board in Canada, has only 20 Health and Safety Inspectors, to inspect 583 schools and ensure a healthy and safe working and learning environment for over 40,000 staff serving more than 240,000 students from K-12.

These 20 Health and Safety Inspectors identify, assess, control and thus work every day to prevent and respond as quickly as possible, to hazards in our schools.

Specifically, they:

- Ensure that the physical environment staff and students work and learn in is safe and healthy
- Respond to and support on concerns related to ventilation and air quality in classrooms
- Inspect high hazard areas in schools such as boilers, electric rooms, shops, and labs
- Check for and respond to hazards such as asbestos, mold, and lead
- Support on dealing with violent incidents

We have seen what happens in workplaces and in communities when drastic cuts are made to the people whose job it is inspect, prevent, and respond to health and safety issues.

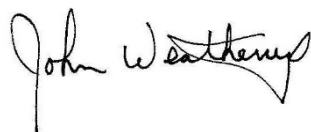
Any decrease in the ability to prevent as well as respond to health and safety issues in our schools will absolutely have an impact on Education Workers, Teachers, and our students and their families.

We urge the TDSB to prioritize the health, safety, and well-being of our students who learn in these sites, and all the staff that work in these sites, and reverse the plan to make these cuts.

Sincerely,



Helen Victoros
President
Elementary Teachers of
Toronto



John Weatherup
President
Toronto Education
Workers/Local 4400



Michelle Teixeira,
President
OSSTF Toronto Teachers



Solange Scott
President
OSSTF, PSSP

