

The Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
5th Floor
438 University Ave.
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

November 1, 2020

Dear Minister,

We are parents, guardians, and caregivers of students in the TDSB French Immersion Virtual School. It has come to our attention that there is a plan to move many of these classes from 100% to 50% French Immersion, and many of us are losing our teachers to other classes. Grade 3 should be receiving 100% French instruction, and Grades 4 and 5 should be getting a gradual reintroduction of English. The disruption this is causing to all of our children is a major problem for us all.

For Grade 3 students to only receive 50% French Immersion instruction while the rest of the TDSB grade 3 students get 100% is unacceptable. This puts them at a major disadvantage for next year, when they have already had to make concessions with the Virtual School program.

Grades 4 and 5 are supposed to receive a slow transition to 50/50 English and French for a reason. Switching them from 100% to 50% literally overnight is outrageous. There are even Grade 6 students who got their first French instruction earlier this month, and 3 weeks later, are being switched again.

We are two months into the school year, and the students have finally been able to develop relationships with teachers and students in an online environment. We have established routines, and anxiety levels have quieted, as each day comes with a familiar face on the screen and predictability. You are now taking that away from the children, and creating an incredibly stressful and inequitable situation for our families.

To add insult to injury, none of us were advised of these changes by the TDSB, but learned of it from current teachers who let us know they were reassigned to other classes. We have all reached out to the Principals, Vice-Principals, Trustees, MPPs and other various members of TDSB and government, and still, no information has been provided.

We are asking for this plan to be delayed until parents can be properly advised on this plan. We need to understand how it affects our children, and specifically, in relation to other children in the same programs/grades across the TDSB. Rushing this through literally over a weekend is disgraceful.

Every single child in the French Immersion program, regardless of in person or Virtual, should be provided with the exact same level of education, and be given the same opportunities to learn. Anything less is shameful.

Sincerely,

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Ward 12, LC2

Bhupinder Johal
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