

FACT SHEET

Jane Finch Action Against Poverty Says - SAY NO TO SCHOOL CLOSURES!!!

From a Community-based Point of View

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is trying to close one or two schools in our community. Driftwood, Shoreham, Gosford, Blacksmith and Brookview are being threatened.

Our understanding is that TDSB wants to sell closed school lands to pay for needed repairs and additions to their buildings because the province will not fund these properly. This sell-off will not solve the Board's problems but it will take valuable community resources away from you and your children. **We are concerned that at least two or three school sites will be sold off here in Jane and Finch.**

The Board will tell you:	We believe:
They are concerned about the children's education and that is why things must change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Boards are being forced to do this because of the provincial funding formula that penalizes boards for having half empty schools even if those schools are doing a good job educating our children.
Research says that a good school should be grades K-8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are good arguments for most grade arrangements. Our three-level system allows educators to concentrate on the learning styles of each level and avoids large factory like schools for our younger children. ▪ A K-8 will put 14 year olds in the same playground with four year olds. Is that the model we want for our children's school?
There should be a 450 minimum enrolment in an elementary school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The 450 number is for that K-8. It can be much smaller for a K-5. Principals should be able to run a good K-5 with 200 students if the board lets them.
There will be fewer transitions for students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transitions are not an important issue on parent's minds. They are more concerned about high quality education, student safety and a caring staff.
Research says that bigger schools are better schools. More specialized areas and staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Again, you can also find experts who will dispute this. But bigger schools mean fewer community based schools. ▪ This is an economic argument. Bigger schools are a bit cheaper to run. ▪ Yes it would be great to have a full time librarian but in a larger school they would have less time for each grade.
The buildings are half empty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only the Board and the ministry care about this. If the local school is doing a good job educating children, why should parents care about the other half of the school? ▪ Community organizations and groups have long

The Board will tell you:	We believe:
	<p>identified the need for community hubs in Jane and Finch. Youth have few safe places for recreation, after school programs and other training facilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The government has a plan to implement all day kindergarten program. The planned closures do not take this into consideration. Where will these children be placed?
<p>There is room for all the students from closed schools in the new K-8 schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The planned school closures do not take into consideration the potential for increase in the Jane Finch population as a result of the new Spadina subway and the Finch and Jane light rail transit lines come into our neighbourhood. ▪ Their figures do not take into consideration the new provincially mandated all day Kindergarten. Will we see 13-14 year olds in overheated portables to accommodate this?
<p>Staff will try to show how declining enrolment will shrink our schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As good as these numbers are, there will be an upturn eventually and these classrooms will be needed again. ▪ As well, the city is projected to have over 1,000,000 people in ten years in in-fill housing. Where will their children go to school?
<p>Nothing can be done about the funding formula.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This is simply not true. We elected this provincial government to do what we think is important and we believe community schools are important.

For more information see <http://www.saveschools.wordpress.com> or email errolly@sympatico.ca
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