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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PSSP TORONTO CONDEMNS DEVASTATING TDSB CUTS THAT WILL HARM STUDENTS, MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS, AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Professional Student Services Personnel (PSSP) strongly condemns the Toronto District School Board's announcement regarding the elimination of hundreds of central positions under the guise of "modernization" and "financial sustainability." While the Board claims these cuts "do not impact classroom staff," the reality is clear: students will pay the price.

These cuts are not administrative housekeeping. They represent a dangerous dismantling of the very systems that support student well-being, mental health, safety, equity, and success.

For years, students across Toronto have experienced increasing mental health challenges, rising anxiety, trauma, violence, housing instability, food insecurity, and the lasting impacts of the pandemic. At a time when students need more support, not less, the TDSB has chosen to gut critical services and reduce the professionals who provide direct support to vulnerable children and youth.

PSSP Toronto is particularly alarmed by the recent decision to alter the School Resource Secondary (SRS) CYW role by removing the Mental Health component. This decision

fundamentally weakens the support structure available to students and sends a devastating message that mental health is no longer considered a priority within schools. The removal of mental health responsibilities from specialized support roles is not modernization; it is abandonment.

The Toronto District School Board cannot claim to support student achievement while simultaneously stripping away the very professionals and services students rely upon to survive and succeed. Students cannot learn when their mental health needs are ignored.

Equally alarming is the TDSB's failure to maintain a protected complement for Psychology members. The collective agreement states that there shall be 128.4 full-time Psychology members. To date, there are only 98 Full-Time Psychology members. Students cannot thrive when supports are eliminated. Students cannot succeed when the adults trained to support them are stretched beyond capacity or removed entirely.

These cuts are also the direct result of chronic underfunding by the provincial government. For years, education funding has failed to keep pace with inflation, student needs, and increasing mental health demands within schools. School boards across Ontario have been forced into impossible positions, and students are now suffering the consequences of political decisions made at Queen's Park.

Just as troubling is the removal of funding allocations for seven Model Schools, schools that were specifically designed to support communities facing systemic barriers, poverty, inequity, and heightened student needs. These schools exist because students in these communities require additional supports and opportunities to achieve equitable outcomes. Stripping funding from Model Schools is a direct attack on equity in public education and will disproportionately harm students who already face significant social and economic challenges.

There is nothing sustainable about dismantling public education supports. There is nothing responsible about reducing mental health capacity during a youth mental health crisis. There is nothing student-centred about eliminating the people who protect, advocate for, and support children every single day.

PSSP Toronto calls on the TDSB and the provincial government to immediately reverse these harmful decisions, restore student mental health supports, and properly fund public education before even more irreversible damage is done.

Public education is not a business model. Students are not budget lines. Mental health support is not optional.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Scott', with a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Solange Scott
President