



COMMISSION SCOLAIRE EASTERN SHORES EASTERN SHORES SCHOOL BOARD

February 18, 2016

M. Ministre
Pierre Moreau
Government of Quebec
Quebec City (Quebec)

M. le Ministre,

We would respectfully request that Eastern Shores School Board be permitted the opportunity to speak before the Parliamentary Commission on Projet du Loi 86. Our presentation will be brief.

We wish to state that we are not opposed to change. On one key point we agree with the Minister. We support the government in their attempt to have parents and schools and centers become more involved in the governance process. We take serious issue, however, that our voices, thus far, have had little effect on the positions espoused by our two previous Ministers of Education over the last several months.

Our resolution to reject Projet du Loi 86 is rooted in our profound concern that the systemic changes to the Education Act will not improve the academic success rates of our students. Eastern Shores School Board is proud of our #1 ranking in the province: both for our 5 year graduating cohort, and the fact that we also led the province in the percentage of our voters who cast their ballots during the November 2014 school board elections. Research shows that incremental change is much more effective and longer-lasting than systemic, large scale changes. For us, the system has been working, and, that allows us to ask the question – “if our system is not broke, why fix it?” Originally, the criticism of our provincial government was that there were an insufficient number of voters participating in the election of school board commissioners. Therefore, instead of changing whole tracts of the Education Act, why not experiment first with the way in which ballots can be cast or the way in which voters lists are constructed.

There are differences in the application of rules governing rural and urban, larger and smaller school boards. We are a very small rural school board and fear greatly, and with great reason, that the vastness of our territory will be a poor fit for the governance structures foreseen in Projet du Loi 86, which will lead to imbalance and inequity of representation across our many communities.

We would be most honored if we were afforded the opportunity to meet with you, in person, and represent our views. We believe we have something important to contribute to this debate - about the future of our educational system and, in particular, the future of our children and their right to have a place in the English-speaking community that represents an important part of the past, present, and future of Quebec.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wade Gifford
Chairperson, ESSB