



**Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec**  
**Quebec English School Boards Association**

Dorval, November 14, 2020

Jean-François Roberge  
Minister of Education  
1035, rue de la Chevrotière, 16<sup>e</sup> étage  
Québec (Québec) G1R 5A5

By email: [ministre@education.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:ministre@education.gouv.qc.ca)

Dear Mr. Minister,

Given the urgency of this communication we are, exceptionally, writing to you today in English. A version in French will follow shortly.

It was with stupefaction that we received your letter of November 13<sup>th</sup>, announcing the resumption of school elections with voting on December 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>.

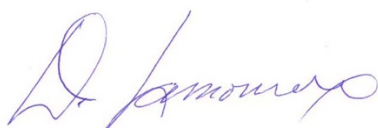
When we met with you just over a week ago on November 6<sup>th</sup>, the QESBA recommended that the elections be postponed until June, health conditions permitting. You gave no indication that your Government was contemplating a resumption of the process in the short term.

The Premier of Québec has been imploring Quebecers to reduce their physical contacts between now and Christmas. To force the holding of school elections on December 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, in the midst of an intensifying and deadly pandemic, is more than questionable from a public health standpoint, is a demonstration of disdain for the democratic process within the English-speaking community, and will be viewed by many as a bad faith strategy to sabotage these elections for important institutions of our community. In two school boards, namely Lester B. Pearson and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the elections cover the entire school board territory for the position of chair, not simply any given ward, and all the elections are currently in “red zones”. May I remind you that the suspension of school elections by Order-in-Council was based, in large measure, on the fact that the affected regions were in “red zones”. Furthermore, we are reliably informed that the recruitment of an adequate number of election personnel in the current circumstances will be extremely difficult if not impossible.

The fact that public health authorities may have, surprisingly, given the go-ahead for the resumption of these elections does not mean that the Government is obliged to hold them on December 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. There is no urgency since the individuals who occupied the various contested positions are still in office and there are no vacancies.

Minister, this decision of the Government of Québec is absurd and should be rescinded. If your Government is determined to proceed with the early resumption of these elections even in “red zones”, at least allow unlimited access to voting by mail, as is the case in many other jurisdictions, in order to protect public health and ensure the best possible opportunity for broad, meaningful voter participation.

Sincerely,



Dan Lamoureux  
President

c.c. François Legault, Premier and Minister Responsible for Relations with English-Speaking Quebecers  
Pierre Reid, Director General of Elections  
Alain Sans Cartier, Deputy Minister of Education  
Steven Colpitts, Assistant Deputy Minister of Education  
Dr. Horacio Arruda, National Director of Public Health  
Dr. Mylène Drouin, Montreal Regional Director of Public Health  
Dr. Jean-Pierre Trépanier, Director of Public Health, CISSS de Laval  
Dr. Eric Goyer, Director of Public Health, CISSS des Laurentides  
Dr. Richard Lessard, Interim Director of Public Health, CISSS de Lanaudière  
Marwah Rizqy, Official Opposition Critic for Education  
Greg Kelley, Official Opposition Critic for Relations with English-Speaking Quebecers  
Véronique Hivon, Parti québécois Critic for Education  
Christine Labrie, Québec Solidaire Critic for Education  
Russell Copeman, Executive Director, QESBA  
Kim Hamilton, Director of Communications and Special Projects, QESBA