



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

January 23, 2017

Mrs. Ghislaine Saikaley  
Interim Commissioner of Official Languages  
Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages  
30 Victoria Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0T8

Dear Mrs. Saikaley,

Congratulations on your appointment as Interim Commissioner of Official Languages.

I am writing you on behalf of the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA). We represent the nine English school boards of Quebec who serve approximately 100,000 students in 340 elementary and secondary schools as well as Adult Education and Professional Training centres.

At our QESBA Board meeting of January 20, 2017 the Directors instructed me to contact you to express our extreme displeasure and dismay at the lack of consideration displayed by Prime Minister Trudeau in his refusal to answer a question in English in Quebec. We certainly do not need to explain to you the surprise and, in reality, shock our network feels in the light of this event.

More than that, and in our capacity as the elected leadership of the education system, we are very concerned about the message that his actions sent to our students. Not only did it marginalize our minority language community but it was an indication to young people that our English community does not count and does not have a full place in an officially bilingual country.

Our Board would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you to discuss this issue and the needs and hopes of the official minority language community of Quebec. Our community has worked, and continues to work, very hard to become proficient in both official languages. We expect our Prime Minister to respect all Canadians at all times.

We hope that a full and transparent investigation by your office will be forthcoming. We look forward to hearing the results of your work and we hope to have the chance to meet and work with you as we continue our efforts to protect, preserve, and promote English as the official minority language in Quebec.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Maccarone". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "M".

Jennifer Maccarone  
President

cc: QESBA Board of Directors  
Mr. David Johnston, Quebec Representative OCOL  
Mr. Marcus Tabachnick, Executive Director QESBA