

EMSB parents take stand against Bill 60

Central Parents' Committee condemns Charter of Values as an attack on cultural diversity and tolerance in public schools

MONTREAL, JANUARY 22, 2014 - After careful consideration, the Central Parents' Committee of the English Montreal School Board is adding its voice to the growing chorus of opposition to Bill 60, the inappropriately named Charter of Quebec Values, and emphatically denounce it as an attack on youth education and a threat to the diversity of the public school system.

Many EMSB schools are found at the heart of cultural communities across the central and eastern portions of the island of Montreal. It is the CPC's view that these communities have built a diverse student body within our public schools, enriching our classrooms with multiculturalism, tolerance and respect for all points-of-view. Our children benefit from experiencing the reality of a 21st century Montreal first-hand, and the CPC opposes any initiative that would damage it. Furthermore, many provisions of the proposed law appear to infringe on rights entrenched in both the Quebec and Canadian Charters of Rights, an unacceptable situation for EMSB parents.

"The parents of the EMSB feel that this misguided legislation will damage the education of our children by limiting their exposure to the diversity of communities in which they live, work and learn," explains Pietro Mercuri, chairperson of the Central Parents' Committee. "We feel that while the government should be secular in action, it should never purposefully exclude citizens from working in support of their community. Bill 60 would force personnel in our schools to make a choice between their religion and their work, and we fear that our children will suffer because of it."

The members of the CPC strongly support a resolution by the EMSB Council of Commissioners that declared that the School Board would not comply with key provisions of the Charter of Values. The CPC will gladly work with the commissioners and administration of the school board to ensure the diversity and freedom of expression of all members of the EMSB community are protected in spite of such divisive legislation.

The EMSB Central Parents' Committee will not present a formal brief during National Assembly public hearings on Bill 60, but instead ardently supports the efforts of the EMSB Council of Commissioners on this controversial subject. The CPC also encourages EMSB parents to sign the National Assembly petition denouncing Bill 60, sponsored by our counterparts at the Lester B. Pearson School Board, as we work alongside our LBPSB colleagues in support of all parents on the island of Montreal. The deadline to sign the petition is February 2.

Central Parents Committee

The Central Parents' Committee represents the highest level of parent governance within the English Montreal School Board. Representatives are selected among delegates from 53 elementary and secondary schools, who are elected annually by parents of students attending EMSB schools. The CPC meets monthly during the school year, with locations listed at www.emsb.qc.ca.

The English Montreal School Board is the second-largest English-language school board in Quebec, with 19,800 students in the youth sector. Found exclusively on the island of Montreal, the School Board's territory extends from Montreal West, Côte-Saint-Luc and St-Laurent in the west, to Point-aux-Trembles in the east.

Source :

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