



April 15, 2019

Bill MacFarlane, Chair  
School District 19 (Revelstoke)  
PO Bag 5800  
501 – 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Revelstoke, BC V0E 2S0

Via Email: [bmacfarlane@sd19.bc.ca](mailto:bmacfarlane@sd19.bc.ca)

Dear Mr. MacFarlane:

RE: Request to Lease Farwell School

I am writing further to my predecessor's correspondence to you dated January 24, 2018, and your subsequent response dated February 16, 2018, regarding the Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique's (CSF) urgent need for additional classroom space in Revelstoke, and our request to lease the Farwell School.

As you may recall, the CSF is a public school board that operates over 41 schools providing French-first language education to over 6,100 students throughout British Columbia. In Revelstoke, the CSF operates École des Glaciers, which has been sharing space with the Arrow Heights School since it opened in 2012. When École des Glaciers first opened in 2012, the CSF leased a single classroom with part of the adjacent hallway and shared other spaces with the Arrow Heights staff and students.

However, since then École des Glaciers has grown to occupy two classrooms in the school and three portable classrooms on the Arrow-Height school site to be able to offer its education, the situation is very challenging for the staff of the school and the Francophone community at École des Glaciers. Some of the rooms available to École des Glaciers need to be shared and are multipurpose by accommodating the Principal's and the Councillor's office within a classroom. You can appreciate the kinds of challenges the



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staff and Francophone community at École des Glaciers face given the overcrowding of our students as a result of lack of space available to the CSF in the Arrow Heights School.

In addition to the correspondence sent to you from the CSF's Board of Regional Trustees over the course of the last several years, the CSF's Secretary Treasurer and spoke and met with the Secretary Treasurer and Superintendent of SD 19 regarding the possibility to lease the former Farwell School that is owned by the SD 19. The Ministry of Education has also approached SD 19 staff in this regard. It is our understanding that the former Farwell school is currently being leased by the Okanagan College and a daycare, and that the facility appears to be underutilized. Therefore, we are once again asking SD 19 to lease it to the CSF to alleviate the serious overcrowding experienced by École des Glaciers at Arrow Heights School.

As was stated in the CSF's previous letter to you, it is our view that the priority for use of closed school facilities belonging to British Columbia school boards should be given to public education programs serving students from kindergarten through grade twelve, before they are leased to other organizations. In this respect, as a purpose-built elementary school, the Farwell School is much better suited to a kindergarten through grade seven school than a college for adults.

While we understand from your February 16, 2018 correspondence (attached) that some of the former elementary school space has been converted to accommodate Okanagan College programming, the Board of Regional Trustees continues to be of the view that the school facility will meet the CSF's needs in Revelstoke. In your February 16, 2018 correspondence you further advised that SD 19 wishes to retain the school site to ensure that the site remains an option for future expansion to accommodate future increased enrolment. We would respectfully point out that this option remains for SD 19 regardless if it is the CSF leasing the facility or Okanagan College and the daycare.

The Board of Regional Trustees appreciates the efforts of the School Board, administrators and staff at Arrow Heights Elementary to accommodate the increasing space needs of École des Glaciers at the Arrow Heights School. However, Revelstoke's Francophone community requires additional and more suitable spaces for its children's education, and the CSF has been unable to identify alternative solutions for its space issues other than the installation of additional portable classrooms on the Arrow Lake School site. Therefore, the Board of Regional Trustees of the CSF once again respectfully



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requests that you consider leasing the Farwell School to the CSF at your earliest opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest opportunity. Should you wish to discuss this request further, I can be reached at 778-977-6274.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Marie-Pierre Lavoie', is written in a cursive style.

Marie-Pierre Lavoie  
Chairperson

cc: Robert Fleming, Minister of Education  
Scott MacDonald, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education  
Joel Palmer, Executive Director, Capital Management Branch, Ministry of Education  
Ryan Spillett, Director, Capital Projects Unit, Ministry of Education  
Mr. Mario Pelletier, President, Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones  
Mr. Jean Johnson, President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadiennes du Canada