

By Email : khpiano@telus.net

Richmond, December 2nd, 2020

Attention: Ms. Katherine Hume

Subject: Response to your letter of October 11th, 2020

Ms. Hume,

First, we would like to thank you for your letter of October 11th, 2020; please excuse the delay in our response. In your letter, you took the time to communicate with us your concerns regarding the plan to expand the Francophone space in our schools, including the school in your area, according to the resolution we adopted on June 30.

As you will be aware, after a ten-year legal battle waged against the Province by the CSF together with the Fédération des parents francophones de C.B. and co-plaintiff parents, the Francophone community finally won its case. In its decision handed down on June 12, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled, citing the section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, that French speaking students of British-Columbia have the right to an education and an experience equivalent to the one of the majority. It was that ruling that led us to adopt the resolution of June 30. We then mandated the administration to consult the communities with a view to enhancing our network of secondary schools, a process referred to as “expanding the Francophone space.”

We are aware that all stakeholders do not necessarily share the same vision of the way in which this process should be carried out, and that each heterogeneous school, along with its host community, has its own unique set of circumstances, which must be taken into account as we move forward. It was with this in mind that we announced, last week, a virtual tour of community consultations to be conducted by the firm Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton (RCGT) to hear the perspectives and concerns of the eight communities that currently have heterogeneous schools. We invite you to consult [the consultation calendar](#) and register for the one in your community to express your point of view and discuss the challenges you foresee. At the end of the consultation process, RCGT will produce a report that will guide our work and help determine how we proceed.

In conclusion, thank you once again for sharing your concerns; we hope you will be reassured by the consultation process, which will provide you with an opportunity to express in greater detail your own concerns as well as those of your children – our students – whose well-being and development remain our top priority. We are committed to extending access to an education entirely in French to all our secondary schools throughout the province, thanks to homogeneous programs. We are convinced that these programs will provide students with an environment that will alleviate their daily struggle against assimilation and allow them to reach their full potential in their Francophone language and culture.

Please accept our best regards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Gatién', written in a cursive style.

Patrick Gatién

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Note: If you would like more information, you may also be interested in [our response](#) (in French) to the Associations de parents d'élèves (APÉs – parent advisory councils) in some of the communities that will be involved in the transition, who also shared their concerns with us. You can access the document with the following link: <https://www.csf.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/ressources/4e4c01b8-cd7f-4ea9-8af6-cb489c2b9e23.pdf>