Association of Administrators of English Schools of Quebec
Association des administrateurs des écoles anglaises du Québec

Montréal, le 8 novembre, 2023

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Subject: Consultation on Bill 23: "*An Act to Amend the Education Act and establish the National Institute for Excellence in Education Act.***"**

M. Rhéaume,

The Association of Administrators of English Schools of Quebec (AAESQ) is a professional provincial association representing over 500 English school, centre, and board level administrators throughout Quebec. Its members are affiliated with ten (10) English school boards, including Kativik, and the Du Littoral Service Center. Among these school boards, the largest two are situated on the island of Montréal, with two additional sizable boards on the north and south shores of Montréal, while the remaining boards encompass the rest of Quebec's territory.

AAESQ (the Association) focuses on promoting and advocating for high-quality education by cultivating excellence in leadership within the public education system. The Association aims to facilitate the development of leadership skills and values, thereby contributing to the overall enhancement of the public education system in Quebec. It also actively represents the interests of the members both within and beyond the education community. Furthermore, its commitment extends to supporting members, addressing their concerns, and communicating to the Ministry of Education the realities faced by the English minority within the province.

AAESQ values the chance to be consulted and present a brief during the consultation on Bill 23: "*An Act to Amend the Education Act and establish the National Institute for Excellence in Education Act*."; particularly with respect to the appointment of school and center principals and assistant principals.

As an initial statement, it is essential to voice the opinion of the anglophone community in saying that Bill 23 directly contravenes Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, affecting the English-language minority's entitlement to manage and control its public

schools. As such, we firmly believe that Bill 23 should not be applied to the English education system in Quebec.

Upon reviewing the Bill, AAESQ wishes to provide comments on three proposed amendments to Bill 23.

1. **Appointment of Directors General by the Minister (Article 198)**

The proposal to modify the process of appointing directors general of school boards, transferring this responsibility solely to the Minister of Education, not only directly contradicts the constitutional right of the anglophone minority to manage and control its schools (as previously mentioned), but also raises significant concerns. This transfer of power elicits apprehensions, as the Minister may not have the requisite insight into the linguistic, cultural realities, and diversities of each English school board across Quebec. This responsibility should be entrusted to the members of the council of each school board who are elected by their constituents. These constituents are members of the anglophone community with vested interest in the education of the English students.

2. **Appointment of School and Center Principals and Assistant Principals (Articles 96.8 and 96.9)**

Regarding the appointment of school and center principals and assistant principals (administrators), we agree that this responsibility be entrusted to the directors general. It is important to emphasize that directors general understand the entirety of their school boards, while recognizing the unique needs of each educational institution within their boards. This awareness empowers the directors general to establish the appropriate selection criteria for appointing the most qualified administrators to each school.

Additionally, it is crucial to highlight that, while within the English education system in Quebec the directors general are appointed by the Council, there must be a clear delineation between the members of the council and the administrators. While directors general of school boards exercise the functions delegated by the council, they must bear the responsibility of shielding the selection of administrators from any political influences. Upholding this practice is essential to guarantee that decisions are founded on merit, objectivity, and the best interest of all parties concerned.

Furthermore, it is vital that, in the process of the appointment of administrators, due respect is given to the management policies of each local association within the school boards. The association argues that adhering to these policies is essential for maintaining appropriate and equitable oversight of appointments, emphasizing its commitment to upholding the integrity of the involved process.

3. **Additional demands by the directors general to the administrators (Sections 96.12 and 96.26)**

The limitation on the amount of work that can be downloaded to the administrators is essential to ensure optimal functionality and performance of schools and centres.

Administrators, as educational leaders of schools, play a pivotal role in overseeing various aspects of the educational process. However, inundating administrators with excessive work can overwhelm their capacity to effectively manage and prioritize tasks. This section does not place limitations on the addition of extra tasks.

By setting limits on the volume of work transmitted to administrators, educational institutions aim to strike a balance that allows leaders to focus on strategic planning, student engagement, and fostering a positive learning environment. This approach ensures that administrators can dedicate sufficient time to key responsibilities without being inundated by an excessive workload, ultimately promoting the overall efficiency and success of the educational system.

Given the Association of Administrators of English Schools of Quebec's (AAESQ) dedication to maintaining a high standard of quality education in the English education system, we align with the Ministry in the common goal of recruiting and retaining qualified and capable administrators to lead teams and improve student success.

Julie Carpentier
President, AAESQ

c. c. : Executive Members, AAESQ
Board of Directors, AAESQ
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