

APÉ ECOLE ENTRE-LACS
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November 9th, 2020

M. Patrick Gatien
President, CSF Board of Directors
13511 COMMERCE PKWY #100
RICHMOND BC V6V 2J8

**Dear M. Patrick Gatien
President, CSF Board of Directors:**

My name is Jodi Edworthy and I am the current PAC president for École Entre-lacs in Penticton. My purpose in reaching out today is in regards to the change to our secondary school's education model that was voted on by the CSF Board of Directors in June of 2020, shifting from a heterogeneous francophone program within Penticton High School to a homogeneous French school. I am writing to represent the general consensus of disappoint from our community regarding the lack of consultation or communication with our affected academic community surrounding this vote and decision.

Although we recognize that a homogeneous francophone program is ideal in principle, the question that needs to be asked is "Is this infrastructure best for our Penticton community?" Currently we have a working, while not ideal, heterogeneous program and a struggling middle school with a high attrition rate. When discussing the strengths of our programs, there must also be an emphasis on our elementary and middle schools to obtain strong and stable curriculums, electives, stable staffing and appropriate outdoor play space for our students prior to moving forth, using funds to dismantle a program that has been running efficiently for several years and create an infrastructure that may not suit the needs of our community. Our academic community has many other priorities that are of utmost importance to retaining our school community.

We find ourselves in a struggle with an under developed middle school program and now an unknown secondary program. At this stage, we don't know whether parents are opposed or for a homogeneous program. The simple fact is that we have not been provided with context or information on how this program will be rolled out and what the final objectives are for the students and this program.

We are at a crossroads. How are we to explain to parents, guardians and students what their secondary education will look like with absolutely no information? Here are some of the questions that have been brought up on our conversations with families:

1. What date will the new secondary program start?
2. Where will the students attend the proposed homogeneous secondary program or school?
3. Which students or cohort will be the last to attend the heterogeneous program currently offered in our community?
4. Will there be the required, staff, teachers and support to provide in-person courses needed and offered to our Anglophone and immersion counterparts?
5. What courses will be provided? What electives? Will there be advance planning?

This is just a small sample of the questions and concerns being expressed at this stage. It is unfair and unjust to our families and our students to be left without any information regarding the future of their francophone education at the secondary level, nor it is acceptable for our community to go without long-required services, programs and accommodations to effectively conduct both successful elementary and middle school programs. Our community needs and requires answers.

Since the vote to close the current heterogeneous program has already been made by the board, we ask ourselves whether the needs and desires of our community are being considered. A significant decision has been made and then released without any information regarding the infrastructure itself. Instead of creating excitement and engagement about improving our francophone program, there is now a sense of disappointment and lack of trust on the part of the families. We find it even further frustrating to know that there is now an upcoming "consultation" process. How is it even possible for our families to make a decision or comment on a program they know nothing about?

The eight communities affected have ideas, priorities, objectives and specific requirements regarding their individual community needs. We have discussed our concerns with the other affected communities and stand in solidarity with them to ensure that the CSF and the governing board take into consideration the needs of each individual community. We were cc'd on the letter from the Sechelt PAC President, lone (attached) to the CSF Board of Directors dated October 29th and agree with many if not all of their concerns and reiterate the importance of respecting the needs of each individual community moving forward.

We are asking for the questions above to be answered without delay. We would like accurate information that we can provide to our families so they can make an educated and informed decision for their children in the following years to come. We request a reply to our letter by November 16th, 2020.

Sincerely,

Jodi Edworthy
Présidente, APÉ École Entre-lacs PAC

Carbon copy:

Patrick Gatien, Chair

Annette Azar-Diehl, Vice-Chair

Marie-Pierre Lavoie, Trustee

Annie Bédard, Trustee

Robert Fillion, Trustee

Marie-Christine Claveau, Trustee

Roger Lagassé, Trustee

Michel St-Amand, Superintendent

Fariba Daragahi, Vice Superintendent

Caroline Picard, Vice Superintendent

Alain Paquin, Vice Superintendent

Marie-Andrée Asselin, Director, Federation of Francophone Parents of BC