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Le conseil catholique d'expression anglaise

The English Speaking Catholic Council (514) 937-2301

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mrs. Angela Mancini, Chairperson
and fellow Commissioners
English Montreal School Board
6000 Fielding Avenue
Montreal, Quebec
H3X 1T4

Dear Commissioners,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the English Speaking Catholic Council, I want to express our dismay that the English Montreal School Board has once again targeted St. Gabriel School, firmly rooted in the Point-Saint-Charles community, in a scenario consolidating its elementary enrolment with a school in another neighborhood, which if retained would result in its Deed of Establishment being revoked on June 30, 2012.

Arguments advanced by all parties affected in favour of retaining St. Gabriel School are compelling. It is our belief that your decision should be made based primarily on how changes are going to affect children and their parents. In this regard, the thought of uprooting children from their environment, being bused two hours a day to and from school, the inevitable loss of parent volunteers and removal from access to other community resources, is deplorable.

We acknowledge that after having to provide for conditions dictated by provincial norms and collective agreements, there is little flexibility left in budgets for school boards. But budgetary balances should not be restored at the expense of social justice.

It is our hope that you will base your decision not on any administrative imperative but rather on the strength and legitimacy of the position advocated in the consultation process by parents and community representatives concerned.

The English Speaking Catholic Council strongly opposes the possible closure of St. Gabriel School, the only English school in Point-Saint-Charles. *When a school goes, so goes the community.*

Yours very truly,

for : Mary McDaid
President