



BY EMAIL: travis.hovland@gov.ab.ca

October 15, 2017

Travis Hovland
Director - Capital Planning North (Alberta Education)
44 Capital Boulevard Building
10044 - 108 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 5E6

Subject: Revisions to the Conseil scolaire Centre-Est Three-Year Capital Plan 2018-2021, submitted on March 31, 2017 to Alberta Education

Dear Mr Hovland,

On behalf of the Conseil scolaire Centre-Est ("CSCE"), I hereby submit revisions to the CSCE's three-year capital plan for 2018-2021 (the "Revised Capital Plan") in accordance with the capital plan submission process described in Alberta Education's email of February 16, 2017, inviting revisions to capital plan submissions where circumstances or board priorities change following the April 1st capital plan submission deadline.

This Revised Capital Plan will be sent by our board chair, Réginald Roy, directly to the Minister. I will also submit the BLIMS version of the revisions to the CSCE's capital plan.

The revisions identified in the Revised Capital Plan submission are essential for consideration by Alberta Education prior to the development of the Province's plans for capital spending. The revisions include new information regarding the CSCE's French-language programming in Lac La Biche, and a new request for École Voyageurs in Cold Lake. All additions in the Revised Capital Plan are underlined, and all deletions are ~~crossed out~~.

The Revised Capital Plan submission is attached as **Schedule "A"**. A Board motion approving the Revised Capital Plan Submission is attached as **Schedule "B"**.

The CSCE looks forward to working with Alberta Education to ensure a quality and equivalent French-language education in its territory.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'MD' with a large loop, representing Marc Dumont.

Marc Dumont – Superintendent

Attachments: **Schedule “A”**: Conseil scolaire Centre-Est’s Revised Three-Year Capital Plan 2018-2021

Schedule “B”: October 15, 2017 board motion approving the Revised Three-Year Capital Plan 2018-2021

SCHEDULE “A”

Conseil scolaire Centre-Est



Revised Three-Year Capital Plan 2018 – 2021

Submission Date: ~~March 31st, 2017~~ October 15, 2017

East Central Francophone/Conseil scolaire Centre-Est

Objectives of the Plan:

- Provide facilities that allow for the provision of the provincial curriculum as required by the *School Act*
- Provide section 23 right holders the facilities required to repair and restore Francophone education and culture
- Provide the facilities necessary to give effect to the rights of separate school electors stemming from section 17 of the *Alberta Act*
- Provide facilities that are functional, attractive and that allow the provision of a substantively equal educational experience so as to not discourage enrolment in French-language schools
- Ensure that CSCE exercises its management rights and owns all of its facilities

Table of contents

Section 1 – Background and Objectives	4
Section 2 – Summary of Priorities	8
Section 3 – Priority 1: École Beauséjour (Plamondon) – Modernization	10
Section 4 – Priority 1: École Sainte-Catherine (Lac La Biche) – Acquisition of school site and building	13 <u>15</u>
Section 5 – Priority 2: École Sainte-Catherine – New K-6 School	17 <u>19</u>
Section 6 – Priority 3: New School in Athabasca	19 <u>21</u>
<u>Section 7 – Priority 3: École Voyageur – Addition</u>	<u>23</u>
Appendix 1 – Floor plan of École Beauséjour	24 <u>25</u>
Appendix 2 – Outline of the costs associated with modernizing École Sainte-Catherine	22 <u>26</u>
<u>Appendix 3 – Letter dated October 12, 2017, from R. Roy to M. Skogan</u>	<u>27</u>
<u>Appendix 4 – Letter dated March 3, 2017, from M. Dumont to T. Hovland</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Appendix 5 – Letter dated March 8, 2017, from T. Hovland to M. Dumont</u>	<u>34</u>

Section 1 Background and objectives

The Conseil scolaire Centre-Est (CSCE) was established in 1994 and has the legislative and constitutional mandate to provide French-language education that is protected by section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (*Charter*), as well as to provide French-language Catholic education protected by the intersection of section 23 of the *Charter* and section 17 of the *Alberta Act*. The CSCE has the shared obligation with the Province to provide an educational experience in its schools that is substantively equivalent to the education experience offered in the neighbouring English-language schools.

The CSCE currently offers a homogeneous French-language education to over ~~700~~⁸⁰⁰ students in schools in St. Paul, Bonnyville, Cold Lake, Plamondon and most recently, Lac La Biche. The establishment of schools in these historically francophone communities has been crucial in beginning to rebuild and restore the French language and francophone culture in the CSCE territory, thereby contributing to remedial purpose of section 23 of the *Charter*.

The homogeneous French-language education program provided by the CSCE is entirely distinct to the French-immersion programs offered in English-language schools. As explained by the Supreme Court of Canada, immersion programs are designed to provide second language training for students in majority language schools whereas minority language schools have the mandate and purpose to transmit the minority language and culture.¹ Indeed, in the communities served by the CSCE, and as recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada more generally, the French-language schools function as a community centre for the Francophone community used to facilitate the transmission of language and culture.²

Given the role of the school as a community centre, it is of vital importance for the CSCE to have control over its facilities in order to ensure they are used to further the purposes of section 23 of the *Charter*, namely of promoting the “two official languages of Canada, and their respective cultures, by ensuring that each language flourishes, as far as possible, in provinces where it is not spoken by the majority of the population”³ and of “redressing past injustices and providing the official language minority with equal access to high quality education in its own language, in circumstances where community development will be enhanced.”⁴

Section 23 rights

As confirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada in April 2015 in *Association des parents de l'École Rose-des-vents c Colombie-Britannique (Éducation)*, there exists a constitutional

¹ *Solski (Tutor of) v Quebec (Attorney General)*, 2005 SCC 14 at para 50.

² *Mahé v Alberta*, [1990] 1 SCR 342 at p 363.

³ *Mahé v Alberta*, [1990] 1 SCR 342 at 362.

⁴ *Arsenault-Cameron v Prince Edward Island*, [2000] 1 SCR 3 at para 27.

right to an educational experience in minority language schools that is equivalent to the educational experience offered in majority language schools in the same catchment area.⁵

In determining whether the educational experience is equivalent, it is necessary to take a contextual and holistic approach, taking into account physical facilities, including their appearances (aesthetic qualities), as well as other factors that may contribute to the quality of the education such as extracurricular activities, and travel times.⁶

According to the Supreme Court, the comparative exercise should be done with the neighbouring English-language schools that represent a realistic alternative for rights holders.⁷

The Supreme Court also specified that when assessing substantive equivalence, it is necessary to consider the educational choices available from the perspective of parents who have the right to enroll their children in minority language schools.⁸ Where a lack of equivalency discourages parents from enrolling their children in a French-language school, the Province has a positive obligation to provide the necessary funding to rectify the breach of section 23 rights.⁹

Where the lack of equivalence exists, the Province has an obligation to remedy the constitutional breach without delay.¹⁰ Indeed, minority language communities are particularly vulnerable to government delay or inaction because for every school year that governments do not meet their obligations under section 23, there is an increased likelihood of assimilation which carries the risk that numbers might cease to ‘warrant’.¹¹

Section 23 rights require that the CSCE’s capital plan includes more than a single number “1” priority to reflect the CSCE’s needs and the Province’s obligations

As a result, in circumstances in which there is an ongoing violation of section 23 rights due to problems associated to the school facilities, the capital projects necessary to put an end to that violation are urgently required and must consequently be constituted as number “1” priorities.

The CSCE is aware that the Province insists that school boards prioritize their capital projects “into a single list from highest to lowest priority.”¹² Indeed, the online web-based capital plan

⁵ *Association des parents de l’école Rose-des-vents and Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique v British Columbia*, 2015 SCC 21 at para 33 [*APÉ Rose-des-Vents and CSFC-B*].

⁶ *APÉ Rose-des-Vents and CSFC-B* at paras 38-39.

⁷ *APÉ Rose-des-Vents and CSFC-B* at para 37.

⁸ *APÉ Rose-des-Vents and CSFC-B* at paras 34-35.

⁹ *APÉ Rose-des-Vents and CSFC-B* at para 35.

¹⁰ *Doucet-Boudreau v Nova Scotia (Education)*, 2003 SCC 62 at para 39 [*Doucet-Boudreau*].

¹¹ *Doucet-Boudreau* at para 29.

¹² February 26, 2016 email from Michael Edinger, 2017-2020 Capital Plan Submission email reminder, To all Alberta School Board Superintendents and Secretary Treasurers.

submission tool the Province requires school boards to use, the “Web-based Application Program (WAP)”, requires that capital projects be ranked and does not allow for more than one project as a number “1” priority.

However, the CSCE and the Province have the obligation to give effect to section 23 constitutional rights. That means that where the school facilities contribute to an educational experience in CSCE schools that is inferior to the education experience available in the neighbouring English-language schools, or where there is a known need for the establishment of a French-language school to begin giving effect to section 23 rights, the capital project is necessarily a number “1” priority. The constitutional rights of one community cannot be placed above the constitutional rights of another.

For these reasons, the present document, where two number “1” priorities are indicated, should replace the prioritization required by the WAP. The prioritization indicated in the WAP does not reflect the actual needs of the CSCE and has only been used as there is no option to indicate that the CSCE has two number “1” priorities. The CSCE’s revised three-year plan has two number “1” priorities because both are necessary to provide equivalent French-language education. The CSCE also includes lower ranked priorities in its capital plan. The CSCE is of the view that these lower ranked priorities (priorities “2” and “3”) may not be urgently required, but that Alberta Education and Alberta Infrastructure should be aware of them as funding will be required in the coming years.

The concrete impact of substantively equivalent facilities

The CSCE has seen immediate enrolment growth following the construction of new schools ~~were built~~, which is a testament to the impact appropriate, well-functioning and attractive facilities have for French-language education. Below is enrolment data showing the impact a new school has had, demonstrating the importance of providing the necessary funding for the CSCE’s capital priorities as well as how the province can fulfil its obligations. The increase in enrolment is a concrete expression of an increase in the vitality of the French language and Francophone culture.

Highlighted: Date of moving into new, homogeneous French-language school facilities

École Voyageur, Cold Lake

Year	2001 2002	2002 2003	2003 2004	2004 2005	2005 2006	2006 2007	2007 2008	2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	2011 2012	2012 2013	2013 2014	2014 2015	2015 2016	<u>2016</u> <u>2017</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>2018</u>
Students	145	141	138	126	153	161	152	157	163	142	137	147	146	139	178	<u>184</u>	<u>239</u>
Levels	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	<u>K-12</u>	<u>K-12</u>

École des Beaux-Lacs, Bonnyville

Year	2001 2002	2002 2003	2003 2004	2004 2005	2005 2006	2006 2007	2007 2008	2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	2011 2012	2012 2013	2013 2014	2014 2015	2015 2016	<u>2016</u> <u>2017</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>2018</u>
Students	71	94	110	120	139	143	147	167	197	204	202	192	202	211	214	200	223
Levels	K-8	K-9	K-10	K-11	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-11	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	<u>K-12</u>	<u>K-12</u>

École du Sommet, Saint-Paul

Year	2001 2002	2002 2003	2003 2004	2004 2005	2005 2006	2006 2007	2007 2008	2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	2011 2012	2012 2013	2013 2014	2014 2015	2015 2016	<u>2016</u> <u>2017</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>2018</u>
Students	151	142	133	130	119	118	111	117	127	158	169	163	175	163	169	141	180
Levels	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	<u>K-12</u>	<u>K-12</u>

Objectives of the capital plan

The CSCE schools service large territories and this revised capital plan serves to improve the access to quality education with modernizations, additions and new builds. This revised capital plan's goal is to provide facilities for Francophone education to ensure that inferior infrastructure or excessive travel time does not discourage enrolment in French-language schools in the CSCE's territory.

Section 2: Summary of Priorities

Location	Title	Key Driver(s)	Asset Name	Project Sub - Category	Client Ranking	Scheduled Start Date	Capital Plan Submission Year	Total Project Cost
PLAMONDON	École Beauséjour - Modernization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of equivalency with neighbouring English-language schools • Lack of functionality • Infrastructure quality 	École Beauséjour	Modernization	1	2017	2017/2018	\$9,274,175
LAC LA BICHE	École Sainte-Catherine – Acquisition of school site and school building declared as surplus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers warrant the establishment of a permanent, stable French-language school • Exercise of the CSCE's management and control over its facilities 	École-Sainte Catherine	New school acquisition	1	2017	2017/2018	To be negotiated between the Northern Lights School District and Alberta Education
LAC LA BICHE	École Sainte-Catherine New School - Pre-school to Grade 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equivalency with neighbouring English-language schools 	École-Sainte Catherine	New school construction	2	2019	2017/2018	\$11,948,642
ATHABASCA	Athabasca New School - Pre-school to Grade 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers warrant the establishment of a starter school • Travel time to the nearest French-language school discourages enrolment 	New School - Athabasca	New school construction	3	2019	2017/2018	\$1,855,673
<u>COLD LAKE</u>	<u>École Voyageur – Addition</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Overcrowded facilities</u> • <u>Lack of functionality</u> 	<u>École Voyageur</u>	<u>Addition</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2017/2018</u>	<u>To be determined</u>
Total: \$23,078,490								

Section 3

Priority 1: École Beauséjour – Modernization

Description:

Replace existing portable structures and links (1014 m²) with a permanent masonry structure. Modernize 591.60 m² of existing space.

Reason:

École Beauséjour was first constructed with a four-room temporary portable structure in 1992 to which a second four-room temporary portable structure with hallway was added in 1997. Given the enrolment pressure and the necessity to provide facilities able to offer the provincial curriculum, an addition, in the form of a permanent masonry and steel structure, including a gymnasium, was constructed in 2002. **Appendix 1A** to this submission shows the general floor plan and indicates the 1992, 1997 and 2002 sections.

The 1992 and 1997 portable structures require replacement and the space within the 2002 addition requires immediate modernization.

Modernization of space to ensure an education that is equivalent to the education offered in the neighbouring English-language schools

The current layout of the school is not functional and does not provide an education that is equivalent to the education offered in the comparator English-language schools, especially at the high school level.

The only English-language school in Plamondon is Plamondon School, a K-12 school that offers French-immersion. English-language schools in the surrounding areas, including in Lac La Biche and in Athabasca are also comparator schools for purposes of evaluating equivalency for the grade levels that are not being offered by École Sainte-Catherine in Lac La Biche (currently K-53). Indeed, the students beyond grade 53 living in or very near to Lac La Biche who could be enrolled in a French-language school will have the choice of enrolling in an English-language school in Lac La Biche or travelling to Plamondon to École Beauséjour. Parents face the same choice in Athabasca, where the distance to Plamondon is even greater, meaning that the educational experience in the French-language school in Plamondon has to be superior as to offset the long travel time.

École Beauséjour is not as attractive, as functional and does not have the same specialized classrooms as its English-language competitors, most notably at the high school level. As an example, J.A. Williams High School, a very attractive new secondary school that opened its doors in 2014 in Lac La Biche, has a dedicated art room, a cafeteria/lounge area, a dedicated music room, an auditorium, and a fitness room. It is expected that the new replacement school for Edwin Parr Composite School, a secondary school in Athabasca to open in September

2018, will also offer a state of the art education in specialized classrooms, in a modern, permanent and attractive facility.

In contrast, École Beauséjour cannot offer the same educational experience to its students:

- i. The aesthetic qualities of École Beauséjour, both from the exterior and the interior, ~~are~~ significantly inferior as in comparison to the aesthetic qualities in the English-language schools at the high school level.
- ii. École Beauséjour used to have a physical fitness room adjacent to the gymnasium, but due to space requirements, it has been converted to a classroom.
- iii. École Beauséjour used to have a normal classroom that was used as a music room (i.e. it was not soundproofed, the room was on a single level), but this space also had to be converted to a general classroom for teaching purposes.
- iv. Given that all spaces are used, there is an absence of flexible school space, limiting teaching opportunities. Indeed, even though École Beauséjour may not exceed the utilization rate as calculated by Alberta Education, all of the classrooms are required and the school will not be able to accommodate much growth. The utilization rate, as calculated by Alberta Education, does not adequately or realistically reflect the way the facilities are being used, largely because a distinct classroom is necessary for instruction to a distinct grade level, even if the number of students in that grade level may not entail that the classroom is full according to Alberta Education's calculation.
- v. The CTS classroom at École Beauséjour is located in an old detached portable in which the ventilation system does not meet provincial standards. Appropriate and safe CTS labs are required to offer a comparable, equivalent education.

As the following table demonstrates, École Beauséjour has faced challenges in retaining students, particularly those transitioning to middle (grades 5 to 8) and high school (grades 9 to 12), as well as throughout high school. Indeed, every year, students entering or already in middle school or high school at École Beauséjour choose a competitor school. ~~In the last five years, at least 5~~ Many students transitioning into middle school or already in middle or high school at Beauséjour ~~do not~~ have not enrolled the following school year.

Enrolment at École Beauséjour

	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18
Pre-K	NA	NA	NA	NA	11	11	16	10	14	14	4	7	7	<u>15</u>
K	15	8	19	16	8	13	15	16	19	17	11	4	12	<u>7</u>
Grade 1	11	14	9	15	13	8	15	15	15	16	14	9	6	<u>12</u>
Grade 2	14	11	14	9	15	14	9	14	15	14	8	15	10	<u>5</u>
Grade 3	11	13	15	16	10	16	14	9	16	14	14	7	16	<u>10</u>
Grade 4	4	10	16	15	16	10	16	13	9	14	13	15	7	<u>15</u>
Grade 5	14	4	14	15	16	16	10	16	12	9	12	10	14	<u>6</u>
Grade 6	7	14	9	13	16	16	17	10	16	13	10	12	11	<u>7</u>
Grade 7	13	7	17	8	13	18	14	17	8	14	12	11	12	<u>11</u>
Grade 8	9	12	7	16	7	13	19	14	18	8	14	10	11	<u>11</u>
Grade 9	7	10	12	10	17	6	13	16	13	17	9	14	11	<u>9</u>
Grade 10	10	6	9	12	9	16	6	11	12	13	17	9	14	<u>10</u>
Grade 11	8	11	6	8	12	8	16	5	11	10	8	13	7	<u>3</u>
Grade 12	7	8	11	6	8	12	8	14	5	10	10	8	14	<u>3</u>

The new school facilities in Lac La Biche and Athabasca make it even more difficult to retain students, as the facilities in English-language schools allow for a richer educational experience than can be offered at École Beauséjour. This situation must urgently be addressed.

The temporary nature and appearance of the portables at École Beauséjour discourages enrolment contrary to section 23 of the Charter

In addition to the space configuration and lack of equivalent specialized classrooms, the ~~temporary nature of the~~ 1992 and 1997 portables gives the appearance of a temporary school and requires constant replacement and maintenance. The 1992 and 1997 portables were built on a wood frame foundation with crawl space access. These temporary structures are, ~~as the name implies, were not conceived as permanent classroom space solutions.~~ Despite efforts to maintain these structures, the physical building type – wood frame with drywall and wood floors – cannot withstand the heavy student use. Indeed, the indoor drywall requires constant repair. The physical structure is also deteriorating due to the passing of time and to the elements. Significant investment to maintain the wood foundation was required in the summer of 2013 by installing a membrane around both structures to slow foundation degradation. ~~The Evidence of roof leaks is present~~ in many areas, especially where the temporary structures link with the 2002 addition.

The temporary structures ~~have a result of:~~

- i. Demonstrating to parents deciding where to enroll their children that École Beauséjour is a school facility that is of lesser quality, thereby discouraging enrolment.
- ii. Giving eligible parents the impression ~~that could enroll their children at École Beauséjour that the temporary portable “solution” used to open a new school in Plamondon constitutes a lack of confidence for a~~ there is no hope for a viable long-term French-language school. These portable structures does not provide the assurance and confidence for many students to enroll, and especially to complete high school education at Écolewith Beauséjour.
- iii. Demonstrating to parents that could enroll their children at École Beauséjour and to the community as a whole that school facilities of lesser quality are sufficient for the French-language minority, contrary to section 23’s remedial purpose.

École Beauséjour students require a facility that is comparable in quality and functionality to those provided for English-language schools, both at the primary and secondary levels. Modernization of École Beauséjour by replacing the temporary structures with a permanent one as well as creating appropriate teaching spaces within the 2002 addition is required immediately. In fact, in July 2017, while visiting École Sainte-Catherine in Lac La Biche, Marc Dumont, CSCE Superintendent, Laurel Udell, Senior Education Manager, and Travis Hovland, Director of Capital Planning, discussed the poor state of facilities at École Beauséjour and the urgent need for modernization. Ms. Udell and Mr. Hovland expressed interest in visiting École Beauséjour in Plamondon to better understand the CSCE’s request for modernization. A visit of the CSCE’s facility in Plamondon is required in order for Alberta Education to fully comprehend the many problems with the facility and the undeniable lack of equivalence with English-language schools. Ms. Udell and Mr. Hovland have not yet visited the École Beauséjour facility.

Modernization Budget:

Item	Cost	Description
Building Construction and Site Development :	\$7,350,000	Amount of funding to be used for the physical construction of the school facility...
Consultant Fees :	\$643,125	Amount of funding for prime and sub-consultants that provide the design of the facility...
Project Expenses :	\$147,000	Amount of funding provided to pay for normal project expenses and services associated with a school building projects...
Furniture & Equipment :	\$588,000	Amount of funding provided for the basic furniture and equipment for approved projects...
Career Technology Studies (CTS) Equipment :	\$200,000	Amount of funding provided for expansion or modernization projects being conducted in facilities in which the project provides or upgrades a CTS area(s)...
Other :	\$200,000	Amount of funding provided for items not covered by the above components.
Sub-total:	\$9,128,125	Sub-total of funding for all items above.
Non-Refundable GST :	\$146,050	Amount of funding provided for non-refundable GST is calculated at 1.6% of the sub-total above.
Total Project Cost:	\$9,274,175	Sum of the funding for all items above.

Section 4 Priority 1: École Sainte-Catherine - Acquisition of school site and building

Description:

Acquisition of school site and school building (Central Elementary School, a section of which is currently being leased by the CSCE to accommodate École Sainte-Catherine) declared as surplus by Northern Lights School District.

Reason:

In 2014, the CSCE successfully implemented a pre-K to grade 2 school in Lac La Biche, which then added a grade level every year. Despite the many hurdles parents faced with the uncertainty of school location, and class readiness, 17 children enrolled in the first year and there are currently ~~24~~ 29 students enrolled in this ~~third~~ fourth year of operation.

A starter school in Lac La Biche was necessary to begin to implement ~~ensure the~~ section 23 rights of parents living in or near Lac La Biche. Indeed, the enrolment at the French-language school in Lac La Biche did not decrease the enrolment at the French-language school in Plamondon, approximately 30 minutes away. In other words, travel time to the nearest French-language school in Plamondon dissuaded parents from enrolling their children in a French-language school, thereby contributing to the assimilation of the French-speaking community.

The CSCE faced important challenges in establishing École Sainte-Catherine in Lac La Biche, the primary one being finding access to an appropriate space. Over the course of many years, Alberta Education directed the CSCE to find a solution to identifying a space for its program by approaching the English-language school boards, in effect making the exercise of constitutional rights dependent on a majority language school board. After much effort, CSCE was able to lease a section of Central Elementary School belonging to Northern Lights.

Considering the conditions parents faced in August 2014 and given the last-minute approval ~~to form partnership~~ with Northern Lights, the high degree of interest for Francophone education demonstrates that there is ~~program will quickly grow into a~~ pressing need for a homogeneous French-language school facility able to offer an equivalent educational experience than that offered in the English-language schools in the catchment area.

Historically, the CSCE has maintained a successful track record implementing Francophone education in its communities. Parents have requested that the school keep adding additional school levels. The CSCE anticipates enrolment ~~the growth of the school via enrolments in~~ each of the grades it will be offering. Despite ~~the difficulty and~~ challenges faced by the CSCE to locate a suitable space for the starter school, the partnership with Northern Lights has helped make École Sainte-Catherine a reality.

Nevertheless, the current situation raises inequality in the educational experience being offered.

First, since 2014, space in Central Elementary School has been leased to the CSCE by Northern Lights on an annual basis. However, the most recent lease with Northern Lights terminated in July 2017. Despite still being in the facility, the CSCE no longer has a lease with Northern Lights, the current 12-month lease expires in July 2017. There are no guarantees that the homogeneous French-language program will be able to remain in the same space for the coming years, especially in the current circumstances where Lakeland Catholic School District has plans to launch a French-immersion program in Lac La Biche. The CSCE has no security of tenure, making the exercise of constitutional rights dependant on a majority language school board. Furthermore, the CSCE does not know and has little influence over what Northern Lights will decide to do with the facility, which it has declared as surplus to its needs. The CSCE's French-language program in Lac La Biche is now, more than ever, in a precarious situation when it comes to school infrastructure, making this request all the more urgent. Indeed, the CSCE understands that when adopting a motion declaring Central Elementary School as a surplus school, Northern Lights also requested that the school be transferred to Lakeland Catholic.

The instability concerning the future of the school discourages enrolment. Indeed, parents are discouraged to enroll their children in a school program if there is a realistic risk that they will have to change programs during the course of the child's education.

Further, given that Central Elementary School was the only space that had been identified to which the CSCE was given access, if the site and school are transferred to Lakeland Catholic, the CSCE will again find itself with no space for its program.

Second, the current space is appropriate for a starter school. However, it is the CSCE's view that with increasing enrolment and the addition of grade levels, École Sainte-Catherine has already become an established school, like many other small schools in the general area, and requires its own school facility. Indeed, numerous English-language schools of less than 100 students exist in Alberta, most notably around Lac La Biche County.¹³

Furthermore, Alberta Education recognizes that there is a need for small schools in some communities by allocating targeted funding for small schools. As confirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada, when the numbers warrant – and if the numbers warrant for an English-language school, they certainly warrant for a French-language school – a French-language school needs to be homogeneous and distinct.¹⁴ Indeed, distinct facilities are essential to

¹³ As examples, Rochester School (K-9), Smith School (K-12) and Grasslands School (K-12), operated by Aspen View Public School District, have less than 100 students.

¹⁴ See for example *Doucet-Boudreau c Nova Scotia (Department of Education)*, 2000 CanLII 13312 at paras 206 and 210 (SCNS) and *Reference re Public Schools Act (Man.)*, s. 79(3), (4) and (7), [1993] 1 SCR 839 at p 855.

ensure a French-language environment that is necessary to counter assimilationist pressures. Further, Lac La Biche County continues to grow, as it is situated at the southern end of the territory in which Athabasca oil sands projects are under way. By 2043, the County's population is forecast to have grown by 81% (as compared to the population in 2013) levels.¹⁵

Northern Lights has no use for the building and the site and has declared them surplus. The only other group that is using the facility is an English-language daycare, entailing that the school does not operate in a homogeneous French-language environment and underscoring the importance for the CSCE to control and manage its facilities.

The CSCE is not eligible for IMR funding as it is not the owner. Indeed, given that there is no guarantee that the CSCE will be able to remain in the building, there is little incentive, for the CSCE, for Northern Lights or for Alberta Education, to fund modernization projects – such as the conversion of unused space into a library, the modernization of an additional classroom, retrofitting the stage to serve as a dual purpose music room, the inclusion of appropriate washrooms, and the modernization of the administrative area.¹⁶ These modernization projects are immediately necessary to make the facilities as equivalent as possible. Were the CSCE the owner of the site and the building, it could plan accordingly to make the best use, for as long as possible, of the existing facilities.

The CSCE needs a permanent site and school facilities for its program in Lac La Biche. If the school and site were transferred to the CSCE, the appropriate resources could be invested to ensure the stability and growth of French-language education in Lac La Biche.

The CSCE is aware that the purchase of a site and a school building that has been declared as surplus may not appear to fall within the established categories of what constitute a capital project as defined by the School Capital Manual, as it does not consist of an addition, a modernization or the construction of a new school. In the CSCE's view, the acquisition of an existing school building serves the same function as funding the construction of a starter school, which falls within the requirements to receive capital funding which Alberta Education frequently grants (for example, ~~most recently~~ in Sherwood Park for the Greater North Central Francophone Authority). The acquisition of the school site and the school building clearly contributes towards satisfying the CSCE capital needs and the Province's obligation that flow from section 23 of the *Charter*.

Cost of acquiring the school site and school building

The cost to acquire the site and the building should be negotiated between Alberta Education and Northern Lights. Case law recognizes that school sites and facilities held by one school board are held in trust for all students, regardless of school boards.¹⁷ As such, given that

¹⁵ Lac La Biche Development Plan at p 3: <http://www.laclabichedecounty.com/home/showdocument?id=2497>

¹⁶ An outline of the costs associated with these projects are at Appendix 2.

¹⁷ *Conseil Scolaire Fransaskois De Zenon Park v Saskatchewan*, 1998 CanLII 13468 (SK QB) at para 15.

Northern Lights has no use for the site, it should be transferred to the CSCE. The CSCE has repeatedly expressed to Northern Lights and Alberta Education its interest in acquiring Central Elementary School. In fact, in a letter dated October 12, 2017, which is attached to this Revised Capital Plan as **Appendix 3**, the CSCE once again confirmed its interest in acquiring Central Elementary School from Northern Lights. The October 12, 2017, letter also expressed the CSCE's interest in exploring capital planning opportunities with Northern Lights that could result in both school districts improving the quality of educational programming offered to their respective students in Lac La Biche. The CSCE is available to participate in discussions between Alberta Education and Northern Lights regarding its facility needs in Lac La Biche, if necessary. If needed, the CSCE could also have the Central Elementary School site and building appraised.

Section 5 Priority 2: École Sainte-Catherine – New School

Description:

New School - Pre-school to Grade 6 - Capacity: 150

Reason:

See above, Priority 1: École Sainte-Catherine – Acquisition of school site and building.

Whether or not the CSCE's number 1 priority of acquiring the school site and school building from Northern Lights School District that is currently leased to the CSCE is granted, there will soon be a need for a new school building that allows for a substantively equivalent French-language education.

The capacity of the school – 150 students – reflects core retention of its student body and the expectation that the number of students in the incoming classes will grow to between 15-20 students when the new school is built.

Any school site would have to be sufficiently large to allow the addition of middle school and high school facilities (of note, the school site the CSCE requests as priority “1” would be sufficiently large).

A gymnasium meeting high school standards should be built with the pre-school to grade 6 school. With the possible addition of middle school and high school students, there would otherwise be a costly upgrade to the gymnasium. In the CSCE's view, it is more cost-efficient to plan ahead.

As mentioned above, it may be possible to partner with other school boards in the Lac La Biche area when it comes to capital planning. For instance, in the CSCE's October 12, 2017 letter to Northern Lights (attached as **Appendix 3**), the CSCE proposes the acquisition of one school site large enough for the construction of two separate schools. Both school boards have requested a need for new school construction in Lac La Biche. Economies of scale can be achieved by acquiring only one site for two school boards and in constructing two schools at the same time, on the same site. Constructing two separate schools on one site, one for the CSCE and one for Northern Lights, with adjoining playfields, would allow both school boards to maintain autonomy, while fulfilling each boards' respective mandates, which for the CSCE means offering French-language Catholic education, and for Northern Lights means offering public English-language, and possibly other language, education in a secular environment.

Construction Budget:

Item	Cost	Description
Building Construction and Site Development :	\$10,020,000	Amount of funding to be used for the physical construction of the school facility...
Consultant Fees :	\$738,474	Amount of funding for prime and sub-consultants that provide the design of the facility...
Project Expenses :	\$200,400	Amount of funding provided to pay for normal project expenses and services associated with a school building projects...
Furniture & Equipment :	\$801,600	Amount of funding provided for the basic furniture and equipment for approved projects...
Career Technology Studies (CTS) Equipment :	\$0.00	Amount of funding provided for expansion or modernization projects being conducted in facilities in which the project provides or upgrades a CTS area(s)...
Other :	\$0.00	Amount of funding provided for items not covered by the above components.
Sub-total:	\$11,760,474	Sub-total of funding for all items above.
Non-Refundable GST :	\$188,168	Amount of funding provided for non-refundable GST is calculated at 1.6% of the sub-total above.
Total Project Cost:	\$11,948,642	Sum of the funding for all items above.

Section 6 Priority 3: New Starter School in Athabasca

Description:

New Starter School - Pre-school to Grade 6. Capacity: 80

Reason:

It has long been suspected that there is a thriving Francophone population in the Athabasca area. In fact, in the past, the Francophone school in Plamondon has served and graduated a number of students from that area. Unfortunately, given the distance of approximately 73km between the two communities and the excessively long bus rides resulting from that distance, many section 23 rights holders are discouraged from exercising their right to a French-language education.

The CSCE's envisages establishing a starter school in Athabasca. The ability of establishing such a starter school will partly depend on having access to a suitable space. The CSCE is open to the possibility of beginning to offer French-language instruction from a rented space. In the event that a suitable space could not identified, a new starter school will have to be established, like it has been done in other parts of the Province (for example in Sherwood Park and at l'École La Mosaïque in Calgary).

Budget

The budget for this priority will depend on the availability of a suitable space for a starter school in Athabasca.

In the event that no space can be identified, funding for a starter school will be necessary.

Item	Cost	Description
Building Construction and Site Development :	\$1,500,000	Amount of funding to be used for the physical construction of the school facility...
Consultant Fees :	\$126,450	Amount of funding for prime and sub-consultants that provide the design of the facility...
Project Expenses :	\$30,000	Amount of funding provided to pay for normal project expenses and services associated with a school building projects...
Furniture & Equipment :	\$120,000	Amount of funding provided for the basic furniture and equipment for approved projects...
Career Technology Studies (CTS) Equipment :	\$0.00	Amount of funding provided for expansion or modernization projects being conducted in facilities in which the project provides or upgrades a CTS area(s)...
Other :	\$50,000	Amount of funding provided for items not covered by the above components.
Sub-total:	\$1,826,450	Sub-total of funding for all items above.
Non-Refundable GST :	\$29,223	Amount of funding provided for non-refundable GST is calculated at 1.6% of the sub-total above.
Total Project Cost:	\$1,855,673	Sum of the funding for all items above.

Section 7 Priority 3: École Voyageur – Addition

Description:

Construction of an addition to accommodate and to relieve, permanently, overcrowding at École Voyageur in Cold Lake.

Reason:

In the 2017-18 school year, 239 students are enrolled at École Voyageur from pre-kindergarten to grade 12. This represents an increase of 30% over last year's enrolment of 184 students. Enrolment at École Voyageur has grown very significantly over the last 6 years, with an increase of 100 students since 2011-12. The CSCE anticipates that enrolment will continue to increase in the coming years.

At present, the École Voyageur facility is not able to accommodate the programming needs of its students. Every classroom at École Voyageur is being used for required programming. There is no room for growth at École Voyageur.

The École Voyageur facility was built to accommodate one classroom per grade level. However, at present, the CSCE already requires two classrooms for its kindergarten students and two classrooms for its grade 1 students, making it difficult to accommodate the other elementary-aged students. In fact, the CSCE has had to transform the teacher's lounge into a classroom in order to try to accommodate its students' space needs. The CSCE has been forced to accommodate many of its elementary-aged students in the secondary wing of École Voyageur. This raises a number of challenges for the younger students who feel intimidated by the older students. Likewise, the older students do not appreciate the presence of elementary-aged students in their part of the school, making them feel as if they are still in elementary school, and creating challenges for retention at the high school level for the CSCE.

Given that all spaces at École Voyageur are used, there is a lack of flexible space, limiting teaching opportunities. There is a lack of multipurpose rooms and one-on-one teaching spaces, making coordination of spaces to meet individual students' needs a challenge.

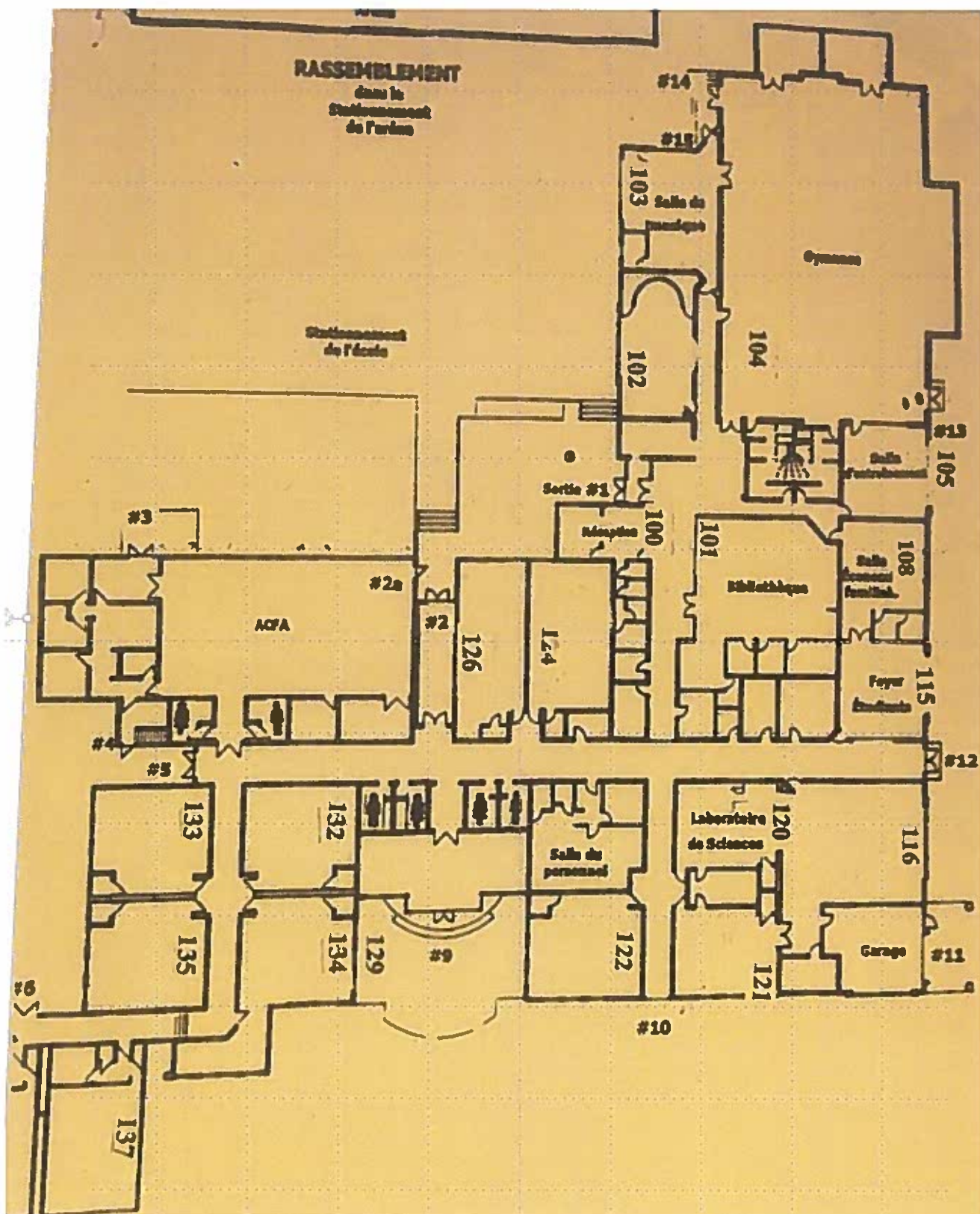
The CSCE projects that enrolment growth will continue for the foreseeable future. In the next few years at least two classrooms will be required for each grade level from pre-kindergarten to grade 6.

In a letter dated March 3, 2017, the CSCE advised Alberta Education of its need for additional space at École Voyageur and made a request for the installation of 3 modular classrooms. The CSCE's March 3, 2017 letter is attached as **Appendix 4**. On March 8, 2017, Alberta Education responded indicating that the CSCE's capacity utilization for École Voyageur does

not meet the Province's threshold of at least 90 per cent utilization for approval of modular requests. Alberta Education's letter is attached as **Appendix 5**.

The CSCE disagrees with Alberta Education's assessment of its request as the capacity utilization rate calculated by Alberta Education is misleading because it does not reflect the actual space requirement and space use at École Voyageur. Alberta Education's utilization calculation inaccurately reflects the use of space and hides the need for additional space at École Voyageur.

The CSCE is operating over capacity and requires additional space to relieve overcrowding and to accommodate the significant enrolment growth at École Voyageur. Therefore, the CSCE requests the construction of an addition to the elementary wing of École Voyageur. There is ample space on the school site for the construction of such an addition. In the interim, the CSCE will submit a request to the Modular Classroom Program in November 2017.



2002

1991

1991

Appendix 2 - Modernization at École Sainte Catherine

Modernization - École Sainte-Catherine

Admin area

Replace flooring	25000
Replace / add millwork	35000
Remodel Bathrooms	10000
Replace ceiling tiles	4000
Telephone / Intercom System	20000
Remodel Kitchen	20000
Remodel storage / workrooms	25000
	<hr/>
	139000
	<hr/>

Create Library Room (Rm 101)

Add carpet	3500
Add windows to hallway	5000
Millwork / shelving	20000
	<hr/>
	28500
	<hr/>

Renovate 4 classrooms (Rm 118, 102, 109, 108)

Replace ceiling tiles	16000
Replace window covering	12000
Replace millwork	32000
Add sinks & water to classrooms	15000
Repaint rooms	12000
	<hr/>
	87000
	<hr/>

Stage

Retrofit stage as dual purpose room - music	<hr/>
	50000
	<hr/>

Bathrooms

Make bathrooms handycap accessible	
New stalls	9000
New countertops / millwork	3500
Flooring	2500
Replumb for handycap reconfiguration	8000
	<hr/>
	23000
	<hr/>
	<hr/>
	327500
	<hr/>



October 12, 2017

Mandi Skogen
Board Chair
Northern Lights Public School Board
6005-50 Avenue, Bonnyville
Alberta T9N 2L4

Re: Response to your letter of September 7, 2017 regarding the facilities needs of Northern Lights Public School Board and of the Conseil scolaire Centre-Est in Lac La Biche

Dear Ms. Skogen,

On behalf of the Conseil scolaire Centre-Est (“CSCE”), I write to thank you for your letter of September 7, 2017, inviting our board to discuss facilities needs of the Northern Lights Public Schools (“NLPS”) and the CSCE in Lac La Biche. The CSCE is interested in exploring capital planning opportunities that could benefit both school boards and, more importantly, result in better facilities and programming for our respective student population.

We would also like to thank you, your fellow board members, and senior staff for taking the time to meet and discuss capital planning opportunities with my fellow trustees, our senior staff, and myself in St. Paul on September 14, 2017. The CSCE has given much thought to the questions and proposals that were raised during that discussion.

The CSCE’s capital planning needs in Lac La Biche

As you know, the CSCE has been operating École Sainte-Catherine in Lac La Biche since September 2014 from the Central Elementary School facility, leased from NLPS, and shared with the Little Sprouts Childcare program.

In the 2017-18 school year, the CSCE offers pre-K to grade 5 French-language Catholic education, and anticipates adding at least Grade 6 over the next year. The CSCE’s program in Lac La Biche is becoming more established and better known in the community. However, the lack of a purpose-built facility with homogeneous French-language Catholic teaching space

Regional Authority of East Central Francophone Education Region No.3

C.P. 249, Saint-Paul (Alberta) T0A 3A0

Téléphone 780-645-3888 Télécopieur 780-645-2045

www.centreest.ca

makes it difficult for the CSCE to offer the educational programming that is required by section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and by section 17 of the *Alberta Act*.

Since at least 2006, the CSCE has been requesting the construction of a school facility in Lac La Biche. In its 2017-2020 capital plan submission to Alberta Education, the CSCE identified the acquisition of a facility as its number one priority. In fact, as the CSCE has communicated to NLPS many times, it is very interested in acquiring Central Elementary School, which your board has identified as surplus to its needs. Although Central Elementary School may be too large for the CSCE's immediate needs, it would allow the CSCE to grow its student population and to cultivate the French cultural and community components of its mandate, which are critical to the success of the CSCE's educational programming and to the French-language minority community in Lac La Biche.

Mutually beneficial capital opportunities in Lac La Biche

The CSCE is very interested in exploring capital planning opportunities that could result in both school districts improving the quality of educational programming offered to their respective students in Lac La Biche.

One proposal identified by NLPS at the September 14, 2017 meeting was the construction of one large school facility, which would be shared by both boards. Although sharing a facility between two boards could result in a certain number of efficiencies, it would also generate a number of problems that may be insurmountable, both in the short and long term.

Based notably on its experience sharing one facility at Central Elementary school facility with the Little Sprouts Childcare program, the CSCE can attest to the many challenges that arise from sharing a facility with another program that has unique needs and a unique mandate. While NLPS offers English-language public programming, which requires its classrooms, hallways, gymnasium, library, to name a few spaces, to be English-speaking and free of any religious symbols, the CSCE, on the other hand, offers French-language Catholic programming, which requires that its classrooms, hallways, gymnasium, and library operate exclusively in French, with religious references and symbols present throughout the facility. Operating exclusively in French is important as it is necessary to create an environment that encourages French-language and culture acquisition and prevents assimilation. Presently, students sharing space with the Little Sprouts Childcare program are regularly exposed to the majority English-language influences around them, which prevents the CSCE from achieving its mandate under the *School Act* and the Constitution. The CSCE is also conscious of NLPS' need to provide English-language, and possibly other language, programming in a secular environment in order to respect its students' constitutional rights to a secular environment. Although not impossible, sharing one facility may not be a mutually beneficial solution whatever the time horizon may be. Another proposal that could meet the needs of both boards is the purchase by both boards of one school site large enough for the construction of two schools, one for NLPS and one for the CSCE. Economies of scale can be achieved in constructing two schools at the same time, on the same site. Sharing a site could allow NLPS and the CSCE to secure capital funding from Alberta Education more quickly. Constructing two schools on one site, with adjoining playfields, would allow our school boards to maintain autonomy and fulfill our boards'

respective mandates without all the challenges that arise from being located in one space. Future capital planning decisions will also be less cumbersome if one board is not reliant on the other.

The CSCE is interested in pursuing further discussions with NLPS about capital planning needs to determine if other mutually beneficial solutions can not only be identified, but also implemented. The CSCE is also interested in three-way discussions with Alberta Education.

On behalf of the CSCE, I thank you again for your invitation to discuss capital planning opportunities; the CSCE looks forward to meeting with you again in the near future.
Sincerely,



Réginald Roy
Board Chair, CSCE



March 3rd, 2017

VIA EMAIL

Travis Hovland
Capital Planning
Alberta Education
Edmonton, AB

Re: Request for modular classrooms at École Voyageur, the Conseil scolaire Centre-Est's K-12 school in Cold Lake, to ensure sufficient school space necessary to offer an educational experience that complies with the Province's constitutional obligations under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*

Dear Mr Hovland,

As per our recent telephone conversation, I am writing to indicate that the Conseil scolaire Centre-Est (CSCE/East Central Francophone Education) requires three single Type A modular at École Voyageur, the CSCE's K-12 school in Cold Lake, to ensure there is sufficient space to allow for an education experience that is equivalent to the educational experience offered in English-language schools in Cold Lake, as required by section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. More specifically, given the projected increase in enrolment for the 2017-2018 school year, École Voyageur needs additional classroom space to accommodate all grade levels.

The increase in enrolment at École Voyageur means that there will be a shortage of necessary classrooms beginning in the 2017-2018 school year.

Every classroom at École Voyageur is currently being used and is necessary in order for the CSCE to offer the school program mandated by Alberta Education. There are no extra classrooms available to accommodate the need for an additional classroom in the future.

Regional Authority of East Central Francophone Education Region No.3

C.P. 249, Saint-Paul (Alberta) T0A 3A0

Téléphone 780-645-3888 Télécopieur 780-645-2045

www.centreest.ca

The following table shows the current enrolment, next year's projected enrolment, and the number of classrooms used for students at the elementary level¹:

Grade level or use of classroom	Current number of students (2016-2017)	Current number of classrooms used (2016-2017)	Projected number of students – 2017-2018	Number of classrooms needed – 2017-2018
Pre-K	29	1	22	1
K	31	2	29	2
Grade 1	25	1	30	2
Grade 2	25	1	25	1
Grade 3	21	1	25	1
Grade 4	21	1	21	1
Grade 5	17	.5	21	1
Grade 6	13	.5	17	1
English	-	1	-	1
Music	-	-	-	1
Totals	184	9	190	12

As the table indicates, École Voyageur requires three additional classrooms next school year, namely a second classroom for grade 1 students, an additional classroom for grades 5/6, as each grade will henceforth need its own space (the grades have thus far shared a classroom), and an appropriate space where music can be taught.

The modulars are needed given the increase in students enrolled at École Voyageur and the need for an appropriate space to teach music.

Indeed, even with the conservative estimate above, the CSCE is anticipating at least 30 students in grade 1 for the 2017-2018 school year. Alberta Education does not specify a maximum class size, as it believes that school boards are in the best position to determine classroom organization that supports parent and student educational choice.² According to the CSCE, 30 students in a single grade 1 classroom is far too many. Indeed, Alberta's Commission on Learning (2003) recommended that 17 students at that grade level was appropriate.³ As a result, a second classroom is required for grade 1 students.

The same reasoning applies to needing an additional classroom space for grades 5/6. The CSCE has creatively used space in the past in a split-class setting, with two grades sharing one classroom. However, this will no longer be feasible as the number of students during the 2017-2018 school year (and for the foreseeable future thereafter given the enrolments in lower grades)

¹ The CSCE is not currently requesting additional space based on the number of grade 7-12 students. The number of grade 7-12 students has been steadily increasing but the current necessary classroom space dedicated for these students is sufficient.

² Alberta Education, *Class Size and Funding Overview*, available at: <https://education.alberta.ca/class-size/about-class-size/>.

³ Commission on Learning Report, p 7, available at: <https://education.alberta.ca/media/1626474/commissionreport.pdf>.

is too large. A classroom, with two grade levels, cannot accommodate 40 students. As a result, there is a need for an additional classroom to accommodate the 21 projected grade 5 students (the 17 grade 6 students can remain in the current classroom).

Finally, a dedicated music room is required to ensure that the CSCE may strive to offer educational experience at École Voyageur that is equivalent to the English-language schools in Cold Lake. As has been determined by the Supreme Court of Canada, the CSCE must be able to offer a comparable and equivalent education program to its students as the education experience offered at neighbouring English-language schools.⁴

Given that other schools in Cold Lake are larger, they have a greater number of classrooms than École Voyageur and therefore more flexibility with how classrooms are used. As such, these English-language schools can ensure the appropriate space for more specialized programs, such as dedicated music rooms.

The current space being used to teach music – on the stage in the gymnasium – is neither appropriate nor equivalent. Indeed, given that the space is separated from the gymnasium only by a thin, retractable stage wall, noise travels from one side of the wall to the other. Evidently, noise levels during physical education instruction and noise levels during music classes are both high entailing that the educational experience in both settings is suboptimal. Further, the stage in the gymnasium does not constitute a teaching space that was intended to be used to teach music. Rather, it is space that the CSCE has attempted to configure to meet the needs of its students as best it can. An additional modular classroom to be used to teach music would allow the CSCE to offer a more equivalent educational experience in Cold Lake.

The utilization rate as calculated by Alberta Infrastructure does not adequately reflect the CSCE's needs.

According to Alberta Education's current method of calculating the utilization rate, École Voyageur's utilization is 40% (2015-2016). However, Alberta Infrastructure's method of calculating the utilization rate fails to consider the space that is required to offer an educational experience at l'École Voyageur that is equivalent to the educational experience offered in the neighbouring English-language schools.

Indeed, even though every classroom may not be at full capacity with a 100% utilization rate as calculated by Alberta Infrastructure, every classroom is nevertheless necessary to offer the school program. Indeed, the modulars requested by the CSCE will be necessary if the CSCE is to continue offering the school program and educational experience it is currently offering. It would not be possible to simultaneously teach English and French in the same classroom to students of different grades. The utilization formula used by Alberta Education fails to take this reality into consideration.

For example, there may be only 15 students in a grade level using a classroom with a capacity of 20 students. According to Alberta Education, the utilization rate would only 75 per cent.

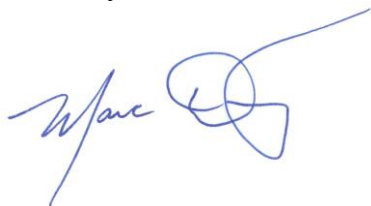
⁴ *Association des parents de l'école Rose-des-vents and Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique v British Columbia (Education)*, 2015 SCC 21.

However, the entire classroom is necessary to offer the required educational program. As such, the utilization rate, used to determine whether the CSCE should be granted a modular classroom or funding for capital projects, inaccurately evaluates both the need and the use of space, and as a result, unfairly limits the possibility for the CSCE to obtain the required modular and funding for its actual space needs. In other words, the fact that the CSCE has fewer students, but must use an entire classroom to teach English, for instance, because English and French cannot be taught in the same classroom at the same time, works against the CSCE when Alberta Education calculates capacity utilization.

Requiring additional classroom space is a normal progression for the CSCE. The CSCE is a relatively new school district, created in 1994, compared to the English-language school districts operating in the same territory. The CSCE also has a very specific mandate of providing the French-speaking parents of East-Central Alberta with the ability to exercise their constitutionally guaranteed right to French-language education for their children. As such, the CSCE has spent the last 20 years developing its educational programming and facilities in order to attempt to offer an education that is comparable to that offered by the English-language school districts. One of the particularities of the CSCE is that it must build its student base over time. École Voyageur is a testament to the CSCE's success and the quality of French-language education being offered in the province. Indeed, the number of students in the incoming classes show that École Voyageur is thriving and requires additional space for its students.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Marc Dumont – Superintendent

cc. Jannick Roy-Plante, Treasurer and Director of Operations



Capital Planning
7th Floor, Commerce Place
10155 – 102 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4L5
Canada
<https://education.alberta.ca/>

AR97646

March 8, 2017

Mr. Marc Dumont
Superintendent of Schools
East Central Francophone Education Region
CP 249
St. Paul Alberta
T0A 3A0

Dear Mr. Dumont:

Thank you for your letter of March 3, 2017, following up our recent telephone conversation about the need for three modular classrooms at École Voyageur in Cold Lake to address anticipated enrolment pressure.

Each year, in October, Alberta Education requests school jurisdictions to submit their requirements for modular units and the relocation of existing modular classrooms or free-standing portable classrooms to address demonstrated enrolment pressures, health and safety issues and evergreening, through the Modular Submission Process.

Utilization is the main criterion used by government to assess provincial priorities in assessing Modular Classroom Program requests. Due to growth pressures throughout the province, and the resources available within the program, only the very highest utilization pressures can be addressed, which are typically above 90 per cent.

Our records, based on 2016-2017 enrolments, indicate that École Voyageur has an adjusted enrolment of 182 students and is 46 per cent utilized.

Modular classrooms to address emergent needs for September 2017, have already been reviewed and approved. I encourage you to submit your jurisdiction's request for modular classrooms in the next call for modular submissions to address emergent requirements for September 2018.

.../2

Mr. Marc Dumont
Page Two

Should you have any questions, please contact Laurel Udell, Senior Manager, Capital Planning Branch North at laurel.udell@gov.ab.ca or 780-427-2437 (dial 310-0000 first for toll-free access).

Sincerely,



Travis Hovland
Director
Capital Planning North

cc: Jannick Roy-Plante, Treasurer and Director of Operations