



February 22, 2018

The Honourable Stephen McNeil
Premier of Nova Scotia
Government House, Halifax
NS B3J 1X5

Dear Premier,

The Canadian School Boards Association, representing School Boards from across Canada, is incredibly disappointed by your government's decision to abolish locally elected school boards in favour of government appointees based on the recently commissioned "Raise the Bar" report.

Since Confederation, provincial/territorial governments have been given the responsibility of managing the education system. This however, was in part due to the important role and deep connection between education and community including the right to choose their own representative to make decisions and choose priorities reflecting the circumstances in their own community. Children's learning is integral for our future and that of our communities and locally elected school boards were created to ensure those closest to students and communities were given a significant voice in their education.

And yet, this recent announcement has decimated the principle at the heart of our democracy, a right that is being protected for minority populations only. While we applaud the protection of the minority language education system and your decision to maintain the French language board in Nova Scotia, we never imagined the majority language voice could so easily be dismissed.

School boards serve our nation well. They provide every Canadian citizen with a meaningful voice in an education system which is the envy of the world. Nova Scotia children compete internationally and perform well among the best countries in the world.

We recognize our system of governance can improve; we strive to make strides in this area and will continue to do so. Voter apathy is a problem in all elections and acclamations are sometimes a result of positive results. However, it is incomprehensible that such a heavy handed, top down directive of removing the significant voice of the community through elected representatives is an improvement. Your government has recognized the value of school boards by maintaining the minority language board. We would identify that what is of value for the minority is also of value to the majority.



We strongly suggest you reconsider your decision and meet with the Nova Scotia School Boards Association to explore alternatives to abolishing a right that all Canadians enjoy and that you consider instead in investing and supporting the education system as opposed to dismantling it.

Sincerely,

Gordon Swan
President



Mary Martin
President



Shawn Davidson
President



Ken Cameron
President



Laurie French
President



Alain Fortier
President



Jennifer Maccarone
President



Robert Fowler
President



Hank Williams
President



Goronwy Price
President



Mario Pelletier
President



Floyd Martens
President

