

September 8, 2016

The Greater North Central Francophone School Authority (CSCN) requests the participation of its school community in a survey that will establish the community's interest in modifying the structure of the school board's elected trustees. The survey will be conducted October 17 to 21, 2016.

In the current model, the board is composed of elected trustees proportional to registered voters. Currently seven (7) elected trustees sit on the school board: Five (5) elected by the Catholic voters and two (2) elected the public voters. The Board's elected trustees hope to get a ministerial decision in order to make a definitive change: That is to say, four (4) Catholic trustees and four (4) public trustees, and to do away with the need to reassess in advance of each election. The main reason for this change is to foster better representation of the students and parents of the CSCN and to preserve rights for both public and Catholic voters protected under the law. For the Catholic voters, the *Alberta Act* (s. 17) of 1905 guarantees to Catholic schools' families the same rights they had in 1905, including the right to manage their Catholic schools. For the public voters, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom* guarantees the freedom of conscience and religion, and as such, the right for a neutral education system without the influence of any religion.

The trustees believe that an egalitarian model will promote a more inclusive strategic positioning with regard to Francophone education to better meet the needs of students and their families. Such a change requires consultation to validate the support of electors and others interested in Francophone education and who live in CSCN's territory.

The survey will be confidential inasmuch as you will not have to give your name or your address. It will ask two questions. The first question will ask you to identify yourself as an elector, a parent, or a member of the Francophone community who doesn't meet the criteria as an elector, as defined by Section 256 of the *School Act*. The responses will provide the descriptive statistics of the survey's participating groups and serve for the purpose of classification.

Question 1 - In which of the following groups do you belong?

A. Elector

In order to be identified as an elector, you must:

- Be 18 years of age or older;
- Be a Canadian citizen;
- Have been a resident of Alberta for the six months preceding the date of the survey.

You must also meet at least one of the following conditions:

- Have at least one child registered in a Francophone school governed by CSCN;
- Received an Alberta high school diploma or certificate through a regional Authority (one of the four Francophone school boards of Alberta);
- Be the biological or adoptive parent of a student who received an Alberta high school diploma or certificate through a regional Authority (one of the four Francophone school boards of Alberta).

B. Parents who do not meet the criteria as an elector

Some of our parents are not considered electors (Group A) because:

- They are not a Canadian citizen, ;
- They have not been residents of Alberta since April 17, 2016.
- They are the parent of a student registered at École Sans-Frontières in Lloydminster and live in Saskatchewan.

C. Member of the Francophone community

You are a member of the Francophone community in the territory served by CSCN, but are neither an elector (Group A) nor a parent (Group B) if:

- You are a Francophone 18 years of age or older, living in the territory served by CSCN;
- You are the grandparents of a grandchild registered or previously registered at one of CSCN's schools, and are living in the territory served by CSCN.

The second question will ask for your opinion in regards to the governance structure.

Question 2 - What is your position on the change to the governance model of CSCN?

Please choose one of the following options:

- I support the proposed egalitarian model of four (4) public trustees and four (4) Catholic trustees.
- I support the existing model of proportional representation, based on a regular census of electors. At the moment the Board is made up of two (2) public trustees and five (5) Catholic trustees.

The survey's results will be given to the school board's trustees and will guide the trustees with regard to their position on the proposed egalitarian representation. Pending approval by the provincial Minister of Education, changes could be made before the school elections of October 2017.

More information will be sent to help you register for the survey in the coming weeks. Until then, information is available online at (<https://centrenord.ab.ca/conseil/rapports/gouvernance>) or you may email me for more information at directiongenerale@centrenord.ab.ca

Thank you in advance for your interest in this matter,



Robert Lessard
Superintendent