

July 3, 2019

Dear Applicant:

Re: Your request for access to information under Part II of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (Our File #: EECD/049/2019)

On June 19, 2019, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development received your request for access to the following records/information:

"May 2019 information note titled CSFP ??? New Francophone School."

I am pleased to inform you that a decision has been made by the Deputy Minister for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (the department) to provide access to some of the requested information, and the appropriate copies have been enclosed.

Access to the remaining records, and/or information contained within the records, has been refused in accordance with the following exceptions to disclosure, as specified in the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015 (the Act):

Section 29: Policy, Advice and Recommendation

29. (1) The head of a public body may refuse to disclose to an applicant information that would reveal

(a) advice, proposals, recommendations, analyses or policy options developed by or for a public body or minister.

As required by 8(2) of the Act, we have severed information that is unable to be disclosed and have provided you with as much information as possible. In accordance with your request for a copy of the records, the appropriate copies have been enclosed.

You may ask the Information and Privacy Commissioner to review the processing of your access request, as set out in section 42 of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the Act). A request to the Commissioner must be made in writing within 15 business days of the date of this letter or within a longer period that may be allowed by the Commissioner.

The appeal may be addressed to the Information and Privacy Commissioner as follows:

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner
2 Canada Drive
P. O. Box 13004, Stn. A
St. John's, NL. A1B 3V8

Telephone: (709) 729-6309
Toll-Free: 1-877-729-6309
Facsimile: (709) 729-6500

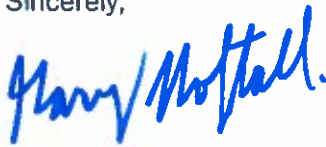
You may also appeal directly to the Supreme Court Trial Division within 15 business days after you receive the decision of the public body, pursuant to section 52 of the Act.

Please be advised that this letter will be published following a 72 hour period after it is sent electronically to you or five business days in the case where records are mailed to you. It is the goal to have the letter posted to the Completed Access to Information Requests website within one business day following the applicable period of time. Please note that requests for personal information will not be posted online.

The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act requires us to provide an advisory response within 10 days of receiving the request. As this request has been completed by day 10, this letter also serves as our Advisory Response.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact the undersigned by telephone at 709-729-7180 or by email at garynoftall@gov.nl.ca.

Sincerely,



Gary Noftall
ATIPP Coordinator

Attachment

Information Note
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Title: CSFP – New Francophone School

Issue: To provide an update to the Minister on the status of planning for a new francophone school/community centre for the greater St. John’s Metro Area.

Background and Current Status:

- The Conseil scolaire francophone provincial (CSFP) currently has six schools under its jurisdiction:

School	2018-19 Enrolment
Ecole de Grands Vents (EGV), St. John’s	156
Ecole Rocher du Nord (former Holy Cross Elementary), St. John’s	32
Ecole Notre-Dame–du-Cap, Cape St. George	42
Ecole Ste. Anne, Mainland	62
Ecole Boreal, Happy Valley-Goose Bay	32
Centre Educatif ENVOL, Labrador City	24
TOTAL	348

- There are currently 188 students enrolled at both schools in St. John’s for 2018-19.
- EGV was constructed in 2004 and designed to accommodate 150 K-12 students as well as a francophone community centre. It serves the francophone student population for the greater St. John’s area, including Mount Pearl, Portugal Cove – St. Philip’s, Conception Bay South, Pouch Cove, and Torbay. Enrolment has increased from 35 students in 2004-05 to 179 students in 2016-17 (prior to the opening of Ecole Rocher du Nord).
- The capacity issues at EGV in recent years have necessitated the installation of a number of modular classrooms as an interim measure pending the implementation of a long-term solution. There is no additional space to install additional modulares.
- In July 2017, CSFP entered into an MOU with the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District and the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation (RCEC) to operate the former Holy Cross Elementary as a grades 7-12 school for a period of 5 years (expires June 2022). EGV was reconfigured to K-6.
- CSFP has conducted their own site selection process and reviewed several potential site locations located in the west end of St. John’s and Mount Pearl. The Board approved Galway as their preferred site for the location of the new school. A press release was issued by the Board on December 6, 2018 announcing the proposed site location.

- CSFP has engaged their own consultant to prepare a Feasibility Study for the new school. It was officially submitted to TW and EECD on December 11, 2018.
- CSFP is requesting a school to accommodate 510 K-12 students plus a community centre for francophones. The estimate provided by CSFP's consultant is approximately \$56 million (\$37 million for school and \$19 million for community space).
- EECD has submitted an Expression of Interest and attended a meeting with Heritage Canada regarding potential funding for the new facility. Heritage Canada has indicated a willingness to work with EECD/CSFP once it has further detailed planning on the new school/community centre.
- Heritage Canada will not fund capital costs for a new school. It will only fund a portion of the building that is for community use or shared space. s. 29(1)(a)
[REDACTED]
- Budget 2018 provided \$400,000 in funding (Phase 1) to commence planning for a new school. In consultation with CSFP, TW released an RFP in December 2018 to engage a consultant for this purpose. The RFP has not yet been awarded.
- \$2.8 million has been allocated in Budget 2019 to continue planning for the school, which includes \$300,000 carryover from Budget 2018.

Analysis:

- EECD received various pieces of correspondence from CSFP in the past several years stressing the high priority they are placing on the new school project and requesting that government approve same given Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- CSFP is of the opinion that EGV has inferior program facilities in comparison to the English schools in the area and this is the reason enrolments at the school drop off significantly into the junior and senior high grades. For example, the K-6 class enrolments are healthy but the current total junior high population (7-9) is 28 and the total high school population is four.
- CSFP contends that enrolment will significantly increase if there was a suitable facility in the area.
- There are currently 188 students enrolled at both schools in St. John's. Accurate enrolment projections are difficult to obtain as there is little data available specific to francophone citizens and families.

- CSFP will need to clearly demonstrate and substantiate the need for a new school that is proposed to accommodate 510 students from K-12. There are currently 188 students in St. John's schools and 348 for the entire province.
- CSFP may need to consider a smaller school that will provide core facilities (e.g., gymnasium, labs, and cafeteria), but with an option to expand if the student population grows.
- The MOU to operate at the former Holy Cross Elementary expires in June 2022. Effectively, there are only three school years remaining under the current agreement. CSFP will require a permanent solution to this problem.
- Alternate options such as the current temporary location and the former School for the Deaf need to be fully explored to determine if either might meet CSFP's needs.

Action Being Taken:

- EECD officials have advised CSFP that alternate options need to be explored, including potential land and existing school infrastructure and how that may meet the needs of the francophone community.
- EECD will continue to work with CSFP on a school that meets the needs of the francophone community.

Prepared/Approved by: B. Evans / B. Gardiner

May 29, 2019

BN/19/48