



Congratulations to the community of the École Rose des Vents for their victory in the courts!

(Richmond, November 2, 2012) The victorious outcome for the Association des parents de l'école (APÉ) Rose-des-vents and Joseph Pagé in the Supreme Court of British Columbia on October 31, 2012 is great news to all francophone children and parents in the province!

As president of the Conseil scolaire francophone de la C.-B. (CSF), I would like to thank and congratulate the APÉ of the École Rose-des-vents, Luc Morin, its former president, Joseph Pagé as well as their legal counsel, Nicolas Rouleau, for their persistence in this lawsuit and their dedication to the cause of education in French in British Columbia.

Over the course of long legal proceedings, the CSF, in collaboration with the APÉ, has jointly filed a large body of evidence to demonstrate the inadequate access to education in French in Vancouver, west of Main Street. The CSF has supported the APÉ and has joined forces in resisting numerous arguments put forward by the government to claim that no infrastructure problems exist in the École Rose-des-vents. I am pleased that the court has recognized the facts of the situation that we have been living with for far too long.

The judgment handed down in the action will help the CSF implement the capital plan for the Greater Vancouver Regional District and it bodes well for the action brought by the CSF, the Fédération des parents francophones de la Colombie-Britannique (FPFCB) and parents as co-plaintiffs against the provincial government.

As you are aware, during the same period, the CSF, the FPFCB and some thirty parents as co-plaintiffs, initiated a legal action of larger scope involving fifteen schools, including the École Rose-des-vents. All the school communities continue to experience equally difficult situations as a result of inadequate infrastructures. This week's victory before the Supreme Court will undoubtedly contribute directly to the success of this legal action.

For years, the CSF has submitted a clear plan for the necessary capital expenditures to the Ministry of Education to meet the needs of parents and children in our catchment areas, including the area of Vancouver west of Main Street. The CSF is asking to replace the present premises of the École Rose-des-vents with two new elementary schools with a total capacity of at least 860 students. One of these buildings would be located between Main Street and Granville Street and the other would be located west of Granville Street. This would allow for a significant reduction in the commuting time for students and their families.

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COMMUNIQUÉ

Important progress has been made toward the implementation of the CSF's plan for this area. In October 2011, the Minister responded partially to our demands for this region by promising to build a new francophone school on a site located south-east of False Creek. Negotiations between the various bodies involved in the implementation of this school have been underway since that time, but it must be pointed out that the Province has still not transferred to the CSF the funds required to purchase the site and build this school.

This week, Justice Willcock confirmed the necessity of immediate implementation of the CSF's plan for this area and he ruled that the Ministry of Education must provide the necessary funding. I strongly hope that the Ministry will announce this funding without any further delay. The educational experience of francophone children in this beautiful province depends on it.

Once again, I extend my warmest congratulations to the parents of the École Rose-des-vents, who have achieved this major contribution to advancing the cause of education in the French language in British Columbia.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Greenhill'.

Alexandra T. Greenhill

President

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