



Leger Marketing Study Confirms English-Speaking Quebecers Overwhelmingly Support Elected School Boards

(Montreal: May 21, 2019): APPELE-Québec – the Alliance for the Promotion of Public English-language Education in Québec – released the results of a Leger Marketing Survey of English-speaking Quebecers, which demonstrates solid community support for elected school boards and strong opposition to the Government of Quebec’s proposal to replace them with service centres.

“School boards have deep roots in the English-speaking community and are viewed as playing a critical and valuable role in ensuring our elementary and secondary schools effectively respond to the needs of our community,” declared former MNA Geoffrey Kelley, who is chairing APPELE-Québec, “Not surprisingly we believe that our neighbour who we have elected to serve on a school board will better represent our interests than a bureaucrat in Quebec City.”

“In looking ahead,” continued Kelley, “as the poll makes clear, we are united in our opposition to the service centres that the Quebec government is proposing and determined to protect our constitutional right to manage and control our school system.”

Key findings of the survey are as follows:

- A vast majority (88%) of respondents are aware of the existence of their region’s English school board;
- Seven out of ten respondents (68%) believe that school boards should be elected by the population.
- Two thirds of respondents (67%) believe that school boards contribute to the efficient functioning of elementary and secondary public schools. Overall, 85% of respondents say that English school boards are important to them.
- 89% of respondents consider the English school board that serves their area important for their community’s identity. However, only half of them (48%) consider that it is a hub of community life.

- 61% of respondents are aware of the government’s plan to abolish school boards but only 12% support this plan. Only 16% of them believe that the Quebec government should be able to unilaterally make decisions regarding the future of school boards. Moreover, three quarters of respondents (76%) feel that a local elected school board official would do a better job at making decisions on English public school education than a Government of Quebec civil servant (6%) as proposed in the plan.
- Respondents are very committed to protecting the rights of their community: 90% of them say that their minority language education rights are very important to them, and 87% think that school boards should remain independent from the Government of Quebec in order to protect these rights. Moreover, with regards to elections, 84% of respondents agree that the population at large should be able to vote in school board elections when it is a question of protecting the rights of English-speaking Quebecers to control and manage their educational facilities.

“School board elections,” concluded Kelley, “are strongly supported and viewed as a critical tool for protecting minority rights. As the Jennings report proposed, the Leger Survey confirms that voter turnout would increase significantly if there were internet voting and if elections were held at the same time as municipal elections.”

About APPELE-Québec:

APPELE-Québec – the Alliance for the Promotion of Public English-language Education in Québec – is a broadly-based, Quebec-wide community coalition to promote the continued existence of English school boards, to ensure they are governed by commissioners who are democratically elected by the English-speaking community at large. Our Alliance, already with 16 supporting organizations and nine observer groups, is expanding rapidly.

The Chair of the APPELE-Québec Alliance is Geoff Kelley, a former MNA and Minister. The vice-chairs are former Senator and respected journalist Joan Fraser and Kevin Shaar, a lawyer with two children enrolled in the Western Quebec School Board.

For more information about APPELE-Québec, go to www.appellequebec.org.

About the Leger Marketing Survey:

Leger was commissioned by the steering committee of APPELE-Québec to conduct a study among the province of Quebec regarding the perception of Anglophones toward school boards in general and English school boards in particular.

In order to meet the research objectives, a WEB survey was conducted from March 13th to March 21st, 2019 among a representative sample of 1001 English-speaking Quebecers, 18 years of age or older.

Using data from Statistics Canada, the results were weighted according to gender, age, region and level of education, to ensure a sample representative of the entire population under review.

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