



471 Green St., Saint-Lambert, QC., J4P 1V2 450-671-1649  
276 Queen Blvd., Saint-Lambert, QC., J4R 1H7 450-550-2612  
675 Green St., Saint-Lambert, QC., J4P 1V2 450-671-1649

Saint-Lambert, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Dear Mr. Roberge,

We, The Governing Board at REACH School are writing to express our profound regret for your decision to deny a new building or an extension of an existing structure for the children at REACH School.

As per your visit to our school on September 10th, 2019, you are well aware that we educate a diverse population of special needs students with multiple needs, abilities and challenges from the Anglophone community within the region of Montérégie. Our buildings, as they are now, do not accommodate for the success of our students. As of August 2020, we now have been forced to use 5 classes at the local high school in order to accommodate our high school population. We are currently spread out over 5 separate locations, which is simply unacceptable, quite frankly deplorable, for any student. These locations do not contain any of the basic resources such as handicap bathrooms, library, cafeteria, intervention rooms, playground, gym etc. that are found in other schools, let alone what is required to educate special needs students.

As our population grows, are we going to be forced into another band-aid solution without any long-term perspective?

Why do our special needs students continue to be treated like second-class citizens? Canada has been blamed many times by the United Nations for how poorly it treats its most vulnerable children. These children do not have a voice in society, and so today we, parents, educators, administrators, speak out for them. We speak out so that their rights to dignity, to education, to equal opportunities to reach their full potential be heard by you, Mr Roberge. For instance, because of a lack of access to proper sanitary installations, high school staff are forced to change students' diapers and clean them on the floor in conditions that do not respect the dignity of these children.

Upon your visit in September 2019, and under your guidance, we completed your requirements and applied a third time for a building conducive to the needs of our students. We now have been refused three times! The first two applications were filed incorrectly under a regular school mandate and were therefore denied. Soon after your visit, we were recognized with 7 classes with the Regional Status, received additional funding and yet, the application for a new building or extension was once again refused with no explanation.

Will we be forced to apply for a fourth time? Whose guidance and recommendations will we follow to guarantee the realization of this project? Will the students who have extreme difficulties dealing with transitions, continue to be forced to relocate year after year, in order to accommodate our growing population each year? If these were your children, Mr. Roberge, would you tolerate these deplorable conditions?



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Quebec has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and as such, we ask that you help us ensure that the rights of ALL children, particularly the rights of children with disabilities, be respected. Minister of Education, it is your responsibility to ensure, enforce and protect these rights. Help us ensure that no child is left behind.

Therefore, we implore you Mr. Roberge, to reconsider our request to better accommodate our great Special Needs Community. We are requesting a meeting with you, at your earliest convenience, within the next two weeks. A member of our Governing Board will contact you shortly.

Thank you for your time and reconsideration of our project. We look forward to a swift and positive resolution.

REACH Governing Board