

NOVA SCOTIA UTILITY AND REVIEW BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF THE EDUCATION (CSAP) ACT

- and -

IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION by the **CONSEIL SCOLAIRE ACADIEN PROVINCIAL** to reduce the number of school board members from 18 to 13; to maintain the number of electoral districts at 10; and to amend the electoral districts of Truro and Antigonish

BEFORE: Roland A. Deveau, K.C., Vice Chair

APPLICANT: **CONSEIL SCOLAIRE ACADIEN PROVINCIAL**
Diane Racette, Chair
Michel Collette, Executive Director

HEARING DATE: April 8, 2024

DECISION DATE: **May 23, 2024**

DECISION: **Board approves the application.**

1.0 SUMMARY

[1] The Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) applied to the Board under the *Education (CSAP) Act* to reduce the number of school board members from 18 to 13 and to maintain the number of electoral districts at 10. Under the *Act*, the same number of school board members need not be elected from each electoral district. The application also asked to amend the boundaries of the electoral districts to move the Municipality of East Hants from the district of Antigonish to the district of Truro.

[2] The CSAP engaged a consultant to prepare a comparative analysis of other Francophone school boards across Canada. The analysis showed that the CSAP has the highest number of school board members of any Francophone school board, regardless of student population size. Section 13(6) of the *Act* requires that the Board “shall give consideration to effective representation of the Acadian and Francophone communities in the province and effective representation shall be considered of greater importance than parity of voting”. During the public consultation, 68.2% of responses to an online survey favoured a smaller CSAP school board.

[3] The hearing was held in person on April 8, 2024, at the CSAP’s head office in Meteghan River, Digby County, Nova Scotia and broadcast on the CSAP’s Zoom webinar platform. The hearing was conducted in French. In addition to the CSAP presenting its application, three members of the public requested to speak at the hearing.

[4] Based on its review of the evidence and the submissions, the Board approves the application. The Board finds that the application is consistent with the requirements of the *Act* and that the CSAP has struck an appropriate balance of ensuring the effective representation of the Acadian and Francophone communities in the province

with the relative distribution of the CSAP members among the electoral districts. The Board determines that there will be 13 school board members and 10 electoral districts, as described in the application.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

[5] On December 19, 2023, the CSAP applied to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board to reduce the number of school board members from 18 to 13; to maintain the number of electoral districts at 10; and to amend the boundaries of the electoral districts to move the Municipality of East Hants from the electoral district of Antigonish to the electoral district of Truro. The application is made under the *Education (CSAP) Act*, S.N.S. 1995-1996, c. 1.

[6] There are presently 18 school board members elected from 10 electoral districts. The legislation specifically provides that, for the CSAP, the same number of school board members need not be elected from each electoral district. In the Board's prior decisions about the CSAP, the relative size of the Acadian and Francophone communities across the Province has been reflected in the number of school board members representing each of the respective regions.

[7] The creation of the CSAP resulted from the Province's commitment to providing the minority Acadian and Francophone communities in Nova Scotia with an education in their own language as guaranteed by Section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Charter)*. It is recognized that minority language education is crucial to the preservation of the language and culture of these Acadian and Francophone communities. This right was highlighted by the Nova Scotia Department of Education in

Education Horizons - White Paper on Restructuring the Education System which was released in February, 1995. In noting the significant role of Francophone governance for these communities, the White Paper contained the following commitment at page 16:

The Acadian and French language population in Nova Scotia has added and will continue to add, a unique cultural, historical and political perspective to Nova Scotia. The introduction of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 formally recognized this contribution by guaranteeing minority linguistic rights. Nova Scotia is obligated to provide for these rights, by providing French and English Nova Scotians with equivalent education opportunities. These opportunities must reflect the unique experiences of both Acadian and French-language societies while providing the foundation for the continuation of their respective cultures in Nova Scotia.

[8] The resulting legislation designated the CSAP to represent minority language education rightsholders, with jurisdiction throughout the province and responsibility for the delivery and administration of all French-first-language programs to the children of entitled parents. The concept of “entitled parent” or “entitled person” is important in that their children are entitled as of right under the *Charter* to a French language education as well as the right to manage and administer their own education system. This differs from French immersion programs for Anglophone students and parents whose mother tongue is English. Such immersion programs are not guaranteed under the *Charter*.

[9] The right of “entitled parents” or “entitled persons” to manage and administer their own education system was enunciated by the Supreme Court of Canada in *Mahe, Martel, Dubé and Association d'Ecole Georges et Julia Bugnet v. Alberta* (1990), 105 N.R. 321 and *Reference Re Public Schools Act (Manitoba)* (1993), 149 N.R. 241. These principles were reaffirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada in *Arsenault-Cameron v. Prince Edward Island*, [2000] 1 S.C.R. 3 and in *Doucet-Boudreau v. Nova Scotia (Department of Education)*, [2003] 3 S.C.R. 3.

[10] The terms “entitled parent” and “entitled person” are significant because only entitled persons can vote in elections for the CSAP. This ensures the governance of the education system by representatives elected by the rightsholders. These terms are defined in s. 3 of the *Act*:

- 3 (h) "entitled parent" means a parent who is a citizen of Canada and
- (i) whose first language learned and still understood is French,
 - (ii) who received his or her primary school instruction in Canada in a French-first-language program, or
 - (iii) of whom any child has received or is receiving primary or secondary school instruction in Canada in a French-first-language program;
- (i) "entitled person" means an entitled parent or a person who, not being an entitled parent, would be an entitled parent if the person were a parent;

[11] As noted in prior Board decisions, it has been difficult to determine exactly how many entitled persons there are in the province, and how many of them will choose to vote in the CSAP election. Until the 2021 Census, no census of entitled persons had ever been undertaken in the province and it is a difficult task to determine this figure in advance as such persons do not all reside in Acadian or Francophone communities. Even if they did reside in such communities, they may not necessarily have their children enrolled in the French-first-language programs. Ms. Racette and Mr. Collette testified that the recent 2021 Census had attempted to gather such data, but the accuracy of the data was still unclear because it was only collected by those completing the full questionnaire. It is also generally acknowledged that some entitled persons do not self-identify.

3.0 EVIDENCE

[12] The hearing was conducted in French and held in person at the CSAP's head office in Meteghan River, Digby County, Nova Scotia, and broadcast on the CSAP's Zoom webinar platform on April 8, 2024. The CSAP was represented at the hearing by Diane Racette, its Chair, and by Michel Collette, Executive Director.

[13] The Notice of Hearing was advertised in Le Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse on March 8 and 22, 2024, and the Chronicle Herald on March 6, 2024. The Notice was also posted on the CSAP and Board websites. The Notice invited members of the public to advise the Board of their written comments in advance of the hearing, or to notify the Board if they wished to speak at the hearing. Three members of the public registered to speak via the Zoom platform. The Board also received 12 letters opposing some aspects of the application.

[14] Student enrollment in CSAP schools has increased from 5,429 in 2015 to 6,318 currently. Also, the estimated number of entitled persons has increased from 35,600 in 2015 to 48,610 at present. The CSAP operates 23 schools across Nova Scotia.

[15] The existing electoral districts, along with the number of members in each district, are shown in Table A. The Board found errors in the calculated variances from the average number of voters per member noted in the application. The figures in the last two columns have been corrected:

Electoral District	Number of Members	Estimated Entitled Persons (Voters)	Student Population	Estimated Entitled Persons (Voters) Per Member	Variation from Avg Number of Voters per Member	
					#	%
Inverness	2	2,830	168	1,415	-1,286	-48%
Victoria-CB	1	1,135	262	1,135	-1,566	-58%
Richmond	2	2,480	250	1,240	-1,461	-54%
Antigonish	1	1,595	282	1,595	-1,106	-41%
Truro	1	1,595	338	1,595	-1,106	-41%
Halifax	3	11,090	2,327	3,696	995	37%
South Shore	1	650	241	650	-2,051	-76%
Argyle	3	5,900	778	1,966	-735	-27%
Clare	3	6,225	585	2,075	-626	-23%
Greenwood	1	2,100	198	2,100	-601	-22%

Total estimated number of entitled persons (voters): 48,610
 Total number of members: 18
 Average number of voters per member: 2,701

[16] The Board received testimony during prior CSAP public hearings that confirmed the number of students in each electoral district provided a fair representation of the relative size of the electoral districts. No contrary evidence was tendered in this application. The Board finds the number of students and the estimated number of entitled persons in each electoral district continues to be evidence at the Board's disposal to help it determine the relative size of the districts.

[17] The proposed electoral districts, along with the number of members in each district, are shown in Table B:

Electoral District	Number of Members	Estimated Entitled Persons (Voters)	Student Population	Estimated Entitled Persons (Voters) Per Member	Variation from Avg Number of Voters per Member	
					#	%
Inverness	1	2,010	120	2,010	-1,729	-46%
Victoria-Cape Breton	1	2,225	324	2,225	-1,514	-41%
Richmond	1	2,180	260	2,180	-1,559	-42%
Antigonish	1	3,090	349	3,090	-649	-17%
Truro	1	2,095	309	2,095	-1,644	-44%
Halifax	2	20,800	3,317	10,400	6,661	178%
South Shore	1	1,725	307	1,725	-2,014	-54%
Argyle	2	5,910	659	2,955	-784	-21%
Clare	2	5,035	433	2,518	-1,222	-33%
Greenwood	1	3,540	240	3,540	-199	-5%

Total estimated number of entitled persons (voters): 48,610
 Total number of members: 13
 Average number of voters per member: 3,739

[18] The CSAP engaged Ms. Maureen Reid, a consultant, to review how other Francophone school boards across Canada were organized. Nine comparable school boards were identified across the country that were relatively similar to the CSAP in terms of school population and geographic size. The consultant prepared a comparative analysis which showed that the CSAP had the highest number of school board members. Indeed, the review showed that the CSAP has the highest number of school board members of any Francophone school board in Canada, regardless of student population size.

[19] Three school boards were identified as being particularly comparable:

- Conseil des écoles Fransaskoises (15 schools; 2,035 students; 10 members);
- Commission scolaire Franco-manitobaine (25 schools; 5,783 students; 11 members);
- Conseil scolaire Francophone de la Colombie-Britannique) (47 schools; 6,453 students; 7 members); and

- Reference: CSAP (23 schools; 6,318 students; 18 members).

[20] The complete comparison of the CSAP and nine comparable French school boards is set out in the following table:

School Board	Student Population	Number of Schools	Board Size
Conseil des écoles fransaskoises (SK)	2,035	15	10
District scolaire francophone du Nord-Ouest (NB)	5,002	18	8
Conseil scolaire catholique de district des Grandes Rivières (ON)	5,507	35	10
Commission scolaire franco-manitobaine (MB)	5,783	24	11
Conseil scolaire catholique du Nouvel-Ontario (ON)	6,056	39	12
Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique (CB)	6,453	47	7
Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (NÉ)	6,615	22	18
District scolaire francophone Nord-Est (NB)	8,728	34	10
Conseil scolaire catholique Providence (ON)	9,539	31	11
Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario (ON)	16,860	43	12

[Exhibit C-3, pp. 19-20]

[21] Before it applied to the Board, the CSAP consulted the public. The consultation process was extensively advertised through many channels, including on the CSAP's website and social media channels (Facebook and Instagram), on the individual CSAP school websites, and by three separate emails to the students' families, faculty, and to the CSAP's media contacts. Ads were broadcast on Radio-Canada and on community radio stations across the province. A notice was also published in *Le Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse*.

[22] A background document was available during the public consultation phase, including the above information about Francophone school boards across Canada

and a review of the requirements in the *Act* for this application. Three options for representation in 10 electoral districts and a fourth option for other scenarios were presented for the public's consideration and comments:

- 1) Reducing to 13 members, with each district currently having more than one member being reduced by one member (i.e., Argyle, Clare and Halifax would decrease from three to two members, while Inverness and Richmond would decrease from two members to one);
- 2) Reducing to 11 members, with Argyle (3), Clare (3), Inverness (2) and Richmond (2) all being reduced to one member and Halifax reduced from three to two members;
- 3) Maintaining the status quo of 18 members; and
- 4) The background document also invited the public to suggest any other option, provided it conform with the requirements of the *Act*.

[23] The CSAP received 85 responses to its online survey. Eight individuals attended the public sessions held by webinar, with six of them providing comments.

[24] The online survey confirmed that 68.2% of respondents favoured a reduced school board size. In terms of the various options that were offered in the background document, the results of the survey were as follows:

- 13-member options (29.4%)
- 11-member option (38.8%)
- Status quo 18-member option (17.6%)
- Other options (14.2%)

[25] However, most options or suggestions recommended under the fourth alternative by 14.2% of respondents (and in letters of comment to the Board in this matter)

are not permitted under the *Act*. For example, some asked that the CSAP be divided into two school boards (i.e., one for HRM and one for the remainder of the province) or that students and youth representatives be added to the CSAP. The Board notes that the *Act* does not permit these suggestions to be considered in this hearing process and are beyond the authority of the Board and the CSAP to implement.

[26] The CSAP approved the filing of this application with the Board at its meeting of December 9, 2023, by a vote of 9 to 7.

[27] Three individuals registered to speak at the Board's hearing of this application on April 8, 2024. They all agreed to speak during the afternoon session instead of the evening session, so the evening session was cancelled.

[28] Nicole Dupuis is the Executive Director of the Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FPANÉ). The FPANÉ supports the application to reduce the number of members on the CSAP from 18 to 13, noting that the reduction could have been even greater. She added that regional representation is important on the CSAP school board.

[29] She expressed two concerns. First, she noted that the members of the CSAP should be subject to term limits. Second, she noted that the CSAP election process should be improved, i.e., some "entitled persons" are not aware they can vote in CSAP elections and other individuals vote in CSAP elections even though they are not "entitled persons". The Board noted that neither of these two concerns are within the jurisdiction of the Board under the *Act*. On the second point, the FPANÉ may wish to consult with the municipal elections officer appointed by the province.

[30] Jeff Arsenault and Jean-Philippe Bourgeois, both of Halifax, also provided their comments in separate presentations. While they both indicated they had no concerns with the administration and faculty of the CSAP, they expressed concerns about what they consider to be a lack of representation for the HRM region on the CSAP school board. They suggested that this under-representation was instrumental in the CSAP failing to provide more schools to serve the increasing Acadian and Francophone population in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

[31] For greater context, 43% of “entitled persons” in the province reside in the HRM. However, only two of 13 members on the proposed CSAP will represent the region (currently, three of the 18 members represent HRM). Further, according to student enrolment records, 3,317 of the current 6,318 students attend HRM schools.

[32] Mr. Arsenault stated that increasing the number of schools in HRM would have a far greater impact on increasing the CSAP’s total student population than similar efforts in Acadian and Francophone regions across the province. He noted that there is far greater potential for growth in HRM because the Francophone population is growing much faster in the central region than in the remainder of the province.

[33] Both Mr. Arsenault and Mr. Bourgeois submitted that the current CSAP board does not represent the interests of parents in HRM and suggested that their concerns are not understood by CSAP members representing other regions in the province.

[34] The Board observes that many of the letters of comment from the public also raised similar concerns about HRM’s representation on the CSAP.

[35] In response to these concerns about HRM representation, Ms. Racette and Mr. Collette again highlighted the specific direction in s. 13(6) of the *Act* that the effective representation of the Acadian and Francophone communities in the province is to be considered of greater importance than parity of voting. The CSAP witnesses also stated that the proposed electoral districts reflect the Acadian and Francophone communities across the province that were approved by the Board in its prior CSAP decisions.

[36] They also noted that in reducing the number of total CSAP board members from 18 to 13, they tried to maintain a similar ratio of members from each district relative to the total. Thus, while representation from Halifax would decrease from 16.7% of the total to 15.4% for the proposed 13-member CSAP, an identical percentage reduction would occur for the regions of Argyle and Clare, and a greater reduction would occur for the Inverness and Richmond districts (i.e., from 11.1% on the 18-member school board to 7.7% on the 13-member board).

[37] In their presentation at the hearing, the CSAP representatives also noted that while CSAP school board members are elected from different electoral districts, once they are on the school board they have a fiduciary duty to act in the overall best interests of the CSAP and all the students, not the individual regions. They added that a smaller school board would operate more efficiently, but they noted that the reduction was not for cost savings because any savings would not be material on the overall budget.

4.0 ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

[38] Section 42(1) of the *Act* states that the CSAP must have not less than five nor more than 18 members.

[39] Section 13(5) provides, however, that:

- 13(5)** Commencing with the first election of the members of the Conseil acadien,
- (a) the Province shall be divided into eight electoral districts or such greater number of districts as the Utility and Review Board determines;
 - (b) the boundaries of the electoral districts shall be as determined by the Utility and Review Board; and
 - (c) the same number of members need not be elected from each electoral district. [Emphasis added]

[40] Section 44 of the *Act* sets out the Board's powers and the matters which it shall consider in determining the number and boundaries of electoral districts and reads as follows:

- 44**
- (1)** In determining the number and boundaries of electoral districts, the Utility and Review Board shall make such decision as in its opinion is just, and is not restricted to the proposal advanced by a school board in its application.
 - (2)** The Utility and Review Board may reject an application and require a school board to re-apply within such time as the Utility and Review Board directs, and may give such directions for the re-application as the circumstances of the case dictate.
 - (3)** In determining the number and boundaries of electoral districts, the Utility and Review Board shall give consideration to
 - (a) subject to subsection 13(6), ensuring as nearly as practical equal numbers of electors in each electoral district;
 - (b) population density;
 - (c) distribution of the school-age population;
 - (d) the principal language of instruction of the school board and language of instruction of the school population in areas of the district; and
 - (e) any other relevant matter that in the opinion of the Utility and Review Board affects the necessity, expediency or justice of the order sought.
 - (4)** The Utility and Review Board shall, in setting the numbers and boundaries of electoral districts, have regard to the existing boundaries of polling districts and wards.

[41] In addition to the factors enumerated in s. 44 of the *Act*, the Board must also consider the provisions of s. 13. Section 13(5) mandates that the province be divided into no less than five electoral districts and that the same number of members need not

be elected from each electoral district. Of particular significance is s.13(6) which provides that effective representation of the Acadian and Francophone communities within the province shall be considered of greater importance than parity of voting:

13 (6) In determining the boundaries of the electoral districts and the number of members to be elected from each, the Utility and Review Board shall give consideration to effective representation of the Acadian and francophone communities in the Province and effective representation shall be considered of greater importance than parity of voting.
[Emphasis added]

[42] A review of past municipal polling district and school board electoral district decisions shows that an important consideration in such reviews has been relative parity of voting power. However, this factor must be given secondary importance to the primary consideration enumerated in s. 13(6) of the *Act*. In emphasizing the need to achieve relative parity of voting power, the Board has been influenced by court cases and provincial legislation, including the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in *Reference re Electoral Boundaries Commission Act* (1991), 81 D.L.R. (4th) 16 (*Carter*), which dealt with provincial electoral boundaries created by statute in the Province of Saskatchewan.

[43] The Board has previously determined that a variation of $\pm 10\%$ is the appropriate guideline to use in reviewing the number and boundaries of the municipal polling districts and school board electoral districts. Section 44(3)(a) of the *Act* directs the Board to give consideration to "ensuring as nearly as practical equal numbers of electors in each electoral district". This is subject, of course, to the primary consideration described in s. 13(6) of the *Act*.

[44] The Board does not consider itself bound in this application by the $\pm 10\%$ guideline it applies in municipal boundary reviews. Further, the Board notes that the Supreme Court of Canada, in *Carter*, accepted a variation of 50% for the northern ridings in the Province of Saskatchewan. The Board concludes that a variation in excess of $\pm 10\%$

is permissible depending upon the circumstances in the CSAP's application. There is a unique context that applies to the CSAP's application, which is characterized by a province-wide school board representing a number of rural Acadian and Francophone communities across the province and a relatively very large urban region.

[45] The Board recognizes that there are several differences between an electoral district for the election of a school board member and a polling district in a rural municipality for the election of a municipal councillor. In most instances, a school board member represents more voters than does a municipal councillor in the same general area. While reasonable departures from the parity guideline may be justified in a few instances, the Board finds the other factors enumerated in s. 44(3) can be adequately recognized and accommodated within the guideline for CSAP applications. However, in considering this application, the Board must give primary importance to the effective representation of the Acadian and Francophone communities in the province as mandated by s. 13(6) of the *Act*.

[46] Section 44(4) of the *Act* requires the Board to have regard to existing boundaries of polling districts and wards. To do otherwise could lead to voter confusion and may increase the cost of elections for the CSAP. The present application is consistent with s. 44(4) as it follows municipal unit boundaries.

[47] The CSAP has applied to decrease the number of school board members from 18 members to 13, distributed across 10 electoral districts, as described in Table B of this Decision.

[48] Table B shows, for each electoral district, the variation from the average numbers of voters per member. The variances from the average number of voters per

member in the electoral districts are roughly similar to those in 2016. The Board observes that the variance for Halifax has increased from 37% to 178%. Some letters of comment also expressed concern with the reduction of members for the electoral districts of Inverness and Richmond in Cape Breton. The CSAP witnesses stated that in reducing the number of CSAP board members from 18 to 13, the CSAP tried to maintain a similar ratio of members from each district relative to the total. A reduction in percentage representation of the total would occur for the Inverness and Richmond districts under the proposed CSAP board (i.e., from 11.1% on the 18-member school board to 7.7% on the 13-member board). As the Board noted earlier in this decision, these variances would reflect the unique context that applies to the CSAP's application, which is characterized by a province-wide school board representing a number of rural Acadian and Francophone communities across the province and a relatively very large urban region. Based on the paramount directive contained in s. 13(6), the Board finds that these proposed electoral districts, and the number of members per district, are justified in order to ensure the effective representation of the Acadian and Francophone communities.

[49] The evidence presented during the 1997 public hearings unanimously supported the eight electoral districts proposed in that application. It was clear from that evidence that those eight proposed electoral districts were fairly representative of the eight Acadian and Francophone communities situated across Nova Scotia at that time. One criterion used in the establishment of these electoral districts was to ensure that each region having an Acadian or Francophone school would be designated its own electoral district. The South Shore district was added in 2000 and the Truro district in 2016.

[50] A number of witnesses at the 1997 hearings, and subsequent hearings, emphasized the significance of preserving each of these eight communities, regardless of their size, in that this would help to ensure the preservation and future expansion of all Acadian and Francophone communities within the province. In its 2008 Decision, the Board stated:

... Particular mention was made throughout those hearings regarding the relatively small Acadian community of Pomquet which had shown extreme perseverance in surviving through the years and avoiding assimilation by surrounding English speaking communities. Witnesses suggested this as an excellent example justifying the creation of some small electoral districts in order to protect existing Acadian or Francophone communities, even where the size of such electoral districts clearly exceeded the accepted $\pm 25\%$ variance then used by the Board as an appropriate guideline. Similar evidence was presented in support of the creation of an electoral district for the South Shore region of Nova Scotia in 2000.

[Board Decision, 2008 NSUARB 78, para. 35]

[51] The evidence in the 2008 application confirmed that the creation of electoral districts for regions such as Pomquet (the district of Antigonish) and Bridgewater (the South Shore district) was necessary for the protection and growth of Acadian and Francophone communities in those areas. Since 1997, student enrolment in the Antigonish district has grown from 207 (which then included the Truro region) to 658 (comprised now of separate Antigonish and Truro electoral districts). Similarly, the South Shore district has grown from 41 to 307 students since 2000.

[52] The Board accepts the CSAP's evidence that the proposed reduction from 18 to 13 members is consistent with the wishes of a strong majority of the respondents to the online survey. A reduced CSAP board size was favoured by 68.2% of survey respondents. Further, the Board notes that most of the letters of comment filed with the Board favoured a reduced CSAP board size, although they identified other concerns (i.e., representation in HRM and Cape Breton noted earlier). The Board is satisfied that the CSAP has struck an appropriate balance of ensuring the effective representation of the

Acadian and Francophone communities in the province with the relative distribution of the CSAP members among the electoral districts. The Board also accepts the CSAP's evidence that after CSAP members are elected to the school board, they are subject to a fiduciary duty to act in the overall best interests of the CSAP, regardless of which district they represent.

[53] For the above reasons, the Board approves the application. The Board has carefully considered the issue of ensuring effective representation of the Acadian and Francophone communities in the province, as required under s. 13(6) of the *Act*. The statute states that effective representation of these communities shall be of greater importance than parity of voting. The Board approves 13 school board members elected from 10 electoral districts, as described in the application. The electoral districts of Argyle, Clare and Halifax will each elect two members and the electoral districts of Inverness, Richmond, Antigonish, Greenwood, South Shore, Truro and Victoria-Cape Breton will each elect one member. The members in those districts with more than one member will be elected "at large".

[54] The CSAP also applied to amend the boundaries of the electoral districts to transfer the Municipality of the District of East Hants from the district of Antigonish to the district of Truro. The CSAP indicated that this was to correct an inadvertent error in the 2016 application. East Hants was not moved from the Antigonish district when the Truro district was created in 2016. Thus, it remained in the Antigonish district even though it is not contiguous with that district. Rather, East Hants is contiguous with the Truro district and East Hants students attend Truro schools. The Board approves these changes to the

electoral district boundaries of Antigonish and Truro. The electoral districts are outlined in the attached Schedule "A".

[55] An Order will issue accordingly.

DATED at Halifax, Nova Scotia, this 23rd day of May, 2024.



Roland A. Deveau

Schedule "A"

CONSEIL SCOLAIRE ACADIEN PROVINCIAL Electoral Districts 2024

Electoral District of Argyle is comprised of the Municipality of the District of Argyle, the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth, the Town of Yarmouth, the Municipality of the District of Barrington, the Town of Clarke's Harbour, the Municipality of the District of Shelburne, the Town of Shelburne and the Town of Lockeport.

Electoral District of Clare is comprised of the Municipality of the District of Clare, the Municipality of the District of Digby and the Town of Digby.

Electoral District of Halifax is comprised of the Halifax Regional Municipality.

Electoral District of Inverness is comprised of the Municipality of the County of Inverness.

Electoral District of Richmond is comprised of the Municipality of the County of Richmond and the Town of Port Hawkesbury.

Electoral District of Antigonish is comprised of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish, the Municipality of the District of Guysborough, the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's, the Municipality of the County of Pictou and the Towns of Antigonish, Mulgrave, Pictou, New Glasgow, Stellarton, Westville and Trenton.

Electoral District of Greenwood is comprised of the Municipality of the County of Annapolis, the Municipality of the County of Kings, the West Hants Regional Municipality, Wolfville, Kentville, Berwick, Middleton, and Annapolis Royal.

Electoral District of Victoria-Cape Breton is comprised of the Municipality of the County of Victoria and the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

Electoral District of South Shore is comprised of the Region of Queens Municipality, the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, the Municipality of the District of Chester, and the Towns of Lunenburg, Bridgewater and Mahone Bay.

Electoral District of Truro is comprised of the Municipality of the County of Colchester, the Municipality of the County of Cumberland, the Municipality of the District of East Hants and the Towns of Truro, Amherst, Oxford and Stewiacke.