



REPORT

<h2>CORRESPONDENCE</h2>

Correspondence directed to the Minister of Education, from the Chair of Durham District School Board regarding Trustee Determination and Distribution for the upcoming term.



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for Tomorrow*

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March 20, 2014

The Honourable Liz Sandals
Minister of Education
22nd Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A1L2

Dear Minister Sandals:

At its recent meeting on March 17th, the Durham District School Board (DDSB) determined that it would declare the Township of Scugog a low population municipality in order to retain the current distribution of trustees across the school district. This allows the DDSB to comply with the timeline requiring that this determination be completed by March 31st and reported by April 3rd. The purpose of this correspondence is to raise concern regarding the timeline faced by the Board in making this determination.

During the Board's discussion regarding a possible redistribution of trustee representation for the upcoming term, concern was expressed that the public was largely uninformed that this matter had come into question.

The DDSB is committed to an open exchange of information and views with its public. In this case, the distribution of trustees has important implications both for those taxpayers residing in the vast rural area of north Durham as well as for those people living in urban communities experiencing mushrooming development. The DDSB believes that much more informed decisions are made when time is taken to hear the input from communities across the school district.

In his memorandum of February 14, 2014, Director Bruce Drewett asserts that provisions in the Education Act and related regulation guiding the determination and distribution of trustees remain unchanged since the 2010 municipal election. Is this assertion intended to imply that possible change in trustee distribution due to population growth and/or decline could somehow have been anticipated at the school board level? District staff have indicated that any valid calculation of this determination must stem from data provided by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC). This data was available to the DDSB on Feb 12, 2014.

Mission Statement

*Success in learning to meet
the challenges of the future.*

Ontario Regulation 412/00 (Elections to and Representation on District School Boards) states in Section 2(1) that "Before February 15 in each election year, the Municipal Assessment Corporation shall, in respect of each board, for each area set out in subsection (2), determine the population of the board's electoral group who are resident in the area on January 1 of that year." Indeed, the current regulatory timelines do not allow for a thoughtful examination of the community's needs in each area of the board and for public discourse on the possible representation of Trustees on the Board.

Respectfully, the DDSB requests that regulatory changes be made to create a mechanism that would allow school districts to undertake the process of determining the distribution of trustee positions one year prior to the opening of nominations for a municipal election with the requirement that the resulting decision on this distribution be reported one month prior to the opening of nominations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph T. Allin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Joseph T. Allin, Chair
Durham District School Board

JTA:kc

cc: OPSBA (Ontario Public School Boards' Association)
Chairs of Ontario District School Boards