



NEWS

THE COMMISSIONER ASKS THE GOVERNMENT TO PLACE THE GOVERNANCE OF THE CENTRE JULES-LÉGER IN THE HANDS OF FRANCOPHONES

TORONTO, July 30, 2015 – French Language Services Commissioner François Boileau recommends to the Minister of Education, the Honourable Liz Sandals, that the Centre Jules-Léger be governed by one of Ontario's 12 French-language school boards. This is one of the eight recommendations that the Commissioner makes in his investigation report on the governance model of this specialized centre for Francophone students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, low vision, deaf-blind or have severe learning disabilities.

Following his investigation, the Commissioner concluded that, on the basis of an analysis of the pertinent sections of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and court decisions interpreting them, the Centre Jules-Léger's governance model violates section 23 of the *Charter* and undermines the Centre Jules-Léger's integrity and mission.

"The current governance structure does not work. All the decisions are made by the Ministry of Education of Ontario and its representatives. Hence there is a lack of autonomous management. This situation must be remedied and governance by and for Francophones should be instituted before the start of the 2016-2017 school year," says Commissioner Boileau.

To achieve this goal, the Commissioner recommends in particular that a two- or three-member transition committee be established in September 2015. The committee's mandate will be to make recommendations to the Ministry by the end of 2015 to ensure both a smooth transition for the students and the viability of the Centre Jules-Léger by September 2016.

"All of the teachers, parents and other parties involved want to see the Centre Jules-Léger revitalized, returned to its status as a benchmark, a model for others, where employees are given sufficient freedom to make sometimes bold decisions based on the interests of their young charges. But there is no time to lose," concludes the Commissioner. "The government needs to act quickly," he adds.

QUICK FACTS

- The Commissioner makes eight recommendations in his investigation report on the Centre Jules-Léger.
- The investigation began in 2014 after a series of about 20 complaints were received regarding the governance of the Centre Jules-Léger.
- As part of the investigation, some 30 interviews were carried out with various stakeholders.
- The Centre Jules-Léger's services are delivered to the Francophone community by nearly 100 professionals and para-professionals.
- Since 1979, more than 700 students have completed one of the Centre's programs.

The Office of the French Language Services Commissioner reports directly to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Its principal mandate is to ensure compliance with the French Language Services Act in the delivery of government services.

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LEARN MORE

You can access the investigation report at flscontario.ca in the PUBLICATIONS section.

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