

**Francophone school board representatives invited to address St. Albert City Council on future school site of École Alexandre-Taché**



August 22, 2013 — Conseil scolaire Centre-Nord (Greater North Central Francophone Education Region No.2) will address concerns raised by Erin Ridge residents on the construction of a new francophone junior/senior high school, École Alexandre-Taché, at a St. Albert City Council meeting next Monday.

On August 19, some Erin Ridge residents expressed concerns to Council over the construction of a new school in Eldorado Park citing increased traffic and exacerbated parking issues for residents. Before adjourning, Council voted to invite the francophone school board and community to express their views. Conseil scolaire Centre-Nord is counting on a strong representation of students, parents and citizens at this crucial meeting for the school's future. Various spokespersons will present the added value for St. Albert of having a secondary-level francophone school and emphasize the importance for City councillors to act expeditiously and positively in support of the allocation of the Erin Ridge school site to Centre-Nord. A decision to delay could threaten the construction of the school.

Student population at École Alexandre-Taché has almost doubled since it opened in 2009, with close to 150 grades 7 to 12 students attending from St. Albert, Morinville, Legal, Spruce Grove, Stony Plain and north Edmonton. Alexandre-Taché presently leases a portion of the basement of Youville Home in St. Albert. It was renovated to meet the needs of this first francophone high school in St. Albert. However, the growing student population, the lack of a gymnasium, and the absence of specialized classrooms and CTS suites makes imperative the need for a new school. It was Centre-Nord's Capital Plan priority until Premier Alison Redford announced the construction of the new school on May 2, 2013.

This is not the first time Francophone Authorities have had to respond to residents' concerns pertaining to designated school sites. In fact, in 2001-2002, Centre-Nord was denied the Erin Ridge site for École La Mission. The school was eventually built in Heritage Lakes where some 700 residents had signed a petition opposing the school. Other Alberta francophone school districts have met similar opposition.

Board Chair Karen Doucet is confident that this time City councillors will «*do the right thing*». She is encouraging all École Alexandre-Taché supporters to attend the City Council meeting on **Monday, August 26, at 15:00 in the Council Chambers** (5 St. Anne Street, Saint-Albert).

- 30 -

Source: Henri Lemire, Superintendent  
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