

For immediate release

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CUPE: PEI SCHOOL BOARDS MUST REMAIN ELECTED

CHARLOTTETOWN: School Boards in Prince Edward Island need to remain as elected boards. That's the message the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) is conveying to the Education Governance Commission, which has been mandated to examine the governance structures, mechanisms and processes of the Island's educational system.

"We strongly believe that School Boards need to continue to follow the democratic process and remain as elected boards at arm's length from the government. Elected members are more accountable to the community," said Lori MacKay, President of the CUPE PEI.

On the Island, CUPE represents 1,200 Education Support Workers, such as Educational Assistants, Youth Services Workers, Maintenance Workers, Administrative Support Staff and Bus Drivers.

This position echoed the message delivered by CUPE Education Locals during the public consultations last November held by the Education Governance Commission.

"Elected board members service the communities in which they live, are accessible to parents and concerned citizens, are in constant communication with school staff and the Home and School Association, and have a vested interest because they are at the grass roots community level", explained Stacy Delaney, CUPE Representative.

"This is a mechanism that ensures that the policies, guidelines and standards are being followed province-wide, as well as the protection of public services in the education system", explained Delaney.

CUPE Education Locals also indicated that the minimum requirement would be to have one elected school board for each of the linguistic groups represented in the education system in Prince Edward Island. A minimum of one English elected school board and one elected French school board is needed.

The Education Governance Commission has been asked to make their recommendations by March 1, 2012.

For more information:

Lori MacKay, President CUPE PEI, (902) 626-1112

Stacy Delaney, CUPE Representative, (902) 315-4366