



YVAN BAKER, MPP

Etobicoke Centre

Appendix C

April 3, 2018

Trustees of the Toronto Catholic District School Board
c/o Barbara Poplawski, Chair

Dear Trustees of the Toronto Catholic District School Board,

Over the past 4 years I have had the opportunity to work with some of you and TCDSB staff to strengthen the quality of education in our province and in my community of Etobicoke Centre.

It is in that vein that I am writing to you today. I am writing to lend my support to the request that has been made by students, parents, staff, administration and the spiritual leadership of the three Eastern Rite Ukrainian Catholic Schools that the TCDSB proclaim September as Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Month at the TCDSB.

I lend my support to this request for a number of reasons:

1. Ukrainian Canadians have left and continue to leave a historic mark on our country and it is important to recognize, celebrate and teach about these contributions. Their contributions are reflected in our economic, political, social and cultural life. Ukrainian Canadians have played an important role in the development of Ontario into one of the most desirable places in the world to live and have contributed to making Canada the great country that it is today.
2. Our province, city and the TCDSB is rich with Ukrainian heritage and traditions.
3. The Ukrainian Canadian community and the Ukrainian Catholic Church of Canada have had a long and productive working relationship with the TCDSB. An excellent example of this partnership is the education being provided at the three Eastern Rite Catholic schools within the TCDSB that augment the Ministry of Education curriculum through Ukrainian Canadian cultural and spiritual education.
4. These three schools have demonstrated excellence in academics, have been pioneers in Full Day Kindergarten and have provided a rich faith based learning environment.
5. September would be the appropriate month to designate as Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Month.

Constituency Office

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In 2011, the Ontario Legislature proclaimed September 7th of every year as Ukrainian Heritage Day in Ontario through the passage of the Ukrainian Heritage Day Act. As the President of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress - Ontario Provincial Council at the time, I was involved in drafting the bill and consulting with the community on the appropriate date to be designated as Heritage Day. September 7th received broad support in the community

- a. September 7, 1891 is the day when the first Ukrainian immigrants, Vasyl Eleniak and Ivan Pylypiw, arrived in Canada.
 - b. Every year Ukrainian Canadians in Toronto celebrate their heritage with Torontonians on the third Saturday of September at the Bloor West Village Ukrainian Festival.
 - c. September is the first month that schools are open after Ukrainian Independence Day is celebrated on Aug 24.
6. Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Month would provide an important and meaningful educational opportunity for all TCDSB students.

Should you support the creation of Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Month, I am confident that UCC-Toronto's Ukrainian Education Committee; which includes representation of all three schools CSPC executives and has been a positive and collaborative partner in discussions about transportation, international language programs, FDK, and attendance boundaries over the past several years; would work with you to identify individuals who will create a robust resource guide to enable the TCDSB to appropriately celebrate Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Month.

Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Yvan Baker, MPP

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