

Good Evening Everyone,

My Name is Patricia Cunningham and I am a member of the St. Francis Xavier Parent Council. I am here tonight to discuss the International Language Program Survey Request Process. The IL Policy states that a survey sent to parents requires a 90% response rate for it to be considered viable. I am requesting that this threshold be reduced as 90% is an astronomical, I would say almost impossible target to achieve for our community and we see it as setting us up to fail.

Setting a 90% response rate as a caveat means that even if say for example 70% of our families responded, it still wouldn't be enough and the majority of parent voices wouldn't be heard. A simple example would be a teacher that decides to reward her class of 20 students with a pizza party. Students are asked to vote for either pepperoni or cheese but the teacher stipulates that 90% must give an answer in order to get the pizza party. 3 students didn't vote for a variety of reasons. Because of these 3 students, the pizza reward was not given because they didn't meet the 90% threshold. This is how **razor thin** the margins are for the ILP Policy. I also looked up voter turnout for Federal elections and referendums for examples of response rates and according to Stats Canada, the highest voter turnout was in March of 1958 with a response rate of 79.4%. **79.4%**...that is **THE highest** voter turnout **ever** in the history of Canadian Federal elections. Even as a civic duty, Canada has never reached 90%. If the Federal government had a requirement of a 90% response rate for an election to be valid, we would still have **John A. Macdonald or a proxy for John A. Macdonald** as Prime Minister today.

There are many factors that can lead to a lower response rate in a survey.

- For some of our families there are language barriers that they must deal with to completing a survey. Our ward has the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest portion of residents who have no knowledge of an official language.
- Some may just not have an opinion either way and don't bother responding
- Maybe some will forget to return the survey

All these contribute to lower the response rates, so for the parents that do respond.....That do take the time to think about the options--They ultimately will be ignored if the 90% threshold isn't met. At the end of the day, we as parents just want our voices heard. Whatever the result may be, we want it to be **our collective decision** and not for the result to be based on a technicality. So on behalf of St. Francis Xavier parent council, please consider lowering the threshold and make it so we can have a say in our children's education.