

## More Information on the Costs, Including Non-Financial, of Separate Schools

- ◆ Religious segregation leads to ethnic segregation. Some ethnic groups have a high percentage of Catholics; some have a very low percentage. We all know the benefits in a multicultural country such as Canada of students of different ethnic groups and backgrounds learning together, and we know the harm that has resulted in other countries when students are segregated from each other.
- ◆ Even though most of the funding (about 72%) of separate schools comes from general public revenues, separate school teachers teach Catholicism (in high school it is a credit course). In 2011, about 30% of Ontario residents described themselves as Protestant, 23% as “no religion”, and 11% as non-Christian religions such as Hindus or Muslims.<sup>1</sup> All these non-Catholics are being forced to pay for the education of Catholics, a strange anomaly in which is supposed to be a country with a *Charter of Rights* with a guarantee of equal benefit under the law.
- ◆ That approximately one-third of Ontario students go to a publicly-funded religious system encourages people of other religions to think that they too should have their own publicly-funded religious system. Support for public schools where all children of all religions or no religion learn together becomes under-valued.
- ◆ Some people promote the myth that separate schools have better results. Some individual schools in both systems may be better than other schools, but if you look at the 2011-2016 EQAO (Education Quality and Accountability) reports for Grade 3 and Grade 6 in Toronto, for example, the general results are very similar, even though the public schools have more students whose first language is not English.<sup>2</sup>
- ◆ Public Boards are being underfunded in their historic mission to integrate students. In certain areas it is the public boards, not the separate boards, who do what public schools in Ontario have traditionally done, teach children whose first language is not English. For example, in 2017-18, Halton had 24% English language learners compared to 4% for Halton CDSB and 21% whose first language at home was not English compared to 7%.<sup>3</sup> Yet while Halton receives somewhat more (about \$279 v. \$206 per student in the language category) it does not receive the 3 to 4 times more one would expect.<sup>4</sup>
- ◆ Our separate school system is depriving our students of the best teachers. Public schools hire the best candidates, of any or no religion. But separate schools can openly discriminate in favour of Catholic teachers, either not hiring non-Catholic teachers at all, or only hiring them if no minimally qualified Catholic teacher exists.<sup>5</sup> Potential teachers may hesitate to enter a field where they will be discriminated against.

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<sup>1</sup> *Statistics Canada*, 2011 National Household Survey, Cat. No. 99-004-XWE

<sup>2</sup> *Toronto DSB (66052) and Toronto CDSB (67059) School Board Reports*, dated Sep. 6, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Halton DSB (66133) and Halton Catholic DSB (67113) School Board Report (EQAO).

<sup>4</sup> Projected School Board Estimates for 2017-18, Ontario Ministry of Education, Fall 2018

<sup>5</sup> For example, Superior-North CDSB P-HR511 (hire only Catholics) or Algonquin CDSB, Policy 2003-03-3 (prefer Catholic teachers).