

## MORE ABOUT OPEN (ONE PUBLIC EDUCATION NOW) AND THE PLAINTIFFS IN OUR CASE

- ◆ OPEN is a coalition of groups and individuals who are crowdfunding for a constitutional challenge in our courts to eliminate the public funding of Catholic Separate schools.
- ◆ Some of us have religious affiliations and some of us don't, but we all believe in one non-denominational two-language public school system. We all want to stop the estimated 1.25 to 1.6 billion the duplicate separate system currently costs us.<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ One of the plaintiffs in our proposed court case is a young high school teacher who graduated with her B. Ed. in 2009, and for 11 years (until fall 2020) could obtain only supply or long-term occasional teaching. She could not, and still does not, qualify for a permanent position in approximately **one-third of the publicly-funded teaching positions** in her area because she is not Catholic. Yet the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board receives **only about 7%** of its operational funding from residential property taxes; **it received about 78% of its operational funding** from 2011-12 to 2014-15, and **all of its capital funding**, from general provincial revenues.<sup>2</sup> That is, from all of us, religious and not religious, Catholic or not Catholic.
- ◆ Like other non-Catholic school teachers, she has only about half the chance of obtaining a publicly-funded teaching job as a Catholic teacher. That is because Catholics (about 1/3 of the Ontario population) can apply for **100%** of publicly-funded teaching jobs. Non-Catholics (about 2/3 of the Ontario population) can apply for only **66%** of publicly-funded school jobs. Some separate schools also require applicants for positions such as Educational Assistants be Catholic.
- ◆ Another plaintiff is a parent of two children who go to public French schools. The closest publicly-funded French school is about a 20 minute drive away. But his children have to be bused for about 55 minutes each way because the closest publicly-funded French school is Catholic Separate and he wants his children to have a public education.
- ◆ This parent likes the teachers, and mixture of religions and backgrounds at his school, very much. But why should his children have to spend about 70 minutes more every school day being bused just because he wants them to have a public education. Under one school system, all publicly-supported French schools would be non-denominational and his children would go to the nearest school.
- ◆ To contribute to our legal challenge, and find out more about the details of our legal challenge, the financial costs of the separate school system, and other related issues, go to <https://open.cripeweb.org/aboutOpen.html> or email us at [OPEN@cripeweb.org](mailto:OPEN@cripeweb.org).
- ◆ OPEN is hosted on the CRIPE (Civil Rights in Public Education) website, an incorporated non-profit asking for one public non-demoninational two-language school system since 1993.

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<sup>1</sup> Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods of Ontario, *Ontario Public and Catholic School Merger Study*, March 2012

<sup>2</sup> Freedom of Information (FOI) Request EDU-160070, February 2017.