



Local News

EMSB to hold special meeting to amend controversial Bill 96 resolution

The resolution will be changed to omit a clause denying that Quebec is a nation.

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A contentious English Montreal School Board resolution that was blasted by political leaders will be amended, the board said Wednesday.

The resolution will be changed to omit a clause denying that Quebec is a nation.



The board's resolution opposing Bill 96 — which aims to beef up Quebec's language charter — asks the federal government to refer the proposed law to the Supreme Court of Canada. But it was a particular clause of the resolution that drew the most ire from politicians Tuesday.

It states: "Quebec is not a 'nation.' It never has been. Its status is recognized by the United Nations as a province within the nation of Canada. Calling oneself something does not make it so and Quebec's intelligentsia is deliberately misusing the word 'nation' so as to imply a reality that exists only in their self-mirage. The only precise word to use regarding Quebec's reality is 'province.' If English is to be respected, then we — those who are English speakers — must demand that all those who use our language do so correctly and with respect. We must insist that Quebec is always referred to as a 'province.'"

EMSB spokesperson Mike Cohen confirmed Wednesday that the clause of the resolution referring to Quebec's nationhood will be removed in an amended version that will be put to a vote in a rare Saturday morning special council meeting.

"We're hoping this puts an end to the controversy," Cohen told the Montreal Gazette.

EMSB chairperson Joe Ortona said in a statement Tuesday that the board "erred in bringing into question that Quebec is a nation. While we do not argue with the concept, we do want to ensure that English-speaking Quebecers are considered integral to the nation."

However, Ortona and the board had already been denounced by Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet, Premier François Legault and mayoral candidate Denis Coderre, who dumped Ortona from his ticket for the Loyola district of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce.