

Local News

# Quebec ditches school board logos in favour of Quebec flag

Katherine Wilton • Montreal Gazette  
15 hours ago • 3 minute read



Katherine Korakakis, president of the English Parents' Committee Association, with her children Nathan and Bella at her home in the Hampstead. She is opposed to the provincial government's plan to do away with individual school board logos and replacing them with a Quebec flag. JOHN MAHONEY / Montreal Gazette

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They want Roberge to suspend the changes and engage in discussions with English school boards to find a mutually acceptable solution.

“We still have time to correct this,” Copeman said. “We have told our members (English school boards) to change absolutely nothing until Nov. 5 (when English voters will elect members to their service centre’s board of directors).”

Under Bill 40, the province’s school board reform plan, French school boards were instructed to use their new names starting on Monday.

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The Commission scolaire de Montréal, Quebec’s largest school board, is now called the Centre de services scolaire de Montréal.

The English Montreal School Board is being renamed the Centre de services scolaire English Montreal.

An email sent to school boards on June 11 revealing the names of service centres and the logo did not contain an English version of the name.

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Copeman said he isn’t sure how much it will cost to rebrand all the signs outside Quebec’s 2,500 public schools.

The English Parents’ Committee Association is also dissatisfied with the imposition of the new logo and branding on school service centres.

“It just looks like any other government agency,” said Katherine Korakakis, president of the EPCA, a coalition of parent committees from English-language schoolboards across Quebec. “It looks like you are applying for a fishing pond license.”

The logo and new names break with longstanding tradition of educational networks identifying themselves according to their own values and the communities they serve, Korakakis said.

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As part of its plan to wipe school boards off the educational map, the Quebec government has ditched the boards' individual logos and is replacing them with a standard logo featuring the Quebec flag.

The move, which was done without consultation, has irked some parents and senior school board employees who say the new logo is too similar to other Quebec government departments.



“The homogenization of the logo negates any local attachment or local identity,” said Russell Copeman, executive-director of the Quebec English School Boards Association. “There’s no difference between it and the Ministère de la justice (logo).”

Employee email address will eventually have to include the Quebec government email address — @gouv.qc.ca

Critics say the changes are stripping away the individual identities of Quebec’s 70 school boards.

A school board’s logo is an important part of the institution’s identity and a reminder that schools are a vital part of the English community — especially outside greater Montreal, where schools are often the hub of the anglophone community, Copeman said.

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“The uniform, government branding appears to visibly absorb servicecentres into the anonymityof government apparatus, without any mind or need toindividual communities,” she added.

The rebranding is part of a government initiative to standardize the look of Quebec government departments.

Quebec adopted a uniform logo so service centres could use their new name and logo on websites immediately, said Francis Bouchard, Roberge’s spokesperson.

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