

BUSINESS COMMUNITY ANTI-POVERTY INITIATIVE

January 11, 2018

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Mr. Rob Fowler, Chair,
And the Members of the District Education Council (DEC),
Anglophone School District – South,
490 Woodward Ave, Saint John, NB
E2K 5N3

Dear Mr. Fowler and Members of DEC,

The Business Community Anti-Poverty Initiative (BCAPI) is in full support of DEC's recommendation of a new school to serve the families who live in Saint John's City Centre (Central Peninsula). We appreciate the significant effort undertaken by DEC to ensure broad community participation and support for this recommendation.

Poverty is highly concentrated in our city centre and the children are caught in a vicious cycle of generational poverty. Education is their vital means to break out of the cycle, yet too many children lag behind in their education success because they are inadequately supported. For the past 20 years, BCAPI has worked in partnership with the Saint John community researching how to end generational poverty and testing new approaches that equip our children for education success. Together we have been learning what the children and their families need to ensure the children graduate and are ready for post-secondary pursuits. Through the *Living SJ* collective leadership approach, our organizations – government, business and community - are rowing together to build effective solutions for our children, from cradle to career. One significant result of this work is that within the past 8 years, the high school graduation rate for students who live in Saint John's high poverty neighbourhoods has risen from 65% to 78%. There is great determination to achieve the Department of Education's 90% target. We know what works, now we must scale up!

Children's education must begin from birth and it is equally important that their families are engaged in services that help them become confident parents and teachers. The children and families who live in high poverty neighbourhoods require "full service" K to 8 Community Schools that embrace child well being + learning and are the go-to hub for the families – a two generational approach. A new school facility must go beyond traditional guidelines and specifications and also accommodate the programs and services required to support the health and learning needs of the children and their families, in school and out of school, 12 months of the year.

Thank you for leading this important initiative. Each child's education success helps to close the education achievement gap and end generational poverty in our city. Our children's achievements will strengthen our city and province. The social and economic benefits are lasting and we all benefit.

Together, we will ensure no child ever again suffers the terrible consequences of lifelong poverty.

On behalf of BCAPI,



John Wheatley and Brice Belyea,
Co-Chairs of the Leadership Team