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MAY 25, 2022

The Suburban

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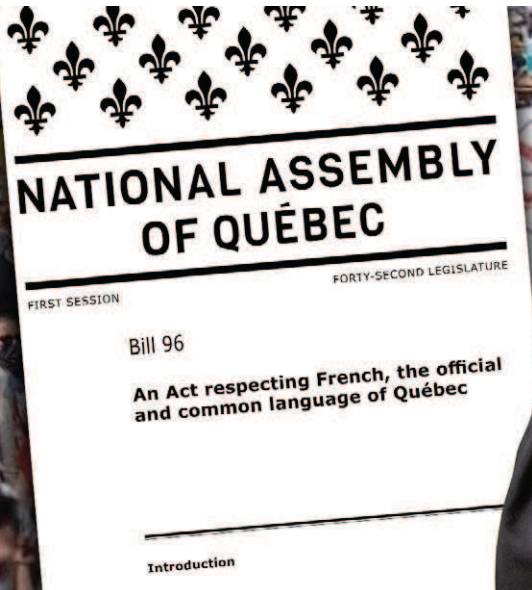
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EMSB to welcome Ukrainian children

By Joel Ceausu
The Suburban

The English Montreal School Board will welcome more than a dozen Ukrainian children as students who have been granted language exceptions to study at English schools in Quebec.

Students whose parents hold temporary work permits are "eligible to receive instruction in English under the Regulation respecting the exemption from the application of the first paragraph of section 72 of the Charter of the French Language that may be granted to children temporarily residing in Quebec, RLRQ, c. C-11, r. 7."

The EMSB is open for any parent to apply for eligibility to EMSB schools under the applicable provisions of the Charter of the French Language, said EMSB Chair Joe Ortona. "We welcome all those who qualify to join us and be part of our great educational program."

The EMSB council of commissioners adopted a resolution on March 23, indicating to the Quebec government that

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Doctors, lawyers warn Bill 96 will cut English services in healthcare

By Amanda Polese
The Suburban

The Collège des médecins du Québec is calling on the government to modify Bill 96 so that it does not cause disruptions in health care services.

"We believe that nothing should interfere with the relationship between a patient and his or her physician, nothing," said Collège des médecins du Québec Président Mauril Gaudreault. "It is important that the patient be able to understand and be understood by their physician. This is the fundamental equation that allows for informed consent to agreed-upon care. This is even more con-

sequential when the patient is considered a partner in that care."

Although Quebec Premier François Legault and Language Minister Simon Jolin-Barrette have assured the public that the bill would not impose a risk on the health care network, legal experts and advocacy groups remain skeptical that the "grey areas" of the bill will create issues between patients and healthcare providers.

Lawyers warn there are little to no guarantees in Bill 96 that there will be rights to health care and social services in English in Quebec. "To say there's nothing here to worry about doesn't seem to

me to reflect what people are seeing in the text of the legislation," said Robert Leckey, Dean of the Faculty of Law at McGill University. Leckey is also concerned that client-patient relationships will be affected to the point that they cannot communicate in their mother tongue, resulting in poorer health care services.

Lawyer Eric Maldoff, Chair of the Coalition for Quality Health and Social Services, criticized the bill for prohibiting certain communications. "It's one thing to legislate that certain communication is required, like everyone is entitled to be

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MONKEYPOX

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relationships with other men aged between 30 and 55 years old.”

Later in the press conference, she said that monkeypox is not a sexually transmitted disease.

“The clinical presentation is mainly ulceration of oral and genital parts [of the body] that are painful, and the phase before the eruption is with fever, sweating and headaches. Most of our cases are not severe — this is important to know at the time we’re speaking.”

Dr. Drouin explained that the first case was declared May 12.

“At first we thought it was chancro mou (chancroid, a sexually transmitted bacterial infection), but on May 17, we had suspected [monkeypox] cases in the U.S. that had travelled to Montreal, and this is when we started to think, and knowing what was going on in the UK, Spain and Portugal, that we changed the course of our investigation.”

She also pointed out that “this virus is mainly transmitted by close contact and droplets. It is not a disease with mandatory reporting. We’re starting an investigation and we have put out an alert to all physicians to increase their surveillance and to make sure they declare all suspected cases, so we will better be able to understand the chain of transmission. All cases are isolated with a mask, and we ask them to cover their lesions until they are cured.”



Montreal Public Health director Dr. Mylene Drouin during her May 19 press conference.

She added that “significant contact cases are those in the same household and sexual partners.

“We do not ask them to isolate themselves, but we do ask them, for 21 days, to monitor their symptoms and if they have symptoms, to rapidly go and consult a doctor so we can have a test done.”

Dr. Drouin said her message to the Montreal population is that investigations are continuing “and we’re going to put protective measures in place to cut the chain of transmission.

“But we do not have to panic at the time we’re speaking. It is not something that is going to go to a sustained community transmission, it’s not something you can acquire when you do your grocery shopping or on public transportation. We’re putting all measures in place.” ■

BILL 96

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served in French,” said Madloff. “But to go the next step and say nobody can be treated in another language except if the law permits it is a completely different story.” The bill as it stands, mandates all members of Quebec’s civil administration to use exclusively French in written and oral communications with their clients, with some exceptions. Language Minister Simon Jolin-Barrette referred to an amendment to the bill in February that makes sure Bill 96 does not supersede Section 15 of the Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services, meaning that Anglophones will still have a right to receive those services in English.

Maldoff argues that the amendment is vague and per-

tains to health care emergencies rather than day-to-day functions, and that it does not cover youth services or mental health care where clear communication between health care professionals and clients is crucial. Leckey believes that the amendments to the bill may only apply to case-by-case exemptions. “The exception for health may be interpreted narrowly — even limited to situations of life and death,” he said.

Lawyer Julius Grey is also worried about the implications on the health care system since there is no guarantee in the bill that new immigrants will be able to access health care in their language six months after they arrive in Quebec. ■

EMSB

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the board is willing to accept Ukrainian refugees immediately on a humanitarian basis. While the Charter of the French Language has a humanitarian clause allowing for admission to the English school system under exceptional circumstances, Ortona emphasized that this is not the route these newly

enrolled students took. “But it should be,” he added.

At EMSB schools and centres, there have been a wide variety of programs, activities and fundraising occurring in classrooms in support of the people of Ukraine. “There is tragic world history unfolding right in front of us each day and I want to commend our educators for sharing this authentic learning experience with our students,” said Ortona. ■



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