

February 6, 2017

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister:

RE: Closure and relocation of the Vegreville Immigration Case Processing Centre

I am writing to express my concern regarding the approaching closure of the Case Processing Centre in Vegreville, Alberta. Should the facility close, there will be significant consequences for students and their families who attend Elk Island Public Schools in the area.

Students whose parents/guardians are employed at the Case Processing Centre represent 25 per cent of the student population in Vegreville. Because base funding from the Government of Alberta is largely allocated on a per-student basis, you can understand that losing a quarter of our financial resources will have a devastating impact on the quality of education that schools will be able to provide. Less funding from Alberta Education will mean we have less money for teachers and classroom materials, and that will translate directly to a lower quality of education for those children. Their future as successful and contributing members of Canadian society is in jeopardy.

As you know, Alberta's economy has been hit hard by the decline in the oil and gas sector, and many of those same families with members working at the Case Processing Centre have already suffered job losses. Simply relocating those same jobs to Edmonton will not offer any relief from the challenges they are encountering; in fact, whether because of higher housing prices, childcare costs or transportation expenses, the transfer of the CPC more than an hour away will put even further financial and emotional strain on these families. Our principals and teachers already see evidence of the increased levels of stress within our schools as unemployment soars in Vegreville, students lose friends and classmates, and their families struggle to make a decent living in the community they call home.

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I implore you to reconsider your decision to proceed with the relocation of the CPC, Prime Minister Trudeau. Students do best in a stable environment with strong support systems and they risk being at a severe disadvantage – at school and in life – should the move go ahead.

Thank you for your kind understanding in this matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trina Boymook', with a long, sweeping underline.

Trina Boymook,
Board Chair

cc: The Hon. Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
The Hon. Shannon Stubbs, M.P., Lakeland
His Worship Myron Hayduk, Mayor, Town of Vegreville