



Canadian Nursing Students' Association Association des étudiant(e)s infirmier(ère)s du Canada

Resolution Statement

Quebec to join Atlantic Regional Conference

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Submitted to: CNSA Board of Directors

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Background

For several years, Quebec and Ontario have hosted their Regional Conference and Regional Executive Meetings together. In 2017-2018, the position of Quebec Regional Director on the Canadian Nursing Students' Association Board of Directors was unfilled. This left Quebec to be overseen by the Ontario Regional Director (Canadian Nursing Students' Association, 2018). Despite the close proximity of Quebec and Ontario, their culture and issues are vastly different.

In 1969, The Official Languages Act was passed, making Canada a bilingual country and New Brunswick the first and only bilingual province (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, n.d.a). In 1974, The passing of the Official Languages Act also made Quebec's official language French (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, n.d.b). Currently, approximately 17.5% of the total Canadian population is proudly bilingual (Lepage & Corbeil, 2013). In 2011, the provinces who reported the highest number of bilingual individuals were Quebec, with 42.6%, and New Brunswick, with 33.2% (Lepage & Corbeil, 2013). In contrast, Ontario reports only 11% of the province's population as bilingual (Lepage & Corbeil, 2013). Based on these statistics, Quebec would benefit from sharing their conference with the Atlantic Region, as it would allow francophone and bilingual students to explore their culture and language in a safe environment and collaborate with individuals of similar interests.

The Atlantic region consists of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador and Nunavut. Approximately 16.3% of the Atlantic region is bilingual (Lepage & Corbeil, 2013), a higher percentage of bilingual individuals than Ontario, and the region includes the province with the largest bilingual population second to Quebec. Quebec and New Brunswick, and by extension all Atlantic provinces, share a common culture more so than Quebec and Ontario. New Brunswick and Quebec share unique lifestyles and experiences. New Brunswick has always been considered a part of Atlantic Canada and should remain with the Atlantic region as New Brunswick's Acadian population has strong roots with the

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other Atlantic provinces. New Brunswick also has several Anglophone schools who may be at a disadvantage if New Brunswick was to be separated from the rest of Atlantic region, with which they share a similar culture and lifestyle. With this change, CNSA would be fulfilling its objectives to be the primary resource for nursing students through further supporting francophone students; by encouraging collaboration on advancement in nursing curriculum with regards to francophone content and the current National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) landscape, and strengthening the linkage between the Quebec and Atlantic region as well as their respective stakeholders. Therefore, Quebec should join Atlantic Regional Conference (ARC) to become Atlantic/Quebec Regional Conference (AQRC).

Links to Canadian Nursing Students' Association Mandate and Current Position on the Issue

While the CNSA does not currently have a position statement on the addressed issue, the association should consider its current mandate and core values to facilitate the joining of the two regions for future conferences. The CNSA seeks to strengthen linkages and create new partnerships with student nurses throughout Canada. Joining Quebec and the Atlantic region, specifically New Brunswick, is in alignment with the CNSA's governing objectives, goals, and core values. Allowing francophone students to share their cultural values, personal experiences, and future career opportunities in a bilingual setting plays an essential role in diversifying and enhancing new affiliations. In order to influence and advance innovation and social justice in nursing curriculum and the nursing profession, French advocacy and representation at a regional conference is essential. As stated earlier, New Brunswick has 33.2% bilingual representation (Lepage & Corbeil, 2013). Proficiency in French allows social justice for the considerable French speaking population within the Atlantic region as it facilitates an accurate understanding and valuable communication with students about their concerns. Furthermore, bilingual representation on behalf of CNSA within the Atlantic region promotes inclusivity and advocacy in nursing by supporting diverse populations within Canadian nursing schools.

The Resolution

WHEREAS, New Brunswick and Quebec have the largest population of bilingual people in Canada; and

WHEREAS, New Brunswick is known to be part of the Atlantic Provinces; and

WHEREAS, CNSA values supporting francophone students, advancement in francophone curriculum, and strengthening and creating new linkages throughout Canada; therefore,

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BE IT RESOLVED that Quebec remain an independent region but join the Atlantic region for conferences and regional executive meetings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Quebec shall join the Atlantic Regional Conference to become the Atlantic/Quebec Regional Conference (AQRC).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the roles of Quebec Regional Director and an Atlantic Regional Director remain separate but share the role of maintaining bilingualism amongst the regions and recruiting more Francophone and bilingual chapter schools in collaboration with the Director of Bilingualism and Translation.

Relation to Canadian Nursing School Curriculums

Francophone students in Quebec have limited employment opportunities within Ontario. New Brunswick can offer prospective unilingual francophone nurses careers that are enriching as well as respectful of the French language. They can also offer language classes to build on their English while still cherishing francophone heritage. This understanding can lead to positive employment outcomes for francophone nurses who are looking to explore Canada. New Brunswick nursing students will also benefit from sharing their conference with Quebec. They will be exposed to Quebec culture which can help broaden their appreciation of Acadians in the Maritimes. Francophone students can also support one another through the unique challenges faced by this population, such as studying and writing the NCLEX-RN in French. Joining Quebec's Regional Conference with the Atlantic Regional Conference will allow these provinces to celebrate Acadian and Quebecois culture and allow for both populations to grow stronger together.

Conclusion

In conclusion, by Quebec joining the Atlantic region for Regional Conferences and Regional Executive Meetings it will enhance the inclusivity of francophone culture. Currently, Quebec only has one chapter school, primarily due to students feeling misplaced among the abundance of Anglophone schools. By Quebec joining the region with the most bilingual population, it will increase inclusivity, foster francophone advocacy, and create an opportunity for francophone students to thrive and become the best nursing leaders. Quebec will remain its own region but will combine with the Atlantic region for conferences to facilitate a

safe environment for francophone students from both Quebec and New Brunswick. It will allow for better collaboration and strengthen linkages between the regions.

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