

## **Sophia and Dounia Badri Win Access to English School**

**Montreal, Thursday, September 26, 2002**-Alliance Quebec President Brent Tyler said, "Alliance Quebec is pleased with the review committee's decision rendered on September 23 to allow Sophia and Dounia Badri to attend English school. The committee upheld its opinion expressed in previous cases that French immersion in an English school counts as English instruction for the purpose of meeting the "major part" requirement in section 73(2) of Bill 101."

The girls started school at St. Ignatius three years ago when their father, Abdelmajid Badri, then a member of the Canadian Armed Forces, was posted in Quebec. When he left the military to take a job with the R.C.M.P., the government told him that French immersion did not count as English instruction and his daughters would have to go to French school. A month ago Quebec Superior Court Justice Roger Baker refused to grant an injunction so that the girls could remain at St. Ignatius until the review committee could hear their case. A Motion for permission to appeal this judgment was refused by Court of Appeal Justice Louise Mailhot.

Mr. Tyler said, "All that this family ever asked of the Minister of Education was that he respect the law as interpreted by the review committee. Rather than appeal its decisions, the Minister directed his representatives to continue to refuse applications for certificates of eligibility on the same spurious grounds, counting French immersion in English schools as French instruction in determining whether the major part of a child's instruction has been in English. This recent decision in the Badri case shows that the Minister has run amok and has no respect for the rule of law. It also shows that the justice system failed these children by denying an injunction. As a result, the children have been forced to change schools not once but twice within a month. This is simply inhuman."

Alliance Quebec strives for the promotion of human rights and minority language rights and is committed to the preservation and enhancement of the English-speaking communities within Quebec.