



English Parents' Committee Association



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PARENT RESOURCES



Katherine Korakakis is the President of the English Parents Committee Association (EPCA). In addition to this vital role in the Quebec educational sector, Katherine has spent most of her life working alongside start-ups in various verticals. For 10 years, she was responsible for the development of entrepreneurial initiatives and projects under the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge, a Youth Secretariat program of the government of Quebec. Katherine is Head of Entrepreneurship at ProMontreal Entrepreneurs (PME), an early stage VC fund that has been around for 20 yrs, and is currently the vice-president of PME MTL Centre-Ouest and on the investment committees of PME MTL Centre and PME MTL Centre-Ouest. Katherine has also authored and co-authored guidebooks on entrepreneurship education and has served on the Boards of numerous corporations.

President's message

Rallying Against Bill 96

Dear Parents and Families,

Spring has been a whirlwind of activities for students and, as they prepare to finish projects and take finals, I am impressed by how much they have accomplished and how far we have all come!

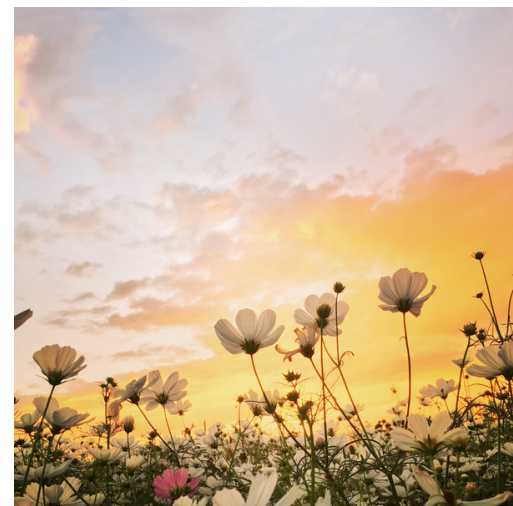
EPCA has been hard at work preparing for the Parents' Conference that we are partnering with the FCPQ to bring to you! It's not too late to register! There will be so much interesting content... we really hope you can join us.

In April, your school should have provided you with a Second Communication to update you on your child's academic progress. Next year, we will return to three report cards as opposed to two, in addition to a single written communication. Communication between parents and schools must be fluid and two-way for students to succeed. You can find additional support regarding academic success and what you can do as a parent on [Parents.Quebec](#).

We have also been hard at work lobbying on our children's behalf regarding the mandatory CEGEP French courses that have been introduced as part of Bill 96. We have a long road ahead to combat proposed changes that could have a devastating impact on student success for years to come. We hope you will join us at our Rally and march with us on May 14th at 10:00 am in front of Dawson CEGEP to show our dissatisfaction with this proposed law.

In the meantime, we will get through this by working together, looking out for each other, and lifting each other up. I am proud to be your EPCA President and to serve this great community.

We thank you and appreciate your dedication to education.



QUEBECERS AGAINST BILL 96

QUEBECOIS(ES) CONTRE LE PROJET DE LOI 96

Demonstration Against Bill 96

Saturday May 14, 2022

Start:

Dawson College / 10 a.m.

*Marchers congregate at the southeast gate
on Atwater*

Rally:

around Noon

*Office of Premier François Legault,
corner McGill College & Sherbrooke*

Manifestation contre le projet de loi 96

Samedi 14 mai 2022

Début :

Collège Dawson / 10h00

*Les manifestants se rassemblent à la porte
sud-est sur Atwater*

Rallye :

vers midi

*Bureau du premier ministre François Legault,
coin McGill College et Sherbrooke*



Marisa Consolata Kemper is an alumnus of l'Université de Montréal and a Director for WQSB and parent member of EPCA and has worked for over 25 years on human rights and diversity issues in the Middle East. Her children - educated abroad until three years ago - have attended Chelsea Elementary, Hadley/Philemon Wright and her son just started CÉGEP Héritage in the Outaouais. Marisa was compelled to engage in parental governance to address the myriad of language and education issues in this border region of Québec and hopes to support EPCA in advancing and understanding English parents' challenges and perspectives.

*Marisa Consolata Kemper
EPCA Director, WQSB*

EPCA BOD Editorial: Bill 96 and English-speaking Youth in Québec

This evening, as I dropped off my daughter to write the entrance exam for the Enriched French program at our local high school, it struck me just how many Grade 6 children were waiting to be seated at doors of the exam room. 150? That's a whole lot of kids seeking to immerse themselves in French. The sad thing is, there are less than half that number of spots available. Why, you ask? One simple answer: teacher shortages.

As the French requirements push ever higher, the reality of teacher shortages in the Outaouais screams ever louder. Bill 96 is framed as a bill 'sur la langue officielle et commune du Québec, le français.' It outlines increased vigour and oversight on the adoption and usage of the French language. Use of a language, however, is premised on it being accessible through a publicly funded system where quality is a priority.

support ~ community ~ equitability

At 12 years old, growing up in Northwest Calgary as a first-generation Canadian, my Francophile mother enrolled me in French immersion at our local high school. I was emerging from my own 6th grade class at St-Jean de Brébeuf Elementary – completely English speaking – where a good one third of my class had names like 'Desbiens', 'Lapierre', 'Morrissette.' I was later to learn that these were assimilated Alberta Francophones who, due to demographics and a deficit of political will – were disabled from attending a French school. As my university professor and thesis supervisor at the Université de Montréal's *faculté des sciences de l'éducation* would frequently remind me, my immersion benefits came at the expense of Franco-Albertan's access to French schools: provincial government priorities out of touch with the realities and rights of communities.

EPCA BOD Editorial: Bill 96 and English-speaking Youth in Québec

cont.



Ironically, the tables are now turned, and I live in Québec – my second province in Canada – with my English minority children having grown up abroad with no access to French education, working to navigate a system fraught with accessibility problems, primarily due to qualified teacher and resourcing shortages.

We cannot keep going with ‘sounded like a good idea at the time’ policy decisions on topics as critical to the preservation of the French language in Québec, including language acquisition, cultural and social integration and preparation of a labour force enabled to speak and work in French. Targeted community and institutional consultations, review of international best practice and reference to the immense volume of studies and intelligence that we have on these topics – pedagogically and otherwise – need to inform the upcoming Bill 96 and, for that matter, all provinces’ resource allocation decisions in reaching goals that are in the broader public interest.

Bill 96:

A DIRECTOR GENERAL'S PERSPECTIVE



*Cindy Finn, Ph.D.
Director General, Lester B.
Pearson School Board*

Per the provincial curriculum, known as the Quebec Education Program, school boards offer courses in the language of instruction as well as in a second language. As institutions with the recognized right to instruct students in English, the English school boards in Quebec are charged with teaching French as a second language (FSL).

Successful completion of FSL courses is necessary for an anglophone rights holder to obtain a secondary school diploma in Quebec. In our system, students take FSL courses the moment they enter kindergarten through to Secondary V. Many school boards offer choices to parents as to the type of approach used to teach FSL (e.g., bilingual, early immersion, enriched), and all school boards prepare students to successfully earn a secondary school diploma,

pursue vocational training or obtain a qualification to directly enter the job market.

Over many decades, English-speaking Quebecers have risen to the challenge of studying French as a second language, and many have embraced the opportunity to learn and live in both of Canada's official languages. For the last several years, the average graduation and qualification rate for the Quebec English school boards has been consistently higher than the provincial average; an indicator of our high level of student success. We can be proud of the efforts that our students make throughout their schooling to improve their level of French proficiency.

However, learning French is not to be confused with learning in French. In its present form, Bill 96 poses pedagogical and logistical challenges. One of the clauses currently under review is a requirement for anglophone students to complete three additional French second language courses at CEGEP, thus bringing the total number of FSL college courses to five. While this is an improvement over the previous proposal forcing students to take three subject courses in French, this new requirement is likely to pose considerable challenges for the English CEGEPs among which include reorganizing course offerings and programs of study, hiring additional FSL teachers, as well as ensuring that adequate supports will be in place for students who struggle with second language learning. The short time frame for implementation makes this an especially tall order for CEGEP administrators.

Bill 96 has not yet become law; it is still under review. Anglophones have a stake in closely monitoring the situation and advocating for legislation that does not adversely affect opportunities for anglophone students to successfully pursue post-secondary studies.

Bill 96:

A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE

As parents, we have a reasonable expectation that every child will have the same opportunities to succeed in school and to advance academically as far as they can based on their abilities and effort. We expect our kids' aptitudes will be nurtured and encouraged as they move through the educational system. This is because, as parents, we know their success in school is directly tied to their future and impact where they will fit into society as adults.

We also know that a child who struggles in their education requires attention as early as possible and that there will need to be dedicated and directed work done to fix any deficit in knowledge, or the problems risk becoming enduring, lifelong problems.



*Doug Bentley and Family
EPCA Director, Lester B. Pearson School Board*

This situation is far more urgent under the reality of the COVID-19 pandemic. There are substantial gaps in learning with regards to where children are expected to be and where they actually are academically. The mastering of core competencies such as Math, English, and French has suffered during the academic disruptions brought on by the pandemic. It will realistically be years before the current cohort of school children have caught up to where they need to be academically, if they can catch up at all before they graduate out of the school system.

It is a critical time for this group of school children. In order to achieve their potential, they need unprecedented attention and help. During the worst of the pandemic, the government claimed it was critically important that we keep the schools open. The government also committed to doing whatever was necessary to ensure that students would receive the support needed to ensure their success.

It is completely counterintuitive, then, that Bill 96 makes it more difficult for children to make the most of their education and to achieve as much success as possible within their capacities. Imposing limits and regulations does nothing for the individual student. The imposition of artificial standards and additional courses to be taken in French, as well as the capping of enrollment in CEGEPs, will result in punitive measures against Anglophone students and will drastically impact their success.

Bill 96:

A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE

cont.

These new requirements in Bill 96 are in addition to existing requirements for additional supports and measures necessary to support children who have already fallen behind academically due to the pandemic. It has already been seen that students are struggling and there are simply not enough resources to support current students to pass existing French classes, let alone additional required courses in French. Making it harder for Anglophone students to succeed seems antithetical to the Government's promise of prioritizing education, and may contribute the further marginalization of the English minority. Our children desperately need help and we intend to fight for our children's future.



[VOLUNTEERS FOR THE RALLY CAN SIGN UP HERE](#)



Parent Resources

The Parents' Role in Education Symposium 28 May 2022

EPAC, in collaboration with The Federation of Parents' Committees of Quebec (FCPQ), will be hosting a Symposium 28 May 2022 on "The Parents' Role in Education."

The symposium will be offered in hybrid mode at the Hôtel Le Victorin in Victoriaville. The Symposium will kick-off with Patricia Paquin and Louis-François Marcotte, Quebec personalities adored by the public who will share their experience of involvement in the education of their children. After the opening conference, a youth panel will discuss their expectations of their parents in terms of their success and personal development. During the day, participants will be able to take part in reflection workshops focusing on the role of parents in education. Workshops offered in English will include:

- *What place do parents have in education?*
- *Bilingualism: The Key to Thriving in Quebec*
- *Evolving from Colorblindness*

For free tickets, contact:
president@epcaquebec.org

Many partners will also be on hand at the Exhibitors' Fair to present their services and products. The complete program is now available on the [FCPQ website](#). To register for the Symposium, click [here](#). Note that all the English content will be virtual. This is an event not to be missed!



[Parents.Quebec](#) is a unique portal that offers parents one-stop access to services and organizations providing support for their children - from bullying and homework help to nutrition and psycho-social support.

As you receive your child's report card this year, the usual scramble for support services is compounded by the pandemic and uncertainty in our school network. We are hoping that this initiative will make that process a little bit easier.



EPCA MISSION STATEMENT

The English Parents' Committee Association (EPCA) is a coalition of parents' committees of Quebec's English-language public school boards, representing more than 100,00 students in the youth sector.

EPCA advocates for a strong and sustainable English-language public education system to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for our children, while respecting the culture and language of anglophone Quebecers.

To do so, EPCA seeks to engage and motivate parents across Quebec to contribute to strong, representative and effective parent governance, to foster positive relationships with stakeholders across the educational spectrum, and to provide guidance and support to all member organizations.

What would you like to see in
our upcoming editions?

[TELL US HERE](#)

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EPCA STRATEGIC PILLARS

INFORM

Using all communications tools at our disposal, offer up-to-date information on public education initiatives, parent governance interests, best practices and issues management to ensure a healthy, well-engaged anglophone parent community.

CONSULT

Ensure strong, high-quality and consistent feedback mechanisms with members and partners across the English-language public school network through both electronic and in-person methods.

SUPPORT

Provide training and professional development at all levels of parent governance, optimize the sharing of best practices and provide multiple support services for parent committees, governing boards and parent delegates in need.

ADVOCATE

Push for appropriate policy change and improvement through enhanced partnerships with like-minded organizations, Government working groups/tasks forces, and related organizations, through well-considered political positions on behalf of English- Language parents committees across Quebec, taking into account regional difference and the urban/rural divide.