

*Keeping the Door Open for
Young English-speaking Adults in Québec :
Language Learning in English Schools and Centres*

Brief presented to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports

The background of the page is a blurred, low-angle shot of people's legs and feet as they walk on a light-colored floor. The image is out of focus, creating a sense of movement and a busy environment. The colors are muted, with a mix of light blues, greys, and soft pinks.

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Young English-speaking Adults in Québec :
Language Learning in English Schools and Centres*

ADVISORY BOARD ON ENGLISH EDUCATION

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1. Introduction

During a committee hearing in April 2015, Premier Philippe Couillard responded to a question from Mr. David Birnbaum (MNA for D’Arcy-McGee) about “what our government has done and plans to do to ensure that young anglophone Quebecers are full and valued participants in building our future,” by saying that he wanted to hear from the English-speaking community. About the same time, then-Minister of Education Bolduc asked the Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE) to advise him on how to encourage English-speaking youth to remain in Québec. In May 2016, Premier Couillard identified the English educational sector as a model for the system as a whole, and the Board proposed some reasons for this success in its most recent brief.¹ It should be noted that students in the English sector achieve this success while receiving instruction in two languages from kindergarten onward. The ability to function in two languages is recognized as a crucial socio-economic skill for young Anglophones, and has an impact on their decision whether or not to stay in Québec. How can the education system contribute to developing this skill? This brief is respectfully presented to the Minister of Education with recommendations that respond to this question.

1.1 What are the problems?

For many years, well-educated, bilingual youth from the English-speaking community have been leaving Québec. A 2014 study of Secondary V students in English secondary schools² showed that although their educational aspirations were generally high (84% planned to pursue post-secondary education), only 34% of respondents planned to find employment in their home regions, another 17% planned to stay in Québec, and 26% intended to leave Québec, citing their perceived likelihood of difficulty in finding employment. The immediate problems posed by these findings are:

- the loss of intellectual capital, a trend that is worrisome since many of these individuals possess skills that are needed in the Québec labour market
- the loss of tax revenues from well-educated workers
- the loss of first-language English-speakers to the Québec economy at a time when it must be increasingly outward looking in an increasingly English-speaking world
- the impact of these losses on the Québec economy as a whole

A longer-term concern is the loss of young families and potential parents, exacerbating the decline of the English community.

The increase in the numbers of children who are enrolled in schools that offer bilingual programs demonstrates a willingness among them and their parents to integrate into Québec society as well as the hope that children will graduate with the skills they need for their careers in Québec, rather than leave for the rest of Canada or elsewhere. Yet even with qualifications comparable to those of Francophones, Anglophones and Allophones are seriously under-represented in the public service and in the upper ranks of the private sector.

What can be done to improve the retention and employment options of young Anglophones in Québec? Attempting to answer this question presents a complicated situation. In several past briefs, the Board has demonstrated the many regional differences in Québec, especially among the English-speaking community.³ The situation and needs of English speakers in Montreal are different from those in the Gaspé Peninsula, the Eastern Townships, or Western Québec. Lack of facility in French is usually blamed for the loss of young people whose first language is English, and this brief will focus on this topic, but the problems faced by young Anglophones are also caused by economic constraints and are coloured by misperceptions and myths, some of which will also be addressed.

¹ Québec, Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE), *We are accountable to the students”: Success and Retention in English-Language Schools* (Montréal: MEES, 2016).

² Réal Allard and Rodrigue Landry, *Graduating from an English High School in Québec: Postsecondary Education Aspirations and Career Plans* (Moncton, New Brunswick: Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, 2014).

³ See particularly: Advisory Board on English Education, *One Size Does Not Fit All: Distinct Solutions for Distinct Needs* (Québec: MELS, 2013).
<http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/references/publications/results/detail/article/one-size-does-not-fit-all-distinct-solutions-for-distinct-needs-1/>

1.2 Methods employed in the development of this brief

The Board followed its usual procedure of discussions among its members, supplemented with presentations by guests with particular expertise. In addition, interviews were conducted with the Directors of English Education Network (DEEN), the English Language Arts (ELA) and French as a Second Language (FSL) consultants of each of the nine English boards and the Littoral School Board, MEES employees responsible for some of the language instruction initiatives, a group of about 60 parents who were members of the Québec Federation of Home and School Associations (QFHSA), as well as teachers of a suburban high

school and a small off-island elementary school. Among the themes that emerged throughout our interviews and deliberations were the differences in the anglophone school populations across the province. There were, however, many commonalities: similar comments from school boards in different parts of the province with a different demographic balance of students; the desire of Anglophone parents to ensure that their children were bilingual; the willingness to integrate with the majority population of Québec. There is also a desire among francophone parents, especially in the regions, to ensure that their children become bilingual to improve their mobility and job opportunities.

2. Language

The ability to function in more than one language is a feature of life in Québec. As one interviewee said:

“When you can manage in both languages, all the doors open.”

Various terms are used to describe the degree of competence in a second language, or the extent to which someone can “manage.”

2.1 Bilingualism, Biliteracy, Biculturalism

A bilingual person is able to communicate fluently in two languages with an emphasis on oral communication. Biliteracy encompasses bilingualism but also involves the ability to read and write in both languages. Since language is such an important feature of culture, both these abilities contribute to biculturalism, which may be defined as the ability to take part fully in the life of two cultures. One of the Board’s guests said:

*“We do offer excellent second language courses, but to **feel at home** you need to be bicultural.” (emphasis added)*

This is obviously the highest level of facility, and goes beyond what can be accomplished in even the best curriculum.

With regard to a young Quebecer whose first language is not French, we may think of bilingualism as functionality in the second language: the ability to communicate orally in French at a level adequate, for example, to work in service jobs. Biliteracy includes oral fluency in French as well as the ability to read and write academic language in French, making further education in French an option. Bicultural individuals are able to live comfortably in the second language. This includes, but is not restricted to, an appreciation of French-language films, literature and music, and involvement in the daily life of Francophones. Nolan (1999) describes this as a cross-cultural mindset:

The ability to function in another culture doesn’t just require knowledge, but the development of a cross-cultural mindset. A cross-cultural mindset helps you look behind facts and figures to uncover meanings and patterns, learn in unfamiliar surroundings, and gain entrance into the cultural world of others.⁴

There are many nuances among the degrees of competence in a second language, depending on circumstances: the language required to communicate in a hospital is not the same as that required to order a meal. At the other extreme, many young people, especially in the greater Montreal area, are multilingual

and move with ease among several cultures. For the sake of simplicity, this brief will mostly refer to bilingualism, since this is the term most commonly used worldwide, and will use the term to mean the ability to speak English and French.

2.2 Facility in more than one language

It has been estimated that half of the world’s population speaks two or more languages. In Europe, over half the population can hold a conversation in a second language, a quarter in a third language, and 10 per cent in a fourth language.⁵ Bilingualism increased throughout Canada between the 1961 and 2011 census, from 12.2% to 17.5%. In Québec, the change has been more dramatic, from 25.5% in 1961 to 42.6% in 2011.

Immigrants in Quebec are more likely to be bilingual, and thus contribute to the increase in bilingualism in the province. Francophones and Anglophones in Quebec are also more likely to remain bilingual over the life cycle, a trend that shows the importance of second-language exposure as a factor behind the retention of bilingualism.⁶

The rate of bilingualism among English-speakers in Québec rose from 37% in 1971 to 70% in 2002 and continues to rise, reaching 80% among English-speakers between 15 and 24 years old.⁷ The increasing bilingualism of Québec’s English-speaking workforce is a fundamental asset to build upon, as the ability to speak more than one language has positive economic payoffs.

At the same time as this growth in bilingualism, there have been economic, political, and workforce pressures that have made finding a job difficult: these include the economic downturn of 2008, employer demands for bilingual applicants within Québec and growing opportunities outside Québec for English-speakers. All these pressures have contributed to an outflow of young people, predominantly Anglophones, from Québec.

⁴ Riell W. Nolan, *Communicating and Adapting across Cultures: Living and Working in the Global Village* (Westport, Connecticut: Bergin & Garvey, 1999).

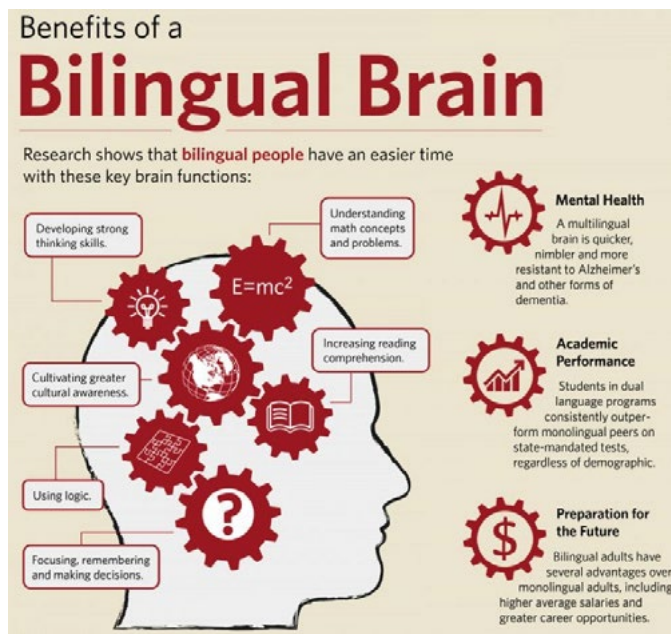
⁵ Aaron Hutchins, “Just say ‘non’: The problem with French immersion,” *Maclean’s*, March 22, 2015.

⁶ Jean-François Lepage and Jean-Pierre Corbeil, “The evolution of English–French bilingualism in Canada from 1961 to 2011,” in *Insights on Canadian Society*, May 2013, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-006-X.

⁷ <https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/com-com.nsf/eng/01232.html>, citing Corbeil, Chavez and Pereira, *Portrait of Official-Language Minorities in Canada - Anglophones in Quebec*, p. 90.

2.3 Benefits of bilingualism

Speaking two languages rather than just one has obvious practical benefits in an increasingly globalized world. But in recent years, scientists have begun to show that the advantages of bilingualism are even more fundamental than being able to converse with a wider range of people. Being bilingual, it turns out, makes you smarter. It can have a profound effect on your brain, improving cognitive skills not related to language and even shielding against dementia in old age.⁸



Source: <http://www.vifprogram.com/vif-blog/entry/infographic-benefits-of-a-bilingual-brain>.

A recent study at Concordia University reported in the *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*⁹ and in *La Presse*¹⁰ has shown this advantage in bilingual toddlers as young as two years old.

2.4 Economic impact of languages spoken

Being bilingual increases career opportunities and earnings, especially outside Québec.

Research shows that individuals benefit from being bilingual, as the ability to speak more than one language has a positive payoff. Thus, bilingualism confers private benefits on those who speak two languages. But . . . there are public benefits to bilingualism as well.¹¹

Historically, there has been a perception that speaking English as a first language in Québec has produced an economic advantage, but this is no longer the case. Bourhis quotes a C.D. Howe report that analyzed the change in the income differential of Quebecers between 1971 and 2001.¹² This showed that while bilingual Francophones maintained an income advantage relative to monolingual Francophones over this period, bilingual Anglophones dropped from having the highest income to equality with monolingual Francophones. In addition, unilingual Anglophones dropped from an advantaged position to a lower income than monolingual Francophones, and Allophones, whether using English or French as a second language, went from parity with monolingual Francophones to a considerably lower income. These results were largely unchanged in the 2006 census, as quoted in *Le Devoir*.¹³ Referring to the 2001 census data, the Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation (CEDEC) noted that Anglophones in Québec were more likely than Francophones to be in the low-income and the high-income groups, with a gap in the \$40 000 to \$60 000 range. They quote Floch¹⁴, who noted that those with higher educational qualifications leave Québec, while those with lower qualifications are more likely to stay because they are less mobile.

⁸ http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/18/opinion/sunday/the-benefits-of-bilingualism.html?_r=0

⁹ Cristina Crivello, Olivia Kuzyk, Momyka Rodrigues, Margaret Friend, Pascal Zesinger and Diane Poulin-Dubois, "The effects of bilingual growth on toddlers' executive function" *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology* 141 (January 2016): 121-132.

¹⁰ <http://www.lapresse.ca/actualites/education/201602/06/01-4947934-des-avantages-cognitifs-chez-les-enfants-bilingues.php>

¹¹ The Conference Board of Canada, Canada, *Bilingualism and Trade* (le Canada, le bilinguisme et les affaires), juin 2013, p. 36.

¹² http://cedec.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Canada-Bilingualism-and-Trade_English.pdf

¹³ Vaillancourt, Lemay, & Vaillancourt, *Laggards No More: The Changed Socioeconomic Status of Francophones in Quebec*, August 2007.

¹⁴ Claude Lévesque, "Les mieux rémunérés au Québec ne sont plus ceux que l'on croit," *Le Devoir*, May 3, 2010, p. A3.

¹⁵ Floch, W., Pocock, J. (2008). *The Socio-Economic Status of English-Speaking: Those who Left and Those who Stayed*. In R.Y. Bourhis (Ed.) *The Vitality of the English-Speaking Communities of Quebec: From Community Decline to Revival*. Montreal, Quebec: CEETUM, Université de Montréal, p.53.

According to the Statistics Canada 2011 National Household Survey, quoted in a CHSSN report,¹⁵ Québec's English-speaking youth are located in communities with low incomes (44.9% had no income, or income below \$20 000) and high unemployment (9.4%). When language communities are compared across the province, English-speaking youth between 15 and 24 years old are more likely than French-speaking youth to be unemployed (16.9% compared to 12.8%). The picture is even more stark for visible minorities. Thirty-four percent of Québec's English-speaking black community lives below the low income cut-off compared to 17% of the English-speaking non-visible minority and 13.8% of the French-speaking non-visible minority.

This situation should be of financial concern for a government that pays unemployment benefits and needs to be supported by a strong tax base. These findings demonstrate the link between competence in French and both employability and earnings. For a graduate of an English school, French is an essential employability skill, so it is worth examining how schools develop language skills.

¹⁵ Community Health and Social Services Network, *Partnering for the Well-being of Minority English-Language Youth, Schools and Communities*, 2015. Available at www.chssn.org

3. Language teaching in English schools

Unlike French minority language schools in other provinces, English schools in Québec do not define their mission as preservation of the minority language. Indeed, Montreal area schools in a 2011 study defined their mission as being aligned with the government's aim of increasing the number of French speakers in the province¹⁶.

The goal of the mandated minimum FSL curriculum ("Core French," or *Français de base*) is "functionality." Graduates of this program can converse well enough to work in a service industry in Québec and to carry on a conversation in French. Their reading and writing levels are estimated to be "fair," which provides an adequate base for future acquisition of the language but not for further education in French Cegeps or universities. They probably lack the kind of specialized terminology needed to advocate for themselves in a hospital that functions in French, or to take advantage of remedial services. Realizing this, and aware of the scarcity of English-language services, especially in the regions, most parents prefer their children to follow courses of study that offer more French instruction.

Language learning is a huge management issue that creates tensions across all the English-language school boards. The prevalence of immersion and bilingual programs requires extra staffing, more teachers of French as a second language, and a corresponding decrease in staff who teach in English. The budgetary rules do not acknowledge the extra costs involved in running several parallel programs in a school. Three school boards in different parts of the province have asked that the budget for *classes d'accueil* for out-of-province and international students, available to French schools under the measure *Pour l'accueil et francisation (Mesure 15051)* be restored in the English sector.

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- *allow flexibility in the budgetary rules so that school boards can fund French language learning to meet local needs*
- *restore the measure Pour l'accueil et francisation (Mesure 15051) for English school boards*

3.1 FSL programs offered

In most English-language schools in Québec, much more than the prescribed time is allocated to FSL teaching, although there are differences between and within school boards. The exact amount of time dedicated to teaching French was difficult for the Board to ascertain because, as in all aspects of their functioning, English-language school boards make local needs a priority, and there is much variation among school boards and among schools within a board. For example, within the same board, immersion or bilingual programs may involve half a year, half a week, or half days in each language. The names of intensive programs also vary by school board, and include Immersion, *Français enrichi*, Bilingual Stream, French As Mother Tongue).

French programs offered in different schools depend on the make-up of the school's population, and it was generally reported that programs are offered at the request of parents. Motivation to learn French depends on the program and on the community served. Some students are still reluctant to learn French although most parents and children see bilingualism as an asset, parents

are asking for more French instruction and there has been a discernible change in outlook among students. One rural teacher said:

"Young kids seem to enjoy learning both languages when they are exposed to them early on. As the students get older, they seem to be more reluctant to learn the second language."

Pedagogical consultants said that all graduating students have better oral than written skills in French, but that students in programs such as *Français enrichi*, *Français plus*, French Mother Tongue or Immersion can probably function in a French Cegep because they have a deeper knowledge of the language. It should be noted, however, that these are sometimes the students who either speak French at home, or are stronger students to start with, or both. Teachers tended to agree with this assessment, but not as strongly. Several teachers offered the opinion that the language spoken at home had a strong influence on the students' levels of bilingualism:

"Those who came in from a bilingual home came out very successfully, in terms of oral and reading (skills in French)."

¹⁶ Diane Gérin-Lajoie, *Youth, Language and Identity: Portraits of Students from English-language High Schools in the Montreal Area* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc., 2011).

3.2 Students with special needs

The increase in students with special needs is a concern, and some core French classes may have 19 out of 25 students with individualized education plans (IEPs). Some have been transferred from French-language schools where they have been unable to function in an all-French environment. Some have chosen not to follow a bilingual or immersion path in the English-language school. Whatever the reason, there is a disproportionately large number of students with special needs in English streams and core French classes, with the related need for support in these classes. This may be an indication of another problem: the need for early intervention that is critical to alleviate learning difficulties in both the first and second languages.

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- fund early intervention in language development in both languages

3.3 Role of parents

Anglophone students in the English school system decreased in absolute numbers and percentage terms between 1971 and 2012.¹⁷ Part of this large decrease can be attributed to lower birthrates and outmigration of anglophone families, but there is another demographic factor at play as shown by the increase in the number of anglophone students in French schools. Anglophones in the French school system increased in absolute numbers and percentage terms between 1971 and 2012.¹⁸

Table 1. Distribution of anglophone students in 1971 and 2012

	1971	2012
Anglophone students in English schools	171 175	63 946
Anglophone students in French schools	17 927	21 835

Anglophone parents choose French schools for many reasons, such as proximity to reduce time spent on buses, or better facilities such as gymnasias. However, the predominant reason they give is to improve the children's mastery of French. As one teacher told the Board,

"There is no such thing as a French culture in an English school."

Richard Bourhis claims that parents want their children to acquire "sociolinguistic skills in French schools: Québécois accent, style, words and expressions," as well as "bicultural skills in [the] Québécois francophone majority culture in addition to [their] own Anglophone and Allophone cultures."¹⁹ Celine Cooper says "anglophone parents in Québec want our children to be fluent, not just proficient, in French."²⁰ In an English school, even with classes predominantly in French, the in-school environment is English. In a French school, students learn the vernacular or the colloquialisms of the schoolyard. Bourhis proposes that this movement to French schools suggests that these English school 'rights holders' are switching to the French school system to gain stronger spoken and written French fluency as individuals, but at the collective cost of further undermining the institutional vitality of the English school system across the Province.²¹

English-speaking parents base their opinions of French instruction in English schools on their own experiences as students in these schools a generation earlier, but curriculum, expectations and pedagogy have all changed and professionals in the English school system have expressed a different opinion. We asked pedagogical consultants: what would you tell a parent who said that she was sending a child to French school because the quality of French teaching is better? They offered the opinion that the French taught in English schools is academically good. Students do almost as much writing as students in French schools. The programmes enriches include songs, movies, and cultural references to encourage biculturalism as well as bilingualism and biliteracy because "We can learn a language if we are interested in the culture." Since French schools place more emphasis on grammar, consultants offered the opinion that students graduating from French schools may be stronger in grammar, but that they are not more fluent. They added that the amount of exposure is important, both in school and—more importantly—out of school. Results from the "Tell Them From Me" survey in one school show that students at all levels see themselves as using French more in the community and in their homes, and less in the school. French learned when, for example, playing on a team is "French with a purpose," as well as being idiomatic and colloquial. The consultants advised teachers and parents to encourage students to "take it out of the classroom" and to take part in student exchanges or activities such as the Canadian Parents for French (CPF) public-speaking contests. In the words of one of the pedagogical consultants: "It really depends on the support at home."

¹⁷ Richard Y. Bourhis, "The Decline of the English School System in Québec and What Can Be Done About It," *Keynote to the Research Forum on Prospects for the English School System in Québec*, McGill University, March 15, 2016.

¹⁸ Bourhis, *ibid.*

¹⁹ Bourhis, *ibid.*

²⁰ Celine Cooper, "Is the EMSB worth saving?" *Montreal Gazette*, Oct 6, 2014.

²¹ Richard Bourhis and Pierre Foucher, *The Decline of the English School System in Québec* (Moncton, New Brunswick: Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, 2012).

Given the much publicized movement to French schools, why, then, do some parents choose to send their children to English-language schools? Many recognize that courses and instruction in French have changed considerably since they were in school, that the graduation rate in English-language schools is higher than that in French-language schools, even when students with special needs are included in the statistics, and that marks in standardized examinations tend to be higher. Notably, in 2013, for example, results in French language leaving examinations were 9.4% higher in three English-language school boards (English Montreal, Lester B Pearson and Sir Wilfrid Laurier) than in three geographically close French school boards (Pointe de l'Île, Marguerite-Bourgeoys and CS de Montréal).²² For some:

"It is primarily about culture. Parents want their children to have the opportunity to go elsewhere and having a strong education in English is important. Any French they have will be an asset outside of Québec. The English schools support the English culture."

"Because of the English culture. When I talk about my child they understand where I am coming from. Parents find it difficult to communicate within the French system."

Many francophone parents with eligibility for English education look to the future and want their children to learn English, and off the Island of Montreal, schools often serve a majority of francophone "ayant droit" students, which has an impact on the teaching of both French and English.

"For the most part our students are Francophone. They attain a fair level of English by graduation."

"Unfortunately, unless the child has support and a good understanding of the need for both languages, frequently the students who are predominantly Anglophone experience more difficulty with pursuing further education and finding good jobs. However the students who have access to both languages fare much better academically, socially, and in employability."

The Board was able to ask a group of 60 parents whose children attended English schools about their experiences. There were a variety of answers to the question "Why did you choose an English school for your child(ren)?" Some of the following themes emerged: a family tradition of attending English school, community ties, the spirit of volunteerism, the openness and welcoming attitude in English schools, preparation for a global marketplace, bilingualism and biliteracy, the importance of maintaining English language skills, the importance of maintaining eligibility for English education for the children's children, the

parents' lack of confidence in French to help their child and to communicate with the school, English schools' policy of inclusion for students with special needs. It was interesting that much of this echoes what emerged in the Board's most recent brief.²³

Some of the comments made it clear that the parents expected their children to leave the province:

"I want my child to be able to compete internationally and go beyond the limited French borders."

"Want [a] strong foundation in English – most common working language – [in] scientific and medical sectors."

"Able to function outside of Quebec."

They said that their expectations were generally met, with some concerns over the loss of English language skills, the emphasis of language over subject-specific knowledge in elementary school and the lack of library materials in French. Some parents chose to send their children to French elementary school to give them a foundation in French and then have them attend English secondary school to ensure that they are prepared for English Cegep.

The benefits of learning two languages at the same time are well established, especially for young children. But increased time allotted for French instruction has an impact on English learning, especially in regions where the population is predominantly francophone. Parents want their children to maintain a high level of competence in both languages. Anglophone parents are concerned that if students have more opportunity to function in French, they will have less opportunity to practice their English and maintain their level of proficiency. This fear is not borne out by research, nor by the experience of many successful graduates.

Teachers said:

"FSL can help ELA (and vice versa) when [we are] discussing [the] same topics (like pronouns in grade 4 ELA and FSL). But rather than this being a coincidence, both sides would need to help each other a bit."

"Unless a child has a language learning problem, learning both languages is beneficial and some of the strategies and skills are interchangeable between the two languages."

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- use opportunities to educate parents about current research into the benefits of learning two languages

²² MELS examination results, 2013, quoted in "How are Québec's English Schools Stacking Up?" Infographic by Amy Luft, CTV News Montreal, 2014. Available at <http://montreal.ctvnews.ca/how-are-Québec-s-english-schools-stacking-up-1.2009833?autoplay=true>

²³ Québec, Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE), "We are accountable to the students": Success and Retention in English-Language Schools (Montréal: MEES, 2016).

3.4 Adult education and vocational training

The need for effective French language courses does not only apply to the youth sector. Students entering adult education and vocational training programs often have low proficiency in French, which has caused them problems through secondary school and restricted their employment opportunities. When there is a lack of courses offered in English, students are often advised to take the same course in French. They are reluctant to do so because their French is probably too weak, and their right to enrol in English-language programs must be maintained. As a minimum, it is important for students to know the terminology of their job, to hold a conversation with colleagues or clients, and to make a report, yet there are very few programs at this level that have a language component. Programs in health sciences are an exception, and the Western Québec School Board has a partnership with Emploi Québec to provide language training in medical terminology and a support person for trainees during their practicum. There are well-qualified and well-supported FSL teachers in adult education programs, while in vocational training programs, teachers tend to be less qualified and more employment oriented.

In recent years, the proportion of students in English adult education classes who come from the French sector has increased to about 30%. Some are immigrants who were ineligible for the English youth sector, but who are seeking to improve their English skills, because they realize that being bilingual gives them more access to employment.

There are many students who have followed Work-Oriented Training Path (WOTP) programs or who have special needs and must be given considerable support if they are to succeed.

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- *review the language content of adult education and vocational training programs*
- *lengthen the programs to include language training where appropriate, and for students who want it, subject to a diagnostic test*
- *ensure that there are material resources for the language courses*
- *provide more support for students with special needs in the adult sector*
- *include the value of learning French as an essential component of career counselling*
- *cooperate with Emploi-Québec to make the link between education and employment, and work in partnership with the school boards to provide the French instruction needed*

3.5 Perceptions

Québec has been criticized because the percentage of English-speaking civil servants in the bureaucracy is much lower than the proportion of English speakers in the province. Again, the reasons for this are not straightforward and erroneous perceptions are sometimes more of a problem than reality. Many young Anglophones feel they do not write French well enough, suggesting that young people's perception of their abilities is a problem, yet English-speaking students writing the French (mother tongue) uniform examination at the Secondary V level are reported to do better than French-speaking students writing the same examination.

As long ago as 1993, there was a perception that "Whether you speak French or not is really not the issue. The point is that you're **not** French."²⁴ Several people interviewed by the Board said such things as:

"Many kids do not feel they know French enough, and are insecure about their future in Québec."

"There is a notion of a glass ceiling."

This reflects the strongly expressed view of young Anglophones in a study conducted by the Québec Community Groups Network Youth Standing Committee in 2009,²⁵ a report that the Board strongly commends to the Minister.

²⁴ Maria Peluso, in William Weintraub, *The Rise and Fall of English Montreal*, National Film Board of Canada, 1993.

²⁵ Québec Community Groups Network, *Creating Spaces for Young Quebecers: Strategic Orientations for English-speaking Youth in Quebec* (Montreal: for Canadian Heritage, 2009).

4. Initiatives to increase the integration of English-speaking youth into Québec society

Many initiatives have been implemented both within the English school system and by other agencies in Québec to encourage young people's involvement in activities in the majority language in Québec. A 2015 study²⁶ noted that this involvement had increased since an earlier study in 2008,²⁷ allowing young Anglophones to develop their French competence in real-life contexts.

4.1 Successful initiatives

4.1.1 Immersion

From its birth in Margaret Pendlebury School in St Lambert in 1965,²⁸ the concept of French immersion has grown and become a standard model of second language instruction around the world. In Québec, enrolment in French immersion has increased from 22% of 15-year olds in 2010²⁹ to an estimated 37% in 2012,³⁰ and immersion programs are available in 80% of the English school system.

Table 2. Anglophone students in immersion classes (percentages)

	2006	2011
Elementary	66	83
Secondary	35	65

Immersion programs are based on additive bilingualism: a child's second language skills develop without harming his or her first language skills. Language is learned through content in a natural way, and in some schools, most of the curriculum is taught in French. Teaching a second language through immersion has been the subject of much research over the past 50 years, and results have consistently shown that:

- by the end of elementary school, the English literacy skills of French immersion students are often better than those of students in English-language programs
- skills transfer from one language to another
- knowledge of an additional language improves cognitive abilities
- working memory is improved
- most children, including those with special needs, or from low socio-economic backgrounds, can succeed in immersion programs

The costs of running programs in two languages are borne by each school board, with no additional funding for extra teachers and materials. School boards see this expense as necessary, given the positive effects on the students.

²⁶ Lise Palmer, *An Update on Québec's English-Speaking Youth 2008-2015*, Spark.

²⁷ Québec Community Groups Network, *ibid.*

²⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mRIJkfnmQRQ>

²⁹ <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-004-x/200406/6923-eng.htm#a>

³⁰ Retrieved from <http://cpf.ca/en/researchadvocacy/research/enrolmenttrends/>

4.1.2 Other initiatives

The *Options d'études* program was started 7 years ago in Chateauguay. It compressed the curriculum into four days and paired an English with a French school so that students were exposed to the other language through sports. The program was popular and achieved its goals, but practical issues, such as the cost of the extra teacher needed and the problem of unbalanced numbers of students in each language group in most of the province, meant that it was not replicated and extended.

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- *re-examine the successful features of the Options d'études program and consider reinstating it where appropriate schools can be twinned*

Some school boards use creative ways to supplement classroom French, such as using "Odyssey" funds from Heritage Canada to supplement school resources and hire francophone animators.

The *Programme d'échanges linguistiques intra-Québec—approche nouvelle* (PÉLIQ-AN) supports language exchange projects between groups of students from Québec's English and French schools. MEES and ECQ funding provides \$25 per student for a pair of classes to meet twice during the year. In between meetings, the students have to work together on a common project. Until the government cut the funding in half, 20 twinnings were supported. This has now been reduced to ten.

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- *restore the funding cut from the PÉLIQ-AN budget*

The McGill Training and Retention of Health Professionals Project sponsors a number of courses offered by McGill University's French Language Centre to help Health and Social Work students studying in anglophone post-secondary institutions to be better equipped to work in Québec's health system. Through the McGill project, Heritage College offers courses in French medical terminology to its nursing students. The results have been dramatic. Anglophone nursing students equipped with French language skills tend to stay in Québec to exercise their profession.

In addition, Champlain College (St Lambert) is developing a program to help nursing teachers feel more comfortable in a French health-care environment and to enable them to better prepare their students to practise in Quebec.

In several of our earlier briefs, we have described the activities of the many Community Learning Centres (CLCs) in the province.³¹ We refer to these earlier documents and once again commend the CLCs for the good work they do in offering extra-curricular activities in French.

We have already referred to Canadian Parents for French (Section 3.3). CPF is:

.... a national network of volunteers which values French as an integral part of Canada and which is dedicated to the promotion and creation of French-second-language learning opportunities for young Canadians.³²

It is better known outside Québec and its mission is "furthering bilingualism by promoting and creating opportunities for students to learn and use French." In recent years, it has become more active and more popular among anglophone families in Québec.

In reality, English graduates probably have enough knowledge of French to integrate well into the majority community, but more needs to be done to facilitate this. One strategy would be to create summer jobs in which students need to work in French. This is easier in urban areas, but it is extremely difficult for students in isolated English communities to get these kinds of opportunities in private sector industries such as tourism and hotels.

³¹ ABEE, *Fostering Student Success in Québec's English Schools*, p.15, http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/publications/MELS_MemoireMinistre2011_ANG.pdf and ABEE, *One Size Does Not Fit All: Distinct Solutions for Distinct Needs*, p. 25, http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/autres/organismes/CELA_onesize_A.pdf

³² cpf.ca/en

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- *set up a summer employment program to give English-speaking students the opportunity to work in French, particularly in the public sector*

There are two organizations whose mission is to help young people find employment in Québec. The Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation (CEDEC) is a Canada-wide corporation that is particularly active in the rural areas of Québec. It “supports employability and community economic development in the English-speaking community of Québec.”³³ Among its recent and current initiatives, CEDEC has linked employers with skilled workers, held start-up workshops to develop entrepreneurial skills among 18-35 year-olds and is devising a tourism plan to help Québec capitalize on the fourth fastest growing industry in the world. In all these activities, it stresses the need for bilingual workers.³⁴

Youth Employment Services (YES) is based in Montreal and provides young Anglophones and recent English-speaking immigrants with services that range from individual job counselling to workshops that develop entrepreneurial skills. One of the challenges faced by young English-speaking job seekers from across the province is to integrate into a predominantly French-speaking job market, and YES is proof of the fact that the employment rates of bilingual or unilingual Anglophones are lower than that of bilingual or unilingual Francophones.

³³ cedec.ca

³⁴ See, for example, The Conference Board of Canada, Canada, *Bilingualism and Trade*, June 2013. Available at http://cedec.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Canada-Bilingualism-and-Trade_English.pdf

5. Curriculum issues

The QEP has now been in existence for over 15 years. When it was first developed, it was—and continues to be—a progressive approach to teaching and learning. But even teachers who have embraced the curriculum’s constructivist philosophy still decry the amount of content to be covered and the lack of support materials and resources.

5.1 Clearer progression of learning

Interviews with consultants and teachers identified some of the problems with the curriculum and its related material. In the words of one teacher:

“There’s so, so, so much to cover in the QEP and POL [progression of learning], it’s overwhelming. We end up picking and choosing. We seem to forget that kids are KIDS.”

Others identified discrepancies between the requirements for teaching the two languages. For example, the use of capital letters and periods to begin and end sentences is assigned to different years in the English and French curricula.

In ELA, the progression of learning is not specific enough about what the students need to know by end of each cycle and in both ELA and FSL, there is a lack of coherence among the programs, the progression of learning, and the framework for evaluation, especially at the elementary level.

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- establish working groups to reassess the ELA and FSL curricula and their related resources for internal consistency and to remove major discrepancies between the progressions of learning for each curriculum

5.2 Assessment procedures

Consultants and teachers all criticized assessment strategies from a variety of standpoints. Consultants emphasized the misalignment among the curriculum, the progression of learning and the evaluation procedures. There was concern that there was too much emphasis on evaluation, that evaluation influenced teaching practices too much, and that there was not enough emphasis on feedback to students. Teachers said:

“We have to teach students how to perform instead of just making them love reading and writing.”

“As teachers, we should be trusted to grade our students, we don’t need big, scary Evaluation Situations.”

“I am tired of the same type of evaluations at the end of the year. I have successfully learned how to teach to the test. There are so many other types of writing that can be the final product, yet the exam is always an article.”

“My colleagues often are frustrated by the amount of testing which takes away from teaching time.”

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- reassess the evaluation tools currently provided by the MEES in ELA and FSL for their appropriateness for assessing language proficiency
- establish working groups consisting of members of the curriculum branch and the evaluation branch working closely together to correct inconsistencies and to develop sample evaluation rubrics

5.3 Resources

Most teachers felt that there is a lack of approved materials that satisfy the range of student needs within a classroom and between levels. In ELA, the only approved book is a dictionary so teachers buy what they can find, spend their own money, and use school libraries, public libraries and e-books to meet the needs of the variety of reading levels in their classes. Some teachers feel that workbooks fill what they perceive as gaps in the ELA program, but they would not rely on workbooks if a wide range of resource materials were available to them. A website such as the American site NEWSLEA allows the teacher to differentiate by changing the reading level in non-fiction books, and this is accessible on students' tablets.

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- *loosen the restrictions on approved materials*
- *identify a wide range of resources to allow teachers to diversify their teaching and make these resources easily accessible to teachers*

There is a lack of materials suitable for French immersion programs and teachers need richer, more varied materials and library books. Teachers use books approved for French as a mother tongue (FMT) teaching, but when these are age-appropriate, the level of French is too difficult so teachers create their own materials. The Québec market is too small to attract publishers from other provinces, where the philosophy underlying the curriculum is, in any case, different. Tablets may be used to produce rather than consume knowledge because there are fewer resources in French.

LEARN is an example of an organization that attempts to fill these gaps with translations of appropriate materials as well as a large selection of electronic resources matched to the curriculum in English and French at the elementary, secondary and adult levels. In some cases, teachers seem unaware of these resources, but a bigger problem in the regions is the lack of adequate broadband capacity.

This is actually a composite of two problems. First, the school board does not have access to enough bandwidth. Secondly, the number of devices in the classroom, such as tablets, smart phones, and laptops, is increasing, placing more demand on bandwidth and causing the system to crash. Teleconferencing is a useful solution to some of the problems involved in communicating over the great distances in the regions, but there is often a problem with the visual component of the popular platforms, that needs stronger bandwidth than is available. Increasing bandwidths would solve these problems. As we have done in earlier briefs, we urge the Minister to address this problem.

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- *Permit FSL teachers to access resource materials published for French immersion classes elsewhere in Canada*
- *provide the infrastructure needed for high speed internet access in remote regions of the province and ensure proper maintenance in this regard*

6. The role of teachers

6.1 Availability of teachers

The most important resource in the schools is the teacher, and there is a shortage of qualified FSL teachers in the English sector, both as teachers of FSL and as subject teachers who are equally skilled in the discipline and in French. Teachers, both English-speaking and French-speaking, feel they are viewed by administrators, parents and colleagues as being able to teach ELA or FSL based solely on the fact that they can speak the language. Teachers may be fluent in French, but most were trained as elementary generalists or secondary subject specialists, and few are graduates of programs specific to second language teaching, particularly in an immersion context. Yet as one interviewee said, “You’re teaching a second language in any school in Montréal,” and we would extend this to schools in the rest of Québec. Some FSL specialist graduates (from French-language universities) believe that their English is not strong enough to teach in an English school environment, and some teach in French schools or in immersion programs in other provinces for better working conditions and more pay. This loss of qualified teachers is a particular problem between Western Québec and Ottawa, or Eastern Québec and New Brunswick, but a Winnipeg school administrator said that:

We’re in the middle of budget discussions now and we’re going to spend money on recruitment teams that will be going to Québec and eastern Ontario to basically start convincing native francophone teachers to immigrate to Manitoba.³⁵

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- *increase the number of FSL and immersion teachers graduating from English-language universities and ensure that they are better prepared both in terms of language skills and subject-related knowledge³⁶*
- *provide pedagogical development for FSL and immersion teachers*

6.2 Differences in pedagogy

Teaching styles differ in ELA and FSL classes partly because the teachers’ preparation is based on different philosophies of teaching language. In the “whole language” approach, language development in the ELA program was largely driven by rich content and appreciation for literature was a critical part of the program and its evaluation, which made use of evaluation rubrics. Technical skills, grammar, spelling, etc., were largely integrated into the work at hand. This certainly had an impact on the nature of class activities and the pedagogical approach in the classroom. Language development occurred over time, and the approach was used from primary school to Secondary V. ELA teaching incorporating a whole language approach is still prevalent in the English school system, although consultants noted that Secondary Cycle Two teachers experience a tension between using a literacy-based and a literature-based approach.

Before the implementation of the reformed curriculum (QEP), the FSL program at all levels was largely structured around technical skills and precision of language. Activities focused mostly on repetition and memorization, application of technical skills, and practice. This program structure, combined with limited resources for second language instruction, was generally demotivating for students. It should be noted that this was the curriculum followed by parents of children currently in school.

Under the QEP, grammar, while still a priority, is taught in context-embedded situations in elementary schools, but in context-reduced situations in secondary school. The use of rubrics, used in ELA for decades, is now more common in FSL, although points are still deducted for grammatical errors. Consultants told us that FSL teachers still tend to be more focused on grammar, saying that it is difficult to learn a second language without knowing how the language works, on the use of workbooks, and on precision. They also spoke about the ways that ELA and FSL consultants have tried to coordinate and cooperate, and how they have encouraged teachers to do the same.

³⁵ Aaron Hutchins, “Just say ‘non’: The problem with French immersion,” *Maclean’s*, March 22, 2015.

³⁶ It should be noted that McGill University has reinstated the PIF program for elementary teachers and is about to start a campaign to increase Secondary FSL enrollment.

6.3 Sharing pedagogies

Three initiatives in English schools are encouraging language teachers to work together, based on the research into how children acquire language. Research has shown that knowledge is transferred through languages and as students make cross-linguistic connections while learning, what they have learned in one language does not have to be learned in a second language.

Projet transfert ELA-FLS focuses on the importance of transfer in the development of language competency in two languages. Teachers are accompanied as they select and integrate teaching practices supporting the transfer of learning from one language to another and as they develop methods of reflecting on language learning and transfer. Benefits to teachers include improved pedagogy, a more thorough knowledge of the Ministry programs and gains in terms of teaching time. Students benefit from higher motivation and improved self-esteem, especially with regard to language learning.

Français, langue seconde et anglais, langue d'enseignement: collaboration et transfert (FACET) is a language transfer project created in response to needs expressed by teachers and consultants. It provides ELA and FSL teachers who teach the same group of students with the practical means to encourage their collaborative teaching efforts. Two piloting groups of Grade 3 and Grade 6 teachers from two different school boards have been funded for the equivalent of five days of substitution to plan their collaborative work. Next year, 10 teams will have the opportunity to receive funding and be supported and accompanied throughout the process of collaboration and inquiry.³⁷

Dr. Roy Lyster^{38, 39} has a research project in some Cycle 1 classes where English and French teachers read aloud from the same fiction books, alternating between chapters from the French and English versions. Students learn new concepts in both languages and are able to make relevant connections.

It is not within the scope of this brief to recommend one teaching strategy over another, but collaboration among teachers in both languages would make it possible to share ideas and teach children in the way that research tells us that they learn.

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- *provide leadership by encouraging research into language learning and supporting collaborative initiatives among language teachers*

6.4 Teacher collaboration

Collaboration between ELA and FSL teachers is moot in a typical small rural school where the same teacher is teaching multiple subjects and multiple levels in the same room, or when one FSL teacher teaches all grade levels with no colleague in the same school, but it is also difficult in large secondary schools that have block scheduling. From our interviews, it was clear that this collaboration in elementary school staffrooms was welcome where it was possible.

"I think a lack of time is an issue."

"Lack of preparation time hinders it."

"For the most part our FSL teacher is also the ELA teacher."

"Both groups of teachers work together to facilitate and complement as much as possible the students' learning."

"They are very much two different teams, though they discuss at times a child's behavior."

"FSL teachers are on opposite schedules (they create the ELA teacher's spares), so it feels like both are on different (though not opposing) teams."

There is less collaboration in secondary schools, where teachers tend to gather in subject area offices and where there are other pressures.

"At Cycle 2 secondary, there is no collaboration. Teachers at this level are focused on exit exams."

In one secondary school, a group of Cycle 1 Mathematics, Science, English and French teachers have a PDIG grant to work together to develop a project in Mathematics and Science that will be presented in English and French. It seemed a shame to the Board that this type of collaboration was dependent on grants and could not be a routine feature of scheduling.

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- *allocate money to encourage collaboration between FSL, ELA, and immersion teachers in schools where there are several teachers at the same grade level*

³⁷ <http://facet.quebec>

³⁸ Roy Lyster, Laura Collins, and Susan Ballinger, "Linking languages through a bilingual read-aloud project," *Language Awareness* 18, no. 3-4 (2009): 366-383.

³⁹ Roy Lyster, Jorge Quiroga, and Susan Ballinger, "The effects of biliteracy instruction on morphological awareness," *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education* 1, no. 2 (2013):169-197.

6.5 Professional development

Every opportunity is used for a variety of professional development activities. This is necessary for out-of-province teachers new to the QEP and to Québec culture, for FSL teachers with no FSL training, for FSL teachers to reduce grammar-focused teaching—the way they were taught—towards more constructivist teaching. Some consultants identified a gradual change in pedagogy among FSL teachers, who are moving away from a rigid, artificial, grammar-based, workbook-dependent approach toward a more integrated, holistic approach.

Great distances between schools in rural boards make it difficult for teachers to get together for professional development. A small school board in a relatively small territory described the possibility of bringing teachers together for professional development as “a luxury.”

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- *allocate money to level the playing field for teachers in remote locations so that FSL and immersion teachers at all levels can meet for professional development*
- *support the development of alternative methods of professional development, such as teleconferencing and webinars for schools separated by great distances*

Only one FSL consultant mentioned the *Fonds de perfectionnement en didactique des langues*⁴⁰, a joint initiative of the Ministry of Education and the Entente Canada-Québec to provide professional development to FSL, ESL, and immersion teachers.

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- *promote the use of the Fonds de perfectionnement en didactique des langues more aggressively*

In some school boards, marking centres for common examinations provide a collaborative forum for teachers to meet and discuss program content and evaluation, as well as the relationships between content at different grade levels. This opportunity for professional development has been a peripheral benefit, but can only be beneficial if the process is initiated early in the year and rules are established by the groups.

The Board recommends that the Minister:

- *fund marking centres where they are requested*

⁴⁰ <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/references/publications/resultats-de-la-recherche/detail/article/programme-de-perfectionnement-collectif-en-langues-secondes-guide-et-formulaires-destines-aux-com/>

7. Conclusion

This is the third time that ABEE has provided advice on the need for the English school system to prepare biliterate students,^{41, 42} but the world has changed considerably since 1995 and even since 2001. There has clearly been a change in attitude among most Québec parents and children who speak English as a first language, partly because of more stringent language laws in the province that favour French speakers but also because of the many influences of the increasingly pluralistic society in which young people live.⁴³ The decisions of young people to stay in their home community or to leave it depend to a large extent on the local economic situation and the availability of jobs. Young Anglophones, with their knowledge of both English and French, have the luxury of being able to choose to leave Québec, to the detriment of both the province and the English community in the province. The general population of Québec would benefit if such a well-educated, bilingual workforce remained in the province, and the vitality of the Anglophone community would benefit from the younger demographic and, ultimately, from their young families.

One thing has not changed since our earlier briefs: “The teaching and learning of French is one of the principal preoccupations of the English school system.”⁴⁴ This has been a pragmatic response to the needs of school leavers in Québec, but has also demonstrated the willingness of parents, schools and school boards to integrate into the majority community. The Advisory Board welcomes this attitude with the hope that the Minister will recognize its benefit to the province as a whole and support the many initiatives that it has produced. The Board also hopes that such integration can be achieved without the loss of the English-speaking heritage that has been of historical importance to the development of Québec.

⁴¹ Advisory Board on English Education, *Language learning in the English Schools of Québec: A Biliteracy Imperative*, 1995

⁴² Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE), *French second language in the English schools of Québec, A report submitted to the Commission des états généraux sur la situation et l'avenir de la langue française au Québec*, March 2001.

⁴³ Marie-Odile Magnan and Patricia Lamarre, “Être jeune et Anglophone dans un Québec pluraliste,” *Vivre ensemble* 21, no. 71 (Automne 2013).

⁴⁴ ABEE 2001, p. 2.

Interviewees for this brief

- Elizabeth Ascah, ELA Consultant, ESSB
- Joelle Barbeau, FSL Consultant, RSB
- Marie-Claude Bergeron, FSL Consultant, EMSB
- Louise Bourque, ELA Consultant, RSB
- Helene Daigle, ELA Consultant, SWLSB
- Donna D'Amato, ELA Consultant, EMSB
- Martine Delsemme, FSL Consultant, LBPSB
- Heather-Anne Denton, FSL Consultant, LBPSB
- Sylvie Dumouchel, FSL Consultant, NFSB
- Deborah Foltin, Director of Educational Services, LSB
- Elizabeth Ford, ELA Consultant, RSB
- H  l  ne Henri, FSL Consultant, RSB
- Paul Kettner, Literacy Consultant, EMSB
- Wendy King, ELA Consultant, ETSB
- Nancy Langlois, FSL Consultant, ESSB
- John Leblanc, ELA Consultant, LBPSB
- Virginia Lavigne, FSL Consultant, WQSB
- Gail MacDonald, ELA Consultant, NFSB
- Anik Malenfant, FSL Consultant, EMSB
- Marc-Albert Paquette, FSL Consultant, SWLSB
- Franca Persechino, FSL Consultant, EMSB
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- Jean Proven  al, FSL Consultant, ETSB
- Lisa Rae, Assistant Director of Educational Services, RSB
- Jill Robinson, Coordinator, Educational Services, CQSB
- Terry Saba, ELA Consultant, EMSB
- Larissa Sansom, ELA Consultant, WQSB
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Individuals consulted for this brief

- Ruth Ahern, Assistant Director General and Director of Education/Adult Education /Vocational Training -WQSB
- Diane Alain, Coordinatrice, Français langue seconde DFGJ – MEES
- Kim Berthiaume, Affordance Studio
- John Buck, Chief Executive Officer, (CEDEC)
- Mario Clarke, Director, Youth Employment Services (YES)
- Stacey Dakin, Operations Manager (CEDEC)
- Michael Canuel, CEO - LEARN
- Celine Cooper, Op. Ed. Columnist, Montréal Gazette,
- David Johnston, Commissioner's Representative, Québec Region, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages (OCOL)
- Michele Luchs, Coordinator, Direction de la formation générale des jeunes, ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (DFGJ-MEES)
- Roy Lyster, Professor, Department of Integrated Studies in Education, McGill University
- France Paquin, Collaboratrice en français, langue seconde, DFGJ-MEES
- Claude Quevillon-Lacasse, Collaboratrice en français, langue seconde, DFGJ-MEES
- Michael Pellegrin, Elementary English Language Arts Team Leader, DFGJ-MEES
- Allen Richards, Provincial Development Officer, CEDEC
- Elaine Roy, Coordinator, DSCA-MEES
- Avery Rueb, Affordance Studio
- Marla Williams, Project Coordinator – Québec, Canadian Parents for French (CPF)
- Daniel Weinstock, Director, McGill Institute for Health and Social Policy

In addition, meetings were held with:

- The Directors of English Education Network (DEEN)
- Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations (QFHSA) Members
- Association of Director Generals of English School Boards of Quebec (ADGESBQ)
- Association of Administrators of English Schools of Quebec (AAESQ)
- Lead Committee of English Education in Quebec (LCEEQ)



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