



Educating Today's Québec Anglophone

Brief presented to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports

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The mandate of the Advisory Board on English Education is to advise the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports on all matters affecting the educational services offered in English elementary and secondary schools. The Minister may also ask the Board for advice on a specific topic.

The Minister of Education names the members to the Advisory Board. The term of office is normally three years. Candidates are nominated by the various English education associations and organizations that represent, among others, teachers, parents, school administrators and school board commissioners, as well as individuals involved in post-secondary education. Nominations can be received at any time.

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1 Introduction

In 1999, the Advisory Board on English Education's report was called *Culture and English Schools in Play* (ABEE, 1999). Among its recommendations were the following:

- 5 *THAT English School Boards develop policies and strategies to identify and preserve the geographic, demographic, and social "space" required for the enhancement of culture in English schools.*
- 6 *THAT English School Boards develop a common agenda for Québec on the cultural aspects of English elementary and secondary education.*
- 7 *THAT the MEQ assure thorough collaboration in the development of social studies and citizenship programs so that they may reflect a common reality as well as the particular and specific historical experience of English Québec.*
- 9 *THAT the MEQ and the School Boards hire teachers and other professionals to prepare materials related to the cultural heritage of the English-speaking community of Québec.*

The same year, Alexander Norris wrote a series of articles in the *Montréal Gazette* called "The New Anglophone" (Norris, 1999), based on census data and opinion surveys, to investigate the reality behind the perception of conflict between the language groups that the media were propagating. In the ten years since then, the Board recognizes that there have been changes in the attitudes of Québec society, in the composition of the traditional Anglophone society, and in the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the population of the schools of Québec. As a result, it has become more difficult to define "Anglophone culture," "English schools," or even "Anglophone." The "New Anglophones" of 2010, and the schools they attend, are both very different.

Typical of institutions serving minority language groups worldwide, the English-language school boards have served the role of protectors and transmitters of the culture. One of the Board's guests described the English-language school board as "a bulwark against assimilation," a place that accepts diversity and evolves, adapting to the diversity and allowing the English community to continue to grow, thrive and live. Their pragmatic, rather than philosophical, approach has allowed English-language schools to adapt to the cultural diversity of their clientele. Changes in the demographics of the schools make it difficult to define what "culture" is to be protected and transmitted, yet the first professional competency identified for teachers is "to act as a professional inheritor, critic, and interpreter of knowledge or culture when teaching students." (MEQ, 2001, p. 57)

The *Education Act* defines linguistic school boards solely in terms of language of instruction. Boards can play community and cultural roles, which are referred to in the Education Act,¹ but the characteristics of the school boards are not defined in law.

To what extent should or can schools be an instrument of community growth when communities are both linguistic and geographic? Since 1999, "the cultural heritage of the English-speaking community" has become harder to define as the community has evolved. There is no longer a single "Anglo" community. The idea of preserving the English-language school system was to preserve the rights of Québec's traditional English-speaking population. That population has little relation to those currently in the English school system.

In this report, we will reconsider some of the issues raised in 1999, and extend them to address the questions: What type of education is appropriate to enable Québec Anglophones to be active participants in society, whether within Québec or in the world, in the 21st century?

¹ S. 207.1: The mission of a school board is also to promote and enhance the status of public education within its territory, to see to the quality of educational services and the success of students so that the population may attain a higher level of formal education and qualification, and to contribute, to the extent provided for by law, to the social, cultural and economic development of its region. See also ss. 36, 74, 90, 93, 97, 109, 110.3, 209.1, 220, 255 and 267.

2 Who is today's Québec Anglophone?

2.1 What does it mean to be an Anglophone in Québec?

Jedwab (2008, p. 2) points out that definitions from various levels of government range across mother tongue, the language first learned and still understood, the language spoken in the home, or first official language spoken, resulting in different estimates and different calculations of population size.

The term is easier to describe than to define. The Anglophone community in Québec, especially on the Island of Montréal, is among the most diverse of any in Canada,² and the static view of what constitutes an English community or a French community in Québec no longer applies. In *Lifelong Learning and Québec's English-Speaking Community* (May 2003)³ we read:

"Québec's English-speaking population at the beginning of the 21st century is a heterogeneous, multicultural blend of First Nations, descendents of early settlers, multi-generation immigrants and new arrivals from every part of the planet." (MELS 2003, p. 30)

The document goes on to say that this population is spread out, in communities of various sizes, where accessibility to services in English varies considerably. Outside the major cities, the English-speaking population is more homogeneous – and of historic English descent – because there is less immigration and more out-migration of young people. Additionally, in the regions, except for the English-speaking First Nations people, the age of the English-speaking population is relatively high, owing to urban migration. As the population ages, institutions lose viability. In rural areas the English-language school may be the only remaining English-language institution.

In Montréal, on the other hand, Anglophones represent a variety of peoples – someone of Anglo-Saxon or other descent whose family has lived in Québec for generations and integrated into the Anglophone community; someone from another province in Canada; someone from a country where English is the first language, or the second language most commonly taught; someone who is bilingual, either by education or by being the product of a "mixed" marriage. There is no "common English heritage:" people tend to place their ethnic and geographic origin high in their self-identification and today, fewer English-speakers have British roots. In effect, language becomes one determinant of identity among others, such as ethnic, racial, sexual, or political identity. Bourhis (2008) found that while young Anglophone Quebecers are likely to identify themselves as Canadians and young Francophones as Quebecers, both groups identify most strongly with their language and ethnic groups. While the multicultural variety in the population has brought added richness and diversity to the community, it also means that the traditional "Québec Anglo" identity now vies with other Anglophone identities within a new configuration of the Anglophone community. These factors have implications for all Québec institutions, including schools.

These considerations may lead us to view an Anglophone as someone who may or may not speak other languages, but prefers to communicate in English, but this omits a huge set of social and cultural issues that complicate the traditional definition – and our assessment of what is an appropriate education for Anglophones. It would be more accurate to refer to – and to address in this Brief – the education needs of the English-speaking community of Québec.

² http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca/html/stu_etu_imm_022002_p6_e.php,
<http://community.qcgn.ca/blogs/gmcdi/archive/2009/05/25/understanding-diversity-in-english-speaking-montreal.aspx>

³ http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/DFGA/english/list/txt_formationcontinue.html

2.2 Emerging questions

After 10 years of linguistic school boards,⁴ more than 30 years under Bill 101 (Charter of the French Language),⁵ and now, in considering the second or third generation of those eligible for English schooling in Québec, the issues described in this section raise questions for the Board:

- Are English-language schools serving their changed population appropriately?

- Have schools kept pace with students', parents' and society's needs?

- Over the years since Bill 101 was adopted, what changes have been necessary to produce successful graduates? And have the school boards adapted to the changes?

- What does it mean to talk about an “English” educational system?

- Should English-language school boards operate both “bilingual” and “immersion” streams as well as “core” French? Is one model better than others?

Recommendation 1

That the English-language school boards engage in a period of reflection to further define their mission relative to the changing Anglophone community and to develop strategies for attaining their objectives.

That this reflection include a consideration of:

- their role as transmitters of culture

- research into why English-speaking parents send their children to French schools and French-speaking parents send their children to English schools

- research-based evidence of the quality and impact of various models of immersion and bilingual programs

- existing models of collaboration with French-language school boards, especially in rural areas, to evaluate the potential benefits of extending these models.

⁴ *Education Act*, S.Q. 1988, c. 84, s. 112.

⁵ *Charter of the French Language*, S.Q. 1977, c. 5, now R.S.Q., c. C-11.

3 Changing demographics of schools

Both French-language and English-language schools have changed demographically in the past 30 years. One guest told the Board that the number of English-language households had grown faster this decade than French, despite the Charter of the French Language, probably because not as many Anglophones are leaving the province as did in the 1970s. But also, it seems that bilingualism among Anglophones and Allophones is more common than before Bill 101 and Francophones in greater Montréal are more bilingual than ever. The Board heard the opinion that the attitudes of Francophone youth have shifted, but not as dramatically as those of Anglophones, with regard to the other language group. Students in French schools know a lot more Anglophones than did their parents, both in their schools and in their neighbourhoods, because of the ethnic diversification of neighbourhoods which have undergone ethnic diversification and are no longer characterized as strictly English or French.

3.1 The population of French-language schools

As a result of the restrictions on access to English schooling imposed by the enactment of Bill 101 in 1977, French-language schools are now multiethnic. Previously, many immigrants tended to become part of the Anglophone community and English-language schools typically adapted to the student population, while more recently, since 1977, immigrants are required to send their children to French-language schools. These latter have taken on the role of integrating immigrants into the “société d'accueil,” placing emphasis on the teaching and learning of the French language and on understanding Québec society. Anglophone students who attend French-language schools (either by choice or as required by Bill 101) also follow this enacted curriculum. The Board questions whether non-Francophone students receive background in their own heritages in school as a result of this focus on integration.

In recent years, there have been some relatively small changes in the numbers of students eligible for English-language instruction who choose to enroll in French-language schools:

Table 1

STUDENTS IN FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOLS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR ENGLISH-LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION, BY REGION ⁶							
	1991-1992			2003-2004			
REGION	IN FRENCH SCHOOL	TOTAL ELIGIBLE	%	IN FRENCH SCHOOL	TOTAL ELIGIBLE	%	PERCENT CHANGE (%)
Montréal	4,900	64,332	7.6%	4,617	65,859	7.0%	-0.6%
Québec outside of Montréal	6,170	51,778	11.9%	8,200	61,989	13.2%	1.3%
All of Québec	11,070	116,110	9.5%	12,817	127,848	10.0%	0.5%

The largest shifts (1.3%) are for the increase in off-island students eligible for English-language instruction who are in French-language schools. This is probably due to the significant increase in the number of students studying in French whose mother tongue is French but who are eligible for English-language instruction.

For French-language schools, most of the changes affecting Québec as a whole have been driven by changes on the Island of Montréal.

⁶ Based on information in *La langue de l'enseignement: indicateurs pour l'éducation préscolaire, l'enseignement primaire et secondaire, le collégial et l'université*, http://www.olif.gouv.qc.ca/etudes/fascicule_04.pdf.

Table 2

STUDENTS IN FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOLS ⁷							
REGION	MOTHER TONGUE	1991-1992 N	1991-1992 %	2003-2004 N	2003-2004 %	CHANGE N	CHANGE %
All of Québec		1,030,629		976,152		-54,477	
	French	951,220	92.3%	870,063	89.1%	-81,157	-3.2%
	English	16,414	1.6%	18,199	1.9%	1,785	0.3%
	Other	62,995	6.1%	87,890	9.0%	24,895	2.9%
Island of Montréal		172,709		181,423		8,714	
	French	117,233	67.9%	106,094	58.5%	-11,139	-9.4%
	English	8,153	4.7%	9,760	5.4%	1,607	0.7%
	Other	47,323	27.4%	65,569	36.1%	18,246	8.7%
Rest of Québec		857,920		794,729		-63,191	
	French	833,987	97.2%	763,969	96.1%	-70,018	-1.1%
	English	8,261	1.0%	8,439	1.1%	178	0.1%
	Other	15,672	1.8%	22,321	2.8%	6,649	1.0%

The change in composition of the student body in French schools has raised some interesting problems. The Board was reminded that second-language teaching must accommodate a cultural divide as well as a linguistic divide, and one guest expressed the view that the “style of teaching” was different in French schools. French-language schools experience pressure from parents who want better second-language instruction for their children. Many families of English-speaking students in French schools have problems since, not speaking French, they have difficulty following their children’s education and participating in the school community. The Board heard about English-speaking parents of children in French-language schools who felt disenfranchised because they could not communicate with the school personnel.

⁷ Ibid. Based on data in Table 4.4b.

3.2 The population of English-language schools

"The nine English-language school boards in Québec are responsible for 330 schools and 107 742 students, a decline of over 50% from 248 000 students in 1971. Two boards on the island of Montréal serve slightly more than half of the students in English language schools and the rest are served by seven boards that are geographically large but more sparsely populated by students eligible for English language instruction. As a result, the students now enrolled in English language schools form two quite different groups, resulting in two quite different groups of English language schools. A third group consists of 15 000 students who attend 48 English language private schools." (Lamarre, 2008, 65)

At the same time, there has been a shift in the makeup of English-language schools in the seven boards outside of Montréal: the proportion of students in English-language schools whose mother tongue is French has significantly increased outside the Island of Montréal while remaining relatively stable in English-language schools on the Island:

Table 3

STUDENTS IN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SCHOOLS ⁸							
REGION	MOTHER TONGUE	1991-1992 N	1991-1992 %	2003-2004 N	2003-2004 %	CHANGE N	CHANGE %
All of Québec		108,873		119,599		10,726	
	French	10,361	9.5%	20,902	17.5%	10,541	8.0%
	English	79,004	72.6%	76,014	63.6%	-2,990	-9.0%
	Other	19,508	17.9%	22,683	19.0%	3,175	1.0%
Island of Montréal		6,883		64,256		2,373	
	French	2,814	4.5%	4,173	6.5%	1,359	1.9%
	English	43,161	69.7%	42,096	65.5%	-1,065	-4.2%
	Other	15,908	25.7%	17,987	28.0%	2,079	2.3%
Rest of Québec		46,990		55,343		8,353	
	French	7,547	16.1%	16,729	30.2%	9,182	14.2%
	English	35,843	76.3%	33,918	61.3%	-1,925	-15.0%
	Other	3,600	7.7%	4,696	8.5%	1,096	0.8%

Along with the changes in the composition, it must also be noted that the overall student population of English-language schools continues to decline (Bourhis, 2008).⁹ The decline in the English-language school population has several causes: there was significant out-migration of Anglophones in the 1970s and 80s; Bill 101 restricts access to English schools; recognizing the need for their children to become bilingual if they plan to stay in Québec, English-speaking parents may choose to send their children to French-language schools.

⁸ Ibid, Based on data in Table 4.3c.

⁹ See also http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/sections/publications/publications/SICA/DRSI/StatEduc_2008.pdf (Table 2.2.4).

While the number of students in English-language schools has decreased to below 108 000 (Lamarre, 2008), there is no reason to believe the trends outside of Montréal have not continued as indicated as in Table 3. As a result, the two English-language boards on the Island of Montréal serve a clientele that remains over 90% English and Other by mother tongue, while the seven English-language boards outside of Montréal serve a clientele that is almost 1/3 French by mother tongue. Many Francophone parents with "English-eligible" children want them to learn English in an English setting. This has a significant impact on how on-island and off-island school boards can serve the different expectations of their distinct clientele: an emphasis on French immersion (for students whose first language is not French) is appropriate for and expected by parents of students on the Island of Montréal, but is not appropriate – or necessary – for many students in English-language schools outside of Montréal. This is especially true in the formerly rural, now suburban area around Québec City, where the majority of students in English schools are French-speaking.

"The drop in the number of English-speaking students has been felt most dramatically in isolated schools across regions of the province which do not benefit from the large Anglophone population base found in the Montréal region (Lamarre, this volume). This problem is compounded by the dearth of English-speaking teachers available for primary and secondary schools in the regions, while recruitment of complementary service professionals is also difficult." (Bourhis, 2008, 136)

Additionally, because English school boards in Québec are unique in that children who attend their schools do so from choice, not by legal obligation, they are competing for students' and parents' choices and must make a case for their competitiveness with private schools and French-language schools. Many of the English-speaking students under the jurisdiction of these boards in Québec – whether English, French, public, or private – are children of parents whose families did not join the exodus of previous years: these parents have a commitment to Québec and to the success of their children in Québec.

According to Béland (Béland, 2006, quoted in Lamarre, 2008, pp. 67, 72), 80% of Anglophone students are enrolled in English-language schools, 10% in French-language schools because of legislation¹⁰ and 10% (about 10 000) by choice. This is

balanced numerically by the number of children whose home language is French who attend English-language schools, and whose presence helps stabilize the numbers in English-language schools. But proportionally, while 20% of English speakers are in French schools, only 2.6% of French speakers are in English schools, so the respective impact on the two systems is quite different (Lamarre, 2008, p.75). This effect is especially pronounced in rural areas. Jedwab (2009) showed that in many regions of the province (Québec City, Central Québec, Chaudière-Appalaches, Mauricie, Saguenay, Lac Saint-Jean and Lanaudière), more French-speaking children attended English school than English-speaking children who attended French school. More startling, in most regions, more French-speaking children attended English-language schools than English-speaking children, by a factor of 10 to 1 in Central Québec.¹¹

A further consideration is that the members of the English community itself have also changed. This is particularly true in Montréal, where most immigrants settle, making the schools as cosmopolitan as the communities they serve. In the rest of Québec, the English schools have many children whose home language is French, but who have one parent who was educated in English and who are therefore eligible for instruction in English. Distinctions between Anglophones and Francophones are becoming less salient, and as a result of intermarriage, children can identify with both communities, and have more contact with other cultural groups. Many students in our schools are comfortable living day-to-day in a mixed environment, switching languages with relative ease as circumstances require and often participating in social and cultural activities along with their peers in both the English and French communities. It is therefore incumbent on the education milieu to build on this type of interaction and to facilitate it where possible.

Thus, even after Bill 101, the English-language schools still have to address the needs of children drawn from a wide range of cultures, with many identities, whose only unifying denominator is the parents' choice of the language of instruction. This clearly has an impact on their mission and way of operating.

¹⁰ These students may be ineligible to attend English schools under s.73 of the Charter of the French Language because their parents' English-language education took place outside of Canada or because they lack Canadian citizenship.

¹¹ « Une proportion de plus de quatre-vingt-dix pour cent (90 %) de nos élèves étudie l'anglais en tant que langue seconde. » http://www.cqsb.qc.ca/Documents/Francais/Commission_scolaire/Secretariat_general/Politiques/STRATEGIC_PLAN_2006-2009.pdf, p. 10.

4 Expectations of English-language schools

There are many different expectations of the role of English-language schools, since each school reflects the community it serves, and the communities are so diverse. The Board reiterates its belief (ABEE, 1999) that the educational system has a role in fostering and maintaining an English-speaking culture and an appreciation of it. Several current Board members said that they had sent their children to English schools because of the culture espoused by the school. English boards are responsible to their current diverse clientele, but also to the English community generally, to provide and continually improve services that will attract and maintain the presence of all eligible students.

But just as the schools have an active role to play as a hub in the community, so do the communities have a responsibility to support their community schools. One guest noted the tendency of English-speaking communities to regard themselves as second-class citizens, to take the existing system for granted, and to be passive rather than active in seeking out the services they need. The community needs to be involved in its local school through associations such as governing boards, home & school groups, volunteer organizations or parent enrichment courses. The Board heard of several examples of Community Learning Centres that provided potentially good models for involvement by a range of community members, with the potential to serve as models of good practice around the province.

Recommendation 2

That school administrators use a variety of strategies to encourage participation of parents and other interested community members in the life of the school.

Recommendation 3

That existing Community Learning Centres be examined, models of good practice be adapted to local needs, and the network be enlarged.

In rural areas, the importance of the community English-language school on the English-speaking community is even greater than in urban areas.

"Schools in many parts of rural Québec are often the only remaining public institutions dedicated to the specific needs of the English-speaking community. Schools are seen as the "focal point for the expression of the community's identity" (QESBA, 2002) and the symbol of community survival." (SSCA, 2009, 6)

If the school closes, the community will not be attractive to young families and the town's English-speaking population will find it difficult to survive. Fortunately, small schools tend to have active communities of volunteers willing to work hard to maintain them despite the lack of services.

4.1 Characteristics of English-language schools

What differentiates instruction in a French-immersion program in an English-language school from instruction in a French-language school? Both systems may have children from a variety of backgrounds in the classroom, but those in the English-language schools are "English eligible." All students in English schools are there by choice. This element of choice places a responsibility on schools.

Recommendation 4

That English-language school boards survey parents in their geographic area as to the reasons for their choice of English - or French-language schools for their children.

Apart from the language of instruction, what else characterizes the English-language school? A single characterization is difficult.

"Every English school in Québec is a microcosm of the community it serves. This is the basis of the second reason why English and French schools are different in ethos. Québec's English schools can be almost as different from each other as they are from their French-language counterparts. English schools are a product of their surroundings and of who attends them. They are not monolithic. The linguistic and cultural affinities they share do not form a mould into which they all fit. They are shaped by their clients and the communities in which their clients live, the newspapers they read, the radio stations they listen to, the associations they belong to, the churches they attend, and the cultural and demographic mix of their neighbourhoods." (ABEE, 1999, p. 32)

Observation of French-language and English-language schools suggests that, in broad terms, they have different organizational cultures. It was the impression of Board members that while French-language schools seem to be more hierarchically structured, more reliant on top-down decision-making, and have a more distant relationship amongst staff and parents, English-language schools, with the historical need to deal with diversity, have always been more flexible, have dealt with change less rigidly and more quickly, have been more independent of authority, and have encouraged the involvement of parents as volunteers and participants in school life. One Advisory Board member summarized these differences as philosophy and pragmatism.

The Advisory Board appreciated the flexibility in the *Education Act* that allows a decentralized approach, permitting variance to correspond to perceived local needs, wherever the community is located. Board members wonder whether this flexibility might be restricted by the recent amendments to the *Education Act*¹² which require that schools align their success plans with the school board's strategic plan which must, in turn, respect the orientations of the MELS' strategic plan.

Recommendation 5

That schools and school boards be encouraged to develop their strategic plans to meet local needs, while respecting the orientations of the MELS' strategic plan.

4.2 Schools as protectors and transmitters of culture

"Education is a key element of institutional support, especially for linguistic minorities who depend on schooling in their own language as a way of supporting the intergenerational transmission of their heritage language in majority group settings." (Bourhis, 2008, p. 136)

Given the diversity of the population in Québec's English-language schools, the questions arise: What is the cultural heritage that English schools should be transmitting and how important is it to youth? What is English-speaking culture? Is there an English culture that ought to be promoted in our schools? How can (or should) an English-language school with many non-Anglophone students transmit English culture? As a minority group within a minority, what participation, activity, and creativity is necessary to sustain this culture and is the level of resources available to the population sufficient to do so? The Board, representing as it does a variety of cultural backgrounds, had many discussions around questions of heritage and culture, which were also posed to our guests. There was general consensus within the Board around the following issues:

- Heritage is a living concept, and is as important a concept for recent immigrants as it is for indigenous people and the founding groups.
- Cultural heritage should be explored from local, regional, national, continental, and global perspectives.
- Because cultural influences are very localized, a variety of strategies may need to be employed in the different regions.
- Despite 400 years of English-language presence in Québec, many young Anglophones do not know their own history.
- English cultural heritage is in great part the local history and heritage of local English-speaking Quebeckers.

- There is a corpus of cultural traditions, fairy tales, legends, and songs in English that young children should experience.
- The culture we wish English-language schools to transmit and maintain goes beyond a single, British, culture and should better be called cultures.
- Québec's different cultural communities use both English and French to share and communicate their cultures.
- Schools should allow all their students to retain their own cultural heritage. They should not be trying to take away heritage; rather, they should be fostering opportunities for the students to learn about and understand a variety of cultures and heritages.
- The various English cultures have a value and can be promoted within a greater Québec culture without posing a threat.
- There should be more emphasis on Canadian culture, both English and French, in English-language schools.
- It is unlikely that English-speaking students in French schools will be exposed to significant aspects of English-language culture.
- Students should learn to respect the contributions of both the English and French founding communities, as well as the indigenous and the newer communities.
- Schools should preserve and promote the diverse cultural heritages of English- and French-speaking Quebeckers.
- Young Quebeckers, both English- and French-speaking, have much more exposure to American popular culture than to Canadian popular culture.
- Families have an important role to play in the transmission of culture.
- While there are many opportunities for English-speaking youth in Québec, some English-speaking youth still feel they do not belong.
- There should be greater availability of materials in English on the Anglophone impact on Québec history.¹³

Recommendation 6

That English-language schools' governing boards strike committees of stakeholders to acknowledge, define and recognize the variety of English-speaking cultures that exist in their milieu and take measures to draw out the benefits for their students.

¹² *An Act to amend the Education Act and other legislative provisions*, S.Q. 2008, c. 29 (Bill 88).

¹³ As an example, Télé-Québec has produced videos on Philemon Wright ("The Squire of the Great Kettle") and on the importance of the Irish immigrants in the construction of the Victoria Bridge ("Building the Victoria Bridge").
http://www.grics.qc.ca/Catalogue_coi_EN/Elementary%20Vdeo%20Guides/Social%20Sciences.pdf

Recommendation 7

That English-language schools emphasize the contributions of the various communities of Québec, in all subjects, especially Social Sciences and Ethics and Religious Culture.

Recommendation 8

That English-language schools make funding available for resource materials to allow early-grade teachers to incorporate cultural traditions, fairy tales, legends, and songs into their teaching.

Recommendation 9

That teachers in English-language schools, both elementary and secondary, choose literature and other resources to promote Canadian culture, both French and English.

Recommendation 10

That English-language schools seek out opportunities to celebrate the cultural heritages of their students.

Recommendation 11

That English-language schools encourage and support family involvement in celebrating diversity in the schools.

Recommendation 12

That LEARN make available to schools a catalogue of materials relating to the impact that English-language communities have on Québec society.

5 What are we educating them for?

The short answer to this question is deceptively simple: We want graduates of English-language schools to be functioning members of society, whether as the provincial, national, or international level. The full answer raises many more questions.

Society is changing so fast that it is a truism to say that while it is impossible to predict what the world will be asking of our graduates in 10-20 years, we know that more will be expected of them.

The Board heard concerns from several guests that both English and French students graduate from high school with little of what they need as young job applicants, especially with regard to the diminishing quality of oral and written communication skills in both English and French. This is apparent regardless of the school they attended, and regardless of whether the language was the first or second language. Reading comprehension does not appear to be a major problem, attributable to the volume of material most young people read on computers, but computer usage, including the reliance on spelling checkers, was also blamed for poorer writing skills among young people.

Recommendation 13

That English Language Arts teachers increase the opportunity for students at all levels to practise writing skills.

Do Anglophone students, upon leaving school, have the skills to function in tomorrow's Québec and in the world at large? What are the life skills that Anglophones need to create confident, self-sufficient graduates? Board members and guests identified life skills such as adaptability, oral and written communication in English and French, practical living skills, willingness to continue learning, interpersonal skills, appropriateness of behaviour to circumstances. It is tempting to ask why children do not come to school with some of these skills learned at home, but the reality is that many parents have devolved to the schools the responsibility of teaching not only academic subjects, but many other life skills as well.

A prime goal of education is to create confident, self-sufficient graduates. For the English-speaking youth of Québec, there are some particular issues involved in achieving this goal. Paraphrasing one of the Board's guests, English-language schools must *prepare* students to take their place in the predominately French society by promoting and encouraging both the language and culture of French Québec; enable students to *appreciate* the history, literature, diversity, legacy, and potential of the Anglophone community; and *celebrate* its presence and diversity.

Recommendation 14

That English-language school boards offer a bilingual, bicultural option as a way to produce graduates who are more able to include themselves in Québec society.

Recommendation 15

That English-language school boards create opportunities for interactions between French-speaking and English-speaking youth such as extra-curricular and exchange programs.

Recommendation 16

That English-language school boards examine successful pilot projects of partnerships with French-language school boards as models for further initiatives.

5.1 Employability

Employability is not a new issue for Québec Anglophones. Since the adoption of the Charter of the French Language, French has become the official language of work. The number of Anglophone families whose adult children left the province in the 1980s and 90s are a mute witness to their perception, at that time, of a lack of opportunity. While there is much evidence that today's young Anglophones have adapted to this reality, Québec's job market raises particular issues which vocational counseling has to address: what does the student have to know and what is really required to succeed in the Québec job market? What are the knowledge-related skills and what are the life skills needed to cope in the current economy? Given that we live in a knowledge-based society in the 21st century, it is imperative that students graduating from our schools be imbued with a sense of and desire for lifelong learning. (This is discussed in section 6.2.) One of the principal aims of the current "reform"¹⁴ is to teach students the skills and competencies to pursue independent learning.

¹⁴ Québec Education Program <http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/sections/programmeFormation/>

Bilingual English speakers in Québec have higher unemployment rates than bilingual French speakers or monolingual French speakers. Unilingual Anglophones have yet higher unemployment rates, and Black Anglophones even higher. According to the Youth Standing Committee (YSC) of the Québec Community Groups Network (QCGN) (2009),¹⁵ the unemployment rates for each group are:

Bilingual French speakers	5.5%
Bilingual English speakers	7.5%
Unilingual English speakers	14.3%
Black English speakers	almost 40%

According to Bourhis:

"Racism and linguicism packs a double punch to Black Anglophone minorities who suffer the highest unemployment rate and lowest salaries in the province, other than First Nations." (Bourhis, 2008, p. 159)

5.2 Retention in Québec, particularly in the regions

The issue of retention of young people presents a particular challenge for rural English-speaking communities, whether keeping students in school, encouraging youth to remain in or return to rural communities, or affording opportunities for graduates to stay to live and work within the province. After the adoption of the Charter of the French language, many families and young people left Québec because of their discomfort with language requirements and political instability. The impact of this out-migration is still a topic of discussion. A series of articles in the *Montréal Gazette* (Johnston, 2009) described the experiences of some of the people who had gone to other provinces and their nostalgia for the Québec lifestyle as they remembered it.

There has also been a large practical impact. By the 1996 census, the median (not average) Anglophone household income was lower than that in Francophone households. Summarizing their analysis of the socioeconomic status of Québec Anglophones, Floch and Pocock write:

"In 1971, 70% of Anglophones (EMT) born in Québec continued to live in the province, whereas by 2001 just 50% continued to live in their home province. This low retention rate is abnormal when compared with other Canadian populations, including Francophone minorities in the ROC. The socio-economic profile of Anglophone leavers and stayers suggests that the upwardly mobile are increasingly associated with the outwardly mobile as young, well-educated members of the Québec Anglophone minority seek economic opportunities elsewhere. Those who left the province tend to perform very well in the labour market

outside Québec, showing substantially lower unemployment rates than other Canadians and higher tendencies to be in the high income bracket. In contrast, Anglophones who stayed in Québec experienced a relative loss in socio-economic status and cohort analysis suggests that such decline will continue in the near future. It is also the case that the arrival of English-speaking populations from other provinces and other countries has slowed considerably from 1971 and especially up to 2001. Needless to say, these trends present challenges for the English-speaking communities of Québec, as higher proportions of Anglophones fall into vulnerable or dependent situations while their demographic and institutional vitality is declining in the province." (Floch & Pocock, 2008, p. 59)

In 2008, the Quebec Community Groups Network reported that according to the 2006 census, while there was a net increase in the English-speaking community for the first time since the 1970s, there was a net loss of 25-29 year olds, young people who might be considered to be at the beginning of their careers. Even more troubling, more of the best educated Anglophones were leaving the province than were staying. Sixty-one percent of Anglophones with a bachelor's degree had left Québec, 66% of those with a Master's degree, and 73% of those with a doctoral degree. In contrast, only 40% of high school dropouts had left. It appears that while university education in Québec is comparatively inexpensive, many graduates leave, taking their acquired job-market skills as well as two languages.

This variation in stayers and leavers explains that while Anglophone Quebecers are over-represented in the high income bracket, they are also over-represented in the very low income bracket, since income is so closely tied to education (Floch & Pocock, 2008).

As these well-educated young Anglophones leave the province, so are their leadership skills – and future children – lost to the English-speaking institutions, so that the impact on the community will increase exponentially. But their abilities, training, and tax base are also lost to the population as a whole, making this an issue that should be of concern to the whole province. Why do they leave and what can be done to keep them in Québec?

Historically people go where there is opportunity, be it the availability of jobs or what they perceive an urban centre has to offer. Québec, and particularly Montréal, is a good place to live. Factors such as the quality of life and reasonable costs for housing, food, and transportation make Montréal an attractive hub. Anglophone youth from rural areas, where there are fewer available jobs, are part of the worldwide trend of movement to the cities, making the impact of out-migration of Anglophones from rural Québec an important problem for the maintenance of these English communities. In rural areas, many young people leave to attend CEGEP or university and do not return.

¹⁵ *Creating Spaces for Young Quebecers: Strategic Orientations for English-speaking*

Youth in Quebec http://qcgcn.com/files/QCGN/aqcgcn_english_web_bw.pdf, p. 8

See also: *Youth Consultations 2008 - Executive Summary* at http://qcgcn.com/files/QCGN/aYouth_consultation_summary_2008.pdf.

The document does not specify whether the Black English speakers were unilingual or bilingual.

See also: <http://www.canada.com/montrealgazette/news/story.html?id=c6a4bdad-98c4-42d5-b7c6-5a800240860d>.

"No matter how you cut it, blacks earn less than non-blacks, irrespective of age, gender, occupation and level of bilingualism," consortium director Jim Torczyner, a McGill social work professor, said after presenting the findings.

The Board is not advocating that young people should, in some way, be “forced” to stay in their communities. Rather, it asks: Are they being trained for the jobs that might be available where they are? Is the school system teaching them what they need to know to stay in rural areas? Is lack of skills in French a major issue? Are the English-language schools giving enough attention to the requirements of living in Québec or are they taking this for granted?

5.3 Instruction for functionality in French

The Board recognizes and praises the English school boards and schools for the way they have responded to the imperative to graduate bilingual students.

"Not all of Québec's English schools will embrace the same culture of belonging. There are two main reasons why English schools are different from French schools. The first is that, English schools put enormous emphasis on turning out bilingual graduates. This emphasis is aimed at more than job market readiness. It is also connected to the survival and health of English Québec's community institutions, which must strive to retain their Anglophone character and culture but whose integration into the wider community depends on their perceived usefulness to society as a whole." (ABEE, 1999, p.31)

5.3.1 Immersion

To respond to the requests of parents, English-language school boards place considerable emphasis on various models of French instruction and about 40% of students eligible for English instruction are in French immersion programs (Lamarre, 2008, p. 71). Operating two or more programs within the same school or school board increases costs; teacher allocation and ratios do not always split neatly. Servicing two linguistic groups has its own costs, especially in smaller schools and boards and the school board carries the cost of doing so. Partly at the insistence of parents, the English-language school system has chosen to bear these costs with the goal of allowing its graduates to be able to flourish in both linguistic communities and to equip its students to be as mobile as possible.

Recommendation 17

That MELS subsidize part of the additional cost of French immersion programs to encourage second language learning among English-speaking students.

Ironically, bilingualism makes students attractive to some employers who will siphon them out of the school system before they graduate. Without diplomas, these young people are highly susceptible to being laid off when the economy is weaker.

Much of the research over the past 30 years on the effects of immersion has been conducted by Fred Genesee. In *Literacy Outcomes in French Immersion* (2007) Genesee asks whether the results of evaluations of literacy achievement in immersion that were carried out in the 1970s and 80s are still pertinent. He concludes that:

- 1 Typically developing English-speaking students who enroll in immersion programs acquire the same levels of competence in English reading and writing as comparable students in all-English programs and, at the same time, acquire significantly higher levels of functional proficiency in French reading and writing than students in conventional French-as-a-second language programs.
- 2 Students with low levels of academic ability and first language ability as well as those from disadvantaged socio-economic and minority ethnic group backgrounds attain the same levels of achievement in English reading and writing as comparable students in all-English programs and, at the same time, acquire significantly higher levels of functional proficiency in French literacy in comparison to comparable students in all-English programs.
- 3 Findings of evaluations of immersion programs conducted in the 1970s and 80s have been confirmed in studies conducted since 2000.
- 4 Students who are likely to experience difficulty acquiring literacy skills in English are likely to experience similar difficulties in acquiring literacy skills in French, and English-based predictors of reading acquisition can provide reasonably good predictors of immersion students who are likely to experience difficulty learning to read French.

Genesee concludes that more research is needed in order to investigate:

- 1 Reading comprehension skills of immersion students in the upper elementary and secondary grades in order to identify students' ability to comprehend academic texts in French in these grades, when reading material becomes linguistically as well as conceptually complex and possible difficulties students have comprehending such material.
- 2 Literacy skills of immersion students living in communities where there are few opportunities to hear and use French as compared to those in communities where many such opportunities exist.

Based on Genesee's work, the Board makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 18

That English-language schools maintain immersion programs without prejudicing the teaching of other subjects.

Recommendation 19

That MELS provide funding for resource teachers to support students experiencing difficulty in learning the second language comparable with that provided for those experiencing difficulty in the first language.

Recommendation 20

That French-language academic texts used by second-language learners be examined for their linguistic level, especially in subjects such as mathematics.

Recommendation 21

That universities and school boards encourage and disseminate research in immersion and other programs of second-language instruction.

5.3.2 *Beyond immersion*

While there are some jobs in Québec for unilingual Anglophones, in such fields as small or one-person operations, or in subcontracting from Anglophone companies, or — in metropolitan areas — for branches of global companies, there are far more opportunities, especially at a professional level, for candidates who are bilingual or, better, biliterate, that is, able to communicate in writing as well as orally. This was recognized by the Board in 1995 (ABEE, 1995) and is still of vital importance. The expected standard of communicating in French has risen. The variety of successful immersion programs appeared to be an ideal strategy for producing bilingual graduates; now it appears that this strategy was not ambitious enough. Achieving a high level of bilingualism is not merely a priority: it has become a necessity. But it is not sufficient. Many young people feel they are running an obstacle course: "sufficient" fluency in French appears to be a receding horizon that they never reach. We quote a group of guests who told the Board: "Even as they improve, it's never enough... There's a glass ceiling for Anglophones." For a student, feeling open to being accepted by the majority community and being accepted by the majority community both require more than just passing marks in second-language examinations.

The need to graduate students considered to be "bilingual" implies more than linguistic skills. It can entail a familiarity and comfort with French speakers' culture, attitudes, and philosophy. This level of skill and depth of proficiency may begin in school, but clearly needs more diverse resources and input than K-11 education can provide.

Recommendation 22

That MELS, QPAT, QESBA, QFHSA and any other interested constituency establish a collaborative table to promote bilingualism and biliteracy amongst English-speaking students and to establish ways of supporting initiatives to promote bilingualism and biliteracy.

The Youth Standing Committee of the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) consulted 400 young (16-29 years old) Anglophones from all regions of Québec in preparation of a vision statement and policy document for Anglophone youth in Québec (YSC, 2009). Four key messages from the consultation were that today's English-speaking youth:

- want to stay in Québec and contribute to Québec society
- want to be bilingual
- wish to foster better relations with Francophone youth
- want to use a collaborative and inclusive, youth-led approach (YSC, 2009, 4)

The Board recommends close attention be paid to the document,¹⁶ and especially supports the following recommendation:

Recommendation 23

That a collaboration table be created including youth, MELS, QESBA, QFHSA, First Nations Education Council, QPAT, CPF and other partners to work to identify steps needed to produce fully bilingual graduates [of secondary schools] and provide support with implementation. (YSC, 2009, 29)

¹⁶ See http://qcgcn.com/files/QCGN/aYouth_consultation_summary_2008.pdf.

6 Learning beyond high school

6.1 Informal learning in the community

Young English-speakers in Québec have many opportunities to function bilingually, whether promoted by the school or informally. The Board heard the example of LaSalle Community Comprehensive High School students making connections with the community around the school, whether working in the businesses in co-op programs, on work-training paths, or as a requirement of the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. The school also invites the community into the school as part of a drug awareness program, and encourages visits from local businesses and sports clubs.

Informally, English-speaking youth can improve their fluency in mentoring situations, by peer-to-peer exchanges, having pen-pals, exchanges between schools, and by involvement in sports. While it appears that young people are open to this kind of informal exchange, the Board was told that many English-speaking youth are reluctant to become involved in them because they are too insecure in their knowledge of French.

Collaboration between English and French schools in the same territory can be advantageous for economic and pedagogical reasons but can cause concern amongst some members of both communities because of their fear of assimilation. Exchange programs, funded by MELS allow students from English and French schools to meet in each other's schools. The Board heard about initiatives where English and French boards on the same territory have developed cooperative strategies, but the number of these initiatives is limited. Sharing facilities and building bridges with French boards allows for a critical mass for cohorts of students and allows fluency in both languages to develop as children interact. Co-ordination outside the classroom is sometimes highly successful: for example the *Partenaires pour la réussite éducative en Estrie (projet PRÉE)*¹⁷ has school boards, colleges, universities, private schools, unions and many other community and government agencies working on a wide variety of projects, activities and campaigns.

The Board recognizes the pedagogical and social value of interaction between French-speaking and English-speaking students in a natural and familiar environment.

Recommendation 24

That MELS advertise and actively promote funded exchanges between French- and English-language schools.

6.2 The adult learner

The *Education Act* lists a three-fold mission for schools: "In keeping with the principle of equality of opportunity, the mission of a school is to **impart knowledge** to students, foster their **social development** and give them **qualifications**, while enabling them to undertake and achieve success in a course of study."¹⁸ (*emphasis added*)

Through the "social development" aspect of their mission, schools prepare students for life as an adult. They fulfill this mission best not with a binary success/failure approach to learning, but by instilling a lifelong approach to learning. Consequently, schools must be concerned with what students take with them when they leave the system. How can schools contribute to the growth and development of future adults? Are we training our students to be lifelong learners?

The Board heard from several guests about the importance of entrepreneurship for young Québec Anglophones. How do we interpret this? Surely this concept is not limited to the need for individuals to set up their own businesses, but rather for students and graduates to take the initiative for their own learning. The competency to become independent learners over the course of a lifetime is the greatest lesson a school can teach.

Recommendation 25

That as the reformed curriculum is being evaluated, its success in imbuing students with a sense of and desire for lifelong learning is also evaluated.

The school board has an ongoing responsibility for adults without a first diploma as well as for youth – they do not become someone else's problem when they drop out of school. Are we preparing students for post-compulsory education in its various forms: adult education, vocational training, alternative and informal schools? The basic core educational system from K-11 seems to be doing a good job for those who graduate, but what happens to those who leave school without a diploma? How are we responding, especially to our marginalized populations? If there are opportunities for the best trained students, what about the rest? How are we preparing them, and for what? Are we teaching the students what they need when they graduate?

¹⁷ <http://www.reussiteeducativeestrie.ca/en/> and <http://www.reussiteeducativeestrie.ca/fr/accueil.htm>.

¹⁸ *Education Act* (R.S.Q., c. I-13.3), s 36, para. 2.

These questions are particularly relevant to students following “non-academic” programs, whether in vocational training or special education programs. Students in vocational training programs need an appropriate level of French proficiency to communicate with colleagues and clients, and also a level of technical French vocabulary appropriate to the trade they are studying. Students with special needs face even more severe problems. They leave school with weak employability skills and poor French-language skills. Unable to access resources, they dissociate themselves and become marginalized from the mainstream. Yet little or no follow-up is conducted with these young people.

Recommendation 26

That MELS invest more resources in promoting and extending adult guidance services to English speakers, especially in the regions.

Recommendation 27

That MELS make available and promote French instruction to adult learners, regardless of how long they have been living in Québec or their level of education.

Recommendation 28

That vocational Students with special needs programs include instruction in French appropriate to the professional needs of students.

Recommendation 29

That relevant social agencies track students who have dropped out of special education programs to investigate their reasons for lack of school success and to provide them with appropriate support.

6.3 CEGEP education

Québec has five *Collèges d'enseignement générales et professionnelles (CEGEPs)* that deliver programs in English, but since there are no linguistic restrictions on attendance at CEGEPs and universities, where Bill 101 does not apply, the student population is even more diverse than in the K-11 system. For example, in the 2008-2009 academic year at Dawson College, students identified themselves linguistically (via their *demandes d'admission*) as:

Anglophone	62%
Francophone	26%
Allophone	12%

The differences between this linguistic breakdown and that reported for English-language schools on the island of Montréal are probably due in part both to differences in the composition of the two groups of students as well as to differences between MELS' language definitions and how young adults at Dawson identify themselves linguistically.

Sixty-nine percent of Anglophones were bilingual by 2006 (Bourhis, 2008, p. 159), yet 61% of youth surveyed by the Youth Standing Committee (YSC) of the QCGN in 2008 said that they did not have adequate competence for the job market in French. Could these skills have been improved if the respondents had gone to French CEGEPs? Ironically, but suggested by the estimate that 39% of youth do feel competent in French, the Board heard that many graduates of English-speaking schools do not have enough confidence in their own language skills to enroll in a French CEGEP.

At the CEGEP level, the English-language students who have been exposed to immersion and bilingual programs are not required nor encouraged to continue at least part of their studies in French beyond the two required French language courses, although many English-language CEGEPs have the capacity to teach in French. CEGEPs have French-language tests to place students appropriately in compulsory courses, but few Anglophones pass into the highest level. The Board wondered if this was because they were not bilingual enough, or whether, as we heard anecdotally, students do deliberately poorly in the tests to get higher marks (and potentially win scholarships) in an easier stream.

Recommendation 30

That MELS make learning a second language compulsory in all 4 semesters of CEGEP.

Recommendation 31

That English-language CEGEPs be encouraged to offer bilingual programs.

Recommendation 32

That English-language and French-language CEGEPs cooperate in offering joint programs.

Recommendation 33

That the possibility of French immersion programs be extended beyond secondary school and into CEGEPs at the beginning of the process of lifelong learning.

Since their inception, English-language CEGEPs have enrolled a much higher percentage of their students in pre-university programs than have the French-language colleges. While the reasons for this pattern range from institutional inertia to traditional perceptions in the Anglophone communities, routinely channeling students into one particular pathway has not served students or society as a whole; the English-language community's stress on university as the post-secondary education of choice has done a disservice to many students. While university education may have represented upward mobility to students' parents, both the economy and social structures have evolved and, with a large proportion of students entering university, it is no longer an institution limited to the elite.

Recommendation 34

That academic advisors and counsellors in English-language secondary schools promote vocational and technical training programs as a viable option for students.

Recommendation 35

That English-language school boards and CEGEPs collaborate on exposing students to a broader range of career options after graduation.

Recommendation 36

That academic and career counsellors in English-language secondary schools and CEGEPs include in their advice to students possible opportunities and benefits of pursuing the subsequent level of education in a French-language CEGEP, university or other institution.

Finally, the Board again notes the difference between the English-speaking community in metropolitan areas and in the regions. As noted in Section 5.2, many young English-speaking people must leave the regions for English-language CEGEP education and many do not return. The YSC's 2008 survey identified the lack of English post-secondary education, whether academic or technical-vocational, in the regions as "a major concern." (YSC, 2009, p. 28)

6.4 University education

At the university level, Québec's three English-language universities attract students from around the world. It is estimated that at McGill, for example, the student population is divided about equally among Québec Anglophones, Québec Francophones, students from the rest of Canada, and international students.

Table 4

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS FROM DIFFERENT LINGUISTIC GROUPS ADMITTED TO MCGILL UNIVERSITY ¹⁹			
MOTHER TONGUE	1987	1994	2008
French	25.5	19.6	17
English	55.1	57	52.5
Other	19.1	23.4	30.1

This diversity suggests that although students from outside Québec may choose to stay here when they graduate if their fluency in French is adequate and they can meet any necessary requirements for accreditation in the province, about half the graduates from McGill might be expected to leave Québec on graduation to return to their home provinces or countries.

¹⁹ Cited in Nadeau, 2009.

7 Existing resources

In this brief, the Board has situated education as a powerful component in the network of organizations whose mission is to support the Anglophone community in Québec. The network exists, but it is fragile. The Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) is an umbrella group of 32 organizations dedicated to furthering the cause of Anglophone communities in Québec, some of whom were guests at meetings of the Board. The *Sec-teur des services à la communauté anglophone et des affaires autochtones (SSCAAA)* at the MELS has produced a helpful glossary of the acronyms of 25 “organizations and committees offering services to the English educational community” (SSCA, 2009). The Board cautions all these groups about the possibility of fragmentation of resources, personnel and activities and hopes that they are coordinating their activities. While some of these organizations have branches in the regions, most of the social and cultural agencies catering to an English-speaking population are concentrated in metropolitan areas and the English-speaking residents in the regions are under-served. Who speaks for the English community? With the variety of organizations, there is a need to ensure that there is no overlap in services, but no gaps in services either. The Board was told about para-governmental services that duplicated the services of community organizations.

Recommendation 37

That QCGN and school boards coordinate to assess the services available in and needed by English-language communities.

Recommendation 38

That provincial government departments such as education, employment, and immigration coordinate their activities, especially with regard to the English-speaking community.

Recommendation 39

That SSCAAA of MELS sponsor an Estates General for the English-speaking educational community to determine the state of available services and establish needs for education, services and support.

8 Conclusion

Although the amount and quality of French spoken in Québec has increased since the Charter of the French language (Bill 101) was enacted, there remains in Québec a substantial population that speaks better English than French and a majority of immigrants reporting that they speak English at home.

The English-speaking community is an integral part of the province of Québec and, as the research in preparing this Brief has shown, the English-language school system continues to respond to that reality, offering programs, knowledge and skills that allow its students to be part of Québec and of Canada. There is no doubt in the minds of Board members that English-language schools are doing an excellent job. Quoting McAndrew (2002), Bourhis (2008) writes: "Québec Anglophones are the most bilingual students in the Québec school system." (136). We might also cite:

- National assessments of English reading achievement show that English-speaking children in Québec score on a par with children in the rest of Canada, although they may have only half as much instructional time in English.²⁰
- French immersion and bilingual programs have produced a high percentage of bilingual students and are models for other countries.²¹
- Quebec High School ranks among schools with the highest marks in the province in French as the Language of Instruction.²²
- English-language schools are versatile and adaptable to changes, whether in their student population or in the curriculum.

- English-language schools teach subjects other than language arts in French, thereby contextualizing the second language.
- Although far from exemplary, the drop-out rate in English-language schools is lower than that in French-language schools.

There is always room for improvement in any system, and the need to keep asking difficult questions. The Board's reflection on the "new Québec Anglophone" has also made it clear that there is still need for more adaptation and improvement in the services that the English-language schools offer to their students. If a system is to flourish, it is essential that it continually adapt and change to meet changing needs. It has been the Board's experience that the English-language school system has had a history of adaptation and we hope that it will continue to do so, with the support and encouragement of MELS.

²⁰ *Measuring up: Canadian results of the OECD PISA Study*

i) <http://www.pisa.gc.ca/BROCHUR-F-28.pdf>

"In Québec, student performance in reading did not differ between the English-language and French-language school systems" (p. 5)

ii) <http://www.pisa.gc.ca/81-590-E.pdf>

"Québec, Ontario and British Columbia performed about the same as the Canadian average" (p. 22)

²¹ "In the last few years some academics and second language educators have proposed the adoption of Québec-like immersion programs in some Latin American countries."

<http://www.julianhermida.com/latamfirst.htm>

Also: "Our ability to teach French to English-speaking Canadians and Canadians from every linguistic background is a Canadian advantage. It is well known abroad as a model."

http://www.cpfnb.com/articles/stiphane_dion.htm

Also: "Our schools were the birthplace of a French immersion model that is now duplicated in countries across the world."

http://www.qesba.qc.ca/en/News_21/items/2.html

Also: "Fred Genesee...said that other countries have begun following the Canadian model by introducing second-language education at a younger age..." Toronto Star, January 6, 2008

<http://www.thestar.com/News/GTA/article/297694>

Also: "(T)he form of bilingual education called immersion education that we use at Katoh is generally accepted to have started in Québec."

<http://www.bi-lingual.com/School/WhatsImmersion.htm>

²² http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/sections/res2007/pdf/eprv_2007_129536.pdf (p. 2)

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Luigi Marshall	Youth Standing Committee, Quebec Community Groups Network
Alexander Norris	Journalist
Lise Palmer	Quebec Community Groups Network
Brent Platt	Co-Chair, Youth Standing Committee, Quebec Community Groups Network
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Kenneth Robertson	Director-General, Champlain Regional College
Iris Unger	Executive Director, Youth Employment Services (YES)

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

That the English-language school boards engage in a period of reflection to further define their mission relative to the changing Anglophone community and to develop strategies for attaining their objectives.

That this reflection include a consideration of:

- their role as transmitters of culture
- research into why English-speaking parents send their children to French schools and French-speaking parents send their children to English schools
- research-based evidence of the quality and impact of various models of immersion and bilingual programs
- existing models of collaboration with French-language school boards, especially in rural areas, to evaluate the potential benefits of extending these models.

Recommendation 2

That school administrators use a variety of strategies to encourage participation of parents and other interested community members in the life of the school.

Recommendation 3

That existing Community Learning Centres be examined, models of good practice be adapted to local needs, and the network be enlarged.

Recommendation 4

That English-language school boards survey parents in their geographic area as to the reasons for their choice of English- or French-language schools for their children.

Recommendation 5

That schools and school boards be encouraged to develop their strategic plans to meet local needs, while respecting the orientations of the MELS' strategic plan.

Recommendation 6

That English-language schools' governing boards strike committees of stakeholders to acknowledge, define and recognize the variety of English-speaking cultures that exist in their milieu and take measures to draw out the benefits for their students.

Recommendation 7

That English-language schools emphasize the contributions of the various communities of Québec, in all subjects, especially Social Studies and Ethics and Religious Culture.

Recommendation 8

That English-language schools make funding available for resource materials to allow early-grade teachers to incorporate cultural traditions, fairy tales, legends, and songs into their teaching.

Recommendation 9

That teachers in English-language schools, both elementary and secondary, choose literature and other resources to promote Canadian culture, both French and English.

Recommendation 10

That English-language schools seek out opportunities to celebrate the cultural heritages of their students.

Recommendation 11

That English-language schools encourage and support family involvement in celebrating diversity in the schools.

Recommendation 12

That LEARN make available to schools a catalogue of materials relating to the impact that English-language communities have on Québec society.

Recommendation 13

That English Language Arts teachers increase the opportunity for students at all levels to practise writing skills.

Recommendation 14

That English-language school boards offer a bilingual, bicultural option as a way to produce graduates who are more able to include themselves in Québec society.

Recommendation 15

That English-language school boards create opportunities for interactions between French-speaking and English-speaking youth such as extra-curricular and exchange programs.

Recommendation 16

That English-language school boards examine successful pilot projects of partnerships with French-language school boards as models for further initiatives.

Recommendation 17

That MELS subsidize part of the additional cost of French immersion programs to encourage second language learning among English-speaking students.

Recommendation 18

That English-language schools maintain immersion programs without prejudicing the teaching of other subjects.

Recommendation 19

That MELS provide funding for resource teachers to support students experiencing difficulty in learning the second language comparable with that provided for those experiencing difficulty in the first language.

Recommendation 20

That French-language academic texts used by second-language learners be examined for their linguistic level, especially in subjects such as mathematics.

Recommendation 21

That universities and school boards encourage and disseminate research in immersion and other programs of second-language instruction.

Recommendation 22

That MELS, QPAT, QESBA, QFHSA and any other interested constituency establish a collaborative table to promote bilingualism and biliteracy amongst English-speaking students and to establish ways of supporting initiatives to promote bilingualism and biliteracy.

Recommendation 23

That a collaboration table be created including youth, MELS, QESBA, QFHSA, First Nations Education Council, QPAT, CPF and other partners to work to identify steps needed to produce fully bilingual graduates [of secondary schools] and provide support with implementation. (YSC, 2009, 29)

Recommendation 24

That MELS advertise and actively promote funded exchanges between French- and English-language schools.

Recommendation 25

That as the reformed curriculum is being evaluated, its success in imbuing students with a sense of and desire for lifelong learning is also evaluated.

Recommendation 26

That MELS invest more resources in promoting and extending adult guidance services to English speakers, especially in the regions.

Recommendation 27

That MELS make available and promote French instruction to adult learners, regardless of how long they have been living in Québec or their level of education.

Recommendation 28

That vocational training programs include instruction in French appropriate to the professional needs of students.

Recommendation 29

That relevant social agencies track students who have dropped out of special education programs to investigate their reasons for lack of school success and to provide them with appropriate support.

Recommendation 30

That MELS make learning a second language compulsory in all 4 semesters of CEGEP.

Recommendation 31

That English-language CEGEPs be encouraged to offer bilingual programs.

Recommendation 32

That English-language and French-language CEGEPs cooperate in offering joint programs.

Recommendation 33

That the possibility of French immersion programs be extended beyond secondary school and into CEGEPs as the beginning of the process of lifelong learning.

Recommendation 34

That academic advisors and counsellors in English-language secondary schools promote vocational and technical training programs as a viable option for students.

Recommendation 35

That English-language school boards and CEGEPs collaborate on exposing students to a broader range of career options after graduation.

Recommendation 36

That academic and career counsellors in English-language secondary schools and CEGEPs include in their advice to students possible opportunities and benefits of pursuing the subsequent level of education in a French-language CEGEP, university or other institution.

Recommendation 37

That QCGN and school boards coordinate to assess the services available in and needed by English-language communities.

Recommendation 38

That provincial government departments such as education, employment, and immigration coordinate their activities, especially with regard to the English-speaking community.

Recommendation 39

That SSCAAA of MELS sponsor an Estates General for the English-speaking educational community to determine the state of available services and establish needs for education, services and support.



