

PLUS ÇA CHANGE, PLUS C'EST PAREIL :
Revisiting the 1992 Task Force Report
on English Education in Québec

Presented to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports

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Revisiting the 1992 Task Force Report
on English Education in Québec

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PREFACE

In September 1991, the condition of English-language education in Québec caused the Minister of Education of Québec to establish the Task Force on English Education to examine the needs of the English education community. This responded to the need, given the political context of the day, for people at the decision-making levels of the bureaucracy to represent and reflect the English community's needs and to assess the changes proposed for the structure of school boards and school governance. Chaired by Gretta Chambers, the Task Force delivered its report, often called the Chambers Report, to the Minister in February 1992.

The Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE) is an outgrowth of the Task Force Report, and was established in 1993 to represent all constituents of the English-speaking educational community from all regions of Québec. The Board has a unique role in that it is the only body that gives advice directly to the Minister of Education about education in English. It established its reputation very quickly:

The Advisory Board on English Education is a classic case of a well-grounded, diversified advisory board in education. It has its ear to the needs of its population and the Advisory Board turns around its advice in timely, do-able reports. The Advisory Board knows the English community of Québec.¹

In 2017, ABEE decided to mark the 25th anniversary of the Task Force Report by asking: What has changed? What remains the same? What still needs to be done? ABEE presents a vision of the English-language school of the future, based on what the schools currently do well, and influenced by the predictable changes that will inevitably occur. This vision incorporates:

a provincial network of democratically elected English school boards, valued and supported by the Ministère, providing local governance to schools and centres that offer a high quality, multilingual, child-centred education to prepare students to be full-fledged members of society. Graduates will contribute to the cultural and economic vitality of their own communities and to Québec society at large, and take their place confidently in the global community.

There are constraints that will prevent this vision from being realized, but there are also affordances that can contribute to it. This brief will identify the constraints and recommend solutions.

DEDICATION

This report to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports is respectfully dedicated to the memory of the author of the Task Force Report and first Chair of the Advisory Board on English Education,

Gretta Taylor Chambers
1927-2017.

1 Cullen, J. Guest presentation to students in the course "Policy Issues in Québec Education," McGill University, Oct 2, 1997.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In many ways, the educational landscape in Québec in 1992 belonged to a different territory. The report's references to issues such as a confessional school system and the need for more French to be taught in English-language schools, or its lack of reference to the use of technology seem strange to a reader today. Yet the same reader may be discouraged to see that, while some of the 29 recommendations have been acted on, many issues and concerns expressed in 1992 have not, although they are still pertinent and have been reiterated in the intervening 25 years. In addition, other, newer, concerns have arisen that affect the education of students in English-language schools.

The recommendations in the Task Force Report have been reinforced in ABEE's communications to the Minister since 1993. For example, a letter from ABEE to Minister Marois in 1997 expressed concern that small English schools would not have enough children for a 5-year-old kindergarten class; that there was a need for flexibility in the curriculum and in teaching materials in English schools; that the increased time spent on French had an impact on the timetable; that there was a need for more opportunities for vocational training in English.² All these issues have been reiterated since then and will reappear in the present brief, not because the English school system wants to complain about its situation, but to propose solutions that maintain and improve its successes. In the words of one guest:

We are allies, not adversaries, not a community that must be dealt with, but a community solving its own problems. We are all proud to be Quebecers. If we are victims in any sense, we are victims of manufactured threats.

To prepare for this brief, ABEE consulted an even larger pool of organizations and individuals than it usually does.³ The brief will quote from the original 1992 document; summarize the situation 26 years later, indicating what changes have occurred and where things remain the same; propose recommendations to the Minister based on the earlier ones and also on the changed needs of the English educational community.

² See Appendix 2 for a complete list of briefs and reports

³ See Appendix 3 for a complete list of those consulted.

2.0 1992 TASK FORCE REPORT: SUMMARY

The Task Force Report's Foreword set the scene for the specific comments and recommendations that followed.

FOREWORD

A community's education of its young is one of the building blocks on which its future is founded. If it leaves the education of its young people to others, others will eventually define its cultural values and choose its social priorities. The Task Force on English Education has approached its mandate from this perspective, a perspective it shares with the country's French-speaking minorities and especially with Quebec's French-speaking majority. A public school system is a fundamental instrument in the forging of a cultural, social, and economic identity.

English-speaking Quebec is no exception to this rule. Its future is tied to its ability to inculcate in its children the strengths of the English-speaking community as well as the desire and ability to function effectively in a predominantly French-speaking society. **The challenge is great.**

It cannot be met by English-speaking Quebecers alone. There must be an acceptance by the whole of Quebec society that its English fact is of intrinsic value to Quebec. If the English-speaking community of Quebec is to continue to exist as a contributing component of Quebec's social, cultural and economic make-up, its schools must reflect the distinct character of its aspirations, traditions and potential. The particular mission of English education in Quebec is, therefore, three-fold:

1. Its students must receive the necessary literacy and learning tools for productive membership in a modern society.
2. Students must be given a knowledge of their English-language cultural heritages and the contribution their community has made to the development of this society.
3. Students must be provided with the language skills and cultural understanding to become full-fledged members of Quebec's predominantly French-speaking economic and political life. (p. 1)⁴

Every curriculum has a cultural bias, recognized by linguistic minorities worldwide, including French-language minorities across Canada. The concern that a generic curriculum, focused on French cultural values and damaging the preservation of the distinct character of the English cultural base, still exists and is even greater than it was in 1992. Similarly, the request for recognition of the English fact as having intrinsic value to Québec is heard even more loudly from English speakers, who strive to contribute to the majority's social, economic, political and cultural scene.

4 Sections and recommendations in boxes, with page numbers in parentheses, refer to the Task Force Report, 1992.

The Task Force Report listed nine principles:

PRINCIPLES

To be successful, English schools must meet all three criteria. The difficulties inherent in fulfilling this mission will become apparent in the ensuing report, which will also contain recommendations for meeting the challenge.

The Task Force on English Education will make proposals for change to the Minister of Education bearing in mind the following principles:

1. Learning is the essence of education and students are its raison d'être.
2. Education must provide each student with the attitudes and skills necessary for life-long learning.
3. English education must prepare students for the future so that they can take their place in Quebec society and must equip them for active and fulfilling careers.
4. Quebec is strengthened by a vigorous and creative English-language education system.
5. The English-speaking community must control its education system within a broad policy framework in order that it may transmit its language, values and culture and meet the learning needs of young English-speaking Quebecers.
6. To be vigorous and effective, a school system must be able to renew itself and develop.
7. Small schools, often the last institution serving an English-speaking community, must be supported.
8. Teachers are key to a quality education and must be supported in their efforts to meet the educational demands placed upon them.
9. Teachers and administrators require ongoing opportunities for professional development and renewal. (p. 2)

Parents and students alike realize the importance of fluency in French to allow graduates to participate fully and to be successful in the dominant French-speaking environment of Québec (Principle 3).⁵ The successes and the innovations of the English education system have made a considerable contribution to Québec as a whole (Principle 4), but as the English system shrinks, it becomes almost impossible for it to develop and renew itself (Principle 6) without support. The important principle of a public education system, locally managed to meet local needs, cannot be over-emphasized (Principle 5), especially for a minority language population that has a constitutionally protected right. Decision-making authority still remains firmly at the *Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur* (MEES), with little substantive authority at the community level.

In small communities, where other English-language services and institutions have atrophied or even disappeared, the school is even more often the last remaining institution for the English-speaking population (Principle 7) and the last remaining opportunity to preserve and promote the English-speaking cultural heritage. Without an English-language school, a community established several hundred years ago disappears. The need for ongoing professional development and support for teachers and administrators is still important⁶ (Principles 8 and 9) although the *Ministère* has greatly reduced its involvement in professional development in recent years. Finally, the well-being of the student and the focus on student learning has always been at the heart of the English educational system (Principles 1 and 2) and continues to be so. ABEE commends the aims of the Policy on Educational Success,⁷ and is pleased to see its focus on learners and on lifelong learning, while wishing that it also acknowledged the presence of the English school system, its particularities, successes, concerns and challenges.

5 See ABEE, June 2015. "We are accountable to the Students:" *Success and Retention in English-Language Schools*.

6 See ABEE, *High-Quality Teachers and Administrators for English-Language Schools in Québec: Preparation, Induction and Support*. July 2010.

7 MEES, 2017. *Policy on Educational Success*. <https://securise.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/policy-on-educational-success/>

ABEE continues to support the threefold mission of English-language education and these nine principles, and has incorporated them into several briefs over the past 24 years, yet we reemphasize the sentence stressed in the original document. The English community, now more than ever, feels unappreciated by “the whole of Québec society.”

The first section of the Task Force Report concluded with this list:

The most pressing problems identified by the Task Force, based on its consultations and deliberations, are the following:

1. The dramatic and ongoing decline in enrolment in English schools in the past twenty years;
2. The lack of appropriate English-speaking representation within the Ministry of Education;
3. The fragmentation of structures and uneven distribution of services, especially to the English Catholic community, in the current division of school boards;
4. The small size, isolation and lack of adequate resources of many English schools;
5. The need to provide better support and opportunities for a teaching force in need of ongoing renewal;
6. The rigidity of the régimes pédagogiques;
7. The lack of proper support, both in the schools and from social services, for students with particular needs;
8. The lack of a coherent network of communication. (p. 6)

ABEE notes that although there have been major structural changes to the school system in the 25 years since the Chambers report, notably the change to a linguistic, rather than a confessional structure, some fundamental problems regarding equity remain. This brief will follow the same sequence as the Chambers Report, making more precise reference to each of the issues that are still relevant, including the status of the recommendations made to address them. In view of the changes that have occurred since 1992, the brief will also propose new recommendations⁸ that address the current situation in the English education system as it looks forward to the next 25 years.

8 New recommendations in this brief will be labelled **ABEE**, with the relevant section number, and listed in Appendix 1.

3.0 THE POPULATION OF ENGLISH SCHOOLS

3.1 Population decline

DECLINE AND ITS EFFECTS

Bill 101, restricting admissibility to English schooling, has accelerated the decline [in the population of English language schools] by shutting out a significant portion of the English school network's traditional replacement clientele. . . . The school system is also being affected by the low birth rate and an aging population in the English-speaking community. The trend away from the regions to the Montreal area has increased the drain on many schools in smaller centres, while the emptying of central Montreal in favor of the suburbs has further strained English educational services in the city core. (p. 2)

Using MEES figures, Bourhis⁹ describes the decrease in school populations between 1972 and 2012 as 36% in French-language schools and a startling 60% in English-language schools. This decrease may be explained by a lower birthrate and out-migration, as well as by the effects of Bill 101 that prevented immigrant students from attending English-language schools. Given the relative size of each population, the decrease has a disproportionate effect on English schools and how they function.

The demographic factors affecting English-language schools still exist and are compounded by the desire of some English-speaking parents that their children should attend French-language schools (see Section 5.1). The future of English-speaking communities is even more at risk than it was in 1992 as the number of the province's native English speakers continues to decrease.

Projections for the future continue to be bleak.

Table 1. Projected school enrolment in Québec for school year 2030-2031 (based on student population in 2015-2016)¹⁰

LANGUAGE GROUP	SCHOOL TYPE	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
BOTH	Public	+13.36
	Private	+21.22
	Both	+14.29
FRENCH	Public	+16.26
	Private	+21.76
	Both	+16.9
ENGLISH	Public	-13.17
	Private	+16.73
	Both	-9.14

The overall increase of 14.29% in the province's student population is reassuring at first sight, but this masks several other trends. First, there is an overall projected increase of 21.22% in the enrolment in private schools, which will have an impact on the public system. Second, and more germane to this discussion, there is projected to be a 13.17% drop in the English public school enrolment, from 83 010 to 72 075, or nearly 11 000 students. Even with the proviso that projections beyond about five years (i.e. after about 2021) are tentatively based on trends over earlier years, this decline is cause for considerable concern. In 1992, the vitality of the English school system was in doubt. These projections suggest that its continued existence is in doubt.

The practical effects of declining enrolments have been felt in almost all areas of English education. . . . The enrolment of most schools is declining. Small schools are often limited in the range of services and resources they can muster. Many schools have been forced to close with the attendant community trauma and dislocation. Others are kept in perpetual insecurity. Schools and school boards are competing for students, and in this context, the community rationale for maintaining a school may be overlooked. (p. 3)

⁹ Bourhis, Richard Y. *Un système scolaire en déclin constant*. Retrieved from <http://www.lapresse.ca/debats/votre-opinion/201511/09/01-4918961-un-systeme-scolaire-en-declin-constant.php>
¹⁰ Source: MEES-DIS, 3 March 2016.

3.2 Eligibility for English-language education

The relaxation of the rules for English school eligibility would have a positive psychological effect. (p.5)

Government support of a high quality English education system would send a powerful message to both Quebecers and potential immigrants. Broadening access to English schools would benefit Quebec, the English school system and English-speaking Quebecers who wish to provide for their children an education both in English and in Quebec. It would be evidence that Quebec welcomes immigrants from parts of the world in which English is the common language. (p.7)

The Task Force's first recommendation addressed the issue of declining enrolment in English-language schools.

(1) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION RECOMMEND TO THE GOVERNMENT OF QUEBEC THAT access to education in English be widened at least to include any child who was being educated in English or who has a parent from an English-speaking part of the world. (p. 7)

This recommendation was unanimously supported by the bodies consulted by the Task Force. The Task Force estimated that if all the immigrant students who were born in English-speaking countries and attending French-language schools under Bill 101 were to transfer to English-language schools, the population of students in French schools would be reduced by 1%, but the English school population would increase by 20%. These numbers have not decreased since 1992. In the response to the Task Force Report, the then Minister of Education undertook to take this matter to Cabinet, acknowledging that some of the recommendations were beyond his jurisdiction. There was no change in the eligibility rules. The current influx of refugees, especially from the United States, is putting considerable strain on French-language school boards in the Montréal area, some of which are appealing to their English-language neighbours for support. Allowing children from English-speaking backgrounds to enrol in English-language schools would help both school systems: it would reduce the pressure on the French system and increase enrolment in the English system.

The situation regarding eligibility has changed since 1992, but only to remove avenues into the English system, rather than add to them, despite many requests from the English-speaking population who observe that immigrants to other provinces from the Francophonie have the same access to minority language education as French speakers born in Canada. The decline in the population of Quebecers declaring English as their mother tongue has been balanced by the number who declare English as their first official language spoken (FOLS), including one third of immigrants to Québec. These immigrants have come from English-speaking countries, or from other countries where they learned English as a second language, rather than French. Allowing children from English-speaking countries to learn French in English-language schools alongside English-speaking Quebecers would be an initiative to persuade young families to stay, to help maintain a critical mass of English speakers and to contribute to Québec society. Their presence would go some way to slowing the decline in English schools, but if they are (as they are likely to be) concentrated in the urban areas, their presence will not enhance the small English communities in the regions.

It is no exaggeration to say that declining enrolment in rural schools is an existential issue, where there may be no critical mass, let alone an attractive economic situation. It is clear that there is no political will to change Bill 101 and its provisions. Attempts to advertise to French-speaking families who are eligible for English education, to attract immigrants to adult education programs, or to admit students on humanitarian grounds have had some success but are not enough to solve the problem. The survival of the English school system in the regions will involve hard conversations with the government and all interested parties. Is there a Québec government willing to keep an active, engaged, well-educated English community in the rural areas of the province?

Models have been proposed for sharing resources with other English school boards and with neighbouring French school boards. These have included information technology services and transportation, and have potential for economies of scale. ABEE was cautioned that the different governance models of neighbouring school boards have required accommodation and that plans for sharing resources need careful guidelines.

ABEE has become aware of an increasing recognition in the French-language education system of influences from the English-language system and the appeal of English-language education to French-speaking families who are eligible to attend English schools (see Table 2). The same recognition from the *Ministère* would have more than a symbolic impact and would provide practical as well as moral support.

ABEE 3.2. Allow access to English-language schools for immigrants to Québec from countries where English is the common language.

Allied to the issue of eligibility were the Task Force's recommendations :

(2) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION ensure that parents are given, prior to registration of their children in school, complete information concerning eligibility for English schooling for their children.

(3) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION ensure representation of the English-speaking community on the Appeals Committee. (p. 7)

The English school boards have taken on the first task and do a good job of conveying the information to parents and of enforcing the law. The office for *Admissibilité à l'enseignement en anglais* receives about 12 000 claims a year, of which about 200 are refused. The *Charter of the French Language* allows two routes for appealing this decision: the three-member Examining Committee, which deals with about 80 requests a year, and the Québec Administrative Tribunal, which receives 10-15 requests a year. At least one examining committee member is English-speaking, because the appeals are generally received in English.

3.3 A French-only school system?

Some writers in the English-language press in Québec have proposed bilingual schools as a solution to declining enrolment in English-language schools. This is a theoretically attractive idea. But it ignores the facts that most English-language schools already run bilingual programs and that if this plan were to be implemented outside the Greater Montréal region, the imbalance of numbers would make all the schools, *de facto*, French-language schools.

What would be lost if there were no public English education in Québec? This question resulted in some passionate responses from those consulted by ABEE. One guest said that it should be self-evident that we need English schools and we should feel confident to say so in the same way that other provinces are enriched by having French schools.

An important consideration for many respondents was the preservation of the culture, most saliently in rural areas where the school is the last “English” facility. If there is no English school, there is no English community. The preservation and transmission of cultures and heritages was linked to the idea of historical rights with the thought that we are lucky that Québec society is composed of many cultures: the loss of one as important as the English-speaking culture would be tragic. English schools were seen as necessary for establishing student identity and giving them a foundation in their community. Students need more than two languages to succeed in an international world and can achieve language proficiency in, at a minimum English and French, in an English-language school.

Respondents maintained that English-language schools were necessary as “the last and only viable cultural institution left to the English-speaking community,” and also to provide high quality instruction in English. This was described as necessary to “provide students an access to the rich culture and heritage of the English-speaking world,” “to prepare English-language students to work in and contribute to Québec society, if they choose to stay in the province and are not discouraged from doing so.” They saw the school as having a symbiotic relationship with its community, mentioning Community Learning Centres (CLCs) as providing a hub for community activities. They grieved the loss of their children to other provinces and congratulated the English school boards for producing bilingual graduates.

One of our respondents replied eloquently:

If we did not have English schools and school boards in Québec, English culture would not disappear because of the obvious English influences available outside of the province, but the sense of the importance of sustaining English culture as a part of a vibrant Québec society might. English communities would become even more scattered than they already are in the regions, and English speakers might be less inclined to live in what are traditionally English areas. English schools help to keep English culture cohesive and also provide the grassroots and home base for English speakers to congregate and feel attached to and proud of their identity. We may not “need” English schools, because children educated in the French public system receive a solid education; yet, their roots and their heritage might slowly erode as they become completely immersed in the French milieu.

4.0 THE MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION ET DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR

The Task Force noted that:

English representation in the Ministry of Education is minimal. No one from the English education community occupies a post of assistant deputy-minister or director general of a major department. (p. 5)

One can speak of an English education sector in Quebec, but not of an English education system with all the human and physical resource-sharing that term implies. (p. 6.)

The English education community has little presence in the Ministry of Education that is supposed to serve everyone. Its involvement within the policy-making structures of the Ministry has been minimal at best, its presence limited to operational services and translation.

As a result, English education policy in Quebec is largely a translation of French education policy. This is unacceptable if English education is to regain its distinctive character in order to give the best of itself to both its students and society. It must be part of the decision-making process dealing with priorities, objectives and standards. Recognition must be given to the importance which Quebec is willing to place on its English education system and services. (p. 7)

4.1 The Assistant Deputy Minister

One of the most important outcomes of the Task Force Report was the creation of the post of Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) responsible for the English sector, supported by a department of English-speaking professionals, *Services à la communauté anglophone* (SCA).

The incumbents in the ADM position have made crucial contributions to the English educational community. It seems that the post is regarded as a light workload compared with other ADM positions, and its scope has been enlarged since it was first established. But this ignores the unique and demanding role of the ADM responsible for the English sector: the great amount of work that needs to be done to establish equity with the French system; building structures and providing materials and resources to support the school boards in the delivery of high quality education. This includes the need to be close to the constituents so as to be able to canvass and synthesize the needs of the English system, then advocate for them and develop strategies to accommodate them. Previous ADMs have shown considerable leadership and with the support of SCA—later the *Direction des Services à la communauté anglophone* (DSCA)—have been the incubators of innovative ideas and province-wide structures that serve the English sector. Some examples are: Leading English Education and Resource Network (LEARN); the Leadership Committee for English Education in Québec (LCEEQ); Community Learning Centres (CLCs); the Evidence-Based Practice Project (EBPP); the School Improvement Resource Team, including the Advancing Learning in Differentiation and Inclusion initiative (ALDI) for resource teachers and Assisting School Systems in Educational Transformation (ASSET) to support principals; and Centres of Excellence to support education for students with special needs. These exemplary practices can be—and often have been—transferred to the whole school system of Québec. All were developed to address particular needs rather than being imposed from above—a defining characteristic of the English sector—and were initiated or supported by the ADM of the day. This kind of initiative has not been observable in recent years as the ADM's job description has expanded greatly into other areas.

The ADM must have a deep understanding of the English-speaking community and its education system, including the Indigenous populations who receive instruction in English, so that he or she can represent the communities faithfully and advocate strongly for their needs. To do this, the ADM needs time to be present and visible in the community to reflect what the constituent groups are saying and to react to it. This would allow the incumbent to contribute to policy development in a proactive way, rather than reacting to established policy that has not been subject to input from the English education community. Top-down decision-making applied generically to the whole system is a continuing complaint of the minority language sector.

ABEE recognizes that budgetary constraints in Québec have reduced the number of ADMs in the *Ministère* over the years, but the constant addition of responsibilities to the ADM whose position was created to have oversight over the English sector has diluted the incumbent's responsibility for English education and devalued the role. These responsibilities include services to the English-speaking and Indigenous populations and for cultural diversity. Since money is available through the Canada-Québec Agreement, lack of ministerial funding to restore the focus of the ADM's responsibilities on the English-speaking population should have no bearing on this ADM's job description.

The English educational community is concerned by the diminished attention paid to its needs as a result of the changing responsibilities of the only senior bureaucrat assigned to it. The minority language groups in Ontario, Manitoba and New Brunswick have a separate Assistant Deputy Minister in their Ministries of Education and separate systems for their minority language group, with comparable structures in British Columbia and Nova Scotia. ABEE is not necessarily advocating a distinct system for English education in Québec—although some people have proposed it—but stresses the need for strong leadership from the ADM responsible for the English system, which would be helped by refocusing the role of the ADM on the English sector.

ABEE 4.1 a. Redefine the job description of the ADM responsible for English-language education to restore the focus on English-language education.

ABEE 4.1 b. Support the post of ADM and the innovations that past incumbents have developed in the sector.

ABEE 4.1 c. Ensure that the ADM works closely and collaboratively with the English education sector and its communities to ensure that their needs are reflected and that any challenges it faces are remedied through concerted action.

ABEE 4.1 d. Ensure representation of knowledgeable English speakers on a selection committee for the post of ADM.

ABEE 4.1 e. Ensure the ADM's involvement from the early stages of the decision-making level for policy changes.

4.2 Professional pedagogical support

The only concentration of English speaking personnel [in the Ministry] is in the area of delivery of services, not in policy development. Influence on curriculum is largely limited to English language arts, French second language and the translation of documents. Few school boards have the administrative and professional resources to develop curriculum. Most provincial organizations have specialized interests and there are no comprehensive bodies to deal with major policy issues, coordinate developments as they arise or oversee a productive relationship with the French sector. (p. 5)

In the Ministry of Education, administrative and professional positions explicitly responsible for English language education are few: about 60 English personnel in a Ministry staff of over 1,200, including fewer than a half dozen English personnel who may be considered senior appointments. The major unit for English education is the Services éducatifs aux anglophones with 9 professionals and 8 regional representatives. (p. 19)

To do the job effectively, the ADM needs the support of a network of professionals in the *Ministère* who also understand and relate to the English education system. Since 1992, the original *Secteur des services à la communauté anglophone* (SCA) has expanded its responsibilities to include Indigenous and cultural communities, and is known as the *Secteur des services aux anglophones, aux autochtones et à la diversité culturelle* (SSAADC). The sector has become a department: the *Direction des services à la communauté anglophone* (DSCA). Its numbers have decreased, its function has changed, and there has also been a loss of representation from the English-language education sector in the *Ministère* with the loss of the regional offices, changed hiring policies, transfers from other government ministries, increased emphasis on representation from cultural communities, and the need to qualify for a position with a rigorous French-language entrance examination.

ABEE 4.2. Ensure the presence of English-speaking educators in the DSCA by encouraging applications from qualified people with a strong connection to, and familiarity with, the English school system.

Thus, as the mandate of the ADM has grown, the absolute number of professionals in the DSCA, as well as their familiarity with the English system, have decreased, with a concomitant loss of contact with the English education system and a loss of influence in the system as a whole. At the same time, most of the provincial subject organizations, such as the Québec associations of mathematics teachers, science teachers, drama educators and teachers of history have disappeared. With little or no funding, the remaining subject organizations are struggling to survive. There is less opportunity for professional dialogue, less advocacy for curriculum concerns in the disciplines, and less opportunity for professional development activities and conference workshops offered by colleagues who were members of these subject organizations.

5.0 FRENCH INSTRUCTION

The importance of turning out bilingual graduates cannot be exaggerated. English education in Quebec continues to give high priority to competence in French for all students irrespective of ability, aspirations and economic status. (p. 13)

A significant number of English-speaking Quebecers are now sending their children to French schools. (p. 2)

This sentiment continues and has gained in importance since 1992,¹¹ and the number of English-speaking students in French-language schools has increased considerably.

5.1 Movement to French-language schools

Table 2. School population by mother tongue and language of instruction

YEAR	LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION	MOTHER TONGUE (MT)			
		French (FMT)		English (EMT)	
1998-1999	French	917 810		17 296	(18 %)
	English	15 826	(1.7 %)	77 702	
2016-2017	French	758 949		23 728	(28 %)
	English	19 773	(2.5 %)	60 496	

Since 1999, there has been a transfer of students between schools in the two language groups. While FMT students in English-language schools increased from 1.7% to 2.5% in this period, the number of EMT students in French-language schools increased by a more dramatic 10%, or 6 432 students. In 2013, it was estimated that 65 698 EMT students were eligible to attend English-language schools, about 5 000 more than were actually enrolled.¹² A recent study by the *Office québécois de la langue française* (OQLF)¹³ reported an increase of 20% in the number of EMT students in French-language schools between 1976 and 2015. Added to this was an increase of allophone students in French-language schools from 14.6% in 1971 to 89.4% in 2015 when all immigrant students became subject to Bill 101's language of schooling requirements.

Now that school boards are organized along linguistic lines, ABEE has previously¹⁴ identified this shift to French-language schools as the recognition by English-speaking parents that fluency in French is not enough for their children to be assimilated into Québec society: they must acquire French language skills going beyond bilingualism to include biliteracy and biculturalism. These parents base their decisions on their own experience in French as a second language classes, and believe that the children will become more fluent in oral and written French by an immersion in French-language culture that can only be attained in a French-language school. Yet since their beginnings in St Lambert in 1965, the French immersion programs offered in the English-language school boards, tailored to the needs of students whose first language is not French, have been models for schools worldwide. Enrolling in a French-language school is not necessarily the answer to the question of complete bilingualism: parents must also realize that children are more likely to attain native and colloquial fluency in extra-curricular activities than in a classroom. Initiatives such as PÉLIQ-AN¹⁵ have been successful, although these are limited because of minimal funding.

ABEE 5.1. Support authentic language learning experiences for English-speaking students that immerse them in the French culture of Québec.

11 See ABEE, 2010. *Educating Today's Québec Anglophone*. p. 18.

12 MELS, PSG, DSID. Charlemagne system, February 23, 2013 data.

13 https://www.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca/office/communiqués/2017/20170331_etudes.aspx.

14 ABEE, 2016, *Keeping the Door Open for Young English-speaking Adults in Québec*.

15 <http://blogdev.learnquebec.ca/pelican/>.

Achieving this goal without sacrificing the cultural heritage of an English education requires special attention. Care must be taken to balance the desire to expand French immersion programs with the cultural and linguistic objectives of other subjects and the needs of students enrolled in the English non immersion programs. (p. 13)

The move to French schools by parents seeking an even more immersive experience for their children has accelerated the decline in the population of English-language schools. These schools have made a conscious choice to increase the time spent teaching French, given the need for their graduates to function in Québec and at the request of parents, and the increased time spent on teaching French in English schools continues to have an impact on the school day. This comes at the cost of time spent in learning English, reducing the time spent on subjects taught in English, and reducing what little flexibility is available to schools from the *Basic school regulation* (BSR) in adapting the curriculum to their needs. Yet schools and centres must still honour the responsibility of transmitting English language and “culture,” in its broadest sense of cultural practices. This dual teaching mission does not seem to have damaged the rates of student success, and according to the research on bilingualism, may even enhance it, but at the expense of promoting other cultural heritages.

There is an aspect of personal gain but community loss when parents send their children to French school, with the loss of resources to the English-language school, and possibly, the eventual loss of the English school itself, but there are pedagogical issues in play too. There is also a perception among some parents that the English schools are less “academic” than French schools. In fact, the difference might lie more in the different teaching strategies employed and the focus on the whole child in English-language schools. The proof of this methodology appears in the success rates of English-language schools in standardized examinations in French compared with neighbouring French school boards.¹⁶

The desire to study in French does not stop at the school level. Although beyond the scope of ABEE’s mandate, it is interesting to note that:

In 2002, just 5.9 per cent of the Quebec-born students who listed English as their mother tongue opted to attend a French university. By 2014, that number had risen to 9.5 per cent.

Although the numbers of anglophone students enrolled at French universities are still relatively small compared to the inverse (roughly 20 per cent of McGill University students and 23 per cent of Concordia students list French as their mother tongue), the rate of increase is not. The number of anglophones choosing to study in French rose by 83 per cent in just over a decade.¹⁷

This suggests that, at least in the past decade, these young English speakers have achieved a degree of proficiency in French that prepares them for university study.

16 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>.

17 René Bruemmer, *Montreal Gazette*, August 19, 2017 | Last Updated: August 22, 2017.

5.2 Achievements of English-language schools

Judged solely on comparative test results, English education is holding its own. Many students graduate successfully from high school and go on to do well in CEGEP, university and the work place. . . . It provides one of the most bilingual educations of any school system in the country. The employment mobility across Canada of its most able graduates is eloquent evidence of this particular strength. (p. 6)

The English school system has continued to make gains in graduation and retention rates (see Tables 3 and 4¹⁸).

Table 3. Seven-year graduation rates for public schools, 2014-2015

	MEAN FOR ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SCHOOL BOARD	MEAN FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REGION
Central Québec	87.5	77.3
English Montreal	89.4	78.1
Eastern Shores	77.0	75.8
Eastern Townships	87.5	77.3
Lester B. Pearson	87.8	78.1
Littoral	79.6	68.4
New Frontiers	77.7	73.4
Riverside	82.1	73.4
Sir Wilfrid Laurier	76.9	68.7
Western Québec	74.3	72.4

Research since 1992 has supported the inclusion of vulnerable students with special needs or with learning or behavioural difficulties into mainstream classes, and this is common practice in English-language schools (see Section 10.1). It is worth noting that the results for these students are included in the overall success and graduation rates for the school boards. The English-language community has accommodated the diverse learning needs of students within a single classroom without extra funding.

Table 4. Change in dropout rate between 1999-2000 and 2013-2014

	MEAN FOR ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SCHOOL BOARD		MEAN FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REGION	
	1999-2000	2013-2014	1999-2000	2013-2014
Central Québec	24.6	14.8	16.0	12.6
English Montreal	26.8	17.0	28.6	18.1
Eastern Shores	26.1	21.2	22.2	13.41
Eastern Townships	34.5	29.4	26.8	21.1
Lester B. Pearson	23.4	13.4	28.6	18.1
Littoral	35.9	18.2	21.0	18.3
New Frontiers	22.7	14.5	25.2	15.4
Riverside	19.4	14.4	25.2	15.4
Sir Wilfrid Laurier	27.4	14.6	26.1	15.6
Western Québec	40.9	30.0	31.6	21.3

¹⁸ Note that, for both tables, comparison between the English-language school board and the administrative region are approximate because the English-language school boards cover more than one, and possibly up to four, five or six administrative regions.

5.3 Second language learning

Task Force recommendations 23 and 25¹⁹ asking the Minister to experiment with and revise FSL programs were not carried out by the *Ministère*, but were taken over by the English-language school boards, given their need to graduate students with fluency in French and to meet the demands of parents in their communities. Task Force recommendation 24, “that the minister of education recognize the special responsibility of English schools to provide literacy and fluency in two languages through special funding,” was not accepted by the Minister of Education, and school boards’ initiatives to develop immersion and other models of second language instruction are still unfunded.

There has been considerable research in the past 25 years on the benefits of speaking more than one language²⁰ and on teaching and learning a second language, especially in an immersion context. Several experimental initiatives show great promise.²¹ Expertise now exists in the English sector for teaching French by immersion, French as a Mother Tongue (FMT), and teaching second, third and fourth language learners. All English-language school boards offer a variety of French-language programs that surpass the mandated core curriculum. The fact that these endeavours have been successful is demonstrated by the success rates of students in English-language schools in both French and English school-leaving examinations.²² These programs have been implemented without any extra financial support and without customized materials: in spite of the imperative that English-language schools produce bilingual graduates, curricula and teaching materials that ignore this requirement continue to be produced.

One of the theories relevant to teaching two languages to children is Cummins’ work on Common Underlying Proficiency²³ and of transfer of learning. This occurs when students are learning the same content at the same time in their mother tongue and in a second language. It needs time for co-planning among teachers of the same students but the rigidity of the *Basic school regulation* makes it difficult for teachers of ELA and FSL to collaborate over teaching the curriculum in the two languages and to capitalize on the commonalities between the two language systems, unless schools take the initiative to make internal changes. Such collaboration, rooted in research, would also produce learning and teaching efficiencies. ABEE notes the difference between larger, urban schools and small, rural schools, where the same teacher is teaching several grade levels and both languages, and where this collaboration is moot.

Within the English sector itself, the popularity of French immersion has affected the structures, content and delivery of education. (p. 2)

19 Gretta Chambers, 1992, *Task Force on English Education: Report to the Minister of Education of Québec*, p. 13.

20 ABEE, 2016. *Keeping the Door Open for Young English-speaking Adults in Québec*.

21 Ibid, p. 20, Sections 6.3 and 6.4.

22 See ABEE, 2016 for details.

23 See the work of J. Cummins, such as: Cummins, J. (2007). “Rethinking monolingual instructional strategies in multilingual classrooms.” *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 10, 221-241.

It is estimated that 80% of English-language schools follow an immersion program of some description. This has great implications for the curriculum and for teaching materials. Materials produced in French for French-speaking students are inappropriate for students learning French as a second language, even those in an immersion program, because the level of language proficiency does not match the age level, and there are problems with the vocabulary level, the reading level and the different cultural references. Materials developed for French immersion programs in other provinces are available, but these are not developed with Québec culture in mind and do not necessarily match the needs of English-speaking Québec students. Schools incorporating the immersion model of French instruction do so with no additional funding, although the parallel structures that operate in these schools cost more than a single language system, because the extra French taught in English-language schools is not considered to be a program in the way that “francization” is considered to be a program in French-language schools.

However, teaching French by immersion is common only in larger schools. Smaller schools must husband their resources carefully, and most of them do not have the luxury of qualified immersion teachers.

ABEE 5.3 a. Invest time and money to ensure that English students integrate into Québec society with the requisite language skills in French and English.

ABEE 5.3 b. Invest time and money to allow release time for ELA and FSL teachers at the same grade level for co-planning to align requirements in the two curricula.

ABEE 5.3 c. Develop materials for immersion programs to teach the language as well as to teach in the language.

ABEE 5.3 d. Encourage the establishment of teacher education programs and in-service programs for immersion teachers based on research and on existing expertise in second language instruction.

ABEE 5.3 e. Support teachers who are teaching several levels and in both languages with extra professional learning opportunities and extra resources.

5.4 Bilingualism and employment

Statistics Canada reports that:

According to provincial government reports, while bilingual English speakers earned 17% more than unilingual French speakers in 1970, this advantage was reduced to zero by 2000. Despite the expectation that greater French-language competency leads to greater success in the job market, ESC [English-speaking Communities] bilinguals (as well as those who are unilingual) have lower income levels than French-speaking bilinguals.²⁴

English mother tongue Quebecers are the most bilingual in Canada. French-English bilingualism in this group increased from 37% in 1971 to 69.8% in 2006, rising to 82.5% among the under 24 years group,²⁵ yet they are among the most disadvantaged in terms of employment.²⁶ Many young English speakers, even though they may be fully bilingual, report that there is a glass ceiling that makes it difficult for them to establish a professional space in Québec.²⁷ In Québec, they believe they are never good enough,²⁸ and this, combined with opportunities elsewhere, has led to the well-documented exodus of well-educated, bilingual, English-speaking families, taking with them their skills, earning abilities and tax contributions to better paid jobs in the rest of Canada and elsewhere.

Outside Québec, their educational level and bilingualism give Québec's English speakers an elite status and also make them attractive employees in the global community. ABEE has argued in the past²⁹ that these well-educated, bilingual young people should be seen as a strength, not a threat in Québec, and they should be encouraged to stay and contribute to the economic and social wealth of the province's society. It is up to the majority population of the province to decide whether they want this to happen, with the government leading the way.

The *Office québécois de la langue française* published a survey in November 2017³⁰ showing that over the previous 20 years, the proportion of people over 18 years old who used French in the workplace had remained stable overall and had increased for Québec's English speakers. They attributed this to the success of the province's linguistic policies, despite the presence of external factors that favoured the use of English. It might also be attributed to the school system's success in teaching French or to the willingness of English speakers to assimilate into the French-speaking majority.

ABEE 5.4 a. With the Minister responsible for Higher Education, demonstrate Québec's wish to retain English-speaking youth in the province by convening a summit of interested parties to propose strategies for doing so.

ABEE reiterates its recommendation that MEES support free French instruction for all non-French-speaking adults living in Québec who wish to learn the language, not only newly-arrived immigrants.³¹

ABEE 5.4.b. Make available and promote free French instruction to adult learners, regardless of how long they have been living in Québec or their level of education.

24 Statistics Canada. A portrait of the English-speaking communities in Québec. June 2011, p. 7. Retrieved from https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/com-com.nsf/eng/h_01229.html.

25 Ibid., p. 5.

26 Floch, W. Communities in Context Research Initiative, 2013.

27 ABEE, 2016, *Keeping the Door Open for Young English-speaking Adults in Québec*.

28 *Creating Spaces for Young Quebecers: Strategic Orientations for English-speaking Youth in Quebec*. <http://qcgq.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Creating-Spaces-English-low-res.pdf>.

29 ABEE, 2016, *Keeping the Door Open for Young English-speaking Adults in Québec*.

30 https://www.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca/office/communiqués/2017/20171123_etude-langue-publique_travail.aspx.

31 See ABEE, 2010. *Educating Today's Québec Anglophone*. p. 20.

6.0 THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CLIMATE FOR THE MINORITY COMMUNITY

6.1 *A community taken for granted*

Today, the social and political climate in Quebec is the most negative factor affecting English education. The substance of the issue lies in the community's continued existence as an integral part of Quebec's future. (p. 4)

This sentiment has not changed in 25 years. Many members of the English-speaking population still feel that they are taken for granted and that their contribution to Québec society, past, present and future, is not valued, although they have always been part of the fabric of the province. Some express the feeling that they are now in "survival mode." In fact, the English education sector has produced a cadre of well-educated, bilingual young people who can contribute to all aspects of the economic, social, cultural and political life of Québec. The English-speaking communities are human capital for the province, willing and able to make these contributions, as well as providing links to the rest of Canada and the broader world community. Recent Cabinet and bureaucratic changes seem to acknowledge this, and the community looks forward to a reversal of the practices that have eroded English-language institutions, such as the health system, that have lowered the status and, correspondingly, the morale of the province's English-speaking population. ABEE hopes that the changes made by the present government will be firmly entrenched enough to become permanent practice.

But old myths die hard, among them the myth of the rich anglophone. The 2016 census showed that in 2015, people who spoke French at home earned more than those who spoke English at home in all provinces and territories of Canada except Alberta, New Brunswick and Yukon, where English speakers earned slightly more. In Québec, the median income of French speakers was \$32 470 and of English speakers, \$29 843.³²

There is a widespread conviction among English speaking Quebecers, that their community is considered expendable by Quebec's French speaking majority. This makes efforts at securing the future and quality of English education appear futile. The English language school system cannot, by itself, shore up the English speaking community. (p. 4)

Part of the malaise in the English-language school system stems from the perceived lack of opportunities for English speakers in the affairs of the province. Part of it comes from the frustration of being forced to take on the role as the only buttress of the English community with little support from other organizations, such as health and social services, where structural changes have led to reduced opportunities for providing services to English speakers. This places a great burden on the English school system to be the primary provider for all these services, whereas these external agencies should be supporting the school system. A strong community is needed to support a strong school system. We shall return to this issue in Section 8.4.

32 William Johnson, "Nés pour un petit pain" is far from today's truth" *Montreal Gazette*, September 27, 2017. A8.

6.2 Decline in community vitality

Although the population decline is a shared phenomenon across Québec, the impact on the English community—and the English educational system—is proportionately much greater, as is the out-migration to other provinces. Between 1971 and 2001, almost 50% of English speakers born in Québec had left the province.³³ Because of the already small numbers in the English population in rural areas, the effect of decreasing numbers is disproportionately important for rural English schools.

If graduates of English schools do not have access to employment in Quebec they will seek it elsewhere. The better trained they are, the easier their moving out will be. If young English-speaking people continue to see their future in Quebec as problematic, then the message received by potential English-speaking immigrants to Quebec, particularly those with skills and resources, will be that Quebec is not a land of opportunity for their own children. The circle then becomes vicious, robbing Quebec of both existing and potential sources of demographic, economic and social strength. (Table 15) (p. 4)

Allard and Landry³⁴ describe the desire of young people to leave home and to be autonomous as “typical” but also report that only 34% of the English-speaking students they surveyed planned to stay in, or return to, their home region after study. Some of this was attributed to the political situation, but the decline in the economic situation in many rural areas continues to be an important factor. Added to this is the lack of post-secondary education opportunities in English, especially in Eastern and Western Québec. A high school graduate who leaves the region to study, faced with career opportunities in urban areas or outside Québec, being persuaded by the majority population that he does not have the French-language skills to work in his home region, and unappreciated for the skills he does have, is unlikely to be attracted “home.”

Even more distressing, Floch³⁵ estimates the retention rate of the English-speaking minority in Québec in 2011 was 55.8%, ranging from 33.8% for those with post-graduate degrees to 67.8% for those without a secondary school diploma, compared with 96.7% retention for the French-speaking majority, independent of their educational attainment. He argues that this has contributed to a relative loss in socio-economic status for English speakers who stayed in Québec. In 2011, the proportion of English speakers in Québec without an educational certificate of any sort was much lower than among French speakers, especially in the 25–44 age group. In contrast, the proportion of English speakers who had at least a bachelor’s degree was much higher. This makes it hard to explain why the proportion of unemployed English speakers in the 25–44 cohort was greater among English speakers. Far more of this age group had a total income under \$20 000 in 2011 and fewer of them reported a total income over \$50 000. Upward mobility has become outward mobility for well-educated English speakers. This exodus of highly educated wage earners affects Québec society as a whole, but has a disproportionately large effect on the vitality of the English-speaking community.

Unless the concept of an English speaking community is supported and given real importance, there is little foundation on which to build or rebuild an English school system. If the arguments underlying Bill 101, that such legislation was necessary to protect and preserve Quebec’s threatened French speaking society, are still valid, then applying them today to Quebec’s English fact is very much in order. Of the two communities, the francophone majority and the English speaking minority, which is the more threatened? (p. 4)

33 Statistics Canada. A portrait of the English-speaking communities in Québec. June 2011, p. 4. Retrieved from https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/com-com.nsf/eng/h_01229.html.

34 Réal Allard, Rodrigue Landry. Graduating from an English High School in Quebec: Postsecondary Education Aspirations and Career Plans. Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities. 2014.

35 Floch, William, Socio-Economic Trends and Composite Indicators of Community Vitality Quebec and its Regions, 1996-2011. Presentation to ABEE, September 26, 2011.

See also: Floch, William, & Joanne Pocock, (2013). “The socio-economic status of English-speaking Quebec: Those who left and those who stayed.” In Richard Bourhis (Ed.). *Decline and prospects of the English-speaking communities of Quebec* (pp. 129- 173). Ottawa: Canadian Heritage, and Moncton: Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, p. 162.

This fear of a threatened language has not changed, yet there is recent evidence³⁶ showing that the French language is no longer threatened in Québec and neither is the English language. The issue is no longer that of individual speakers, and the answer to the Task Force's rhetorical question is: the English-speaking community as a whole.

"Though the English language is not threatened in Quebec, there is strong evidence that the vitality of the English speaking communities of Quebec (ESCQ) is declining demographically and on the institutional front."³⁷

"...the main concern facing the ESCs is not the future of the English language, which enjoys prominence in both North America and the world, but rather the future of the communities themselves, especially those in rural or remote locations."³⁸

The "Englishness" of individual Quebecers may not be threatened, but Quebec's English speaking community as a working part of the larger Quebec society cannot function without the requisite human resources to make its collective contribution. If it is prevented from renewing itself, it will simply fade away. Continuing to shut it off from its traditional sources of replenishment can and will be construed as a delayed but deliberate death sentence. (p. 4)

The English speaking community, as a minority in Quebec, must build on its strengths and potential as a community. Minority education must be equal in quality but not necessarily identical to majority education. Minority schools have a fundamental role to play in the maintenance and vitality of their communities. Decision making authority over a number of key areas of program content and delivery must be assured to the community. (p. 5)

The weakening of the vitality of English communities in Québec has been studied extensively over the past 25 years, particularly since 2000, and is well summarized by Landry and Allard.³⁹

ABEE continues to maintain the need for equity ("equal in quality"), rather than equality ("identical to majority education") in the management and financing of English-language education in the province and the need for local control and management.⁴⁰ One example of equitable funding would acknowledge the remoteness, in many regions, of English schools from each other and from their school boards.

ABEE 6.2 a. Maintain local control of education through a strong network of effective school boards.

ABEE 6.2 b. Ensure equitable funding that takes into account the particular needs of the English education system.

The tradition of volunteerism was described as "a successful cultural phenomenon" among English speakers that keeps many English communities viable and functioning. Sadly, the number of volunteers in a community may be the result of the lack of opportunity for paid work in that community, and traditional volunteers are an aging group. But there is a great willingness among community groups to work with schools, using their own—already stretched—budgets to do so. Their initiatives to support schools should be funded by the education system.

ABEE 6.2 c. Allow community groups to access MEES funds for projects of direct benefit to schools and students.

36 <https://www.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca/ressources/sociolinguistique/index.html>.

37 Richard Y.Bourhis, The Decline of the English School System in Quebec and What Can Be Done about it, Keynote to the Research Forum on Prospects for the English School System in Québec, Faculty of Education, McGill University, March 15, 2016

38 *A portrait of the English-speaking communities in Québec*. Retrieved September, 10, 2017 from https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/com-com.nsf/eng/h_01229.html.

39 Rodrigue Landry, Réal Allard. "Bilinguisme et construction identitaire d'élèves d'écoles de langue anglaise au Québec." *Linguistic Minorities and Society*. Number 7, 2016, "Au Québec, des signes de l'affaiblissement de la vitalité des communautés de Langue anglaise se manifestent (Bourhis, 2013 a ; Caldwell, 2002 ; Dickinson, 2007 ; Landry, 2013b ; Landry, Allard et Deveau, 2013b ; Stevenson, 1999). Le nombre d'inscriptions d'élèves à l'école de langue anglaise est faible en raison surtout des mesures protectionnistes de la langue française associées à la loi 101 (Bourhis et Foucher, 2012 ; Lamarre, 2007, 2013 ; Landry, 2013c ; Pilote et Bolduc, 2007). On constate de plus une baisse dans l'accès aux services de santé en anglais (Carter, 2013), un exode des jeunes anglophones les plus scolarisés et une diminution du niveau socioéconomique de la population de langue anglaise (Floch et Pocock, 2013), une faible représentation des anglophones dans la fonction publique du Québec (Bourhis, 2013b), ainsi que des difficultés dans les secteurs de la représentation politique et de la gouvernance communautaire (Jedwab, 2005, 2013 ; Jedwab et Maynard, 2013). Foucher (2013) conclut que les droits linguistiques des anglophones pourraient être menacés au Québec en raison d'une trop forte accentuation des droits linguistiques individuels et d'une trop faible reconnaissance de leurs droits collectifs. Une étude récente, toutefois, souligne que la baisse de vitalité de la communauté de langue anglaise au Québec révèle moins une atténuation de la vitalité de la langue anglaise qu'un affaiblissement de vitalité communautaire associé aux possibilités de réaliser un véritable projet d'autonomie culturelle (Landry et coll., 2013b)".

40 ABEE 2013. *One Size Does Not Fit All: Distinct Solutions for Distinct Needs*. Section 6.

6.3 Community institutions

Quebec's English speaking community has a well developed set of institutions. It needs to define its own cultural and educational goals as well as the degree of independence and self determination it wishes to pursue in its education system. It must foster the community support it needs in order to build viable frameworks and strategies for achieving its goals in education. (p. 5)

With the decline of institutions such as churches, the English community institutions continue to grow and develop strategies to support their constituencies, and progress has been made since 1992 to establish equity. Notable among these initiatives developed since 1992 are the Québec Community Groups Network (QCGN),⁴¹ the umbrella organization for 53 local community groups in all regions of the province, and the CLCs, which started with 15 partner schools and centres in 2006 and have grown to 85 schools and centres in 2017. Both QCGN and the CLCs rely on funding from Heritage Canada. The CLCs' goals include fostering student success, which in turn leads to increased community vitality. They benefit the students of the school where they are located as much as the local community and merit more funding from educational resources.

The CLC network may be seen as an indirect response to the Task Force observation that:

In many places, the English school is the last cultural institution of an English community. In many more, it is an endangered species. Schools, especially those in isolated communities, should be organized with the necessary resources to provide learning, literacy and cultural services to the whole community. This would enhance the concept of school as a community service and resource centre for children and adults. (p. 9)

CLCs demonstrate an example of lifelong learning by involving adult community members in cooperation with the local school community. The particular programs in each centre vary with the needs of the community, but all involve community members and students, provide resources and programs for the community, and serve to bring the community into the school to the benefit of both adults and children. Unfortunately, there is no ministerial acknowledgement of the benefit of these centres to the schools and communities where they exist. CLCs are not fully sustainable and are perpetually in danger of closure because of lack of funding. Not only do CLCs occupy space in schools, they also contribute to community vitality, and their presence in schools should be taken into account when the occupancy of a school is under consideration.

ABEE 6.3 a. Ensure sustained funding to CLCs to support their mission of student success.

The availability of money from the Canada-Québec Agreement is sometimes used as an argument against providing a disproportionate amount of funding to the English school system, but ABEE suggests that this argument is a canard. We propose that the English sector should receive *a priori* enough of the provincial education budget to ensure equity with the French sector, and that the money from the Canada-Québec Agreement should be used only as top-up funding for minority language education, in effect, bilingual education, as it is in other provinces. It also seems strange to ABEE that the Québec government takes a slice of this funding before it is allocated to English education, whereas in other provinces there is a more direct application of funds to minority language issues and more transparency in its distribution.

ABEE 6.3 b. In conjunction with the Treasury Board, re-examine the allocation of funds from the Canada-Québec Agreement and make its findings transparent.

41 <http://www.qcgn.ca>.

7.0 SCHOOL BOARDS

5) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION recognize that the English-speaking community must have the control and management of its school boards within a broad framework established by the Minister of Education, in order that it may transmit its language, values and culture and meet the learning needs of young English-speaking Quebecers.

(6) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION seek guaranteed constitutional protection for English language school boards, comparable to the one now given to confessional minorities.

(7) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION seek the inclusion of provisions protecting the right to English education in the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms of Quebec. (p. 8)

The Task Force predated the change from confessional to linguistic school boards and reported that: “The vast majority of the people consulted were clearly in favor of the organization of Quebec education along linguistic lines.”⁴² In the change to linguistic school boards, control and management have been maintained at a cost, and may even have privileged the marginalization of the minority group by the majority. Protection for linguistic boards is implied under Section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, but it is not an absolute guarantee and has gradually been eroded.

Yet the literature on community vitality maintains that local institutional control is crucial,⁴³ and remains at the forefront of attention for English-language school boards. ABEE notes that one of the culprits in the erosion of control and management is contained in Bill 105. The veto power that Bill 105 gives the Minister regarding the closing of schools appears to be a breach of the principle of meaningful local control and management, and ABEE believes that this veto power should not exist.

ABEE 7.0 a. Define clearly the circumstances where the Minister of Education might invoke a veto under Bill 105.

A strength of the English-language school boards is their creativity in finding resources to fund solutions to local student needs. Several smaller school boards have coordinated efforts to share some services, while still maintaining their local flavour and still meeting the needs of their local communities. The change to linguistic school boards has gone some way to remedying the fragmentation in the system and ABEE notes that locally controlled school boards reflect community needs well, addressing the local needs expressed by parents and the community at large as well as they can.

It is also admirable that all English-language school boards collaborate at all levels—teachers, complementary services, administrators and directors general—to consolidate resources and use them as wisely as possible. Ironically, coordination often occurs *de facto* because the diminishing size of the English-speaking community means that the same people are called on to play many different roles, so there is a danger that much of their work is fragmented. There is still a need for concerted leadership, a role that is difficult because of the variety of organizations involved, each with its own preoccupations, but one that should be the responsibility of the ADM.

ABEE 7.0 b. ABEE continues to endorse strongly the Task Force recommendations 5, 6 and 7 regarding the right to English-language education and local control and management by democratically elected school boards.

42 Chambers, 1992, p.8.

43 ABEE 2008, Consultation on School Democracy. Letter to Minister of Education. http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/references/publications/results/detail/article/consultation-on-school-democracy/?no_cache=1&cHash=9dea46d14f2131a095c9156055da0408.

8.0 SCHOOLS

8.1 The “English” character of schools

The province’s change to linguistic school boards removed the Task Force’s concerns regarding the confessional system and was endorsed by the Task Force. It has been replaced by the concern that the increase in the French instruction offered by the schools has blurred the definition of “English school,” a question asked as far back as 1992:

HOW ENGLISH ARE THE SCHOOLS?

Other influences have affected English education in Quebec. It seeks to bridge a French-inspired structure and curriculum system and a North American educational community of organizations, textbooks, professional literature and research. It has ceased to be very “English”, framed as it is by a French structure and terminology, curriculum systems and highly detailed bureaucratic regulations, many of which are quite foreign to English traditions. In addition, 50% of kindergarten and elementary students are following at least one-half of their program in French and 25% of secondary students are following one or more subjects in French. (Table 21)

Section 5.1 described some of the impact of increased French instruction on English schools, and schools in the English system should more correctly be called bilingual schools.

The school is where teachers and parents interact. Existing patterns of teacher-parent collaboration must be strengthened and school administrators encouraged to facilitate the involvement of parents in their children’s learning process and progress. Programs giving parents the tools and the confidence to be involved in their children’s education must be promoted and facilitated. (p. 9)

There is a long tradition of parent involvement in the English school system that predates the establishment of governing boards and parent participation organizations. Parents are generally welcomed as volunteers in English-language schools, either informally, or as members of the Québec Federation of Home and School Associations, founded in 1944,⁴⁴ the English Parents’ Committee Association (EPCA), or the *Fédération des comités de parents du Québec* (FCPQ). As English-language school boards increasingly hire teachers whose first language is French, they will need to ensure that the kind of communication between home and school that has been such an important feature of their success is not diminished, if the parents are more at ease communicating in English and if the teachers are not steeped in this tradition.

44 https://www.facebook.com/pg/QFHSA/about/?ref=page_internal “The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations Inc. is an independent, incorporated, not for profit volunteer organization dedicated to enhancing the education and general well-being of children and youth. The Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations Inc. promotes the involvement of parents, students, educators and the community at large in the advancement of learning and acts as a voice for parents.”

8.2 Small schools

Most English schools are small schools, with fewer than 200 students. Many cannot offer a complete range of programs and services. Small schools can therefore be seen as a problem or, conversely, as an opportunity to offer learning on a human scale and to use informal approaches. Particularly successful are small alternative schools for dropouts and students at risk. (p. 9)

The small school service, established in the 1990s by the Ministry of Education, is no longer operating, although small schools still constitute an important proportion of the English school system.

Table 5. Population of public schools, 2015-2016⁴⁵

NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN SCHOOL	FRENCH		ENGLISH	
	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	PERCENT-AGE OF TOTAL	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	PERCENT-AGE OF TOTAL
≤ 100	220	10.9	63	23
101-200	327	16.2	44	16.1
201-500	989	49	118	43.2
501-1000	379	18.7	41	15.0
1000+	108	5.3	7	2.6
TOTAL	2 023	100	273	100

Table 5 shows that while the percentage of large schools is greater in the French sector than in the English sector, and there is about the same proportion of schools in the 101-200-student range, there is a much higher proportion of English schools having fewer than 100 students.

Small schools receive extra funding as recommended by the Task Force's ninth recommendation to revise budgetary rules, but the school board is still penalized financially if the student population is too low. The same issues that affect all English schools, such as rigid parameters for funding and for school organization, an inflexible curriculum, and lack of services and resources in English, affect small schools to a greater extent. For example, to be eligible for pre-kindergarten funding, a school needs a minimum of six students. Small school boards cannot form groups large enough to be eligible for funding, yet if these schools are in remote areas, their population of students is often particularly in need of the kind of early intervention available in pre-kindergarten. Any initiatives by the school board to support these children involve taking resources from other projects. Finally, the development and application of the budgetary rules remains opaque to many in the school system.

ABEE 8.2. Adjust budgetary rules to reflect equity, not the number of children in the school, such as using a sliding scale for services, depending on the size of the school.

45 Source: Charlemagne system, January 26, 2017.

8.3 Remoteness of schools

If size is a factor that must be taken into account, so is transportation. Many students must travel close to two hours twice a day. New patterns of school organization should be examined and tried. These might include four day attendance/one day individual study patterns; alternative workstudy and community service patterns. (p. 9)

As well as the small size of schools, it must be remembered that, in rural areas, they are usually geographically isolated from other schools and from the school board head office and its resources.⁴⁶ The strain on these schools to offer high quality instruction, comparable to the availability of courses and resources in larger schools, or the provision of professional help is clear. Teachers' remoteness from each other is helped to some extent by classroom-to-classroom links facilitated by LEARN in six English-language school boards, but the problem of easy access to professional support has not been solved.

It does not seem that the new patterns of school organization proposed in 1992, nor other ideas such as using peripatetic teachers, have been used to address the problems of small, dispersed populations, although newer technologies could make the option of online classes attractive. Even so, the availability of high quality "close-to-home" education was described to ABEE as a birthright for all children, education at a distance is not appropriate for all students, especially young ones, and the use of technology demands a robust and reliable infrastructure that is not always available.

Some school boards' experiments with sharing resources such as transportation have not been without difficulty, but show a willingness to economize on central office expenses. These experiments could also include such things as payroll for adjacent English-language boards.

ABEE 8.3 a. Convene a meeting of educators and community members to propose innovative solutions for delivering a wide variety of programs to small schools in remote regions.

ABEE 8.3 b. Establish pilot projects, with funding for their implementation and evaluation, to test the proposed solutions.

ABEE 8.3 c. Establish consultations regarding sharing of resources among neighbouring school boards where this is appropriate.

⁴⁶ "The distance between schools in rural areas makes it difficult for them to have face-to-face contact with the school board, with other schools within the board, and with schools in other English boards. The Eastern Townships School Board covers the same land area as Belgium. . . . The [Eastern Schores] school board head office in New Carlisle is 350 km from one school in Baie-Comeau, and 825 km from another in Grosse Isle. Travel from Baie-Comeau to the school board office requires a minimum of seven hours of travel by ferry and automobile." ABEE, 2013. *One size does not fit all: Distinct solutions for distinct needs*, p. 12.

8.4 The school and its community

The 2011 Statistics Canada report confirmed a growing realization among English speakers in Québec :

Although once perceived to be a socio-economic elite, in the last forty years the province's English-speaking minority has been in a state of decline, losing vitality against measures such as population, institutional network and legal status. . . . the main concern facing the ESCs [English-speaking communities] is not the future of the English language, which enjoys prominence in both North America and the world, but rather the future of the communities themselves, especially those in rural or remote locations.⁴⁷

Writing in an Ontario context about school closures, the Canadian Education Association writes in terms that ring true for English schools in rural Québec communities:

Schools play many roles in our communities. School boards would remind us that they exist to educate our children, which is true; however, these schools are so much more. Municipal politicians and community residents regard schools as an important part of the community's fabric and self-image. Some researchers have argued that schools should be classified as a public good. Schools are also considered key to building a community's social capital. There is evidence that a healthy, stable community enhances students' academic performance and by extension, the viability of schools.

Schools are important symbols, valued as the focal point of the community, "as markers of community history." School buildings and equipment support community activities; they are places where residents meet and build connections. Schools contribute in a big way to a community's health, well-being, and sense of place. Local government planners also recognize the important and diverse role played by community schools as a stabilizing factor, especially in inner city communities and in small towns and rural communities. As Witten et al. note, "schools are more than buildings where a curriculum is delivered."

A school closure can have a significant and often negative impact on students, families and communities. When a school closes, it becomes difficult to attract families with young, school-age children. Businesses can have trouble attracting employees with families. The loss of a community school symbolizes a community in trouble.

The loss of these local institutions can adversely affect the long-term vitality, resilience, and overall well-being of a rural community. Schools in rural communities are a source of local identity and community pride, and they typically reflect a community's particular culture, values, or way of life. Schools provide rural communities with important infrastructure that local residents need and that might not be available otherwise, such as recreation facilities, libraries, and gathering places for social events. When a school closes in a small town or rural community, children are bused to schools elsewhere, an experience that can be stressful for children and parents.⁴⁸

The Board heard the opinion: "Lose the elementary school, lose the community," and indeed, English-speaking communities in the regions have experienced attrition when the school closes, as young families move to communities where they can educate their children in the language of their choice.

47 Statistics Canada. A portrait of the English-speaking communities in Québec. June 2011, p. 2. Retrieved from https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/com-com.nsf/eng/h_01229.html

48 Mark Seasons, Bill Irwin, Robert Rappolt. *School Closures and Communities: There must be a better way*. EdCan Network, May 2017. Retrieved Nov. 2017 from: https://www.edcan.ca/articles/school-closures-communities/?utm_source=Bulletin+and+

8.5 The school as a cultural protector and transmitter

Québec's ideology is based in nationalism, in contrast with the more international perspective of English speakers. In the existing paradigm, how can cultures other than French, especially the cultures and heritages of English speakers, be preserved, protected and promoted? Franco-Ontarians accommodate this dichotomy as part of the school curriculum. In Québec schools, any concession to addressing the English cultural heritage is done in addition to the prescribed curriculum.

The millennial generation and their children in Québec have a different view of their culture and heritage from that of their predecessors. They have grown up as a linguistic minority in an increasingly—at least in urban areas—multicultural environment, and have benefited from much-improved instruction in French. One of the successes of the English school system has been described as the way it has increased the assimilation of English speakers into French life. What is “English” culture and how can it be preserved in Québec? How can English speakers maintain their traditional cultures while living successfully within the majority community?

The situation for minority English-language education in Québec is in stark contrast to Ontario's 2005 policy for French-language education.⁴⁹

Aménagement linguistique is defined as the implementation by educational institutions of planned systemic interventions to ensure the protection, enhancement, and transmission of the French language and culture in a minority setting . . . to counter the gradual assimilation of its members into the Anglo-Canadian community. (p. 5)

French-language education offsets the linguistic and cultural erosion of the minority French-language community. . . . French-language education is an essential element in the sustainable development (i.e., the maintenance and growth) of the francophone community. (p. 6)

The uniqueness of French-language schools lies in the fact that their mission is not only to educate their students but also to protect, enhance, and transmit the language and culture of the community they serve. Protecting, enhancing, and transmitting the language and culture are an explicit part of their mandate. (p. 8)

A major difference comes from language laws in Québec, intended to protect the French language, that restrict the use of English. A second difference is that English-speaking immigrants to Québec are not allowed to attend English-language schools (with rare exceptions) while French-speaking immigrants to other provinces in Canada are encouraged to enrol in the French school systems. Third, the mission of English education in Québec is quite different.

In 2016, ABEE wrote:

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 study⁵⁰ defined their mission as being aligned with the government's aim of increasing the number of French speakers in the province.⁵¹

49 *Aménagement linguistique* 2005. Retrieved from: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/policy/linguistique/linguistique.pdf>.

50 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).

51 ABEE, 2016. *Keeping the Door Open for Young English-speaking Adults in Québec*.

This echoed the Task Force Report:

English schools in Quebec have a special mission. They must transmit an English cultural heritage as well as a sound knowledge of French. They must provide leadership in literacy and learning as well as represent a synthesis of English and French cultural and linguistic traditions. (p. 9)

All English schools must assure high levels of literacy in spoken and written English and in reading for content analysis, as well as exposure to rich and appropriate selections of English literature. English schools, often the only centres in small and remote communities, must be able to provide cultural enrichment and stimulation as well as literacy training for all members of the community. (p. 12)

It reinforced Pilote and Bolduc's finding in 2008:

Le système scolaire anglophone québécois n'a donc pas, selon eux, le mandat de transmettre une culture anglophone ou des valeurs spécifiques, mais : "we have a mandate from the Ministry of Education, which is to socialize, to instruct and to qualify – not to protect the culture".⁵²

While observing that the local school could not revitalize the minority language community on its own, the Senate Standing Committee on Official Languages noted that:

Education is the starting point for revitalizing Québec's English-speaking communities. This sector of development is key to transmitting, maintaining and developing the communities' language, heritage and culture.⁵³

52 Annie Pilote, Sandra Bolduc. *L'école de langue anglaise au Québec : Bilan des connaissances et nouveaux enjeux. Phase 2: Compte rendu des tables rondes des régions de Québec et de Montréal*. Institut canadien de recherche sur les minorités linguistiques. June 2008, p. 4.

53 Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages. *The vitality of Québec's English-speaking communities: From myth to reality*. March 2011, p. 21.

9.0 TEACHERS

Many teachers who entered the system in the 1960s and 1970s have watched enrolments decline, schools close and colleagues placed on surplus. They have often been bumped from one curriculum area to another and have seen resources and support systems shrink significantly. Many teachers feel they have lost control of their profession and their right to make professional decisions about curriculum and school policy. Their sense of powerlessness is often acute.

Teachers are doing their best in their own classrooms, often with outstanding success. Efforts are generally of an ad hoc nature taken on private initiative, and therefore not always sustainable. Unrealistic expectations are placed on teachers to deal with the added burdens of mainstreaming, multi-level classes and the requirements of a rigid curriculum. Teachers must be provided with professional development opportunities and teaching materials that will help them to deal effectively with individual student learning needs, different learning styles and the integration of students who have learning disabilities and those who are handicapped.

Over the next few years, many teachers will be retiring and, unless enrolments continue to decline sharply, there will be few opportunities to hire young teachers. They will need to have the skills for meeting more diverse student needs. The challenge will be for faculties of education to prepare teachers with the skills required. (p. 10)

The situations described here have changed very little overall, although there are variations across different parts of the province. Experienced teachers are still placed on availability in schools where there are decreasing numbers of students. There is frequently a mismatch between teachers' skills and staffing needs. For example, the shortage of qualified mathematics and science teachers continues to be a worldwide problem, and candidates for teacher education programs are more likely to have a humanities background. Yet mathematics and science have a prominent place in the curriculum and need qualified and enthusiastic teachers.

The increase of French immersion programs in many school boards has simultaneously reduced the number of jobs available for English-speaking teachers and caused a shortage of qualified teachers of French. Teaching in a second language demands different skills from teaching a second language or teaching in the student's mother tongue. Many teachers in these programs have not taken any courses pertinent to second language teaching and learning.

ABEE 9.0 a. Revise the universities' teacher education quotas to allow an increase in the number of teachers of French as a second language or by immersion.

Section 8.2 described the number of small schools in the English sector. One of the problems that this causes is that teachers in rural areas—and increasingly in the larger centres—usually teach multi-level classes as well as a range of disciplines. They use considerable personal initiative to modify the curriculum and a limited selection of learning materials to meet the needs of their students, and those needs have increased over the years.

The need for increased and innovative approaches to professional development for teachers is critical. Teacher mobility and exchanges must be promoted if teachers are to have opportunities for renewal. Schools and school boards should be encouraged to arrange exchange programs for teachers with business and public organizations in their regions.

(13) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION increase the support and funds for local school initiatives for staff renewal and development. (p. 10)

Teachers need a large repertoire of strategies to differentiate among the variety of learning needs in a single class, and many feel ill-prepared for the range of problems displayed by their students and ill-equipped in the subtleties of dealing with the variety of issues they face every day. (See Section 10.1). Teachers could be better prepared in their pre-service programs to teach students with special needs, or by specialized graduate programs. There is a feeling among some teachers that no amount of professional development activities can prepare them for the variety of challenges in the classroom, although they would be helped by the presence of professional support. School boards have shown great initiative in supporting in-service activities for teachers to learn to diversify their teaching practice and great ingenuity in allocating resources to integrate nearly all students into regular classes. There are still problems with the provision of support and remedial services, and the availability of professionals to assess and to provide support in English for students at risk, especially in the regions. This will be addressed further in Section 10.2.

ABEE 9.0 b. Revisit the Twelve Teacher Competencies⁵⁴ for their applicability to beginning teachers' needs, especially for teaching students with special needs and in multi-level classes.

ABEE 9.0 c. Establish graduate programs in Inclusive Education to build greater capacity among teachers to improve services to students with special needs.

ABEE 9.0 d. Provide core funding for professional aides to support teachers, especially in classes with large numbers of students with special needs.

The rapid integration of technology into classroom practice has meant that many teachers need to learn new skills to integrate these tools into their teaching, and even young teachers, who tend to be more comfortable with digital tools, need help with implementing technology in the classroom. This has implications for both pre-service programs and for teachers in service. This is an opportunity for newly graduated teachers and more experienced teachers to work together to share expertise. All this implies a need for a review of teacher education programs for pre-service teachers and targeted professional learning opportunities for in-service teachers.⁵⁵

(12) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION explore, in collaboration with school boards and teachers' organizations, ways of supporting opportunities for increased teacher mobility to allow for enriching career experiences.

There have been changes in the thinking behind professional development for teachers since 1992. One-shot workshops designed by administrators at various levels are often seen by teachers as irrelevant, and have been replaced with other strategies more targeted to teachers' expressed needs. One of these is a series of summer institutes on topics such as elementary mathematics and creative writing. These sessions are organized and funded by LCEEQ, schools and school boards. Funding for school-level initiatives managed by LCEEQ, such as Professional Development Improvement Grants (PDIGs) and John Killingbeck scholarships,⁵⁶ have empowered teachers and have had a positive effect on their practice. They are awarded competitively and one requirement of the John Killingbeck scholarships is that the results are shared with colleagues, usually in a video production.

54 MEQ, *Teacher Training: Orientations, Professional Competencies*, <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/references/publications/results/detail/article/teacher-training-orientations-professional-competencies/pubLang/1/>.

55 ABEE, 2009. *High quality teachers and administrators for English-language schools in Québec: Preparation, induction and support*.

56 "Professional Development and Innovation Grants (PDIG) are available for teachers, library personnel and administrators who are looking for ways to improve student achievement in Québec's English schools. Professional Development Grants allow teachers/library personnel to improve their pedagogical practice. Innovation Grants are intended to support school teams to engage in systemic change within the school to promote student success."

"The John Killingbeck Teacher/Administrator Scholarship Program provides teachers, in-school administrators and centre directors, with opportunities for short-term study visits to exemplary schools or centres to experience good practice, carry out research and share information with a network of other participants." https://lceeq-files.s3.ca-central-1.amazonaws.com/documents/LCEEQ_Project_Funding_2017-2018.pdf.

There has also been a move, unique to the English sector, to evidence-based practice (EBP).⁵⁷ This project was initiated under the aegis of an ADM responsible for the English sector, thanks to the Canada-Québec Agreement funding, and has proved to be well received and productive. In EBP, research in education is introduced to teachers who then apply it in their classrooms in a targeted manner, review their practice with peers and mentors, and modify it when appropriate. Currently the EBP Project is working with a variety of educators from the nine English-language school boards on examining research data, such as the results of Response to Intervention (RTI), and investigating how it can be implemented at the local level, and what kind of professional development activities and resources are needed to support its implementation.

There remains an expressed need from teachers in the English school system for professional development to address the needs of inclusive classrooms and the wide range of student needs they contain. Possibly related to this is the growing concern for the need to support teachers' well-being and mental health.

ABEE 9.0 e. Revisit the Twelve Teacher Competencies for their applicability to beginning teachers' needs, especially in the incorporation of technology.

ABEE 9.0 f. Implement Section 22 (6.1) of the Education Act, which requires experienced teachers to mentor new colleagues.⁵⁸

ABEE 9.0 g. Provide more opportunities and funding for recertifying teachers in subject areas where there is a shortage of specialists.

ABEE 9.0 h. Promote the successes of professional learning activities to change the societal perception of professional development.

ABEE 9.0 i. Explore and support more targeted professional learning opportunities appropriate to locally expressed needs.

ABEE 9.0 j. Support local initiatives with appropriate funding for staff wellness programs.

(14) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION facilitate the establishment of a communications network for teachers in English schools in Québec.

(15) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION ensure that public recognition is given, to outstanding schools and staffs, innovative projects, new ideas, extraordinary service and great educators. (p. 10)

The rapid changes in technology over the past years have increased the ability to communicate, and there are now communication networks, via the Internet and through LCEEQ and LEARN, to share opportunities for professional learning, grants and resources initiated by the English sector. There is still a lack of communication between the *Ministère* and the English teaching profession, and teachers in the English sector are often unaware of ministerial initiatives, such as awards and grants. For example, MEES has teaching awards⁵⁹ in some subjects, such as reading, but these are not well known in the English school system.

ABEE 9.0 k. Use available electronic communication to convey up-to-date information between the *Ministère* and members of the English education system and to serve as a medium for promoting activities in the English education system.

ABEE 9.0 l. Publicize existing teaching awards more aggressively.

ABEE 9.0 m. Establish and broadly publicize provincial teaching awards comparable with the federal Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence.⁶⁰

57 <http://www.ebpquebec.com/>.

58 Section 22: A teacher shall: (6.1) collaborate in the training of future teachers and in the mentoring of newly qualified teachers

59 <http://www.gouv.qc.ca/EN/VotreGouvernement/Pages/PrixConcours.aspx>.

60 <https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/pmatae-ppmee.nsf/eng/home>.

10.0 STUDENTS

Every student, whether average, gifted or with learning difficulties, can benefit from alternative learning experiences. The teacher in the classroom is expected to help all students learn whatever their ability or learning style.

Most teachers have had insufficient preparation for such a diverse range of classroom needs. Support personnel such as classroom aides, psychologists, speech therapists, Youth Protection and social workers are in short supply or not available at all to English schools. . . . an urgent need for services in English still exists in many communities. Access to social services in English in every region of Quebec must be assured, if necessary by contracting for these services with those agencies with teams of English-speaking personnel. (p. 11)

(20) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION establish with the minister of health and Social Services an interministerial coordinating process to ensure that the health and social service needs are met in English schools. (p. 11)

This situation still applies and has grown in importance as more students are recognized as having learning difficulties or are classified as marginalized or underprivileged. New Approaches New Solutions (NANS) schools were established to meet the needs of marginalized or underprivileged students, but they are constantly in a catch-up position as more students are found to match the criteria of students needing support. Early identification and intervention are now recognized as key components in enabling students to reach their potential.

The identification of schools in disadvantaged areas using the postal codes of the students' addresses raises concerns. When schools are in well-populated areas, they may draw from postal codes with similar characteristics; when they draw from a much broader catchment area, there is often considerable variation among the socio-economic status of the students, making it difficult to define the student population accurately. Finally, the English school boards in a region are added on to existing agreements for sharing services between the education network and the health and social services network (*Ententes de complémentarité*) with the surrounding French school boards and the regional CIUSSSs. They would be better served in English if they could establish their own agreements.

ABEE 10.0 a. ABEE continues to endorse recommendation (20) of the Task Force Report regarding an inter-ministerial committee of education and health.

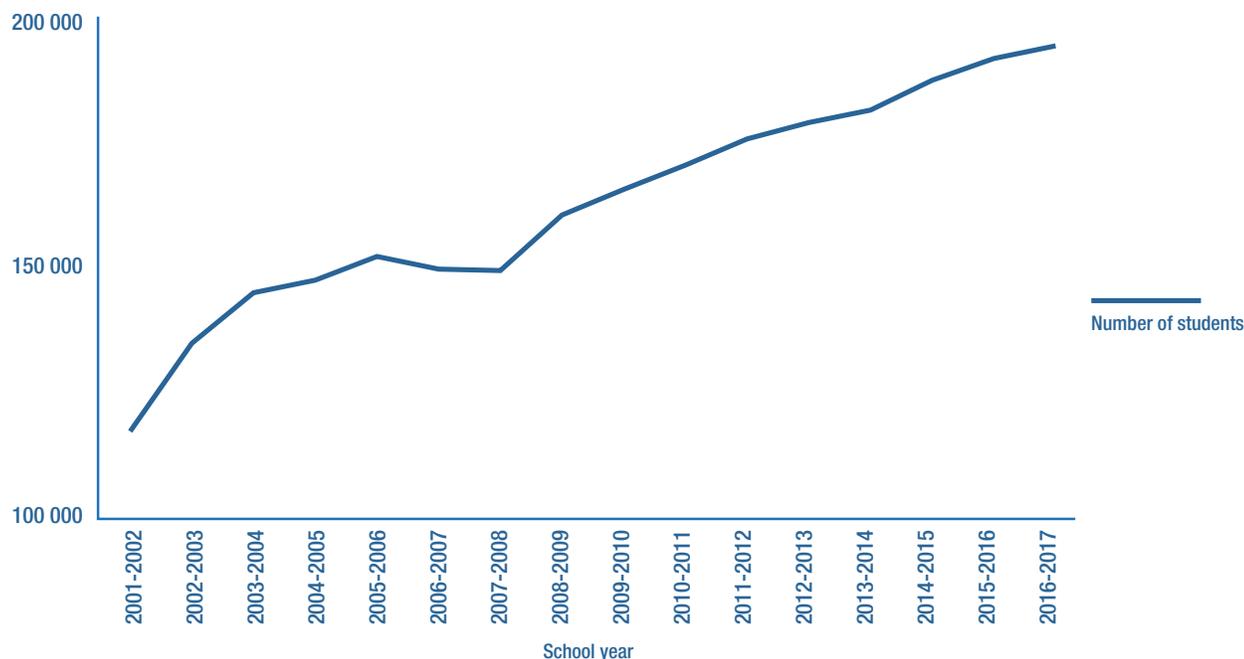
ABEE 10.0 b. Develop a more fine-grained system than the use of postal codes for identifying marginalized and underprivileged students.

ABEE 10.0 c. Mandate the health sector agencies to establish agreements with the English-language school boards in their respective regions.

10.1 Changes in the student population.

Since the Task Force Report was written, there have been changes in the characteristics of students in the classroom. Students are even more challenging than they were in 1992, and more students are identified as having social, intellectual or behavioural difficulties. (Figure 1)

Figure 1. Number of students with special needs in the public school system⁶¹



In the English school system, the great majority of these students are integrated into the “regular” classroom. In the 2015-2016 school year, 88.2% of children with difficulties in English-language public schools were integrated into mainstream classrooms, compared with 72.5% in French-language public schools.⁶²

Raised awareness of the realities of Indigenous peoples and their need for support has increased sensitivity to the needs of this population. Much needs to be done for Indigenous students, most of whom are educated predominantly in English, both in their communities and in southern schools, and this was addressed fully in an earlier brief.⁶³

61 Source: MEES, GIR, DGSEG, DIS, information portal, Charlemagne system, January 26, 2017 data.

62 MEES, GIR, DGSEG, DIS, information portal, Charlemagne system, January 26 2017, Presentation by the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation.

63 See ABEE, 2017 *Indigenous education: Walking on both sides of the river*.

The vocabulary has changed since 1992, with increased knowledge about students' needs, and there are now concerns about student well-being and student engagement. The 2015 PISA results for student well-being⁶⁴ showed that teenagers reported a life satisfaction level of 7.3 out of 10, but gave bullying at school and anxiety over tests and grades as two of their concerns. There are discussions among educators as to what needs to be done to develop student engagement and identity for all students, but especially the identity of minority and marginalized students. There is pressure on schools that educate minority students to teach them to function within the majority, but also to maintain the culture of their minority group, addressed in Section 8.5.

The English Montréal School Board (EMSB) operates successful alternative schools for high school students who do not function well in regular situations. Many students have mental health issues, are mildly intellectually impaired, or have language development problems making them vulnerable. They are identified as such, but because they are not coded, they fall below the radar and there is no funding for them. Changing the system to meet the needs of the child, such as special pathways within a school or an extra academic consolidation year, needs extra funding, which is not provided.

The Task Force Report restricted its work to the youth sector. Since it was written, much more emphasis has been placed on the adult sector, where there has been growth in the student population. This will be addressed in Section 13.

64 <http://www.oecd.org/newsroom/most-teenagers-happy-with-their-lives-but-schoolwork-anxiety-and-bullying-an-issue.htm>.

10.2 Complementary services

Access to educational services is uneven and the needs of many students are not addressed. (p. 6)

(17) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION ensure that sufficient resources are provided to make appropriate school intervention and/or integration possible without jeopardizing the education of any student. (p. 11)

In some regions, access to complementary educational services has declined and is now worse than “uneven.” The lack of access to support services in English to students who have English as a common language is a major problem. There are few providers of services such as speech therapy available in English and no incentives for English-speaking professionals to relocate to remote areas. The Report on the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages noted in 2011 that it is difficult to attract professionals, such as psychologists, to jobs that might be divided in communities as far apart as La Tuque, Jonquière and Thetford Mines.⁶⁵

The provision of classroom resources to support students with special needs is a constant request of the English educational system, where most students in difficulty are integrated into mainstream classes and the allocation for special needs support does not cover the number of students integrated into English-language classes. English school boards are to be commended for the ways they manipulate budgets to accommodate these students. School boards try to share services, but the distances involved mean that a professional in the regions spends an inordinate amount of time travelling, and this reduces the amount of contact with students to sporadic meetings with them. Small schools in the regions are limited as to how many students they can refer to a psychologist in a year, regardless of how many need to be referred, and waiting lists may be as long as two years in some regions. ABEE heard of a case where a school was allowed to refer only two students to the school board psychologist per year, regardless of the need, because of the lack of professionals. For the same reason, follow-up is often done through videoconference, a far from ideal situation.

Recently, the validation process for establishing codes for students with special needs has been revised so that the *Ministère* takes a sampling of the reports made at the school board level. This has reduced the amount of work for MEES staff, but has not changed the load on school board professionals who must still fill out detailed assessments on all the students, whether or not they form part of the sample group. Their time would be better spent supporting teachers and students.

ABEE 10.2 a. Provide more in-class support for students with special needs who are integrated into regular classes in English-language schools.

ABEE 10.2 b. Re-evaluate the process for establishing codes for students with special needs at the school board level.

ABEE 10.2 c. Provide the services of more psychologists to make assessments and provide remediation.

ABEE 10.2 d. Revise the salary scale of professionals (psychologists, speech-language pathologists, guidance counsellors and occupational therapists) in an effort to improve retention and recruitment.

ABEE 10.2 e. Provide incentives for English-speaking professionals to work in the regions.

One of the problems in attracting English-speaking professionals is the need for them to pass examinations in French to become members of the relevant professional order. Many bilingual candidates find these examinations to be too demanding of their skills in written French and move to another province. Conversely, when an English school board shares a French-speaking consultant or professional with a local French school board, there is no guarantee of the professional's English language skills because there is no parallel requirement for an English proficiency examination, as there is for teachers in English-language schools.

65 Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages, March 2011. *The vitality of Québec's English-speaking communities: From myth to reality*, p. 27.

Establishing alternative models of provision could reduce the pressure on existing complementary services. Pre-service teachers serve 700 hours of supervised internships in Québec schools. English-speaking students in social work, psychology, psychiatry, nursing and other professions could also be required to complete internships in Québec schools. This would give them experience working with children and would provide the schools with extra resources, under the supervision of university personnel and practising professionals. Since the problems are particularly acute in the regions, the students could be encouraged by the provision of living accommodations, as student teachers have received, in remote placements.

ABEE 10.2 f. Require students in professional university programs to serve internships in Québec schools.

(16) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION support services and resources for early identification and intervention for students with learning difficulties. (p. 11)

Research shows that children need language support as early as possible, certainly before 4 years of age, and ABEE commends the Minister's recent initiatives to support this. The early childhood centres (*centres de la petite enfance*, or CPEs) can serve this function in French, but there are few CPEs that provide services in English. CPEs function on a play-based curriculum with small groups of children, and the cost to parents is subsidized. A better model would be to merge them with pre-kindergarten and provide a free service. In March 2016, "Fifty-three early childhood education activities/programs [were] offered by or in collaboration with CLC schools."⁶⁶ The CLCs are compensating for the lack of such services in the mainstream education system, but there is surely a strong case for establishing preschool programs in English schools. These would identify children with special needs early enough for intervention to be useful.

ABEE 10.2 g. Establish a universal preschool program for Québec, not just in disadvantaged areas.

ABEE 10.2 h. Extend the mandate of NANS schools to accommodate students with special needs from preschool age.

ABEE 10.2 i. Establish CPEs that function in English to support early language development in English.

An example of community involvement with young children and their families is the establishment of an early childhood learning program called Bright Beginnings for children between 0 and 5 years in the Gaspé and Magdalen Islands. Its mission is to "Ensure that English-speaking children in the Gaspé and Magdalen Islands have early learning opportunities and strengthened families for lifelong success."⁶⁷ Transitions from preschool to kindergarten are more intense in the smaller centres in the regions because of the smaller numbers of children and greater distances involved. The Committee for Anglophone Social Action (CASA), coordinating with the Council for Anglophone Magdalen Islanders (CAMI) and Vision Gaspé-Percé Now, conducted a survey of anglophone parents in the region and found that, among other things: "Out of the 37 programs [for families of children 0-5 years old] offered by Francophone organizations, only six (16%) were available in English and the participation rate by English speakers in these available services was from 0 to 20%."⁶⁸ They have acted on the survey results and they are to be commended for filling a gap that is not being filled by the school system, given the lack of funding for small cohorts of children of preschool age.⁶⁹

66 http://www.learnquebec.ca/documents/20181/111781/learn_2016_09_06.pdf/882ce85b-0c5c-44e9-a9d6-8193adb41588, p. 66.

67 http://visiongaspereperce.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Final-ENGLISH-Action-Plan-BrightBeginnings_13mars.compressed.pdf, p. 6.

68 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

69 SPEC, May 3, 2017, p. 10.

There is a particular need for early intervention for young children of the 10 000 English-speaking residents of the Gaspé and Magdalen Islands who have the unenviable record of having the lowest socio-economic status of any official minority community in Canada, because research has consistently shown that these factors alone can have a negative effect on school engagement and performance. Yet they are not the only underprivileged group of English speakers in Québec. ABEE was surprised to realize that on the Island of Montréal, 17 elementary schools and 11 secondary schools are in low socio-economic neighbourhoods. Most of these schools are on the territory of the EMSB. The EMSB, which consistently places among the highest success rates of all public schools in the province for all its students, including those with special needs, is clearly accommodating the underprivileged students early in their school careers if they are so successful at the end of secondary school. It should be noted that there are proportionately more resources available on the Island of Montréal than in the Gaspé peninsula, where complementary services in English are rare.

ABEE 10.2 j. Support interventions for all children from 0 to 5 years old, with special funding for underprivileged English-speaking children.

Parents, the partners with the schools in educating their children, are often not given adequate information or support in order that they in turn can play the essential role of helping their children to learn. The children of parents with little formal education or low levels of literacy are the most vulnerable. Programs must be established to support and enhance the levels of learning and literacy in the homes and the community. (p. 11)

This comment in the Task Force Report acknowledges the prime role of the parents in the education of their children, and the vicious circle that develops for the children whose parents are, themselves, poorly educated. These parents' experiences make it unlikely that they will approach the authorities for assistance, so the assistance should take the initiative to go to them.

McGill University has developed a series of mental health seminars for parents, now in the second year of operation, that could be a model for practice. Programs jointly developed by universities and school boards, supported by structures such as the CLCs and parent groups such as QFHSA, EPCA, and FCPQ, would be especially valuable for parents who have the interest, but not necessarily the skills, to be the first teachers of their young children.

ABEE 10.2 k. Fund school boards to establish a support network for parents, especially parents of children with special needs, to receive support and training to help them with their children's education.

ABEE 10.2 l. Fund school boards to establish a coordinator to develop and disseminate, in conjunction with other organizations, programs to support parents as they help their young children to learn.

11.0 PROGRAMS OF STUDY

While there has been more involvement of English speaking educators in the production of materials and examinations in recent years, the Ministry's "régimes pédagogiques" – now ten years old – established detailed Quebec wide structures and programs at the elementary and secondary levels and extensive guidelines for content and teaching methods. In many instances, the curriculum of English schools and the final examinations became translations from the French. (p. 3)

As a result, English education policy in Quebec is largely a translation of French education policy. This is unacceptable if English education is to regain its distinctive character in order to give the best of itself to both its students and society. It must be part of the decision making process dealing with priorities, objectives and standards. Recognition must be given to the importance which Quebec is willing to place on its English education system and services. (p. 7)

In 2011, Statistics Canada wrote that "the ESCs [English-speaking communities] are less able to have an impact on decisions affecting policy and program development, particularly those that are not endorsed by the majority Quebec population."⁷⁰ They attributed this to the decline in the English-speaking population, especially its concentration in the metropolitan Montréal region, and the "disproportionately low representation" in government and the public service.

Although this refers to "policy and program development" in general, it rings true in the context of educational policy and curriculum development. English-speaking educators remain involved in the production of materials and examinations, although English education policy in Québec is still a translation of French education policy, and the curriculum and the ministerial examinations in English schools are translations from French. This becomes a problem in subjects that are laden with cultural content, as the recent concern over the content of the Secondary III and IV History program has highlighted. There is a need for consideration of other viewpoints early in the development of the curriculum, to entrench these viewpoints in the program, and not leave them to be taught—or not—depending on the teacher's choice.

(18) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION recognize and support alternative approaches to meet the diverse learning needs of students and to provide enrichment for gifted students through activities such as the use of community resources, CEGEP courses, computer networking and distance education. (p. 11)

The régimes pédagogiques with their rigid grids and detailed specifications are difficult to adapt to the overall philosophy and circumstances of English education, to the needs of rural schools and small schools and to the heterogeneous student populations of Quebec's English schools.

Although objectives can be added to the curriculum, the structure discourages the development and adaptation of courses at the local level. It is often difficult to match the objectives of the programs with the available English textbooks. (p. 12)

Soon after the Task Force Report was written, some schools in Québec began to adopt the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, which has provided an enriched program for students. More flexibility in the basic school curriculum and the placement of courses would allow academically advanced students to follow CEGEP courses and possibly increase their motivation. But neither of these solutions is useful for students who do not want to pursue further academic programs. For these students, the rigid, academically oriented school curriculum is inappropriate. We can imagine that a 16-year-old boy dropping out of school to work might be more encouraged to stay in a school that offered a more relevant curriculum, geared toward the employment opportunities in his region, and then staying in his local area instead of leaving for perceived opportunities in an urban area. This would involve creativity at the school level, but the possibility to be creative is crushed by the one-size-fits-all *Basic school regulation*.

70 Statistics Canada. A portrait of the English-speaking communities in Québec. June 2011, p. 11. Retrieved from https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/com-com.nsf/eng/h_01229.html.

School boards develop or adopt local initiatives to support school engagement. Some examples of this are:

- The Cree School Board's *Mikw Chiyâm*, "aimed at increasing student retention by promoting Cree and individual identity through artistic expression. Successful applicants explore a different form of art each school term—music, visual arts, drama/multimedia and dance."⁷¹
- Destination Imagination: a program containing a set of challenges that combine STEM and the Arts.⁷²
- An annual robotics competition involving "a video, a website, a kiosk and a robot. The robot needs to compete in a game against the other teams and the other categories are all judged throughout the competition."⁷³

Again, the language in The Task Force's recommendation 18 has changed over 25 years: the requirement for computer networking has been replaced by the need for reliable access to the Internet and robust broadband availability. ABEE hopes that the Government's commitment to extending broadband access in remote areas will be fulfilled quickly. Distance education remains a priority for schools with too few students to constitute a viable cohort for a particular subject and for adult education and vocational training in the regions. Distance education could be used to deliver the academic content of vocational programs (to be discussed in Section 13.1), whose students are likely to be more motivated to learn on their own than elementary or secondary school students are.

ABEE 11.0 a. Support local initiatives to customize the curriculum to meet local needs.

ABEE 11.0 b. Demonstrate confidence in the education system, the administrators and the teachers by relaxing the *Basic school regulation* and allowing more flexibility in offerings to accommodate a wider spectrum of students.

ABEE 11.0 c. Guarantee equitable access to the Internet and a robust broadband system, especially in remote areas.

(21) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION amend the structure of the régimes pédagogiques for elementary and secondary schools to (a) reduce the number of required courses, (b) give more latitude to schools to decide the sequence in which courses are offered, (c) encourage more school initiative in the development of programs to meet the needs of the students and the community. (p. 12)

The number of required courses in secondary school has increased since 1992, leaving even less room for local initiatives, or the latitude to decide the sequence of courses. A recent example was the order to place the Financial Education course in the Secondary V curriculum by cutting in half the time spent on the Contemporary World course, while many educators feel Financial Education would be more appropriate for younger students and that the Contemporary World course is too relevant to students to be cut.

71 <http://www.nationnews.ca/9932-2/>.

72 <https://www.destinationimagination.org/>.

73 <http://macdonald.lbpsb.qc.ca/robotics.html>.

There is little opportunity for schools to offer courses for the many students who fit between the university aspirants and the students with special needs. Many educators remember fondly the technical courses, including automotive skills, professional cooking or technical drawing that were a part of the school curriculum and served the needs of students with an interest in the skills and trades. Students now have to wait until they have left school to be eligible to take these courses in vocational training programs and, as we will elaborate in Section 13.1, there is a lack of these courses for English-speaking students.

Using a semester system would open opportunities for many schools to introduce a broader curriculum, as well as accommodating students who miss part of the school year, but this is not encouraged by the *Ministère*, which makes schools apply for an exemption if they wish to semester a program. Encouraging school initiative has little meaning when there is little room in the curriculum, there are administrative roadblocks, and there are few resources to implement the initiative.

The lack of choice among teaching materials in English remains a problem. The market is too small for publishing companies to want to produce as many choices of textbooks in English as in French (typically one English translation out of every three or four alternatives in French) without encouragement from the *Ministère*. Textbooks produced in English for other provinces do not usually match the content nor the pedagogy of the Québec curriculum. LEARN was established to alleviate this problem by developing learning materials and adapting existing ones, such as those available through *Récit*. Anecdotally, teachers report that they are not using these materials to the extent that was envisaged although LEARN's new mission includes other forms of educational support.⁷⁴

ABEE 11.0 d. Reduce the number of courses required for graduation to allow for optional courses, especially practical and technical ones.

ABEE 11.0 e. Simplify the process for schools to schedule courses, as long as the basic time allocations are met.

ABEE 11.0 f. Allow flexibility for schools to develop programs to meet local needs, within the framework of the *Basic school regulation*, and provide adequate resources to support the initiatives.

ABEE 11.0 g. Support the production of a variety of pedagogical materials in English and ensure that teachers have timely access to them.

74 <http://www.learnquebec.ca/about-us>. "In 2015-2016, LEARN catered to more than 9 400 students from all the English-speaking school boards in the province by offering online distance learning opportunities. LEARN'S overall services and resources – virtual school, tutoring, tailored pedagogical content, training, community learning centres' (CLC) support, academic peer review articles, curated resources, enrichment activities – were offered to more than 39 500 students and parents as well as hundreds of educators across Quebec."

12.0 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The need for ongoing curriculum development and evaluation should be a joint responsibility of the Ministry of Education, school boards, individual schools, and professional organizations of teachers. The English education network should be a major contributor to the development of programs and curriculum as well as to the methods of evaluation. (p. 12)

Programs in subjects such as history, geography, social studies, and the arts must be revised to give appropriate attention to the contribution of English-language communities in Quebec and throughout the world. Such content should be maintained in French immersion programs. (p. 12)

The *Basic school regulation* is now fully in place in schools since it began in 1997—a long life for a school curriculum—with very few changes and, being completely controlled by the *Ministère*, is another example of lack of control by the English educational community over its activities. Consultation on the curriculum was largely “after the fact” with little input in its development. Yet the pedagogical reforms initiated in 1997 were adopted smoothly in most English-language schools that were already familiar with the pedagogical approaches proposed. Elementary school teachers in particular found the approaches to be an affirmation of things they were already doing well, and they continue to innovate within the rigid parameters of the *Basic school regulation*.

There is a need to adapt the curriculum and teaching resources to the minority community and to develop, maintain and enrich these resources.

(22) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION establish an English Curriculum Council, advisory to the Assistant Deputy Minister (English Education), with representation from the Ministry, teacher organizations, school boards, post secondary institutions and members of the community, to initiate and coordinate (a) the development and adaptation of programs to meet the needs of the English community of Quebec, (b) the assessment of appropriate textbooks and teaching materials, (c) the assessment of curriculum structures and learning programs, and (d) the development of policies related to the assessment of student progress and qualifications for secondary school graduation. (p. 12)

This was not done, with the consequent devaluing of the English-speaking communities and cultures in the curriculum. Although an English Curriculum Council was not established, members of the English educational community are asked

to provide feedback on the curriculum, although often late in the development process. A council of this sort would give community representatives the opportunity to inform and to be informed by the curriculum developers and to have input into the curriculum before it is written, rather than after the fact. A centre for the development of educational resources for the English sector received endorsement from the Office of the Deputy Minister and was the object of a legal opinion from the Direction des affaires juridiques and discussions with the school boards in 2000, but was not put into effect. The DSCA is not directly involved in the development or evaluation of the curriculum. Rather, its role is to support the English sector once a program has been developed and is being implemented. The closest body to meet the description in Task Force recommendation 22 is the Directors of English Education Network (DEEN), who could take on an expanded role that includes working with the DSCA in the early stages of curriculum development and provide useful input from the English-speaking community.

ABEE 12.0 a. Involve English-speaking educators closely in the development of any modifications to the *Basic school regulation*, rather than consult them after the fact.

ABEE 12.0 b. Ensure input from the English-speaking educational community to adapt the curriculum so that it acknowledges the contribution of citizens of non-French speaking origins.

(11) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION make resources available for school based innovations and projects and for evaluation. (p. 9)

Evaluation practices in Québec are rigid and geared to a particular skill set based on test-writing skills, not necessarily on the evaluation of knowledge, and standardized examinations are not coherent with the philosophy of the reformed curriculum. Accommodation for students with special needs is restricted, and there is much unused room for the use of technology. This is often hindered by the lack of appropriate hardware and software available to the student.

ABEE 12.0 c. Change standardized evaluation practices to match the reformed curriculum more closely.

ABEE 12.0 d. Facilitate the use of modified evaluation methods for students with special needs by relaxing the rules and providing appropriate technology.

13.0 PREPARATION FOR WORK

13.1 Vocational Training

In the tradition of English education, technical and vocational education has been viewed by many parents and educators as a less than optimum choice for students. . . . There is still a need for some programs of this nature.

. . . With its much higher academic requirements, technical education no longer offers a less demanding path to high school completion. Because the new programs have much to offer, the advantages to students must be publicized. Imaginative marketing should carry the message that these programs lead to highly skilled, well-paid jobs. (p. 13)

Technical and vocational training is still seen as a poor alternative by many parents, yet it still provides a route to highly skilled, well-paid jobs, and can lead to a double diploma if vocational courses are used as optional courses toward a Secondary School Diploma. Technical training has moved into the CEGEP system, making enrolment difficult for young English-speaking people in the regions where there are no English-language CEGEPs. Vocational programs are still undervalued by the general public and by many parents, although their provision and popularity has increased greatly in the past 25 years. Permits to offer courses in vocational training are allocated to school boards through a process that disadvantages the English school system. The length and the complexity of the process mean that the English sector is still trying to catch up with the offerings of French-language school boards. In remote areas and in small school boards, the cost of programs is unsustainable and young people are forced to leave home to find their choice of programs in English. There are also examples of a lack of alignment between vocational programs offered in the schools and technical programs offered in the CEGEPs.

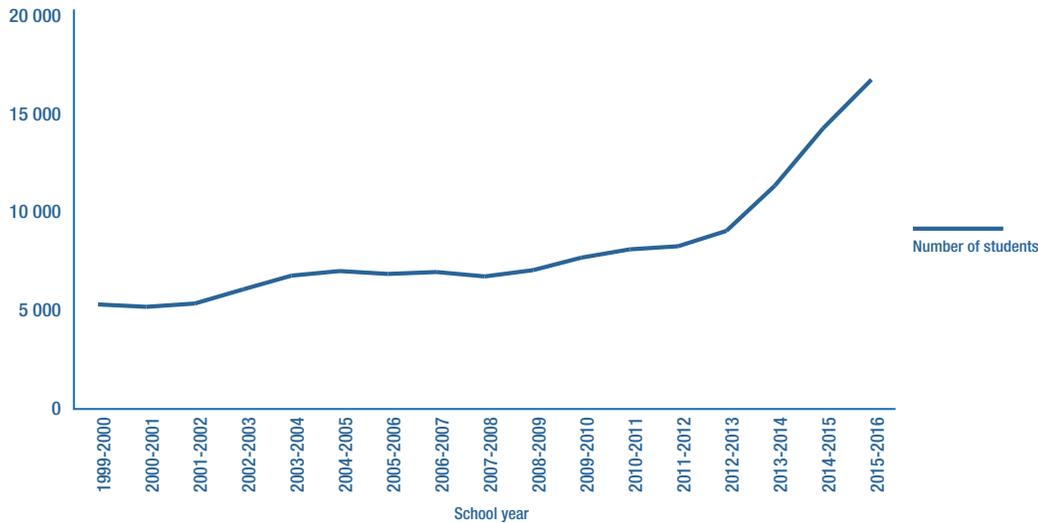
ABEE 13.1 a. Advertise vocational training provincially as a viable and attractive choice for secondary school students.

ABEE 13.1 b. Establish a better alignment between vocational programs and technical programs to avoid duplication of program offerings.

In 1992, the Task Force's mandate was to examine education in the English youth sector, and it did so thoroughly. Since then, technical and vocational training and adult education have grown in importance and continue to do so, which means that the scope of the present brief must necessarily be broader. Between the school years 1998-1999 and 2015-2016 in Québec, the number of English-speaking students in vocational training programs tripled, from 5 343 to 16 016.⁷⁵

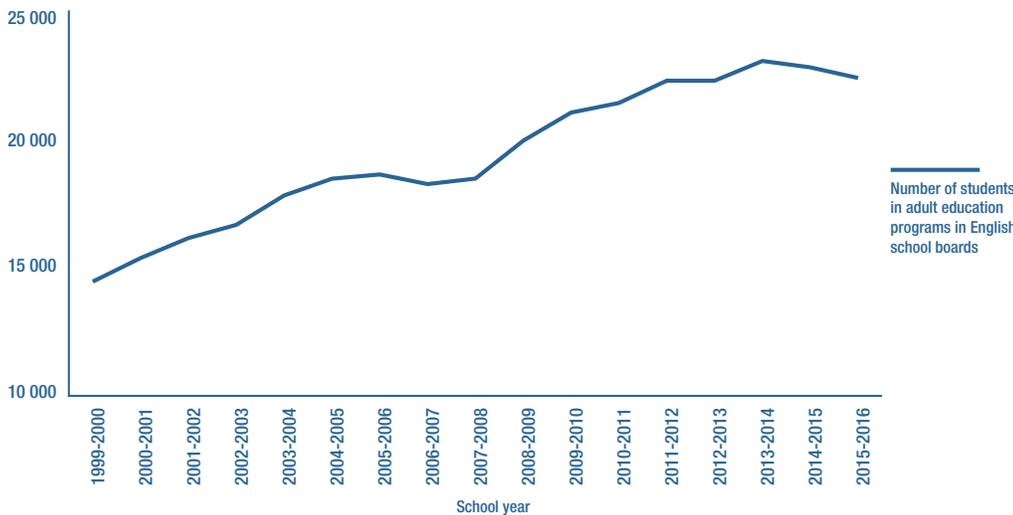
75 Source: MEES, DIS, information portal, Charlemagne system, January 26, 2017 data.

Figure 2. Enrolment in vocational training programs in English-language school boards



At the same time, there was an increase from about 14 500 to about 23 000, or about 60%, in adult general education in the English sector.⁷⁶

Figure 3. Enrolment in adult education programs in English-language school boards



One contributor to this brief suggested that 25 years from now, the adult and vocational sectors in the English school system will have more students than the youth sector. This will not happen without considerable support from the *Ministère*.

76 Source: MEES, GIR, DGSEG, DIS, information portal, Charlemagne system, January 26, 2017 data . These figures are approximate because they do not include students who report as French-speaking or Indigenous.

In vocational training, the *Ministère* does not invest as much in the English centres and encourages them to “borrow” programs and facilities from the French sector for financial expediency. This is a good idea in theory, and helps match students to the programs that meet local needs, but it introduces problems for the English school boards. Although all students follow the same program, acquire the same competencies and meet the same requirements when they graduate to the workplace, some are more comfortable studying in English. This possibility is hampered by the lack of resource materials in English to match the materials available in French. There has sometimes been a reluctance for the French sector to open up its programs to the English sector and to share its facilities at convenient times, rather than in the evenings and on weekends. When a program is borrowed, the centre borrowing the program does not declare student numbers so that its school board does not receive funding for them.

ABEE 13.1 c. Establish recurring measures for vocational training in the budgetary rules.

ABEE 13.1 d. Encourage sharing of program permits among school boards, especially between French and English school boards in the same geographic area, with less bureaucracy to hinder the process.

ABEE 13.1 e. Establish centres between neighbouring English and French school boards ensuring equitable sharing of facilities and equipment.

Business leaders have asked school boards to align the programs of study with their needs. In addition, between 20 and 30 programs of study are revised each year in a long process that makes them redundant before they are implemented. This is especially true for the competencies needed in fields such as information and communications technologies.

ABEE 13.1 f. Allow school boards budgetary flexibility to meet the labour demands of industry in vocational programs.

(26) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION support (a) the ongoing development of a province-wide plan for English technical and vocational education, (b) the development, as part of this plan, of English centres as well as bilingual centres for programs in various technical and vocational fields, and (c) the providing of assistance necessary to ensure the access of English-speaking students to these centres.

(27) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION support the use of apprenticeship programs and special placements for credit for students who have special talents or who learn more effectively through practical experience.

(28) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION support the development of a limited number of elective practical courses in a variety of fields for interested secondary school students, especially those whose learning style relies on practical tasks.

(29) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION support training for special job opportunities developed on a local or regional level in cooperation with business, industry and craftspersons. (p. 14)

ABEE continues to support the Task Force’s recommendation (26) with some additional recommendations in this section.

The Work-Oriented Training Path (WOTP) has gone some way to addressing the concerns in recommendations (27), (28) and (29), but there are still gaps to be addressed. There is now an even greater mismatch between the prerequisites (such as the mathematics requirement) for vocational training programs and the programs themselves. There is a provision in the *Basic school regulation* to modify the general curriculum to support students who learn by more practical means by offering optional courses that allow them to explore vocational programs, but this is meaningless as long as the curriculum is so dense and the graduation requirements are so rigid.

ABEE 13.1 g. Facilitate the transition from the WOTP (semi-skilled) to vocational training by offering more programs with Secondary III prerequisites as well.

ABEE 13.1 h. Establish satellite centres for programs where these are appropriate.

ABEE 13.1 i. Provide online access to a bank of academic courses and tutoring to support vocational training students, especially those in the regions.

ABEE 13.1 j. Assign a professional from the DSCA to work with counterparts in other ministries, such as the *Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale*, the *Ministère de l'Économie, Science et de l'Innovation*, and the *Ministère de Santé et des Services sociaux*, to propose where special skills are needed and to support students in vocational programs.

ABEE 13.1 k. Allow opportunities for in-school practical experience (such as janitorial work, secretarial work, the school print shop or the school cafeteria) to keep the students in school longer. This would increase their readiness for work while continuing their basic education.

ABEE 13.1 l. Ensure the provision of a reliable Web infrastructure and broader bandwidth in the regions.

For some programs (for example, Automobile Mechanics) there is no language requirement, while for others (such as Accounting) there is an additional requirement for French. In addition to the terminology related to the trade, students need support to acquire or polish French conversation skills before they enter the job market, rather than developing them on the job, as they often do at present.

ABEE 13.1 m. Include the teaching of workplace French in vocational training programs.

There is a general shortage of vocational training teachers in the province. In the opinion of many vocational training practitioners, the requirement for vocational teachers to qualify with a four-year bachelor's degree is inappropriate. Vocational teachers' expertise depends more on extensive practical experience than on academic coursework, so their training should be different to acknowledge this.

ABEE 13.1 n. Reintroduce a one-year teaching certificate program for vocational teachers, with the option of allowing them to follow a four-year program for general certification.

13.2 Adult Education

(19) THAT THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION ensure that more opportunities be available for the adult learner and for continuing education in rural or isolated communities, particularly through better use of distance education. (p. 11)

Adult education has grown in importance in each of the school boards that are now struggling to acquire relevant pedagogical materials, resources and training in English that meet the demands of the new curriculum. The profile of students in adult education classes has changed, notably that the students are younger than they once were. Some young people who need more time to gain their secondary school qualifications drop out of the system for a few years, then re-enter via adult education programs to finish their requirements for graduation. They may still have the same learning difficulties or behavioural problems that hindered their success in secondary school, but complementary services to support adult learners are even more scarce than they are for secondary school students. Because of privacy concerns, information from the assessments performed when they were in elementary or secondary school that might have identified areas needing support is not transferred to the adult sector. Professionals working as transition officers between the youth and adult sectors are proving to be a very successful resource in some boards. They provide support and guidance to students, preventing them from falling through the gaps of the system and possibly dropping out of their program.

Some resources are available for distance learning from the *Société de formation à distance des commissions scolaires du Québec* (SOFAD)⁷⁷ as translations of French-language materials, and these are sold to users.

The entry of French-speaking students into English-language adult education classes seems to be the victim of miscommunication or misinterpretation of the law by the French-language school system. Students from the welcoming classes in the French system often prefer to finish their secondary school studies in English in an adult education centre, preferring its inclusion rather than exclusion model and their greater facility with the language of instruction. However, students report that they are being discouraged from doing so by their French secondary schools, and are told wrongly that Bill 101 does not allow it. *Emploi Québec*, now under the umbrella of *Services Québec*, advises very few of its clients to pursue a career in an English establishment, and some students report that they are told wrongly that they must study in French in order to receive unemployment benefits.

ABEE 13.2 a. Provide resources to assess students for learning difficulties on entry into the adult sector.

ABEE 13.2 b. Provide support for adult students with learning difficulties or to improve French-language proficiency.

The Board notes the extensive work done by the Provincial Organization of Continuing Education Directors, English⁷⁸ in developing materials and supporting teachers and administrators, as well as giving advice to all levels involved in vocational training and adult education.

77 SOFAD (Société de formation à distance des commissions scolaires du Québec) is an organization that developed from the *Ministère de l'Éducation*'s mandate to provide distance education services between 1946 and 1995. Its creation, in 1996, was the result of the joint effort of the *Ministère* and the school boards.

SOFAD's services are intended for francophone and anglophone school boards and the schools under their jurisdiction. SOFAD reports to a board of directors composed of representatives of school boards and educational institutions in Québec.

78 Provincial Organization of Continuing Education Directors, English, December 8, 2016. "As a subcommittee of the Directors General, PROCEDE works to support the network of English Language Adult Education and Vocational Training services. It acts as a forum and consultative body for the nine English-language school boards; provides policy orientation and strategy recommendations to the ministry and the school boards; oversees the development and delivery of adult general education, and vocational training curricula and programming; coordinates professional development for all personnel."

14.0 CONCLUSION

Part III of the Task Force Report used *Ministère de l'Éducation* statistics, information from school boards and interviews to identify “Challenges to English education across Québec,” addressing these challenges for various regions of the province. Allowing for the changes that occurred with the establishment of nine English school boards instead of the larger number of confessional boards, it is remarkable how many of the challenges still remain and, in some cases, have grown in importance. An edited list, removing duplications and the few challenges that no longer apply, is given here. As this brief demonstrates, it could have been a list of challenges written today:

- The exodus of the English population, especially the young, well-educated
- Decreasing population of medium and higher income families
- Competition for students as scarce commodities (especially in boards close to Ontario and New Brunswick)
- Impact of prolonged decline on resources, services and morale
- High cost and lack of adequate support services in English especially in the regions
- Increasing number of children with learning difficulties
- Lack of support services in English from consultants and other professionals such as psychologists and youth protection workers
- Scarcity of employment opportunities in the regions
- Isolation of small schools and distance between them
- Declining enrolment and small schools
- Maintaining small schools in remote communities where they are important social institutions
- Meeting parent demands for better French programs
- Teaching of English
- Maintaining the character of English schools
- Defining what constitutes an English school
- Decline in the quality and prestige of English programs in the face of demands for expanding French immersion
- Providing suitable vocational programs, especially in the regions
- Need for teacher renewal (p. 20)

A system of education must reflect the social and economic imperatives of the society in which it operates. It must function as a training ground for individual learners without losing sight of the objectives of the society in which those learners are going to have to live and work. If English education is to survive and thrive in Quebec and make its proper contribution to Quebec education and society, it must develop a system of strategic planning. There needs to be coordination and cooperation among all the elements of the English-language education system and the broader community that it serves.

As in any dynamic society, Quebec depends for its future on the success of its youth. English education is a vital partner in the challenging endeavor to equip all Quebec students to participate productively in that future. Its merit is strongly rooted in its tradition of excellence and its ability to adapt in a rapidly changing environment.

Despite these important qualities, English education is a social system under siege. Uncertainty obscures the way ahead. As this report demonstrates, school enrolments have declined dramatically, affecting access to programs and support services in many areas. Further deterioration will undermine renewal of Quebec's English-speaking population.

The Task Force on English Education has consulted students, parents, employers, teachers, school boards and administrators throughout Quebec. The Task Force believes that the remedies it proposes are essential to stem the exodus of young English-speaking Quebecers and to provide them with a good education and satisfying career opportunities. (p. 14)

This eloquent summary in this part of the Task Force Report still applies to English education in Québec today. Twenty-six years later, and with the next 25 years in view, there is a need to take it further. The system “under siege” is now faced with existential problems in some regions. The English education system is no longer satisfied with a “good” education and continues to strive for excellence. Its problems in doing so have been exacerbated by various issues described in this brief, compounded by a perceived sense of having been ignored by successive Ministers and Ministries. Four examples in the past year that relate to education are especially salient.

- ABEE was surprised that the consultation on the Minister’s proposed *Institut de recherche* made no reference to research activities that already exist and are well-entrenched in the English school system.
- The Policy on Educational Success treats the education system as a monolith, with no recognition of the differences between the French and the English systems.
- The *Conseil supérieur’s* report on the integration of students with special needs⁷⁹ mentions the situation in English-language schools only in two tables of their report. Integration of students with special needs is common practice in English-language schools (see Section 10.1) and their experience could have informed the *Conseil supérieur’s* report.
- The *Institut du Québec* searched the world for examples of innovative practices⁸⁰ such as community schools, inclusion, focus on the individual child, emphasis on continuing professional development. All of these could have been found in English-language schools in Québec.

In December 2017, Premier Couillard was quoted as saying that there will be a million jobs to be filled in Québec between now and 2024.⁸¹ We may assume that many of these workers are now in school in Québec. What plans does the government have to encourage all English-speaking secondary school, CEGEP and university graduates to stay in the province? What is being done to support their learning and to prepare them for these jobs? Given the increase in a globalized economy, how many of these jobs will need proficiency in English as well as French and other languages? How will this proficiency be gained in a French-language school?

No amount of strategic planning, nor of cooperation among partners—all of which are clearly present within English school boards—can allow the system to flourish without acknowledgement and support from the majority language group, notably MEES. The establishment, by the present government, of a Minister and its secretariat with responsibility for English-speaking Quebecers is a welcome move, but beyond this, Québec needs to decide whether it **really** wants to keep the English-speaking population in the province. Some first steps would be recognition of the particularities of the English school system by the majority of Québec’s educational community, and the establishment of a system of equitable funding.

The purpose of the brief is not to join some French-language journalists in shedding crocodile tears over the condition of Québec’s English-speaking community, but to look for ways of supporting the English-language school system in Québec so that its graduates can contribute fully to all aspects of the life of the province.

This was also the mandate of the Task Force in 1992.

In making the recommendations in this brief, ABEE feels that, like Sisyphus, it has been pushing a boulder up the same hill for many years. An uncomfortably large number of concerns and their recommendations from 1992, reiterated in successive ABEE briefs, still pertain.

It is hoped that the recommendations in this brief will contribute to some solutions so that English-language school boards, schools, centres and their teachers can continue with the excellent work they do so that their students may continue to be successful. With the kind of flexibility and support implied throughout the recommendations in this brief, the English education system can move from strength to strength, to the benefit of Québec as a whole.

The Advisory Board on English Education will continue to monitor the challenges that prevent the English school system from reaching its full potential, to solicit input from its constituent communities, and to advise the Minister of Education on ways to remove the challenges and to promote the contribution of the English school system to the whole of Québec’s education scene.

79 Conseil supérieur de l’éducation. Pour une école riche de tous ses élèves: S’adapter à la diversité des élèves, de la maternelle à la 5e année du secondaire, October 2017.

80 Des exemples pour l’école québécoise: Étude de cas d’écoles innovantes. Institut du Québec, September 2017.

81 Philip Authier, Montreal Gazette, p. A7, December 6, 2017.

Appendix 1. List of recommendations from each section of this brief

3.2 ELIGIBILITY FOR ENGLISH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

ABEE 3.2.

Allow access to English-language schools for immigrants to Québec from countries where English is the common language.

4.1. THE ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER

ABEE 4.1 a.

Redefine the job description of the ADM responsible for English-language education to restore the focus on English-language education.

ABEE 4.1 b.

Support the post of ADM and the innovations that past incumbents have developed in the sector.

ABEE 4.1 c.

Ensure that the ADM works closely and collaboratively with the English education sector and its communities to ensure that their needs are reflected and that any challenges it faces are remedied through concerted action.

ABEE 4.1 d.

Ensure representation of knowledgeable English speakers on a selection committee for the post of ADM.

ABEE 4.1 e.

Ensure the ADM's involvement from the early stages of the decision-making level for policy changes.

4.2 PROFESSIONAL PEDAGOGICAL SUPPORT

ABEE 4.2.

Ensure the presence of English-speaking educators in the DSCA by encouraging applications from qualified people with a strong connection to, and familiarity with, the English school system.

5.1 MOVEMENT TO FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

ABEE 5.1.

Support authentic language learning experiences for English-speaking students that immerse them in the French culture of Québec.

5.3 SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

ABEE 5.3 a.

Invest time and money to ensure that English students integrate into Québec society with the requisite language skills in French and English.

ABEE 5.3 b.

Invest time and money to allow release time for ELA and FSL teachers at the same grade level for co-planning to align requirements in the two curricula.

ABEE 5.3 c.

Develop materials for immersion programs to teach the language as well as to teach in the language.

ABEE 5.3 d.

Encourage the establishment of teacher education programs and in-service programs for immersion teachers based on research and on existing expertise in second language instruction.

ABEE 5.3 e.

Support teachers who are teaching several levels and in both languages with extra professional learning opportunities and extra resources.

5.4 BILINGUALISM AND EMPLOYMENT

ABEE 5.4 a.

With the Minister responsible for Higher Education, demonstrate Québec's wish to retain English-speaking youth in the province by convening a summit of interested parties to propose strategies for doing so.

ABEE 5.4 b.

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

6.2 DECLINE IN COMMUNITY VITALITY

ABEE 6.2 a.

Maintain local control of education through a strong network of effective school boards.

ABEE 6.2 b.

Ensure equitable funding that takes into account the particular needs of the English education system.

ABEE 6.2 c.

Allow community groups to access MEES funds for projects of direct benefit to schools and students.

6.3 COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS

ABEE 6.3 a.

Ensure sustained funding to CLCs to support their mission of student success.

ABEE 6.3 b.

In conjunction with the Treasury Board, re-examine the allocation of funds from the Canada-Québec Agreement and make its findings transparent.

7.0 SCHOOL BOARDS

ABEE 7.0 a.

Define clearly the circumstances where the Minister of Education might invoke a veto under Bill 105.

ABEE 7.0 b.

ABEE continues to endorse strongly the Task Force recommendations 5, 6 and 7 regarding the right to English-language education and local control and management by democratically elected school boards.

8.2 SMALL SCHOOLS

ABEE 8.2.

Adjust budgetary rules to reflect equity, not the number of children in the school, such as using a sliding scale for services, depending on the size of the school.

8.3 REMOTENESS OF SCHOOLS

ABEE 8.3 a.

Convene a meeting of educators and community members to propose innovative solutions for delivering a wide variety of programs to small schools in remote regions.

ABEE 8.3 b.

Establish pilot projects, with funding for their implementation and evaluation, to test the proposed solutions.

ABEE 8.3 c.

Establish consultations regarding sharing of resources among neighbouring school boards where this is appropriate.

9.0 TEACHERS

ABEE 9.0 a.

Revise the universities' teacher education quotas to allow an increase in the number of teachers of French as a second language or by immersion.

ABEE 9.0 b.

Revisit the Twelve Teacher Competencies for their applicability to beginning teachers' needs, especially for teaching students with special needs and in multi-level classes.

ABEE 9.0 c.

Establish graduate programs in Inclusive Education to build greater capacity among teachers to improve services to students with special needs.

ABEE 9.0 d.

Provide core funding for professional aides to support teachers, especially in classes with large numbers of students with special needs.

ABEE 9.0 e.

Revisit the Twelve Teacher Competencies for their applicability to beginning teachers' needs, especially in the incorporation of technology.

ABEE 9.0 f.

Implement Section 22 (6.1) of the Education Act, which requires experienced teachers to mentor new colleagues.

ABEE 9.0 g.

Provide more opportunities and funding for recertifying teachers in subject areas where there is a shortage of specialists.

ABEE 9.0 h.

Promote the successes of professional learning activities to change the societal perception of professional development.

ABEE 9.0 i.

Explore and support more targeted professional learning opportunities appropriate to locally expressed needs.

ABEE 9.0 j.

Support local initiatives with appropriate funding for staff wellness programs.

ABEE 9.0 k.

Use available electronic communication to convey up-to-date information between the *Ministère* and members of the English education system and to serve as a medium for promoting activities in the English education system.

ABEE 9.0 l.

Publicize existing teaching awards more aggressively.

ABEE 9.0 m.

Establish and broadly publicize provincial teaching awards comparable with the federal Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence.

10.0 STUDENTS

ABEE 10.0 a.

ABEE continues to endorse recommendation (20) of the Task Force Report regarding an inter-ministerial committee of education and health.

ABEE 10.0 b.

Develop a more fine-grained system than the use of postal codes for identifying marginalized and underprivileged students.

ABEE 10.0 c.

Mandate the health sector agencies to establish agreements with the English-language school boards in their respective regions.

10.2 COMPLEMENTARY SERVICES

ABEE 10.2 a.

Provide more in-class support for students with special needs who are integrated into regular classes in English-language schools.

ABEE 10.2 b.

Re-evaluate the process for establishing codes for students with special needs at the school board level.

ABEE 10.2 c.

Provide the services of more psychologists to make assessments and provide remediation.

ABEE 10.2 d.

Revise the salary scale of professionals (psychologists, speech-language pathologists, guidance counsellors and occupational therapists) in an effort to improve retention and recruitment.

ABEE 10.2 e.

Provide incentives for English-speaking professionals to work in the regions.

ABEE 10.2 f.

Require students in professional university programs to serve internships in Québec schools.

ABEE 10.2 g.

Establish a universal preschool program for Québec, not just in disadvantaged areas.

ABEE 10.2 h.

Extend the mandate of NANS schools to accommodate students with special needs from preschool age.

ABEE 10.2 i.

Establish CPEs that function in English to support early language development in English.

ABEE 10.2 j.

Support interventions for all children from 0 to 5 years old, with special funding for underprivileged English-speaking children.

ABEE 10.2 k.

Fund school boards to establish a support network for parents, especially parents of children with special needs, to receive support and training to help them with their children's education.

ABEE 10.2 l.

Fund school boards to establish a coordinator to develop and disseminate, in conjunction with other organizations, programs to support parents as they help their young children to learn.

11.0 PROGRAMS OF STUDY

ABEE 11.0 a.

Support local initiatives to customize the curriculum to meet local needs.

ABEE 11.0 b.

Demonstrate confidence in the education system, the administrators and the teachers by relaxing the Basic school regulation and allowing more flexibility in offerings to accommodate a wider spectrum of students.

ABEE 11.0 c.

Guarantee equitable access to the Internet and a robust broadband system, especially in remote areas.

ABEE 11.0 d.

Reduce the number of courses required for graduation to allow for optional courses, especially practical and technical ones.

ABEE 11.0 e.

Simplify the process for schools to schedule courses, as long as the basic time allocations are met.

ABEE 11.0 f.

Allow flexibility for schools to develop programs to meet local needs, within the framework of the Basic school regulation, and provide adequate resources to support the initiatives.

ABEE 11.0 g.

Support the production of a variety of pedagogical materials in English and ensure that teachers have timely access to them.

12.0 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

ABEE 12.0 a.

Involve English-speaking educators closely in the development of any modifications to the Basic school regulation, rather than consult them after the fact.

ABEE 12.0 b.

Ensure input from the English-speaking educational community to adapt the curriculum so that it acknowledges the contribution of citizens of non-French speaking origins.

ABEE 12.0 c.

Change standardized evaluation practices to match the reformed curriculum more closely.

ABEE 12.0 d.

Facilitate the use of modified evaluation methods for students with special needs by relaxing the rules and providing appropriate technology.

13.1 VOCATIONAL TRAINING

ABEE 13.1 a.

Advertise vocational training provincially as a viable and attractive choice for secondary school students.

ABEE 13.1 b.

Establish a better alignment between vocational programs and technical programs to avoid duplication of program offerings.

ABEE 13.1 c.

Establish recurring measures for vocational training in the budgetary rules.

ABEE 13.1 d.

Encourage sharing of program permits among school boards, especially between French and English school boards in the same geographic area, with less bureaucracy to hinder the process.

ABEE 13.1 e.

Establish training centres between neighbouring English and French school boards ensuring equitable sharing of facilities and equipment.

ABEE 13.1 f.

Allow school boards budgetary flexibility to meet the labour demand of industry in vocational programs.

ABEE 13.1 g.

Facilitate the transition from the WOTP (semi-skilled) to vocational training by offering more programs with Secondary III prerequisites as well.

ABEE 13.1 h.

Establish satellite centres for programs where these are appropriate.

ABEE 13.1 i.

Provide online access to a bank of academic courses and tutoring to support vocational training students, especially those in the regions.

ABEE 13.1 j.

Assign a professional from the DSCA to work with counterparts in other ministries, such as the *Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale*, the *Ministère de l'Économie, Science et de l'Innovation*, and the *Ministère de Santé et des Services sociaux*, to propose where special skills are needed and to support students in vocational programs.

ABEE 13.1 k.

Allow opportunities for in-school practical experience (such as janitorial work, secretarial work, the school print shop or the school cafeteria) to keep the students in school longer. This would increase their readiness for work while continuing their basic education.

ABEE 13.1 l.

Ensure the provision of a reliable Web infrastructure and broader bandwidth in the regions.

ABEE 13.1 m.

Include the teaching of workplace French in vocational training programs.

ABEE 13.1 n.

Reintroduce a one-year teaching certificate program for vocational teachers, with the option of allowing them to follow a four-year program for general certification.

13.2 ADULT EDUCATION

ABEE 13.2 a.

Provide resources to assess students for learning difficulties on entry into the adult sector.

ABEE 13.2 b.

Provide support for adult students with learning difficulties or to improve French-language proficiency.

Appendix 2. Previous ABEE briefs and reports

1992-1993

Task Force on English Education - Report to the Minister of Education of Québec

1992-1993

English Language Education in Québec - A response to the Task Force on English Education

1993-1994

Report to the Minister of Education - Textbooks and Teaching Materials

1994-1995

Report to the Minister of Education of Québec - The Reorganization of School Boards along Linguistic Lines: Bill 107 - An English School Perspective

1995-1996

Report to the Minister of Education of Québec - Language Learning in the English Schools of Québec: A Bilingual Imperative

1996-1997

Report to the Minister of Education of Québec - The Integration of the New Information and Communication Technologies in the English Schools of Québec

1997-1998

Report to the Minister - Evaluation of Learning in the English Schools of Québec

1998-1999

Report to the Minister of Education - A Challenge for English School Boards: Regionalization and Vocational Education

1999-2000

Report to the Minister of Education - Culture and English Schools in Play

2000-2001

Report to the Minister of Education - English Schools in Transition: Building Collaborative Leadership

Report submitted to the Commission des états généraux sur la situation et l'avenir de la langue française au Québec – French Second Language in the English Schools of Québec

2001-2002

Report to the Minister of Education - Policy Environment for the Implementation of School Reform

2003-2004

Report to the Minister of Education - Profile of the Teacher as Keystone in Secondary Reform Implementation

2004-2005

Report to the Minister of Education of Québec - The Transitions Beyond Secondary School

2006-2007

Brief to the Ministre de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport - Decentralization, Regionalization and Adaptation (DRA): Jamais deux sans trois

2007-2008

Brief to the Ministre de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport - Special Education: Issues of Inclusion and Integration in the Classroom

2008-2009

Response to the Minister of Education regarding school board governance: Consultation on school democracy

2009-2010

Brief to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports - High-quality teachers and administrators for English-language schools in Québec: preparation, induction and support

2010-2011

Meetings with partners in education - Letter from the Chair of the Advisory Board on English Education to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sport

Brief presented to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports - Educating Today's Québec Anglophone

Letter sent to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports following the First Meeting of Education Partners: Meeting on the Integration of Students with Special Needs - ABEE's response to the three questions in the Minister's discussion paper (October 2010)

2011-2012

Fostering student success in Québec's English schools: Implications for policy and practice (February 2011)

Bridging the gap between training and employment to meet labour market needs: Issues affecting the Anglophone sector (August 2011)

Response to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sport's request for advice on implementation of intensive English instruction for Francophone students in Grade 6 (August 2011)

2012-2013

The Importance of Complementary Educational Services for School Success

Commentary on Bill 56: An Act to prevent and deal with bullying and violence in schools

Establishing Boundaries for Safe Schools

2013-2014

One size does not fit all: Distinct solutions for distinct needs

Response of the Advisory Board to the Consultation publique portant sur le renforcement de l'enseignement de l'histoire nationale au primaire et au secondaire

2014-2015

Québec Schools On Line: Opportunities for English-Language Education

Principles and Recommendations for School Board Governance in the English Education Sector

"We Are Accountable to the Students": Success and Retention in English-Language Schools

2015-2016

A brief to the Minister of Education and Higher Education and to the Committee on Culture and Education regarding Bill 86: An Act to modify the organization and governance of school boards to give schools a greater say in decision-making and ensure parents' presence within each school board's decision-making body.

A Brief to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports: Keeping the door open for young English-speaking adults in Québec: Language Learning in English Schools and Centres

2016-2017

A brief to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sport and to the Committee on Culture and Education regarding Bill 105: An Act to Amend the Education Act.

Brief on the consultation: Towards a Policy on School Success

A Brief to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sport on the History of Quebec and Canada Pilot Program

Letter sent to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports regarding the implementation of the Financial Education Program in September 2017

Letter sent to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports regarding the vacant post of Assistant Deputy Minister for Relations extérieures et services aux anglophones et aux autochtones

A Brief to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports: Indigenous Education: Walking on Both Sides of the River

Response to Creating a provincial institute for excellence in education: Consultation document

Appendix 3. Individuals and organizations consulted for this brief

Association of Administrators of English Schools of Québec (AAESQ)

Association of Directors General of English School Boards of Québec (ADGESBQ)

English Parents' Committee Association (EPCA)

Rhonda Boucher, President

William Floch, formerly Heritage Canada

Janyne Hodder, former Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education

Leo La France, former Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, Recreation and Sports

Leadership Committee for English Education of Québec (LCEEQ)

Montreal Lakeshore University Women's Club

Québec Community Groups Network (QCGN)

Geoffrey Chambers, Vice-President

Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Executive Director

Gerald Cutting, Board member

Québec English School Boards Association (QESBA)

Jennifer Maccarone, President

Kim Hamilton, Director

Québec Federation of Home and School Associations (QFHSA)

Carol Meindl, Executive Director

Rosemary Murphy, Member

Québec Provincial Association of Teachers (QPAT)

Sébastien Joly, President

Jean-Paul Fossey, Executive Assistant

The NEXT school

Noel Burke, former Assistant Deputy Minister

Michael Canuel, Executive Director, LEARN

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