

# Ontario's Aménagement Linguistique Policy

for French-Language Education

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# INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the guidelines for *aménagement linguistique* interventions both for the Ministry of Education and for Ontario's French-language school boards. It replaces the 1994 document *Aménagement linguistique en français : Guide d'élaboration d'une politique d'aménagement linguistique – Paliers élémentaire et secondaire*.

*In this document, the term **school board** refers to both the French-language district school boards and school authorities.*

The policy outlined in this document respects the unique mandate of Ontario's eight French-language Catholic district school boards and four French-language public district school boards. The implementation of *aménagement linguistique* interventions is thus compatible with the mission of these school boards and recognizes their distinctiveness. The *Rapport des États généraux sur l'éducation élémentaire et secondaire de langue française en Ontario* (1997) described the background of the two kinds of boards as follows:

- A Catholic district school board expresses its *raison d'être* through the Christian faith and the values taught by the Catholic Church and draws

on the teachings of this faith in its activities. It offers religious instruction that helps students live their Catholic faith more fully. A Catholic board promotes close cooperation among its schools, parishes, the clergy, educators, and parents.

- A public district school board expresses the human, moral, and democratic values of Canadian society. It respects the religious antecedents of all students enrolled in the board. Cooperation among the board, its schools, and the **wider community** fosters knowledge and appreciation of diversity in a spirit of harmony, tolerance, and compassion.

*In this document, the term **wider community** refers to every member of the community and every francophone and francophile community organization able to help the French-language school board and French-language schools in carrying out their mandate; this may include cultural and multicultural organizations, religious institutions, industries, businesses, banking institutions, and government agencies.*

This document is divided into two parts. Part One: Aménagement Linguistique Policy in the Education Sector in Ontario includes a general statement of the policy, its guiding principles, and its legislative framework. The key strategic aims of the policy are identified through an analysis of the context of French-language education and the challenges faced with respect to language acquisition and cultural ownership. The *aménagement linguistique* framework is defined and outlined in clearly defined intervention areas.

Part Two: Guide for Developing an Aménagement Linguistique Policy and Results-Based Management explains the process for developing a policy and an underlying management approach. It sets out a series of steps for school boards to follow in developing, implementing, and reviewing their *aménagement linguistique* policy. These steps are based on a results-based management and accountability framework. In this way, school boards will be able to measure the progress they achieve through the *aménagement linguistique* interventions they adopt and to comply with their accountability requirements.

Working together on an ongoing basis, the Ministry of Education and school boards will determine how to develop and implement the *aménagement linguistique* framework, including the development of resource guides that will explain the required content and processes of the *aménagement linguistique* policy in detail.

The policy outlined in this document was developed by the Ontario Ministry of Education in consultation with some 600 representatives of school boards and other education partners from across the province. The final version of the policy reflects the comments, critiques, and suggestions received during the consultation process. The ministry recognizes that these consultations have also acted as a catalyst for dialogue among the people involved in French-language education, dialogue that should continue and culminate in the implementation of the *aménagement linguistique* policy and of appropriate and innovative interventions at the local, regional, and provincial levels.

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# Part One



## *AMÉNAGEMENT LINGUISTIQUE POLICY IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR IN ONTARIO*



The provincial *aménagement linguistique* policy was developed to respond to the unique needs, in a minority setting, of Ontario's French-language community and its educational institutions. This policy will help *educational institutions*<sup>1</sup> increase their capacity to create teaching and learning conditions that foster the development of the French language and culture to ensure the academic achievement of every student. Through this policy, the Ministry of Education fulfils its responsibility to enforce the Education Act in compliance with section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms regarding instruction in the language of the minority.

As part of its responsibility, the ministry monitors the implementation of the *aménagement linguistique* policy at both the provincial and local levels, taking into consideration the resources available, to encourage the achievement of the policy's key strategic aims and to receive regular reports on the outcomes achieved. At the provincial level, strategic aims and expected outcomes are integrated into the ministry's annual planning process.

<sup>1</sup> In this document, the expression *educational institutions* includes the Ontario Ministry of Education, French-language district school boards, French-language school administrations, and French-language schools.



*In collaboration with parents and organizations from the wider community, all French-language school boards will implement the provincial aménagement linguistique policy and develop a local aménagement linguistique policy that will help French-language schools carry out their mandate. The policy has the following key strategic aims:*

- *to foster, within a lifelong learning approach, the academic achievement of every student by implementing relevant quality programs and services that reflect the unique nature of the francophone community and that take into account the impact of the English-language-dominant environment on learning in all school subjects and disciplines*
- *to promote identity building and the development of self-confidence of young francophones through the implementation of conditions conducive to the creation of a francophone environment that takes into account the vitality and pluralism of Ontario's French-language community*
- *to develop, through a learning-community model, the capacity of school staff, parents, and students to sustain the linguistic and cultural development of the community within a vision that fosters lifelong learning*
- *to increase the capacity of educational institutions to develop the necessary programs, resources, and services by creating meaningful partnerships among the school, the family, and the community*
- *to increase the vitality of Ontario's educational institutions through leadership that facilitates capacity building and strategic changes that foster the sustainable development of both these institutions and the francophone community*

*Finally, the school board's policy is implemented through a series of interventions that are part of both the aménagement linguistique framework and the five intervention areas described in this document.*



## RATIONALE

The *raison d'être* of the *aménagement linguistique* policy is to contribute to the sustainable development of Ontario's French-language educational community by implementing targeted and planned interventions. This contribution is brought about by means of interventions designed to:

- facilitate students' acquisition of the competencies required by Ontario's curriculum expectations, which lead to academic achievement for every student and the completion of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma requirements;
- foster the emergence of young francophones who have a proud awareness of their identity, have developed the competencies they need to pursue their goals, have become lifelong learners, and are actively involved socially, politically, environmentally, spiritually, culturally, and economically in the francophone community;
- promote, enhance, and expand the use of the French language in all spheres of activity;
- reduce the potential for assimilation by creating and maintaining alliances with parents<sup>2</sup> and building partnerships with francophone and francophile community members and organizations;
- enhance the capacity of French-language schools and school boards to contribute to the linguistic and cultural development of the francophone community.

## DEFINITIONS

The Site for Language Management in Canada has suggested the following definition of *aménagement linguistique*, in its broadest sense: "*Aménagement linguistique* is the overall organization of activities pertaining to a language in a specific area (country, state, province, etc.). It promotes the use of tools that meet the various language needs of a population and it contributes to language development."

*Aménagement linguistique* (or "language management") is generally broken down into two areas of activity:

- the management of **language status**, which involves the management of the language particularly by means of language legislation and policy, and the promotion of the language by making language products and services available. Given the evolution of language rights in Canada, the management of official languages must take into consideration the role of culture in language acquisition.

<sup>2</sup> .In this paper, the term *parent* also refers to guardians and any others with legal responsibility for a child.

- the management of the **linguistic code**, which involves activities such as the creation of new words, standardization, establishing standard spelling or grammar, and so on (Site for Language Management in Canada).

In this document, *aménagement linguistique* refers exclusively to activities or interventions related to the status of the French language.

*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.*

The need for *aménagement linguistique* in French-language education in Ontario is linked to the coexistence in this province of two official language communities, one majority and the other minority. This coexistence – and in particular the pervasive presence of the English language and the Anglo-Canadian and -American cultures – means that the minority francophone community faces obstacles when it comes to transmitting the French language

and culture. It is precisely the need to help this minority community overcome such obstacles, and in particular to counter the gradual assimilation of its members into the Anglo-Canadian community, that makes such a policy necessary.

*The aménagement linguistique policy states the guidelines to be adopted by educational institutions in order to orient thinking and actions needed to manage the implementation process of aménagement linguistique interventions.*

The *aménagement linguistique* policy takes into account the context of French-language education in Ontario and the challenges that this context poses. The key strategic aims have been established, the intervention areas defined, and the expected provincial outcomes identified to meet these challenges, which must be taken up by the wider francophone community.



## The Principles of the Aménagement Linguistique Policy

*Aménagement linguistique* in French-language education in Ontario is based on the following principles:

- Instruction in the minority language is a legal right under section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- French-language education strives to be quality education delivered under conditions that foster the personal success and academic achievement of every student.
- French-language education creates and nurtures the development of a personal, linguistic, and cultural identity, as well as a sense of belonging to a vital and pluralistic francophone community.
- 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.
- Equal opportunity for language acquisition, transmission of culture, and access to quality education and academic achievement in a minority setting requires constant reinforcement in the form of support measures and resources adapted to meet the specific needs of francophone students.
- Collaboration among educational institutions, families, and the wider community is essential for the delivery of quality education programs and services adapted to meet the specific needs of the francophone community and its learners.
- French-language education is characterized by openness to diversity and contributes to the development of a sense of belonging to the francophone community of Ontario, of Canada, and of the world.
- French-language education promotes respect for human rights and the rights of minority francophones, as well as for democracy, equality, justice, and dignity.

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**.

*“A **mandate** is the mission given to a group, setting out the objectives of the work to be done and defining the matters to be dealt with” (translated from Office québécois de la langue française, 2004 ).*

The *aménagement linguistique* policy enables school boards to develop conditions that will carry out the mandate of French-language schools.

In implementing this mandate, French-language schools offer a quality education that meets the needs of every one of their students, while simultaneously providing a social setting, a meeting ground, and a forum for exchange and collaboration with parents and the francophone community, as well as a resource for the community and all its stakeholders.

## MANDATE OF FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

A French-language school is a **learning environment** whose goal is to help students achieve personal and academic success by:

- developing students' competence to communicate in French, both orally and in writing;
- teaching the knowledge and skills related to all subjects and disciplines in French, except Anglais and Anglais pour débutants from Grade 4 to Grade 8 and English and Anglais pour débutants at the secondary level;
- adopting an approach that places lifelong learning at the centre of educational activities;
- implementing the curriculum with a focus on improving student achievement;
- developing in students the competencies that will help them make wise choices throughout their lives.

A French-language school environment fosters **identity building** through:

- the development of a cultural identity;
- the development of a sense of belonging to a dynamic culture;
- the intellectual, affective, linguistic, physical, cultural, moral, and spiritual growth of all students, while respecting their rights as set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code;
- a commitment to a diverse francophone community that appeals to its members and develops their sense of belonging.

A French-language school environment provides for **participative leadership** and equips staff with:

- pedagogical approaches designed to provide quality education in a minority setting;
- resources for transmitting the French language and culture;
- conditions conducive to the development of a learning community within the school.

*A French-language school environment promotes **individual and collective commitment** through alliances with parents and partnerships with families and various groups in the wider community to:*

- *exercise a positive and decisive influence on student achievement by incorporating planned performance-improvement objectives;*
- *find realistic solutions to the challenges of language acquisition and cultural ownership;*
- *focus on early childhood interventions to ensure the integration and academic achievement of francophone preschoolers;*
- *design and offer school-community projects based on community needs and that incorporate subject-specific knowledge and skills and identity-building activities;*
- *offer guidance and career education programs as well as work-experience opportunities, cooperative education programs, and school-to-work transition programs;*
- *participate in the sustainable development of the francophone community, that is, meet the needs of the present without compromising opportunities for future generations to satisfy their own needs.*





The Ontario Ministry of Education first published a text on *aménagement linguistique* in 1994. In *Aménagement linguistique en français: Guide d'élaboration d'une politique d'aménagement linguistique – Paliers élémentaire et secondaire*, the ministry defined *aménagement linguistique* as a set of measures designed to promote and enhance the use of a language in all of a society's spheres of activity. In the case of French-language schools, the objective of *aménagement linguistique* is to promote the use of French, improve its quality, and extend its use within institutions or the wider community. The 1994 document represented an initial attempt to take responsibility for *aménagement linguistique* in French-language education in Ontario.

The many social and educational changes of the 1990s have made it necessary to update the 1994 document. The impact of the ever-growing trend towards globalization on the linguistic and cultural development of Ontario's francophone community must also be considered. The major challenges confronting the wider francophone community and its educational institutions in light of these changes must be redefined to set priorities for *aménagement linguistique* interventions.

In addition, the Ontario Ministry of Education implemented a series of reforms in the 1990s that had an impact on French-language education, including:

- the implementation, starting in 1997, of Ontario curriculum reforms (see, in particular, the Kindergarten program, the curriculum documents for Grades 1–12, and the Ontario Provincial Report Card for Grades 1–8 and 9–12);
- the introduction of secondary school program policies, including the Ontario Secondary School Diploma requirements (Ontario, Ministry of Education and Training, 1999a);
- the introduction, in 1996, of a provincial testing program managed by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO);
- the amalgamation of existing school boards and the creation of twelve French-language district school boards in 1997;
- the reform of the student-focused funding model in 2001.

As part of these changes, francophone access to school governance through the creation of the twelve French-language district school boards resulted in:

- a redistribution of powers and responsibilities along linguistic and denominational lines;
- a new model of education management along linguistic and denominational lines;
- a redistribution of institutions by language of instruction and denomination;
- new service delivery models that vary with the language in which the services are provided.

This restructuring has had an impact on the development of programs and services to meet the unique needs of a clientele living in a minority setting. For instance, the delivery of *aménagement linguistique* programs such as *Actualisation linguistique en français*, *Perfectionnement du français*, and *Animation culturelle* required continuing cooperation among boards on the one hand and between the ministry and boards on the other.

In addition to the need for information exchange, there was a need to develop a provincial *aménagement linguistique* policy that would make it possible to:

- better define, based on an assessment of the province-wide situation, *aménagement linguistique* priority interventions and a management approach for measuring their effectiveness;
- analyse the major recruitment and retention problems experienced by French-language school boards and then develop a set of corrective measures;
- better coordinate and distribute *aménagement linguistique* funding;
- better delineate the division of responsibilities between the ministry and school boards with respect to *aménagement linguistique*.

The *aménagement linguistique* policy is part of the ongoing efforts of the last few years to provide quality education that takes into account the realities and pressures that French-language schools face in carrying out their mandate.



## Foundations of Aménagement Linguistique in French-Language Education

A brief overview of the legislation governing the language rights of official language minority populations in Canada and the implications of these rights for education will help to better delineate the role of different levels of government with respect to these rights. This overview will also help in identifying the legislative foundations of the principles of the *aménagement linguistique* policy and of the mandate of French-language schools.

Between 1963 and 1970, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism produced reports that resulted in the first Official Languages Act (enacted in 1969 and overhauled in 1988).

In 1982, the Constitution Act, which included the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, was proclaimed. It contained additional constitutional guarantees on the status and use of Canada's official languages in federal institutions. Under section 23 of the Charter, each province and territory is responsible for providing elementary and secondary minority-language education (English in Quebec, French elsewhere) where numbers warrant. Section 23 of the Charter reads as follows:

23. (1) Citizens of Canada

a) whose first language learned and still understood is that of the English or

French linguistic minority population of the province in which they reside, or

b) who have received their primary school instruction in Canada in English or French and reside in a province where the language in which they received that instruction is the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province,

have the right to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in that language in that province.

(2) Citizens of Canada of whom any child has received or is receiving primary or secondary school instruction in English or French in Canada have the right to have all their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the same language.

(3) The right of citizens of Canada under subsections (1) and (2) to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of a province

a) applies wherever in the province the number of children of citizens who have such a right is sufficient to warrant the provision to them out of public funds of minority language instruction; and

b) includes, where the number of those children so warrants, the right to have them receive that instruction in minority language educational facilities provided out of public funds.

In 1990, following the Mahé case, the Supreme Court ruled that official-language minorities have the constitutional right to participate actively in the governance and control of their children's education and the educational institutions their children attend.

The issue of language rights was clarified by the court, which described what it saw as the essence of section 23 as follows (Foucher, 2000):

The general purpose of s. 23 is clear: it is to preserve and promote the two official languages of Canada, and their respective cultures, by ensuring that each language flourishes, as far as possible, in provinces where it is not spoken by the majority of the population. The section aims at achieving this goal by granting minority language educational rights to minority language parents throughout Canada. (See *Mahé v. Alberta* [1990], 1 S.C.R. 342, p. 362.)

The court also defined the scope of its finding with respect to the language rights issue:

My reference to cultures is significant: it is based on the fact that any broad guarantee of language rights, especially in the context of education, cannot be separated from a concern for the culture associated with the language. Language is more than a mere means of communication; it is part and parcel of the identity and culture of the people speaking it. It is the means by which individuals understand themselves and the world around them (Foucher, 2000).

Thus, in a minority context, French-language institutions often have a larger institutional role to play. In addition to their pedagogical role, these institutions work to maintain the French language, transmit the culture associated with that language, and strengthen the vitality of the francophone minority population.

## ROLE OF THE ONTARIO GOVERNMENT IN AMÉNAGEMENT LINGUISTIQUE

The Ontario French Language Services Act (R.S.O. 1990, c. F-32), is a good example of *aménagement linguistique* at the provincial level. The preamble to the act recognizes the contribution of the cultural heritage of the French-speaking population and the legislative assembly's wish to preserve it for future generations.

The province recognizes French as an official language in education. Sections 1(4) and 1(4.1) of the Education Act (R.S.O. 1990, c. E-2) state:

- (4) This Act does not adversely affect any right or privilege guaranteed by section 93 of the *Constitution Act, 1867* or by section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, 1997, c. 3, s. 2 (6).
- (4.1) Every authority given by this Act, including but not limited to every authority to make a regulation, decision or order and every authority to issue a directive or guideline, shall be exercised in a manner consistent with and respectful of the rights and privileges guaranteed by section 93 of the *Constitution Act, 1867* and by section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, 1997, c. 31, s. 1 (5).



Recognition of this status conforms with the purpose of section 23 of the Charter and encourages all education stakeholders to take steps to ensure that this status brings concrete benefits. In 1991, the government created the French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch and incorporated it into the ministry's organization chart with a mandate to develop policies and programs that meet the needs of students in French-language schools.

As early as 1994, with the publication of the trilogy *Aménagement linguistique en français*, *Investir dans l'animation culturelle*, and *Actualisation linguistique en français et Perfectionnement du français*, the French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, together with its partners, was developing its vision of French-language education in a minority setting.

*Aménagement linguistique en français: Guide d'élaboration d'une politique d'aménagement linguistique – Paliers élémentaire et secondaire* explained the need for an *aménagement linguistique* policy as follows:

... the *aménagement linguistique* policy will attempt to counteract the effects of interaction with the forces of the majority by implementing measures justifying the use of French and making the francophone community visible. These measures will touch on the management and organization of French-language schools, learning, teaching, and assessment. The measures will be established in consultation with parents and community organizations (Ontario, Ministry of Education and Training, 1994a, p. 46).

In 1996, the ministry paved the way for a reform of the provincial education system. While the intent was to give every student access to an equitable,

quality education system, the ultimate, unequivocal objective was to improve student achievement and academic achievement. In view of the unique nature of French-language education, the design and drafting of all the new curriculum's programs constitute an example of *aménagement linguistique* measures that meet the needs of the minority population. As a result, the French-language curriculum is no longer simply a translation and adaptation of the English-language curriculum. Instead, it includes linguistically and culturally important measures designed to create a continuum of learning tailored specifically to students in French-language schools.

In the Education Quality Improvement Act, 1997 (L.O.1997, c. 31), the Ontario government restructured the education system by reducing the number of existing school boards and creating twelve French-language district school boards split into four public district school boards and eight Catholic district school boards. By creating Catholic and public boards, the Ontario government fulfilled its obligations under section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the Ontario government worked closely with the federal government on funding *aménagement linguistique* measures in minority-language education, primarily under the Official Languages Act. The province also played an important role in the discussions and projects of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, especially with respect to the multilateral Protocol for Agreements for Minority-Language Education and Second-Language Instruction. Through various bilateral cost-sharing agreements with the federal government, such as the Agreement on Official Languages in Education (OLE) and the Canada-Ontario Special Agreement for the Implementation

of French-Language School Governance 1998–2003, the Ontario government helped finance many *aménagement linguistique* initiatives at the local and provincial levels.

## ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN AMÉNAGEMENT LINGUISTIQUE

Federally, the Official Languages Act has recognized English and French as official languages with equal status in Canada since 1969. Under this act, the federal government is acting on its commitment to support the development of official language minority communities in Canada. The act serves as the anchor point for many *aménagement linguistique* measures across the country. In addition to providing services in both languages in many parts of Ontario, the Canadian government makes a financial contribution to the development of French-language education in Ontario.

*Le plan d'action pour les langues officielles (The Action Plan for Official Languages)* (Government of Canada, 2003) reiterates the federal government's commitment to promoting linguistic equality and

the development of official language minority communities in Canada. In the area of education, the plan sets an objective of increasing the number of children of **Charter rights-holders** enrolled in francophone minority-language institutions, implementing measures that encourage preschool-age children to learn French, and increasing the number of bilingual graduates across Canada.

*Although it does not appear explicitly in legislative texts and court decisions, the term **Charter rights-holders** refers to parents who, according to sections 23 (1) and (2) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, are Canadian citizens and have the right to have their children instructed in the language of the minority population, as well as to their children who are the beneficiaries (Martel, 2001, p. 18).*



# Context and Challenges of French-Language Education

## CONTEXT

By studying the context in which French-language education is delivered in Ontario, we can define the principal social factors that exert an influence on the implementation of the schools' mandate. Since schools draw their clientele from both a minority and a pluralistic community, it may be difficult to identify *aménagement linguistique* interventions that meet the needs of this clientele without considering its demographic, linguistic, geographic, and socio-cultural characteristics.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF ONTARIO'S FRANCOPHONE POPULATION

The following are the principal trends that emerge from the 1991 to 2001 censuses with respect to the demographic and linguistic evolution of Ontario's francophone population: francophones are a minority community whose population, compared with the general population, is declining, older, more rural but undergoing increasing urbanization, and, because of immigration, becoming more diverse. While the population with French as its **mother tongue** made up 5 per cent of the total population of Ontario in 1991, in 2001 it made up only 4.5 per cent, or 548,940 people (Statistics Canada, 2002a, p. 26).

*According to Statistics Canada, **mother tongue** is defined as the first language that a person learned at home in childhood and that is still understood at the time of the census.*

Current research shows that the factors contributing to the "minorization", that is, the marginalization of the minority francophone population, are the falling birth rate; urbanization, which exacerbates dispersion; and immigration, which, from a demographic point of view, favours the anglophone majority. In French Ontario, increased "minorization" is also accompanied by increased assimilation, that is, the loss of a person's mother tongue as the usual language of communication. According to Roger Bernard, "the majority of language transfers to English, in situations where francophones are very much in the minority, are relatively definitive changes that represent losses for the population whose mother tongue is French" (translated from Bernard, 1998, p. 74).

### ASSIMILATION AND ITS CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Statistics Canada indicates that, in 1991, 62.8 per cent of francophones spoke French most often at home, while in 2001, 59.2 per cent did. Furthermore, the proportion of Ontario francophones speaking English



most often at home has increased steadily over the past decade, rising from 36.9 per cent in 1991 to 40.3 per cent in 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2002a, p. 30).

The rate of language retention among Ontario's francophones is a matter of concern. One of the consequences of assimilation is erosion of the minority population through the gradual disappearance of its culture and, finally, of its collective identity and community vitality (Bernard, 1998). In addition to increased "minorization", the main factors contributing to assimilation are **exogamy**, globalization, and immigration which, from a linguistic point of view, tends to favour the Anglophone majority.

*Exogamy is the union or marriage between members of different language groups.*

*Endogamy, on the other hand, is the union or marriage between members of the same language group.*

#### INCREASED "MINORIZATION"

Census data for Ontario reveal that the use of French as the language spoken at home in a specific region depends very much on the concentration of francophones in that region (Office of Francophone Affairs, 1999, pp. 4 and 10).

The regions of the province where retention of French as the language spoken at home is highest are, in declining order, eastern Ontario and north-eastern Ontario, the regions where the concentration of people declaring French as their mother tongue is also the highest. The retention of French as the language spoken at home is, on the other hand, noticeably lower in southwestern Ontario and

central Ontario, regions where the proportion of the population declaring French as their mother tongue is much lower.

#### EXOGENY

The last few decades have brought major changes in the family structure, and these have had an impact on the transmission of the French language and culture to the next generation of young people in Ontario. Although unions or marriages have traditionally tended to take place primarily within the same language group, an increase in unions between members of different language groups is now occurring. It has been demonstrated that the smaller the minority, the higher the rate of exogamy (Landry & Rousselle, 2003).

Exogamy is often associated with a high rate of language transfer from French to English in many of Canada's minority communities. In fact, in Ontario, 95 per cent of endogamous families transmit French to their children, while the transmission rate is about 46 per cent for exogamous families (Statistics Canada, 2002b). The increased anglicization of children from exogamous families is all the more disquieting as 54.3 per cent of the families of Charter rights-holders making up the **target school population** are exogamous (Martel, 2001, p. 33).

*The term target school population refers to children between the ages of six and seventeen who have at least one parent who is a Canadian citizen with French as a mother tongue and who are thereby eligible for instruction in the language of the minority, whether or not this right is exercised (Martel, 2001, pp. 18 and 25).*



In Canada, only a little more than four out of ten children of families of Charter rights-holders live in a strong French family environment (Landry, 2003, p. 17). It has been demonstrated, however, that the likelihood that children from exogamous families will be anglicized can be reduced if the francophone parent is successful in promoting his or her language and culture within the home and if parents choose to have their children educated in French-language schools (Landry & Allard, 1997, p. 587). Under these conditions, the acquisition of the French language by the children of exogamous couples is similar to that of endogamous couples.

#### *GLOBALIZATION*

This increase in the assimilation of the minority francophone population is currently taking place in a context marked by the globalization of markets, the development of information and communication technologies, and the new knowledge economy. In this context, an opposing movement is starting to emerge. On the one hand, globalization, and, in particular, the development of new information and communications technologies seem to offer enormous possibilities for revitalizing the French language, currently the eleventh-most-spoken language in the world (Braun, 2001, p. 337), as well as for increasing the frequency of cultural and economic exchanges among nations having French as a common language. On the other hand, on an international scale, a strong trend towards linguistic and cultural uniformity, that is, an impoverishment of linguistic and cultural diversity and, paradoxically, a growing demand for a bilingual and plurilingual workforce (James, 1996; Lefebvre & Hily, 1997; Weber, 1999). These events are having their effect on the global francophone environment (Agence internationale de la francophonie, 2002) and on the language

and identity practices of Canada's minority communities (Heller & Labrie, 2001).

#### *IMMIGRATION*

It has been shown that, depending on the aims of immigration policy, immigration may or may not contribute to the linguistic vitality of a community. According to a recent study, although there was a large increase in immigration in the 1990s, only 6.8 per cent of new immigrants spoke French as their first official language on arrival and 3.2 per cent spoke both English and French (Jedwab, 2002). Furthermore, once they have settled in Canada, most immigrants adopt the English language (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2002).

Although immigration contributes little to the demographic growth of the francophone community, it nevertheless contributes to its diversity. Immigration is making Ontario's francophone community more multicultural and multiracial. Outside Quebec, the province of Ontario receives the largest number of francophone immigrants (13.4 per cent) (Jedwab, 2002, p. 26). The number of francophone immigrants who belong to an ethno-cultural minority increased from 22,700 to 28,825 between 1991 and 1996 (Office of Francophone Affairs, 1999, p. 7).

In general, immigration brings major challenges – on the one hand, those related to the recruitment of francophone immigrants to areas outside Quebec (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2002) and, on the other hand, those involving structures for integrating these new immigrants into the francophone community in Canadian provinces other than Quebec (Quell, 2002).

Since immigration falls under federal jurisdiction, the Canadian government has indicated its intent to respond to these challenges by instituting measures to deal with them (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2002; Government of Canada, 2003). Through its actions, the government is endeavouring to make immigration contribute more to the maintenance and development of minority linguistic communities across the country.

## CHALLENGES

If the changes of the last decades have had an impact on the status of Ontario's minority French-language community, they have also had an impact on this community's educational institutions, especially with respect to language acquisition and cultural ownership, as well as to the recruitment and retention of students in French-language schools.

### CHALLENGES RELATED TO LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND CULTURAL OWNERSHIP

#### IMPROVING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) annually administers provincial assessments so that it can report to the public on the education system's performance and improve education quality and accountability. By analysing the test results, it is possible, for example, to compare student achievement year over year for a given school.

Annual test results for French-language schools indicate that many students at the elementary level have difficulty meeting the **provincial standard** for reading and writing. These problems have implications for their academic achievement.

*The provincial standard, or level 3 on a four-level scale, corresponds to achievement that fully meets the expectations outlined in the Ontario curriculum guidelines, thus ensuring a smooth transition from one grade to the next.*

Achievement rates have, however, begun to improve significantly, an indication of both the usefulness of focused pedagogical interventions and the need for pedagogical approaches that better meet students' needs.

The ministry (King, 2004a) has analysed students' progress towards graduation and course achievement during the implementation of the Reorganized Program. Its report reveals that a certain number of students may fail to graduate. Students should normally have completed twenty-four or more credits by the end of Grade 11; however, over one-quarter of the students in the first cohort of the new program have no more than twenty credits and are very likely to drop out of school before graduating (King, 2004a).

This finding must be taken into consideration in the choice of interventions that target struggling students and focus on the acquisition of subject-specific knowledge and skills and the raising of achievement levels. The development and implementation of pedagogical practices adapted to a minority setting are considered essential for the success of all students and the vitality of educational institutions. The remedial measures taken by secondary school staff in 2002 and 2003 to improve the success rates of francophone students on the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)



confirm this: 79 per cent of students in French-language schools successfully completed the test in 2003, compared with 67 per cent in 2002 (Education Quality and Accountability Office, 2002).

The following measures are also designed to help improve student achievement at the elementary and secondary levels:

- Boards continue to implement student achievement improvement plans.
- Students who are unsuccessful on the OSSLT can now take a specially designed literacy course to help them meet this Ontario Secondary School Diploma requirement or, in exceptional cases, can request that their skills be assessed by a local adjudication panel.

However, these measures have not entirely resolved the problem of students' poor language skills, especially poor oral communication skills in a setting where French is losing ground to English as the language spoken at home.

Although the provincial tests help verify the development of students' reading and writing skills, in their present form they do not specifically assess students' level of competence in oral communication. In the case of students from a linguistic minority population, poor French-language skills can delay learning at all levels of the learning continuum. However, there is a broadly shared conviction among researchers that "first language learning rests on a more solid foundation if, as early as possible – at the pre-school level – the child acquires strong communicative competence" (translated from Coghlan & Thériault, 2002, p. 7). The development of an oral communication learning **continuum** from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 as

an integral part of the teaching of all subjects and disciplines would be most helpful in improving achievement levels for students in French-language schools.

*"A **continuum** is a set of basic skills in various areas of learning that enables an individual to effectively process everyday situations and problems by calling on a variety of resources" (translated from Jonnaert, 2004, p. 28).*

#### *CURBING ANGLICIZATION AND OFFSETTING ITS EFFECTS, ESPECIALLY AT THE START OF SCHOOLING*

Francophone families in Ontario are experiencing an increase in the anglicization of their children, especially when the parents use English more than French in their daily exchanges. This trend is also seen in French-language schools. Data from the *Programme d'indicateurs sur la qualité de l'éducation* (PIQÉ) on the language spoken at home by students in French-language schools in Grades 3 and 6 in Ontario confirm a growing trend to the predominance of English as the language spoken at home (Education Quality and Accountability Office, 2000, p. 100). These data lead us to the conclusion that families, under pressure from their social environments, are becoming less and less of a vehicle for transmitting the minority language. This can lead to the progressive assimilation of the members of a minority community, thus weakening the community as a whole. This phenomena is called **subtractive bilingualism**.

**Subtractive bilingualism** is defined as a situation in which learning a second language occurs at the expense of the mother tongue, and in which intensive contact with the more prestigious language of a dominant group poses a threat of linguistic assimilation. Subtractive bilingualism is often merely a transitional phase leading to unilingualism in the second language (see Landry & Allard, 1990, p. 529). This type of bilingualism appears when an individual feels forced to learn the second language and that his or her mother tongue is not valued.

In families in which French is not the language used most often for everyday conversations, parents look to the school to assume the responsibility for transmitting the minority language to their children. This situation has direct implications for the learning process and for teaching strategies.

Given this state of affairs, the education community must explore, in partnership with representatives of the social, community, and health sectors, measures for implementing preschool programs and services adapted to the special realities of the francophone community. Studies have shown the importance of the first five years of life for the development of a child's abilities, especially language proficiency, the development of cultural identity, and the ability to integrate into the school community. In fact, there is a growing consensus among Canadian francophones that the future of French-language schooling will be decided at the preschool level (Coghlan & Thériault, 2002, p. 1). Rodrigue Landry adds that to

ensure that children of Charter rights-holders acquire good literacy skills in both languages and experience balanced psycholinguistic development, it is imperative that interventions be made early and over the long term (Landry, 2003, p. 22).

Ontario's French-language school boards have recognized the importance of intervening by offering full-time programs for children aged four and five. These boards also believe that intervention in the early years is essential to recruit, integrate, and retain the children of Charter rights-holders and new arrivals in their schools. Boards and the francophone community in general endorse views on learning and brain development such as those expressed in the *Early Years Study: Reversing the Real Brain Drain* (McCain & Mustard, 1999). These views indicate that "early child development programs (early years centres and parenting programs) and the school system should be part of a continuum for children that extends from the early years through to adulthood. The brain develops in a seamless manner and what happens in the first years sets the base for later learning in the formal education system" (McCain & Mustard, 1999, p. 15). A learning continuum is all the more important in a minority setting that is constantly faced with the issue of whether students know and are familiar with the French language. *Aménagement linguistique* interventions in the early years should help young children acquire the necessary language skills to enter the regular program when they start school.

#### *IMPROVING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE GROWING LINGUISTIC HETEROGENEITY OF THE FRANCOPHONE SCHOOL POPULATION*

As already shown, changes in the province's francophone population have radically modified the





linguistic profile of the school population. The constitutional guarantee of the right to receive instruction in the language of the official minority has also had an impact on the makeup of this population. Parents who meet the eligibility criteria set out in section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms are the holders of this right while their children are the beneficiaries. Since the child's knowledge of French is not an eligibility requirement in and of itself, the children of Charter rights-holders have widely varying language skills.

The children in French-language schools today begin school with quite varied language skills and experiences. Students who are the children of Charter rights-holders form two different categories. The first is made up of students who are proficient

in the French language when they start school, as French is most often spoken in their homes. The second contains students whose French-language skills are limited or sometimes even non-existent, as the language that they most often use at home, in their activities outside of class, and sometimes even in the classroom is English (see Gérin-Lajoie, 2001).

Children of parents who do not meet section 23 criteria can be admitted into Ontario's French-language schools by an **admissions committee**. These children may be the children of parents who have settled in Canada as immigrants or refugees and for whom French may be their first, second, or even third language, yet who feel a certain attachment to French.

*Under the Education Act, the **admissions committee** is composed of three people – the principal of the school to which admission is requested, a teacher of the board, and a supervisory officer employed by the board (Education Act, 2002, section 293[1]). The admissions committee bases its decisions first on admission criteria such as those set out in section 23 of the Charter and then on the criteria developed by the board.*

*Among these criteria we find the following:*

- *the level of knowledge of French of both the child and the child's parents*
- *the child's attitude to and motivation for learning the French language*
- *the parents' commitment to academic learning*
- *the parents' commitment to school and quality French-language education*

Over the last few decades, the linguistic homogeneity of the population of French-language schools has diminished significantly, gradually giving way to a heterogeneous population with an extremely diverse range of ability in the French language. For legal reasons (those of French-language Charter rights-holders), because of immigration, or for other reasons, French-language educational institutions often come to accept students for whom English is the dominant language or for whom French is not their first language (Coghlan & Thériault, 2002, p. 10). This increasing linguistic heterogeneity poses a major challenge if children's poor knowledge of French on starting school has the effect of delaying their entry into the regular program. In addition, gaps in basic language skills may, over the course of children's schooling, lead to delays in acquiring concepts and skills in various subjects and disciplines.

The issue of the linguistic heterogeneity of the school population remains, on the whole, a difficult one. In some areas, with the decline in enrolment, children of Charter rights-holders who speak little or no French may be considered an important clientele and a determining factor in the school system's survival; in other areas, this clientele may be seen as an obstacle. In fact, research shows that the limited French-language proficiency of English-language-dominant students often has a delaying effect on French-language-dominant and bilingual students with respect to learning French and even other subjects (Coghlan & Thériault, 2002, p. 10). In this situation, schools must make sure that they meet the needs of the first group without interfering with the needs of the second by implementing language support programs and appropriate pedagogical

approaches. Schools must also ensure that linguistic heterogeneity does not result in French becoming a second language within the schools themselves.

Creating a francophone environment becomes an essential step in enabling students to develop their French-language skills and their francophone identity to the fullest. Through its targeted *aménagement linguistique* interventions, a school implements ways of ensuring the primacy of French in all areas of activity. Spoken French then becomes the preferred language of communication for everyone in contact with that school.

#### *PROMOTING HIGH-LEVEL BILINGUALISM FOR ALL*

In Ontario, a social environment dominated by English generally means that members of the minority community must communicate in English in many aspects of their daily lives. That is why most Ontario francophones are bilingual.

High-level bilingualism is increasingly valued in our society. For this reason, bilingualism is an asset for francophones when it comes to meeting the greater demand for bilingual skills on the job market. However, the assimilating forces resulting from subtractive bilingualism may outweigh the advantages provided by learning English. Subtractive bilingualism must not be allowed to harm the linguistic and cultural vitality of francophone schools and communities.





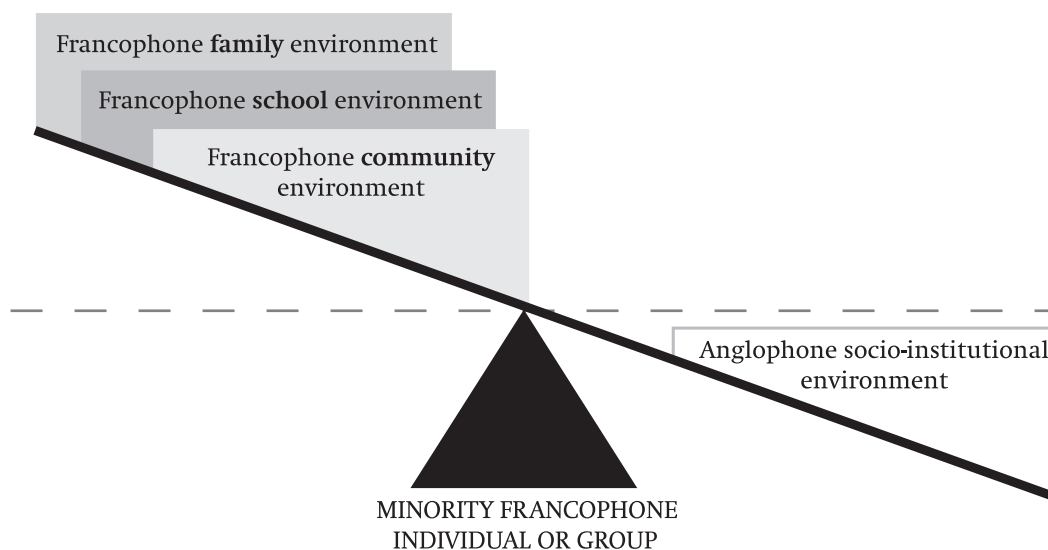
*Additive bilingualism exists when the second language is learned without any adverse effects on the development and maintenance of the minority language. In Canada, the total immersion in French of anglophone students seems to lead to such bilingualism. Research reveals a high degree of acquisition of the second language without a negative impact on the mother tongue or on the academic achievement of these students (Landry & Allard, 1990, p. 529).*

This concept of maintaining the primacy of the minority language while ensuring mastery of the majority language represents an ideal for francophone communities to strive for. In a setting conducive to subtractive bilingualism, where the language of the majority is already the usual language of many students and their parents, the challenge is to create a learning dynamic that, to some extent, re-establishes the linguistic and cultural primacy of French. From their research, Rodrigue Landry and Réal Allard (2000) have shown that better development of the French-language skills of all students has the effect of promoting **additive bilingualism**, since it improves students' ability to learn a second language. However, in the process of learning the minority language and acquiring additive bilingualism, the francophone minority requires **compensating measures** to neutralize the subtractive influence of the majority language on the minority language.

*According to Rodrigue Landry and Réal Allard (1990, pp. 527–553), three major environments influence the bilingual development of school-age and preschool-age children: the family environment, the school or preschool environment, and the social environment. Given that English is usually dominant in the social environment, the school or the family, or both, must be able to offer the child a francophone environment that compensates for the weak presence and low value of French in the social environment. The family and school thus act as true “**compensating measures**”.*

“In the compensating measures model, the weaker the linguistic vitality of the francophone community, the more the family environment and the school environment must foster the use of French to offset the lack of French resources in the individual network of linguistic contacts. . . . From this model it can be inferred that in a minority francophone environment, additive bilingualism is fostered by a strong French education. A unilingual French school environment will help minority francophones develop competence in French that is transferable to English, as well as a strong subjective ethno-linguistic vitality that offsets the lack of socio-institutional vitality” (translated from Coghlan & Thériault, 2002, p. 6).

## COMPENSATING MEASURES



*This illustration shows how the vitality of the francophone language, identity, and culture can be counterbalanced with the dominant English-language and anglophone environment by the family, the school, and the francophone community.*

*Adapted from the ethno-linguistic vitality compensating measures model developed by Rodrigue Landry in 1984 (Centre franco-ontarien de ressources pédagogiques [CFORP], 2003b, p. 37).*

#### FACTORING IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR IDENTITY

In the current context of globalization, the increasing diversity of the migratory movements of labour, the further development of information and communications technologies, and the overwhelming presence of the Anglo-American media, the traditional reference points for identity are being challenged. Studies have found that, when it comes to their sense of belonging, young francophones are torn “between their Frenchness and their participation in a culturally and linguistically diverse society, between the local and the national, between the minority and the majority, between ethnic exclu-

sivity and linguistic and ethnocultural inclusivity. Consequently, young people identify with their bilingualism and their biculturalism or multiculturalism without, however, rejecting their Frenchness” (translated from Dallaire & Roma, 2000, p. 6). All too often, however, the French language takes on a strictly utilitarian function divorced from francophone culture (Frenette, 2003).

The double cohort research that was discussed in the section on challenges supports the notion that “the cultural identity of francophone students appears to be ambiguous. On the one hand, they see the importance of the French language and their



French-language skills. On the other hand, having a better understanding of their French culture is of little or no importance to them” (translated from King, 2004b, p. 146). King adds: “Francophone students seem to need support to take ownership of their culture and develop their self-esteem. They must discover pride in being francophone and a desire to promote their culture. They must also learn to create their own cultural identity from their diverse and often complex roots” (translated from King, 2004b, p. 146).

The issues at stake in developing a cultural identity in a minority setting are undeniably reflected in the following question posed by the poet Édouard Glissant: “In the current state of the world, one major question is this: How can one be oneself without shutting out the other and how can one be open to the other without losing oneself?” (translated from Glissant, 1996, p. 23).

Such is the challenge presented by the difficult transition from subtractive bilingualism to additive bilingualism.

#### CONNECTING WITH GREATER CULTURAL DIVERSITY

French-language schools are enrolling more and more new arrivals whose families are in search of a new life or a safe refuge. Integrating these students creates a number of challenges for school boards since these young people come from many different origins and have had varied life experiences and an education that is just as varied. Many of them speak a form of French that is different from the French spoken in Ontario. The arrival of these young people certainly adds to the multicultural and multiracial character of the schools. Their entry and inclusion, as well as that of their parents, become a source of

dialogue and learning for everyone in daily contact with the school.

## CHALLENGES OF STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

In addition to having an impact on language acquisition and cultural ownership, the factors already described also have an impact on student recruitment and retention.

### RECRUITMENT

One of the issues faced by French-language schools is the recruitment of children entitled to receive instruction in the minority language. In fact, recruiting Charter rights-holders’ children who are between six and seventeen years of age is, according to the study *Rights, Schools and Communities in Minority Contexts: 1986–2002*, the goal for which francophone school systems must strive (Martel, 2001).

In her study, Martel describes trends in the target student population of French-language schools outside Quebec. She finds that in the early years of section 23 implementation, some progress was made in reaching this target student population. In fact, the proportion of this population rose from 45.2 per cent in 1986 to 54.4 per cent in 1996, which indicates that a slightly larger proportion of children from the francophone minority population were educated in French (Martel, 2001, p. 9).

The study also indicated that, between 1986 and 1996, the proportion of the target school population enrolled in French-language schools in Ontario rose from 53.5 per cent to 64.1 per cent, a reclamation rate above the national average ( Martel, 2001, p. 33).

Martel believes that with energetic *aménagement linguistique* measures, Ontario’s French-language

schools could increase their percentage of the target school population to 75 per cent by 2010 ( Martel, 2001, p. 39). In addition to the recruitment of the children of Charter rights-holders who are not already enrolled in French-language schools, Martel suggests the establishment of preschool institutions to help improve student recruitment for the early years.

Since the recruitment of the children of Charter rights-holders makes it possible to maintain this right over many generations, it becomes a key factor for French-language school boards in consolidating the French-language school system. Boards could adopt a number of measures to achieve a high level of recruitment, including the following:

- improving the identification of Charter rights-holders living within the board's catchment area through systematic data collection
- establishing recruitment strategies that target the children of Charter rights-holders from other parts of Canada, as well as new arrivals
- creating links with immigration services to improve the recruitment of new arrivals

Aware of the high stakes associated with student recruitment, the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with French-language school boards, is developing performance measures for recruitment and improving the graduation rate.

### *RETENTION*

Martel's study also analyses the retention rate for students in French-language schools in Canada and finds that French-language schools outside Quebec have difficulty retaining their students. The author points out that attrition occurs primarily between Grades 1 and 2, between Grades 8 and 9, and


between Grades 11 and 12. She concludes that the drop in enrolment between Grades 1 and 2 calls into question the quality of the welcome extended by the school, while the loss at other levels could indicate that the choice of language of instruction is related to the language of postsecondary education (Martel, 2001, p. 5). Preliminary analyses conducted by the Ministry of Education of retention rates for the francophone school population indicate that Ontario is not immune to the situation.

Some believe that the existence of a learning continuum from preschool to university influences parents' choice of school and students' motivation to pursue their education in French. One way of improving retention rates and thus countering assimilation is to set up educational institutions that are sensitive to the needs of the francophone community and to create access to French-language environments from preschool through secondary education, as well as with postsecondary education and the job market.

The status of French and English is another factor that influences retention. English is the language that most often provides access to the job market. This has a direct impact on parents' motivation to enrol and keep their children in French-language schools, knowing that to function in Ontario society their children must be proficient in English. Therefore, the francophone community's continuing efforts to create bilingual jobs and environments where French is the language of work can have only a positive influence on parents' motivation to enrol their children in French-language schools (Côté, 2003).

In light of these findings, the Ministry of Education believes that the issue of the retention rate concerns





all levels of French-language education. It is a matter of demonstrating to parents and students that, in the global context, an education acquired entirely in French is an added value for the acquisition not only of diversified language skills but also of intercultural skills.

These skills make it possible to engage in a process of mutual understanding and healthy communication. They make it possible to reduce discrimination and racism and to strengthen conflict management capacities. They promote openness to cultural plurality and the sharing of common environments in the classroom, in the school, and later in society (Lafranchi & Perregaux, 2000; Kanouté, 2003a). Such skills equip young francophones to better meet the requirements of the provincial, national, and international labour markets.

## IN CONCLUSION

In light of the preceding, it is of the utmost importance to reiterate that all *aménagement linguistique* interventions are designed to create a school environment that will enable young francophones to flourish. While some may think that this policy is a remedial measure in the face of anglicization, or that it is primarily designed to meet the need to increase student numbers in French-language schools regardless of its impact on the French-speaking student who may appear to be left out, this obviously is not the case. The *aménagement linguistique* policy is first and foremost an attempt to protect, support, and enhance the French language. It offers school boards the possibility of determining the methods required to help French-speaking students develop without their francophone identity being challenged in the school environment. School staff, parents, and members of the wider community are jointly responsible for the personal and career growth of these young people.



Strategic aims are the major focus areas set by francophone educational institutions to enable them to meet the challenges posed by the impact of the social changes of the last few decades, as well as the impact of assimilation on the acquisition of the French language and francophones' ownership of their culture. The key strategic aims can be divided into two broad categories: those promoting **personal development** and **academic achievement** and those promoting institutional **capacity building**.

In French-language education, personal development is the responsibility of individuals, such as the school staff, managers, parents, and students. Capacity building is the responsibility of educational institutions such as schools, school boards, and the Ministry of Education.

*Academic achievement has both a very broad and a more restricted definition. In its broader sense, it includes the notions of personal success and achievement. The Ministry of Education's initiatives for success for every student recognize that the idea of success must go beyond basic academic performance to include the successful acquisition of knowledge and skills, the valuing of self-knowledge and self-esteem, and program pathways that meet the aspirations of every student. This means thinking in terms of changing the overall culture of the educational institutions. An education system that promotes excellence and openness expects that both students and school staff will produce work of the highest quality and will demonstrate a humanism marked by tolerance.*

*In its restricted meaning, the concept of academic achievement refers to the student's performance with respect to curriculum expectations and is measured regularly. The student is encouraged to improve his or her level of achievement with the supervision and support, in the learning process, of parents and school staff.*

**Capacity** is defined here as the organizational and technical skills, relationships, and values that enable institutions to carry out functions and achieve development objectives over time (Morgan, 1998, pp. 2 and 3). An organization's capacity is its potential to perform – its ability to successfully apply its skills and resources towards the accomplishment of its goals and the satisfaction of its stakeholders' expectations.

An organization's overall capacity depends on its resources (human, physical, financial, and technological) and its management (leadership, program and process management, networking, and alliances). It also depends on the environment in which people and institutions grow (de Souza Siva, 2003).

The following aims promote **personal development** and **academic achievement**:

- to foster, within a lifelong learning approach, the academic achievement of every student by implementing relevant quality programs and services that reflect the unique nature of the francophone community and take into account the effects of the English-language-dominant environment on the learning of school subjects and disciplines
- to promote identity building and the development of self-confidence in francophones through the implementation of conditions conducive to the creation of a francophone environment that takes into account the vitality and pluralism of Ontario's French-language community
- to increase the capacity of educational institutions to develop the necessary programs, resources, and services by creating meaningful partnerships among the school, the family, and the community
- to increase the vitality of Ontario's educational institutions through leadership that facilitates capacity building and strategic changes that foster the sustainable development of both these institutions and the francophone community

These strategic aims are translated into action through the implementation of the *aménagement linguistique* framework and its intervention areas. It is in the spirit of this policy that lifelong learning, identity building, and capacity building are ongoing processes that involve every person who, directly or indirectly, works within the French-language school system.

The following aims promote **institutional capacity building**:

- to develop, through a learning community model, the capacity of school staff, parents, and students to sustain the linguistic and cultural development of the community within a vision that fosters lifelong learning



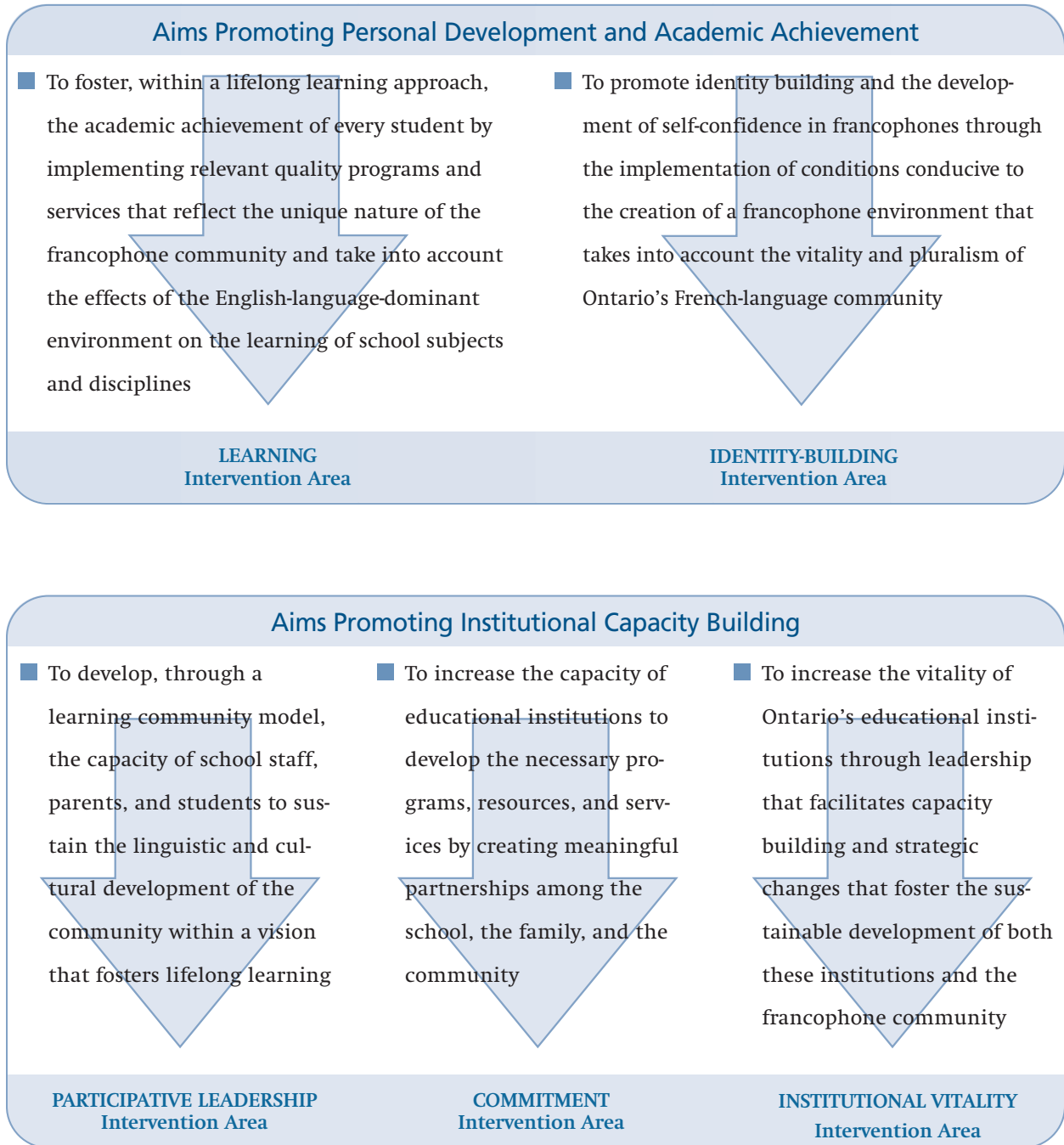
Every school and every school board must comply with the conditions required for its students' academic achievement. However, these conditions cannot be dissociated from the impact of the minority setting on learning. This is where *aménagement linguistique* interventions make a contribution.

The variety and complexity of *aménagement linguistique* interventions are so great that a framework is required to classify and assess them in terms of how well they achieve the desired changes. Every need that French-language school boards consider fundamental, such as the need to provide students and school staff with adequate facilities, does not necessarily fall within the *aménagement linguistique* framework. *Aménagement linguistique* typically consists of a set of interventions that deal specifically with language acquisition and cultural ownership in a minority setting. The interventions are grouped into five separate **intervention areas** that are closely related to the strategic aims presented earlier through interventions targeting students,

school staff, parents, and educational institutions such as schools, district school boards, and school authorities.

*Intervention areas are specific areas of activity that can be used to categorize the interventions and define their scope. In this policy, the term **intervention** is synonymous with an *aménagement linguistique* activity or measure undertaken with the goal of attaining a specific outcome and making a significant change in the education system. The term **system** refers to schools as well as district school boards and school authorities.*

The following table illustrates the relationship between the strategic aims and intervention areas:



The *aménagement linguistique* framework consists of five specific intervention areas:

- *learning*
- *identity building*
- *participative leadership*
- *commitment*
- *institutional vitality*

Within each area, rubrics are used to further refine the categories of potential interventions, while the accompanying text sets out the rationale for each. For example:

AREA	LEARNING Intervention Area
Rubrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <i>Cross-curricular competencies</i></li> <li>■ <i>Subject-specific competencies</i></li> <li>■ <i>Career-related competencies</i></li> <li>■ <i>Bilingualism</i></li> <li>■ <i>Attitudes conducive to academic achievement</i></li> <li>■ <i>Language support programs</i></li> <li>■ <i>Learning support</i></li> </ul>

A description of each intervention area follows. Each description concludes with a summary table which, through the use of many examples, illustrates the kind of interventions that might be selected in implementing *aménagement linguistique* projects.



## LEARNING INTERVENTION AREA

“Learning intervention area” refers to the area of knowledge and skills acquisition and career preparation. Interventions in the learning area can be used to create conditions that foster the academic achievement of every student regardless of potential and talents. They should take into consideration the needs of every student from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 and, of course, the conditions arising from the minority setting.

In school, students learn to acquire the **competencies** and **attitudes** that they need to develop their knowledge, skills, and talents, as well as for their academic and personal success. The learning process should help develop critical thinking skills that enable students to reflect, make choices, and act independently. During this process, students assume responsibility for themselves, set their personal goals, and determine their degree of autonomy (Legendre, 1995).

*“A **competency** is the result of frequently exercised, sound choices that sufficiently mobilize knowledge, know-how, and interpersonal skills within a known or recognizable context. A learner who succeeds in coordinating and mobilizing the various appropriate skills within the given context or situation demonstrates a knowledge to act” (translated from Bissonnette & Richard, 2001, p. 9). For these reasons, a competency is not applications-oriented – defined as predetermined ways of doing things; it is the consequence of a process that brings into play a set of cognitive resources (adapted from Morissette, 2002, p. 76).*

*“**Attitude** is the state of mind enabling behaviours that express values. Much could be said about the hierarchy of values. We will say only that to master the attitudes that allow an individual to develop depends on the search for a balance between, on the one hand, individual values centred on identity affirmation, and on the other, social values centred on the discovery of and respect for the identity of others” (translated from Henry & Cormier, 1996).*

This learning process continues throughout one’s life, from early childhood right through retirement, and, when it takes place in school, the responsibility for achieving it is shared among the learner, parents, school staff, and all members of the learner’s influence group, whether institutional or not.

### CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

Every student must acquire basic skills that are suited to his or her needs, talents, and potential. These are indispensable to making one’s way in life and in society. Such competencies are called cross-curricular competencies because they cross discipline and subject boundaries and lay the foundations for learning in these very disciplines and subjects. They are the basis for developing literacy and numeracy and they enable people to function in contemporary society. It is important to define the conditions for acquiring these competencies, particularly if they are acquired in a minority setting.

The *Groupe d'experts sur les élèves à risque* agreed on the following definition of literacy:

*Literacy is defined as the set of knowledge and skills used in oral communication, reading, writing, finding information, mastering interactional technologies, and critical thinking.*

- **Oral communication** includes the ability to know and properly use appropriate vocabulary, to articulate clearly, to use intonation correctly, to listen for understanding, and to stay focused.
- **Reading** includes decoding texts and, depending on the student's academic or intellectual level, cognition and interpreting inferences.
- **Writing** involves creating meaningful handwritten text or using a word-processing tool, as well as appropriate vocabulary for the purpose, proper syntax, and the accepted rules of grammar.
- **Finding information** includes choosing and evaluating texts and visual or sound documents, using interactive technologies as well as traditional methods.
- **Mastering information and communication technologies** includes the ability to use a search engine, manipulate visual or sound digital documents, and use or add to databases.
- **Critical thinking** includes the ability to make connections among facts and to question one's own certainties.

*(Translated from Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003a, p. 13)*



To have a precise basis for its research, suggestions, and recommendations, the expert panel (Ontario Ministry of Education 2004, p. 11) agreed on the following definition of **numeracy**:

*“A set of essential competencies relying on mathematical concepts and related competencies, such as using appropriate technologies.” These competencies allow a person to function in society, that is, the ability to handle and manage life situations effectively, resolve real-life problems, and communicate solutions. For the student, numeracy takes the form of four mathematical competencies:*

- 1. effectively using measurement and the properties of numbers and geometrical objects*
- 2. problem solving and developing analytical and critical thinking*
- 3. reading and interpreting information*
- 4. communicating mathematical ideas*

**Oral communication** is used to inform, explain, discuss, present an argument, and do everything that enables an individual to respond adequately to life's situations. For Philippe Perrenoud, mastering oral communication means that people are “able to understand the world around them, not naively believing everything they are told, participating in decision making, negotiating their place, discussing the rules of the game, judging laws and policies, ideologies, and the powers that be” (translated from Perrenoud, 1991, p. 12). At the outset, we learn a language to make ourselves understood and to exchange information with the people around us. “Acquisition of oral language occurs in large part, both in class and at home, through imitation, imprinting, and a succession of positive or negative situational reinforcements” (translated from Perrenoud, 1991, p. 4).

In French-language schools, French is the language of daily life. The variety of languages spoken may be different at home, at school, and in the social environment. Thus, as demonstrated by researchers, “the school (may) teach a language unconnected with the language that the children learn at home” (translated from Perrenoud, 1991, p. 5). The continual and dominant presence of English in the social environment of most young people and the anglicization that some of them experience may endanger their acquisition of the French language and cast doubt on the importance of using French at home, at school, and in society.

Just as it does for writing and grammar, the school “normalizes” spoken language (Perrenoud, 1991, p. 5). As a result, a student who knows that he or she is well understood and supported in his or her

learning processes, despite hesitations and stumbles, acquires basic language skills and adapts to the formal language of school much more easily, regardless of his or her starting point (Landry & Rousselle, 2003).

To maximize the minority student's chances of success, oral proficiency should be at the heart of all learning activities, starting in preschool. The challenge is to convince young people not only to study in French but also to want to speak French as often as possible in all aspects of daily life. Through its programs and services, school should convince the student of the relevance of learning French. Around the world, French is spoken by 72 to 90 million speakers who use it as their first language and 125 to 265 million people who understand it and use it as their second language (UNESCO, 2003). French is an official language of at least thirty countries. Seen from this angle, learning French is definitely a plus.

Given that the oral communication competencies of students in schools in minority settings vary so greatly, an oral communication learning continuum for preschool children and for children from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 is a useful tool for embedding language skills development throughout a child's schooling, thus making it easier for the child to meet curriculum expectations.

**Reading** is an active and complex process of reflecting and constructing meaning. It plays a vital role in learning by enabling us to know both ourselves and the world around us. Mastery of reading is "just as essential ... as acquiring language in weaving the social fabric and becoming part of one's community" (translated from Government of Quebec, 1998, p. 1).

Reading is a basic skill which is acquired in the earliest years of schooling. The Groupe d'experts sur les élèves à risque quoted from Steve Bissonnette and Mario Richard: "Reading has been shown to be the most important competency to be acquired in school, since it is one of the best predictors of academic achievement. Studies have shown that nine out of ten children who are struggling with reading at the end of Grade 1 will be identified as exceptional by the end of Grade 4. And the probability that these students will still be exceptional at the secondary level remains at 90% (Juel, 1991). Because reading is required in all subjects, one can say that a student with a reading delay at the end of Grade 1 is a potential dropout" (translated from Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003a, p. 23).

Reading stories to children, even preschool-age children, is a very important activity that helps children develop a taste for reading and improve their vocabulary (Government of Quebec, 1998). So it is a key activity for counteracting the effects of anglicization and should be encouraged for preschoolers at home and for children in Junior and Senior Kindergarten.

**Writing.** Learning to write depends on a set of strategies that allow students to perform writing tasks for school or for the activities of daily life. Moreover, reading and writing are mutually reinforcing. Writing is also the form of expression that is used in school to verify what has been learned and understood. That is why the successful completion of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) is a requirement for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. Among other things, the OSSLT tests knowledge and understanding of the writing process and language concepts. To maximize academic achievement, students must have adequate writing skills by the end of elementary school.





It is interesting to note that, in school, learning to write unfortunately often occurs at the expense of oral communication (Heller & Roy, 2001, pp. 10–12). For young people to feel good about themselves, to enjoy communicating in French and take pride in being francophone, self-expression using the spoken word, the written word, and the arts must be required and valued throughout their schooling.

**Finding information** is an important skill. Since the advent of information and communication technologies (ICT) and the proliferation of media, students are exposed to a phenomenal number of ideas and concepts of all kinds. “Information floods in, jostles about, and sometimes contradicts itself. This information needs unceasingly to be clarified and incorporated into academic activities and must constantly be adapted to the values to be transmitted and the knowledge and skills to be acquired” (translated from Centre franco-ontarien de ressources pédagogiques, 2003a, p. 131). Students must be able to select, classify, and organize all this information into a useful, coherent, and valid whole. They must also understand the languages of the different media and grasp their social and cultural importance.

**Mastering information and communication technologies** fosters the development of “a large number of other competencies such as research, reasoning, organizing ideas, analysing, cooperating and problem solving” (translated from Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003a, p. 14). As well, “proficiency in finding information has the effect of making independent learning easier for every student, respecting individual work tempos, differentiating learning procedures and error processing, and promoting independent work processes” (translated from Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003a, p. 25).

Given the importance of this learning, the information-technology-related educational resources used in school should be varied and available in French. With respect to Internet research, teachers should familiarize students with French-language search engines and the many francophone sites, thus helping them realize that French is an international language used for many purposes, including scientific publications, the literary arts, and political or sports news networks.

**Critical thinking** is the ability to see relationships among facts and to gain perspective on one’s own certainties. It enables students to make better choices by taking into consideration the various options and alternatives open to them. Ways in which this competency is acquired include trial and error, contextual assessment, making decisions, and translating them into actions. Critical thinking leads to the exercise of critical judgement. “Schools have an important role to play in developing students’ critical faculties, by teaching them to weigh all the facts, to take into consideration their own emotions, to use logical arguments, to take the context into account, to allow for ambiguity and to weed out pre-conceptions” (Gouvernement of Quebec, 2001, p. 20).

Another cross-curricular competency that is also important to consider is **creative thinking**, which allows students to use their imaginations, come up with innovations, and take risks. Through this process, students are led to find original solutions to problems and choices. Often an original response to questioning gives rise to a positive and gratifying conclusion.

**Numeracy** is a skill learned and applied both inside and outside of school. Its goal is to contribute to an individual’s capacity to make informed choices, exercise free will, and develop as a citizen. It is a set of essential required competencies leading to higher-order thinking (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 12).

## SUBJECT-SPECIFIC AND DISCIPLINE-RELATED COMPETENCIES

Beyond learning cross-curricular competencies, students acquire during their schooling a body of knowledge contained in the subjects and disciplines of the Ontario curriculum. This knowledge can be found in the areas of the arts, language and literature, mathematics, social sciences and the humanities, science and technological education, and economics and finance.

The knowledge and skills presented in the Ontario curriculum for Grades 1 to 12 are organized as overall and specific expectations that comprise **concepts** and **processes** that students must master according to their grade level.

*A **concept** is a mental or abstract representation of an object (e.g., triangle, society, time, hope).*

*"A **process** is above all a tool for learning used to structure thinking and procedures. All programs have a structured procedure that draws on acquired concepts. Whether or not they are defined as competencies, the processes presented in the (elementary) programs must be developed in depth" (translated from Centre franco-ontarien de ressources pédagogiques, 2003a, p. 52; for further information on these processes, refer to Tableau synthèse des processus in Centre franco-ontarien de ressources pédagogiques, 2003a, pp. 54–55).*

Acquiring subject- and discipline-related knowledge is more complex than simply memorizing facts and ideas: "for learning to occur, the student must structure his own knowledge into a subjective, personal, rational, and meaningful model that will enable him to make connections with his greater understanding of the world around him" (translated from Centre franco-ontarien de ressources pédagogiques, 2003a, p. 115). Learning is an active construction process that links new information with previously acquired knowledge. It requires ongoing reorganization of knowledge and involves cognitive and **metacognitive strategies** as much as theoretical knowledge (adapted from Tardif, 1992).

*"A **strategy** is a way of doing, a way of proceeding, or a process that is very specific and often includes steps. It often requires a number of actions carried out in order or in sequence" (translated from Centre franco-ontarien de ressources pédagogiques, 2003a, p. 118).*

**Metacognition** is a competency that allows one to reflect on one's learning and on its meaning. Its purpose is to broaden one's field of awareness and hence one's willingness and capacity to reuse in different contexts what one knows (Britt-Mari Barth in Morissette, 2002, p. 57) and to facilitate planning and managing one's learning (Desrosiers, 2003).



While strategies are used to understand and reinvest acquired knowledge to achieve a specific goal, metacognition allows us to be aware of what we are doing, how we are doing it as we are doing it. It is then necessary to readjust one's own cognitive process to make appropriate transfers to increasingly complex situations (Desrosiers, 2003). As metacognition allows us to verify whether we have achieved our goal, the metacognitive process includes an element of self-assessment. A student's knowledge of his or her own cognitive and metacognitive strategies enables him or her to better control how he or she understands and learns. Finally, through the conscious exercise of metacognition, affective resources and self-esteem are mobilized to the same extent as thinking skills, knowledge, and strategies.

"Research has shown that students who are successful in their studies not only know how to use a strategy, but also when to use it effectively. In addition, the student who associates good performance with the accomplishment of a task that requires effort is likely to deploy a larger number of cognitive strategies" (translated from Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003a, p. 26).

A student motivated to apply his or her knowledge in a variety of projects and real-life situations develops the capacity to use what has been learned in many different situations and discovers how to exercise judgement and act with confidence.

Meeting all curriculum expectations is made much easier if students have access to a variety of quality French-language resources. French-language educational institutions in a minority setting derive many benefits from working closely together to create and share resources related to curriculum requirements.

## CAREER-RELATED COMPETENCIES

Cross-curricular competencies and subject-specific competencies are developed in parallel with the exploration of each student's interests and talents. Every young person is seeking to define the role he or she will play in society and the employment that will yield pleasure and satisfaction.

It is important to realize that the job market is in constant evolution and the rules of the game have changed (Landry, 1995). Increasingly, people are called on to change jobs regularly throughout their lives and in some cases to change careers. To stay qualified, a person must entertain the idea of continuous on-the-job training. In fact, career guidance and education is a dynamic process that starts in childhood and lasts throughout one's life (Landry, 1995, p. 2).

Faced with these new realities, students must be able to orient themselves in the midst of uncertainty, adapt to new realities, and develop career-related competencies that will enable them to better grasp the requirements of global competition with respect to the need for skilled, well-informed labour (Moisan, 2000, pp. 1 and 41).

At school, the development of these competencies fits into the three areas of learning identified in *Des choix qui mènent à l'action—Politique régissant le programme d'orientation et de formation au cheminement de carrière dans les écoles élémentaires et secondaires de l'Ontario 1999* (DCMA). The objective of this policy is to prepare young people "for their educational, social, and career success in the twenty-first century" (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999b, p. 3).

These areas of learning are student development, or the acquisition of the skills necessary for learning; interpersonal development, or the acquisition of the skills necessary for getting along with others; and career development, or the acquisition of the knowledge and skills required to set short- and longterm objectives and plan for the future.

This policy requires that schools develop a guidance and career education program that is built on the successful integration of students' needs, curriculum expectations, and the social and cultural realities that characterize the school and the wider community. The policy's primary tool is undoubtedly the Annual Education Plan (AEP), which helps students set realistic objectives and develop action plans that allow them to take responsibility for their education and plan their future. Students are encouraged to develop and maintain tools like academic and career portfolios to better manage their learning, discover their potential and talents, and explore their career options (Centre franco-ontarien de ressources pédagogiques, 2003a).

The guidance and career education program takes on particular significance when it builds bridges between schools and the communities they serve. Through appropriate partnerships, the program gives students an opportunity to participate in **school-community projects**, which promote the development of employability skills, learning from experience, and the transition to postsecondary education or the workplace. Indirectly these projects help students develop a sense of belonging to the francophone community while enlarging the community's pool of resources.

*School-community projects serve a double function. On the one hand, these projects, jointly developed by educators and members of the wider community, are very closely linked with curriculum expectations, help with learning tasks, and target very specific skills and knowledge. On the other hand, these projects are developed to help young people explore and benefit from the largest possible number of experiences in French, where French is an integral part of daily life. These projects value the development of a broader perspective on the francophone environment. They help give young people perspective on multiple and pluralistic francophone environments (Rainville & Forestier, 2001).*

These projects can help secondary school students complete the graduation requirement of forty hours of community involvement activities (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999a, p. 9). They can also help develop entrepreneurial skills by placing young people in contact with francophone models of entrepreneurship and community leaders who contribute to the sustainable development of their community (Landry & Rousselle, 2003). These projects are a way of fostering cooperation by drawing on all of the school's partners, including parents, businesses, community agencies, and other potentially interested partners.



## BILINGUALISM

Among the skills to be developed, those involving the learning of other languages deserve attention, especially in a minority setting. As discussed in the section on the challenges of French-language education, being bilingual brings many advantages with respect to employment, but it also comes with all the dangers of subtractive **bilingualism**, that is, the gradual loss of the minority language, in this case, French.

*Bilingualism is the use of two (or more) languages in one's everyday life. However, bilingualism is not knowing two or more languages equally well and optimally (as most laypersons think). Bilingualism is extremely widespread and is the norm, rather than the exception in today's world.*

*The older, monolingual view of bilingualism has had many negative consequences, one of the worst being that many bilingual individuals are very critical of their own ability to communicate as persons and do not consider themselves to be bilingual.*

*The bilingual person is a unique speaker-hearer who should be studied as such and not always in comparison with the monolingual person. Those who are bilingual use two languages – separately or together – for different purposes, in different contexts, and with different people. Because the needs and uses of the two languages*

*are usually quite different, the bilingual individual is rarely equally or completely fluent in the two languages.*

*Bilingual individuals are now seen not so much as the sum of two (or more) complete or incomplete monolingual individuals but rather as fully competent speakers-hearers who have developed specific characteristics. People considered bilingual are now studied in terms of their typical language repertoires and the areas of use of their various languages.*

*(Translated from Navracscics, 2002, pp. 2–3)*

In an additive bilingualism perspective, schools must create and maintain a balance among students' needs with respect to their acquisition of competence in French and English for both oral and written communication. In a complex and pluralistic society like ours, where knowing several languages is an undeniable asset when it comes to personal and professional success, schools must do their utmost to help students develop high-level competence in both French and English.

## ATTITUDES CONDUCIVE TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Autonomy, responsibility, teamwork, planning, and the achievement of academic objectives are important components of the guidance and career education program. These personal attributes are part of a set of attitudes that, when developed and used, have a positive influence on academic achievement.



When it comes to their studies, young people are called on to develop intellectual curiosity and concern for accuracy and work well done. Perseverance, risk taking, and recognizing one's shortcomings are all part of the learning process. Students are therefore expected to develop these attitudes. Paradoxically, these same attitudes contribute to the pleasure of learning and are necessary for success.

A commitment to learning, persistence, and participation in the activities proposed by the school and conducted in the classroom are closely linked to motivation. According to Jacques Tardif (1992), the motivation to get involved, persevere, or participate depends on a set of emotions that stimulate or interfere with the motivational process. Motivation is also affected by a number of other factors, some of which have special significance in a minority setting. Students' perceptions of a task and their perceptions of the value of this task will have a direct impact on their commitment to the activities proposed by the school. If the task is perceived as having no personal or social benefits, students are less inclined to get involved and participate actively. Students who have difficulty mastering the French language, who do not see the relevance of acquiring the language, and who feel socially isolated will be reluctant to value Frenchness and act accordingly.

Mastery of the language, academic achievement, and self-esteem are closely interconnected and are components of identity building, which is discussed in the next intervention area.

### LANGUAGE SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Children must be able to express themselves in French and have a minimum of language skills from the time they start school. The francophone school

community must develop ideas for *aménagement linguistique* interventions that will promote the acquisition of oral communication skills as quickly as possible (McCain & Mustard, 1999). Research has shown that it takes two years of exposure to the language of instruction to develop basic communication skills that make it possible to hold a conversation in a social setting (translated from Ontario Ministry of Education, 2000). In addition, "acquisition during the first three years of life of a first language or of several first languages is quite definitely universal. All children, regardless of their linguistic environment, regardless of how they are spoken to, acquire exactly the same language skills in one or two languages with the same competence and at the same speed" (translated from Vermès, 1996, p. 2). The author adds that a child who has one first language at his or her disposal during the first three years and who around the age of three or four is confronted with a second language as part of broader social contacts and increasing independence will rely on the first language, on what is already known, to acquire the second language (Vermès, 1996, p. 3). It has also never been proved that a bilingual child has shown a delay of any kind for reasons related to bilingualism (Vermès, 1996, p. 1).

This being the case, concerted action by educational institutions and the wider community to promote the implementation of intervention programs for preschool children deserves special attention. Examples of such interventions would be the creation of areas in the school where parents could meet during the school day to allow preschool-age children to play together. In this way, parents and their children could meet in a francophone environment where they could express themselves



regularly in French. Other interventions could focus on French courses for parents who speak little or no French. For children living in a family environment in which English is the preferred language of communication, such additive bilingualism interventions would have the following advantage: “The child not only develops good language skills, but also develops, at the cognitive level, mental flexibility that will help him solve real-life problems more effectively by using more developed processes of abstraction than the unilingual child. In this case, the child retains his second language even if that language is not usually spoken around him. He begins to have a mental grasp of the fact that he has at his disposal two linguistic tools and retains his competence in both languages even if socially he uses only one” (translated from Vermès, 1996, p. 4).

These words illustrate how important early identification of language skills of Junior and Senior Kindergarten children is in French-language education. According to Policy/Program Memorandum No. 11, school boards are required to develop procedures to identify each child’s level of development, learning abilities, and learning needs (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1981). It is essential that the tools that school boards develop be continually reviewed and be in tune with the development characteristics of children in a minority setting. Full-time Junior and Senior Kindergarten give young children an opportunity to learn French as their first or second language in a stimulating social environment offering language support that encourages additive bilingualism.

*La trousse d’évaluation diagnostique – Aménagement linguistique* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2000) is a

diagnostic tool developed for students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 10. It assesses the three areas of communication (oral communication, reading, and writing) for students in Grades 1 to 10. For Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten students, the kit includes only oral communication tasks. These assessments help determine whether to offer temporary language supports.

The *Actualisation linguistique en français (ALF)* program was designed to meet the needs of students with a limited knowledge of French or with little familiarity with the French language and culture. Its aim is to have these students acquire a sufficient knowledge of the language to communicate and learn, as well as develop the related language skills required to continue their education. It also promotes the development of a positive attitude towards the use of the French language to communicate, think, learn, and build a cultural identity.

The *Perfectionnement du français (PDF)* program is a response to two major concerns regarding French-speaking students who have had little or no schooling, have come from abroad, and have recently settled in Ontario. Its aim is to help develop the reading, writing, and mathematical skills of students who are lagging behind in these areas because they have not been able to attend school regularly or have had their schooling interrupted. The program also aims to familiarize these students with their new school and socio-cultural environment so that they will feel more at home and can take up their studies with confidence. Students who have received regular schooling in their home countries may also benefit from this program if it is necessary to upgrade their acquired knowledge or facilitate



their entry into a regular program of studies. It must be remembered that a student's stay in either of these programs should be brief to facilitate entry into a regular class as quickly as possible.

## LEARNING SUPPORTS

The ministry considers it essential that every student be able to achieve a high level of competency in oral communication, reading, writing, and mathematics by the age of twelve so that he or she has the acquired knowledge needed to meet curriculum expectations at the secondary level and develop a career action plan.

In support of these objectives, the ministry has implemented two initiatives focused on student success: Literacy-Numeracy focuses on the development of skills that are prerequisites for mastering the different subjects and disciplines; Program Pathways facilitates the transition between secondary school and college, university, or the job market.

The ministry plans to offer a variety of strategies to support schools' implementation of these initiatives. This should lead to a "reculturing" of schools, that is, a new vision of student success that reflects "the values and aspirations of the entire student population" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003b, p. 10).

It is to respect this principle of fairness that schools and school boards recognize the needs of exceptional students and develop special education programs.<sup>3</sup>

This program is intended for students who have been formally identified as exceptional because of their intellectual, physical, behavioural, communicational, or multiple needs. These students need frequent and ongoing modifications to the curriculum and may also require accommodations. Some school boards offer special education programs and services to students who have not been formally identified as exceptional. In both cases, school boards develop the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) that describes the required modifications and accommodations. The IEP sets out the modified learning expectations, or expectations that are different from those in the program for the appropriate grade, subject, or course, as well as the accommodations and services to be provided to the exceptional student. In the case of students for whom modified or different expectations have not been established, the IEP covers only accommodations and services (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004).

Specific *aménagement linguistique* interventions should be included in the plans developed for these students, both in the Individual Education Plan and in the Transition Plan. The plans should include some interventions to make these children's parents aware of the context of learning in a minority setting, while other types of interventions would serve to integrate the children into the projects undertaken by the school and its partners.

<sup>3</sup> Section 1(1) of the Education Act defines as follows the terms *special education program*, *special education services*, and *exceptional pupil*.

- "Special education program" means, in respect of an exceptional pupil, an educational program that is based on and modified by the results of continuous assessment and evaluation and that includes a plan containing specific objectives and an outline of educational services that meets the needs of the exceptional pupil;
- "Special education services" means facilities and resources, including support personnel and equipment, necessary for developing and implementing a special education program;
- "Exceptional pupil" means a pupil whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he or she is considered to need placement in a special education program by a committee, established under subparagraph iii of paragraph 5 of subsection 11 (1), of the board [...]

As required by Regulation 181/98, sections 6 and 7, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) must be developed for every child identified as exceptional by the Identification, Placement and Review Committee. A school board may also develop an IEP for certain non-identified students who might benefit from special education programs and services.



## LEARNING INTERVENTION AREA: INTERVENTION CATEGORIES

Quality programs and services pertaining to:

### *CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES*

- Strategies for integrating information and communication technologies into learning
- Strategies for developing oral communication skills and the mastery of reading and writing in all subjects and disciplines
- Strategies for managing information and developing critical and creative thinking

### *SUBJECT-SPECIFIC AND DISCIPLINE-RELATED COMPETENCIES*

- Cognitive and metacognitive strategies
- Strategies for acquiring subject-specific processes
- Strategies for the acquisition of subject- and discipline-related knowledge
- Student achievement improvement plans

### *CAREER-RELATED COMPETENCIES*

- Implementing *Des choix qui mènent à l'action* policy
- School-community projects
- School-to-work transition projects
- Community involvement activities

### *BILINGUALISM*

- Strategies for the acquisition of both official languages as well as other languages in a minority setting

### *ATTITUDES CONDUCIVE TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT*

- Clarifying the values and attitudes needed for success
- Strategies for acquiring these values and attitudes

### *LANGUAGE SUPPORT PROGRAMS*

- Diagnostic assessment and early identification strategies
- *Actualisation linguistique en français* program

### *LEARNING SUPPORTS*

- *Perfectionnement du français* program
- Pathways and Students' Success programs
- Special education program

## IDENTITY BUILDING INTERVENTION AREA

This area reflects the unique nature of French-language schools by implementing interventions focused on cultural ownership. It includes interventions that have the effect of helping the student become intellectually autonomous, make decisions, and belong to a social group, all part of an identity affirmation process that is not imposed but willingly assumed (Landry & Rousselle, 2003, p. 123). This process begins at home, continues throughout schooling, and deepens in adult life. As a result, cultural ownership becomes part of the lifelong learning process for all students, including those with special needs.

### CULTURE AND IDENTITY BUILDING

If learning a language opens the door to ideas, concepts, and understanding, it must be acknowledged that language plays a primary role in the development of an understanding of the world since “every language delineates reality in its own way” (translated from Duverger, 1996, p. 3).

Language is a tool that provides access to a system of values and a way of interpreting the world and is in fact a tool for expressing **culture**. Contrary to popular belief, one does not automatically take ownership of a culture by learning its language.

School becomes a unique setting for transmitting culture, as the time spent in school is characterized by significant identity building in both children and adolescents. “The language of instruction contributes to the definition of both personal and collective identity. An important factor in social cohesion, a language enables a community of individuals to express its essence, its view of reality, its

thoughts and its feelings” (Government of Quebec, 2003, p. 7). French-language schools thus serve as a unique setting for taking ownership of culture, and very often in a minority setting they are the only places that provide a uniquely francophone environment for both young people and the community.

*In the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, UNESCO (2001) reaffirms “that **culture** should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs.” Renald Legendre says of culture that it is “the aggregate of the special features of a civilization. It is the sum total of the daily activities of a people that lives, creates, flourishes, maintains and extends itself in time and space” (translated from Legendre, 1995, p. 186).*

For any given group, culture includes knowledge, interpersonal skills, and the ability to build a community. It serves as a frame of reference in an individual’s relationship to the self, to others, and to the world. For Monique Boucher, it “is what allows us to understand the world, that is, to understand how men and women have responded in the past and still respond today to life’s questions and problems, but also how they have given form to their dreams and plans. Culture is therefore a major tool for



understanding our contemporary reality and an essential support to our own contribution to the world of today and tomorrow” (translated from Monique Boucher, 2001, p. 18).

Culture includes all aspects of an individual and is therefore affective, moral, cognitive, conceptual, experiential, perceptual, physical, and social (Legendre, 1995, pp. 186–187). From this perspective, it becomes impossible to separate culture from identity.

Because culture carries this relationship to the self, to others, and to the world, it links a person to his or her reference group and gives meaning to his or her identity. According to Yves Frenette, “Franco-Ontarian identity is a construct. At its foundation is the French language, which is constantly threatened. Franco-Ontarian identity involves belief in a common heritage and common origin. It is thus nurtured by collective memory, oral tradition, the writings of historians and chroniclers, literary and artistic works. It is also forged through the vision of others” (translated from Frenette, 2003). Frenette adds that, paradoxically, bilingualism is the key element of Franco-Ontarian identity.

Identity can be expressed in different ways, depending on the reference group, the group’s social position, and the individual’s place in the group. Diane Gérin-Lajoie notes that “it is possible to display a Francophone identity in one’s family environment and a bilingual identity in one’s work environment. This would mean that individuals make deliberate choices with respect to the identities they project, and these choices depend on circumstances. In this sense, a bilingual identity

would represent a stable reality” (translated from Gérin-Lajoie, 2003, p. 27). Gérin-Lajoie adds that one must not jump to the conclusion that a bilingual identity is necessarily English-language-dominant or, even if this is the case, that it will inevitably lead to assimilation into the anglophone majority (p. 148).

According to Fasal Kanouté (2003b), identity has two primary dimensions, which are continually in balance and in tension: the social dimension (professional, gender, ethnic, national, etc.) includes a variety of reference groups, while the personal dimension involves the physical, psychological, moral, legal, social, and cultural characteristics of the individual. These two dimensions allow all individuals to define themselves, to present themselves, to know themselves, and to make themselves known. These two dimensions also form the basis on which others can situate or recognize them.

One’s attachment to the francophone environment through one’s language and culture is thus expressed in many different ways no matter what identity one claims to have. Identity building and identity expression are complex processes, and thus it is almost impossible to derive a single Franco-Ontarian identity.

In a French-language school, however, identity building, as described in the personal, interpersonal, and career development areas of *Des choix qui mènent à l’action* policy, has to be framed by the **cultural development** of the student. This becomes the pedagogical foundation of this intervention area.

*Cultural development is characterized by the following three interconnected steps:*

- *awakening to the francophone environment and cultural reality*
- *identification with a francophone group by adopting the group's characteristics*
- *commitment, which is reflected in autonomy, self-discipline, self-confidence in being francophone, and participation in francophone community life*

*(Translated from Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1994b)*

Cultural development helps young people take ownership of the culture of the school environment and enables them to ground themselves in the francophone community. It helps develop their sense of belonging and strengthen their sense of identity. At various stages in their development, young people are induced to acknowledge the importance of their cultural heritage. Ideally, successful cultural development will lead to students' self-affirmation and community involvement.

### ATTITUDES CONDUCTIVE TO CULTURAL AFFIRMATION

The development of the competencies and attitudes described as part of the learning intervention area will help students make appropriate choices, express thoughtful opinions, recognize their values, and place their opinions and values in perspective. In

this way, students develop their critical thinking and self-assessment abilities.

Students should also be asked to examine the minority context and evaluate the cultural and political factors that influence the acquisition of a minority language (Vermès, 1996). This is what the concept of *linguistic and critical consciousness* refers to. Linguistic and critical consciousness, which is metacognitive in nature, leads one to reflect on the impact of minority status on the development of one's identity and one's sense of belonging to a linguistic community. It promotes taking ownership of the tools needed to adjust to one's minority status. Such consciousness is greatly facilitated if students are regularly immersed in francophone community life so that they find meaningful experiences, develop their creativity, and feel responsible for building their society as every well informed citizen would do.

The attitudes required for the development of self-esteem as a francophone and self-affirmation as a member of a distinct community are also influenced by the pluralism and diversity that characterize Ontario's francophone community and Canadian society as a whole.

French-language schools try to provide an environment that encourages the development of tolerance, solidarity, mutual aid, and cooperation. Through interventions focused on additive bilingualism, schools encourage the development of **intercultural competencies** and a more refined understanding of the complexity of the world by helping students develop perspective on their own culture so that they can understand the culture of others (Vermès, 1996).



*Intercultural competencies enable students to act in different cultural and social situations, and to be aware of, respect, and tolerate different values and standards.*

*They build on students':*

- *curiosity about languages and cultures different from their own;*
- *respect for justice and rights as social values;*
- *appreciation of diversity and awareness of everything that connects all humanity;*
- *receptivity to new perspectives and different ways of looking at things.*

*Students are thus prepared to modify their own ideas and beliefs, to tolerate uncertainty, and to develop flexibility in their relationships with others and with different cultures*

*(Adapted from Pike & Selby, 1988).*

## ANIMATION CULTURELLE AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

*Animation culturelle* is a very useful and relevant strategy for education in a minority setting. This support service “promotes the student’s academic achievement and cultural development by placing learning in a meaningful context where the French language and culture become relevant in the stu-

dent’s eyes” (translated from Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999a, p. 85). *Animation culturelle* results from the programming of varied cultural activities undertaken by *animation culturelle* specialists who complement the work of school staff.

The *animation culturelle* strategy is explained in *Investir dans l’animation culturelle : Guide d’intervention – Palier élémentaire et secondaire*, 1994. Its objective is to promote students’ awareness of and personal commitment to the francophone community and the development of attitudes conducive to cultural affirmation.

French-language schools pursue this objective by integrating cultural activities with pedagogical approaches, school life, and the community environment. Members of the community are invited to participate in the design and development of activities that enhance the school environment.

The Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne (FESFO) has proposed a set of activities for French-language schools that stress the importance of developing a sense of belonging, self-affirmation, and pride in young people. These activities invite students to help maintain and develop the francophone environment by exploring the characteristics and potentialities of the local, provincial, and global francophone community. Designed by young people for young people, these resources respect the stages of cultural development and easily fit into French-language schools’ *animation culturelle* programs.

*Animation culturelle* also proposes a **cultural pedagogical approach**, that is, the planned and organized integration of culture into students’ experiences and learning so as to actively contribute to their identity building.



*According to Denis Simard, the cultural pedagogical approach attempts to “create the conditions that enable students to take ownership of, integrate, and organize knowledge into a coherent, original, and personal whole, to situate themselves within the problems and complex realities of our times in their human identity and in history” (translated from Simard, 2002, p. 77).*

From this perspective, the teacher uses cultural reference points to help students understand the world and to discover that each discipline is meaningful by virtue of both its history and the questions it raises. This involves ensuring that students establish more connections among the various scientific, social, artistic, moral, and economic phenomena, and develop their own perspectives on these phenomena. The cultural approach thus promotes a critical, ethical, and aesthetic view of the world (Government of Quebec, 2003, p. 7).

By studying their culture, students will discover how, over the centuries, the way of life and the value system that characterize the francophone community have been fashioned and will come to understand how civilizations evolve and why every individual is a full member of a civilization (Simard, 2001). The study of culture is part of a process that encourages students to think actively and places them at the centre of the dynamic of the francophone community. Such integration supports openness to diversity and intercultural dialogue, as it is through such dialogue that students develop the required competencies to “learn to know, learn to be, and learn to live together” (Gohier, 2002).

This approach is centred around thoughtful cultural activities that present culture as a concept that can be understood. Among other things, it suggests the study of **cultural referents** and their inclusion in students' learning. *Aménagement linguistique* interventions proposed in the Ontario curriculum are elements of this approach, while the generic *aménagement linguistique* expectation of the French-language secondary curriculum is a specific example of such interventions.

**Cultural referents** are culture-related concepts that take on particular cultural significance – events, media objects, or objects from daily life (provided these elements allow to examine significant social phenomena or trends), heritage objects, artistic works, scientific discoveries, school of thought, values, practices that affect behaviours, and so on (see Sauvé, 2001).

However, integrating culture into the daily life of schools can be a difficult undertaking. The transmission of the francophone community's cultural heritage is taking place under conditions of social change that influence the cultural referents. Globalization, sophisticated information and communication technologies, and large migratory movements are some of the factors contributing to the erosion of cultural boundaries and to a cultural crisis. How can schools transmit a cultural heritage anchored in a people's history and at the same time acknowledge a fast-changing contemporary culture?

It is for this reason that the integration of culture into pedagogical planning is being realized through the provincial *aménagement linguistique* project.



As Denis Simard suggests, “it is one thing to make room for cultural content in education, to fit it in haphazardly in response to spontaneous questions and interests, but it is quite another to make specific plans for cultural content and include it in teaching and learning activities designed to develop subject-specific competencies” (translated from Simard, 2001, p. 22).

### CREATING A FRANCOPHONE ENVIRONMENT

Culture is the cornerstone on which schools and community organizations depend in creating a **francophone environment** within which people feel comfortable living, expressing themselves, and getting involved. Identity building is the product of all the actions and events of the cultural life of the school and the community. It is these actions and events that enable people to talk about themselves, tell their stories, and build memories – in other words, to comfortably express their Frenchness.

French-language schools have a primary role in creating and maintaining an environment in which culture can be embedded and that provides a framework for students’ identity building.

*“The concept of francophone environment is in some respects a substitute for the territorial foundation of a community. It reflects the fact that in a minority situation, the use of the minority language is frequently confined to niches such as schools, churches, community organizations, etc. and that members of the minority group actively select to be part of this Francophone environment. . . . The focus on Francophone environment puts*

*the family and the community’s infra-structure at the heart of the struggle for survival of the minority language, rather than a territorial base” (Department of Canadian Heritage, 2000).*

The nature of this francophone environment is linked to the type of community in which a French-language school is located. Working from the typology developed in 1991 by the *Vision d’avenir* team of the Fédération des jeunes canadiens-français, it is possible to identify three different types of communities: a community living in French, a mixed living environment, and a minority French-language “cell”.

Anne Gilbert describes the mixed living environment as “a ‘bilingual’ environment where community members take part in English-language activities but participation in French-language activities is also made possible by a number of institutions” (translated from Gilbert, 1999, p. 51). Gilbert goes on to say that minority French-language cells “are differentiated from mixed living environments by the much smaller proportion of francophones and the much more limited number of French institutions. Life in French in these environments is organized around participation in certain events or groups and daily life takes place in English” (translated from Gilbert, 1999, p. 52).

Since many schools in Ontario are located in minority French-language cells, the creation of a francophone environment must rely on non-traditional methods, given the lack of a territorial base, the scattered nature of the population, and the limited number of francophone institutions. According to Gilbert, the method with the most potential is based on the concept of networking space: “From the perspective of

networking space, the future of the Franco-Ontarian community depends on a double dynamic: the creation of institutions that state their linguistic differences and strengthen them through partnerships, using distance communication technologies. The notion of a francophone environment implies, also, the notion of power . . . and power which in itself refers to taking charge and autonomy” (translated from Gilbert, 1999, p. 81).

The creation of networking thus becomes a preferred method of survival for the francophone community. Pedagogical approaches that encourage networking through the use of information and communication technologies and developing partnerships with organizations of the French-language community should be implemented. These are all important means by which the French-language schools can create the francophone environment that is essential to maintain the vitality of the French-language community.

## IDENTITY BUILDING INTERVENTION AREA: INTERVENTION CATEGORIES

### *CULTURE AND IDENTITY BUILDING*

- Develop school-community projects that include a cultural component.
- Develop programs and services that support cultural development.

### *ATTITUDES CONDUCIVE TO CULTURAL AFFIRMATION*

- Use strategies that foster the development of linguistic and critical consciousness.
- Employ strategies that foster attitudes and skills connected with the role of citizens in a democracy.
- Develop strategies that encourage intercultural dialogue.
- Develop strategies that build on student involvement.

### *ANIMATION CULTURELLE AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS*

- Use strategies that help students develop leadership skills.
- Develop strategies that encourage young peoples' involvement in cultural and intercultural activities.
- Employ strategies that integrate *animation culturelle* in the school's daily experiences.
- Integrate the cultural-pedagogical approach when planning curriculum expectations.

### *CREATING A FRANCOPHONE ENVIRONMENT*

- Follow the guidelines on the use of French as the language of communication.
- Acquire and provide access to a variety of resources in French (e.g., technological software, books and periodicals).
- Ensure the primacy of French in information posted in the school.
- Develop strategies that encourage networking among all participants in education, including students.



## PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP INTERVENTION AREA

The participative leadership intervention area involves the development of the school's capacity to implement a lifelong learning approach that is consistent with building a francophone identity. More specifically, it involves all the people who work in schools on a daily basis and who help, through their involvement, to make it a rewarding setting for francophone experiences. **Participative leadership** is leadership that is shared among management, staff, and students, with each assuming an equal share of responsibility for carrying out the school's mission, vision, and mandate. Parents' and community members' contributions are essential and will be discussed in the next section on the commitment intervention area.

*Participative leadership is the development, with a strong team, of a positive vision of the school, which is seen as the protector of the language and culture (Langlois & Lapointe, 2002 p. 45).*

This area requires two separate and complementary initiatives. The first involves increasing teachers' capacity to understand and apply pedagogical approaches that have been adapted for a minority setting. The second provides, through the model of the learning community, the professional structure and support needed by staff to carry out their educational responsibilities and involves people from the community who show some interest in French-language education.

## PEDAGOGICAL CAPACITIES

In carrying out its mandate, the school attempts to provide all the conditions necessary for fostering lifelong learning and identity development. The preferred pedagogical approaches are centred around three essential components. First, they should support in-depth learning of subject-specific knowledge and processes; next, they encourage students' interpersonal, career, and cultural development; and finally, they take into consideration the effects of both the minority setting and anglicization on learning and identity building.

A number of pedagogical approaches may initially meet these requirements. Strategic instruction, differentiated instruction, concept- and process-centred approach, and project-based instruction all focus on each student's capacity to build understanding. They encourage intellectual autonomy, decision making, and the development of critical thinking.

The ministry's current initiatives are centred around pedagogical approaches that focus on **explicit instruction** and **differentiated instruction** in subject-specific knowledge and processes.

**Explicit instruction** relies on the following components, among others:

- questioning, that is, inviting students to ask questions in a dialogue with class members
- sequencing, breaking down, and scaffolding a task
- modelling

- *directed practice*
- *small-group learning*
- *the regular use of information technology (see Bissonnette & Richard, 2001)*

**Differentiated instruction** is derived from Howard Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences and encourages teachers to design learning tasks that take into consideration the various intelligences of their students (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004).

These modes of teaching give students time to verify their understanding and to learn at their own speed, using their own learning styles. They also allow for the different modes of learning of girls and boys. A variety of strategies is needed so that students, the primary actors in their own learning, are able to identify their own ways of understanding, to discover and use their potential while interacting with their peers (Brazeau, 1998). The Groupe d'experts sur les élèves à risque concludes that "systematic teaching of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, especially in reading, writing, and oral communication, must be brought forward and made an integral part of effective teaching" (translated from Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003a, p. 32).

Using these strategies may help students meet the provincial standard of achievement (level 3) and also develop their autonomy and leadership skills. The preferred strategies will promote the active participation of community members in the educational

process and curricular activities. They also foster the development of *linguistic and critical consciousness* by creating a school setting that makes young people aware of their minority status and teaches them to affirm their culture and identity in a positive manner while being willing to participate in projects in their community. (Landry & Rousselle, 2003, p. 121).

Teaching adapted to a minority setting focuses simultaneously on high-quality learning for everyone, developing students' autonomy, and encouraging students' personal involvement in their own learning and in the francophone community.

The improvement plans required by the Ministry of Education and the Education Quality and Accountability Office could serve as the starting point for developing a shared vision of the concept of learning. In a minority setting, however, improving the academic achievement and the success rate of every student makes sense only if the three-pronged relationship between lifelong learning, language acquisition, and cultural ownership is explained, discussed, and understood by staff members, students, parents, and the community. This dialogue will result in an improvement plan that will drive the planning of both learning and cultural activities. Such a shared vision requires that the participants work together to:

- take ownership of the curriculum through a collective planning and implementation process;
- understand, discuss, critique, and integrate the underlying principles of the initiatives involved in implementing the curriculum (e.g., that reading is important and is everyone's business);



- use curriculum support resources such as exemplars, course outlines, learning units, and planning and assessment tools;
- make resources like learning tasks based on the exemplars, course outlines, and learning units available to students and their parents;
- understand and discuss the rationale for provincial tests, and use data collected by the school to validate the achievement improvement plan;
- understand and discuss the effects of anglicization and assimilation on the school's clientele and select appropriate teaching strategies to deal with these realities;
- identify, understand, and share information on the characteristics of first and second-language learning and the acquisition of oral communication skills;
- plan professional development activities together, take part in them, and integrate their own learning into the planning of learning activities;
- research and take ownership of the pedagogical approaches most likely to contribute to the school's and students' success;
- learn about and discuss strategies for teaching intercultural competencies and strategies for managing multi-ethnic classes;
- adopt strategies for making students responsible for their own learning (e.g., in-class work, homework, team activities).

Students' responsibility for their own learning is stimulated when school staff develop a common point of view about homework. One interesting strategy worth exploring is "interactive homework". The product of research and projects conducted by the National Network of Partnership Schools (2003), this strategy makes it possible to keep parents informed of and involved in their children's learning activities. Interactive homework features homework assignments that require students to talk to someone at home about something interesting that they are learning in class. The advantage of this strategy for French-language schools is that it encourages the development of oral communication; creates a dialogue among students, their families, and the school; and builds student self-esteem. The strategy can be used with any subject or discipline and generally makes students more aware of the importance of homework as a necessary step in the learning process.

The francophone school provides not only a learning environment but also a social environment in which the French language and culture are at the core of daily activities. The school has taken on the task of creating a francophone environment that is consistent with the social and community environment. It achieves this by fostering and maintaining dialogue among all staff members and students on the following:

- the common effort needed to create a francophone environment
- the role of students and their leadership in creating this environment
- the role of the wider community in creating this environment

- the importance of understanding the implications of being recognized as a Charter rights-holder and of participating in the preservation of that right
- the shared responsibility with respect to oral and written communication

The growing discomfort felt in some schools concerning a perception of the importance of communicating in French everywhere and for every purpose can be reduced only by honest and constructive discussions among staff members and with students and their parents.

Finally, since culture involves knowledge, ways of interpreting the world, values, and lifestyles, it becomes necessary to collectively develop a pedagogical approach that highlights the special features of a culture lived in a pluralistic minority setting. This approach, which is derived from the pedagogy of critical consciousness and commitment:

- suggests initiating an intercultural dialogue by developing intercultural skills (Lafortune & Gaudet, 2000);
- guides *animation culturelle* and community relationships choices;
- is centred around young peoples' increased awareness of power relationships in society, the issues arising from the minority experience, and the fragility of the francophone identity and collective destiny (Landry & Rousselle, 2003, p. 129).

## LEARNING COMMUNITY CAPACITIES

The *aménagement linguistique* policy encourages the creation of **learning communities** within French-language schools through participative leadership. The learning community includes everyone who contributes in some way to the sustainable development of the French-language school community.

*The learning community includes school staff, students, parents, and community partners who are called on to work together at school improvement and at creating learning opportunities for students. An essential component to this is a structured school-community projects program whose activities are linked to school goals (Epstein & Clark Salinas, 2004, p. 12).*

Participative leadership brings about a planned change in the institutional culture, both at the pedagogical level and in a school's relations with the wider community. This leadership grows out of the consensus reached on the sustainable development of the francophone community, collective responsibility for language acquisition and cultural ownership, power and resource sharing, and the decision-making process in place in the school. Leadership is not the work of a leader alone; it requires a collective commitment.

Consensus is developed through a process of reflection during which members of the school community





debate preliminary questions such as the following (adapted from DuFour & Eaker, 1998):

- What is our vision of success?
- What do we need to do to help students take an active part in the decisions that affect the life and climate of the school?
- How do we define student and staff responsibility with respect to learning and community involvement?
- Do we collectively have the competencies to implement the changes and *aménagement linguistique* interventions we consider desirable?
- What intake mechanisms have we put in place to welcome and integrate new people (e.g., staff and students) to the school?
- What motivational strategies are we using regarding the language of communication used by students? Are these strategies effective?

The learning community supports a shared vision of lifelong learning and identity building. It contributes to both the development of community-related *animation culturelle* programs and the design of integrative school-community projects, two major components of the *aménagement linguistique* policy. In a learning community, conversations about fundamental questions enliven school life and affect the working and learning climate of the community (Hord, 1997). Everyone's attention is focused on the pleasure of learning.

In creating a learning community, the leader acts, initiates, promotes, delegates, innovates, creates a

climate of cooperation, and is sensitive to the kind of workplace that the school must be. The leader seeks to implement a culture of collegiality, that is, a culture in which staff members have enough trust to openly discuss problems they encounter in their practice and to share thoughts on their pedagogical strategies. An individualistic, isolationist approach is replaced by a school team approach. Conversations about common themes are considered important and occur regularly. Professional development is valued.

A **professional learning community** is special in that it focuses on the development of a spirit of collaboration among teachers that is essential for the creation of a strong professional identity. Dialogue on educational practice, collective effort, cooperation, and mutual support become the cornerstones of any real change, medium- and long-term, in education practices (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003a).

*The term **professional learning community** refers to a way of operating that emphasizes the importance of nurturing and celebrating the work of each individual staff person and of supporting the collective engagement of staff in such activities as the development of a shared vision of schooling and learning, capacity building, problem identification, learning, and problem resolution. It is an environment in which staff can learn continuously and continually increase their ability to create the environment they desire.*



*A professional learning community is exemplified by collaborative work that is grounded in reflective dialogue, in which staff have conversations about students, teaching, and learning, identifying related issues and problems and debating strategies that could bring about real change in the organizational culture (adapted from Hord, 1997).*

In a professional learning community, all members of the team are provided with professional development activities that meet their individual needs and better prepare them to practise their profession. Activities are selected on the basis of common values, are related to what goes on every day in the school, reflect individual and collective needs, and facilitate the kind of change required by the shared vision of academic achievement.

A professional learning community differs from a learning community because it pays special attention to the training staff members require to introduce the changes needed to achieve results with respect to students' academic achievement. The learning community goes beyond the walls of the school to include parents and the wider community in discussions on learning, identity building, the sustainability of the school, and the sustainable development of the French-language school community.

Models of learning communities are numerous and varied. But regardless of the country in which such organizations came into being, of the socio-economic status of the school populations, of the multiplicity of

languages and cultures of the community served by the school, or even of the size of the school, these communities have the following in common:

- high academic achievement
- a reduction in the dropout rate
- a reduction in staff and student absenteeism
- higher satisfaction levels among parents
- increased job satisfaction among school staff
- a significant amount of collaboration among staff members
- a significant amount of collaboration between staff members and families
- the integration of community resources into school programs and services

(Blair, 2000; Hord, 1997; Lambert, 1998; DuFour & Eaker, 1998)

To make a successful transition to a learning community, the school principal, as the leader, needs the ongoing support of the school board managers. This support will allow the principal to obtain the required resources, monitor progress, provide assistance to people concerned by the proposed changes to their working environment, and find appropriate mechanisms to help build alliances with parents, as well as partnerships with members and organizations within the community. The leader's skills, imagination, and pioneering spirit will gradually bring about the transformation of the school's culture (Blair, 2000).



## SCHOOLING FOR SUCCESS

Since the implementation of the education system reform that had as its objectives the improvement of student achievement and of the performance of the school system as a whole and schools in particular, an impressive number of research studies have been undertaken to isolate the components of successful schooling.

Schools in minority-language settings have embarked on planned changes using a variety of models for successful schooling, and, by developing a shared vision, they are choosing systemic *aménagement linguistique* interventions that are applicable to the models they consider best.

It must be emphasized that all these models have one thing in common: their implementation depends on a shared vision of the teaching-learning process and of success (individual, collective, systemic). Some models also take into consideration the characteristics of learning in a minority setting and assume the following principles (Centre franco-ontarien de ressources pédagogiques, 2004):

- Every student is capable of learning if the conditions are right.
- Schools assume responsibility for their students' results. If the results are poor, the schools do not blame the students or their environment.

Among these models, the *École orientante* (Bégin, Bleau, & Landry, 2000) offers some very interesting ideas. Working from Holland's typology (see Bujold and Gingras, 2000), this model promotes curriculum and teaching programs that encourage identity building. The theoretical framework of the *École orientante* was adapted by Lucie Gauvin (2003). This framework is strongly focused on the pedagogical approaches required in a teaching-learning process recommended for minority-setting schools.

Regardless of the model selected, any change in the school culture will produce effective change only to the extent that leaders and their school staff members are informed and consulted as partners in change. They must, in addition, have access to professional development that will enable them to perfect their skills in working in a minority setting.

## PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP INTERVENTION AREA: INTERVENTION CATEGORIES

All the training opportunities included in the professional development plan are aimed at improving school-team capacities.

### PEDAGOGICAL CAPACITIES

- Understand the vision of the *aménagement linguistique* policy and incorporate it into teaching-learning strategies for all students, including exceptional students.
- Conduct diagnostic assessments of oral communication.
- Develop teaching strategies based on the results obtained on diagnostic assessments.
- Explicitly teach oral communication and regularly assess it.
- Be familiar with the rationale, overall expectations, and characteristics of the *Actualisation en français* and *Perfectionnement du français* language support programs and integrate them in teaching strategies.
- Become aware of the importance of the quality of the language spoken and written in all subjects and disciplines.
- Understand the impact that the creation of a francophone environment has on school life and academic learning and contribute to its sustainability.
- Use strategic and explicit teaching strategies for literacy, numeracy, and all subjects and disciplines, along with appropriate assessment strategies.
- Plan learning activities using curriculum support resources and teach students to work with these resources (e.g., exemplars).
- Develop a practice of using data management and interpretation, as well as results-based management.
- Help implement the achievement improvement plan at the school and board levels.
- Understand the challenges of learning in a context of anglicization.
- Integrate meaningful cultural referents when planning learning experiences.
- Use strategies for managing a multicultural classroom.
- Adopt and apply the special features of students' cultural development in planning.
- Develop a school interactive homework program.

### LEARNING COMMUNITY CAPACITIES

- Develop a shared vision of lifelong learning, of learning in a minority setting, and of the school as a learning community.
- Develop strategies for the collaboration of school staff, parents, and community members.
- Develop effective partnership and communication strategies.
- Participate in the design of school-community projects that encourage the participation of members of both the francophone community and the wider community.
- Adopt the professional development plan developed by the school team.



## COMMITMENT INTERVENTION AREA

To fulfil its mandate, a francophone academic institution must create alliances with parents and maintain partnerships with organizations in the wider community. The variety and quality of the programs and services offered by schools depend on the vitality of the francophone and francophile communities and their members' commitment to carrying out the school's mandate. School-family-community relationships should make it possible to implement a compensating measures model (see page 25) and create dynamic learning communities. These alliances and partnerships are more than public relations strategies as they support the school's capacity to adequately use the resources at its disposal.

*Aménagement linguistique* interventions vary depending on whether they are focused on the family or on community organizations. Thus the commitment area consists of two separate but complementary subareas: parental commitment and community commitment.

### PARENTAL COMMITMENT

As soon as parents choose French-language education for their children, and no matter what motivates them to do so, an alliance is created between the parents and the school. The stability of that alliance relies on finding a balance between the expectations and needs of the parents (and of the family in general) and those of the school. The intent of this alliance is to allow parents to take ownership of the changes brought about by educational reform. It focuses primarily on children's success and the parental participation needed to maintain the school's vitality. All the efforts of both parents and the school must continually take into consideration the context in which learning occurs.

### SCHOOL-FAMILY ALLIANCE.

Parents expect that a school, whether it is a denominational school or not, will create the conditions that will allow their children to learn French and achieve success. They also expect the school to be a pleasant, safe, and fair learning environment.

A sound school-family alliance is based on the idea that all families wish to contribute actively, in their individual fashion, to their children's academic achievement. The family is not solely responsible for academic achievement, since the responsibility for every child's learning and achievement is shared by the family, the student, and the school (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

As a general rule, parents want information and guidance on the best strategies to help their children learn. Research has shown that direct parental commitment results in greater academic achievement for young people and a lower dropout rate (Epstein, 2003; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). It is thus worthwhile for the school to respond to parents' expectations by planning interventions that will help improve their understanding of academic learning and the type of support they can provide, with respect to the following:

- the curriculum, achievement assessment, transition programs, and Ontario Secondary School Diploma requirements
- subject- and discipline-specific knowledge and skills
- guidance and career choice
- volunteer programs
- ministry initiatives

The school makes a commitment to parents to develop a shared vision of lifelong learning and identity building that is supported by all staff. The school pays special attention to the parents of exceptional students and implements interventions that will help all parents better understand:

- the school's expectations regarding parental support;
- the language-of-communication guidelines;
- preferred attitudes to written and spoken French;
- the conditions for acquiring the French language and the challenges of learning in a minority setting;
- recommended pedagogical approaches to learning and identity building;
- the role of *animation culturelle* and community relationships in creating a francophone environment;
- the need for leadership from and the commitment of young people;
- the importance of the status given to *aménagement linguistique* in the home.

Parental support is closely linked to the relationship between teachers and parents. When there is visible cooperation between teachers and parents, children often conclude that their parents can really help them and are therefore more inclined to talk about their school experience at home (Epstein, 2003). To ensure a quality relationship with parents, the school and the school board commit to providing teachers with training in areas such as the following:

- effective communication strategies
- strategies for welcoming parents in the classroom, as learning resources and support for all students

- the dynamics of intercultural understanding and dialogue
- integrating the life experience of seniors and other community volunteers in planning learning activities (e.g., exchanges and dialogues on traditions, cultures, know-how)

#### FAMILY-SCHOOL ALLIANCE

Schools cannot be expected to assume responsibility, on their own, both for the learning and academic achievement of every student and for their linguistic and cultural mission. It is therefore entirely legitimate for the French-language school in a minority setting to have specific expectations regarding family involvement. The school can expect that the family will:

- play an active role in supporting and valuing the child, creating opportunities for dialogue so that the child can talk about what is happening at school;
- initiate conversations about careers and the benefits of a French-language education;
- help the child by setting realistic goals for academic achievement and learning in general, continuing discussions on this topic throughout the child's school career;
- support the child in doing his or her homework;
- help the child plan his or her program with a view to postsecondary education and job-market entry;
- help the child balance the requirements of study, leisure, and paid employment activities, if required.

For the family to be an extension of the francophone environment created at school, Parents Partenaires en Éducation (PPE) considers that, to develop the skill of



living together as francophones, every individual needs to have cultural references and a lifestyle that reflect a certain Frenchness. From this perspective, parental commitment could be articulated as follows (adapted from Parents Partenaires en Éducation, 2003):

- The family takes part in training sessions on learning in a minority setting.
- The family recognizes that the French-language school is more than a setting for language acquisition; it is also a dynamic cultural environment.
- Family members talk about how they live their “Frenchness”.
- Family members who are less comfortable in French try to communicate with their children in French or at least acquire the basics of the language.
- The family sees itself as a member of a francophone community in which the child should participate as often as possible through cultural and sports activities.
- The family acquires a variety of francophone cultural products (e.g., CDs, magazines, books).
- The family encourages and supports the cultural activities put on by the school.
- The family members volunteer to share their expertise with the school.

#### THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

The school council is the linchpin of the relationship among the family, the school, and the community. It is through the school council that the school principal can sound out parents and learn about the many resources available within the wider community.

*Regulation 612/00 confirms the advisory role of school councils and clearly states that their objective is to improve student achievement and, through the active participation of parents, enhance the accountability of the education system to parents (Ministry of Education, 2002).*

The school council can help stimulate parental participation by making the school a welcoming place. It can make an active contribution to planning and implementing *aménagement linguistique* interventions and can also do the following:

- inform parents of their special and crucial role in transmitting language and culture
- seek the support of community organizations for initiatives that will help French-language schools carry out their mandate
- strengthen relationships among the school, the family, and the francophone community
- develop and maintain a pool of community resources for schools
- boost the school’s cultural activities
- develop strategies for encouraging parents to volunteer
- implement strategies for maintaining parental commitment

In short, parents are a valuable resource for schools. Strategies for exploiting this resource in the context of *aménagement linguistique* have the advantage of contributing to the vitality of the school and the entire francophone community.



## PARENTAL COMMITMENT: INTERVENTION CATEGORIES

### *SCHOOL-FAMILY ALLIANCE*

Schools can:

- offer families support in relation to learning, academic achievement, and student success;
- offer families support on interactive homework;
- provide literacy and numeracy training for parents;
- provide workshops on oral communication;
- provide workshops on discipline-specific knowledge and skills;
- inform parents of their role in language acquisition and cultural ownership;
- inform parents of the impact of assimilation on academic achievement, learning, and the general climate of the school;
- build parents' awareness of intercultural dialogue;
- open the classroom to parents, seniors, and anyone else able to make a contribution to learning and identity building.

### *FAMILY-SCHOOL ALLIANCE*

Parents can commit to:

- implementing the school's vision;
- helping students with their interactive homework;
- helping students with their career education;
- creating a francophone environment in the home;
- participating in cultural activities organized by the school;
- increasing the vitality of the school and the francophone community.

### *THE SCHOOL COUNCIL*

The school council can help:

- develop a francophone environment;
- develop a vision of lifelong learning;
- create parent networks;
- develop the school profile;
- develop partnership models;
- make parents aware of the impact of an English-language-dominant environment on learning and on the school environment;
- develop strategies for informing parents of and involving them in cultural activities;
- develop student recruitment and retention strategies;
- contribute to the inventory of the school's requirements for a variety of human resources;
- create active partnerships with parent associations (e.g., Parents Partenaires en Éducation).



## COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

To meet the complex challenges facing the school environment, schools need access to resources other than those they have at their disposal. They must therefore seek to increase their capacity to achieve their institutional objectives by creating community partnerships. In other words, the school has to identify and take advantage of the skills and expertise of community members to help it carry out its mandate. The school can draw on a varied pool of expertise that complements the expertise available within the school itself. The community can also make a major contribution to the development of action plans that will implement a realistic shared vision of the *aménagement linguistique* policy.

### CREATING PARTNERSHIPS

The following are some of the basic principles needed for building and strengthening school-community partnerships (adapted from Henderson & Mapp, 2002):

- The school, in all its activities, continuously reaffirms its commitment to lifelong learning, identity building, and the sustainable development of the French-language community.
- The school, in all its activities, reaffirms its commitment to developing and maintaining a francophone environment.
- The school principal, through his or her leadership and actions, demonstrates a willingness to maximize the community involvement.
- The school is willing to build relationships based on dialogue with all its partners.

- The school is willing to talk with potential partners about the degree and the nature of their involvement.
- The school makes partnership development part of the learning community implementation process.

Among these basic principles, good dialogue is undoubtedly the most important and the hardest to achieve. As a general rule, the education system is a relatively autonomous entity, which is not necessarily used to negotiating with the community. It is thus important to begin by informing the various stakeholders of the school's intentions. Good dialogue must be grounded in principles of cooperation that require the following (adapted from Alberta Learning, 2000; Hilliges, Rademaker, & Rademaker, 2000; Senge, 2000):

- school, school board, and community commitment to the social, cultural, and economic development of the francophone community
- involvement of all stakeholders from the very beginning of all aspects of the project, including the decision-making process, financial management where applicable, and implementing monitoring and evaluation strategies
- the satisfaction of stakeholders' respective needs
- a joint contribution of resources (e.g., human, physical, financial)
- the sharing of risks and benefits within the partnership

Some partnerships will focus more on specific school programs that will provide a linguistic, cultural, or educational framework to complement classroom activities and fit in with required pedagogical processes. One example would be the creation of web pages for local businesses as part of the Interdisciplinary Studies, Applied Design, Grade 11 course (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2002b).

Inviting families and community contributors to participate in the school's *aménagement linguistique* planning is another means of creating partnerships. As well, by organizing regular meetings with groups of seniors and new arrivals within the *animation culturelle* program, students could explore the francophone community through others' perspectives on identity.

### *SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PROJECTS*

Partnerships for developing school-community projects serve essentially to ground students' learning, develop their sense of belonging to a French-speaking community, and provide them with opportunities for cultural affirmation outside of school. These partnerships must be incorporated into a detailed, meaningful, and coherent program.

The Ministry of Education (2002) allows the participation of the school council, at the principal's invitation, in the development of the school profile. This profile, which highlights, among other things, the demographics of the community, helps all participants gain an understanding of the needs of the school and the resources available for the various projects. It is also helpful in assessing parent and community representative volunteers and in exploring strategies to be included in the

school's improvement plans, and in implementing ministry policies and initiatives, as well as *aménagement linguistique* interventions.

Michel Blais points out that "having a good knowledge of the school environment before initiating work groups, round tables, or collaborative projects is an important prerequisite for the development of partnerships in education" (translated from Blais, 1996). Blais adds that other conditions required for educational partnerships include good communication among partners, the school's positive image in the community, the optimal use of resources so as not to overload school staff, and, finally, an adequate understanding of the political and organizational issues of the school environment.

In its initiatives and policies, the Ministry of Education encourages the creation of partnerships. For example, close community-school council cooperation might make it easier to establish the board-wide literacy committee that focuses on literacy and facilitates partnerships with the broader community to design work experience for students at risk (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003a, p. 54).

The school council can also help carry out the mandate of the advisory team proposed in *Des choix qui mènent à l'action* (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999b). The policy advocates setting up a school program that involves a variety of appropriate community partners that will help involve students in the community. This strategy will enrich the community's French-language resource pool and help develop a sense of belonging in young people.



Every partnership must complement curricular activities. School-community projects that involve students in the francophone community should have the support of families, be integrated into the curriculum planning process, and originate from a variety of French-speaking environments (e.g., private industry, cultural centres, day-care centres). Community members who become involved in projects make a unique contribution to the education of young francophones and become adult models for whom living and working in French are sources of gratification and growth (adapted from Rainville & Forestier, 2001).

Community partners could facilitate school-community projects such as:

- organizing class visits to different community agencies
- setting up a volunteer service to help Grade 1 and Grade 2 students learn to read
- creating student cooperatives to provide support services in French to community agencies and businesses
- developing a program for community beautification, French signage, summer camps, or ecotourism
- developing projects focusing on information and communication technologies
- developing a market for products and services supplied by students in different fields of study, including technology, art, and interdisciplinary studies

#### PROJECTS THAT SUPPORT THE SCHOOL'S SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ROLE

Partnerships do not have to be linked to academic learning or curricular activities to be valuable; they are also valuable when they reinforce the social and cultural role of the school, the home, or the francophone community. Examples of such partnerships, such as family literacy or support networks for parents who speak little or no French, have been referred to in previous sections of this publication. Such networks can also focus on the needs of new arrivals.

Parents Partenaires en Éducation (2003) has launched a *Parents en forme* program for parents, school boards, and education partners. This program includes topics such as the curriculum, parent-child communications, and student recruitment. It also presents topics that deal specifically with life in a minority setting, such as the role of parents in transmitting the French language and culture. This program is an accessible, user-friendly *aménagement linguistique* resource.

Finally, the objectives and programs adopted by the school, the school board, and their various committees enable the school to participate in the socio-economic development of the francophone community.

## COMMUNITY COMMITMENT: INTERVENTION CATEGORIES

Partnerships with individuals and organizations from the wider community allow the school to become a resource for the community and the community to become a resource for the school.

### *CREATING PARTNERSHIPS*

- Create an inventory of resources to be shared.
- Create an inventory of existing youth projects in the francophone community.
- Apply the school board's partnership models.
- Create the various committees required by the ministry.

### *SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PROJECTS*

- Create recruitment programs for potential partners.
- Develop a program based on projects that feature a linguistic and cultural component.
- Initiate student volunteer-based projects.
- Create exit programs that help students make the transition into the community following graduation.
- Provide support for the development of pedagogical approaches that meet the learning needs of minority-setting students.
- Create projects that foster the economic growth of the community (e.g., student cooperatives).

### *PROJECTS THAT SUPPORT THE SCHOOL'S SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ROLE*

- Provide support for family literacy.
- Create support networks for parents with little knowledge of French.
- Provide support for new arrivals and their integration into a French-language community.
- Provide support for economic and community development through community development agencies.
- Find practical solutions to problems of isolation, remoteness, the small number of students, and the limited number of courses or extracurricular activities.



## INSTITUTIONAL VITALITY INTERVENTION AREA

The vitality of francophone educational institutions depends on their developing a vision shared by francophone community members and education managers. This vision will become apparent through the choice of school organization models and programming that best meet the needs of the francophone community members and make the best use of available resources. The school organization models followed should be flexible enough to allow regular adjustments and include interventions needed to maintain a high level of commitment from the community as a whole. At the same time they should comply with the transparency requirements associated with all activities of public administration.

The vision development and review exercise must be supported by solid research in such areas as the impact of the minority setting on learning, demographic patterns, language status, and the origin of francophone community members. Implementing the shared vision depends, in turn, on building the community's capacity to use a results-based management approach.

### EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Within the framework of the *aménagement linguistique* policy, educational leadership has a major role to play in implementing a set of interventions and in contributing to the sustainable development of the French-language school community from a perspective that supports lifelong learning and identity building. This type of leadership drives thinking and influences practices and action at all levels of the system: the classroom, the

school, the school board, and educational institutions in general. It affects the type of partnership sought, the choice of pedagogical approaches, and the setting of *aménagement linguistique* performance standards.

Educational leadership should begin with strategic thinking and proceed to strategic planning. Strategic thinking, while focusing on the sustainability of the system, helps to clarify the long-term orientations and to highlight the implementation elements. It also helps determine the ultimate impact of the interventions undertaken and the categories of intervention that are most likely to have a positive influence on the changes desired in the short, medium and longterm.

As mentioned earlier in the document, the system's sustainability depends to a large extent on its capacity to respond to the challenges posed by recruitment and the retention of new students. With respect to recruitment, educational institutions will have to find ways to identify parents eligible to register their children in French-language schools.

Rodrigue Landry underlines the importance of recruitment as follows: "There is no doubt that the low participation of children eligible to attend French-language schools, coupled with the minimal use of French as the home language by many of these children, represents the greatest threat to the future vitality of these communities. The challenge today is less one of access and more one of participation. Ironically, exogamy, which is the main (but not the only) factor in the low use of French as the home language, is also the source of a possible turnaround of the situation" (translated from Rodrigue Landry, 2003, p. 18). The assumption



of responsibility for the overall development of education implies that school boards will cooperate not only with members of the wider community but also with different agencies and government departments, for example, those responsible for early childhood services and for immigration (Landry & Rousselle, 2003).

School boards work with one another and with the ministry to strengthen the networks that create francophone environments. These networks include distance education delivery and the promotion of important and relevant joint projects such as *SOS Devoirs*.

Student recruitment and retention capacities can also be increased at intake through the promotion of French-language education, through research, and by implementing a results-based management approach.

## INTAKE

There is a need for several intake programs within the school structure. Schools and school boards should equip themselves with intake measures especially tailored to deal with new staff, new students, new parents and partners, and new arrivals in the area, whether they come from elsewhere in Canada or from another country.

New staff members should be given an orientation kit and invited to an information session that covers the following items:

- the vision of *aménagement linguistique* adopted by the school and school board and the accompanying action plans
- the mandate of the French-language school

- a profile of the school's social and cultural environment
- oral and written communication expectations
- the French-language school's expectations regarding the role of school staff
- intake strategies aimed at parents, especially parents who speak little or no French, and newly arrived families
- intake strategies that promote intercultural dialogue
- models of school organization implemented by the school board

While each school has to apply its board's guidelines for intake and student integration, students' first contact with the school should be positive and productive, whatever their ease with the French language or their connection with the school's cultural communities. In this way, all students will begin each school year with confidence.

The school should present itself as a unique, dynamic, and rewarding linguistic and cultural setting that respects diversity, one that is open to all members of the wider community and that takes care to maintain a francophone environment, since in many communities, the French-language school is often the only place that provides a francophone-dominant environment. Victor Goldbloom summarizes this idea as follows: "Few can doubt the importance of minority language schools to the vitality of their communities. Such institutions provide an essential physical and social space within which members can meet and



foster their cultural and linguistic heritage. Indeed, without minority language schools, the very conditions necessary for the preservation of Canada's linguistic duality would be markedly diminished" (in O'Keefe, 2001, p. 75).

Rodrigue Landry (2003, p. 22) reminds us that although the "official" position of the school must remain francophone, this position must not prevent schools from making the necessary accommodations for welcoming and effectively communicating with all parents.

The intake structures developed to facilitate the integration of new arrivals are the product of a dialogue among the new arrivals themselves, board managers, and school principals. If schools want to benefit from the contribution of new arrivals, they should (Quell, 2002):

- have an intake strategy that provides focused assistance;
- find ways to help immigrant parents quickly become functionally bilingual;
- work with francophone community organizations to facilitate new arrivals' access to a francophone network to help them succeed economically and develop a sense of belonging to the francophone community;
- create an inventory of the skills that new arrivals have to offer to the school and its programs;
- invite new arrivals to take part in school-community projects;

- initiate and maintain a process for identifying prejudices to be eliminated and develop integration methods that will encourage openness and the acceptance of new arrivals by others;
- agree to be part of a changing francophone community.

Finally, schools should be welcoming and open, distribute clear information to everyone coming through their doors, react quickly to the needs of visitors, and make room for the activities of organizations from the wider community (Quirion, 1994).

## PROMOTION

Efforts invested in promoting the school to attract Charter rights-holders and their children are necessary for the sustainability of the French-language community – by enabling the francophone population to preserve and transmit to future generations its right to receive instruction in the minority language. If the French language is not transmitted to a child today, either in school or at home, then this child, as an adult, will have lost the right to education in the French language for his or her children. In this way, the vitality of the entire francophone community will be weakened. This is one of the challenges that *aménagement linguistique* interventions seek to solve.

Rodrigue Landry (2003) has developed an inventory of possible courses of action:

- Launch educational campaigns that provide the most recent research on the consequences of the choice of language of instruction for children and the choice of language spoken at home.

- Set up language development support services for children. (In Ontario's French-language schools, these support services are found in the *Actualisation linguistique en français*, the *Perfectionnement du français*, and the *Animation culturelle* programs.)
- Provide support for preschool children by creating early childhood centres to help exogamous families in their efforts to create a francophone environment at home.
- Emulate the successes achieved by school-based community centres in meeting the special needs of some communities.

Most promotion campaigns also provide information on the kind of programs and services that the education system provides to the population as a whole. Such campaigns:

- promote the growth of schools and school boards;
- describe a school organization that responds to the needs of students and their parents;
- make people aware of school-community projects that encourage young people's integration into the francophone community;
- make people aware of technological networking possibilities for overcoming the effects of the geographic isolation of young people in remote communities;
- share testimonials from young francophones;
- highlight the unique role of the school in the community;
- encourage private sector investments;
- encourage community organizations to make presentations at the school's open houses;
- support the linguistic and cultural vitality of the francophone community at the provincial level.

Finally, to get and keep parents involved, the promotion strategy developed by the school board and its schools should appeal directly to parents' interest in their children's well-being and in passing on their heritage (Landry, 2003, p. 22). Partnerships can be developed around family literacy and early childhood services, such as the following:

- establishing child-care centres in francophone schools
- creating close connections between existing child-care centres and French-language schools
- maintaining and improving full-time programs for children aged four and five
- providing access to quality resources designed to support the acquisition of French, the transmission of francophone culture, and total child development

It may be necessary to facilitate access to courses for relearning French for parents who have become assimilated. It would also be valuable to make it possible for families to share play times and the French language with their young children.



## RESEARCH

Research into the realities and needs of French-language education in a minority setting is vital for resolving the problems faced by francophone educational institutions. This might involve researching the following:

- oral communication assessment tools
- cultural referents and how to integrate them into learning and teaching activities
- identity building success factors
- pedagogical approaches that promote the optimal use of technological resources
- conditions fostering the development of additive bilingualism
- the impact of school organization and the existence of two education systems on the vitality of French-language education
- school-community projects tailored to the curriculum and the realities of the francophone community
- recruiting teachers from the francophone community throughout Canada, including the immigrant population
- educational leadership in a minority context: characteristics and manifestations
- action research as a tool for professional development and the development of a learning community

Action research helps to raise the awareness of school staff and often stimulates them to create new and ground-breaking solutions to the challenges of teaching in a minority setting.

*“A key feature of action research is that it is developed in close cooperation with the beneficiaries who become partners. It has no target public but rather partners in reflecting acting, transforming, making discoveries and exceeding expectations. It produces theoretical and generalizable concepts, and it considers the largest possible number of situational parameters” (Joblin, 2004).*

Affiliation with researchers at both the provincial and national levels is essential for defining and understanding problems and finding realistic and appropriate solutions to them.

Finally, it is important that a dialogue be established between those responsible for initial training and those dealing with continuing training so that initial training and ongoing professional development take into consideration the constraints imposed by the minority setting in the classroom every day. This dialogue will certainly enrich educational practice and will probably make it easier to recruit and retain staff.

## RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT

A results-based management and accountability framework will serve as a blueprint to help managers focus on measuring and reporting on outcomes throughout the life cycle of a policy. Such a framework helps managers to (adapted from Treasury Board Secretariat, 2001):

- describe clear roles and responsibilities for the main partners involved;
- develop a logic model that establishes the relationship between resources and expected results;
- determine appropriate performance measures and a sound performance measurement strategy;
- set out any evaluation work that is required;
- ensure adequate reporting on outcomes.

If successfully developed, the framework should represent (adapted from Treasury Board Secretariat, 2001):

- an understanding among partners of what they aim to achieve, how they plan to work together to achieve it, and how they will measure and report on outcomes;
- a tool for better management, learning, and accountability throughout the life cycle of a policy;
- an early indication that policy implementation is set up logically and has a good chance to succeed.



## INSTITUTIONAL VITALITY INTERVENTION AREA: INTERVENTION CATEGORIES

### EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Integrated strategic planning includes the following:

- school boards' annual improvement plans
- *aménagement linguistique* plans
- a shared vision and systemic interventions in *aménagement linguistique*
- partnership models
- learning community models adapted to a minority setting

### INTAKE

Intake programs should be developed for the following:

- new staff members
- new arrivals
- parents
- students

### PROMOTION

The following can increase system visibility and credibility:

- partnerships with adult education agencies
- partnerships with family literacy organizations
- partnerships with early childhood services agencies

The following can increase school visibility:

- the initiation of a school-community project program
- information for the public on innovative pedagogical approaches used in the system (e.g., interactive homework, the cultural pedagogical approach, approaches focused on community awareness and involvement)

### RESEARCH

A research program can include the following:

- basic and applied research on education in a minority setting, oral communication assessment tools, cultural identity, and the learning community in a minority setting
- training in action research
- partnerships with universities

### RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT

The following may be part of results-based management:

- training in data collection and management
- the development of logic models
- the development of assessment and evaluation strategies and other areas related to results-based management



The responsibility for *aménagement linguistique* lies with all the people and institutions that are in some way involved with French-language education. Through targeted initiatives, the ministry and its partners strive to preserve for future generations their right to receive instruction in the French language and to promote, within the limits of resources and mandates, the sustainable development of Ontario's francophone community.

## INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The ministry, in implementing its *aménagement linguistique* policy, ensures that:

- all district school boards and school authorities adopt an *aménagement linguistique* policy;

- the steps for developing and implementing the policy are worked out in cooperation with school boards;
- the accountability processes used when carrying out the policy are developed in cooperation with school boards.

The ministry is also taking steps to achieve the outcomes it has set for itself, which are included in its annual plan. These outcomes are part of a vision of academic achievement and the sustainable development of Ontario's francophone community.

### Expected Outcomes at the Provincial Level

#### 1. Students:

Increased capacity to acquire oral communication skills to maximize their learning and identity building

#### 2. School staff:

Increased capacity to work in a minority setting to support the academic learning and identity building of every student

#### 3. School board:

Increased capacity to maintain and increase the student population to contribute to the vitality of French-language schools and the francophone community

### The French-language district school board or school authority:

- adopts an *aménagement linguistique* policy that supports each of the schools in its jurisdiction in carrying out its mandate as a French-language school;
- participates, in cooperation with the ministry and other school boards, in identifying and developing accountability processes;
- participates, in cooperation with the ministry and other school boards, in designing tools to facilitate the implementation of the provincial *aménagement linguistique* policy;
- develops specific guidelines for schools for creating community partnerships and developing school-community projects;
- develops a communications strategy for informing the community of the outcomes it has achieved and the progress it has made.

### French-language schools:

- carry out their mandate by implementing meaningful *aménagement linguistique* interventions;
- prepare their teachers to deal with the changes brought about by the implementation of *aménagement linguistique* interventions;
- work in cooperation with members of the wider community to define and create a francophone environment with a view to enhancing the vitality of the francophone community;

- develop a shared vision with students, parents, and the community, and initiate a dialogue with these partners on the subject of the nature of a learning community;
- encourage parents to contribute actively to school programs and school life;
- create meaningful partnerships throughout the community;
- open themselves to the wider community to contribute, through their school-community projects, to the growth of a resource pool on matters relating to the francophone community;
- cooperate with the wider community to define the actions both the school and the community can take to make the school a resource for the community and the community a resource for the school.

### INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

Individual responsibility relates to everyone who plays a role in the French-language community and school. It brings into focus the role each of these people has to play in the creation and maintenance of a francophone environment that is essential for individual and community development.

Those who work in a French-language school board or a French-language school as professionals are choosing to:

- value the French language and culture in all aspects of the school environment;
- help promote additive bilingualism;

- commit to the principle of lifelong learning;
- actively help transform the school into a more comprehensive learning community;
- acknowledge the importance and impact of the *aménagement linguistique* policy;
- acknowledge the importance of oral communication to language acquisition in a minority setting;
- value the use of excellent spoken and written French;
- use teaching strategies that will maximize learning in a minority setting;
- understand the importance and expectations of language support programs (*Actualisation linguistique en français* and *Perfectionnement du français*);
- actively help integrate francophone culture into learning activities and the school environment;
- use awareness-building strategies with students to motivate them to express themselves in French and to become involved as francophones;
- take part in professional development projects.

Aware of the school's linguistic, cultural, and educational mandate, students, parents, support staff, and members of community organizations express their commitment by:

- using French constantly and naturally as their language of communication both inside and outside of school, as they recognize the importance of communicating in French at all times;
- supporting all individual and collective efforts regarding French-language use and cultural expression;
- collaborating on an ongoing basis to contribute to the development and visibility of culture in French Ontario.





## Part Two



***GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING AN  
AMÉNAGEMENT LINGUISTIQUE POLICY  
AND RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT***

In light of the inventory of available resources and the assessment of interventions completed or in progress, all French-language district school boards and all school authorities following the directives presented in this document must:

- review or develop their own *aménagement linguistique* policy, ensuring that it:
  - ☐ supports the mandate of French-language schools;
  - ☐ is in accord with the principles set out in Part One of this document;
  - ☐ respects the foundations of *aménagement linguistique*;

- ☐ supports the strategic aims and expected outcomes of *aménagement linguistique* and incorporates local characteristics appropriately;

- develop and implement an intervention plan that supports their *aménagement linguistique* policy and that can be used for systematically reporting on progress;
- collaborate with the ministry and other school boards on developing resource guides that explain the content and processes for the various components of the policy.

Developing an *aménagement linguistique* policy includes the following steps:

- Step 1: Examine the context and identify the challenges of French-language education at the local level.
- Step 2: Determine the priority to be given to each of the strategic aims.
- Step 3: Define the changes to be made and express them as expected outcomes.
- Step 4: Select categories of activities from each intervention area.
- Step 5: Evaluate policy implementation systematically.



# Context and Challenges of French-Language Education at the Local Level

An examination of the context of French-language education allows us to define the main social factors that influence its evolution. Ontario's francophone community, which is both a minority and pluralistic, is, so to speak, the backdrop against which French-language education plays itself out. This context provides the school with its clientele, as well as with many challenges with respect to language acquisition, cultural ownership, and community vitality because of the social changes Ontario's francophone community has undergone.

Before deciding which interventions will best meet the needs of each school's clientele, the school board should become very familiar with the demographic, linguistic, and socio-cultural factors of the environment each school serves.

This examination of the local context is needed to identify the challenges to be met. It should be carried out in partnership with community members, for there can be no sustainable development without the local capacity to sustain it (Qualman and Bolger, 1996, pp. 4-5). Hence the importance of these consultations.

The challenges of language planning are intimately connected with language acquisition, cultural ownership, and the recruitment and retention of students. These challenges must be inventoried and classified in a priority order, which will potentially determine and guide the interventions to be undertaken.

## AT THE PROVINCIAL LEVEL

*Demographic, linguistic, and socio-cultural profile of Ontario's francophone population.* Generally, the censuses of the last decade (1991 to 2001) reveal a shrinking minority community, which is older, rural but undergoing increasing urbanization and, through immigration, is becoming proportionally more diverse than the general population.

"Minorization". The following factors increase "minorization" of the francophone population:

- a falling birth rate
- urbanization, which exacerbates dispersion
- a high rate of language transfer from French to English, especially in interlinguistic families
- the preferential use at home of a language other than French
- immigration that, from a demographic and linguistic point of view, favours the anglophone majority more than the francophone minority
- market globalization and the trend towards Anglo-American-dominant linguistic and cultural levelling

*The challenges of language acquisition and cultural ownership in a minority setting are revealed by the following:*

- difficulty in scoring high levels of academic achievement on provincial, national, and international tests
- anglicization and its effects, especially at the start of schooling
- increasing linguistic heterogeneity of the school population
  - ☐ children of Charter rights-holders entitled to receive instruction in the minority language
  - ☐ children admitted by the admissions committee when their parents do not meet section 23 criteria
- subtractive bilingualism in a minority setting
- an evolving francophone identity
- growing cultural diversity

*The challenges of student recruitment and retention are indicated by the following:*

- the large number of children of Charter rights-holders who do not attend French-language schools
- the high percentage of students who leave French-language schools before the end of Grade 12

## AT THE SCHOOL BOARD LEVEL

Demographic, linguistic, and socio-cultural profiles of the school board's francophone population should be developed by determining the following:

- demographic profile
  - ☐ the francophone representation in the general population and in each of the areas
  - ☐ the rural/urban distribution of the francophone population
- linguistic profile
  - ☐ the relationship between French as a mother tongue and the language spoken at home
  - ☐ endogamy, exogamy, and the rate of language transmission
- socio-cultural profile
  - ☐ the origins and ethnic composition of the francophone population
  - ☐ other language(s) spoken at home
  - ☐ the percentage of immigrants who speak French
- profile of the actual and the target student population
  - ☐ identification of the numbers of Charter rights-holders and determination of the target student population
  - ☐ the relationship between the actual student population and the target student population

The profiles already developed by school boards are an excellent resource in carrying out this work.

The challenges of language and culture transmission can be identified by determining the following:

- students' linguistic characteristics
  - ☐ an inventory of students' oral communication skills at the start of school
  - ☐ test results (provincial, national, international)
  - ☐ the number of students currently in or to be registered in language-support programs (ALF/PDF)
  - ☐ the impact of anglicization on the student population
- students' socio-cultural characteristics
  - ☐ the cultural diversity of the student population and school staff
  - ☐ the impact of cultural diversity on school life

The challenges of student recruitment and retention can be identified by determining the following:

- the difference between the actual and target student populations
- the retention rate and the grades with the highest rate of student departures
- the causes of student population loss
- the percentage of students graduating



An analysis of the impact of the changes affecting Ontario's francophone population helped define the provincial challenges when determining how best to enable schools to carry out their mandate and contribute to the vitality of the francophone community. To meet these challenges collectively and implement remedial measures, educational institutions must, within the framework of an *aménagement linguistique* policy, adopt common strategic aims.

#### AT THE PROVINCIAL LEVEL

The strategic aims of the *aménagement linguistique* policy are to:

- foster, within a lifelong learning approach, the academic achievement of every student by implementing relevant quality programs and services that reflect the unique nature of the francophone community and take into account the effects of the English-language-dominant environment on the learning of school subjects and disciplines;
- promote identity building and the development of self-confidence in francophones through the implementation of conditions conducive to the creation of a francophone environment that takes into account the vitality and pluralism of Ontario's French-language community;

- develop, through a learning community model, the capacity of school staff, parents, and students to sustain the linguistic and cultural development of the community within a vision that fosters life-long learning;
- increase the capacity of educational institutions to develop the necessary programs, resources, and services by creating meaningful partnerships among the school, the family, and the community;
- increase the vitality of Ontario's educational institutions through leadership that facilitates capacity building and strategic changes that foster the sustainable development of both these institutions and the francophone community.

#### AT THE SCHOOL BOARD LEVEL

To adapt the strategic aims to the local context and challenges, the school board must:

- prioritize the policy's five aims with regard to local needs;
- conduct a qualitative and quantitative assessment of existing interventions at the local and regional levels;
- identify interventions that are obsolete as well as those that merit initiating or continuing.

An *outcome* is the product of an activity, a consequence attributable to the activities of a policy, program, or initiative. An outcome is usually sustainable.

#### AT THE PROVINCIAL LEVEL

The expected outcomes are as follows:

*1. STUDENTS:*

Increased capacity to acquire oral communication skills to maximize learning and identity building

*2. SCHOOL STAFF:*

Increased capacity to work in a minority setting to support the academic learning and identity building of every student

*3. SCHOOL BOARDS:*

Increased capacity to maintain and increase the student population and to contribute to the vitality of French-language schools and the francophone community

#### AT THE SCHOOL BOARD LEVEL

The expected outcomes must be grounded in the five main strategic aims of the *aménagement linguistique* policy and the provincial outcomes. The board's expected outcomes depend on the context and the priority challenges identified in the preceding step. Each year, the school board must plan the activities and deliverables needed to achieve its outcomes.

This policy defines the *aménagement linguistique* framework by establishing five intervention areas (specific areas of activity that help define the nature and scope of *aménagement linguistique* interventions). The interventions selected will have an impact on the behaviours of a selected population or the growth of target institutions. The following are the five intervention areas:

■ **Learning**, which includes:

- ☐ making a commitment to the concept of lifelong learning and planning to develop students' competence in communicating orally and in writing in excellent French;
- ☐ interventions targeting cross-curricular competencies, subject-specific competencies, career-related competencies, and attitudes conducive to academic achievement and bilingualism;
- ☐ language and learning support programs.

■ **Identity building**, which requires:

- ☐ interventions involving cultural identity building and attitudes conducive to identity building;
- ☐ interventions involving *animation culturelle* and community connections;

- ☐ interventions involving the creation and maintenance of a francophone environment.

■ **Participative leadership**, which includes training in:

- ☐ lifelong learning;
- ☐ identity building;
- ☐ teaching in a minority setting;
- ☐ learning communities as an organizational model for French-language schools;
- ☐ results-based management;
- ☐ school-community projects.

■ **Commitment**, which has two subareas:

1. **parental commitment**, which includes:

- ☐ communicating with parents to inform them about the various strategies for involving them in learning, academic achievement, and career development, and to make them aware of the needs of French-language schooling and their role in the linguistic, cultural, and educational development of their children;
- ☐ creating school-parent alliances that will support schools in carrying out their mandate.



**2. community commitment, which includes:**

- ☐ working with community leaders to develop school-community projects that complement the curriculum and cultural programs;
- ☐ developing school-community projects that focus on the school's social and cultural role.

**■ Institutional vitality, which includes:**

- ☐ examining educational leadership in the context of maintaining and developing French-language educational institutions that lead to excellence.

**AT THE PROVINCIAL LEVEL**

The interventions recommended by the French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch are reflected in its annual plan. The plan is based directly on Ministry of Education and provincial government strategies for education in general and more specifically for French-language education. A number of these interventions fall within the five intervention areas of the *aménagement linguistique* framework.

The table summarizing the policy shows the interventions already underway through the ministry as well as examples of other interventions that could be included in school board policies.

**AT THE SCHOOL BOARD LEVEL**

At this stage in the development of its *aménagement linguistique* policy, the school board should make an inventory of the interventions that have been completed or are underway, classifying them by the *aménagement linguistique* intervention areas. The board will then be able to use this inventory to identify neglected activity areas and to determine what steps to take.

The board's *aménagement linguistique* policy should list the specific activity areas it considers important for inclusion in its implementation schedule.

In developing its policy, every school board must also take into consideration the needs of the target populations and institutions. This includes the needs of the following:

- students
- school staff
- parents and families in general
- schools
- the school board itself
- the francophone community, where appropriate



## Systematic Assessment of the Aménagement Linguistique Policy

To be effective, a policy must stay dynamic to accurately reflect the needs of the environment and the practitioners it serves. Some data will change more slowly than others. Thus, if the process of drafting a policy statement is completed precisely and fairly, the aims, context, and challenges identified will remain largely unchanged for some time, unless a major event affects an entire community, such as a massive influx of immigrants or an economic change.

Depending on the success of the planned interventions, the expected outcomes and the interventions planned for each intervention area will have to be systematically reviewed and realigned. They will thus be included in the strategic planning and continuing assessment framework. The data obtained could have implications for the frequency with which the board's *aménagement linguistique* policy implementation strategy has to be reviewed.

### SUGGESTIONS

- Barring a major event, the data and hypotheses for the context, challenges, aims, and target populations can be reviewed during a systematic review of the board policy or when new data emerge (about every five years).
- The annual review (or other, if needed) of expected outcomes and interventions to be selected by intervention area should be guided by:
  - ☐ data collected during the continuing performance measurement process;
  - ☐ data collected when the context, challenges, aims, and target populations are reviewed.

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