

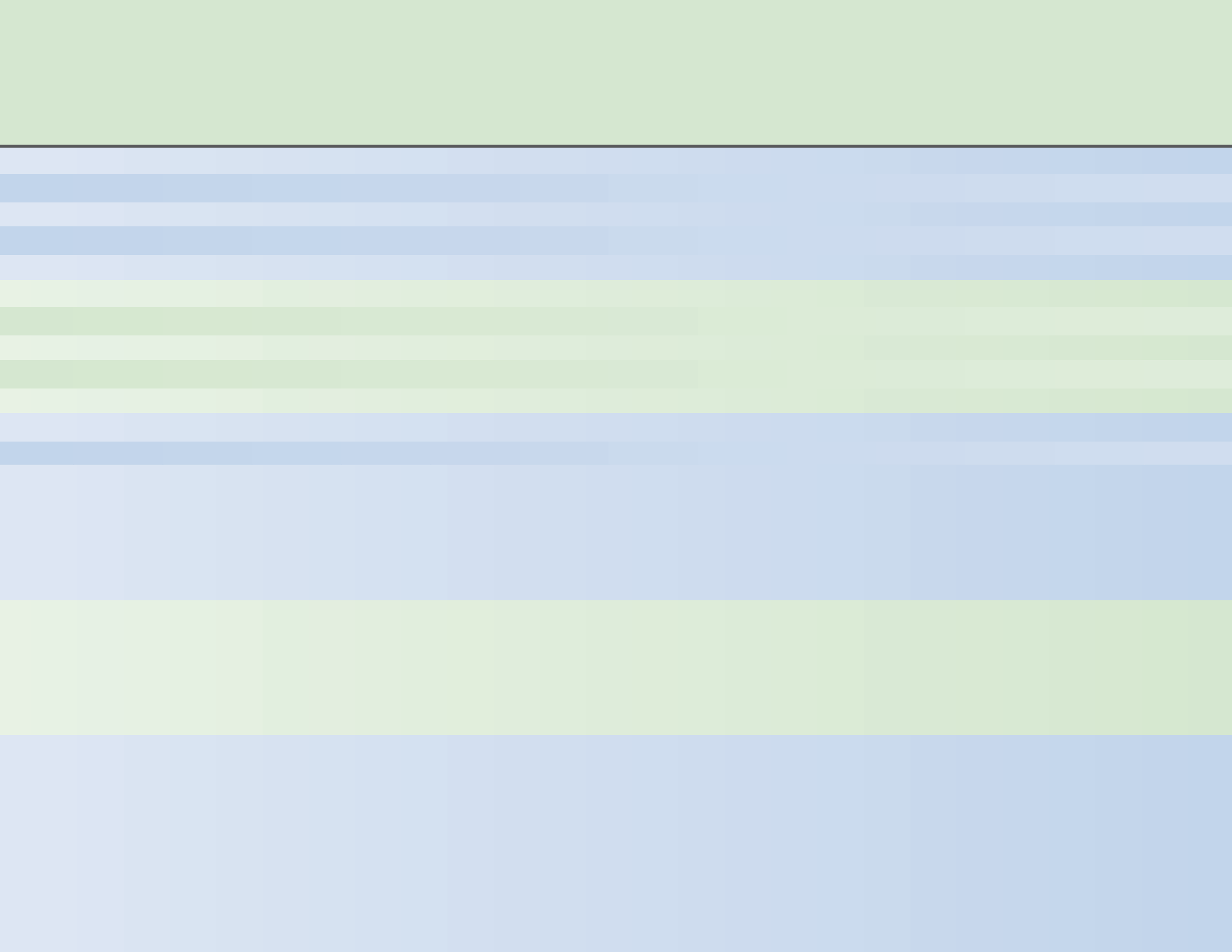
Aménagement linguistique

A Policy for Ontario's French-Language Schools
and Francophone Community



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 Ontario



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The Aménagement linguistique Policy: An Overview



INTRODUCTION

A language thrives when people use it in daily communication and when it permeates the space in which they live and build their communities. This is the role that the French language plays in Canada's francophone communities; Canadian francophones speak to each other in French and draw on the language to affirm their cultural identity. In the process, they create a community that shares the same language.

The policy presented in this document concerns French-language schools, the young people attending them, and their parents. Its intention is to help the province's French-language educational institutions and settings optimize the transmission of the French language and culture among young people, to help them reach their full potential in school and society, and to breathe new life into the francophone community.

The term *aménagement* means arranging, planning, organizing, or administering. It is often used in areas such as urban planning, road development, and forest management. Whenever this term is used, it always implies making something viable, useful, or productive. *Aménagement linguistique* refers to language planning.

Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, part of the Canadian Constitution passed in 1982, guarantees the French or English linguistic minority populations of a province the right to instruction in their own language. Ontario has enacted laws to protect these rights in this province. To help French-language schools fulfil their mandate, Ontario bases its policies on the current legal status of these rights, as well as on the relevant federal statutes. The *aménagement linguistique* policy falls within this legal framework.

It is important that all institutions responsible for providing French-language education in the province adopt the same guidelines to ensure

the protection, enhancement, and transmission of the French language and culture in minority settings. These common guidelines are provided through the *aménagement linguistique* policy.

This document should interest everyone involved, either directly or indirectly, in the education of Ontario's young francophones, including the young people themselves. In a broader sense, it is written for all individuals and groups concerned with the vitality and the very existence of the francophone community. The implementation of the *aménagement linguistique* policy will require a commitment from all partners in French-language education.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN THE PROVINCE?

- the Ontario Ministry of Education
- the 12 French-language district school boards
- the 7 French-language school authorities (as of September 2004)
- the 397 French-language schools (as of September 2004)

OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

The *aménagement linguistique* policy is firmly linked to the mandate of French-language schools and exists to help these schools better fulfil their mission. The goal of the policy is to foster the well-being of current and future generations by promoting and expanding the francophone milieu in which the students are educated to meet their linguistic, educational, and cultural needs.



The objectives of the aménagement linguistique policy are to:

- deliver high-quality instruction in French-language schools adapted to the minority setting;
- educate young francophones to become competent and responsible citizens, empowered by their linguistic and cultural identity;
- increase the capacity of learning communities, including school staff, students, and parents, to support students' linguistic, educational, and cultural development throughout their lives;
- expand and enrich the francophone environment through solid partnerships among the school, the family, and the community as a whole;
- increase the vitality of educational institutions by focusing on student retention and increased enrolment, thus contributing to the sustainable development of the French-language community in Ontario.

IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOL BOARDS AND SCHOOL AUTHORITIES

Each of Ontario's French-language school boards and school authorities, in collaboration with parents and community organizations, is required to develop a local aménagement linguistique policy that promotes the fulfilment of the French-language school's mandate and increases the educational system's capacity to protect and enhance the French language and culture.

Based on a rigorous analysis of its individual situation and needs, each school board and school authority will plan targeted interventions, which include, for example, establishing partnerships with deliverers of or associations for early childhood education and implementing programs for the intake, assessment, placement, and integration of students who – for linguistic, cultural, or academic reasons – are not immediately able to follow the regular programs offered. Such initiatives translate into both short- and long-term results (e.g., an increase in the spontaneous use of French at school, an improvement in student performance, increased enrolment).

ANTICIPATED PROVINCIAL POLICY OUTCOMES

1. FOR STUDENTS

An increased capacity to acquire oral communication skills to maximize learning and identity building.

2. FOR SCHOOL STAFF

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

3. FOR SCHOOL BOARDS

An increased capacity to maintain and increase student enrolment to contribute to the vitality of French-language schools and the broader francophone community.

THE FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOL

Two key places for the transmission of Ontario's French language and culture are the homes in which children are raised and French-language schools. French-language education makes families and schools full partners. The challenges and particular characteristics of education in a minority setting explain both the need for the family-school partnership and the specific nature of the French-language school's mandate.

The mandate of French-language schools is to ensure that students receive a good education in all subjects and disciplines. French-language schools also have a mandate to protect, enhance, and transmit the French language and culture. French is the school's language of instruction and communication, and it animates the social and cultural life of the school community.

The French-language school:

- is a place of learning devoted to the academic success, lifelong learning, and personal growth of all its students. All subjects in the Ontario curriculum are taught in French, with the exception of *Anglais* and *Anglais pour débutants* from Grade 4 to Grade 8 in elementary school and *English* and *Anglais pour débutants* in secondary school, which are taught to the standards required to ensure a high level of bilingualism. All curriculum guidelines are developed and taught in French to promote students' acquisition of general knowledge and the development of their learning skills. The goal of each French-language school is to ensure students equal opportunity in terms of their learning, access to quality education, and academic achievement;



- contributes to the building of students' cultural identity through the development of their knowledge and use of the French language, as well as a profound sense of the cultural and universal values shared by francophone communities here and elsewhere. The school seeks to foster in students increased self-realization, a commitment to the francophone community and its sustainable development, and a strong sense of belonging;
- fosters quality instruction by working with its school board and teaching staff to develop and implement an educational strategy adapted to the minority setting and to create and support a dynamic learning community;
- consolidates and expands its educational and cultural network through school-community projects and through partnerships among the school, the family, and various groups in the broader community. These partnerships are created to find realistic solutions to the challenges of acquiring the French language and French culture in a minority setting, to promote *aménagement linguistique* in early childhood, and to encourage optimal learning and academic achievement among all students. They help to prepare young people for the transition from school to work and to active and fulfilling lives in the future, in the context of Ontario's cooperative education, workplace transition, guidance, and career education programs. As well, they prepare students for participation in the development of a strong French-language community.

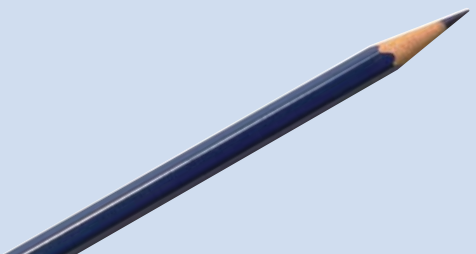




The aménagement linguistique policy is firmly linked to the mandate of the French-language school and exists to help the school better fulfil its mission. The implementation of this policy in schools is mainly the responsibility of the French-language school boards, which have the task of overseeing the proper management of their schools, assessing local needs, and determining with their school communities which interventions are most likely to have a positive impact on the school environment.

The aménagement linguistique policy is the result of a desire to ensure the well-being of current and future generations of francophones in Ontario by promoting and expanding the francophone milieu where students are educated and in which they grow both linguistically and culturally.







Thought-Provoking Findings

THOUGHT-PROVOKING FINDINGS



A PROFILE OF ONTARIO'S FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY: DEMOGRAPHIC, LINGUISTIC, AND SOCIAL TRENDS

Even though the number of Ontarians who count French as their mother tongue is rising, the size of the group is declining in comparison with the rest of Ontario's population. The percentage of Ontarians whose mother tongue is French dropped from 5 per cent in 1991 to 4.5 per cent in 2001.

"Mother tongue" is the first language learned in the home during childhood and still understood at the time of the last census.

In the eastern and northeastern regions of the province, where large groups of francophones have traditionally lived, the exodus to large urban centres is progressively increasing the isolation of French-language communities. In the central and southwestern parts of the province, where the francophone population is relatively small, French is spoken in, at most, one-third of Francophone homes.

The province welcomes 13 per cent of Canada's francophone immigrants. These newcomers should be contributing to the maintenance and expansion of the province's francophone communities. However, few services exist to welcome, inform, and direct newly arrived immigrants to the French-language school system. New francophone arrivals, therefore, tend to adopt English once they establish themselves here. This is one of many factors that increase the likelihood of francophone assimilation.

A critical aspect of assimilation is the loss of the mother tongue in everyday conversation.

More often today than in the past, French and English, and sometimes other languages, co-exist in Ontario homes. Francophones who have

anglophone spouses or partners and who live in a predominantly English-speaking environment have great difficulty maintaining an essentially francophone lifestyle. As a result, these francophones often speak less French than English in the home.

Still, a growing number of parents are choosing to exercise their right to have their children educated in French. The reasons for this decision include these people's heartfelt connection to their language and culture, the distinct advantages of bilingualism in the job market, and, with globalization, the understanding that linguistic diversity is preferable to linguistic uniformity.

Some families still find it difficult to give French an equal opportunity in the home. Under these circumstances, is it possible for them to provide their children and teenagers attending a French-language school with adequate, ongoing support? While this is a sensitive issue, it is essential to the debate on the transmission of language and culture in a minority setting.

WHO ATTENDS ONTARIO'S FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOLS?

Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms defines the right of Canadian citizens of the English-speaking or French-speaking minority of a province to educate their children in that minority language, wherever numbers warrant. In Ontario, the following have the right to have their children educated in French at the elementary and secondary school levels in Ontario:

- Canadian citizens residing in Ontario whose first language learned and still understood is French
- Canadian citizens residing in Ontario who received their elementary-level education in French, here or elsewhere in Canada



- Canadian citizens who have a child who received, or who is receiving, his or her education in French at the elementary or secondary level, here or elsewhere in Canada

Under the Education Act of Ontario, it is also possible for children whose parents do not meet the criteria of Section 23 of the Charter to be admitted to a French-language school if they receive permission from the school's admissions committee. A committee reaches its decisions after examining each request in light of Section 23 and the admissions criteria in effect at the French-language school board, for example, the parents' commitment to the school and to education in the French language.

In the spirit of the right stated in the Charter, French-language schools now serve a diverse clientele, both linguistically and culturally:

- Because students' linguistic experiences vary greatly from one home to another and from one community to another, their language skills are considerably different. When they first attend school, some students understand their mother tongue well, whereas others know little or no French.
- Because the French language itself conveys the culture of the many communities in which it is spoken, students' cultural experiences vary greatly.

The physical features of French-language schools in Ontario may differ from one another, but they remain closely tied to their educational and cultural mission: to serve the province's francophone communities and to promote the heritage of the francophone community.

A PROFILE OF THE FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOL SYSTEM

The French-language school system in Ontario comprises close to 400 French-language schools and their students across the province. To better understand this system, we must consider the impact of the behaviour and

the performance of the students who attend these schools on the vitality of the system as a whole.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Annual provincial testing informs the public about the education system's performance, helping to improve the quality of education and the accountability of the system. The results of these tests make it possible to compare the performance profile of an individual student and his or her class or school from year to year.

At the elementary level, some students in French-language schools continue to fail to meet the provincial standard in reading and writing. Nevertheless, significant improvement has been accomplished through targeted educational interventions in the schools and through teaching strategies that better address students' needs. This is why a pedagogy that has been adapted to the minority setting and that focuses on optimal oral and written language acquisition is part of the *aménagement linguistique* policy.

The provincial standard – level 3 on a scale of four levels – is the level at which students are expected to achieve the expectations in Ontario's curriculum guidelines.

The corrective measures taken by school teachers and district school boards to improve students' success rate on provincial tests confirm the effectiveness of the *aménagement linguistique* policy:

- At the secondary level, 79 per cent of students in French-language schools passed the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) in 2003 compared to 67 per cent in 2002.
- Students' results on the provincial assessment of mathematics in Grades 3, 6, and 9 have also shown improvement.

The following provisions are also designed to bring about an improvement in the performance of French-language students at the elementary and secondary levels:

- School boards will continue to implement improvement plans for student performance on the provincial tests in reading and writing.
- School boards will continue to implement ministry-approved locally developed courses to meet the compulsory credit needs of students in Grades 9 to 10 in French, mathematics, the sciences, and history.
- Students who do not pass the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) may take a language skills course specifically developed for students in a minority-language context or, in exceptional cases, may request a review by an adjudication panel to obtain the graduation literacy requirement.

Other important interventions are being considered in the area of oral communication. Many children speak little or no French when they start school. If they spend a significant amount of class time listening to and speaking in French, they can quickly catch up. Understanding the different stages of oral language acquisition and implementing proper teaching strategies are priorities for French-language education.

ENROLMENT

While the number of French-language schools has clearly increased over the years, enrolment has slowly declined in the last few. Two-thirds of parents who have a constitutional right to have their children educated in French exercise this right. Are the others even aware of their right? Do they know that there is almost certainly a school near where they live that provides a quality education in French where programs are taught to exacting standards? Do they know that a French-language school offers young people a unique opportunity to live in French in Ontario?

The following general and targeted interventions to correct this situation have been planned as part of the aménagement linguistique policy:

- informing Canadian citizens of their educational right
- informing newly arrived immigrants of the availability and advantages of French-language education
- promoting French-language schools and the quality of education and the cultural life they provide
- increasing public awareness of the services that an increasing number of the province's pre-school children could receive


RETENTION

Some parents opt for a French-language school from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 1, but then move their children to an English-language school. Some students choose to leave after Grade 8 or Grade 10. Why do they leave the French-language school? The reasons are unclear, but the intake procedures and the support that students and their families receive may need to be targeted for improvement.

The beneficial effect of early childhood education programs in the French language on student retention, academic performance, and social skills has also been recognized. The promotion of these programs is one of the foundations of the aménagement linguistique policy, and the programs themselves have been rigorously monitored since the establishment of full-day education programs for four- and five-year-old children in the province's French-language schools.

Postsecondary education and career choices also have a great influence on some students' decision to transfer to an English-language school. Others decide to leave school prior to graduation, as soon as they have completed their compulsory education.

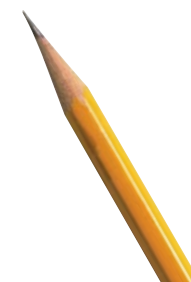




In addition to aménagement linguistique in early childhood education (see the section “Giving Children the Best Possible Start at a French-Language School”), the following interventions are also planned or are being considered to lower the incidence of students’ transferring to English-language schools and dropping out of French-language schools:

- implementating programs to welcome, support, and mentor students and their families on an ongoing basis from the start of schooling until the end of secondary school
- improving relationships between secondary schools and their elementary feeder schools to ease students’ transition from one level to the next
- actively promoting – in the high schools – colleges and universities that offer full or partial programs in French
- integrating Grade 7 and 8 students in the secondary school system

In summary, French is being replaced by English in some homes, and students in French-language schools are very linguistically and culturally diverse. The francophone community – including parents, students, community groups, and representatives and officials from the province’s French-language education system – is well aware of the challenges involved in the transmission of language and culture in a minority setting and is prepared to tackle them one by one.







Creating Sustainable Change: The Policy's Priorities

CREATING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE: THE POLICY'S PRIORITIES



GIVING CHILDREN THE BEST POSSIBLE START AT A FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOL

By the time children start school, they have spent four to six years within their family and community. When they start Grade 1 at age six, children are already communicating, playing, and learning using the language or languages they know. Most francophone students come from families in which French is spoken, but others speak little or no French. To give children the best possible start at a French-language school, they should be exposed to French as early and as intensively as possible. This is as much a parental responsibility as is the decision to enrol and support children in the various French-language early childhood education programs.

Addressing Some Parental Concerns

From a parent whose child speaks French fluently

Concern: *“Our child is starting Junior Kindergarten and speaks French fluently. Will the program be challenging enough?”*

Answer: *“The regular program is rigorous and demanding. It was developed for your child. For example, the French curriculum expectations for Grades 1 to 8 in reading, writing, and oral communication stipulate that French must be taught as the first language, not as the second language.”*

From a parent whose child speaks little French

Concern: *“French is my mother tongue but I don’t speak it well enough to feel comfortable using it. Still, I would like my daughter to learn French at school.”*

Answer: *“Trust yourself and try to improve your ability to speak French. Use it to communicate with your child every day. Make French resources*

available in the home. The more you demonstrate your attachment to French, the more receptive your child will be to the learning experiences offered at school.”

From a parent whose child does not speak French

Concern: *“We don’t speak French at home, but surely our child will learn French from the other students.”*

Answer: *“Children are open to new influences and have an incredible capacity for learning. However, adapting to the school’s linguistic and cultural life will require a lot of effort from your child. He or she will need special attention to achieve this. Give your child a gift: learn or re-learn French yourself to support your child throughout his or her studies. Give your child a head start by enrolling him or her in a French-language day care.”*

Ideally, all children who start Grade 1 in a French-language school have already been exposed to French during their early childhood – at home, at day care, and in Junior and Senior Kindergarten – and are ready to function in French. To succeed, these children should be able to:

- understand simple instructions, express themselves, and answer in French in a variety of familiar situations;
- demonstrate personal and social skills, for example, self-confidence and independence through their behaviour and social skills; and,
- demonstrate basic understanding, especially of the French language, mathematics, and science.



AMÉNAGEMENT LINGUISTIQUE INTERVENTIONS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

All the province's French-language school boards offer full-time early childhood education programs in French. The Kindergarten programs were specially created to prepare children for instruction in the French language under the new Ontario curriculum. It is strongly suggested that parents who enrol their children in Junior or Senior Kindergarten familiarize themselves with the document entitled *Jardin d'enfants, 1998* and monitor their children's progress. Parental involvement and support make all the difference at this level and can help improve students' achievement.

The earlier that children are exposed to French, the greater the likelihood that they will acquire and develop strong language skills. Building and maintaining close links between existing French-language day cares and French-language schools, improving the quality of the delivery of full-time early childhood education programs, and meeting the need for high-quality materials and resources to support learning are the key interventions in aménagement linguistique for young children.

OPTIMIZING THE USE AND ACQUISITION OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE AND ACHIEVING A HIGH LEVEL OF BILINGUALISM

Academic success is very closely linked to the development of strong communication skills. Programs delivered in French-language schools are especially rigorous, demanding, and stimulating in this regard, and reflect the goal of the gradual development of skills in both official languages.

To optimize the acquisition and use of the French language, young people must become comfortable using French spontaneously in day-to-day life to

communicate, listening and talking to a wide variety of French speakers, and reading and writing in French in a variety of learning situations and about subjects that interest and involve them.

Answering Some Student and Parental Concerns

From Grade 8 students who value bilingualism, but feel insecure about their French

Concern: *"There are students and teachers who speak 'good French' in our school. We are somewhat embarrassed about our own French. It's like we express ourselves better in English."*

Answer: *"What you call 'good French' is the school's language of instruction, the language of French-language newspapers, and the language of the French-language business world. Anyone can speak this rich, complex language. To learn it, you must be able to speak French spontaneously in day-to-day life, and you must use it much of the time every day. Take this advice and you will maintain and improve your French."*

From a group of parents with children who attend elementary school

Concern: *"What should we do to encourage reading at home?"*

Answer: *"Young children are naturally curious. At an early age, give them their own French-language books – books at their level, of course. Also, be sure to read out loud to them every day. They will quickly understand that books contain stories that move them and interest them. Take the time to discover the subjects and areas that interest them so that you can choose books and magazines that they will want to read. Answer their questions and keep supporting them as they discover the written word. If you need help to better guide your children's language development, seek it out."*

Ideally, all French-language elementary and secondary school students will be committed to speaking French at school, will gradually develop their language skills, and will feel increasingly confident about their oral and written communication skills. Students should be able to:

- speak French spontaneously and use it to communicate and interact with others in all of the school's learning situations and cultural activities;
- use French as a learning tool to explore and solve problems;
- meet the expectations of Ontario's curriculum guidelines with respect to communication and language skills, from Grades 1 to 12 in oral communication, reading, and writing.

FEELING COMPETENT AND DEVELOPING A LOVE OF LEARNING

Communication is a high priority in Ontario's curriculum guidelines for Grades 1 to 12. Most of the activities in which students participate in school require skills in oral communication, reading, and writing. All these activities lend themselves to practising and gradually perfecting these language skills.

The aménagement linguistique policy promotes a supportive linguistic environment in which students can practise French intensively, beginning with oral French. It also promotes the use of the French language in all school activities, whether for learning course content or for social and cultural activities. The policy recommends that the province's schools use the following two key interventions: the regular assessment of oral communication skills throughout a student's schooling and the implementation in schools of linguistic support programs for those students experiencing difficulties with the French language. New and proven pedagogical practices in reading and writing must also be used in the classroom.

DEVELOPING A CULTURAL IDENTITY

Language is the most immediate manifestation of culture and it remains the key to each individual's cultural identity. Students at French-language schools are just like other young people who love cultural products. They consume whatever is most prevalent in their environment – in Canada, Anglo-American products. However, for young people to develop a strong francophone linguistic and cultural identity, they must be nurtured in a francophone cultural environment that is both authentic and global. They must be exposed to francophone media (e.g., radio, television, newspapers, magazines) and cultural products (e.g., CDs, books, computer games) that reflect their lives and the things that matter to them. They must be encouraged to participate in athletic and extracurricular activities in French.

What Schools and Boards Can Do: Two Case Studies

- *A theatre arts teacher puts on a play with her Grade 10 students and tours the region's elementary schools with it. Not only do these young people learn about the theatrical profession and perfect their skills in French but they also get a warm reception from younger students. As a result of word-of-mouth reports, the course becomes popular, the school recruits new students, and young students can't wait to get in.*
- *A school board launches a French-language multimedia project for Grade 7 and 8 students with the intention of encouraging young people to explore interactive technologies (computer graphics, and information and communications technologies). The board makes a technology specialist available to the students and teaching staff. The students get involved and start designing and producing their projects. They do research, experiment, make decisions, overcome obstacles, and greatly extend their skills. In short, they develop learning strategies while at the same time working to meet the expectations of their French, science, and technology programs.*



Ideally, all students in a French-language school will know the school's mission and behave in ways that respect and help achieve this mission. Over time, and based on their age and stage of development, students should be able to:

- understand the need for individuals living in a minority setting to learn French, continue to use the language, and cultivate the language and culture in Ontario and Canada;
- recognize, share, and appreciate their linguistic and cultural heritage and respect the heritage of others;
- assert themselves culturally by speaking French at school and by contributing to and participating in the social and cultural life of the school;
- feel independent and competent in all the subjects taught at school and experience a sense of belonging to a group in which they feel respected and valued.

FEELING GOOD ABOUT BEING PART OF A FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY WHILE REMAINING OPEN TO THE WORLD

Students attending French-language schools study, reflect, and discuss their own heritage. It is important that they gradually acquire a good understanding of their social and cultural milieu so that they identify with it and become ambassadors for it throughout their lives.

Cultural support must be provided to students across the entire curriculum, including the exploration of career paths and any related cultural activities. The *aménagement linguistique* policy endorses cultural development activities (*animation culturelle*) in schools to encourage students' cultural development through the schools' educational, social, and cultural activities.

OPTIMIZING LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT IN A MINORITY SETTING

Students cannot develop sophisticated skills in reading, writing, or mathematics in a vacuum; they require a dynamic, friendly environment that is conducive to understanding and learning. A parent who makes a ritual of reading in the home knows full well that the more expression is used when reading aloud, the more involved a child will become and the more fully the child will participate in the magic of the story. French-language schools and, as much as possible, students' families must compensate for the minority status of the French language by providing judicious and caring support. Francophone children who experience a positive relationship with learning become fully committed to their studies, feel motivated, and believe that they will succeed. They will gradually come to understand that being francophone means belonging to a community that has members all over the planet with whom they may share their vision of the world.

Supporting Learning in the Home

Imagine that your child comes home and says, "Today, the teacher told us a nice story." You say, "Tell me about it."

Your child continues, "Well, they took their boats, they caught the crab, and then they ate it."

You now have two choices. You could say, "That's a nice story," or you could say, "I'm afraid I don't understand your story." Choose the latter. Explain that you weren't in the classroom and that's why you don't understand the story. Ask your child to tell you the whole story.

Your child will then explain what happened in the fishing village, bit by bit, in his or her own words. This might involve, for example, your child telling you that a giant crab prevented the fishermen from going out to sea, that

there wasn't anything to eat in the village, that all the villagers decided to go together to hunt the giant crab, and that they caught it, brought it back to the village, and ate it during a great feast.

That night, at dinner, your child can tell the story once more to the entire family. The other family members will not have heard the story, so the child will have a new audience and can practise his or her language skills while sharing the story.

Ideally, all students will benefit from adequate and sustained support throughout their education and, as a result, will learn to trust in their abilities. Students should be able to:

- persevere when faced with a challenge and experience the satisfaction of mastering what they have learned;
- gradually expand their ability to think through rich and constructive experiences;
- correctly use a growing number of learning strategies and a variety of methods to accomplish increasingly complex assignments;
- make use of interactive technologies to enrich their French, increase their level of knowledge, and expand their views of the world;
- remain committed to learning and confident of their academic and personal success.

MASTERING THE LEARNING PROCESS

The programs delivered in French-language schools are created to meet the diverse needs of the students attending the school and to provide the interventions at the school that the students require. The

aménagement linguistique policy also recommends that students have the structured support they require as they discover oral and written communication, reading, and mathematics, and as they use interactive technologies. It is essential that, by the end of their secondary school education, students master the basic skills and knowledge needed to function in society.

Teachers should make full use of education research on appropriate teaching strategies to use in a minority context. Parents should also be better informed about what goes on at school and about the demands of learning in this context. Thus two very important tools for increasing awareness of aménagement linguistique are professional development for teachers and information sessions for parents.

DEVELOPING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

Part of the mandate of French-language schools involves playing an active role in their communities. Excellence in education owes a great deal both to the leadership demonstrated by the French-language education authorities and to the francophone community, which has demanded excellence in education and is working with education authorities to achieve it across the province. The values, convictions, aspirations, and expectations of the entire francophone community of Ontario are reflected in the countless individual and collective actions and initiatives undertaken in the world of education. To develop vibrant francophone communities, this energy should be harnessed, and the school's educational and cultural activities should be based on a shared vision of French-language education in a minority setting and on solid partnerships among the school, the family, and the community as a whole.



Begin with Partnerships

Based on local and regional needs, school boards should use partnership models that are sustainable and that have succeeded in Ontario and elsewhere. These include the following:

- partnerships between the school and the family (e.g., to provide a greater awareness of students' needs in the minority setting, to provide language support programs for parents)
- partnerships between elementary and secondary schools (e.g., through programs that promote secondary schools to younger children)
- partnerships among school boards, schools, and entrepreneurs (e.g., the establishment of new francophone day cares)
- partnerships among school boards, schools, and businesses (e.g., the establishment of school-community projects adapted to the needs of both local businesses and the curriculum)
- partnerships among school boards, schools, and community and cultural organizations (e.g., having secondary school students participate in the Jeux franco-ontariens [Franco-Ontarian Games], or in forums and internships through the Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne [Franco-Ontarian Youth Federation])
- partnerships among school boards, secondary schools, colleges, and universities (e.g., through programs that prepare young people for careers in high-demand trades in the community)
- partnerships that involve volunteering (e.g., contributions to extracurricular activities, mentoring programs, using the expertise provided by members of the community in classroom activities)

Ideally, each of the province's French-language schools will benefit from the leadership, expertise, and resources of its school board in planning and implementing with the broader community the school's interventions in aménagement linguistique. These interventions by the school include:

- establishing the conditions necessary for the creation of a francophone environment and ensuring that these are respected;
- delivering Junior and Senior Kindergarten programs that adequately prepare young children for entry into Grade 1;
- in addition to the regular program, delivering adequate *support programs* to students who have some or a very limited knowledge of French or who are recent arrivals to Ontario from another country and need to familiarize themselves with their new school and socio-cultural environment before they can begin to pursue their education with confidence;

The support programs referred to above are Actualisation linguistique en français and Perfectionnement du français.

- recruiting qualified teachers who can teach and support students in an appropriate linguistic, cultural, and educational environment;
- endeavouring to improve student performance and achievement by taking the minority context into account;
- consolidating and expanding its educational and cultural network by forging solid partnerships among the school, the family, and the community.

WORKING TOGETHER TO DEVELOP OUR COMMUNITIES

The school is a resource to the community and, conversely, the community is a resource to the school; they contribute to each other's vitality and development. The school's and the community's needs and priorities must guide any efforts to establish new partnerships. Thus, the school and the community must collaborate on evaluating potential partnerships and on making decisions in this area. For this reason, schools must keep their communities informed of any partnership activities via newsletters, the school council, and community meetings. Community partners must also be made aware of the importance of sharing information and French-language resources that the school, the students, and the students' families do not necessarily have access to.





Let's Get to Work!

LET'S GET TO WORK!



The aménagement linguistique policy requires everyone's involvement.

STUDENTS

Academic achievement is very closely linked to your motivation to study, your ability to take charge of your learning, and your commitment to the French-language community. Over the course of your education, teachers will help you gain confidence in your abilities, learn independently, and build on your skills. You will also be helped to understand your linguistic and cultural heritage so that you may fully commit yourself to using and improving your French, feel good about yourself, and be proud of your identity. You will become fluently bilingual as well as developing the factual knowledge and know-how that you will need to be judged competent and qualified in a postsecondary institution, in the workplace, or in public life.

AT SCHOOL, YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

- think about and discuss the following themes and questions:
 - your right to a French-language education
 - the reasons why you are studying in French
 - the challenge of living in French in a predominantly anglophone environment
 - the conditions for learning and mastering French

- the personal and collective means at your disposal for expanding your francophone environment and interacting with other francophones
 - the advantages that a French-language education will give you in society
 - commit yourself fully to your education;
 - make full use of the resources available at school to enhance your strengths and talents and overcome your difficulties;
 - make your position known on issues that affect you directly, for example, extended school library hours, after-hours services, and school rules in general;
 - ask for support from your teachers and the principal to undertake projects that you find useful or that you think will interest your peers, the school, or the community;
 - get involved in the school's linguistic or cultural activities, for example, by participating in extracurricular activities or by making your artistic talents or academic abilities available to others.
-

AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY, YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

- start a dialogue with your parents about your education and your aspirations;
- commit yourself personally or collectively to French-language community activities or school-community projects that hold a special interest for you, your family, or your community;
- document, think about, and take a position on issues that affect you personally or that affect other francophone young people, families, or the community;



- seek out the expertise of qualified individuals to answer your questions and make informed decisions, especially regarding your career choices;
- learn about current political, economic, scientific, or other events by, for example, reading the major French-language newspapers on their websites;
- meet other francophones by, for example, doing an internship or participating in forums or cultural events.

PARENTS

The school acknowledges, respects, and values the central role that you play in the education of young people. No one is in a better position than you to tell the school about your concerns with respect to the education of your child and to help the school meet his or her needs. The school wants you to contribute to discussions about aménagement linguistique, because this large-scale undertaking affects you directly. It wants to hear your experiences, consult with you, and keep you informed about the possibilities of finding realistic solutions to the issues raised in this document. In sum, it wants any decisions made at the school concerning aménagement linguistique to be the result of consultation, consensus, and commitment.

AT SCHOOL, YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

- participate in the regular school council meetings, at which you can make your point of view on the school's programs and operation known to the principal and the school board;
- begin a constructive dialogue with other parents, francophone or otherwise, on educating young people in a minority setting;
- speak to the principal or the teaching staff about any issues concerning your child's education and experience at school;

The school council advises the school principal or the school board on such matters as the following:

- school priorities for the curriculum
- programs and strategies to improve student results on province-wide tests
- communication with parents and the community
- the use of schools by the community
- the delivery of community programs and services to the school through partnerships between the school and the community
- school board policy regarding the school

- if you can and would enjoy it, work as a volunteer at your elementary school, where there are always various things for volunteers to do – for example, they can escort students on outings or share their expertise or talent during theme weeks or at cultural or social events at the school;

- spend more time at your local French-language secondary school, where young people could, for example, benefit from your professional expertise in educational or cultural projects undertaken by the school.
-

AT HOME, YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

- use French as much as possible with your child in daily communication if you speak French and, if you don't, provide as much opportunity as possible for French to be part of your child's and your family's life by, for example, listening to French-language television or radio programs or taking courses in French;
- get your child interested in French-language television programs, books, journals, or magazines as early as possible;
- start a dialogue with your child or teenager about his or her learning, progress, concerns, and life at school;
- regularly set aside time to read with your young child in French even if French is not your first language;
- use French with your teenager to discuss current events and issues that affect him or her and about which he or she has to make informed decisions, such as working part time or paying for postsecondary education;
- familiarize yourself with the expectations for learning set out in the curriculum guidelines, so that you can offer your support and discuss them with your child and with his or her teachers.



PARTNERS IN THE FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY

Whether you are a parent, a teacher, an artist, a business person or entrepreneur, a representative of a social or community agency, or a member of a cultural group, you are an important partner in the education of the province's young francophones. Within the school, you can enhance students' linguistic, educational, and cultural experiences and contribute to the development and growth of your community.

YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

- give young people a voice in the francophone media by, for example, giving them a column in the local paper, inviting them to discuss a subject that concerns them on local radio, or using a television program to promote the cultural products created at the school;
- invite young people to become involved in community action by, for example, inviting them to take part in an activity day for the development of a sports complex or to promote services in French and francophone cultural events in the municipality;
- make room in your schedule for events featuring young francophone artists;
- come to the school to speak to young francophones about your community, whether it is the community you are in or the one you have left behind;





- talk to young people in schools and cultural and community centres about issues that affect them and tell them about opportunities in various fields or sectors of activity (e.g., part-time work, employee rights and employer responsibilities, exchange programs, specialized internships, scholarships, entrepreneurship);
- work with the school in developing and supporting school-community projects;
- give young people opportunities to meet with you and to play a role in the community by, for example, inviting them to visit your workshop, business, or office, or spend a day with you at work;
- talk to your local and regional anglophone partners to gain recognition for the francophone community in Ontario and to raise its profile in the province.





LET'S GET TO WORK!

Conclusion

Aménagement linguistique is an enormous undertaking in which many Ontarians are already involved. It is important to recognize the work that is already under way and to learn from the individuals and institutions that are engaged in language development in the field – the French-language schools, the children and their families, and the community partners – because everything that is being done today in connection with aménagement linguistique affects students’ daily lives and promises to have a positive impact on their lives in the future.

Aménagement linguistique offers Ontario’s francophone community an opportunity to contemplate the future through the prism of French-language education. It also has the resources required for success: French-language schools; a rigorous curriculum, developed with French-language instruction in mind; and full-time Kindergarten programs in French.

Aménagement linguistique is also the beginning of a dialogue among school boards, schools, individual francophones, and groups of francophones on the development and implementation of action plans to meet the linguistic, educational, and cultural needs of young people and the expectations of their families. The province's aménagement linguistique policy is flexible enough to allow school boards to take into account changing circumstances and the incredible linguistic and cultural diversity of this province.

Language is the element that unites all members of Ontario's diverse French-speaking community. The future of these communities is being ensured today by those parents who have entrusted the education of their children to a French-language school and by the commitment of young people who have decided to define their identity through their francophone heritage.

