

EDUCATIONAL REFORM AND THE ENGLISH SCHOOLS OF QUÉBEC

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ABSTRACT. Since the last educational reform in Québec at the beginning of the 1980s the face of English Québec has changed, as has its attitude towards government policies in education. In 1999, the newly formed English-language school boards are joining forces to share resources and expertise and to take charge of implementation in their schools.

RÉSUMÉ. Depuis la dernière réforme de l'éducation au Québec au début des années 1980, le visage du Québec anglophone a radicalement changé, tout comme son attitude à l'égard des politiques gouvernementales sur l'éducation. En 1999, les commissions scolaires anglophones de création récente ont décidé d'unir leurs forces pour échanger des ressources et des expertises et prendre en charge la mise en oeuvre des réformes dans leurs écoles.

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Introduction

As Québec educational reform moves from the planning stages to implementation in schools, the English community is making its voice heard. This paper traces the context in which the minority language community is coming together to take ownership of the reform in its schools.

Glimpses of the English-speaking community

It is never simple to account for all the elements of context – in time and in space – which shape the values, attitudes and behaviours of a community. To identify and describe the contextual features of the English school system is no exception. One can look at the observable characteristics – the size of schools, the territories of school boards, the organization of educational services and so on – but the less tangible

elements, which influence the broader profile, stretch back in time and reach out to other spaces. English schools in Québec belong to a community which has changed fundamentally over the last three decades, in many cases unwillingly.

Also, like minority groups everywhere, the English-speaking minority in Québec exists within various smaller and larger interwoven circles of context. The so-called English community is linked by its use of the English language and its political views more than by its ethnic or religious commonalities. This immediate context is embedded in the larger context of the French-speaking, predominantly Catholic and recently multicultural society of Québec, which itself, of course, occupies a minority status in Canada and in North America. The resulting tensions and complexities are myriad.

Since the early seventies the size of the English-speaking community in Québec has diminished dramatically – in 1971 some 256,000 students were studying in English-language schools; in 1997 that figure stood at just over 114,000 (Ministère de l'Éducation [MEQ], Direction des statistiques et des études quantitatives [DSEQ], 1999). As this decline gained momentum, throughout the 1980s many Protestant (mainly English-speaking) school boards opened up more and more French language schools. These schools proved to be attractive to many allophone students who, under the provisions of the *Charter of the French Language* [Bill 101], did not have access to English-language schools. To some extent the “francization” of the Protestant boards masked the decline in the English-speaking school population, since the boards maintained, or at least shored up, their overall student count.

However, beneath this apparent maintenance of size, and in the boards which did not open French schools, the decline in the English-speaking student population continued. The network of English schools became more fragile as small schools were closed, the transportation of students to more distant schools became costlier and parents, in some cases, chose to send their children to the more accessible French-language schools. English Catholic schools across the province were particularly vulnerable. In many cases only one or two English-speaking schools existed within large Francophone governed school boards. The scarcity of services to these schools was notable and the English Catholic community was rarely represented on the Council of Commissioners. In 1989 the new *Education Act* instituted the position of “minority language parent commissioners” in school boards in order to alleviate the

sense of “disenfranchisement” of English-speaking Catholics and French-speaking Protestants.

As the number of English-speaking students continued its decline up until the early 1990s, the divided nature of the system aggravated these disparities since the great majority of the English-speaking student population (70%) is concentrated in the Greater Montréal area and the rest (30%) is spread thinly throughout the province.

As the well documented exodus of Anglophones from Québec was underway and, to a considerable extent, as a result of it, the face of the Anglophone community was changing dramatically.¹ From an essentially unilingual group with a majority of its members claiming British origin, it has evolved into the bilingual, largely multicultural community which we know today. Even more significant perhaps are the differences between the generations in the English-speaking milieu. Young people form the largest group of bilingual Anglophones, having grown up in French immersion or French-language schools. For them, language issues, which have fuelled so much of the dissension in the community, are of far less significance. In addition, as marriages between Anglophones and Francophones become more commonplace, the contours of linguistic context and identity become blurred (Grey, 1998). All of these factors contribute to the disparate attitudes and opinions which colour the English-speaking community and influence the shifting efforts to find a space and to align loyalties within both linguistic communities.

As the community adapted to down-sizing and its changing make up, it also began to perceive itself as becoming marginalized. In the early 1980s the MEQ instituted the English services directorate to provide for the special needs of the community in the areas of translation, networking and teaching materials. Positions were also reserved for English-speaking coordinators in most regional offices of the MEQ. But these sectorial efforts were outweighed by the English community's response to the political landscape. Reactions to government policy – particularly in the fields of health and education – continued to be marked by more than the usual cynicism and many English speakers were alienated by the implementation of various language policies.

In the face of a growing sense of isolation in the English community, the then Minister of Education, Mr. Michel Pagé, set up, in September 1991, a Task Force on English Education. Chaired by Gretta Chambers, the Chancellor of McGill University. The Task Force made recommen-

dations to the Minister (Task Force, 1992), on various issues which were considered vital to the welfare of English schools, including access to English schools, the establishment of an Advisory Board on English Education and the nomination of an Assistant Deputy Minister for the English-speaking community. Whereas the government has not changed its position on the question of increased access to English schools, the first Assistant Deputy Minister for the English-speaking community was named in 1992 and the Advisory Board on English Education was set up in 1993. The Advisory Board reports to the Minister annually on issues which are of special concern to the English sector.² Since 1993 it has made recommendations on textbooks and teaching materials (1993), the reorganization of school boards along linguistic lines (1994), language learning (1995), information and communication technologies (1996), evaluation of learning (1997), and regionalization and vocational education (1998). In most cases the MEQ has responded positively to the reports.

LINGUISTIC BOARDS AND ENGLISH SCHOOLS

On July 1st 1998, a school board system based on language replaced the denominational (Catholic and Protestant) school board structures which had existed since 1875 (MEQ & Conseil supérieur de l'éducation [CSE], 1989). Sixty French-language boards were set up to offer services to the one million Francophone and immigrant students of the province and nine English boards were established to serve just over 100,000 students, eligible for English schooling under Bill 101 and who attend English schools (MEQ, DSEQ, 1999).³ The three remaining special status school boards, Cree, Kativik and du Littoral, were not affected by these structural changes.

Elections for the first English-language boards were held in June 1998. The question of who would have the right to vote in these boards was not easy to resolve. Since access to English schooling in Québec is generally restricted to students with at least one parent who has been schooled in English in Canada, the initial position on the vote was to restrict voting rights to parents of those children. After much debate the right to vote became a question of voter choice. Parents with children in school must register to vote in the language sector which their children attend, but anyone else may simply identify in which system they wish to vote. The turn-out at school board elections in Québec is traditionally poor, hovering at around 11%, but in June 1998, the English community turned out in record numbers, with as many as

54% of eligible voters in some English boards coming out to vote. It remains to be seen if this trend will continue, but the initial response of the community to the establishment of linguistic boards was impressive, to say the least. As institutions previously associated with the English community have become more and more bilingual, this newly created network of English school boards seemed to answer a need for ownership and identity.

The network of English school boards covers the entire province (see Appendix A). On the Island of Montréal two large school boards (27,000 students at Lester-B.-Pearson School Board and 25,000 at English Montreal School Board) service English-speaking students (Dufort, 1998). Off-island, the remaining seven school boards have much smaller student populations but cover vast territories, with the extreme, Eastern Shores School Board, serving 1,600 students and covering almost one third of the land surface of the province. The challenges for these boards are huge. In 1998-1999, linguistic boards, particularly but not exclusively the English-language boards, have been struggling to deal with issues of transportation.

Generally speaking, in the shift from denominational to linguistic systems, schools which previously housed English students were transferred to English boards and schools which housed French students were transferred to French boards. At the same time the number of school boards was reduced from 156 to 72, the territories of school boards were therefore increased. The nine English boards have the largest territories, covering the same territory as the 60 French boards. Under the denominational system Francophone and Anglophone students – particularly in the Catholic sector, would share transportation to their various schools, indeed many school buildings housed English and French-speaking students. In the new linguistic system, schools have been re-assigned and students, in some cases, have to travel longer distances. Also, given the size of the territories of the English boards, a greater proportion of students (up to 70%) must be bussed to school than would be the case in smaller territories. The need to service a dispersed school population and the capacity of small organizations to manage a network of schools and centres have put real strains on the resources of the boards. The Minister of Education has recently announced his intention to work with the boards to revise budgetary norms to better take into account the new infrastructures. Meanwhile some *ad hoc* adjustments have been made to deal with the immediate short-fall in transportation budgets and in financial norms for boards with under 9,000 students and a declining population.

In addition to the administrative changes, English language boards – all of which were affected by the move to linguistic boards – are faced with the challenge of aligning policies and practices inherited from the former school boards. The melding of models for second-language teaching, for the organisation of services and resources for special needs students and for the evaluation of student learning are all sensitive areas which will no doubt take time to resolve. As this article is written, linguistic school boards have been in existence for not quite one year. It will take several more years for many of the issues to be resolved and for new identities to emerge.

The establishment of English-language school boards has also entailed a new status for these boards under Bill 101. Since the boards serve an exclusively English-speaking population they are covered by article 29.1 of Bill 101, an article which the public previously associated with the application of language laws in municipalities in which more than 50% of the population is English-speaking – Rosemere being the case which seems to have had the most media coverage. Whereas this special status allows school boards and schools to use English only in most of its internal communications and in publicity for its services, it does not release them from the obligation to produce public documents (minutes of meetings, etc.) in French as well as in English.

In spite of the various challenges, the English community seems to have been re-invigorated by the introduction of linguistic boards and is showing every indication of a will to work together to maintain its network of schools and to take ownership of the reform in education. In the last year, the response from English schools to the Ministry's call for representatives to sit on program development committees was immediate, the reaction to a similar call for schools wishing to field-test programs of study was beyond expectations and the willingness of English school boards to take responsibility for implementation was expressed loudly and clearly. The decline in student population in Québec, traditionally associated with the English sector, may be more precipitous in the next 5-10 years in the French sector, since English enrolments have stabilized since the early 1990s and in some areas have even increased slightly (MEQ, DSEQ, 1999).

In this situation, the minority-language English school system may paradoxically be at an advantage. Since many English schools outside of Montréal are small, they have learned to cope by necessity. Teachers are polyvalent; classes integrate up to 100% of handicapped and learn-

ing-disabled students; multi-grade classrooms are not uncommon; and school principals often work in more than one school. Obviously, there is a limit to the capacity of the schools and of the community to ensure services if numbers begin to decline again, but small schools succeed in some areas where larger schools struggle. It may not be possible for them to offer as diversified a curriculum, but it may be possible for them to have a greater impact on student learning and to develop a healthier sense of belonging in students.

One of the major challenges of the reform of education in Québec is to move away from the "one-size-fits-all" school of the last twenty years. English schools show diversity in the teaching of the second language, particularly at the elementary level, but seem to have a less diversified approach at the secondary level. In many cases this is due to the size of secondary schools, but even in larger schools there seems to be less choice of pathways for students. The numerous specialized sports and arts schools which exist in the French sector are all but absent in the English sector. Vocational options are limited, the implementation of organizational models which allow for diversification in vocational education (Alternate Paths) seems to create difficulties and the alternative pedagogical model known as the Technology Oriented Path (*Voie technologique*) is implemented in only three English schools.

Nevertheless, the initial response to the new linguistic structures seems positive. The previously divided community – English Catholic and English Protestant – will need time to forge an identity, but a certain critical mass has been formed, a willingness to work together has been reinforced, and previously "disenfranchised" English Catholic parents now elect their commissioners. The minority-language system in Québec, although small, with over 114,000 students in public and private schools in the youth sector, and 23,000 in adult services is, in fact, larger than the majority-language systems of Newfoundland (110,901), Prince Edward Island (24,704), the Yukon (6,132) and the Northwest Territories (17,625) and is not much smaller than those of New Brunswick (136,770) and even Nova Scotia (167,960) (Statistics Canada, 1997).

School governance

The mosaic of reform in the youth and adult education sectors in Québec is defined by two pieces of legislation (*Act to Amend the Education Act, the Act Respecting School Elections and Other Legislative Provisions [Linguistic School Boards Act]* (1997); *Act to Amend the Education Act and Various Legislative Provisions [Education Amendment Act]* (1997))

as well as an educational policy statement, *A New Direction for Success* (MEQ, 1997a). The *Linguistic School Boards Act* set in place the linguistic structures previously described, and the *Education Amendment Act* set out a series of dispositions dealing with school governance. In the re-definition of roles and responsibilities of the Ministry, the school boards and the schools, the move towards school-based decision-making is predominant. As in any change, of course, the starting point is all important in setting new policy directions.

At the beginning of the 1980s the MEQ set up a highly centralized education program, as described in this issue by Smith, Foster and Donahue (1999), in an attempt to improve and equalize standards of learning. School board powers covered the range from educational to administrative matters. The decision-making powers – at least as assigned by laws and regulations – were centralized in the hands of the MEQ and the school boards. Under the *Education Amendment Act* this balance is re-distributed and schools assume many more decisional responsibilities, particularly those relating to the organisation of teaching and learning. These responsibilities are shared by teachers and parents primarily, through the governing board of each school, on which parents and school staff have parity and whose chairperson is always a parent. The school principal sits on the governing board and acts as liaison between staff, governing board and school board. He or she is called on to play a variety of roles including those of manager and pedagogical leader. In addition, a “parent participation organisation” allows all parents to give advice to their representatives on the governing board.

As with the change from confessional to linguistic boards, this re-distribution of powers has the potential to bring about massive change in the system. The mission of every school is now mandated by law (*Education Act*, s. 36) which also requires each school to develop its own educational project, and to ensure equality of opportunity for all students. The school has the authority to decide on the implementation of the *Basic School Regulations*,⁴ to develop a student supervision policy, to establish disciplinary measures, to decide on teaching time for each program of study, to adapt and enrich learning objectives and to provide for the professional development of staff – in other words to assume responsibility and accountability for quality of learning and the success of students. School boards meanwhile maintain a management function, mostly in administrative and policy matters. The *Education Amend-*

ment Act permits the gradual transfer of powers from the school boards to governing boards over a two-year span and at this stage of implementation the players are struggling either to assume their new responsibilities and to understand the scope of them or, in some cases, to postpone or limit the shifts in decision-making responsibilities.

In any process of change it seems that it is much more stressful to give up old responsibilities than to assume new ones. As the law re-defines roles and divests some levels of the system of various powers it is probably normal that anxiety will be created as the former decision-makers relinquish their duties. In many cases the anxiety seems to be fuelled by a genuine concern for standards of quality and by a fear for the capacity of schools to assume their new functions. In educational areas there will have to be negotiation between school boards and governing boards if the new model of governance is to be successful. Choices which governing boards make concerning teaching time, for instance, obviously impact on hiring and assignment of teachers, for which the school board is responsible, and educational projects decided on by governing boards will have to take into account the financial resources which the school board will make available.

But the message of the *Education Amendment Act* is clear. Student success is the focus of the reform. Parents, teachers, principals, school board personnel, elected commissioners and the community are expected to combine their efforts to this end.

This concept of school governance, as defined by the *Education Amendment Act*, is not completely strange to the English community. Historically the English schools of Québec were rooted in local communities and very often established by them, and even in the larger cities they tended to be identified with community groupings (Mair, 1980). Whereas this historical memory may have receded over time, one suspects that it has never completely disappeared and that at least some local autonomy or influence has always been maintained in English schools. Certainly parents seem to have been the catalysts in changing the course of many schools in the community. The characteristic predominance of immersion as an approach to second-language teaching in the English schools of Québec was initiated by parents some thirty years ago and has assumed a legitimacy and renown that was probably never dreamed of. Similarly the enduring "home and school association" is a phenomenon hardly known to our French-speaking colleagues.

Nevertheless the real impact of the *Education Amendment Act* on school culture remains to be seen. The responsibility of parents, while gladly accepted, and indeed demanded, by their associations, may prove to be onerous. The participation of teachers on governing boards is already an issue in union negotiations and school principals are viewing their new roles with apprehension. The challenge is to build the participatory management of schools which will root schools in their community and will provide a place of learning responsive to the social and educational needs of each student. The fear is that some schools will become politicized and fractious fora. As in any policy option, laws and regulations set up conditions and mechanisms. The actors will determine the outcomes.

CURRICULUM REFORM

Québec Schools on Course (MEQ, 1997c), the educational policy statement which sets out the underpinnings of the curriculum reform, has been dealt with earlier in this issue by Henchey (1999). The aims of the curriculum reform – to provide instruction with renewed conviction, to socialize in order to learn how to live together better and to provide qualifications through a variety of options – can hardly be contested and it seems that many of the proposed changes of emphasis in the curriculum echo the priorities which English schools have already acknowledged. The emphasis on the teaching of languages and cross-curricular skills, the use of technologies and an integrated approach to the teaching of science, and an increase in the number of credits allotted for the teaching of French as a second language are all changes which are congruent with projects and thinking in the English sector.

The policy document also includes statements such as: “There is increasing recognition that young children have the least difficulty learning other languages and that learning other languages promotes proficiency in one’s own language because of the comparisons that are inevitably made with the mother tongue” (MEQ, 1997c, p. 16). This is a statement which resonates clearly in English schools. In addition, for the first time the Ministry will provide a program specifically designed for French immersion.

Arts programs have not been sacrificed and more options will be available to students in the second cycle of secondary school. Programs of study are being developed by practising teachers and a Provincial Curriculum Board has been established to advise the Minister on the general design of the curriculum. Representatives of the English com-

munity sit on all of these committees. As part of the development phase of the new curriculum a small group of schools will field test the programs of study and the cyclical organization of learning objectives in 1999-2000, prior to general implementation. Three English schools will be part of this cohort, and many more volunteered for the role. At this stage then the English community is involved and engaged.

The challenges ahead in the implementation phase lie, on the one hand, in the capacity of small schools to provide the diversification of options and pathways which the reform calls for. Since more than 50% of English schools off the Island of Montreal house fewer than 200 students the difficulties are real. On the other hand, the manageability of the various components of the curriculum will be a challenge for teachers. Disciplinary programs, a cross-curricular program and a series of themes linking learning to various social issues and real-life situations will have to be articulated into a whole and adapted or enriched for each group of students.

THE CONTEXT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REFORM IN ENGLISH SCHOOLS

In recent years many efforts have been made by the English-speaking education community to build collaborative self-support systems. As the number of students and schools declined it became clear that the various institutional groups, teachers, administrators, school boards, private schools, universities and the English sector of the MEQ needed to pool their various resources and expertise to build and maintain capacity and quality in schools.

The Québec English Schools Network (QESN) provides an active and interactive educational website, attracting not only teachers and their classes from small schools in Québec, but teachers from schools of any and every size, both in Québec and beyond. The Partnership for School Improvement, made up of various associations from the English-speaking educational community (Association of Administrators of English Schools of Québec (AAESQ), Association of Directors General (ADG), Québec Association of Independent Schools (QAIS), Québec School Boards Association (QSBA), Québec Provincial Association of Teachers (QPAT), McGill University, MEQ) has the mandate of supporting school-based improvement initiatives.

Self-help groups have emerged to collaborate in various areas of the curriculum where student results in English schools indicated a need for support to teachers and schools. The History Task Force (HTF) encour-

ages, advises, and aids in the teaching and learning of history, and the Science and Mathematics Action Plan Committees (MAPCO and SAPCO) explore best practices and bring their expertise together in order to propose solutions and strategies.

The experience of working together in these networks has led the English sector of the MEQ to propose a similar collaborative model for the implementation of the changes to the curriculum which are central to the reform (MEQ, 1997a, 1997b, Task Force on Curriculum Reform, 1997).

Given the position of the English-speaking minority system within the larger French-speaking educational community, the challenge of implementation in the English sector presents several special considerations. Since the demographics and the culture of English schools differ from the majority French sector, implementation models have to fit this different context, but at the same time, the English education community is anxious not to lose contact with the provincial infrastructure. Secondly, the community, dissatisfied with the previous generation of curriculum implementation, is determined not to repeat the experience. Lastly, of course, it only makes sense to learn from the various case-studies and research into implementation practices elsewhere (Healey & DeStephano, 1997).

The MEQ has also emphasized the importance of the implementation phase of the reform by issuing a position paper on the professional development needs of school personnel (MEQ, 1999) and by allocating 10 million dollars per year, over the next five years, to support in-service efforts in schools. Finally, in 1998, the English sector of the MEQ was given the responsibility of supporting the implementation of the new curriculum in English schools in Québec. This then is the context in which the community is setting up a long-term collaborative model of implementation.

The English sector model

The approach to implementation in the English sector aims at remaining integrated in the larger system while having authority over the required adaptation and delivery of service to English-language schools. The model is designed to accompany school teams in the implementation process at three levels: first, in face-to-face working sessions using internal or external resource persons; second, at a distance through the use of a dedicated web site; and third, through the funding of locally developed innovation and professional development activities.

The need to set up appropriate community implementation models is being answered by two groups. To address the needs of the schools and school boards an Implementation Design Committee (IDC) has been set up. The Director of Educational Services of each of the nine English school boards, teacher representatives from the provincial teachers' union (QPAT), in-school administrators (AAESQ) and representatives of the MEQ form the IDC. It is this group which will develop models, pool resources and provide services to school boards and, as deemed necessary by the boards, to the school level.

The IDC, chaired by a Director of Educational Services from one of the school boards, seems to hold promise for successful implementation in the English sector. It is participative by design, has assumed the character of a learning organization, provides for the sharing of unevenly distributed human resources and is in the best possible position to tailor its delivery of services to the community which it represents.

The second level of the organizational model has been baptized the "Curriculum Coalition." The Coalition is composed of representatives of all the organisations and groups which have a stake in the educational mosaic. It includes representatives of the groups already mentioned in the IDC as well as representatives from associations of parents (FCPPQ, H&S) from the association of school boards (QSBA) and from the universities (McGill, Bishops, Concordia).

The mandate of the Coalition is essentially derived from the need to keep the larger community involved as the curriculum reform becomes implemented. The Coalition will serve as a forum for the exchange of information; the representatives of the various groups will be encouraged to share information with their members, set up support networks and, where possible, adapt their activities to support schools in the process of change.

Technologies will play an important role in the delivery of services to schools and to teachers. Even with the financial resources which have been made available to school boards by the MEQ, the costs of bringing the dispersed English community together are daunting. In collaboration with Concordia University, the MEQ is in the process of developing a distance delivery model to answer the professional development needs of teachers and administrators. As of June 1999, the model is being field-tested and should become operational within the next school year.

Finally, the English community can rely on school-based project initiatives to complement the activities described above. For the last four

years funding programs, supported by the Canada-Québec Agreement for Minority Language Education and Second Language Instruction, have been made available to English schools to finance specific local initiatives in innovative organizational and pedagogical practices and in professional development projects. School teams or small groups of teachers submit projects annually and grants are awarded based on the recommendations of a peer review group. Whereas the amounts awarded are generally quite small, the results obtained are often gratifying. Ownership of the project by the teachers involved goes a long way towards assuring motivation and success.

CONCLUSION

As we move towards implementation of the reform, other issues are emerging which could have an impact on progress. The recent report on religion in schools (Task Force on the Place of Religion in Schools in Québec, 1999) with its recommendations to establish a secular system of public schools and to provide for the study of religions from a cultural perspective, will be debated in a Parliamentary Commission in the autumn and depending on the decisions reached, has the potential to introduce further changes in the educational menu.

Budgets in the educational sector have been cut over the last few years and services have been accordingly reduced, so that schools will have to assume more responsibility for implementation. Whereas major investments have been made since 1996 to supply schools with computers and Internet links, the integration of technologies into teaching and learning seems to be progressing only slowly.

The professional development of teachers will be an on-going necessity and initial training will have to be adjusted to take into account the new demands of the curriculum. In fact, according to Ministry projections between 1997 and 2009, 80% of the permanent teacher force will be replaced (MEQ, DESQ, 1999), so the influx of young teachers and the loss of experienced practitioners will no doubt change the culture of many schools.

The first year of the implementation of the curriculum reform in schools is still a year away and various pitfalls surely await. Among others, the up-coming renewal of the teachers' collective agreements will be a major hurdle. Nevertheless, the strong public support for reform, starting with the Estates General in 1995 (Commission of the Estates General, 1996), the important efforts to involve all regions and

both language communities in the development of the programs of study, and the broader vision of curriculum indicated in the educational policy statement of the Ministry have created a positive environment for change in most sectors of the educational community, including the English sector.

NOTES

¹ Articles in *The Montreal Gazette* during the week of May 30th to June 6th 1999 amply document this change.

² Copies of these reports are at: www.meq.gouv.qc.ca/cela/anglais.htm; see also CSE: www.cse.gouv.qc.ca; MEQ: www.meq.gouv.qc.ca; Québec English Schools Network: www.qesn.meq.gouv.qc.ca; English Language Vocational Education: www.inforouteftp.org.

³ Over 12, 000 students who are eligible for English schooling choose an education in the French sector.

⁴ *Basic School Regulation for Preschool and Elementary School Education; Basic School Regulation for Secondary School Education.*

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Educational Reform and the English Schools of Québec

**APPENDIX A
ENGLISH SECTOR ENROLMENTS 1998-1999**

REGION	BOARD	ENGLISH SCHOOLS	STUDENTS-ENGLISH INSTRUCTION			
			PRESCH.	ELEM.	SEC.	TOTAL
Québec	Central Québec	17	369	2 248	1 371	3 988
Esterie	Eastern Townships	25	603	3268	2 547	6 418
North/Mtl	Kativik	14	*			781
Montreal	English-Montreal	81	2 738	13 488	9 208	25 434
Montreal	Lester-B.-Pearson	61	2 407	14 113	10 424	27 004
Outaouais	Western Québec	27	746	4 199	3 340	8 285
Côte Nord	Littoral	8				622
Nord	Cree	9	*			1 131
Gaspésie	Eastern Shores	18	204	759	677	1640
Laval	Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier	33	1 018	5 924	4476	11 418
Montérégie	Riverside	31	896	5 504	3 930	10 330
Montérégie	New Frontiers	14	417	2 630	1 792	4 839
Public Schools						101 890
Private Schools						12 822
Special Schools (Hors réseau)						234
TOTAL						114 946

* More than one language in the school

Source: MEQ DSEQ PM9J030H Tableau 21 99-06-18

THE CHALLENGE OF TEACHING – THE REFORM OF TEACHER EDUCATION

The MEQ began its reflection on the reform of teacher education with a paper that recognized an obvious – but often forgotten – truth: *

Because teachers play a crucial role in shaping the success of the children and adolescents they teach, it is essential that we direct our attention and our efforts to the renewal and recognition of the teaching profession.

The vital importance of a teacher's knowledge of the broader context in which he or she is teaching is addressed and emphasized in each policy paper in the following terms:**

The role of the school is not only to foster intellectual growth. As a social institution, it has the responsibility to educate all children and youth so that they grow into independent individuals and responsible citizens. The school is also expected to provide students with equal opportunities and the best possible conditions for learning. It is therefore important for future teachers to reflect on the role of the school in society and on issues relevant to knowledge and educational paths and trends

* Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec, *The challenge of teaching today and tomorrow* (Québec: Author, 1992), p. 1.

** Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec, *Teacher training: The arts, physical education and second language education. Orientations and expected competencies* (Québec: Author, 1997), p. 40.