

A School for the Future

*Policy Statement on
Educational Integration
and Intercultural Education*

A NEW
DIRECTION
FOR
SUCCESS



For some time now, a change has been under way: more and more people are seeing the issue of citizenship in Québec in a new and modern light. The new outlook is that of ZERO EXCLUSION, and its ideal is for each and every citizen to be able to participate fully in the development of Québec society.

A School for the Future, the policy statement we are presenting today, salutes the efforts that Québec schools are already making to ensure the success of all students, in both the youth and adult sectors. At the same time, the proposal calls on us to adopt a broader perspective on integration and intercultural education, affirming our desire to live together, sharing common values and developing our sense of belonging in Québec society. In this sense, the proposal urges everyone—parents, families, the educational milieu and local communities—to join with us in striving to fully realize the promise of Québec's diversity.

This policy statement represents a new step towards a more inclusive society. We are pleased to present a plan that involves education in a collective effort of society as a whole.



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Minister of Relations with Citizens
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Pauline Marois
Minister of Education

FOREWORD

This policy statement follows up on the intentions expressed by Education Minister Pauline Marois in *A New Direction for Success: Ministerial Plan of Action for the Reform of the Education System* in the fall of 1996. It indicates the major approaches that the educational community* should adopt in its efforts to integrate immigrant students and prepare the whole student population to participate in social interaction in a democratic, Francophone, pluralistic Québec.

The policy statement thus reflects the outlook of the report to UNESCO by the International Commission on Education in the Twenty-first Century, *Learning: The Treasure Within* (1996), which underscores the importance of teaching students how to live well together. This new learning focus involves not only respecting each other's differences, but also sharing the same social values, which are part of our history and have become the basis of our institutions. Intercultural education and citizenship education are thus two inseparable dimensions of this policy.

The need for a policy on educational integration and intercultural education was recognized by the Commission for the Estates General on Education (1995-96), whose final report, observing the numerous but scattered efforts made within the educational milieu, called for a set of guidelines that would define the responsibilities of the education system regarding integration and intercultural education.

In this spirit, Education Minister Pauline Marois mandated an interministerial work group to draft a consultation document. In addition to representatives from the Ministère de l'Éducation, this group included members delegated by the Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration, the Ministère de la Métropole and the city of Montréal. The work group also received input from an advisory committee of education specialists who work either in teacher training or with young people and adult immigrants or persons of immigrant parentage, and who are all involved in the issue of pluralism in education. We wish to thank all those who contributed to the development of the policy statement.

In addition, we extend our thanks to all those who participated in the consultations in Montréal, Québec, Longueuil, Sherbrooke, Hull and Sainte-Thérèse: school board administrators, teachers, administrators of educational institutions, non-teaching professionals, parents, representatives of teachers' unions, leaders of national organizations related to education, teacher training professors, representatives of intercultural

* "An educational community is a school that mobilizes all its stakeholders, both within the school proper and in the surrounding community, and relies on sharing and good relations to carry out its educational mission." (Conseil supérieur de l'éducation. *L'école, une communauté éducative. Voies de renouvellement pour le secondaire*. Ste-Foy: Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, 1998.) Free translation.

education and multiethnic organizations, and so on. Their suggestions and comments have helped improve the policy statement on *Educational Integration and Intercultural Education*.

The policy on the educational integration of newly arrived students and on intercultural education is addressed to preschool, elementary- and secondary-school personnel in all regions of Québec, in the public and private, Francophone and Anglophone, youth and adult sectors, and in the regular and continuing education sectors at the college level. The universities are also concerned, insofar as they are responsible for teacher training.

The document has four chapters. The first chapter describes the diversity of the student population and the general context in which the policy will be applied. The second chapter deals with the principles on which Québec schools should base their accommodation of ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity.

The third chapter presents an overview of the tasks facing the school system as regards educational integration and intercultural education. Although efforts to achieve these ends have made considerable headway in certain areas, problems remain. The fourth and final chapter presents guidelines for educational institutions on issues such as the responsibility of school staff for integrating students who are new to Québec, the learning, mastery and use of French, fostering a knowledge of Québec's heritage and acceptance of its shared values, taking ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity into account in the curriculum, the training of school staff, and so on. The conclusion underlines the need for this policy to be actively supported by all members of the education community.

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INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity characterizes the education systems of many industrialized societies today. In Québec, as elsewhere in Canada and the world, educational institutions must now find ways to accommodate this diversity in their educational practices and objectives. To help them, the Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec has developed a policy statement setting out its principles and offering guidelines regarding the integration of immigrant students into Québec educational institutions¹ and society and the intercultural education of the whole student population.

Integration—the first dimension of the policy—may be defined as a long-term multidimensional adaptation process, which is distinct from assimilation, the overall adoption of the host society's culture and fusion with the majority group. The process of integration, which involves accepting elements of the immigrants' cultural identity of origin and in which the achievement of proficiency in the language of the host society plays an essential role, is only complete when the immigrants or their descendants participate fully in all aspects of the community life of the host society and feel a sense of belonging in that society.

This means that when immigrants first enter the Québec school system, they are only at the beginning of their integration process. For example, young non-Francophone students have to acquire a certain proficiency in French, which is the language of instruction and of public life, in order to master the subjects taught in school (linguistic and academic integration) and must also assimilate the social codes in order to establish meaningful relations with their classmates and participate in the life of the community (social integration). In addition, it takes time before students from other countries develop a feeling of belonging in Québec society. This happens gradually, and depends in large part on the acceptance of immigrants as full members of the host society.

It is important to recognize that integration is a two-way street. Certainly it requires that the immigrants make efforts to adapt and to adopt the shared values² of the host society, but it also demands openness to diversity and the application of appropriate policies by the social and educational milieu that receives them. The specificity of the

1. In this policy statement, unless otherwise indicated, the term “educational institutions” includes colleges, vocational education centres and adult education centres. The terms “school system,” “school staff or personnel” and “students or student population” are also used in the general sense. “Student” refers to anyone enrolled in courses at the elementary or secondary level (youth or adult sector) or at the college level (regular or continuing education sector). For the sake of concision, children enrolled in preschool education are also referred to as “students.”

2. Shared values are those that underlie our democratic system and, in particular, our charters of rights and institutions: values relating to social justice, such as non-discrimination and fairness; legislation, such as respect for others, equality (especially sexual) and responsibility; and democratic participation, such as negotiation, peaceful conflict resolution, solidarity and information (Task Force on Curriculum Reform. *Reaffirming the Mission of Our Schools*, Québec: Ministère de l'Éducation, 1997, p. 33-34).

school environment and that of the needs of newly arrived students must be mutually recognized. This reciprocal relationship based on respect for obligations on both sides is essential for successful integration.

Intercultural education is the second dimension examined by this policy statement, and it influences the concept of integration just considered. It refers to any educational measure designed to foster awareness of the diversity — notably, ethnocultural diversity — that characterizes the social fabric and to develop skill in communicating with people from various backgrounds, as well as attitudes of openness, tolerance and solidarity. Using this very broad concept of intercultural education, teachers can also consider the issue of the representation of different ethnic and cultural groups in various spheres of society, including that of education.

The object of intercultural education is not to convey knowledge about cultures — there are already disciplines that do that—but rather to foster a better understanding of culture in pluralistic societies. This sort of education requires that people take stock of their cultural backgrounds and ties and reflect on their socialization in order to overcome their prejudices concerning “otherness,” in whatever form it presents itself, and so be able to communicate better with people who are different from themselves.

The aim of this policy statement is thus in part to provide guidelines for the integration of students from other countries, and in part to favour openness to diversity in the school system and to gain recognition for the idea that diversity is a source of collective enrichment. The statement also suggests ways to foster acceptance of the basic values of Québec society and whole-hearted participation in the development of a Québec in which all can share. In this sense, the objectives of intercultural education overlap with those objectives in the citizenship education program that bear on diversity and learning to live together, which means that intercultural education is part of citizenship education. Reflection on how best to integrate immigrants into Québec society is ultimately part of the urgent effort today to reaffirm civic norms — rules arrived at democratically, which govern collective life — and shared values.

C H A P T E R 1

THE DIVERSITY OF THE STUDENT POPULATION

The composition of the student population, which once consisted primarily of French Canadians, English Canadians and Aboriginals, has changed considerably since the end of the nineteenth century as successive waves of immigration have brought students from many ethnic backgrounds and from every continent. Until the late 1960s, the great majority of immigrant students came from Europe and North America, while today, most come from Asia, the West Indies, Africa and South America.

This diversity is also reflected in linguistic terms. More than 150 mother tongues, many of them belonging to linguistic families bearing little similarity to French, are represented in the school system. In addition, all the major religions are represented.

This ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity extends throughout the whole school system, producing a wide variety of situations. Some educational institutions have a large proportion of immigrant students or students whose parents are immigrants, with many different mother tongues and religious backgrounds, while other schools are relatively homogenous.

Most allophone students in the youth sector who arrived in Québec before the coming into force of the *Charter of the French Language* (1977) chose English-language public schools. Since then the opposite situation has gradually come to prevail; more than 80 percent of allophones attended French-language schools in 1996-97. Henceforth, this will be the sector in which most, although not all, young recent immigrants receive their schooling. At the college level, 47 percent of allophones were

enrolled in the French-language sector in 1996-97, compared with about 15 percent in 1980.

The situation in Montréal

The Montréal region receives the great majority of allophone immigrant students. In 1996-97, 38.3 percent of youth sector students in this region reported a mother tongue other than French, English or an Aboriginal language, compared with 8.2 percent of students in the whole of Québec. At the college level, for the same year, allophone students represented 16.2 percent of enrolments in regular classes in the Montréal region and 8.1 percent in Québec overall. Private and public colleges in the Montréal region account for 94.4 percent of allophone enrolments at the college level.

In 1996-97, allophones accounted for about a third of the students in the French-language youth sector and a quarter of the student population in the English-language youth sector. It should be noted that allophones in the English-language sector were for the most part born in Québec and are generally second- or third-generation Quebecers who claimed a language other than English or French as their mother tongue.

However, these proportions do not accurately reflect the diversity of the student population on the island of Montréal, for some students who stated that their mother tongue was either French or English were born outside of Canada or have at least one parent born outside Canada.

Ethnocultural and linguistic diversity is not evenly distributed among the school boards on the island of Montréal. The proportion of

allophones varies between slightly under 10 percent and over 45 percent, depending on the school board.

As in the youth sector, the great majority of immigrant students in the adult sector attend educational institutions on the island of Montréal. In 1995-96, about 80 percent of these students were enrolled in island of Montréal adult education centres or vocational education centres. This proportion is comparable to the percentage of immigrants on the island.

Allophones outside the island of Montréal

Although allophones represent a high proportion of the student population on the island of Montréal, there are allophone students in almost every school board and in many colleges in Québec. Their distribution outside of Montréal is even more uneven: the cities of Québec, Sherbrooke and Hull and towns on the North Shore and South Shore of Montréal have the main concentrations. Outside these areas, there are very few allophone students.

Anglophone students

In 1996-97, students declaring English as their mother tongue represented 8.3 percent of enrolments in the youth sector (private and public). They were present in all regions of Québec, but more than half attended schools on the island of Montréal, and more than three quarters went to schools within the greater Montréal region. In Québec as a whole, in the youth sector, nearly one Anglophone in five was enrolled in the French-language sector in 1996-97. At the college level, 7.4 percent of

students in the regular sector claimed English as their mother tongue in 1996-97. More than 85 percent of these students attended CEGEPs in the greater Montréal region.

Common rules

The diversity of the student population affects preschool, elementary and secondary institutions in the public sector, which were divided, for more than a century, into two confessional systems, each of which was subdivided into two linguistic sectors.³ Diversity also exists in private schools, which come under the *Private Education Act* and account for about 10 percent of total enrolments at the preschool, elementary and secondary levels, and 8 percent at the college level. There are various types of schools in the private network: schools accredited for subsidy purposes and schools without such accreditation, French-language schools, English-language schools, heritage schools, schools that emphasize religious or cultural instruction. In addition to the network's linguistic diversity (instruction in French or English), schools defined in terms of their religious or cultural identity may also offer additional instruction in a third language.

Yet notwithstanding the diversity of teaching institutions and structures, both public and private, and the variable distribution of the students, there are common rules. All educational institutions, vocational and adult education centres and colleges must conform to the basic school regulations respecting educational services in Québec. Subjects must be taught according to programs approved by the Minister of Education; educational institutions must observe

3. Since July 1, 1998, Québec's schools have been organized on a linguistic basis. This means that school boards have lost their confessional character, but not schools. The dispositions of the

Education Act concerning the confessionality of schools will remain unchanged until the government has ruled on this question.

the rules respecting admission, enrolment, attendance and the passage from one level of education to another, propose a school calendar and respect the prescribed periods of instruction, follow the rules for evaluation of learning, certification of studies and graduation, and hire only teachers with teaching certificates for compulsory instruction at the preschool, elementary and secondary levels. At the college level, only teachers whose professional competency and pedagogical aptitudes have been recognized may be hired for compulsory instruction.

Although students in the education system come from many backgrounds, speak different languages and hold various religious beliefs, they must master the elements of a common framework of learning and acquire a common set of values (see note 2, p. 1). This policy statement will focus on these objectives.

CHAPTER 2

PRINCIPLES FOR ACTION

The principles for action proposed here for Québec schools⁴ dealing with ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity are derived from the basic principles of education itself and from government policy statements concerning the integration of immigrants into Québec society. These principles, which are shared and supported by all schools, are: equal opportunity for all; proficiency in French, the shared language of public life; and education for active citizenship in a pluralistic and democratic society.

Equal opportunity

The role that schools play, and must continue to play, in promoting equal opportunity for all is closely related to their vocation itself, which concerns instruction, socialization and certification.

Instruction is defined as guided learning that permits students to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need in order to understand and transform the world and to continue to learn throughout their lives. Schools socialize by transmitting the basic values of our democratic society and respect for its institutions, while at the same time encouraging students to explore and choose their values. Schools help students qualify for various occupations by taking into account the needs of the job market as well as the students' interests and aptitudes, and providing the training and upgrading needed to exercise a given occupation.

The schools have an obligation to fulfill their mission with all students, whatever their characteristics (ethnic origin, mother tongue, social condition, sex, religion, etc.). This obligation follows from the principle of equal opportunity for all, which has been recognized in Québec since the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education (the Parent Commission) and the democratization of the province's education system in the 1960s. The same principle was reaffirmed by virtually all participants in the Estates General on Education (1995-96).

The educational institutions' organization and educational activities should strive to educate students, as individuals and as (actual or future) citizens, under conditions of equal opportunity. This means maximizing students' chances to discover their particular aptitudes and tastes and the means to develop their potential, and offering them the possibility of continuing their education in various ways and settings throughout their lives.

Equal opportunity implies not only ensuring that all students have access to the basic educational services, but also providing special conditions or compensatory measures (for example, help learning French) if students require them. This is consistent with the principles of equity and non-discrimination and of accepting and respecting otherness and rejecting intolerance, ethnocentrism and all other expressions of discrimination. To apply this principle, schools have to recognize students for who they are, with their similarities and

4. The term "Québec schools" is used in this chapter in a generic sense to refer to institutions of learning, including those for young people and adults, in the French- and English-language sectors, and the public and private schools. Thus this term

includes vocational education centres, adult education centres and colleges, which are recognized as autonomous educational institutions that come under higher education.

differences, their shared and particular characteristics. By accepting that ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity have a right to exist, schools can bolster students' self-esteem and sense of belonging to Québec society, whatever their ethnic and cultural origin.

Proficiency in French, the language of public life

The school is the main, although not the sole, institution, responsible for ensuring that students learn and use French, the language of public life, with which Quebecers of all origins can communicate and participate in the development of Québec society. Educational institutions should be capable of turning out students who are proficient in the use of this basic tool of communication, whether French is their mother tongue, as it is for the majority, their second language, as it is for Anglophones and some allophones, or their third language, as it is for certain children of immigrants, who generally do not speak it at all on their arrival.

The education system should take the appropriate measures to fulfill this expectation by providing students in French-language institutions with a solid grounding in the language of instruction and giving students in English-language institutions quality instruction in the second language. Acquiring proficiency in French and using it can help students from other backgrounds surmount their marginalization and develop a sense of membership and participation in Québec society.

Education for citizenship in a democratic, pluralistic society

Seeking and promoting shared values contributes to the development and consolidation of a democratic society that accepts all its members as full participants. Citizenship

education aims to make these values an integral part of a society characterized by democratic traditions and institutions, respect for individual rights and a commitment to live together in mutual respect for individual and group differences.

Schools have a responsibility to promote citizenship education in order to prepare students, both young and adult, to play an active role in Québec democracy by adopting its values, codes and norms, knowing its key institutions, and exercising the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society. Citizenship education focusses on both knowledge and experience, and is grounded not only in the curriculum but also in democratic practices, in the schools and outside them. In this sense it extends into the life of the immediate community and more generally into social, economic and cultural life.

Citizenship education concerns both diversity (in terms of family background, religious or cultural identity, fields of interest and so on) and the shared values and democratic institutions that make it possible for people to live together. From this perspective, the recognition of diversity is itself one of our shared values.

The schools have an obligation to attune their students to diversity and to prepare them to live in a pluralistic society that is broader than their families or neighbourhoods, and to help them appreciate its richness and be aware of the challenges it poses, the better to overcome them. With the proper skills, students should be able to understand the relationship between diversity and unity, the particular and the universal, identity and difference, to expand the boundaries of the familiar and open up to the world.

Certainly the schools already help their students accept diversity and develop attitudes

of openness to the world by means of the knowledge they transmit. This learning is the fruit of many generations and cultures, which have commingled over time and space. If the learning the students assimilate no longer bears an ethnic tag, if it transcends its place and culture of origin, that is because it has become a part of the human heritage. Schools can reconstitute the origin of various domains of learning by placing their development in historical context. In this way, in addition to discovering their roots, students can become aware of the perpetual process of borrowing and lending that nourishes all cultural progress. What the students learn about the constitution of cultural heritages in general is transferable to the concept of Québec's particular cultural heritage: it too is an original creation incorporating many sources and influences, and is still developing.

Québec's present diversity cannot be ascribed entirely to immigration, although the latter has played a major role by introducing new cultural or religious currents or accentuating their presence. Factors related to the internal evolution of Québec society, notably the Quiet Revolution, also help explain why it is necessary to learn to live in a pluralistic society in which the norms of social cohesion are changing.

Social cohesion is not a juxtaposition of many disparate elements, but the reflection of the successful integration of shared characteristics. In this connection, schools are responsible for educating their students in the norms, values and codes that sustain a democratic community imbued with a spirit of openness but resolved to transcend particularisms when this is the condition for endowing the collectivity with a common language and shared instruments of everyday life and emancipation.

CHAPTER 3

OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION

In a number of areas, measures have been taken to favour the integration of students from outside of Canada into Québec's school system, in either the youth or adult sector, and to foster openness to ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity. The results have been encouraging in several respects. However, certain problems persist and others have emerged more recently. This chapter presents an overview of the situation in the light of the principles presented previously, and highlights certain areas in which intervention is urgent. The question of the training of school staff is considered at the end of the chapter.

Success in school

Students in the youth sector

Taking all sectors together, the performance of allophone students (including immigrants and Québec-born second- and third-generation descendants of immigrants) is comparable to that of students whose mother tongue is French or English. Marks on the uniform secondary school examinations are very similar and so are success rates for the two groups. In certain subjects, the allophones have slightly higher marks than the Francophones.

It is also known that allophones do slightly better in school in the Montréal region than outside it, and that they are not over-represented among handicapped students or students with adjustment or learning difficulties. The breakdown of the marks of allophones by linguistic group shows, however, that certain groups experience difficulties and have marks well below the level of the student population as a whole.

It may be presumed that there are a number of factors underlying these difficulties, such as poor or inadequate educational conditions prior to immigration, poor mastery of the language of instruction, a disadvantaged social and economic milieu, administrative underevaluation of these students' needs, inadequate parental support, vestiges of prejudices among school staff (which can result in lowered expectations for these students), and lack of skill in dealing with a diverse student body. To date, however, the respective weight of each of these factors remains unknown, and no overall plan has been elaborated to deal with the situation.

There is no concrete evidence that ethnic concentration (the presence of a high proportion of students receiving instruction in a language other than their mother tongue) favours or impedes success in school. A review of the situation in Montréal schools reveals that the success rate is higher when ethnic concentration is low, declines when it is average and increases when it is very high. It is possible that socio-economic status and parents' educational level would go further to explain the various patterns of performance among immigrant students.

It has been noted that, independent of their linguistic group, non-Francophone immigrant students who arrive in the French-language school system at adolescence have problems in school. Six years after entering reception and francization services, an overwhelming majority of these students have repeated two or more years, and only one in three obtains a secondary school diploma.

At the time of their arrival in Québec, some allophone students are already three or more

years behind in their studies relative to Québec norms, and must be viewed as students with difficulty integrating into school. Some of these students have attended school very little or not at all, some have experienced interruptions in their school attendance in their home countries, some have been exposed to fundamentally different sorts of education than that recognized in Québec, and some simply have learning difficulties.

Action-research projects designed to familiarize students at the elementary and secondary levels with the culture of the written word have tested approaches adapted to their needs. However, the problem remains formidable, and the question of how to ensure the education of these students was a major preoccupation in all the schools concerned. As certain linguistic groups are over-represented among these students, the identification of learning difficulties among them is often touchy.

Other immigrant students who enter the Québec school system during secondary school may not obtain their secondary school diploma in the youth sector, in which case they are obliged to continue in the adult sector. Students over the age of 18 are not allowed to continue their studies in the youth sector unless they will obtain their diploma before the age of 19. Thus after a year or two in the youth sector, these immigrant students must switch to the adult sector. This change is unsettling and necessitates further adaptation, while the students in question are no more likely to obtain their diploma than they were in the youth sector.

It has also been observed that few of these students enter the vocational sector, for lack of either interest or information or because they have not acquired sufficient command of the language of instruction. This sector is often undervalued, and some parents do not encourage

their children to learn a trade or opt for vocational education.

Students in the adult sector

Adult immigrants, who are not obliged to attend school, and whose choice of which schools to attend is not limited by the *Charter of the French Language*, make extensive use of educational services in both French and English in the adult education sector. They enrol more in general education (francization, literacy, Secondary Cycle One and Two, etc.) than in vocational education. The rate of success observed among allophone immigrants in vocational education is similar to that of Francophone or Anglophone immigrants and of students born in Canada. Allophone students are concerned about obtaining recognition for their scholastic and experiential learning.

Students at the college level

About 57 percent of allophones enrolled in college-level institutions are in the pre-university sector, compared with 49 percent for the college student population as a whole. However, since 1994, the proportion of allophones in the pre-university sector has declined slightly in favour of the technical sector.

The overall graduation rate of allophone students is comparable to that of students whose mother tongue is French. However, that rate varies considerably from one linguistic group to another. Further research is needed in order to understand these variations in educational success and apply corrective measures.

Helping students achieve greater proficiency in French

Students in the youth sector

Immigrant students or students whose parents are immigrants, who are obliged to pursue their education in French, generally have average to good marks, as noted earlier. This indicates that they can function adequately in French.

However, three observations should be made. First, the ability demonstrated by these allophone students to study in French in elementary and secondary school, when they are obliged to do so, does not indicate that they will continue their education in the same language. On the contrary, the Ministère de l'Éducation's data indicate that the tendency of allophone students who have obtained their secondary-school diploma in the French sector to transfer to English-language college institutions has increased in the last few years, although their representation in English colleges is still less pronounced than it was before the coming into force of the *Charter of the French Language*. It is unclear whether this trend is temporary and whether it reflects an influx of particular types of immigrants in a particular period of time, such as immigrants from English-speaking countries.

The second observation concerns allophone students who are immigrants or have a parent who is an immigrant, and who attend schools with a high ethnic concentration. This phenomenon has a slight negative effect on students' "aptitude for French," a concept that refers to their tendency to speak French with their friends and other students, to have a favourable opinion of the French language, to aspire to do their post-secondary studies in French and to use electronic media in French. Ethnic concentration has far less impact than the prevailing

sociolinguistic factors in students' community of origin. In short, compared with other factors, attending a school with a strong ethnic concentration has relatively little effect on a student's linguistic integration.

The third observation has to do with the particular difficulties experienced by non-Francophone immigrants who enter the Québec school system after beginning their schooling elsewhere. Their problems may in part be attributable to their poor command of the language of instruction. This hypothesis is supported by the current trend in the schools to prolong immigrant students' period in welcoming classes.

However, spending more time in welcoming classes will not necessarily lead to greater proficiency in French, the language of instruction, as long as the students do not have to function in ordinary classroom situations. What has to be done now is not to count exclusively on intensive language-learning services, but to deploy several strategies concurrently.

For about thirty years, students in the English sector have had access to immersion programs that allow them to greatly improve their French. These programs are effective, and their implementation reflects a desire to master the common public language.

Nonetheless it has been observed that some students in the English sector, whether they are Anglophones or allophones, believe that their French is too poor to enable them to attend a French-language school or obtain skilled employment in which they would have to speak or write in French.

Students in the adult sector

In the French-language adult education sector, the francization services are supposed

to enable non-Francophones to acquire basic skills in oral and written French. However, there is no specific linguistic support (classes to help students go beyond the basic skills and become proficient enough to study in French) available to these adult students. Although these courses, including those given by the COFIs (Centres d'orientation et de formation des immigrants—Immigrant orientation and education centres), do introduce immigrants to French as the language of daily life, they often cannot teach enough French to enable immigrants to exercise trades or professions or attend school, especially at the college or university level.

On the other hand, most adult allophones who enrol in general education in the English sector have only the French as a second language course, which can hardly allow them to master French and seek work in it.

Students at the college level

Data on the performance of allophone students in the Preparation for College French courses, the two compulsory French courses in the core block, and the French exit test at the conclusion of their college studies indicate that allophones perform less well than the students as a whole. This is especially the case of students belonging to certain linguistic groups.

In addition, there is no intermediate level where students who have learned introductory French in a COFI can reach the level of mastery they need to attend college in French. That is not the mission of the COFIs. This is a real problem for adult non-Francophone immigrants wishing to pursue their studies at the college level. Many, in both the regular sector and continuing education, lack the advanced language skills necessary, for example, to argue a philosophical point on a question of ethics or to analyze a poem.

Further research is called for to identify ways to deal with this problem. The language problems experienced by these students can affect their school performance and compromise their equality of opportunity.

Intercultural education

In the present curriculum

The educational institutions already help familiarize students with the basic principles of a democratic society and the related notion of individual rights and responsibilities. Considerable efforts have also been made to develop teaching materials that take into account the ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity of our society. A procedure has been developed for examining these materials to ensure that they contain no stereotypes and that they present diversity in a positive light. In addition, certain programs, such as the History of Québec and Canada program, deal with the issue of ethnocultural and religious diversity to a certain extent, while the Heritage Languages Program (HLP), which was set up in 1978, gives these languages a certain real and symbolic legitimacy within the education system.

However, there is at present no citizenship education course to encourage students to participate actively in the community and help them develop a civic spirit that is attuned to a pluralistic society. The programs that treat this question do not cover it adequately. The focus on diversity is limited, and has not been generalized within the curriculum. The result is that students from other cultures have difficulty recognizing themselves in certain learning content, which may have a negative effect on their sense of belonging.

On the other hand, these students are not given adequate access to information on

Québec's heritage, history, values and customs. They have little sense of the direction in which Québec society is evolving or of the role they might play in building and enriching this heritage. Finally, certain groups presently enrolled in the Heritage Languages Program include quite a high proportion of second- and third-generation Quebecers. The "language of origin" in which certain of these students take courses within this program is no longer the language they use at home, which means that in these cases, the HLP is acting more as an agent of cultural renewal, than as a program allowing people to maintain their languages of origin while they integrate into Québec society.

In current college-level curricula, intercultural education is not a major focus, even in the social sciences. This is also the case regarding human rights education, which is not offered in any curriculum. However, it should be noted that some professors, often on their own initiative, organize their courses to include elements pertaining to these areas.

Although technical and vocational education programs are regularly updated so that they reflect real work situations, intercultural questions have so far not received much consideration. Only one program, police technology, includes a competency in working with an ethnically diverse population. Efforts are being made to ensure that this aspect will be taken into account in other programs that are currently being updated, such as those in health and social, educational and legal services.

In school life

In many parts of the industrialized world, the student population of educational institutions in large urban centres has become increasingly multiethnic over the last twenty-odd years. Often, the host population no longer constitutes

a majority, and the social fabric has been transformed as a result. The repercussions of these changes may be examined from the perspective of relations among students, the management of ethnocultural diversity and the impact of ethnic concentration on the cultural identity of the host society and its values.

As regards relations among students, there is a certain amount of closed-mindedness and withdrawal into ethnic identities, some exclusionism and some racial or ethnic tension. In addition to classroom teaching, extracurricular activities can help promote community spirit and a sense of solidarity among all the students. These activities involve educating students about intercultural relations, rights and responsibilities, international understanding, peace and the environment. Activities designed to give students experience in the exercise of democracy have been organized in most regions in order to attune young people to the issue of rights and responsibilities, notably in student councils. Student-teacher relations do not always reflect the climate of mutual understanding that should prevail, although staff members in many institutions have made great efforts to promote openness to diversity and to improve relations within the educational community. Their contribution to the quality of school life does not always receive the recognition and encouragement it should.

The educational milieu now has a number of reference documents (decisions of government agencies) on the management of ethnocultural, religious and linguistic diversity to help it deal with the exceptional requests that it receives. However, some school personnel continue to stress the need to acquire greater skill in this type of management, which is often complicated. Along similar lines, the introduction of a code of conduct that would take into account the diversity of the student population and respect

the basic values of Québec society is a major concern in certain schools.

The educational institution's mission is to promote the integration of students of diverse origins by fostering democratic values, helping the students master the language of instruction and of public life, and making them aware of our unique historical heritage. Institutions must devise educational measures and school integration strategies that suit their particular ethnocultural profile. The task may be more difficult in an institution with a strong ethnic concentration, especially if the parents themselves are still in the process of integrating. Recent research on the social integration of students shows that ethnic concentration has very little impact on the image immigrant students have of the host society. At most, it may be said that their attitude is slightly more positive in schools with low ethnic concentration. It remains essential, however, to ensure that the school's relations with the students, the families and the community all contribute to the students' social, linguistic and cultural integration.

Many CEGEPs have taken initiatives in the field of extra-curricular activities, often with support from the Ministère de l'Éducation. For example, in certain CEGEPs with a strong ethnic concentration, socioeducational integration projects have been organized by the intercultural committee or the sociocultural activities team.

Among the school staff

The credibility of pretensions to openness and ethnocultural and religious diversity relies heavily on the visibility of this diversity within the school staff; but, in many school boards and most educational institutions, the staff remains ethnoculturally homogeneous. In addition, relatively few students who are recent immigrants choose teaching careers, especially in elementary

school teaching. Several factors discourage them, including their image of the sector, the inherent difficulty involved in mastering the language of instruction and the obstacle represented by the written French test students must take to enter university.

Programs favouring employment equity for members of the cultural communities in multi-ethnic school boards have not been very effective: the quotas established have not been attained in most cases. The slow progress in the representation of ethnocultural diversity is generally explained in terms of the difficult economic situation but that is not the only cause, so it is important to consider the matter further in order to find and apply effective solutions.

Among the public colleges, only 1.4 percent of all staff reports a mother tongue other than French or English. The proportion of teaching staff that is allophone is slightly higher, at 1.9 percent, but the teaching staff is far from reflecting the ethnic diversity of Québec society. Most of the allophone employees work for colleges in the greater Montréal region.

In the educational institution's relations with the family and the community

First it should be noted that schools' relations with families vary both in multiethnic milieus and in relatively homogenous communities. Relations may be close and dynamic in one school and otherwise in another. Many factors may underlie this variability. It is impossible to generalize, however, and the tendencies observed in the schools may change from one year to the next.

Some multiethnic schools have taken measures to encourage collaboration between school and family: allocating extra human resources, adapting procedures for transmitting information and maintaining contact with the parents,

holding consultations with parents or resource persons from multiethnic organizations, and inviting parents to participate in decisions concerning the orientations of the school or the education system. But these efforts have not been made in all schools. In some cases, the educational milieu and the families are not true partners in education. This situation, which is often explained by linguistic barriers and differences in social and educational values and practices, can have a negative effect on the socio-educational integration process of immigrant students.

In addition, there is often a dichotomy between the school's expectations and the reality of family life today. The school staff expects parents to participate actively (help with homework, attend meetings, etc.) and sometimes interprets as evidence of irresponsibility behaviour that should in fact be attributed to socio-economic factors, different family dynamics or other factors. If the gap between the school's expectations and the parents' actual capacity for involvement is too great, the parents may react by ceasing to play any role whatsoever in their children's education. This deprives the schools of any cooperation the parents might have offered, and may lead the children to have a negative image of their family. In addition, it should be noted that parents also sometimes harbour exaggerated expectations, which do not correspond to the role or functions of the school and which the school cannot fulfill.

Regarding the schools' openness to the community in general, much remains to be accomplished. Certainly the establishment of a number of programs and activities has contributed to students' social integration and improved the education they receive in civic life and citizenship. But on the whole, and despite their complementary expertise and geographical proximity, collaboration between the school and the

community tends still to be sporadic and limited. The resources of the milieu are underutilized.

The schools are sometimes perceived by the community as self-absorbed, and this perception sometimes leads to a power struggle, each side seeking to fulfill only its formal responsibilities at the expense of cooperation, the sharing of skills and the interests of the students and communities themselves. Ideally, without taking the place of the school, community organizations should be able to exercise a positive influence on students' educational context—for example, by persuading parents to play a more supportive role in their children's education. Often, however this has not been the case,

In many towns, the local college is the prime purveyor of knowledge, in addition to contributing to the socioeconomic development of the community. With buildings, equipment and material that are ideal for cultural activities, the college plays a leading role in the cultural life of both the student and local communities in the areas of theatre, music, film and photography.

Training of school staff

In the last few years, the universities have made efforts to help teachers and other school staff develop the skills needed to facilitate the integration of students recently arrived from outside Canada and to provide intercultural education within the schools. Since the 1992-93 reform of teacher training, certain university courses are now compulsory for future teachers and others are offered on an elective basis in some programs. Practicums in multiethnic settings have also become common. However, the actual impact of this reform remains unknown, as are any further changes that may be necessary. There are no data on the number of students who take the elective courses.

In continuing education, the universities have set up intercultural education programs leading to both undergraduate certificates and master's degrees for school staff. After experiencing a certain amount of popularity in the late 1980s, some of these programs have had falling enrolments since 1990-91.

In addition, some school boards, the Ministère de l'Éducation and many organizations have held sessions designed to help school staff take diversity into account in the teaching process and inject a pluralistic perspective into various educational activities. These efforts are necessary, yet there are often no links between intercultural education for teachers and the teaching itself: the theory is difficult to translate into practice. Certain school boards and organizations handle the problem by relying more and more on peer teaching and by organizing training activities that correspond more closely to the priorities defined by the educational institutions and their staff.

Some colleges offer their personnel professional development and sensitization activities to help them address the question of diversity, and especially ethnocultural diversity, in their educational services to students. Teaching materials have been developed and various long and short programs are available, but they only meet a small part of the need expressed.

Given the situation described in this overview, the need for appropriate training in this field for all teachers and other school staff (school principals, non-teaching professionals, support staff) is beyond all doubt.

GUIDELINES

This chapter presents eight guidelines based on the principles for action regarding equal opportunity, proficiency in French and education for democratic citizenship in a pluralistic society. The guidelines do not propose specific measures⁵ or strategies, but allow educational institutions introducing, consolidating or adapting educational and intercultural education practices to choose those most appropriate for their needs. The guidelines have been formulated with a view to reconciling the shared values and social cohesion of Québec society with respect for diversity.

On the basis of the observations set out in Chapter 3, it may be stated that in general educational institutions have already begun taking steps to integrate immigrant students and to provide intercultural education. However, much ground remains to be covered, notably as regards the education of students belonging to groups at risk; the acceptance of collective responsibility for the task of integrating newly arrived immigrant students, which is presently handled by too small a number of staff members; close collaboration between institution, family and community; mastery and use of French; references to Québec's heritage, in all its diversity, in the curriculum and in school life; the development of skills and attitudes that are essential in order to achieve openness to diversity among the school staff; and representation of Québec's ethnocultural and religious diversity in the composition of the school staff.

The guidelines are presented in two sections corresponding to the two themes of this policy

statement, namely educational integration and intercultural education. The first three guidelines concern educational integration, and the remaining five focus on intercultural education.

EDUCATIONAL INTEGRATION

Preparing students for success and full participation

The three guidelines presented below concern the responsibility for the integration of students who are newly arrived in Québec, the schooling of newly arrived students who are experiencing difficulty with their educational integration, and the relationship between the educational institution, the family and the community. Thus, the first two guidelines target recent immigrant students, and third, all immigrant students.

1. Integrating students who are new to québec is the joint responsibility of all school staff

It is important to facilitate the integration of students who are new to Québec. Their integration is, first of all, linguistic: once they learn the language of instruction, they will assimilate other new things much more easily. Integration also has a pedagogical component, in that it involves determining students' academic level and bringing them up to the necessary level in certain subjects, if necessary. Integration also has a social dimension, which entails in particular establishing close ties with the host society and learning its values, codes, norms and cultural references. One of the school's basic objectives is to help newly arrived students to integrate

educational community.

5. This policy is accompanied by a plan of action containing measures of interest to the various participants in the

successfully in all senses, so that all students have an equal opportunity for success.

All members of an educational institution's staff have a role to play in the integration of students who are new to Québec. In preschool and at the elementary and secondary levels, teachers of regular classes, school principals, non-teaching professionals, support staff and teachers of French in welcoming classes or elsewhere all must participate, according to their role and function, in the integration of these students. This is not uniquely the responsibility of those whose job is to teach newcomers French, even if they are of necessity on the front line of integration services. The long process involved in helping new immigrants learn and master French and educating and socializing them requires the active support of all school staff.

This also applies to college personnel, and concerns teachers of Preparation for College French courses as well as the rest of the personnel.

In the youth sector, the welcoming class—with its various organizational models, such as the closed and semi-open classes⁶—has proven an effective way to lay the foundations for integration. Over the years, it has allowed non-Francophone immigrants with a broad range of mother tongues and cultural origins to acquire the rudiments of French and to integrate into their new school environment and society. It should be recalled that the welcoming class is a means of integration that may be applied according to the needs of particular school boards. This adaptability no doubt helps explain its success.

However, regular classes are still a key phase in the integration process for immigrant students,

because they provide students with larger challenges, which favourably influence the integration process. In regular classes, students must learn the various subjects, become more autonomous and adapt, especially in the case of secondary-school students, to the diversity of the teaching staff. Regular classes also offer greater scope for socialization.

Consequently, students should be integrated progressively into regular classes as early as possible. Welcoming class teachers can only take the linguistic and socio-educational integration process so far. Like other aspects of integration, learning a language is a long-term process, and the best way to learn is in real situations involving communication.

Once they have acquired the basis of communication, these students should enter regular classes, with students of their own age, in their local educational institution, where they will be able not only to master the language of instruction but also have greater opportunities for social integration in the neighbourhood.

Obviously there is no question of expecting students with little French to integrate into regular classes without support. It is up to each educational institution to decide what measures are appropriate, and measures will necessarily vary depending on the percentage of students to be integrated, but it is clear that some support measures must be implemented in all cases. Examples might include a lower teacher-student ratio, offering support outside the classroom, using special instructional materials, and calling on the help of resource persons. These measures would help lighten the load of teachers of regular classes and increase the students' likelihood of success.

6. The closed welcoming class is primarily for immigrants with no French language proficiency. The semi-open model allows for

the progressive integration of welcoming class students into regular classes, first in certain subjects, then others.

Integration into regular classes should not be abrupt, but rather should be carried out carefully, which requires flexibility in applying the chosen models. It is well known that students' linguistic needs are not identical in all subjects, and that they also vary according to the individual and his or her age on arrival in the Québec education system.

As a general rule, the later students arrive in the system, the more support they will require in order to master the language of instruction and communication. A non-Francophone who arrives in time for secondary school needs incomparably more support than a child who arrives at the outset of elementary school, with much less linguistic catching up to do. Similarly, a non-Francophone preschooler will usually require support for a shorter period than a child who enters Québec schools at the elementary level.

At the college level and in adult education, where there are no welcoming classes, it is important to offer preparatory courses in the language of instruction for students who, even though they have been admitted, lack the linguistic proficiency to succeed in their studies.

Be it at the preschool, elementary, secondary or college level, integration into regular classes of students who are new to Québec can only succeed if the entire staff accept responsibility for their linguistic and socio-educational integration. In addition, staff members must cooperate in order to ensure coherence between the various measures to achieve integration. Administrators, teaching staff, non-teaching professionals and support staff must all agree on the strategies to use.

Educational institutions—schools, adult education centres, vocational education centres and colleges—should be encouraged to make their staff aware of the need to collectively adopt measures facilitating the linguistic and

socio-educational integration of new arrivals to Québec. Institutions should multiply their efforts to integrate recently arrived non-Francophone students into regular classes and encourage the gradual development of their sense of membership in the host society.

The school boards should support the educational institutions' efforts in this sense and ensure that money allocated for supporting the acquisition of proficiency in French is used for that purpose. They should also adopt policies favouring the enrolment of these new arrivals in their local institutions and should respect the parents' wishes concerning the school their children attend, as they do for other students.

The Ministère de l'Éducation will maintain its measures supporting the acquisition of proficiency in French and integration in general at the preschool, elementary, secondary and college levels. It will try to ensure a certain flexibility in the application of these measures in order to encourage, whenever possible, the progressive integration of recently arrived students into regular classes corresponding to their level of education, while allowing the schools their choice of school organization and educational support services.

2. Recent immigrants with difficulty integrating into school need fast, effective help

The proportion of immigrant students who experience difficulties integrating into the Québec school system has been fairly stable for many years, at about 20 percent of recent immigrants in the youth sector. The welcoming class plays a vital role for these students, who, understandably, stay there longer than the average. Similarly, these students require support measures for the acquisition of proficiency in French longer than the other students. All those who can do so within a reasonable period of time should have the opportunity to improve

their French and catch up in their other areas of learning, so that they can continue their education.

Without appropriate help, these young people, and especially those who arrive here at or above the age of 13, may never graduate from secondary school, so it is vital that the system find effective remedial measures. Various approaches have been tried with these students, who are entitled to other educational services besides instructional services. Most of these approaches are based on cultural literacy education to help the students to function in a technologically advanced society, the application of metacognitive strategies and techniques concerning schoolwork, the integrated learning of school subjects and the encouragement of parental support for the institution's efforts. Although all of these approaches appear viable, it is essential that measures be taken immediately, as soon as these students arrive in Québec, and that they be suited to the realities of the milieu and the needs of the students in question.

Taking action as rapidly as possible requires prompt identification of students with problems and an overall approach that both enables them to assimilate enough French to communicate and follow courses, and addresses their problems in other subjects. This should make it possible to avoid placing the students in a situation that could lead to failure, which would demoralize them. To design and apply the appropriate measures, it is necessary to take into account a student's age, prior learning, the nature of the difficulties and his or her plans for the future.

The educational institutions must develop innovative models for intervention suited to the needs of the students concerned, in collaboration with the adult and vocational education sectors. They must also offer the students' parents the support they need to play an active role in their children's educational success.

The Ministère de l'Éducation has already modified its budgetary rules to allot more resources for students at the secondary level and to eliminate the obligation to conform to a preestablished educational organization, so schools and school boards can set up strategies adapted to the particular needs of students with difficulties integrating into school.

In addition, where the Heritage Language Program is available, the Ministère will reorient this program, which was originally designed to enable students to maintain and develop the language used in their family, transforming it into another support measure for students with difficulty integrating into school. When the students in the HLP program master their language of origin better than French, it can serve as the basis for learning in subjects in which the students have not been progressing, and thus help these students catch up.

3. Educational institutions, families and the community must work together to promote educational integration

In the new *Education Act*, the Ministère de l'Éducation places special emphasis on a partnership between the institution, the family and the community, in order to permit equal input from users of educational services and those who offer the services, and shared decisions that respect the competence of all concerned. In the spirit of this partnership, a governing board will be set up in each institution, composed of members of the school staff, parents, and representatives from the community and the students, at least in schools offering Cycle Two of secondary school.

In addition, the new Act provides for an organization enabling parents to contribute to the planning, achievement and periodic evaluation of the school's educational project and to their children's academic success. This Act also allows schools more leeway to adapt their services to

the needs and characteristics of their students and their community.

The idea underlying these measures is that the school, the family and the whole community must share the responsibility for integrating immigrant students and ensuring their full participation in the life of the community. The educational institution cannot accomplish this task alone; it needs partners.

Some schools have developed ways of eliciting community cooperation that other schools may find helpful as well. In most cases, however, as indicated in the previous chapter, relations between schools take the form of periodic exchanges of resources and the occasional sharing of expertise.

Further efforts are needed to achieve active and ongoing collaboration between school staff, parents and community organizations, which is part of the school's mission and is urgently required for integration. Involving parents and community organizations in the school's mission means encouraging parental participation in any form, engaging in dialogue on values, supporting community initiatives and responding to needs the community expresses (access to offices, resources, etc.).

Vocational and adult education centres with immigrants students must also establish closer ties with community organizations in order to promote the education, socialization and qualification of these students, thereby helping them become active citizens.

To this end, educational institutions must involve the parents more in various aspects of school life, consult them, and inform them about Québec's education system, the school culture and the changes introduced by the reform of the education system. Institutions should open up to the needs of the community and collaborate in community initiatives. It is to be hoped

that the institutions will in return benefit from the support of the community (help with homework, extracurricular activities, sharing of information, etc.).

Educational institutions should coordinate their services with those of other institutions and organizations in the community (CLSCs, municipalities, police, etc.) in order to organize cultural and sports activities for young people, for example. Educational and community institutions must share certain infrastructures, such as school gymnasiums and other premises, cultural centres, libraries and sports centres.

The school boards should encourage cooperation between the schools and community organizations and encourage schools, as well as adult and vocational education centres to participate in community consultation and coordination committees, with representatives from the world of business. The colleges should continue to their efforts to establish partnerships with community organizations in order to be able to offer services and organize activities that support the training, schooling and integration of their immigrant students.

In addition to evaluating the actions undertaken, the Ministère de l'Éducation will collaborate more actively with other ministries (Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, etc.), to improve and coordinate services and to produce and distribute a resource bank on the theme of integration.

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

Learning how to live together in a Francophone, democratic and pluralistic society

The following guidelines focus on intercultural education and learning to live together, and they concern all students in the school

system, whether they were born in Québec or elsewhere, are Francophone, Anglophone or Aboriginal. Mastering and using French, the language of public life, learning about and supporting shared values and acquiring the skills necessary to participate actively in the development of a democratic and pluralistic Québec society are major goals that apply to all students. The guideline on the intercultural education of school staff is especially concerned with adapting the educational practices used with all students, be it in multiethnic milieus or others. Finally, the representation of ethnic and cultural diversity among school staff, which is the focus of the last guideline, is essential as evidence of good faith on the part of institutions claiming to combat exclusion and to support the idea that we must all live together.

4. Learning French must be seen as an ongoing process

We have already seen, particularly in the chapter on principles, that French is the common language in which Quebecers of all cultural origins, languages and religions can communicate. The means for becoming as proficient as possible in the use of this common tool of communication should be available to everyone. This guideline underscores the importance of supporting the mastery of French, which, as is the case with any language, is never complete. All Québec students should be able to take French proficiency as far as they want, using means available in courses and programs, and also in school activities. Learning French should be considered an ongoing process.

This perspective implies giving all non-Francophone students the opportunity to become proficient enough in French to attend school, if they want, to obtain occupational certification or upgrade their qualifications or function effectively in their job and to participate actively in the life of their community. The

corollary of this perspective is that all school staff, the work context and society in general become responsible for the ongoing French-language acquisition of the non-Francophones in their midst.

There are several programs for learning French in Québec: mother tongue; second language; (various models, including immersion) welcoming class and francization; the French taught in immigrant orientation centres; adult education francization services in school boards; francization and job market integration programs in the continuing education sector at the college level, etc. These programs operate along parallel lines at present, and in most cases there is little continuity between the various courses.

Mastering a language is a long-term, perhaps never-ending, process, as we have mentioned on several occasions, which explains why non-Francophone students in all sectors often have to move from program to program in order to attain their educational objectives, passing from a French as a second language course to a French, language of instruction, course, for example. Successive adaptations to programs, inadequate coordination between programs and programs that are not always suitable for the students sometimes create obstacles to success in school, social integration (in the case of immigrants), employability, and full participation in social life.

It is important to remove these obstacles. The Ministère de l'Éducation and the Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration are committed to harmonizing all French-language instruction programs: for example, adult sector francization courses at the secondary and college levels will be coordinated with the programs offered in immigrant orientation and education centres (centres d'orientation et de formation des immigrants:

COFIs). These ministries will also eliminate the gap between the courses given in COFIs and the Preparation for College French courses offered at the college level for students wishing to take college courses, either in continuing education or in the regular sector.

It is also urgent for school boards, through their adult education sectors, to help certain parents overcome the difficulties created by their ignorance of French, which prevent them from offering their children the support they need for success in school. In order to respond to the communication needs of the parents, the educational institutions and community organizations should set up projects, workshops or other francization activities, with the dual objective of helping the parents learn French and involving them in the educational mission of the schools.

5. French, the language of public life and vehicle of Québec's cultural life, must be presented in a positive light by the educational community

Priority should be given to providing all students with a positive image of French, the language of public life. Their active participation in Québec's cultural, economic and political development will be shaped by their image of the language. Access to the culture, which is inherent in a knowledge of the language, is often left out of teaching practices. This reflects a tendency to see the language purely as a subject to be taught. In addition to its functional aspects, language is a vehicle of culture and thought, and a sphere of creativity.

This guideline suggests that the use of the language of public life can enhance communication and understanding between Quebecers of all origins, overcoming ethnic and linguistic divisions, and creating solidarity. It does not entail the rejection of English, Aboriginal languages, or the mother tongues of allophone students.

Promoting French as a vehicle for communication among Quebecers of all origins is an excellent way to achieve the linguistic and social integration of non-Francophone immigrants students or those whose parents are immigrants. In addition to ensuring that immigrants learn French, we must encourage them to take pleasure in using it in everyday life, which will enable them to better understand the French character of Québec society, and its history, and to develop a sense of belonging and a commitment to the survival of French.

Along these lines, the Ministère de l'Éducation is collaborating with the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, the Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration and the Office de la langue française in the development and implementation of strategies favouring the linguistic integration of immigrant students as well as their familiarization with Québec's cultural heritage, and the full participation of all students in this Francophone, democratic and pluralistic society. These strategies are based on the use of French and access to numerous and varied cultural resources.

Working together, educational institutions and community organizations should organize activities allowing students, and parents in some cases, to enjoy activities together and experience the pleasure of using the French language. Suitable activities would be meetings with authors of various origins, shows, exhibitions, etc. School administrations should encourage all approaches based on the assimilation of skills in French, and especially twinning activities. French can be presented in a positive light by means of attractive activities such as artistic productions, introduction to various media and training in the new information and communications technologies, in a spirit of openness to the French-speaking community and culture throughout the world. The educational community should use posters to promote

French and create a stimulating environment that is hospitable to the use of French.

6. The curriculum and school life must both reflect the heritage and shared values of Québec and be open to ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity

The best way to bolster students' sense of belonging and solidarity is by fostering their active participation in the development and enrichment of Québec's collective heritage,⁷ which may be seen as an evolving heritage in which all can see themselves and as an ongoing process to which all can contribute.

It is important for educational institutions to share Québec's heritage, history, values and customs, and its pride in its progress in all domains with all students, but especially with recent immigrants. Recognition of the fact that the host society is a largely French-speaking entity in the North American context should be a major focus of the integration approach used. It is also necessary, in an inclusive approach, to fully recognize the contributions (in the economic, cultural, artistic, scientific, sports, linguistic and religious fields, and so on) of all members of Québec society, whatever their origin.

Educational institutions have already made efforts to accommodate Québec's ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity. These should continue, and efforts should also be made to include more pluralistic perspectives in the learning content and in the various spheres of school life in order to meet the challenges facing pluralistic democracy. Care must be taken to instill in all students, and especially immigrants and the children of immigrants, the shared values necessary for participation in

society and social cohesion, which are an essential condition for pluralism.

The curriculum and school life should familiarize students with Québec's heritage and the shared values that underlie it, namely, openness to ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity.

It is of the utmost importance that all students acquire a solid grounding in Québec's shared values; that program content favour openness to ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity by illustrating the diversity of our society; that these objectives be incorporated into the context of school life; that harmonious relations between communities be promoted and that racism and discrimination be combatted. This overall approach will probably foster a sense of belonging to Québec society among immigrant students and will encourage all students to participate in building the evolving collective heritage.

Courses and programs

Elementary and secondary level general education programs must be adapted, and the courses enriched in order to achieve these objectives. Creating a citizenship course will be especially helpful, as will according greater importance to the teaching of history and social studies and taking ethnocultural pluralism into account in a greater number of courses and programs.

The Ministère de l'Éducation's educational policy statement, *Québec Schools on Course*, established the framework for these changes, whose dual objective is to transmit Québec society's shared values to new immigrants, thus contributing to their integration, and to ensure

⁷ The collective heritage is a term referring to both the memory of the contribution of all those who have ever lived in Québec,

and a project in the sense that all contemporary Québec citizens work together to shape society.

respect for ethnocultural, linguistic and religious pluralism.

Citizenship education - There are three basic reasons why citizenship education should be a component of the democratic school's overall mission: to offer every person, in the spirit of equal opportunity, the means for achieving personal fulfillment and optimum social integration; to prevent students' withdrawal into themselves, or their marginalization or exclusion and encourage them to participate in the democratic debate on the guidelines for a just society; and to recognize that equality before the law, social justice and the right to security are basic elements of any democratic society.

Citizenship education focusses on knowledge of the common rules of life in our society and understanding of relations among people and between people and the environment. It is a tool for understanding others, accepting differences and harmonizing life in the educational institution, which are also the objectives of intercultural education. Citizenship education also involves letting students exercise citizenship rights within the context of the educational institution to prepare them for active participation in the democratic institutions of society in general.

The Ministère will make it compulsory for all students to take a history and citizenship education course from the second cycle of elementary school through Secondary IV. The Ministère will also determine the competencies students should acquire to foster harmonious interpersonal and social relations, participate fully in the life of the community and enhance their critical judgement.

Learning a third language - The Ministère de l'Éducation will encourage students to learn a third language, which will be a valuable addition to their education in the context of the globalization of trade and communications. The third

language may be chosen from among the Aboriginal languages, the languages taught in the Heritage Language Program, or the working languages of the United Nations, excluding French and English, as the students already receive instruction in them. Given Québec's cultural and economic relations with Latin America, Spanish—which is both a working language of the UN and an HLP language—or Portuguese—which is offered in the HLP—would also be useful third languages to acquire.

The Ministère de l'Éducation will examine the possibility of recognizing learning in their mother tongue for Aboriginal and immigrant students or those whose parents are immigrants, in the second cycle of secondary school.

Introduction to religious cultures - The Ministère de l'Éducation may develop an introduction to religious cultures, which would consider the Christian and Aboriginal religions that have particularly shaped Québec and other major religions practised in Québec. This approach will make it possible to ground the instruction in the traditional practices of the students, their parents or their extended families. In addition it would stimulate dialogue among students of different religions concerning their respective religions and the place of religion in contemporary society.

French, language of instruction and second language - In addition to literature produced in French by Francophone and non-Francophone Québec authors, which will familiarize students with French-language Québec literature, students should be reading literary works produced elsewhere in the Francophone world. The range may be further extended by the addition of translations of works originally written in another language, notably English.

English, language of instruction and second language - In addition to English-language

literature produced in Québec by Anglophone and non-Anglophone Québec authors, which will familiarize students with English-language Québec literature, students should be reading literary works produced in English outside of Québec. The range may be extended by the addition of translations of works originally written in another language, notably French.

National history - It is essential to raise cultural standards by encouraging a better knowledge of Québec's history, and in particular of the material and spiritual achievements and the movements that have characterized Québec's evolution as a French-speaking society in North America. It is also important to integrate into the study of history—and not just to tack on as separate material—the role played by Anglophones and Aboriginal peoples, and by groups of other ethnic origins, in the building of Québec society and the development of the collective identity and memory of Quebecers. Expressions such as “the contribution of the cultural communities” and “successive waves of immigration” may mislead by implying juxtaposition in certain contexts. The Ministère will also enrich or make compulsory the teaching of history and geography in Introduction to Québec life programs, along with the support immigrants receive for learning French.

The contemporary world - This program will enable students to learn about various civilizations and situate their development using comparative historical tables. The program will also explain population movements and their causes and sociological, cultural and demographic implications in Québec. In addition, the concept of international understanding will be introduced in the context of the problems of North-South and East-West relations and the implications of globalization for Québec society.

Arts - This program will include elements of art history, focussing on the works of Québec

artists of different origins, and will associate art with international and intercultural understanding. The music program will familiarize students with instruments and types of music of different origins.

Science - The history of science will be a major focus of the science program. This will contribute to a proper appreciation of the contributions of different cultures to the development of the sciences.

College students in the pre-university sector should be familiar with the theories, concepts and facts pertaining to intercultural relations and develop professional and civic attitudes and skills. This learning content should be distributed among the various disciplines that make up a program and teachers should cooperate in organizing this aspect. As many courses as possible in a program should include learning content with objectives related to intercultural relations, rights and citizenship. Each discipline should contribute to the acquisition of intercultural and civic skills.

As vocational and technical education are updated, it will be more possible to introduce the intercultural dimension (where the work situation justifies it) in the competencies related to communication and interpersonal or social relations, for example. This seems particularly appropriate in programs leading to occupations that involve dealing directly with the public, such as health care, social services, education and law.

School life

Student participation

In addition to taking diversity into consideration in course content, educational institutions should introduce pluralistic perspectives in extracurricular activities, complementary services and codes of conduct. Sporting, cultural and other

activities will provide an authentic initiation in democratic and harmonious relations, free from discrimination or racism. By emphasizing cooperative activities and the sharing of knowledge and experiences, they will help students of diverse origins build a collective heritage.

Participating in school elections, the student council and, for older students, the governing board are also good ways to learn about working in groups, including how to respect the rights of each member of the group and how to build solidarity within the group as a whole. Special attention will be paid from an early age to the process of developing codes of conduct and to their content. This activity will develop the students' ability to express themselves, listen, understand and assimilate rules with an attitude of self-respect and respect for others. The schools must ensure that the codes of conduct guarantee the students' fundamental rights and combat all forms of racism and exclusion, whether among the students or the school staff.

Reasonable Accommodations

The diversity of beliefs and values, whether originating in religion, culture or personal opinion, can result in the formulation of demands by students or parents for exceptions to an educational institution's rules. These requests generally concern observance of religious obligations and practices, but may also reflect concepts of school, learning, discipline and children's rights, linguistic usage, and the status and roles of men and women.

A fair number of requests are settled directly by teachers or the administrations of the educational institutions. In some cases, the institution takes measures to adapt its educational practices to the cultural, religious and

linguistic diversity of its student body out of a concern for professionalism and not in response to official requests.

A variety of arguments concerning the importance of partnership, the harmonization of family values with those of the school, and means to support the integration of newly arrived students can be used to seek mutually acceptable solutions to exceptional requests. In addition, there is a growing awareness in the education community that some of these requests can or could be the object of legal action—although these are far fewer than is often supposed, and are related mainly to religious freedom. It is true that the courts have ruled that there is an obligation to seek “reasonable accommodation” in areas related to employment when the matter involves a basic right guaranteed by the Canadian and Québec charters of rights and the failure to respect the right could cause discrimination by adverse effect.⁸ Some experts now believe that, in reality, this obligation extends to the field of services.

However, other cases are of greater concern to school staff, who worry about the possible contradictions between accommodations the educational institution reaches and the basic values it is supposed to instill in its students. In Québec and Canada the law provides certain guidelines for the recognition of pluralism and the exercise of rights and freedoms, such as the need to reconcile the various laws and the state's recognized responsibility to enforce the law in ways that serve the general interest.

With specific regard to the education system, this general principle implies that accommodations agreed on to meet the cultural or religious needs of families must not jeopardize basic rights, such as the right to equality before the law, the

8. Discrimination by adverse effect is said to occur when, even in the absence of overt discrimination, an ostensibly neutral rule or practice, applied in the same manner to all persons, excludes

or penalizes certain categories of persons in a way that may curtail their right to equality.

right to be treated without discrimination and the right to protection, which the *Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*, the *Education Act* and other laws give every student. However, these guidelines must be interpreted carefully. On the one hand, it is important to consider the fact that the rights granted by legislation to minors and the right of parents to choose the type education their children will receive are gradually coming to be exercised and are supported by many charters and international agreements. On the other hand, we need to distinguish between a direct infringement of a person's right to equal treatment or protection and a practice unacceptable to the values of the school staff but which contravenes no law or charter. Thus, for example, wearing a hijab not cannot be forbidden in Québec schools, but any practice designed to prevent girls and boys from having access to the same educational services, or which would have that effect, must be forbidden.⁹

The effort to achieve a balance between recognizing pluralism and providing a minimal common framework for school life and, in the long term, life in society also implies that the proposed accommodations should not contravene Québec laws and regulations respecting education that apply to students of all origins. However, it must be remembered that, unlike basic rights, some of these provisions allow for a certain flexibility in their application: some clearly define the leeway that exists regarding their prescriptive nature, while others even consider it an obligation to take into consideration the diversity of the student population. For example, although it is not permitted to exempt students from sex education courses, except in rare cases whose requirements newly arrived or poorly

educated parents would be unlikely to fulfill, flexibility in response to cultural and religious diversity is not only allowed but strongly encouraged in this subject.

Finally, the financial and organizational constraints facing educational institutions must also be borne in mind, in order to avoid accommodations that strain the staff's ability to fulfill all their responsibilities. However, this concept of “undue hardship” must not be used to justify a policy of doing nothing or the refusal to make any concessions. After all, the very idea of reasonable accommodation or of the reasonableness of the accommodation presumes that both sides are acting in good faith. It must be stressed that both are responsible for finding a mutually acceptable compromise—the requester of exemptions from the practices of the educational institution just as much as the representative of the institution.

The Ministère, which has already published a training unit for the youth sector on accommodating cultural and religious diversity in the schools (including an analysis of the leeway regarding the most frequent demands),¹⁰ is committed to supporting the schools by preparing appropriate tools, which can be adjusted according to the evolution of the demands.

Regarding all such matters, the Ministère de l'Éducation will collaborate closely with the other ministries and organizations concerned, in particular with the Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration, the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse du Québec and the Conseil du statut de la femme.

9. Accommodations must obviously not limit the equal right of girls or women to pursue their education.

10. In 1998, the Ministère will publish a version of this guide for use in the adult education sector.

7. School staff must be trained to meet the educational challenges associated with Québec's ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity

The teachers and other members of the staff of educational institutions play a pivotal role in the carrying out of any project in the schools. Their cooperation is essential for the successful implementation of this policy.

Although a real effort is made during initial training and professional development to give school staff, and especially teachers, a good grounding in intercultural education and, to a lesser extent, teaching in a multiethnic context, new concerns have emerged. These include conveying the shared values, accommodating diversity appropriately, schooling immigrant students with difficulty integrating into school, enhancing school staff's effectiveness, etc. There are also challenges in the adult education sector, where the staff receive little intercultural education. Activities to educate staff on these issues have been organized in some colleges, but they cannot satisfy the extent and the diversity of the needs.

It is crucial that the staff of educational institutions be trained to meet the educational challenges posed by the ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the students and by the need to ensure that they assimilate a set of shared values. This guideline concerns not only teachers but also the other categories of staff, in schools, adult and vocational education centres and colleges, in all regions of Québec. All of these staff members must have knowledge, skills and attitudes that are appropriate for meeting these educational challenges.

Teachers and all other members of the staff of educational institutions must receive training in educational integration, since they will all be involved in the effort to integrate recently arrived students into regular classes.

All school staff must develop openness towards diversity; teaching skills appropriate for working in a multiethnic milieu; the ability to effectively resolve conflicts concerning practices and standards; the ability to teach a second language and a language of instruction, and to adapt their teaching in these fields to students' progress; the ability to convey values and information related to Québec's heritage and to communicate, when necessary, with allophone parents who do not share their educational values and customs; and the ability to include pluralism in the educational project, and so on. Training in these skills must take into account the guidelines set out in this policy statement.

It is thus to be expected that school boards and institutions will give priority to further training in class management and the development of teaching strategies suited to students' needs. School boards, schools and adult and vocational education centres should encourage peer teaching based on the sharing of personal experiences and solutions, and rely on organizations whose expertise is recognized.

In the colleges, staff should be encouraged to take professional development courses to improve their skills at working with an ethnically diversified population. Teaching staff must learn how to organize their instruction so as to incorporate themes that will enable all their students, whatever their background, to assimilate the shared values of Québec, including openness to ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity.

The universities must modify their teacher training and professional development programs to ensure that teachers acquire the skills they need to work in a multiethnic setting and to prepare their students to live in a pluralistic society, even if they attend a school in which

there is little ethnic diversity. This concern must be reflected in all the theoretical and practical education the teachers receive.

8. The ethnic and cultural diversity of Québec society should be reflected in all categories of school staff

In keeping with society's goal of social equality and an end to all forms of exclusion and discrimination, educational institutions, school boards, colleges and the Ministère de l'Éducation should seek to increase the ethnic and cultural diversity of their staff. People from different ethnic groups should feel recognized and included in Québec society, and have access to employment in all job categories in the field of education. This would also bring the composition of those employment categories more into line with that of society.

Ethnocultural diversity in the staff of an educational institution also has psychoeducational implications: by encouraging student identification with a diversified society and a variety of role models, it favours success in school and the development of a sense of belonging in Québec. These consequences benefit not only the immigrant students but all the students and staff, who learn, through contact with others, to recognize the diversity of their society.

In order for the staff to reflect the ethnic diversity of our society, even school boards or colleges in so-called homogenous areas must include individuals of different origins. This does not mean that each educational institution must aim to recreate in its staff the proportional distribution of each ethnic group in its particular student population, but rather that the composition of the institution's staff should reflect that of Québec society as a whole.

This would give concrete expression to arguments in favour of acceptance and integration

and help bring people of different cultures closer together. Educational institutions striving to achieve an active and visible pluralism should consider this a priority, even if the dearth of qualified candidates from varied backgrounds for teaching positions is a real obstacle to the improvement of this situation.

Ethnic diversity should be a priority in the hiring of new educational personnel, which has already begun and will continue for the next few years. In addition, although hiring remains the principal means of increasing ethnocultural diversity, transfers and promotion of personnel within educational institutions should be looked into as possible ways to achieve this goal.

Finally, it seems appropriate to ask school boards and colleges to make sure that their hiring system includes no rules or practices that could have a discriminatory effect and that the diversity of society finds some reflection even in the most homogenous institutions, and to urge educational establishments to encourage young immigrants to consider careers as teachers.

CONCLUSION

This policy statement offers a comprehensive framework for the integration of immigrant students and the implementation of intercultural education, setting out the principles for action that should guide the school system in its efforts to accommodate the ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity of its students. The first principle for action, equality of opportunity, requires that all schools offer an equal opportunity for success in school to all students, whatever their characteristics. A command of French, the language of public life, is the focus of the second principle for action, which educational institutions must apply in a manner that benefits all their students, be they Francophones, Anglophones or allophones. The third principle for action concerns education for democratic citizenship in a pluralistic society, and aims mainly to promote the acceptance by all members of society of shared values, including an open attitude towards diversity.

Although educational institutions have made some progress in the areas of integration and intercultural education, there remain weak areas, which must be improved. This policy statement indicates the guidelines institutions should adopt in numerous areas: responsibility for the integration of recently arrived young immigrants; success for students with difficulty integrating into school; collaboration between the educational institution, the family and the community; the learning of French, the shared public language, as an ongoing process, and the promotion of French as a vehicle of culture; openness to ethnocultural, linguistic and religious diversity throughout the curriculum and in school life; initial training and staff upgrading in intercultural education and working in a multiethnic context, and the ethnic diversification of school staff.

These guidelines provide an overall approach to use in connection with all aspects of the curriculum and school life. Integration and intercultural education involve more than one subject or one set of measures, no matter how effective. Rather, they involve adopting cross-curricular objectives and pursuing them constantly and in every aspect of the education process.

It is clear that the diversity of these guidelines makes their implementation the shared responsibility of all partners in the education system, including the Ministère de l'Éducation, the school boards and the schools: integration and intercultural education depend on the participation of all members of the educational community. Everyone has to contribute to the recognition and accommodation of diversity, educating students to become active citizens and participants in the development of a democratic, Francophone, and pluralistic, Québec society. Thus, everyone will have a hand in the collective renewal of Québec schools.

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APPENDIX

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