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**Chair**

**The Honourable Michael Chong**



## Standing Committee on Official Languages

Monday, November 25, 2013

• (1530)

[Translation]

**The Chair (Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC)):** Welcome to the fifth meeting of the Standing Committee on Official Languages. Today is Monday, November 25, 2013. We are here pursuant to Standing Order 108 and the motion adopted on Monday, November 18, 2013, study of second official language immersion programs in Canada.

Today we welcome representatives from two groups: the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne and the Peel District School Board.

We will start with Mrs. Lalonde, from the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde (Director General, Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne):** Good afternoon, Mr. Chair, distinguished members of the committee, and the partners who are here with us. On behalf of the board of directors of the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne, and on my personal behalf, I thank you for your invitation. It will be a pleasure for me to share with you the AUFC's information, comments and recommendations on second official language immersion programs in Canada.

Though many of you already know the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne, allow me to begin by giving you a short overview of the association and its contribution to the development of French-speaking Canada and of linguistic diversity. Then I will share some information about today's topic and the important role that the AUFC and its members play in this area. I will conclude with some recommendations.

The AUFC represents 14 French-speaking or bilingual universities of all sizes, located in seven provinces outside Quebec. The programs offered by those institutions enhance the quality and scope of university learning, teaching and research in French, thereby contributing to the development of French-speaking communities in Canada. The AUFC is therefore committed to playing a role in Canada's human, cultural and economic development through the quality and accessible university training it offers across the country.

With their primary function as intellectual nerve centres for post-secondary education in French outside Quebec, our universities also play a key role in the promotion of official languages in Canada. This dual role sets us apart from the francophone universities in Quebec and allows our students to enjoy a unique French-speaking experience in our communities.

The association's programming is funded in large part by Canadian Heritage and by the dues paid by our members. This year and last, the association was also able to count on funding from Canadian Heritage for some immersion projects. One such program was to provide 25 immersion scholarships, each of \$5,000, to the best graduates from immersion high schools registered in one of the AUFC's member universities.

This year as well, the department is funding a project conducted in conjunction with l'Association canadienne des professeurs d'immersion. One of the things that this funding will allow us to do is to complete a study of the needs of immersion students enrolled in our member institutions. This will identify and suggest support and assistance services that could be put in place in order to provide a better welcome and orientation for immersion students arriving from high school.

I now move on to the subject that brings us together today, the study of immersion programs in Canada.

We estimate that around 5 million of Canada's 34 million inhabitants speak both official languages. Currently, around 340,000 students are enrolled in elementary and secondary immersion programs. Those students represent a critical mass to be recruited by and educated in our French-speaking or bilingual universities. The institutions that are members of the AUFC are addressing that recruitment already because more than 5,500 of their students come from immersion out of the 24,000 or so students enrolled in undergraduate programs offered in French or bilingually.

This critical mass of students is very important because it is becoming imperative to create a bilingual workforce at a time when Canada is playing a greater and greater role in the national and international economy. We are therefore very proud to be able to say that, each year, around 6,000 highly qualified, bilingual students receive degrees from our member universities.

The international forum on immersion at the university level that was held in February 2012 identified the challenges facing bilingual university teaching programs and the extra effort required by students enrolled in second language programs. To meet those challenges, universities must put in place orientation programs and special services in order to provide a cultural and social context that will allow the students to continue their immersion experience outside of their campus and during their internships.

•(1535)

I must also say that the move from a high school immersion program to a university immersion program creates a lot of insecurity for the students. They now find themselves in class with francophone students, whereas they were used to being with their anglophone peers in high school. So students may decide not to continue with French-language or immersion studies at university, very often because they are not sure about the quality and the breadth of programs offered in French-speaking universities outside Quebec.

In that context, Statistics Canada notes that bilingualism rates reach their peak with the 15 to 19-year-old age group, at the end of high school; the rate dwindles after that. In 2001, for example, 14.7% of young anglophones in that age group were bilingual. In 2006, just five years later, only 12.2% of the same age group, now aged 20 to 24, identified themselves as bilingual. The knowledge of French as a second language therefore seems to decline with time if it is not supported by a post-secondary experience. However, that experience is available all across the country.

That statistic underlines the importance of more promotion of post-secondary programs offered in French all across Canada, as well as of establishing the infrastructure required to encourage students to continue post-secondary studies in immersion or in French in order to allow their bilingualism to take root.

Here are our recommendations for improving the current situation of bilingualism and second official language learning programs.

First, we would like your committee to recommend in its report that the Government of Canada support the creation of a promotion, awareness and information campaign to inform Canadians, including new Canadians, about the existence of a continuum of French-language education, from elementary to post-secondary. As a result, Canadians would be able to choose a French immersion school, or first-language French school, safe in the knowledge that they would be able to continue their studies in the language up to post-secondary level.

Second, in order to improve existing second official language learning programs, we feel that it is essential to increase collaboration and partnerships between provincial, territorial and federal government authorities on the one hand and, on the other, national organizations that are concerned about bilingualism and that have a scope and a presence in communities across the country. We are thinking here about the AUFC, Canadian Parents for French, the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers, and so on. With the help of the federal government, the AUFC is offering to work together with the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to strengthen the ties between the various stakeholders.

Finally, we hope that the new Protocol for Agreements for Minority-Language Education and Second-Language Instruction will lead to an improvement in federal government support for second-language teaching at post-secondary level in Canada. In this context, we would like your committee to recommend that the federal government increase funding for strengthening the capacity and infrastructures of small francophone universities outside Quebec. The result would be improved access to their immersion programs, which would also be better maintained and developed.

Once again, I thank you for inviting me today. I will be pleased to answer your questions.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mrs. Lalonde.

[English]

Our second group in front of us today is represented by Mr. Shawn Moynihan, superintendent of curriculum and instruction support services, as well as Mr. Moreash, associate director of instructional support services. Welcome to you both. Now we'll have an opening statement from the Peel District School Board.

•(1540)

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan (Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction Support Services., Peel District School Board):** Thank you, Chair.

Good afternoon. On behalf of our director Tony Pontes, and the chair of our board Janet McDougald, we are pleased to accept your invitation to appear before the House Standing Committee on Official Languages.

In the Peel District School Board, we have three very successful French as a second language programs. We have French immersion, abbreviated as FI, which begins in grade 1. We have extended French beginning in grade 7, and core French beginning in grade 4.

As the invitation we received asked us to address French immersion “access, capacity, waiting lists, best practices, and efficiencies”, we will confine our remarks to those aspects of our FI program.

The demand for an FI program has grown at a very rapid pace in our board over the last 10 years. In 2001, 9.4% of all grade 1 students were in FI. By 2011, this percentage increased to approximately 25%. This growth demonstrates our board's commitment to the belief that FI is an option for all students, and the principle that “Participation in FSL programs should reflect the diversity of the student population, including students with special education needs and English language learners.” That's from the ministry document entitled “A Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12”, on page 10.

However, the rapid growth of the FI program has caused some stakeholders to express concern about the board's ability to sustain a quality FI program for students. To address this concern about the sustainability of a quality FI program, the Peel District School Board conducted an extensive review in 2011-12 of its elementary FI program.

This review was conducted by a committee and had several components, including an extensive review of the literature. Also, FI parent input was sought through a survey, to which 4,342 families responded. They were asked the following questions: Why did you enrol your child in French immersion? If busing were not provided for French immersion, would you have registered your child in the program? For those parents where French immersion is offered at your home school, would you have registered your child in the program if it had been offered at another school? The survey also asked whether they were planning on having their child continue French immersion in secondary school, and finally we asked if there were any other comments that they would like to share.

Other stakeholders, such as board departments, were asked to provide information as issues emerged. For example, our board is experiencing tremendous enrolment pressures in some areas, and this pressure has impacted space for potential FI programs.

The key finding that emerged from the review was the difficulty in ensuring a quality FI teacher. The review committee defined quality as a teacher who is qualified, fluent, and committed. The review committee found that although principals were finding it very difficult to hire teachers who are qualified to teach French immersion, qualifications alone were not enough to ensure a quality program.

The review committee heard repeatedly from different stakeholders regarding instances where a teacher had the requisite paper qualifications but was not fluent in French. Furthermore, the review committee heard that qualified and fluent teachers sometimes chose to leave the French immersion program to teach in the English program. The review committee heard that although it is very difficult for principals to find French immersion teachers for permanent contract teaching assignments, it is even more problematic for them to find FI teachers for long-term occasional assignments.

Although the Ontario College of Teachers has stated that there is not a shortage of FI teachers, this has not been our experience in Peel.

Early in the 2012-13 school year, the review committee shared its findings and recommendations with the board of trustees. The board of trustees considered the report and recommendations and enacted some changes to the French immersion program. These changes will be revisited by 2017.

First, the grade 1 French immersion program will be capped at the September 2012 level of enrolment, which is roughly 25%. Second, if registrations for FI exceed capacity at a school, then a lottery process would be used. Third, some students would be exempt from a lottery process should it occur.

●(1545)

At this time we would like to share our process for accessing grade 1 French immersion. First, and most importantly, information is provided to parents so that they can make an informed decision about their children's participation in French immersion. Information evenings are held in every French immersion school and at central locations. The board provides informational material in a variety of formats and languages. The board has worked in partnership with

Canadian Parents for French to produce two informational videos for parents.

The second major aspect of our process for accessing grade 1 French immersion is that the registration deadline is set well in advance, and this deadline is communicated to parents in a variety of formats and languages.

The next step is that if there are more registered students than there are people spaces at the school, then a lottery is conducted. However, for the 2013-14 school year, only 4 of our 34 grade 1 french immersion schools used a lottery. Therefore, 97.5% of registrants were placed without a lottery.

Lastly, we keep students on wait lists. We continue to monitor them until the end of their first week of school in September. At this time, students on the wait list who cannot be accommodated at their home French immersion school are offered a place in the nearest French immersion school that has space. By the end of our registration process, all families who registered for grade 1 French immersion were offered a place in French immersion either in their home French immersion school or the nearest French immersion school that had space.

We feel that our registration process has been a success. We have ensured a quality program, but we've also been able to offer a place for all who registered for grade 1 French immersion. We are proud of our French immersion program, our students and our staff, and we value all forms of diversity, including linguistic diversity, and we are pleased to provide students with an opportunity to learn, for many, their third language.

Thank you, Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I'll just make one remark before we go to questions and comments from members of the committee for the next hour and 40 minutes. I find it astounding and amazing that one in four grade 1 students in Brampton and Mississauga is in French immersion. I think that's just a real testimony to your expertise as a board in accommodating that rapid growth over the last decade.

So we'll have now about an hour and 40 minutes of questions and comments from various members of the committee, beginning with Monsieur Godin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Welcome to our witnesses.

Mrs. Lalonde, I have some questions for you.

How do we make sure that francophone students and students coming out of immersion programs will continue their studies in French?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** For immersion students, different factors are at play. From elementary school through high school, immersion students and their parents, who often have an important role to play in decisions on post-secondary education, must be informed about the programs in French and the support for immersion that universities offer. Students are unaware that it is possible to successfully continue their studies in French. Some high school students decide to study at university or college in English because they are afraid that they will not have as much success if they study in French.

You need to know that a number of our universities provide support programs through which the students can get individual help from teachers in correcting texts with a view to increasing their chances of success. At the post-secondary level in French, all kinds of mechanisms can be put in place. But they do not exist in all our universities. Some larger universities such as the University of Ottawa and the Université de Moncton can help people, but other smaller universities would need help to be able to support immersion students.

To answer your question in a nutshell, I will say there is a great need to make the possibilities in French understood and known. Often, students are under the impression that, if they are in immersion from grades 1 to 12, they can get a bilingual job and use French in the job market, but that is not always the case.

• (1550)

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Are you talking about the first two years of university?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** No. I am talking about students who start immersion in the first or second year of elementary school.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** You should talk to the Government of New Brunswick.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Yes.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** In New Brunswick, it used to be from grade 1, but then they changed it to start in grade 5. The people from Peel should listen to this. It was the first time that anglophones took to the streets, in front of the Legislative Assembly Building in Fredericton, to say that they wanted their children to be learning French from grade 1. Finally, the government started it in grade 3.

Could you comment on that, given that you are experts in studies and things like that. Is it not better for children to start immersion at an early age? Is the government doing enough for services in both official languages in a country that is supposed to be bilingual? It should be doing promotion in the universities to tell students that, if they want a job with the Government of Canada, they should be learning both languages. That is what it should be doing, not telling people that they do not need to be bilingual, because judges and all kinds of people appointed to positions are not bilingual either.

This question goes to the people from Peel. What role should the government play in this?

[English]

**The Chair:** If Mr. Moynihan or Mr. Moreash could respond to that question from Mr. Godin, he would appreciate that.

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** If the question is, is it better to start immersion early, then the research is really clear that, yes, the earlier the better, and that's why we start our immersion program in grade 1.

**Mr. Scott Moreash (Associate Director, Instructional Support Services, Peel District School Board):** Certainly, because we start in grade 1, we've seen, as Mr. Moynihan pointed out earlier, an increase over the last 10 years in interest in early immersion programs, to the point where, as the chair stated, we have one in four of our grade 1 students opting into a French immersion program beginning in grade 1.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** It is said that federal government positions should be bilingual so that Canadians can be provided services in both official languages. Mrs. Lalonde, do you feel that the government is doing enough promotion in the universities to make sure that students understand that it would be good for them to learn the other language? There have to be programs to encourage them along those lines from an early age. You mentioned universities like Moncton and Ottawa, but other universities are poorer.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** When people thought about immersion, they thought mostly about elementary and high school education. There was very little mention of the post-secondary level. I think that is starting to happen. Work in awareness and promotion must continue. Students must be told that they must be in immersion throughout their education. Studies clearly show that, if students do not continue their education in French into post-secondary level, their ability to use both languages decreases a lot.

If we want our investments in immersion education and training at elementary and high school to bear fruit and if we want our workforce to be bilingual, we have to continue the investment into the post-secondary level.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mrs. Lalonde.

Thank you, Mr. Godin.

Over to you, Mr. Gourde.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My thanks to the witnesses for being part of our meeting today.

My first question goes to Mrs. Lalonde. I am going to continue along the same lines.

We all agree that, if anglophones can continue into post-secondary studies in French, they will be more competent. But what tools can we offer them? Sooner or later, they will leave school, and if they end up in an anglophone environment for seven or eight years with no chance to use their French, I feel that they will be back to square one.

•(1555)

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** First, they have to get post-secondary training that they can rely on in their jobs. If they take post-secondary education in English, they will still have their French vocabulary. They will have a base of education in French, and that is very important. If they want to continue to study French, they have that choice. They have to use their French and continue with language training, if they feel it is necessary. At that point, it becomes their responsibility.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** You said that bilingual students in Canada have an advantage when they reach the job market, not just nationally, but also internationally.

Can you give us some more details about this international dimension?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Given the agreement that Canada has just signed with the countries of Europe, I feel that our bilingual workforce will increasingly be an asset for Canada. We can do business internationally with a number of countries in the Francophonie.

In another context, international students come to study in our universities and, in many cases, we want them to stay in Canada as economic immigrants. They are often viewed positively by the government as potential Canadian citizens who will participate in Canada's economic life. That is a way in which we increase our bilingual workforce.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** In trade and economics, interpersonal relations are really very important internationally.

Are there other countries in the world, apart from those in Europe, that provide those advantages?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** There are all the African countries we work with, the countries of the Maghreb. I think there are a number of regions in the world where French is spoken and used for trade.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** In the eyes of Europe and those other countries, does the fact that we are bilingual make Canada a sort of gateway that allows them to do business with North America?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I cannot speak for them, but I am sure that, for the European countries in which French plays an important role, the fact that people can speak both official languages is certainly an asset. In a number of other European countries, French is not the first language. But Italian and Spanish are in the same family.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Thank you, Mrs. Lalonde.

My next question goes to the representatives from the Peel District School Board.

People say that it is not difficult to find qualified teachers for these programs, but you are talking about a shortage? Who is right?

[English]

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** We can speak to our experience in Peel. It has been difficult to find committed, fluent, qualified French immersion teachers. That has been the difficulty in our board.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Do you make an effort to recruit francophone teachers from other provinces? You are in Ontario, but do you let francophone teachers in other provinces know that you have jobs for them? I am thinking about Quebec. A lot of francophone teachers might be interested.

[English]

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** Absolutely. Our recruiting process does take us into the province of Quebec—for example, looking for teachers. In fact it would take us across Canada in some instances. Certainly we have hiring processes in place that specifically target a search for—again—qualified, fluent, and committed teachers to teach in our FI programs.

•(1600)

[Translation]

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Gourde.

Ms. St-Denis, the floor is yours.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Lib.):** Thank you.

First, I have a question for Mr. Moynihan.

You mentioned a survey that you conducted with parents of children in immersion, but you did not talk about the result.

What did your survey say about why people enrol their children in immersion schools?

[English]

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** Thank you.

Through you, Mr. Chair, we have some sample responses for what parents said as to why. The most prevalent response was “to open doors to future opportunities for my child”. Another frequent response was “to increase my child's appreciation of other languages and cultures”. The third most frequent response was “to help my child learn French, the language we speak at home”. The fourth most common response was “to help my child get into a post-secondary institution”, and the next most common one was “to enhance my child's future potential”. The next one was “to increase my child's opportunities for success in a rapidly changing global economy”.

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** We've also heard anecdotally from parents—sorry.

[Translation]

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Not many people say that they send their children to immersion to improve their job prospects. No one says that it is in order to get a job.

But what is the attitude of immigrants to immersion? Do first-generation immigrants send their children to immersion?

[English]

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** Yes, we have many English language learners who are registered in French immersion schools.

[Translation]

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Is that for the same reasons?

[English]

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** Yes, for the same reasons.

[Translation]

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Mrs. Lalonde, when immersion programs are being developed, what role does an introduction to francophone culture in Canada have? Does French-Canadian culture come first, then the culture of the various minority francophone groups? Are children introduced to the culture in the programs? Is that done, or is it just about teaching the language?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Do you want me to talk about the post-secondary level?

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** No. So I will ask the school board representatives that question.

[English]

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** I'm sorry, could we ask you to repeat the question?

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Do you want it repeated in English?

What I want to know is if you teach French culture in your courses, the culture of Quebec and the culture of all other French communities in Canada? Is it in the program to do that?

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** Absolutely yes. That would in fact be an important part of our teaching of French as a second language, not only in the immersion program but in our extended programs and our core French programs as well. Culture is a very important part. It isn't only a language acquisition course; it's a holistic approach to French as a second language.

[Translation]

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** You said that 20% of the people who enrol at university come from immersion. What is the percentage from francophone communities outside Quebec?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** At the moment, there are between 24,000 and 25,000 students in the universities with programs in French. Of that number, about 5,500 come from immersion. The rest are from francophone communities.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Do you believe that French immersion programs help in a tangible way with the survival of the most threatened francophone communities in the country? Do you feel that it will be necessary to create different programs for the other francophone communities outside Quebec where French is threatened with extinction?

Do immersion course help to breathe life into Saint Boniface, for example? Take any francophone community. Do immersion courses help the vitality of those communities?

• (1605)

[English]

**The Chair:** I think that question was for the Peel District School Board.

Madame St-Denis is asking if French immersion programs strengthen and contribute to the vitality of official language minority

communities living in places like Welland, Ontario, or St. Boniface in Winnipeg or places like that.

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** It's difficult. We can't speak for any other jurisdiction but our own. We are a suburb of Toronto where the percentage of francophone population in the overall population I suspect is relatively low, but certainly we've seen, just from interest in French immersion programs, that not only does it certainly vitalize and bring life to an individual school but given the demand for FI programs, it really also adds a lot to the program offerings that we can bring to our school.

As for other jurisdictions, I'm sorry but I can't speak of them.

[Translation]

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** In the case of Toronto, do immersion programs bring anything to the overall community socially, culturally or economically? Is it positive? People sign their children up, but does that do anything for the community? Are they recognized for it? In your opinion, are that attitude and affiliation important?

[English]

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** Certainly, we believe it does. Our French immersion programs are a very important part of the overall program offerings that we have as a school board, as the second-largest school board in the country. Certainly, they bring a vitality to our program offerings, which we are very proud of.

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** And we've been able to take advantage of opportunities provided by the Ministry of Education to really focus on heightening awareness and understanding of French culture. We've provided many opportunities with artistic events or field trips, or things like that, which we think have really contributed to a positive feeling in the community.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. St-Denis.

[English]

Now we'll go to Madam Bateman. You have the floor.

[Translation]

**Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My thanks to all our witnesses. I have questions for you all.

First of all, Mrs. Lalonde, I am the mother of two students enrolled in immersion programs. I am really interested in knowing your opinion of the level of French necessary to attend a university in Canada entirely in French.



**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I could not tell you the precise level and skills required. However, the language level of each student is assessed the moment they arrive at any university that offers its programs in French. It must be said that most universities have programs in French and in English but only some are strictly French-speaking. Based on the students' skills when they arrive at a university or college, a plan is established that will allow their language or writing abilities in French to develop. Students are supported in their university courses.

Of course, a basic knowledge of French is required. But all students who have been in immersion programs in elementary school or high school generally have the skills they need to take courses at university level.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Thank you.

In general, what percentage of your students come from immersion programs?

• (1610)

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** About 24,000 to 25,000 students are studying in French. Of that number, 5,000 students come from immersion programs.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Very good.

Mr. Moynihan, you said that almost 25% of your elementary students were in immersion programs. What is the percentage in grades 7, 9 and 12?

[English]

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** We have a strong program throughout the elementary years, from grade 1 to grade 8. We have a fairly low rate of attrition. The reason most frequently given that students leave the French immersion program before they go to secondary school is that they choose another option, such as a regional program—for example, a school for the arts or something like that. Our attrition rates from grades one to eight are very low.

Regarding high school, we're in the process of beginning a review of our secondary school programs. In about one year we'll have more information about exactly why there's attrition.

We also have—

[Translation]

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** What is the percentage in grade 12? Are we talking about 10%, 5% or 20%?

[English]

What is the percentage of students that you have in French immersion programs in grade 12, for example?

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** We don't have the data presently for secondary school. That's something that we're engaged in. We have a project on the go to take a look at a—

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Just a ballpark number. How many teachers do you have for your grade 12 programs, and are 10% of them French-speaking teachers? Just a ballpark number is fine, because typically there's a huge attrition rate. There's an enormous investment up front and then there's a huge attrition rate.

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** What I can tell you is that we have three or four secondary school French immersion programs from which we

are graduating students, whereas at the elementary level we would have in the range of 20 or 30, or even higher, sites where we offer French immersion.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** So 30 versus three or four.

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** Correct.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** When are you going to have that data?

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** We're engaged in a similar French immersion review of our secondary programs. That data should be available in the fall.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** What do you anticipate? If it's available this fall, what do you anticipate? This is not unique to the Peel district.

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** We would anticipate that there would be a variety of factors. I just want to clarify, through the chair, that you're asking about pursuing French immersion to obtain the certificate. Is that correct?

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Yes, to graduate in French immersion.

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** So, anecdotally—

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** For that matter, some schools have international baccalaureate programs that start in grade 10 and so there's a dropout at that level because they're only choosing to offer it in one language, but there's a higher level of language demanded, which traditionally French immersion students excel at.

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** Yes, and anecdotally we would say that you're right on with things like the international baccalaureate programs. Anecdotally we would have students say that they pursue other things like regional programs, like international baccalaureates, and that their schedules become very crowded and it's harder for them to continue to take the French immersion courses in secondary school. We've heard that anecdotally so far.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Do you offer IB programming, and if you do, do you offer it in both languages?

• (1615)

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** Yes. The language of instruction officially in our IB program is English.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Okay, so you offer it in English. You don't offer it in French?

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** Correct.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** And that would be a cause and effect for the dropout, I suspect.

Do you have late immersion programs?

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** Yes.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** What year do you start that in?

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** Through you, Chair, we start in grade 7.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Madame Bateman, for your questions.

We'll now give the floor to the member from New Brunswick Southwest, Mr. Williamson.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Mr. Chair, the opposition members have not yet had a chance to ask questions.

**The Chair:** The floor is yours, Mr. Williamson.

**Mr. John Williamson:** Okay, fine. Excuse me, Mr. Chair.

My questions go to the representatives of both organizations. First, I would like to talk to the witness from the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne.

What will be your challenges be in the next 10 years? In your institutions, one student in five comes from immersion programs, meaning that one student is anglophone while the other four of the five are francophones. Given the way in which schools change and given the number of students currently registered in them, what will be your main challenges in the next 10 years?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Our challenges in—

**Mr. John Williamson:** I am talking about the challenges that your schools have to face. Are you afraid that there may be fewer students in your schools in 10 years?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Actually, there are three client groups in universities and colleges outside Quebec: immersion students, francophones who have studied in French all their lives, and international students. At the Université de Moncton, in New Brunswick, the proportion of international students is almost at 20%. That client group is increasingly a presence in our universities and colleges.

In some regions of Canada, the young francophone demographic is declining. Clearly, at the moment, that decline is being felt more in the Atlantic region than in western Canada. Nevertheless, the number of students in our universities is staying the same, because of an increase in the number of immersion students and especially in the number of international students.

**Mr. John Williamson:** In New Brunswick, where I live, we are already seeing changes in the number of students attending our schools.

Do you think that the number of international students and students coming from elsewhere in Canada is going to be able to solve the problems in the Atlantic region?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** For the time being, the increase in the number of international students is allowing us to maintain the number of students we have.

In addition, the universities and colleges outside Quebec are working together more and more in order to provide on-line programs. We are offering more and more distance education. It allows us to offer more programs than a single university could. That kind of collaboration allows us to offer distance education programs that can be used in a number of francophone communities. Several universities use them at the same time.

**Mr. John Williamson:** Do those programs work reasonably well for students who are not on campus?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Actually, those programs can be offered in more than one way. It is always important for a student to have support in person. Some courses can be offered as distance learning options, but the student can also have access to educational support in person at a university or college.

**Mr. John Williamson:** How do you assess the second language French competency of students coming from immersion programs across the country who want to enrol in the universities in your network?

• (1620)

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** When they arrive at the post-secondary level, either university or college, immersion students have a very good understanding of French.

Ms. St-Denis was asking earlier how they integrate into our communities. They integrate as members of French-speaking Canada. Just today, I was at a meeting where the person in charge was a student with two anglophone parents. She had been in immersion programs all her life and spoke French as well as I do. They integrate into our communities.

Basically, people who are in immersion from elementary to post-secondary level have very good French skills.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Williamson and Mrs. Lalonde.

[*English*]

Now we'll give the floor to Mr. Benskin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin (Jeanne-Le Ber, NDP):** Good afternoon. Thank you for being part of our meeting today. My question goes to either one of you.

How can we encourage high school students in immersion to continue studies in French?

Mrs. Lalonde, you are saying that, at the moment, some French-speaking universities have assistance programs for students who come from immersion schools but who do not necessarily have confidence in their ability to operate in French.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Let me answer your second question.

We are conducting a study at the moment in which we are asking high school immersion students to tell us why they would continue to study in French at university or college level. We are also asking them what would cause them not to. We want to find out about the obstacles they see and the fears they have, so that we can put in place the support they are going to need at university.

At elementary school and high school, they are studying with other anglophones who are also learning French. But at college or university, they are studying with francophones. We have to be able to provide those students with separate and appropriate services that meet their own personal needs. We have to let them know about that opportunity so that they can trust their own ability to succeed at post-secondary level. That is important for them, because their future is at stake.

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin:** Thank you.

[English]

I'll go over to you, Mr. Moynihan.

What do you feel can be done at the secondary level to encourage immersion students studying in French to continue their studies in French at the university level?

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** That is one of the key questions we're taking a look at as we begin our review of secondary programs. It's really one of our key inquiry questions: what can we do to support you to continue your studies in French throughout secondary school?

We have some anecdotal reasons as to why students aren't doing that, but we're looking forward to completing the review so that we'll have some really clear data about why they're not doing so.

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin:** Could you quickly share some of that anecdotal information?

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** Anecdotally, students have commented that their schedules become very full, in terms of their core selections or taking prerequisites for courses in university. Also, they've mentioned taking regional programs, such as school for the arts programs and such things, in which their schedules become very full. As much as they would like to continue in French, they can't take all the courses they would like. Anecdotally, that is our information thus far.

• (1625)

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin:** Okay. You mentioned earlier in your comments the difficulty of finding qualified teachers for the immersion program. That's not the first time this committee has heard that. We've heard it from organizations in the west of Canada as well.

When you are searching for these teachers, is there a teaching program or a teaching certificate specifically in immersion teaching from which you can source, or are there people out there who speak French and are teachers?

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** We're sourcing through Ontario universities, but in fact our recruitment goes countrywide. In Ontario, the qualifications to teach French immersion are similar to qualifications to teach core French—that is, having additional qualifications programs through universities not specifically in French immersion, but in teaching French as a second language.

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin:** Okay, but do you source right across the country? Do you source in Quebec as well as in B.C.?

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** Yes.

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin:** And you are still having difficulties finding qualified teachers?

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** That's correct.

[Translation]

**Mr. Tyrone Benskin:** My question is for Ms. Lalonde.

[English]

Are you aware of that situation?

[Translation]

I mean the limited number of qualified people to teach French immersion.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Benskin.

Ms. Lalonde, the floor is yours.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I often hear about the shortage of French as a second language teachers. I'm not sure whether the intention to increase those resources exists or not. But I do think that the smaller a region's French-speaking minority, the harder it is to find people qualified to teach French as a second language. I think that's the reality.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

[English]

Now we'll go to one of the three members we have here today from Toronto.

Mr. Daniel.

**Mr. Joe Daniel (Don Valley East, CPC):** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, witnesses, for being here.

To the members from Peel District School Board, I would continue to encourage you to get people to start learning a second language when they're young, because I think learning a second language then makes it very much easier. I have both a second and a third language, which I learned when I was young. Unfortunately, neither of them is French. But having said that, I'm taking French lessons now, which is interesting.

My questions are mainly for Madame Lalonde, and mainly directed towards the post-secondary education side of things.

I am really interested in finding out what sort of fall-out rate you get for those who are attending university-level immersion courses. Is it more significant for those who have studied immersion than for those who are naturally French-speaking people, or not?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** If I understand correctly, you're referring to students' ability to do well.

[English]

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** Yes, of those who pull out during the program because it's too difficult or—

[Translation]

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I don't have those kinds of figures with me. But I do know that, if we want students who have come from French immersion to do all their schooling in French, they need support services right from year one of their programs. Otherwise, they often shift over to English in year two.

[English]

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** Okay, so there are no significant numbers that drop out of school, or you don't have the numbers.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I don't have those numbers.

[English]

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** Okay.

Do you have any numbers for them once they have graduated, as to how they compare with the anglophone university graduates in terms of finding a job and finding one in the profession they choose?

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I don't have those statistics, per se. But a number of studies have very clearly shown that individuals who have completed post-secondary education and who have the ability to function in both official languages are more likely to find better paying jobs very quickly.

• (1630)

[*English*]

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** Clearly, the opening up of this new EU market will, I hope, bring many jobs in the commercial sector that also support all of that.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Absolutely. With the various markets opening up around the world, I would say we're now a small village. In order for Canada to carve out a place for itself on the economic stage, it is critical to have that bilingual workforce.

[*English*]

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** I notice from the flyer you brought in of all your various courses, there is a fairly limited number of engineering courses. I'm curious to find out why. Is that because technical French may be somewhat more difficult in terms of comprehension and execution in the technical schools and technical engineering work?

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I can't give you the exact reason. But I can say that the more specialized a university program is, the harder it is to offer the program across a number of universities, and that is due to the small number of people in certain communities. There is no way all the universities could offer those specialized programs. That's why we're trying to work together more at the university level: to make those programs more accessible around the country.

[*English*]

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** Again, I notice that the hub for aerospace is in the Montreal area and that there is a lot of technical work being done there. That must fuel a number of jobs for that area.

Would you like to comment on that?

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Quebec offers more training in those sectors.

There's still a long ways to go before more post-secondary programs are available in French. Right now, not every program is available outside Quebec. If the number of students goes up, then we need to accommodate them by providing greater access to certain programs not currently available.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay.

Thank you very much, Mr. Daniel.

Madame Brosseau.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau (Berthier—Maskinongé, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank all the witnesses for their input. I'm new to the committee. I find our discussion extremely worthwhile. French is very important to me. My son will be turning 13 soon, and he's in French immersion.

I'll begin with you, Ms. Lalonde. Did you appear before the committee on the topic of the new Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-18?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Yes.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau:** I'd like to hear what you think of the roadmap and whether it meets your expectations.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I'll begin by saying that I'm the director general of the Consortium national de formation en santé. It was in that capacity that I appeared before the committee on the roadmap. The new roadmap focuses on training sectors. Under the roadmap, similar funding will be allocated to areas such as health. We were very pleased to learn that, with the new roadmap, our funding over the next five years would be the same as it was in the previous five years.

The roadmap also sets out training funding in the area of justice, which is another important sector for francophone minority communities. In fact, access to justice services in French is just as important as access to health services in French is.

The roadmap continues to make investments in education. I think the roadmap continues to meet the needs of francophone minority communities, but still has room for improvement. Many needs persist, and we must continue to meet them.

• (1635)

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau:** I have a question for both witnesses, if they don't mind.

What social factors represent challenges for students wanting to continue in French immersion?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** At the post-secondary level?

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau:** Yes.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** One challenge is being able to study in an environment with other francophone students. It's a new situation for those continuing in immersion at the post-secondary level.

There are a number of possibilities. For example, we offer scholarships to students who wish to complete their post-secondary education in French immersion. In order to receive the scholarship, the student is required to work in the francophone community. That's another challenge. In addition to what they're learning in their program, it's important for them to be involved in the francophone minority community.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau:** Ms. Lalonde, is this the first year you've offered scholarships?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** We've done it for two years now.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau:** How many scholarships do you give out every year?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Currently, the government gives us enough money annually for twenty-five \$5,000 scholarships for students enrolled in a university program and pursuing their studies in French. The scholarships are awarded in their first year of university. It's well known that students who start out in French tend to continue the rest of their university education in French. The scholarship represents an important incentive. And by working and being involved in the community, they get to see just how useful their studying in French is.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau:** Do you know how many students apply for the scholarship?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** We never have enough scholarships, that's for sure. If that's what you want to know, I can confirm that right off the bat.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau:** More money, then—

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** There are never enough scholarships for everyone who applies. But on top of the scholarships we happily receive from the government and award to students are the ones the universities, themselves, offer.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau:** Can students use the scholarship to study at any university in Canada?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Yes, all over outside Quebec. The scholarships are available in the 14 universities who belong to the AUGC.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau:** Very good.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

[English]

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** Mr. Moynihan talked earlier about the number of English-language learners who are part of our French immersion programs, and we've just done some quick calculations of our own here at the table. We see that one in four students in grade 1, for example, at the beginning level of French immersion, also receive support in their endeavours to learn to speak English. Certainly, that would be a factor in the number of new Canadians whom we have the privilege of serving in our district. It is very high. The complexities of learning French as a second language while at the same time learning English as a second language is, in all likelihood, a factor that affects their choice of immersion programs.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau:** I think it was mentioned earlier that there are 31 primary immersion schools and only three to four secondary schools that offer immersion. Is that right?

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** That's correct.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau:** Because there is a great interest, I guess, in parents wanting to send their children to an immersion school—it opens so many more doors for them—do you think that in the next few years there will be more of an opportunity to have secondary schools open up and have more French offered?

• (1640)

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** That is certainly one of the key questions that will be answered in the secondary French immersion review that we're beginning to conduct. We know that will be a key question we'll look into because you're right: the program is so popular in

elementary school it would make sense for us to explore the number of locations in secondary schools as well.

**Ms. Ruth Ellen Brosseau:** I guess it will only facilitate more students continuing on in post-secondary, university, and then employment.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We have Mr. Leung, from Willowdale.

**Mr. Chungsen Leung (Willowdale, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I also apologize, because while I can handle three or four other languages, unfortunately, French is not one of them. It's something that I'm endeavouring very hard to study right now, although I must admit that when you have a second, third, or fourth language, it does become easier—but not past the age of 60.

I want to come back to the Peel District School Board. You mentioned that one of the reasons students want to study in French immersion is that there are better job prospects. Particularly in Canada, the job prospects are in government, and the military, and perhaps in well-known organizations like Air Canada or some mining companies, and so on.

Based on my experience in speaking three or four languages, you need to have that environment where you can talk about commerce and where you can conduct day-to-day living, arts and culture. What kinds of facilities or environment does a student in, say, the Peel region have for making French a lively language as they go into the French immersion program? Perhaps you can give an example of what they can do or what your program does for them to give them a sense that learning French is lively and not like learning a language like Latin.

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** We have many, many examples of the way our teachers bring the French language alive. We very much focus on active learning, on experiential learning. Students have many, many opportunities to use their language, especially socially, because we really try to develop some oral fluency as a first step. It's a very active classroom.

I also had the privilege of taking Latin at high school, so I know exactly what you're referring to in terms of approaches. It's very different. It's very social and there's a lot of opportunity to construct a good understanding of the French language. There are many, many activities, and it's very active, very lively, and very social.

**Mr. Scott Moreash:** We are also funded by our own ministry of education to enhance opportunities for our students outside the classroom. Because of our proximity to the city of Toronto, where there are a number of opportunities available to students— theatre, field trips, including experiences in French restaurants—the kinds of things that our teachers use to enhance the classroom experience for students in immersion.

**Mr. Chungsen Leung:** Is there a budget in the French immersion program to take students, let's say, to Quebec or France or francophone Africa, not necessarily at the primary level, but certainly at secondary school level?

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** There wouldn't be a budget to go outside the country, but the ministry has provided budgets for French cultural experiences, such as field trips.

Over the last couple of years, we've been able to provide many opportunities for our students to take field trips, whether to Quebec or to French cultural events in Ontario.

**Mr. Chungsen Leung:** My next question is for Madame Lalonde.

In terms of Canadian manufacturing, a lot of it is based in Montreal, for example the whole aviation industry, including Bombardier, and also SNC-Lavalin, which I have worked for in the past.

If students graduate at master's level or Ph.D. level, they can find occupations in those areas. But are we graduating enough students who are bilingually proficient to work in those industries? If not, do they have to go overseas to seek employment? I could see this opening up with the comprehensive European trade agreement.

What's the level of graduates right now? Can you absorb enough of your bilingual students?

•(1645)

[Translation]

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I haven't done a proper study on whether we currently train enough bilingual workers to meet all the needs that could flow from the new EU agreement. But I do know that those with training who can speak both French and English are able to find jobs very quickly. We are often told, loud and clear, that there is a shortage of bilingual workers.

In any event, I don't think we're training enough bilingual people to meet the market's needs.

[English]

**Mr. Chungsen Leung:** In the higher sciences like computer sciences, or the other higher sciences, finance and so on, all the research tends to be in English.

Is there a problem with bilingual students working totally in an English-speaking research field yet living in a French environment?

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Leung.

Madame Lalonde.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** We're talking about bilingual workers. Of course, at some point, students doing their studies in French do a lot of research in English. So they're able to study and do research in English. But if they weren't doing their studies in French, they would lose their ability to work in that language. Despite the fact that some of their textbooks or research is in English, they at least have the option of taking certain classes in French.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Lalonde.

Ms. Raynault, go ahead please.

**Ms. Francine Raynault (Joliette, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses.

Personally, I have always lived in a French-speaking environment. My riding isn't home to many anglophones.

My question is for Ms. Lalonde.

You award twenty-five scholarships at \$5,000 a piece. That's not a lot. What could we do to give you more and enable you to encourage more people to study in a different province? How many scholarships would you like to have?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** What do you mean by "a different province?"

**Ms. Francine Raynault:** I mean a student from Manitoba, for example, continuing their studies in Quebec, Saskatchewan or some other province with a university in your network.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Right now, the federal government provides us with twenty-five \$5000 scholarships. On their end, universities award scholarships to encourage students to pursue their studies in immersion. The scholarships are awarded based on students' marks and abilities. The 25 scholarships aren't the only support available. Different types of funding are available to students beginning their studies.

**Ms. Francine Raynault:** How many scholarships are there?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I couldn't tell you how many there are all together.

**Ms. Francine Raynault:** You don't have that figure?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** No, not that one. But I can say that it's always important to offer enough scholarships to fill the need. There's no question that 25 isn't much. We wish the program had more resources.

**Ms. Francine Raynault:** So you're going to ask the government to add more scholarships?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** We're going to look at how we can work with the government and the universities to add more scholarships.

•(1650)

**Ms. Francine Raynault:** Scholarships represent incentives for students. That support also enables students to live in a different community. That's a valuable dimension.

My next question is for all three witnesses.

You frequently mentioned the shortage of French teachers. What can we do to produce more French teachers who teach French immersion? What should we do to encourage those teachers to teach French immersion?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I'm not sure whether people realize the shortage exists. The first step is to let them know about it. Some areas have a more severe shortage. The smaller the francophone minority community is in a region with French immersion, the more severe the teacher shortage. Finding solutions to the shortage requires an examination of the problem. I'm not convinced that, today, we have a comprehensive view of the problem.

**Ms. Francine Raynault:** What do we do now to let people know that we need teachers to teach students in French?

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** The first thing to do is determine where the shortage exists. The second step is to let young people pursuing post-secondary education know that we need more French as a second language teachers.

**Ms. Francine Raynault:** My understanding, then, is that no study was done on the shortage.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Studies may have been done, but I'm not familiar with any.

**Ms. Francine Raynault:** Gentlemen, do you know where the shortages are? How can we tell people we need French teachers?

[*English*]

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** I know that when this has been brought up before, the Ontario College of Teachers has suggested that there's not a shortage, but it has been our experience that there is.

One of the things that we're doing is that we're working in collaboration with faculties of education so that we can work with students who have not yet completed their teacher training to make them aware of the opportunities to teach French immersion or French as a second language in our board, so that they can be aware of that as a decision earlier in their teacher preparation.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Francine Raynault:** All three of you seem concerned about the lack of French teachers in your communities. I hope that French teachers will eventually hear you so they can help others benefit from French-language skills. It's important for people in other provinces to speak French. French-speaking communities are scattered throughout the country. These people need to preserve their language so they can work in French later and, why not, teach French in their communities.

There's something else I'd like to know. Generally, what are the main challenges of learning a second language, be it French or English in the Canadian context? Any of the three witnesses can answer that.

**The Chair:** We'll begin with Ms. Lalonde.

**Mrs. Jocelyne Lalonde:** The first challenge is ensuring language learning happens not just in school, but outside the classroom as well. French as a second language learners have to be able to speak French outside the classroom in order to practise their skills and

integrate into francophone communities. Doing that familiarizes them with the culture and gives them a greater appreciation of why they are learning French as a second language.

• (1655)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Okay.

Mr. Moreash or Mr. Moynihan, would you care to comment?

**Mr. Shawn Moynihan:** Very often the students might be in a French immersion program, but the parents don't have facility in the French language themselves. So we've embarked on several projects to help parents better support their children who are learning French.

There have been some very successful partnerships with Canadian Parents for French, and also some projects through the ministry of education, to support parents who don't have a facility in French but want to encourage their children to develop that.

Support for parents to support their kids outside of the classroom has been a promising avenue of support.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Very good.

I want to thank all the committee members for their questions and comments.

I would also like to thank Ms. Lalonde for her input.

[*English*]

Thank you very much to Mr. Moreash and Mr. Moynihan for your testimony.

All of that will be very helpful as we draft a report on second language immersion programs throughout Canada.

Without further ado, this meeting is adjourned.







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