The Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy

A Societal Project
for the French Education System

Premier's message

As Premier of New Brunswick, I would like to congratulate the members of the Action Group for the Commission on Francophone Schools (AGCFS) and the hundreds of individuals who have fully committed to carrying out one of the most significant Acadian and Francophone educational projects in New Brunswick's history, i.e. the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy for the French Education System.

I am very proud of the exemplary collaboration that has taken place between the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the community. This solid partnership has led to the development of a policy that will draw attention and serve as an example across Canada and around the world.
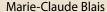
With the adoption of the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy for the French Education System, New Brunswick now has a plan to support the Acadian and Francophone community in meeting the challenges of the linguistic minority context. By helping our children to excel and to develop their identity from a very early age, we are building a solid foundation for the growth and prosperity of New Brunswick society as a whole.

To all those who participated in this project and will see to its implementation, I thank you for your ongoing commitment. I am convinced that by working together we will ensure that this policy generates all of the desired outcomes.

David Alward

Premier

Marie-Claude Blais

Gérard Mcken

Message from the Co-Chairs of the Action Group for the Commission on Francophone Schools (AGCFS)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As co-chairs of the Action Group for the Commission on Francophone Schools (AGCFS), we are very pleased to present the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy for the French Education System which is the result of a consultation and collaboration process unlike any other between the Acadian and Francophone community and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system has the dual mission of ensuring the academic success of learners and contributing to the transmission of the French language and appropriation of the Acadian and Francophone culture. In other words, the education system promotes the overall development of children and young people.

The Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy represents a collective vision, a strategy, and a fusion of approaches that an entire community wishes to acquire in order to ensure the growth and sustainability of the Acadian and Francophone culture. This Policy recognizes the unique characteristics of education in a minority setting and the major role of the education system as a whole in cultural and identity development.

We are proud to present this Policy which, in addition to valuing the contributions of many cultural groups, recognizes the role of the community and all education partners in fulfilling the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system.

To the members of the AGCFS and the hundreds of individuals, researchers, and organizations who participated in this societal project and who believed and continue to believe in the importance of its existence, we applaud your efforts and your perseverance. We would like to offer our sincere thanks for this generous gift that will benefit all New Brunswickers for generations to come.

The Honourable Marie-Claude Blais, Q.C.

Minister of Education and
Early Childhood Development
and AGCFS co-chair

Gérard Mcken

President of the Fédération des conseils
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FRANCOPHONE NORD-OUEST SCHOOL DISTRICT

Acknowledgments

The Government of New Brunswick and the Action Group for the Commission on Francophone Schools (AGCFS) would like to thank all of the education partners who contributed to the development of New Brunswick's Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy. More than 200 Acadian and Francophone[1] leaders were involved in this major undertaking to devise and design a collective educational project.

The Government of New Brunswick and the AGCFS would also like to extend their sincere thanks to the support staff who put a lot of time and effort into the preparation of a document that reflects the latest research trends in education in a minority setting, as well as the needs and aspirations of the Acadian and Francophone community. The Province and the AGCFS thank them for their expertise and their involvement:

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1. The lists of individuals and organizations that participated in the development of the policy are found on pages 14 to 17 of this document.

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Preamble

"The entire Acadian and Francophone community, including parents[2], school staff, community organizations, the business community and the media, have a duty to become involved in and promote the collective education project."

Report of the Commission on Francophone Schools, p. 51

The policy — a genuine societal project

The Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy is much more than just a document. It is the realization of a dream and a vision of a community that has mobilized its strengths to adopt a strategy that will contribute not only to the development of current and future generations, but also to its own vitality as well as the vitality of its language and culture.

Through this policy, New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone community, together with the government of New Brunswick, has committed to a genuine societal project to take on the many challenges associated with its minority linguistic situation, which can be adapted, over the years, to the multiplicity and the ever-changing nature of its realities. The purpose of the policy is to enhance the capacity of all the education partners to fulfill the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system, i.e. to ensure the educational success and identity building of each learner, while contributing to the sustainable development of the Acadian and Francophone community and of the province of New Brunswick.

A development process based on dialogue and collective intelligence

The Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy project arose from a process of reflection that began a few years ago within the Government of New Brunswick and the Acadian and Francophone community. In July 2008, the Minister of Education announced the establishment of the Commission on Francophone Schools, whose mandate was to undertake a major consultation with the entire Acadian and Francophone community and various stakeholders in the education system for the purpose of identifying issues and finding solutions to the challenges of Francophone schools. Commissioner Gino LeBlanc's report explained how important it is for the government and the Acadian and Francophone community to develop and adopt a Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy in education. A similar recommendation, stemming from significant collective thinking on the part of the Acadian and Francophone community, was also included in the final report (2006-2007), as well as the *Global Strategy for the Integration of Arts and Culture into Acadian Society in New Brunswick* (2009), which was developed under the framework of the *États généraux on arts and culture in Acadian society in New Brunswick.*

Once the Report of the Commission on Francophone Schools was submitted, a group including the participating organizations was established to follow up on the recommendations. That entity, called the Action Group for the Commission on Francophone Schools (AGCFS), became the steering committee of the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy. Together, the members of the AGCFS defined the process of developing the policy. They also developed the vision, the mandate, the principles, and the values, and they identified the five focus areas (Early Childhood, Identity Building, Educational Success, School-Family-Community Partnership, and Vitality of the Education

2. In this policy, the term *parent* also refers to guardians and any other people who are legally responsible for a child.

System). Throughout the process, they made sure that the methods proposed in the policy met the needs of the community as well as those of the Acadian and Francophone education system. Five sectoral committees were formed, each consisting of about 20 people with targeted, varied, and complementary expertise. The work of reflection and analysis, as well as the information gathered at many meetings, helped to identify the priorities and develop the strategies and courses of action set out in this policy. A coordination, facilitation, and writing team ensured that each step of the process went smoothly. Several researchers and experts also took part in the process to ensure that the policy's content reflected the latest research trends in minority communities. In total, more than 200 Acadian and Francophone leaders played an active role in the development of the policy.

Partner engagement — the key to success

The realization of the societal project proposed in the policy depends mostly on the ability of all of the education partners to work together to implement the proposed strategies. Without this collective synergy, based on dialogue, engagement, collaboration, empowerment, and the need for immediate action, these strategies will never take shape in the daily lives of learners. It is therefore essential for all stakeholders in the Acadian and Francophone education system to join forces, consult one another, and participate in the achievement of this collective education project.

The concepts of *education partners* and *education system partners* refer to the groups and individuals who are engaged in a collaborative process designed to enhance various components of the education system and its impact on the community. They include the primary partners (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the school districts, the schools, the child care centres, the school principals, teaching and non-teaching staff, early childhood education workers, the parents, the families, as well as the learners), professional associations (e.g. teacher/school principal associations), community partners (e.g. parent/youth associations, art and culture organizations, early childhood/family literacy/immigration organizations), and institutional partners (e.g. post-secondary institutions), and other departments that play a role in education (Department of Social Development, Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture, Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, and Department of Health).

Toward a common understanding and vision of linguistic and cultural development

Linguistic and cultural development refers to the overall organization of language and culture in a given area. It promotes the development of tools for meeting the different linguistic and cultural needs of a specific group and recognizes the value of language and culture as resources. In the context of this policy, the goals and strategies proposed fall under the area of linguistic and cultural development in education, i.e. the implementation, by educational institutions and their education partners, of planned, systematic, and coordinated actions designed to ensure the protection, promotion, and transmission of language and culture.

Education partners who contributed to the development of the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy for the French Education System, LCDP Forum, N.B., June 2013.

The need to introduce such actions in the area of French-language education in New Brunswick is linked to the coexistence, in this province, of two official-language communities, one being a majority linguistic community, the other, a minority linguistic community. This reality presents many challenges for the Acadian and Francophone community, which is evolving in an environment where contact with the English-speaking culture is predominant. It is becoming more and more difficult to pass on the language and to promote the appropriation of the French-speaking culture among young Acadians and Francophones in New Brunswick, leading to a gradual erosion of the vitality of this language and culture. This type of policy helps to contribute to the development and sustainability of the Acadian and Francophone community.

Through this policy, the partners of the Acadian and Francophone education system propose a solid plan that will enable them to contribute individually and collectively to a quality education in French that will have an impact on the evolution of the Acadian and Francophone community in New Brunswick. It begins with a general statement on the policy, a framework including the major elements of the vision on which it is based (vision, strategic goals, mission, mandate, shared values, basic principles, and guiding principles), as well as a description of the context of this collective initiative (background, legal foundations, and demolinguistic context). In addition, 48 strategies are presented, divided into four focus areas in the field of linguistic and cultural development in education, i.e. Vitality of the Education System, Identity Building, Early Childhood, and Educational Success. These strategies are supported by the School-family-community partnership focus area, which is the catalyst for their implementation. The policy concludes with a statement on the implementation mechanisms and monitoring of progress as well as on the roles and responsibilities of all education partners.

List of individuals who participated in the policy development process

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Chantal Ouellette

Chantal Varin

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Claude Landry

Claude Marquis

Claudette Lavigne

Crystal Kelly

Danielle Gauthier-St-Onge

Denis Lagacé

Denise Caissie

Denyse LeBouthillier

Desmond Maillet

Diane Albert-Ouellette

Diane Ross

Emmanuelle Robinson

Ernest Thibodeau

Fernande Chouinard

Fleurette Landry

Francine Finn

Gabrielle Ross-Marquette

Georges Grondin

Gérald Richard

Gérard McKen

Gérard Robichaud

Gerry Pelletier

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Gilberte Godin

Gilles Bourque

Gilles Saulnier

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Jean-Marie Thériault

Jeanne Da Gauthier

Jeanne d'Arc Gaudet

Jeanne Duquette

Jean-Marie Pitre

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Lina Bourgeois

Linda Haché

Line Pinet

Louise Landry

Luc Handfield

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Workshop, LCDP Forum, Fredericton, N.B., June 2013.

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Acadian Peninsula Family Resource Centre (APFRC)

Association acadienne des artistes professionnels du Nouveau-Brunswick (AAAPNB)

Association acadienne et francophone des aînées et aînés du Nouveau-Brunswick (AAFANB)

Association des directions d'école francophone du Nouveau-Brunswick (ADEFNB)

Association des enseignantes et enseignants francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick (AEFNB)

Association des travailleurs en loisirs du Nouveau-Brunswick (ATLNB)

Association francophone des municipalités du Nouveau-Brunswick (AFMNB)

Association francophone des parents du Nouveau-Brunswick (AFPNB)

Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities (CIRLM)

Centre scolaire Samuel de Champlain (Saint John)

Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB)

Conseil pour le développement de l'alphabétisme
et des compétences des adultes Nouveau-Brunswick (CODAC-NB)

Conseil provincial des sociétés culturelles (CPSC)

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD)

Department of Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA)

Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (PETL)

Department of Social Development (DSD)

Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture (THC)

Early Childhood Care and Education New Brunswick (ECCENB)

Early childhood development and family centres – Francophone Sud school district

Early intervention programs, Early Childhood Stimulation Inc. (southeast) (EIP)

École Apollo-XI (Campbellton)

École Cité de l'Amitié (Bathurst)

École L'Odyssée (Moncton)

École Le Maillon (Saint-Léolin)

École Le Mascaret (Moncton)

École Léandre-Legresley (Grande-Anse)

École Sainte-Bernadette (Moncton)

Faculty of Education – Université de Moncton

Fédération des conseils d'éducation du Nouveau-Brunswick (FCÉNB)

Fédération des jeunes francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick (FJFNB)

Francophone Nord-Est District Education Council (DSF-NE DEC)

Francophone Nord-Est school district (DSF-NE)

Francophone Nord-Ouest District Education Council (DSF-NO DEC)

Francophone Nord-Ouest school district (DSF-NO)

Francophone Sud District Education Council (DSF-S DEC)

Francophone Sud school district (DSF-S)

New Brunswick Association for Community Living (NBACL)

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Parent School Support Committee, École Sainte-Anne (Fredericton)

Polyvalente Louis-J.-Robichaud (Shediac)

Polyvalente Thomas-Albert (Grand Falls)

Polyvalente W.-A.-Losier (Tracadie-Sheila)

Population Growth Division

Réseau d'appui aux ayants droit du Nouveau-Brunswick

Rural community of Kedgwick

Société culturelle Centr'Art, Caraquet (SCCA)

Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick (SANB)

Youth Strategy

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Policy Statement

[Translation] "Where do we begin? In our schools, of course. That is where the identity project is passed on in the modern world. We have conquered the schools; now we have to define a content that is consistent with a proposal on how to make a society."

Joseph Yvon Thériault[3]

New Brunswick's Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy is the tool used by all partners in the Acadian and Francophone education system to better meet the challenges and needs with respect to French-language education in a minority setting. This policy, a genuine societal project, presents a vision based on mobilization, cooperation and empowerment of all education stakeholders, strategies and initiatives to be put in place in order to contribute not only to the educational success and the identity building of each learner, but also to the vitality of the French language and culture, as well as to the development of the Acadian and Francophone community and New Brunswick society as a whole.

Through this policy, the Government of New Brunswick and all of its partners assume their collective responsibility with respect to the realization of education rights for the linguistic minority.

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3. Joseph Yvon Thériault, quoted in *Table nationale sur l'éducation.* (2012). *École communautaire citoyenne : Cadre de référence*, p. 12.

2

Framework for the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy

In the spirit of working concertedly, cohesively and efficiently in the area of linguistic and cultural development in education, the partners in New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system have jointly laid foundations for their actions. Those foundations are presented in the form of a framework consisting of the following elements:

- a vision;

- five strategic goals;

- the dual mission of New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system;

- a mandate;

- shared values;

- fundamental principles;

- guiding principles.

VISION

**Each person, from early childhood to adulthood, develops and realizes his or her full potential.
As an engaged citizen who is open to the world, she or he contributes to the vitality, the development
and the influence of the Acadian and Francophone community and New Brunswick society.**

FIVE STRATEGIC GOALS

Vitality of the education system

Ensure the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone education system through shared leadership among government, all education partners and the community, which:

- is based on a collective vision;
- mobilizes the community to exercise its rights to French education;
- engages students, families and the community in the fulfilment of the education system's dual mission, from early childhood to adulthood;
- ensures substantive equality in the allocation of human and financial resources.

Identity building

Foster among individuals and the community:

- identity building;
- the confidence and the desire to express and assert oneself in French;
- active participation in the development of their culture, their community and society as a whole;
- development of an engaged citizenship who can live together in solidarity;
- knowledge and appreciation of Acadian, Francophone and world cultures;

through the creation of a Francophone space which:

- promotes the vitality, uniqueness and diversity of the province's Acadian and Francophone communities;
- reflects a contemporary and pluralist Acadian and Francophone culture;
- is open to the world;
- acknowledges the contribution made by different cultural groups to the renewal of Acadian and Francophone culture;
- develops under joint, coordinated leadership by all the partners in education;
- stimulates the participation and engagement of young people, families, educational settings and different sectors of the community;
- promotes creativity, innovation, awareness, critical thinking and engagement.

Early childhood

Foster among children 0 to 8 years of age:

- their overall development;
- the building of their own identity;
- the learning of the French language;

through the implementation of an integrated network of services which:

- is based on partnerships and shared leadership by public and private institutions, families and the community as a whole;
- gives children and their parents access to services in French that meet all of their needs, delivered in a consistent and integrated manner by qualified individuals who are aware of and trained in the specific characteristics of early child hood intervention in a Francophone minority setting.

Educational success

Ensure that students develop knowledge and skills that will:

- make them lifelong learners;
- guarantee their educational success;
- enable them to express themselves fluently in French and to assert themselves with confidence;
- enable them to engage in and contribute fully to the vitality and development of the Acadian and Francophone community;

through educational experiences which reflect the specificity of the Acadian and Francophone community and are supported by:

- a quality education based on effective and proven practices;
- leadership that promotes a culture of learning;
- an inclusive learning environment;
- the engagement of the parents and all the partners.

School-family-community partnership

Increase the participation and engagement of learners, families, educational institutions, and the various sectors of the community in:

- the fulfillment of the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system;
- the development of the Acadian and Francophone community;

by introducing mechanisms that:

- rally all stakeholders around a common vision;
- promote collaboration, cooperation, and empowerment of all education partners at the local, regional, and provincial level.

**DUAL MISSION
OF NEW BRUNSWICK'S ACADIAN AND FRANCOPHONE EDUCATION SYSTEM**

The Acadian and Francophone education system provides each person, from early childhood to adulthood, with quality education contributing to his or her educational success and to the development of his or her linguistic and cultural identity.

MANDATE

New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system:

- brings together the best conditions to ensure its sustainability and support the sustainability of the community it serves;
- recognizes the community's fundamental role in the fulfillment of its dual mission.

> **To that end, it:**
> - establishes promotion, recruitment and retention measures;
> - strengthens the mechanisms for managing its institutions;
> - obtains the resources that take its specific needs into account;
> - innovates by drawing on research and the development of best practices.

New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system provides learners and the community with a learning environment and conditions conducive to:

- the building of their linguistic and cultural identity;
- the development of a sense of confidence, belonging, competence and autonomy.

> **To that end, it:**
> - utilizes instructional practices and obtains resources that take into account the specific characteristics of education in a Francophone minority setting throughout the educational path;
> - creates an inclusive and welcoming Francophone cultural space;
> - establishes and consolidates a range of partnerships.

New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system recognizes:

- the crucial importance of the early childhood period for language learning, the laying of the foundations for identity, and the overall development of each person;
- the fundamental role of parents in their children's development and education, in partnership with workers in various community sectors;
- the importance of quality services in French that are adapted to the needs of children 0 to 8 years of age and their parents, in both rural and urban areas;
- the importance of quality initial and ongoing training in French, including raising awareness among all individuals working with children and their parents, of their role as conveyors of culture.

> **To that end, it:**
> - provides access to an integrated network of services in French;
> - recruits, welcomes and supports parents;
> - provides quality programming and interventions in French.

New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system provides each learner with:

- an environment rich in learnings and experiences that promote educational success;
- a diversified and balanced education allowing for the development of one's full potential.

> **To that end, it:**
> - provides quality teaching;
> - stimulates instructional leadership;
> - creates an inviting and engaging learning environment;
> - establishes strong school-family-community partnerships.

SHARED VALUES

- Excellence
- Leadership
- Citizenship and engagement
- Collaboration

- Creativity and innovation
- Critical thinking
- Communication

- Equity
- Accessibility
- Language and culture
- Respect for differences

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

- Instruction in the minority language is a right granted by section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which in turn is entrenched in the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

- Duality in education is a fundamental characteristic of New Brunswick's education system. Since it expresses the right of the province's Acadian and Francophone community to distinct and homogenous educational institutions, it is the embodiment of this community's right to govern its schools and, more particularly, its right to set the major directions for its education system, taking into account the specific needs of a minority communities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Linguistic and cultural development for French education in New Brunswick is guided by the following principles:

Learners are at the core of decision making

- Learners are at the core of decision making in education.

High-quality education

- Educational success and the personal success of each and every one depend on a high-quality French education.

Instruction designed for minority settings

- Instructional interventions and resources designed for the specific needs of Francophones in a minority setting are required in order to ensure equal opportunity in terms of language learning, cultural affinity, access to high-quality education, and educational success.

Development of identity and a sense of belonging

- French education promotes the development of personal and collective linguistic and cultural identity, an openness to the world and a sense of belonging to a vibrant and pluralist Acadian and Francophone society as well as to the Canadian and international Francophonie.

French-language proficiency and a positive relationship with the language

- French education enables each and every one to develop a strong French language proficiency while cultivating a positive relationship with the French-language.

Skills associated with living in society

- Education in French promotes the development of skills for living in society and the engagement of every learner in the future of his or her community, both locally and globally.

Access to diversified cultural experiences

- Access to diversified cultural experiences, through preschool, school, extracurricular or community activities, is vital for the creation of a Francophone cultural space in which everyone can recognize themselves, express and assert themselves, be innovative and engage [with those around them] while developing their identity.

An inclusive and positive learning environment

- To develop to their full potential, all learners have to be in a positive learning environment in which they feel valued, confident and secure.

Collective capacity building

- A culture of collaboration among educational institutions, families, students and the community at large is essential for everyone to be involved in the development of a knowledge-based culture focused on educational success and identity building.

Sustainable development of the community

- French education contributes to the sustainable development of the Acadian and Francophone community and to that of New Brunswick society, i.e., their prosperity, vitality and influence.

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Background of French Education in New Brunswick

Today, New Brunswick's education system, which is based on the principle of linguistic duality, is well equipped to achieve the dual mission of French-language schools in a minority setting. This was not always the case, however. French education in New Brunswick, a product of the history of the province's education system, case law on language rights and sociodemographic trends, has undergone major changes in terms of governance, funding, programs of study and its student population.

History

The development of the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy for the French education system is a continuation of a lengthy historical process to improve access for the province's Acadians and Francophones to high-quality education in their language.

Early years of a public education system (1784–1871)

When New Brunswick was founded in 1784, there was no structured education system. The few schools that existed were privately run. In Francophone communities, parents, the clergy and a few itinerant teachers did their best to teach reading and writing.

Between 1802 and 1870, the provincial government gradually began laying the foundation for a public education system. For example, during the first half of the 19th century, it provided financial assistance to teachers (1802). It also built elementary and secondary schools (1805) and set up administrative councils consisting of trustees and landowners, who were appointed by parish magistrates (1816). For that reason, at that time, only the children of taxpayers could attend public school.

In 1847, the government passed legislation requiring the establishment of a Board of Education. The *Parish Schools Act* (1858) supplanted the previous legislation, entrusted the running of schools to the Board of Education, and specified that school trustees would be elected from that point on. Even though government

funding to build secondary schools increased, it was not enough to cover the wages and expenditures involved in running the schools. Parents were therefore required to make a contribution proportional to the number of children enrolled, which deprived the less well-off of an education.

At that time, several schools in the province already offered French-language education. In 1842, a public report mentions the existence of at least 15 French-language schools in Kent and Westmorland counties alone. Other Legislative Assembly documents show they existed in the counties of Gloucester, Carleton, Victoria and Madawaska. Around the 1870s, there were more than a hundred French-language schools on record. In addition, a regulation was passed in 1852 to specifically allow for the accreditation of Francophone teachers. Then in 1853, funding was provided for the translation and acquisition of school textbooks in French for the parish schools (Migneault, 2012). However, the availability of French and English textbooks alike remained inadequate.

From the *Common Schools Act* to the *Equal Opportunity* Program (1871 to 1970)

After making several attempts to establish a network of public schools funded partly through provincial grants and partly through local taxes, the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick adopted the *Common Schools Act* in 1871. The Act had a significant impact. It affirmed that education was free, established a non-denominational school system, divided the province into school districts, instituted inspections of teaching permits and called for the hiring of inspectors and superintendents and for schools to be organized into elementary and high school sections. The provincial authority stepped up its commitment to produce bilingual textbooks (Migneault, 2012).

However, since the 1871 Act established a non-denominational school system, many Catholic families, both Acadian and Irish, refused to send their children to public school and put pressure on the federal and New Brunswick governments. As a result, a number of confessional schools (seminaries, convents, and colleges) were established by religious communities. Those post-secondary institutions, precursors of the Francophone community colleges and the Université de Moncton, educated the first elites of the Acadian and Francophone community.

In 1932, the MacFarlane Commission report recommended that elementary school instruction be given in the children's mother tongue and that bilingual textbooks should not be introduced until the intermediate level. That recommendation would not be implemented until the early 1940s, at which time the Board of Education also appointed the first Francophone official in charge of the Acadian and Francophone population.

The school districts were then consolidated and new secondary schools offering broader curricula were built in rural areas to serve wider areas. However, there was a significant disparity between the schools in the poorest counties and those in richer counties, since each county had the power to levy taxes.

Nearly a third of the so-called bilingual schools were located in French-speaking regions. Failing substantive measures to counter the assimilation ascribed to attending those schools, the province's Acadian and Francophone leaders became impatient and demanded a quality education in French for their children, one that would be provided at Francophone schools, where pupils could develop their cultural identity and sense of belonging.

Such was the situation when, in 1960, Louis-J. Robichaud came to power and introduced his *Equal Opportunity Program* promoting the redistribution of wealth and the establishment of the same standards for all citizens. In 1963, he set up the Byrne-Boudreau Royal Commission, which proposed a radical reorganization of the school system. From then on, the province would take full responsibility for the administration and funding of education, health, justice and social services.

At the Department of Education, two deputy ministers, one of whom was Francophone, were appointed. The Francophone staffing plan was also increased. The school districts, which were still bilingual, were reduced in number from 422 to 33. Each district was managed by a school board, some of whose members were elected and some who were appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, who was tasked with ensuring that both linguistic groups were equally represented. Even though the *Equal Opportunity Program* rectified the inequalities created through funding based on the counties and municipalities, it did not address the issue of language of instruction or that of the districts and the French-language schools. That situation caused considerable dissatisfaction among Acadian and Francophone militants.

However, the Francophone education community was delighted when the Université de Moncton was founded in 1963, and when, in 1968, a Francophone teacher training school under the aegis of the Department of Education opened on the campus. It would not be until the early 1970s that the government would grant the Université de Moncton the right to train teachers, which led to the establishment of the Faculty of Education at the Université de Moncton in 1972.

From equality to duality (1970 to 2000)

The 1970s were decisive years for education in French in New Brunswick. In 1973, a Francophone education services sector was established in the Department of Education following the release of the Pinet-MacLeod Committee's *Education Tomorrow* report. Then, in 1979, an education system based on the language of instruction was instituted, as recommended by the Finn-Elliot Committee. The establishment of two parallel and homogenous school networks, embodying the objectives of the *Act Recognizing the Equality of the Two Official Linguistic Communities in New Brunswick*, adopted by the Hatfield government in 1981, put an end to bilingual schools and classrooms, which were seen as tools for assimilating the minority.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the province initiated a series of reforms that took New Brunswick's language make-up into account and optimized learning conditions. Those reforms included the following:

- strengthening curricula in general and the secondary school instructional system in particular;
- implementation of a provincial assessment strategy and a continuing education program for teachers;
- the passage in 1986 of an amendment to the *Schools Act* giving equal rights to students with exceptionalities, resulting in the closure of specialized schools and the provision of additional resources to public schools for those students to be educated [Translation] "in the most normal setting possible, taking the education needs of every student into account" (New Brunswick Department of Education, 1988, p. 11);
- establishment of a provincial network of full-time public kindergartens.

In 1992, the Landry-Downey report, issued by the *Commission on Excellence in Education*, gave rise to major structural and educational changes, including:

- decentralization of powers to schools;
- restructuring of school levels to better meet students' needs and aspirations;
- abolition of school boards, a decision that would be challenged for violating constitutional rights and would be remedied with the passage of a new *Schools Act* in 2000;
- establishment of programs to evaluate schools, staff and student learning at the elementary and secondary school levels;
- participation of New Brunswick students in Canada-wide testing under the School Achievement Indicators Program.

From duality to linguistic and cultural development (2000 to date)

In New Brunswick and across the Canadian Francophonie, the 2000s were characterized by two major trends: the quest for a mission specific to Francophone schools in a minority setting and the desire by schools to become anchored in their communities. In that context, education was seen as one of the major focuses for promoting language and affirming one's identity. Every education partner, whether government or community based, including students and parents, wanted to work better together to foster the sustainability of the linguistic and cultural development.

Those major trends manifested in several ways: through numerous studies by community organizations and government on such topics as the relationship between language and culture, identity building and education in a minority setting; through symposia and large-scale conferences on education in minority settings; through the establishment of mechanisms for collaboration between community organizations and provincial and territorial departments of education, with a view to developing a shared vision and joint actions; and through projects to create tools for identity building, such as the *Cadre d'intervention en construction identitaire* [intervention framework for identity building], developed by the Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (2006) and projects by the Council of Ministers of Education concerning language and culture, including the most recent (2012) initiative on cultural approaches in teaching. The New Brunswick Department of Education participated actively and often took a lead role in those forums, projects and initiatives.

In the meantime, the Association acadienne des artistes professionnel.le.s du Nouveau-Brunswick spearheaded the *États généraux* on arts and culture in Acadian society in New Brunswick, which between 2006 and 2009, enlisted the support of society at large, including the education sector, in identifying ways to make arts and culture a key component of community development. The 2009 *Global Strategy for the Integration of Arts and Culture into Acadian Society in New Brunswick*, the product of a series of consultations and the Grand Rassemblement, contained a sector strategy for integrating arts and culture into education. The strategy followed on the heels of discussions and deliberations concerning the dual mission of the province's Acadian and Francophone school system.

During that time, in a desire to bring decision-making power closer to players in the field, the New Brunswick Department of Education gave the newly elected District Education Councils responsibility for district education plans and governance policies. To improve the outcomes of students in general and those of Acadian and Francophone students in particular on national testing, the Department developed provincial strategic frameworks that were in line with national and provincial changes reflecting the dual educational and identity mandate of Francophone schools in a minority setting. Following are the main frameworks:

- The *Quality Learning Agenda* (2003) promoted closer ties between schools and the community and community involvement in schools. Parent School Support Committees were established to facilitate parent-school communication.

Centre communautaire Sainte-Anne in Fredericton, N.B., the first Francophone school-community centre in Canada.

- *When kids come first* (2007) recognized Francophones' specific needs in education planning and set out a vision for education, taking into account New Brunswick's social, economic and demographic context. The report emphasized the Acadian and Francophone school system's dual mission to promote educational success and identity building, and introduced the idea of a linguistic and cultural development policy for every stakeholder in the Francophone school system.

- Following large-scale consultations with the community and education stakeholders, the Commission on Francophone Schools released *Education in Acadian New Brunswick: A path to cultural and linguistic self-sufficiency* (2009), identifying issues, challenges and possible ways to improve the province's Francophone education system, several of which reflected the school system's dual mission and its role in the community.

The Action Group for the Commission on Francophone Schools (AGCFS) was set up in September 2009 to implement the recommendations in the Commission's report, including the one calling for a linguistic and cultural development policy. The AGCFS, co-chaired by the Fédération des conseils d'éducation du Nouveau-Brunswick and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, consists of a group of key partners in the Acadian and Francophone education system.

In tandem with the Commission's and the AGCFS's work, the province developed tools to support identity building, including the *Strategy for the Integration of Arts and Culture into Acadian Society in New Brunswick* (2009), the Trousse du passeur culturel [conveyor of culture kit] (2010) and the community schools movement. The Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy for the French education system is part of that movement.

Legal Context

A brief analysis of New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone community's minority language education rights reveals fundamental principles on which the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy must be based.

Section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*

The centrepiece of minority rights is unquestionably section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, whose ultimate goal is to "preserve and promote minority language and culture throughout Canada,"[4] including the right to an education provided in their language throughout Canada.[5] The reference to culture in that provision is fundamental, particularly in the area of education, where language learning cannot be dissociated from cultural development. Language—much more than a mere tool for communication—is part and parcel of the identity and culture of the people who speak it and is a means for expressing that cultural identity.[6] In affirming the cultural purpose of language rights, the Supreme Court has linked the preservation of culture to the existence of homogenous schools for the linguistic minority: "The constitutional protection of minority-language rights is necessary for the promotion of robust and vital minority language communities…."[7] This fundamental relationship between language and culture is embodied in, for example, the dual education and identity mandate of Francophone schools across Canada, including in New Brunswick.

Besides seeking to remedy the progressive erosion of official-language minorities, section 23 has a remedial aim and includes in that regard "a notion of equality between Canada's official-language groups"[8] to make them equal partners in the area of education.[9] Accordingly, far from wishing to reinforce the status quo by adopting a formal vision of equality, this section of the Charter addresses substantive equality, which means, among other things, the right to separate services and structures whose access and quality are at least equivalent to those enjoyed by the majority.[10]

Provincial legislation

With regard to substantive equality and distinct services and structures, New Brunswick blazed new trails when it instituted a dual system in the Department of Education as early as the 1970s and 1980s, and passed the *Act Recognizing the Equality of the Two Official Linguistic Communities in New Brunswick* in 1981. The fundamental principles of that Act were then entrenched in section 16.1 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* in 1993, compelling the provincial government to protect the equality of both communities as well as their right to distinct institutions within which cultural, educational and social activities may be carried on. To reiterate what the Supreme Court said with regard to section 23, "In the playground and in extracurricular activities, as well as in the classroom, French-speaking pupils should be immersed in French. The facility should be administered and operated in that language, right down to the posters on the wall."[11]

4. *Mahe v. Alberta*, [1990] 1 SCR 342 at 350 [Mahe]; *R. v. Beaulac* at para.17 and 25 [Beaulac]; *Arsenault-Cameron v. Prince Edward Island*, [2000] 1 SCR 3 at para.27 [*Arsenault-Cameron*].
5. *Mahe*, *supra* note 1 at 362.
6. *Ibid*. at 362; *Ford v. Quebec (Attorney General)*, [1988] 2 SCR 712 at.
7. *Desrochers v. Canada* (Industry), 2009 SCC 8 [2009] 1SCR 194 at para. 54 [DesRochers].

8. Passage cited and approved by the Supreme Court of Canada : *Ibid.* at 369.
9. *Ibid*. at 364.
10. *Renvoi manitobain*, *supra* note 8 at 854-855.
11. *Renvoi manitobain*, *supra* note 8 at 854-855.

Accordingly, following the logic of the Supreme Court decisions, the Province of New Brunswick must ensure that curricula designed according to each of the two official languages are taught in distinct institutions. We can conclude that when the Province decided to establish the Early Learning and Childcare Act, it also, insofar as possible, had to develop the mechanisms to apply those standards, not only in the area of elementary and secondary school education, but also in the early childhood sector, without infringing on freedom of expression rights (private institutions) as set out in the Constitution.

This concept of substantive equality referred to in sections 16.1 and 23 is consistent with the requirements of section 16 of the Charter, which provides for the equality of status and use of Canada and New Brunswick's two official languages. In the Renvoi relatif à la sécession du Québec, the Supreme Court ruled that the principle of the protection of minority rights, which include linguistic rights, is one of several fundamental unwritten principles which form the foundation for the Constitution of Canada and which, at the very least, affect their application and interpretation.[12]

One step closer to substantive equality

However, to give effect to linguistic rights, the Acadian and Francophone community must be provided with the means to be an equal partner in the context of education.[13] As part of its obligation to respect language rights, the Province has a series of institutional means that it can select, provided they meet the benchmarks set by the Supreme Court, while always remembering that the aim is "the flourishing and preservation of the French-language minority in the province."[14]

In that regard, the Supreme Court ruled, in one of its first decisions concerning section 23, with substantive equality being the key element, that allocation of additional funds to meet the particular needs of an official-language minority may be necessary to provide children of that minority with an education of equal quality of that of the majority.[15] It is also from that perspective that the New Brunswick Education Act states that the equitable division [of financial resources] "shall seek to assure to each of the education sectors… an equivalent standard of education taking into account the needs and particular circumstances of each sector."[16]

In conclusion, the adoption of a linguistic and cultural development policy is an excellent way for New Brunswick not only to meet its obligations, but also especially to promote "the flourishing and preservation of the Francophone linguistic minority in the province,"[17] to give effect to "their right to distinct institutions within which cultural, educational and social activities may be carried on"[18] and to "seek to assure… taking into account the needs and particular circumstances of each sector."[19]

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12. Renvoi relatif à la sécession du Québec, [1998] 1 SCR 753 at para. 74, 79 and 81.
13. *Mahe*, *supra* note 1 at 364.
14. *Arsenault-Cameron*, *supra* note 1 at para. 51; *Renvoi manitobain*, *supra* note 8 at 850.

15. *Mahe*, *supra* note 1 at 378.
16. *Ibid.* at s. 44(2). That subsection was added to the Act in 2000: *An Act to Amend the Education Act*, S.N.B. 2000, c. 52, s. 44.
17. *Arsenault-Cameron*, *supra* note 1 at para. 51; *Renvoi manitobain*, *supra* note 8 at 850.
18. *An Act Recognizing the Equality of the Two Official Linguistic Communities in New Brunswick*, R.S.N.B. 2011, c. 198, s. 3.
19. *Ibid.* at subsection 44(2). That subsection was added to the *Act in 2000: An Act to Amend the Education Act*, S.N.B. 2000, c. 52, s. 44.

Demolinguistic Situation

The success of the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy depends, among other things, on its ability to meet the needs, expectations and aspirations of every French speaker in the province. However, far from being the monolithic entity that it once was, the Acadian and Francophone community is undergoing profound change, not only in terms of its rate of growth, but also in terms of the origin, age and geographic distribution of the Francophones who make it richer. A brief review of the profile of New Brunswick's Francophone community and the trends shaping it puts the policy's values, principles and instruments on a more solid footing in the context of contemporary Acadie.

The picture in 2011

Francophones make up nearly one third (31.9% according to first official language spoken) of New Brunswick's population. More specifically, according to data from the most recent census (Statistics Canada, 2011), New Brunswick has a population of

- 740,000, of whom approximately 237,000 people have French as their mother tongue; 484,000, English; and 19,000, non-official languages, including some 2,200 who speak Mi'kmaq; 1,900, German; 1,800, Korean; 1,400, Arabic; and 1,200, Chinese;
- 720 newcomers whose first official language spoken was French, alone or with English (many of whom are from the United States), accounting for 13% of the newcomers to the province in 2011 (Pépin-Fillion, 2013);
- 930 people who identified as Aboriginal and had French as their mother tongue in 2011;
- 312,000 people who could speak French, and of that number, 246,000 could speak French and English (based on the language proficiency criterion, i.e., being able to carry on a conversation);

- with a significant rate of linguistic continuity or language transmission (89.9% in 2011), albeit the rate was lower in some urban areas in New Brunswick.

National trends

Outside Quebec, New Brunswick has the largest proportion of Francophones, with its 312,000 French speakers. That demographic weight is partly responsible for the rate of linguistic continuity, which is much higher in New Brunswick than it is in other provinces. However, some national demographic trends can work against Francophones in minority settings, including those who live in New Brunswick, if they are not taken into consideration. According to a study by Landry (2010), the factors responsible for that are as follows:

- the decrease in Francophones' demographic growth across Canada;
- the gradual increase in the rate of linguistic transfer from French to English (or rate of assimilation): 29.8% in 1971 to 39.3% in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2006);
- the fertility rate of Francophone women, which is less than the replacement rate for the Francophone population;
- the strong social attraction of English among Allophone immigrants outside Quebec (roughly 14 times greater than for French);
- the out-of-province migration of members of some Francophone communities;
- the increase in the number of Anglophone and Francophone exogamous couples who can choose to enrol their children in the English school system;
- population aging;
- youth migration to urban centres where language transfer to English is more apt to occur.

Trends in New Brunswick

In New Brunswick, some of those trends are more pronounced and could affect Francophone minorities more. The Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy is therefore an important tool for the Acadian and Francophone population in curbing some of those trends.

According to statistics from the 2011 census, New Brunswick has one of the most rapidly aging populations in Canada. The low rate of immigration and the low fertility rate are such that the population is not replenishing itself quickly enough. If those trends continue, the Acadian and Francophone population will continue to decline.

Migration to other provinces, particularly Alberta, Quebec and Ontario, are contributing factors in the decrease in the Acadian and Francophone population in rural regions of the province, where the natural ressources-based economy is in decline.

Another migration phenomenon within New Brunswick can have both a positive and negative effect: the increase in the number of Francophones in urban areas such as Dieppe and Moncton, and the decline in their numbers in rural areas. The concentration of Acadians and Francophones across the province is in fact very uneven. For example, in counties such as Madawaska in the northwest, in the Acadian Peninsula (northeast) and in Beauséjour (southeast), there are many small communities that are mostly Francophone. On the other hand, in urban centres such as Moncton, Bathurst, Saint John and Fredericton, Acadians and Francophones are in the minority in an environment where the dominance of English results in their using that language spontaneously in public life.

Urban areas also lend themselves to two other phenomena affecting the Francophone minority's resilience: immigration and exogamy. Newcomers choose primarily to settle in cities. However, as indicated earlier, only 13% of them have French as their first language. The social attraction of English is also very strong among Allophone newcomers outside Quebec

FRANCOPHONE NORD-EST SCHOOL DISTRICT

Provincial program *Une école, un artiste.*

(approximately 14 times greater than for French) (Landry, 2010). Those migratory movements pose a challenge for community and educational infrastructure in the province which, in some locations, serve a homogenous Francophone population, and in others, have to tailor their policies, services and programs to suit a highly diverse Francophone population. In that respect, the policy has to be flexible and use asymmetrical means to take into account the plural nature of the community.

With regard to exogamy, according to Landry (2010), the statistics show a correlation between that trend, which is more pronounced in urban areas, and language transfers from French to English. Exogamous parents often choose to enrol their children in majority schools or in immersion programs. In both cases, the learning of French and cultural transmission are more limited, and there is less chance that these young people will become bilingual and still be bilingual in adulthood.

Impact on school populations

According to the 2011 Education Outline for New Brunswick, the number of students in the Francophone sector at schools where French is the language of instruction fell from 30,420 in 2009–2010 to 29,842 in 2010–2011. By comparison, nearly five years earlier, in 2005–2006, there were 33,460 students attending Francophone schools.

The relative percentage of Francophone students in the education system would seem to be smaller than that of the total population of the province, with one reason being that a large proportion of children of rights-holder parents are enrolled in the English school system. As indicated in the report by Collette, Cormier and Rousselle (2010), not only is [Translation] "the number of children eligible to attend French school dropping," but there is also a "low participation rate among children eligible to enrol in the French school system" (p. 21). Nearly 20% of children eligible to enrol in the Francophone school system do not do so.

However, over those same periods, there has been a gradual increase in the number of children enrolled in French immersion programs offered by English-language schools. This increase can be explained in two ways: Anglophone parents choose to send their children to schools where they can learn French, and exogamous parents enrol their children in immersion programs at English schools, even though their status entitles them to send their children to Francophone schools. It is important to remember that under section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, one parent must have received an education in French for his or her children to be able to attend French school. Accordingly, even children who have learned French and are bilingual could lose their right to enrol their own children in a French school by virtue of their having attended an English school.

These data are nevertheless very telling of the desire of rights-holder parents to see their children learn French. We still have to impress upon them the fundamental role of conveyors of culture that sets French schools apart from immersion programs, beginning from early childhood services through to post-secondary education. That is one of the functions of this policy.

Lastly, francization, language upgrading and literacy among children and their families, be they exogamous, newcomers to Canada, Acadian or Francophone, are all additional challenges involved in the acquisition and transmission of the French language, which this policy will have to take into account.

In conclusion, the historical progression of New Brunswick's education system, the evolution of language rights in Canada and in New Brunswick and the combination of demolinguistic trends—urbanization, the aging population, the decline in the birth rate, exogamy and migration—have changed the face of the Francophonie in Canada and in this province. We have to take this into account in order to seize on the opportunities they present and meet the challenges they raise. The impact of the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy for the French education system will be all the more meaningful if it preserves historical and legal continuity and is rooted in the fertile soil of plurality and current trends in the Acadian, Francophone and Francophile community.

4

The Focus Areas of the Policy: Synergy and Complementarity

In an effort to meet the challenges of the linguistic minority context, fulfill the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system, and move closer to the ideal proposed by the policy's vision, the partners have come up with 48 strategies grouped under four interdependent focus areas of linguistic and cultural development in education, which are:

1. Vitality of the education system;
2. Identity building;
3. Early childhood;
4. Educational success.

The proposed strategies are supported by a **fifth focus area**, i.e. **School-family-community partnership**, which is meant to drive their implementation. Of course, carrying out many of these strategies will have an impact on the success of the other ones. The five focus areas and the 48 strategies must therefore be viewed as a whole consisting of complementary elements, in constant synergy, the strength of one building on the strength of the others. The strategies will also evolve over time as they adapt to the ever-changing situation.

For each focus area, a description of the content is provided, as well as the main concepts relating to this area, a strategic goal, and a mandate. A summary table underscores the areas of intervention to more clearly identify the categories of action, the anticipated outcomes, and the terms of the strategic goal. The strategies are developed and include a text that explains the rationale and proposes some possible actions that could help with their implementation.

The **focus areas of the policy** are the activity sectors of specific interest to the partners in the Acadian and Francophone education system with respect to the implementation of linguistic and cultural development measures in education that will make it possible to achieve the anticipated outcomes of this policy.

THE POLICY'S 48 STRATEGIES

Vitality of the Education System

Promotion, recruitment, and retention
V 1 — Promotion and recruitment   50
V 2 — Welcoming, support, and retention   51

Management mechanisms
V 3 — Governance of the school system   55
V 4 — Shared leadership   56
V 5 — Continuous improvement   58

Resources
V 6 — Human resources   59
V 7 — Financial resources   60
V 8 — Infrastructure   62

Innovation
V 9 — Research and development   64
V 10 — Networking and collective capacity in the digital age   65
V 11 — International education   67

Identity Building

Curriculum, programs and instruction
IB 1 — Curriculum and instructional resources   79
IB 2 — Education in minority settings   80

Francophone cultural space
IB 3 — School as a hub of cultural vitality   83
IB 4 — School as a space for democratic citizenship   85
IB 5 — Development and sustainability of initiatives   87
IB 6 — Regional cultural development   88
IB 7 — Artistic and cultural creations   90
IB 8 — Events of the Francophonie   91
IB 9 — Francophone citizenship in traditional and digital media   93

Partnerships
IB 10 — Role of conveyor of culture   96
IB 11 — Partnership and coordination   97

Early Childhood

Access to an integrated network of services in French
EC 1 — Integrated network   106
EC 2 — Equal access to services in French   107

Recruitment, welcoming and support for parents
EC 3 — Recognition of care, services, and education in French   110
EC 4 — Welcoming and support   111
EC 5 — Services and resources for linguistic and cultural development   113

Quality programs and interventions in French
EC 6 — Human resources   116
EC 7 — Staff training   117
EC 8 — Programs and instruction   118

Educational Success

Quality teaching
ES 1 — Awakening passions and developing skills   128
ES 2 — Critical and creative thinking   129
ES 3 — Knowledge building   131
ES 4 — Literacy   133
ES 5 — Francization   135
ES 6 — French-language proficiency and a positive relationship with the language   136
ES 7 — Numeracy   138
ES 8 — Initial and ongoing training   140

Instructional leadership
ES 9 — Instructional leadership of principals   142
ES 10 — Culture of collaboration   144

Stimulating and engaging learning environment
ES 11 — Inclusive learning environment   147
ES 12 — Diversified courses and learning experiences   148
ES 13 — Digital learning environment   150
ES 14 — Comprehensive school health approach   151
ES 15 — Engagement in school life   153

Partnerships
ES 16 — Parents as first educators   155
ES 17 — Community structure of the school   157
ES 18 — Collaboration and partnerships   158

School-Family-Community Partnership Transversal Focus Area

It is important to team up with the community in order to make our educational activities meaningful. A community that is actively present in its schools shows students its richness. Education should encourage students to become engaged in the community so they can develop their leadership qualities.

Marianne Cormier (2010, p. 14)

Introduction

According to an old Senegalese saying, "It takes a whole village to raise a child." This is even truer for minority linguistic communities, which, to ensure their sustainability and growth, must encourage all of their citizens to get involved in the appropriation of culture and the transmission of language to children, while stimulating their desire to contribute to the future of their community, at both the local and global levels. Much like this saying, the School-family-community focus area urges all education partners to become engaged and to act together in solidarity to ensure that young Acadians and Francophones in the province can achieve their full potential in every facet of their lives.

The true pillar of this policy, the School-family-community partnership focus area is meant to be the basis, even the preferred tool, for implementing all of the strategies and actions proposed in the four other focus areas (Vitality of the education system, Identity building, Early childhood, and Educational success). These strategies and actions underpin a change in culture, based on collaboration and shared leadership, all centred on fulfilling the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system, the vitality of the French language and French-speaking culture, and the development of the community. The Vitality of the education system focus area is therefore concerned with establishing and consolidating multi-sector partnerships and management mechanisms that ensure increased participation and give genuine power of influence over the education vision of Acadian and Francophone society in New Brunswick to learners, parents, education stakeholders, and individuals representing the various sectors of the community. For its part, the Identity-building focus area uses the dynamics arising from the school-family-community partnership to create a welcoming and inclusive Francophone cultural space that promotes identity development, individual and collective growth, and citizen participation among youth and within the community as a whole. Also, it stresses the role that can be played by all education system stakeholders as conveyors of culture. The Early childhood focus area is based on establishing partnerships and shared leadership by public and private institutions, families, and the Acadian and Francophone community for the purpose of setting up an integrated network of services supporting the overall development of young children. Last of all, the educational success focus area is concerned with establishing structured, bidirectional partnerships and encouraging the collective engagement of all education partners, including youth, parents, partners from all levels of the school setting, institutional partners, and community partners so as to meet the individual needs of all learners and offer them authentic, meaningful educational experiences. Particular emphasis is placed on establishing a community structure in all Francophone schools in the province. Lastly, all

of the focus areas of the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy highlight the importance of the role played by parents, who have primary responsibility for the education of their children.

In summary, the school-family-community partnership focus area emphasizes the importance of collaboration and shared, coordinated leadership by all education partners with respect to fulfilling the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system in New Brunswick. This focus area also demonstrates the impact of pooling knowledge, skills, and resources and the benefits of sharing the experiences of the civic, economic, public, educational, and volunteer sectors. The implementation of this policy depends, to a large extent, on the individual and collective engagement of all education partners. Human activity is central to the success of this societal project.

> In the School-family-community partnership focus area, the word "school" refers to all educational institutions, from early childhood to adulthood.

The strategic goal of the School-family-community partnership focus area

> **Increase the participation and engagement of learners, families, educational institutions, and the various sectors of the community in:**
> - the fulfillment of the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system;
> - the development of the Acadian and Francophone community;
>
> **by introducing mechanisms that:**
> - rally all stakeholders around a common vision;
> - promote collaboration, cooperation, and empowerment of all education partners at the local, regional, and provincial levels.

School-Family-Community Partnership

The school-family-community partnership is a collaborative process that refers to the ties between schools, families and individuals, as well as community organizations and businesses that directly or indirectly support and promote children's or adolescents' success in school and their social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development (Deslandes, 2004). In addition, it helps to establish conditions favorable to identity building. The actions resulting from this partnership are supported by the synergy of the resources of each partner and are intended to achieve common goals for the benefit of children and the community.

Building strong ties between schools, families, and communities

School-family-community collaborations require that time, effort, and resources be devoted not only to the projects themselves, but also to the "human conditions" that make them possible. Consequently, to build strong ties among the partners, it is important to recognize the unique and essential contribution of each of them, as well as the complementary nature of their roles

Jeux de l'Acadie.

in achieving common goals. It is also important to create a harmonious, friendly atmosphere that nourishes feelings of equality, mutual trust, attachment, competency, and autonomy. In the same vein, partnerships are cultivated through effective, open, and transparent communication. They are also cultivated through individual and collective accountability and participation in decision making, based on a shared vision and values, as well as on a common understanding of the issues. Last of all, the development of school-family-community relations requires considerable adaptability on the part of educational institutions, particularly through the introduction of mechanisms that promote integration and participation (e.g., planning meeting times and places that are convenient for the various partners).

A few key elements that contribute to the success of an initiative or project involving various partners

- Design a project or initiative that meets the needs and interests of young people and ensures their participation throughout the process;
- Promote the participation of the different partners in sketching out the project;
- Define all of the steps required to carry out the project;
- Identify all roles and responsibilities, as well as the necessary resources;
- Involve all of the partners in implementing the project or initiative, in accordance with their expertise;
- Provide opportunities for discussion in order to make any necessary adjustments;
- Provide tangible ways of evaluating the project's spinoffs and make sure the different partners are involved;
- Promote and celebrate successes;
- Highlight the contribution of each partner throughout the process.

Acting *TOGETHER* to fulfill the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system

The partnerships that arise from the mobilization of the various stakeholders in the Acadian and Francophone education system become meaningful when they focus on fulfilling the dual mission of that system, i.e., the identity building and educational success of each learner. Indeed, this type of partnership promotes individual and collective management of the many challenges associated with education in minority settings (e.g., francization, linguistic insecurity, accessibility of French-language services, language transmission, cultural appropriation, and effects of globalization on the attraction of the English language and culture). Parents, teaching staff, and communities must therefore combine their expertise and resources through various collaborative structures in order to find and implement solutions that meet the needs of their respective settings. This necessarily involves a change in culture regarding school-family and school-family-community collaborations, based on practices that encourage cooperation, engagement, individual and collective accountability, and empowerment. In short, it is important that all partners be aware of their role and the importance of working together to ensure the educational success and identity building of each learner.

Moreover, the school-family-community partnership makes citizen participation easier for young people by enabling them, for instance, to have experiences in French within their community, become involved in certain social causes and actions, or carry out innovative projects, all while developing skills associated with life in society. Learners can exercise and develop citizenship only if they are given the opportunities and spaces they need to participate actively in life in society and in the future of their community, on both the local and global levels.

Last of all, the individual and collective accountability and engagement of all partners in education and those from different sectors of society, as well as the introduction of mechanisms for multi-sector cooperation and collaboration will definitely support the implementation of the policy's strategies. The educational, political, and social actions that result from this shared leadership will contribute not only to learners' educational success and identity building, but also to the development of the Acadian and Francophone community of New Brunswick and that of the province.

Some possible actions*

- Establish, in all schools, a community structure that promotes the participation of learners, parents, families, school staff, and community partners in carrying out the education vision of each school.
- Introduce mechanisms for interdepartmental, intersectoral, and community coordination and cooperation at all levels of the education system to ensure:
  - consistency of the actions;
  - active participation in the creation of new knowledge;
  - implementation of proven practices;
  - exchange of best practices in identity building and educational success;
  - optimization of partnership potential.
- Implement measures to welcome and support parents.
- Put in place measures that make parents and educational staff aware of the role played by parents, who have primary responsibility for the education of their children.
- Raise the awareness of, mobilize, and equip all education partners regarding their role as conveyors of culture.

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* Other possible actions associated with the School-family-community partnership focus area are found in the four other focus areas.

Vitality of the Education System Focus Area

[Translation] "There is no institution more important than the school to ensure the vitality of a linguistic community...."

Landry, Allard and Deveau, 2010, p. 19

Introduction

The concept of *vitality* is closely related to the concepts of vibrancy, development and sustainability. It is often associated with groups, communities and systems which, through their actions, want to ensure their sustainability and renewable. For the Acadian and Francophone community, this vitality manifests itself in a multitude of forms. These include the growth and influence of its language, culture, citizens, institutions, achievements, progress and expertise. However, the Acadian and Francophone community faces a number of challenges that remind us just how important it is to act quickly and effectively in order to ensure its vitality and sustainability. The low rate of transmission of French in dual-language families, the decline in enrolment at French-language institutions and the shrinking Francophone population in general are but a few examples of the challenges that have been facing New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone community for the past few years.

The vitality of New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone community depends without question on the strength and vitality of its education system, through which Acadians and Francophones develop a shared vision of the importance of their language, culture and institutions. As a result, the Acadian and Francophone education system has to implement a series of measures to develop its ability to renew itself—not only to keep pace with social change, but also to effect positive changes in the Acadian and Francophone community. In addition, the Acadian and Francophone education system must capitalize on this renewal in order to fulfil its role as a major player in the Canadian and international Francophonie. Lastly, it is important that the Acadian and Francophone education system take steps to foster educational success and identity building, both individually and collectively, for all those attending Acadian and Francophone schools.

A number of factors shape the vitality of the education system. They include the engagement and participation of the community in French-language education, the development of a culture of excellence that uses proven educational practices, citizen engagement and participation, an outward-looking approach and the dissemination of its achievements, for example through technology. This vitality is created by the stakeholders in every sector of the education system, including youth, through their shared and effective leadership and through multi-sector partnerships, both locally and internationally. The partners must therefore have a shared vision of the role of education and its impact on the sustainable development of the Acadian and Francophone community and on that of New Brunswick society as a whole, and they must reaffirm its fundamental role in producing citizens who are not only responsible and engaged, but also show solidarity with others.

As a result, it is crucial that the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone education system be front and centre in the strategic actions of the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy, with an entire focus area devoted to it. To that end, four areas of intervention have been identified

to guide actions and strategies promoting the vitality of the education system:

1) Promotion, recruitment, and retention;

2) Management mechanisms;

3) Resources;

4) Innovation.

These strategies are in response to the recommendations in the report by the Commission on Francophone Schools and consultations with the community and various stakeholders to identify the main components of this focus area.

Strategic goal of the Vitality of the Education System focus area

Ensure the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone education system through shared leadership among government, all education partners and the community, which:

- is based on a collective vision;
- mobilizes the community to exercise its rights to French education;
- engages students, families and the community in the fulfillment of the education system's dual mission, from early childhood to adulthood;
- ensures substantive equality in the allocation of human and financial resources.

Mandate of the Vitality of the Education System focus area

New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system:

- brings together the best conditions to ensure its sustainability and support the sustainability of the community it serves;
- recognizes the community's fundamental role in the fulfillment of its dual mission.

To that end, it:

- establishes promotion, recruitment and retention measures;
- strengthens the mechanisms for managing its institutions;
- obtains the resources that take its specific needs into account;
- innovates by drawing on research and the development of best practices.

Summary Table Of The Vitality Of The Education System Focus Area

Areas of intervention			
Promotion, Recruitment, and Retention	**Management Mechanisms**	**Resources**	**Innovation**
Anticipated outcomes Rights-holder parents, aware of their rights under section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, choose the Acadian and Francophone education system. The Acadian and Francophone education system welcomes more immigrants and more First Nations students. The education system and the Acadian and Francophone community are inclusive, welcoming and open to the world.	**Anticipated outcome** The Acadian and Francophone education system and all of its education partners: • are fully engaged in the educational success and identity building of every individual, from early childhood to adulthood; • are accountable for achieving their education targets.	**Anticipated outcomes** The Acadian and Francophone education system has the resources needed to fulfill its dual mission. Schools and educational institutions open their doors to the community by being places where people can meet, receive services and learn.	**Anticipated outcome** The Acadian and Francophone education system is innovative and makes its influence felt by: • applying practices proven through research; • taking part in the creation of new knowledge; • using technology and social media wisely; • being involved in international programs and exchanges.
Strategies **V 1 — Promotion and recruitment** Implement strategies that: • promote education in French as a societal value to all New Brunswickers; • raise community awareness towards the importance of educational success and the school's role as a driving force in the development of the Acadian and Francophone community; • promote the excellence of the Acadian and Francophone education system; • encourage rights-holder parents to exercise their rights by choosing the Francophone education system; • promote education in French to prospective immigrants and newcomers; • value the teaching profession. **V 2 — Welcoming, support and retention** Implement: • welcoming and support strategies tailored to all learners and their families; • stimulating and diversified academic, extracurricular, college and university programs that make education in French appealing.	**Strategies** **V 3 — Governance of the school system** Develop and implement mechanisms to ensure greater participation and engagement among students, parents and individuals from various sectors of the community in the governance of the school system. **V 4 — Shared leadership** Implement interdepartmental, intersectoral and community partnership mechanisms to promote cohesive actions and smooth transitions throughout the educational path, from early childhood to adulthood. **V 5 — Continuous improvement** Develop a continuous improvement mechanism for the Acadian and Francophone education system that makes every education partner accountable for educational success and identity building.	**Strategies** **V 6 — Human resources** Recruit and retain professionals with the essential skills needed to participate fully in the education vision for the Acadian and Francophone community. **V 7 — Financial resources** Provide the Acadian and Francophone education system with funding that enables it to fulfill its dual mission. **V 8 — Infrastructure** Maximize the use of schools and education infrastructures, including sharing facilities among institutions of different levels.	**Strategies** **V 9 — Research and development** Develop a culture of excellence in the education system based on research and development enabling education partners to: • participate actively in the creation of new knowledge; • implement proven practices. **V 10 — Networking and collective capacity in the digital age** Implement mechanisms capitalizing on the transformative power of information and communications technologies and social media to facilitate networking, visibility and collective capacity building. **V 11 — International education** Provide students, teachers and the community with opportunities to influence and to learn through programs and initiatives focusing on: • international exchanges; • welcoming students from abroad; • developing intercultural and transcultural competences; • being open to the world.

Vitality of the Education System

New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system has a major responsibility to produce citizens who are capable of social innovation and are committed to their communities and society in general. The entire community will be stronger in the long run if every partner in the education system embraces their role as defined by the dual mission, i.e., fostering learner's educational success and identity building. In that vein, the objective of the Vitality of the education system focus area is to facilitate the creation of conditions for the Acadian and Francophone community and New Brunswick society as a whole to thrive over the long term from a sustainable development perspective. This will be achieved by taking into account the factors affecting the sustainability of linguistic minorities, e.g., demographics, strengthening of institutions, enhancement of the status of the minority language, access to services and resources, and steps to reduce poverty and illiteracy.

Focus on promotion, recruitment and retention measures

Promoting education in French—from early childhood to post-secondary level—as a societal value to New Brunswickers as a whole and as a driver for the development of the Acadian and Francophone community is crucial in order to ensure its vitality. It is therefore important to establish communication and social marketing strategies that highlight the importance of education and make rights-holder parents aware, even before their children are born, of their right to an education in French under section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and of the many benefits, both individually and collectively, of exercising that right. Recruiting the children of rights-holder parents will, among other things, preserve that right for present and future generations. It will be crucial for consolidating school populations and ensuring the survival and development of the French language and culture. It is also important to work on recruiting and retaining newcomers to support French-language

educational institutions. In that regard, we must encourage the development and consolidation of strong ties between the various tiers in the education system and the authorities responsible for recruiting, welcoming and integrating newcomers in order to ensure that the latter feel that they have a place in the Acadian and Francophone education system.

Promotion and recruitment have to be aligned with welcoming and support measures for families. The Acadian and Francophone education system therefore has to develop tools to meet the various needs of students and their families, thereby facilitating their retention. Collaboration and multi-sector and bidirectional relationships between schools, families and communities, and access to a range of programming promoting the participation of students in a multitude of rewarding experiences throughout their educational path will also be required.

Developing a collaborative culture focused on the continuous improvement of the education system

The vitality and sustainability of the Acadian and Francophone community depends to a large extent on the ability of the education system and its partners to work together and rally everyone involved around a shared vision of the role of education in promoting the overall development of each individual and in supporting the growth of the Acadian and Francophone community and New Brunswick society as a whole. It is therefore necessary to establish mechanisms for interdepartmental, intersector and community collaboration, and to make optimum use of existing mechanisms to facilitate the emergence of a shared leadership by the players in the education system. It is vital that youth be actively engaged in those mechanisms. These collaborative efforts will result in more cohesive action as well as greater participation and engagement by all of the partners. According to Breton (1964), the more the members of a linguistic minority are represented and autonomous in educational institutions, the stronger the

vitality of the group will become. This is because the minority community will be afforded greater recognition, resulting in a stronger commitment among its members to speaking French and taking part in growing and shaping the future of the community.

Furthermore, this shared leadership must be supported by a continuous improvement mechanism that makes the education partners accountable for educational success and identity building for every learner. This shared leadership must also make it easier to decide which actions have to be taken or strengthened based on the recurring challenges and issues facing the community and society. Establishing such a mechanism will definitely foster continuous progress in the quality of the education and services provided in the Acadian and Francophone education system.

Implement the resources needed to achieve the dual mission

People are the most important resource in any system. For the education system to achieve its goals and its dual mission, it has to have human resources who are competent, aware, passionate and engaged. As a result, educational staff recruitment strategies must include a description of the competencies that are required for teaching in Francophone minority settings, and explain their importance.

Furthermore, the education sector has to be able to support its actions with funding that has been established taking its particular needs and the demographic realities of the different regions into account. The continuous improvement process proposed in this policy will definitely facilitate analysis of systemic data on an ongoing basis, thereby contributing to greater resource efficiency.

Lastly, it has been said many times that schools are the cornerstone of the cultural vitality and identity of communities because they support families and citizens by providing a variety of services and activities in French, and by offering inviting spaces where people can gather, thereby fostering the emergence of a sense of belonging

and engagement. For schools and educational institutions to fully play that role, we have to maximise the potential uses of school and educational infrastructure, e.g., having institutions of different levels share space together. In that regard, the community also has to become a place of learning by opening its doors to students so they can have meaningful experiences outside school. A positive school-community symbiosis will support the establishment of a bidirectional partnership, for the benefit of youth and their communities.

Fostering innovation and outreach

The vibrancy of the education system is largely supported and nurtured by a culture of excellence which, in turn, is sustained through the continuous inflow of evidence-based research findings. Armed with these research findings, the players in the education system are able to anticipate the challenges that can arise from social or other changes, and adopt new practices that research has shown to be effective.

Since educational, community and organizational innovation is action based, participatory action research is a critical instrument of change for ensuring educational success and identity building in minority settings. In fact, action research and dissemination of its findings must be part and parcel of the culture of the Acadian and Francophone education system, because this is the best way to ensure the continuous professional development of educational staff and to facilitate informed decision making—key to improving instructional practices and the system as a whole. Action research promotes collaboration among key players in the system and strengthens leadership among partners in the community. The education system and the community thus become springboards for innovation and positive expression of the can-do mindset of stakeholders. Furthermore, the use of information and communications technologies offers increased opportunities for collaboration, influence, innovation and learning for everyone in the Acadian and Francophone community.

Festival de théâtre jeunesse en Acadie, Caraquet, N.B.

Lastly, the importance of promoting and showcasing the expertise in the Acadian and Francophone education system has to be reaffirmed. The achievements and innovations of its students, teaching staff, researchers, community partners, leaders and administrators deserve to be seen and known, both locally and internationally. By drawing attention to its impressive range of expertise, the education system will support not only its own vitality, but also that of the Acadian and Francophone community, its young people and New Brunswick society as a whole.

Strategies and Possible Actions

Area of intervention: Promotion, recruitment and retention

The vitality and sustainability of the Acadian and Francophone community depends largely on the education system's ability to maximize and increase its numbers. As a result, it is important to develop promotion, recruitment, welcoming, support and retention strategies that target all people who are eligible to receive an education in French.

Anticipated outcomes:

Rights-holder parents, aware of their rights under section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, choose the Acadian and Francophone education system.

The Acadian and Francophone education system welcomes more immigrants and more First Nations students.

The education system and the Acadian and Francophone community are inclusive, welcoming, and open to the world.

V 1 — Promotion and recruitment

Implement strategies that:

- promote education in French as a societal value to all New Brunswickers;
- raise community awareness towards the importance of educational success and the school's role as a driving force in the development of the Acadian and Francophone community;
- promote the excellence of the Acadian and Francophone education system;
- encourage rights-holder parents to exercise their rights by choosing the Francophone education system;
- promote education in French to prospective immigrants and to newcomers;
- value the teaching profession.

V 2 — Welcoming, support and retention

Implement:

- welcoming and support strategies tailored to all learners and their families;
- stimulating and diversified academic, extra-curricular, college and university programs that make education in French appealing.

STRATEGY V 1:
Promotion and recruitment

Implement strategies that:

- **promote education in French as a societal value to all New Brunswickers;**
- **raise community awareness towards the importance of educational success and the school's role as a driving force in the development of the Acadian and Francophone community;**
- **promote the excellence of the Acadian and Francophone education system;**
- **encourage rights-holder parents to exercise their rights by choosing the Francophone education system;**
- **promote education in French to prospective immigrants and newcomers;**
- **value the teaching profession.**

The vitality and sustainability of the Acadian and Francophone community depends largely on the education system's ability not only to maximize and increase its numbers, but also to consolidate them over the long term systemwide, from early childhood to post-secondary level. For example, as indicated by Landry (2003a, 2010), it is crucial to implement a recruitment and social marketing strategy to convey positive messages to the general public about education in French. Such a strategy has to highlight the value of education in general, educational success, the teaching profession and the importance of the role of every professional who comes into contact with children. It must also make parents aware of the many benefits of choosing the Acadian and Francophone education system from early childhood to post-secondary level. Besides facilitating educational success, education in French in minority settings promotes the development of French-language competency and identity building, both individually and collectively. In the New Brunswick context, education in French is the best guarantee for additive bilingualism, i.e., where students will develop strong language competencies in French and English, as well as a sense of belonging and positive attitudes towards the French language and culture.

Possible actions   **V 1**

- Implement a strategy to inform rights –holder parents about their right to French-language education and about the impact of their choices.
- Implement communications strategies which:
  - reinforce the image of Acadie as a welcoming society;
  - showcase the success stories of students from exogamous and endogamous families, as well as the success stories of Allophones having attended the Acadian and Francophone education system;
  - promote the Francophone education system to newcomers when they are recruited;
  - present as role models Francophone Acadians who have made significant achievements in various fields.
- Implement strategies that raise awareness among the general public and education professionals of the importance for the Acadian and Francophone community to welcome children of rights-holder parents and newcomers who speak little or no French.
- Implement policies on immigration and the recruitment of Francophone newcomers to facilitate their integration into the Acadian and Francophone community.
- Establish close cooperation between daycares, the various range of Francophone early childhood services, immigration services and Francophone schools to ensure smooth transitions from service to service.
- Gather data systematically to identify parents whose children are eligible to attend the Francophone education system (rights-holder).

In short, education in French contributes to the sustainable development of New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone community.

By identifying everyone who is eligible to French education, including rights-holder, newcomers and First Nations members, the Acadian and Francophone system and its partners will be able to develop a communications and promotion strategy with messages targeting the various groups (e.g., promotion of trilingualism among Allophones). They will utilize a wide range of media to showcase the programs and services that are available, as well as success stories.

It is also important to continue raising public awareness about the benefits of linguistic duality in education. That duality enables both official linguistic communities in New Brunswick to thrive and contribute to the vitality of the province. In that regard, section 16.1 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* states that these two communities have equality of status and equal rights and privileges, including the right to distinct educational institutions and such distinct cultural institutions as are necessary for the preservation and promotion of those communities. However, revitalizing those rights requires an understanding of their ramifications for students and parents and also for the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community.

STRATEGY V 2:
Welcoming, support and retention

Implement:
- **welcoming and support strategies tailored to all learners and their families;**
- **stimulating and diversified academic, extracurricular, college and university programs that make education in French appealing.**

In addition to the social marketing campaign that will enable the Acadian and Francophone education system to consolidate its numbers, it is important to implement welcoming, support and retention measures to meet the various needs of those who use the system. With these measures, children and their families will thrive in French and take pleasure in beginning and continuing their education in a system with which they can identify as full-fledged partners. In that respect, the welcoming and support measures for parents promote the principle of reciprocity by opening up opportunities for collaboration, engagement and accountability where families are concerned.

In addition to implementing welcoming and support measures for parents, stakeholders must also think of how best to include and support children and students who will be entering the French education system. The latter must have all the services they need from day one, e.g., francization, literacy and methods and resources. These services must be well established already and well structured, in addition to providing for effective, research-based interventions. Furthermore, parents must be informed about the existence of these programs even before they enrol their children in school, so they will feel reassured about the quality of the education their children will be receiving in the Acadian and Francophone education system.

Vitality of the Education System Focus Area

To ensure its growth and vitality, the Acadian and Francophone education system has to promote to the general public the undeniable benefits of education in French in a province such as New Brunswick, which chose bilingualism as a societal and economic value. By receiving their education at a French-language institution, students will develop strong competencies in both official languages, which will definitely be a good thing for New Brunswick's future.

Possible actions   **V 2**

- Develop and provide parents with services, tools and programs enabling them to support their children's educational success, beginning in early childhood:
  - family literacy;
  - support between parents (twinning);
  - francization for parents;
  - homework help.
- Work with entities responsible for implementing welcoming, orientation, and support mechanisms for newcomers in the host community.
- Establish open reception structures that are sensitive to the needs of First Nation families who choose the Francophone school system.
- Offer a range of interesting programming and special programs, e.g., programs that combine sports and arts with academic coursework at all high schools.
- Implement orientation and retention strategies at Francophone post-secondary institutions in New Brunswick.
- Establish partnerships with private-sector enterprises and/or Acadian and Francophone institutions that will enable college and university students to study in French in New Brunswick in the field of their choice.
- Develop retention strategies in cooperation with high school students, post-secondary students and teaching staff.

Moreover, the Acadian and Francophone education system has to be mindful of the needs and aspirations of young people and the community by offering a multitude of academic, extracurricular, college and university programs that will encourage learners and their families to choose French-language educational institutions throughout their educational path. Acadian and Francophone institutions must therefore deliver a top-quality education that will enable them to compete with other institutions inside and outside the province, and enable their students to stand out in every way.

Statistics show that transfers from the Francophone education system to the Anglophone education system are more frequent during certain critical periods, e.g., entering and leaving elementary school, and during the first few years of high school. To keep student numbers up and facilitate the growth of the Acadian and Francophone system, stakeholders should conduct research to determine the reasons for these transfers and propose ways to minimize them. It could also be helpful for Acadian and Francophone schools to consider offering, in addition to existing courses, programs that combine sports and arts with academic work, programs such as the international baccalaureate, and international exchange programs that would allow students to explore different avenues through exposure to a wide range of learning experiences, and discover new passions and talents.

FRANCOPHONE SUD SCHOOL DISTRICT

Work created by students from École Saint-Paul as part of the activities for the *Semaine provinciale de la fierté française*.

At the post-secondary level, it is important to offer programs that allow students to study in French in the field of their choice while exposing them to a variety of experiences (e.g., sports, science, culture, humanitarian work, environment, arts). With that in mind, it may be desirable to establish partnerships with private-sector enterprises or with other Francophone post-secondary institutions, either inside or outside the province. That will benefit every New Brunswicker, but especially Acadians and Francophones, because chances are that Francophone youth will be more inclined to settle down in the province if they can do their post-secondary education in the language and field of their choice. The growth and vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community and New Brunswick society as a whole are largely dependent on the number of Francophones who live in the province and contribute to its growth.

Area of intervention: Management mechanisms

The success of the strategies proposed in this policy will require a change in culture that is based on collaboration and shared leadership, with the entire process driven by the desire to continuously improve the Acadian and Francophone education system. The establishment and consolidation of multi-sector partnerships, management mechanisms and tools for evaluating anticipated outcomes are essential for the vitality and sustainability of the Acadian and Francophone education system. Giving parents, the community and education partners a voice and genuine power to influence the Acadian and Francophone community's vision for education, will help them feel more competent and empowered, in addition to fostering a stronger sense of belonging to, and greater accountability for, the education system. That will make it much easier to get everyone to commit to achieving the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system, which in turn will promote its vitality and sustainability.

Anticipated outcome:

The Acadian and Francophone education system and all of its education partners:

- are fully engaged in the educational success and identity building of every individual, from early childhood to adulthood;
- are accountable for achieving their education targets.

V 3 — Governance of the school system

Develop and implement mechanisms to ensure greater participation and engagement among students, parents and individuals from various sectors of the community in the governance of the school system.

V 4 — Shared leadership

Implement interdepartmental, intersectoral and community partnership mechanisms to promote cohesive actions and smooth transitions throughout the educational path, from early childhood to adulthood.

V 5 — Continuous improvement

Develop a continuous improvement mechanism for the Acadian and Francophone education system that makes every education partner accountable for educational success and identity building.

FRANCOPHONE SUD SCHOOL DISTRICT

STRATEGY V 3:
Governance of the school system

Develop and implement mechanisms to ensure greater participation and engagement among students, parents and individuals from various sectors of the community in the governance of the school system.

Community participation in governance of the school system is essential if Acadian and Francophone schools are to attain their dual mission. That is why the Commission on Francophone Schools, in its 2009 report, emphasizes the importance of increasing community participation in governance of the school system: "Much more needs to be done to promote the importance of school elections in the Acadian and Francophone community. Renewed efforts are required at the time of school elections in order to promote their importance and foster greater interest" (p. 72).

Since sections 16.1 and 23 [of the Charter] clarify the legal aspects enabling minority communities to govern their schools and the New Brunswick *Education Act* provides for a governance structure through the establishment of District Education Councils (DECs) and Parent School Support Committees (PSSCs), we now have to develop measures to promote these governance mechanisms to the community. The more that parents and the community are aware of the positive effects of their involvement, both for students' educational success and identity building and for the Acadian and Francophone school system and the community, and the more they feel wanted and supported in these structures, the more they will get involved. They will definitely be more engaged if mechanisms are established to support the new members of these structures. This could be done for example by mentoring them or pairing them with more experienced members. Since governance, by definition, gives elected officials the authority to develop strategies and ensure that objectives are achieved, there has to be healthy competition in DEC and PSSC elections to ensure sound governance.

Possible actions   **V 3**

- Analyze current structures for governance by the Francophone community and, if necessary, make changes and implement mechanisms to provide for greater community engagement.

- Review the structure of the Parents' Committee and the Parent School Support Committee in order to combine the strengths of the two committees and/or ensure they complement one another.

- Implement mechanisms promoting the electoral process for the education system to encourage full participation by the Acadian and Francophone community.

- Promote and showcase the importance of the role of parents in parental governance structures and inform them of their constitutional right as regards school governance.

- Implement mechanisms within the education system which:
  - ensure parental participation and reflects the diversity of the school population (e.g., parents who do not speak French, immigrant parents, parents of children with learning difficulties;
  - provide for meaningful participation by students in school governance;
  - promote community participation;
  - facilitate multi-sector participation (e.g., arts, economy);

- Give students a genuine participatory role in school governance, for example through student councils.

- Educate students, teachers, school principals, parents and the community about civic participation and provide them with the necessary tools.

- Educate and guide students and provide them with tools for the roles they will have to play on student councils, District Education Councils (DECs) and Parent School Support Committees (PSSCs).

Envol program, Centre d'apprentissage
du Haut-Madawaska, Clair, N.B.

Lastly, students must have a say in governance structures and be permitted to play an active role in them. To that end, it is important to review existing structures and redefine the responsibilities of student councils so they can take on a greater role and become involved in the development of programs, policies and school services.

STRATEGY V 4:
Shared leadership

Implement interdepartmental, intersectoral and community partnership mechanisms to promote cohesive actions and smooth transitions throughout the educational path, from early childhood to adulthood.

The aim of this strategy is to establish best practices for leadership and collaboration among government departments, sectors and community partners to foster engagement and collective accountability for the achievement of the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system. This collaboration is essential for ensuring the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community and its education system. Shared leadership requires that sector leaders collectively work on establishing collaboration mechanisms to implement tangible measures that will attain the objectives of the policy. It is therefore important that each member play his or her own leadership role and take responsibility for achievement of these anticipated outcomes.

The shared leadership model is advisable because it effectively taps into the capacities of each individual in order to build collective capacity. Sharing resources, abilities and expertise also fosters complementary relationships between partners, always with the aim of advancing towards a common goal. Collective capacity develops when a group learns to behave like an entity. According to Luc (2010, p. 8), [Translation] "Shared leadership makes people accountable, promotes a better understanding of the issues and encourages everyone to become more engaged in achieving objectives."

The Acadian and Francophone school system therefore has to develop a provincial collaboration mechanism bringing together leaders from the sectors concerned, including students, in order to act cohesively and exercise transformational power, e.g., roundtables, consortiums. The

Possible actions   **V 4**

- Practice shared leadership that is flexible, open and inclusive, and focused on community and partner empowerment.
- Ensure the participation of all sectors with a stake in the education system, including agencies, departmental sectors, parents, students, municipal elected officials, Local Service District (LSD) representatives and District Education Councils (DECs).
- Implement interdepartmental collaborative mechanisms and measures which:
  - ensure consistent government action in the fulfilment of the education system's dual mission;
  - result in an education continuum facilitating transitions from early childhood to post-secondary education.
- Develop a shared understanding of the issues facing the Acadian and Francophone community and its education system.

primary goal of this interdepartmental, intersectoral and community collaboration will be to create conditions facilitating the transitions for students at each stage in their schooling, from early childhood to adulthood. By making an individual and collective commitment, these leaders will be able to decide what has to be done to bring the sectors together, and then identify and carry out the actions that will result in the achievement of the anticipated outcomes of the policy. This group should also work out a continuous improvement mechanism. Such a mechanism should, among other things, assess the impact and effectiveness of the actions in relation to the desired changes, in order to ensure that actions are always cohesive (see Vitality strategy V 5,).

Jeux de l'Acadie.

STRATEGY V 5:
Continuous improvement

> **Develop a continuous improvement mechanism for the Acadian and Francophone education system that makes every education partner accountable for educational success and identity building.**

The shared leadership vision described in strategy V4 of the policy calls for the development of a continuous improvement mechanism. Such a mechanism must be based on the fundamental components of an accountability process—a description of roles and responsibilities, anticipated outcomes and objectives, written reporting requirements and provisions for making changes. The continuous improvement mechanism must also take its inspiration from, and be aligned with, the vision, mission and values of the Acadian and Francophone education system in order to support implementation of the strategies in the policy. With such a process in place, education partners will be able to periodically assess achievement of the anticipated outcomes and make any necessary adjustments.

The main purpose of a continuous improvement mechanism is to promote the ongoing enhancement of the quality of student learning, the services offered by the partners in the education system and the outcomes of those services. For this mechanism to be effective and support the advancement of the education system as a whole, it has to be targeted, cyclical, open, informative and predictable, with its ultimate goal being educational success for every learner, as well as identity building.

A process which is designed to measure, on a periodic and regular basis, the effectiveness and impact of measures taken, and promotes dialogue between the partners will enhance outcomes and have a positive impact on strategic planning by those concerned. This continuous improvement mechanism must also be supported by the principle of transparency to encourage the participation of the education partners, the community, parents and students. Written reports stemming from this process must be informative and include data that will allow the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the other partners to prioritize actions that will directly or indirectly affect learners' educational success and identity building. It is also important to determine in advance and explain the stages in the continuous improvement process to everyone in order to ensure better planning at every level of intervention.

Possible actions   **V 5**

- Provide the Acadian and Francophone education system with a strategic framework promoting collaboration among the partners and:
  - long-term planning;
  - an accountability process;
  - evaluation mechanisms;
  - a strategy for communicating planning and accountability measures.
- Appoint an entity responsible for following up on the accountability process, such as a standing committee consisting of members of the Department, school districts, early childhood sector, community, etc.

Area of intervention: Resources

As a result of its minority linguistic status, New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system has specific needs in terms of human, financial and physical resources. Those needs must be taken into account so the education system can fulfil its education and identity mandate and fully play its role as a place of cultural development for the communities it serves. Providing the education system with the resources it needs to achieve its dual mission, will ensure its vitality and that of the entire Acadian and Francophone community.

Anticipated outcomes:

The Acadian and Francophone education system has the resources needed to fulfill its dual mission.

Schools and educational institutions open their doors to the community by being places where people can meet, receive services and learn.

V 6 — Human resources

Recruit and retain professionals with the essential skills needed to participate fully in the education vision for the Acadian and Francophone community.

V 7 — Financial resources

Provide the Acadian and Francophone education system with funding that enables it to fulfil its dual mission.

V 8 — Infrastructure

Maximize the use of schools and education infrastructures, including sharing facilities among institutions of different levels.

STRATEGY V 6:
Human resources

Recruit and retain professionals with the essential skills needed to participate fully in the education vision for the Acadian and Francophone community.

Since the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone education system depends largely on the people who work in it, it is essential to maximize the potential of its human resources to ensure that they consciously and concertedly incorporate into their practices approaches that promote identity building and educational success for every learner.

For instance, leaders in the education system have to take definitive steps to develop a recruitment and retention strategy for professionals directly and indirectly involved in the Acadian and Francophone community's vision for education. Such a strategy must include a description of the essential skills for ensuring the vitality of the education system. The strategy must also focus on support and continuing education for persons working in the system, including current staff, new teaching and educational staff, new support staff and new school principals.

To create conditions supporting the achievement of strategy's goals, it is essential to develop partnerships between the departments concerned, the school districts, early childhood agencies, post-secondary institutions and professional associations. The foundations of this strategy must also be based on research. To achieve the desired success, the findings of studies on recruitment and retention will have to be cross-referenced with those of studies on the skills profiles of teachers, school principals and other support staff in minority language settings.

Lastly, collaboration among all the partners and the sharing of expertise and resources are essential in developing and implementing a human resource recruitment and retention strategy. Leaders in the education system must also target sectors and regions where needs are more pressing in order to prioritize recruitment measures while advocating for a unified education system that provides quality instruction, from early childhood to post-secondary level.

Possible actions　**V 6**

- Establish recruitment mechanisms supporting the education professions by:
  - providing assistance and induction programs;
  - conducting a social marketing campaign.
- Support education professionals by providing them with the resources and continuing education needed to achieve the objectives of the dual mission of the education system.
- Enhance initial training programs in the light of the requirements of the Acadian and Francophone education system.
- Create a support program for new school principals.
- Create mechanisms to better utilize strengths and capitalize on the expertise of staff who specialize (e.g., Certificate VI, master's degree).
- Consolidate or implement mechanisms enabling teaching and non-teaching staff to continue their education (e.g., educational leave, scholarships).
- Provide the school districts and schools with staff in charge of cultural activities, community development and identity building.

STRATEGY V 7:
Financial resources

> Provide the Acadian and Francophone education system with funding that enables it to fulfill its dual mission.

The 2009 report by the Commission on Francophone Schools identifies a number of ways for achieving the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone school system. Among other things, the report underscores the importance of "a series of critical inputs, such as political leadership, collaboration, structural renewal and awareness-raising in civil society" (p. 24). Funding is also a significant aspect in being able to provide a quality education that meets the needs of every child, particularly in minority settings, where schools face numerous challenges related to their educational and cultural mandates. For example, the Acadian and Francophone education system has to carry out activities that are dictated by its context and offer supplementary programs (e.g., francization), in addition to having to use resources that are often more costly than those in majority settings. In that regard, the New Brunswick *Education Act* recognizes the government's responsibilities and commitments as regards the particular needs of education in the minority language, and provides for the equitable division of financial resources between the Anglophone and Francophone sectors, as approved by the Legislative Assembly. The Act clearly states that equitable division "shall seek to assure to each of the education sectors … an equivalent standard of education taking into account the needs and particular circumstances of each sector" (s. 44(2)). To that end, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development relies on principles developed by experts in education in minority settings and experts in public administration and economics. Those principles serve to establish funding levels that take into account the social, cultural and linguistic realities specific to education in minority settings, as well as needs stemming from the demographic situation in each region.

Possible actions   **V 7**

- Establish a multi-year financial planning mechanism for the education partners.
- Consult existing studies and conduct research to better understand the challenges inherent in the education system's dual mission and assess best practices requiring additional funding.
- Include an accountability process in the plan to implement the policy.

FRANCOPHONE NORD-OUEST SCHOOL DISTRICT

Heritage Fair.

To increase its education funding, New Brunswick can count on the federal government's support through the Official Languages in Education Program (OLEP), one of whose main objectives is "To provide members of the French or English minority-language community with the opportunity to be educated in their own language and to experience cultural enrichment through exposure to their own culture" (2009b p. 3). The funds allocated under this federal-provincial agreement is used to fund programs related specifically to the dual mission of French-language education, such as programs promoting cultural enrichment in schools, school-family-community partnerships, and francization programs for children who speak little or no French.

The Acadian and Francophone education system will also have to be innovative by making maximum use of the resources it has, for example by conducting a multi-year planning exercise based on priorities and needs to facilitate effective management of available funds. The Acadian and Francophone education system will also have to develop a governance structure that will enable the regions to meet their specific needs by allowing them a certain amount of autonomy and flexibility in decision making, in addition to taking steps to facilitate the analysis of changing demographic trends and their impact on the regions' needs.

The provision of funding for education in minority settings and the establishment of the governance structures described above must be supported by accountability mechanisms that are in place as initiatives begin. This evaluation process will enable the authorities concerned to make regular changes to ongoing measures in order to meet the specific needs of education in Francophone minority settings. This approach will ensure the continuous improvement of New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system over the short, medium and long terms.

SRATEGY V 8:
Infrastructure

Maximize the use of schools and education infrastructures, including sharing facilities among institutions of different levels.

By opening their facilities, when possible, to different activity sectors (e.g., early childhood services, family support activities and services, performing arts and sports and recreational activities), schools and educational institutions contribute to the vibrancy and development of the community and its members while promoting civic engagement. Optimization of the use of school and educational infrastructure will facilitate the coordination and complementary nature of these services and activities. Such an approach will also foster the development and consolidation of school-family-community partnerships by providing opportunities and physical spaces for people to gather and work on projects or simply receive services. Since the environment in minority-language settings is heavily influenced by the majority language and culture, it is essential to have a place where the French language and culture are dominant across a number of activity and service sectors, for community members of all ages.

Other Acadian and Francophone institutions and agencies will also have to open their doors to children, youth, their families and the community as a whole. Every citizen must have the opportunity to have experiences in French in community spaces in order to, among other things, discover the local, regional, provincial, national and international Francophonie; develop a sense that they belong to and are contributing to the development and vitality of the Francophonie; and promote civic engagement.

Possible actions   **V 8**

- Develop long-term planning for the use of schools and educational infrastructures to meet community needs.
- Establish mechanisms enabling partners to fairly share the costs of using school and community infrastructure.
- Increase and enhance—infrastructure permitting—services offered in schools, such as:
  - early childhood centres;
  - daycare;
  - after-school daycare programs;
  - family literacy;
  - homework help;
  - public library;
  - family services;
  - health.
- Establish interdepartmental and intersectoral partnerships to turn schools—infrastructure permitting—into single entry points facilitating access to a variety of services that meet the needs of children, families and the community.
- Use school, educational and community infrastructure for educational activities (e.g., intergenerational exchanges, network of exchanges between students, parents and the community).

In conclusion, sharing schools and educational infrastructures and using community spaces as places for learning will definitely contribute to the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone education system, the communities it serves, and New Brunswick society.

Area of intervention: Innovation

To ensure its sustainability, vitality and influence, the Acadian and Francophone community has to have an innovative, creative and proactive education system. To that end, it has to be based on research and development, networking and collective capacity in terms of technology and social media use, and be outward-looking, for example through international education.

Anticipated outcome:

The Acadian and Francophone education system is innovative and makes it's influence felt by:

- applying practices proven through research;
- taking part in the creation of new knowledge;
- using technology and social media wisely;
- being involved in international programs and exchanges.

V 9 — Research and development

Develop a culture of excellence in the education system based on research and development enabling the education partners to:

- participate actively in the creation of new knowledge;
- implement proven practices.

V 10 — Networking and collective capacity in the digital age

Implement mechanisms capitalizing on the transformative power of information and communications technologies and social media to facilitate networking, visibility and collective capacity building.

V 11 — International education

Provide students, teachers and the community with opportunities to influence and to learn through programs and initiatives focusing on:

- international exchanges;
- welcoming students from abroad;
- developing intercultural and transcultural competences;
- being open to the world.

STRATEGY V 9:
Research and development

Develop a culture of excellence
in the education system based on research
and development enabling the education
partners to:
- participate actively in the creation
  of new knowledge;
- implement proven practices.

Linkages between research and the education system help create a culture of excellence based on informed decision making. Implementing research findings can only result in best practices in professional circles, which will definitely contribute to the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone education system. Innovation and renewal in education infuse the system with strength and vitality.

It is therefore important that education professionals and leaders in the education system have access to the latest studies, research and popularized articles from domestic and other sources on the components of educational success, identity building and teaching in minority settings, and that they take inspiration from them in performing their duties. It is therefore essential to establish data dissemination, information and training mechanisms for these professionals so that everyone will be familiar with the findings of the latest education research and trends. In turn, they will be able to base their actions on proven data and practices. It is also essential to support teachers and educators in their efforts to improve and fine-tune their instructional approaches by buying into and applying research findings.

Possible actions   **V 9**

- Establish a clearly articulated research mandate in connection with the anticipated outcomes of the policy for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, in partnership with post-secondary institutions and other education partners.
- Promote research that meets stakeholder needs.
- Create opportunities for reflexive practice and sharing and using knowledge.
- Designate persons responsible for following up on research, communicating findings and transferring them to educational practices.
- Enable teaching staff who specialize (e.g., Certificate VI, master's degree) to use their new expertise.
- Create spaces for sharing to promote and implement proven approaches.
- Provide initial and continuing training that facilitates the development of critical thinking and teaching and educational practices based on research.
- Make it easier for education partners to access scientific databases.
- Promote international exchanges as regards knowledge, research and proven educational practices.

It will also be necessary to create new knowledge by encouraging professionals to participate collaboratively in and contribute to research projects and phases. Many research models, such as action research and collaborative research, require the participation of people in the field. These approaches can meet specific needs in the field by exploring innovative solutions. The latter are designed taking into account local strengths and challenges, and they are cross-referenced against the findings of existing studies on the issues at hand. These kinds of studies also contribute to the participants' professional development while furthering research on the subject(s) at issue. By combining the theoretical expertise of researchers with the practical expertise of professionals in the field, approaches such as action research and collaborative research become instruments for change as regards educational success and identity building in minority communities.

Lastly, depending on the outcome sought and the circumstances, the findings of research on the development of a culture of excellence within the Acadian and Francophone education system should be used to full advantage. In conclusion, familiarization with and the application of research findings, the establishment of formal mechanisms for collaboration between researchers and professionals, and the creation of a continuous improvement process (see Strategy V 5, page 58) will definitely contribute to the development of the desired culture of excellence. Such a culture is necessary in order to ensure the vitality of the education system as well as that of the Acadian and Francophone community as a whole.

STRATEGY V 10:
Networking and collective capacity in the digital age

> Implement mechanisms capitalizing on the transformative power of information and communications technologies and social media to facilitate networking, visibility and collective capacity building.

Whereas Identity Building Strategy IB 9 (page 93) emphasizes Francophone digital citizenship and Educational Success Strategy ES 13 (page 150) focuses on the digital learning environment, this strategy is concerned primarily with networking, visibility and collective capacity building with a view to promoting the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community and its education system. Even though the digital environment offers numerous opportunities in those three areas (networking, visibility and collective capacity building), without a doubt the first thing that must be done is to facilitate the development of the individual and collective skills needed to capitalize on its potential. Information and communications technologies (ICTs) make it possible to overcome obstacles in terms of distance and time, and make borders more porous by offering new possibilities for networking, visibility and collective capacity building. Officials and partners in the Acadian and Francophone education system must therefore plan, both internally and on a wider scale, strategic actions that will lead to the development of the skills needed to capitalize on the transformative potential of ICTs. It has also been shown that discussions and the connections between different ideas and idea fragments are essential in the process to create innovative ideas, and that the best way to support those discussions is through the Internet (Johnson, 2012).

Possible actions

V 10

- Promote the use of digital technologies to facilitate networking, collaboration and social learning, e.g., online meetings and discussions.
- Provide formal and informal initial and continuing training to incorporate digital technologies effectively into partnerships and roundtables.
- Enable stakeholders to develop and make use of professional learning environments in order to rethink collective capacity building.
- Provide multiple formal and informal professional development opportunities using the wide range of digital tools available.
- Create and nurture digital professional learning communities.
- Establish an open and secure network in the school system and make it accessible to allow for collaboration between partners through ICTs.
- Promote the production of French-language content on the Internet.

FRANCOPHONE NORD-OUEST SCHOOL DISTRICT. PHOTO: DANIEL AUCOIN

Moreover, by combining expertise, the wise use of technology, critical thinking and creativity, learners, families, communities and leaders and personnel across the Acadian and Francophone education system will be able to capitalize on the potential that ICTs and social networks have to offer, in order to contribute to collective capacity building and the growth of local, global, physical and virtual communities. For everyone in the Acadian and Francophone community, be they learners or community leaders, social networking via digital spaces offers numerous opportunities for collaboration, innovation, learning and outreach, both locally and around the world.

The importance of training, partnership and collaboration is the backdrop for all the strategies in the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy.

The collective capacity sought after in this strategy depends in part on a culture of collaboration between the players in the Acadian and Francophone education system. Joining forces to capitalize on the transformative potential of ICTs and social media must become a priority for the Acadian and Francophone community. Individual and collective actions will enable the community to promote its visibility and outreach both locally and internationally. Communities that are active in the digital world, that showcase and promote their best practices and successes, and that establish sound networking mechanisms contribute greatly to their own vitality. This strategy will have to be implemented in conjunction with Educational Success Strategy ES 13 (Digital learning environment) and Identity Building Strategy IB 9 (Francophone citizenship in traditional and digital media).

STRATEGY V 11:
International education

> **Provide students, teachers and the community opportunities to influence and learn through programs and initiatives focusing on:**
> - **international exchanges;**
> - **welcoming students from abroad;**
> - **developing intercultural and transcultural competences;**
> - **being open to the world.**

International education enriches education experiences in Acadian and Francophone schools and post-secondary institutions. It transcends borders and opens windows onto the world. International education helps in developing critical thinking with respect to current societal issues both locally and internationally, and in producing citizens who are independent, engaged, respectful of differences and aware of the riches that cultural diversity brings. It can take place in formal and informal learning situations at any point in the educational path, from early childhood to adulthood.

This strategy targets three fundamental components of international education: exchanges, promotion of Acadian and Francophone expertise, and recruitment. Among other things, exchanges give learners and education professionals the opportunity to have rewarding experiences and become aware of diversity. It is also important that the Acadian and Francophone community implement mechanisms to promote its expertise abroad by building partnerships between officials in the education system here and outside the country. This education expertise should also be exported in various forms, e.g., programs of study, curricula, online courses, teacher professional development, and training in select areas of expertise. Developing that aspect of international education would definitely foster the influence and vitality of the

Acadian and Francophone education system and the community. Lastly, the recruitment of international students has to include a promotional strategy in foreign markets that will encourage the target clientele to come here to study or take part in short-term practicums in the Acadian and Francophone education system. This component requires careful consideration as regards welcoming and support structures.

Possible actions — V 11

- Enter into international agreements with institutions/organizations with a view to implementing strategies and programs that facilitate international exchanges for learners and teachers.
- Establish a provincial roundtable with representatives of different initiatives involving international education.
- Raise awareness in the education community about the benefits of international students and newcomers, in order to develop collective values that support inclusion, openness, welcoming attitudes, etc.
- Develop and implement an innovative business model for international education.
- Implement the language portfolio in schools and post-secondary institutions.
- Promote interprovincial exchanges and exchanges with countries in the Francophonie, either in the classroom or through online courses.
- Enable students to take courses developed by other institutions (online or on site).
- Explore the possibility of offering learners practicums outside the country (academic, community, scientific, sports, arts, etc.).
- Incorporate into initial and continuing training for educational staff and into programs of study educational foundations and approaches promoting the development of intercultural and transcultural competences.

International students clam fishing (immersion camp).

International education initiatives are already under way in the Francophone sector. Existing activities should receive more support, and steps should be taken to develop those components that are missing or incomplete in order to increase and broaden opportunities for educational experiences that open up windows on other cultures and can export local know-how. Establishing multi-sector strategic partnerships (public and private sector) and developing and implementing an innovative business model are essential if we are to take full advantage of the opportunities inherent to international education.

Identity Building Focus Area

> *"Language is more than a mere means of communication,*
> *it is part and parcel of the identity and culture of the people speaking it.*
> *It is the means by which individuals understand themselves*
> *and the world around them."*
>
> *Mahé v. Alberta (1990)*

Introduction

For some years now, the Acadian and Francophone community of New Brunswick has been undergoing major socio-demographic change. It is becoming more diverse, since it is receiving more and more individuals and families from other Canadian provinces and territories and other countries. It also has more exogamous couples, that is, couples in which one of the spouses is Anglophone or speaks a language other than French. As a result, like other linguistic minorities in Canada, the Acadian and Francophone community is culturally diverse by virtue of its regional identities and the new trends in immigration and intermarriage. It also has to deal with the strong worldwide appeal of the English language and English-speaking culture. Given all of these new realities, it is natural that the members of the Acadian and Francophone community of New Brunswick should have questions about their individual and collective identity, but also about the place they hold in the Canadian and international Francophonie.

The literature frequently stresses the importance of the school's role in the cultural development of individuals in the linguistic minority and their community. Consequently the Acadian and Francophone education system has to adjust to the socio-demographic realities mentioned above. That system has confirmed that it attributes great importance to identity building by formally stating in its dual mission its desire to foster the development of every person's linguistic and cultural identity.

Identity building is in a way the cornerstone for any actions to be taken to help "make a society," and to ensure the sustainability of the French language and the transmission, enrichment and renewal of Acadian and Francophone culture. That is why it is vital that it be treated with great importance from early childhood all through the educational process.

It is therefore essential that the policy make the Identity-building focus area central to its action strategies for training citizens who are responsible and open to the world, confident in expressing and affirming themselves in French, proud of their identity, and engaged and conscious of the importance of their role in the growth of Acadian and Francophone culture, their community, and society as a whole. Obviously, none of this is possible without the development of a positive relationship to a contemporary, pluralistic Acadian and Francophone language and culture.

To achieve this objective, three areas of intervention have been defined within the focus area dedicated to identity building:

1) Curriculum, programs and instruction;
2) Francophone cultural space;
2) Partnerships.

These strategies are in response to the recommendations in the report of the Commission on Francophone Schools and to consultations with the community and stakeholders to establish the main components of this strategic focus area.

The strategic goal of the Identity building focus area

Foster among individuals and the community:

- identity building;
- the confidence and the desire to express and affirm oneself in French;
- active participation in the development of their culture, their community and society as a whole;
- development of an engaged citizenship who can live together in solidarity;
- knowledge and appreciation of the Acadian, Francophone and world cultures;

through the creation of a Francophone space which:

- promotes the vitality, uniqueness and diversity of the province's Acadian and Francophone communities;
- reflects a contemporary and pluralistic Acadian and Francophone culture;
- is open to the world;
- acknowledges the contribution made by different cultural groups to the renewal of Acadian and Francophone culture;
- develops under joint, coordinated leadership by all the partners in education;
- stimulates the participation and engagement of young people, families, educational settings and different sectors of the community;
- promotes creativity, innovation, awareness raising, critical thinking and engagement.

The mandate of the Identity-building focus area

New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system provides learners and the community with a learning environment and conditions conducive to:

- the building of their linguistic and cultural identity;
- the development of a sense of confidence, belonging, competence and autonomy.

To that end it:

- utilizes instructional practices and obtains resources that take into account the specific characteristics of education in a Francophone minority setting throughout the educational path;
- creates an inclusive and welcoming Francophone cultural space;
- establishes and consolidates a range of partnerships.

Summary Table Of The Identity-Building Focus Area

Areas of intervention		
Curriculum, programs and instruction	**Francophone cultural space**	**Partnerships**
Anticipated outcome Every individual, from early childhood to adulthood, has the benefit of an education that fosters: • development of a positive relationship with the language and culture; • the building and expression of the person's identity; • development of the skills necessary for citizen participation; • openness to the Francophone communities of New Brunswick, Canada and the world.	**Anticipated outcomes** From early childhood to adulthood, individuals have the benefit of a Francophone cultural space in school and in the community, so that they can develop in terms of their identity, culture, language and citizenship. Educational institutions are hubs of cultural vitality for the Acadian and Francophone community. Leaners, parents and the community contribute individually and collectively to the vitality of Acadian and Francophone culture.	**Anticipated outcome** All the partners in the education system are collectively committed to building the identity of all members of the Acadian and Francophone community.

Strategies

IB 1 — Curriculum and instructional resources

Provide all educational staff, from early childhood to the post-secondary level, with programs and instructional resources that contain cultural referents which reflect the Acadian, Francophone, and world cultures, as well as educational activities to make effective use of them.

IB2 — Education in minority settings

Provide all teaching staff, including school principals, with initial and continuing training that fosters the emergence of shared cultural leadership, as well as instructional know-how that is focused on the minority setting.

Strategies

IB 3 — School as a hub of cultural vitality

Enhance the ability of schools to become hubs of cultural vitality for leaners, their families and the community, and the ability of the community to help make the school a success.

IB 4 — School as a space for democratic citizenship

Enhance the ability of schools to become spaces for democratic citizenship.

IB 5 — Development and sustainability of initiatives

In collaboration with partners in the education system, ensure the development and sustainability of initiatives concerned with:

• integration of the arts, artists and their works in education;

• access to a variety of sports, scientific and recreational activities in French;

• the transmission and highlighting of Acadian and Francophone history and heritage;

• citizen participation;

• cultural facilitation and community development;

• promotion of the accomplishments of the Acadian and Francophone community in different fields.

IB 6 — Regional cultural development

Make all community partners aware of the importance of:

• coordinating their activities and cooperating in the implementation of French-language cultural development strategies;

• contributing to the Francophone linguistic and cultural landscape;

• offering the entire population a variety of enriching activities in French in artistic, cultural, heritage and recreational settings.

IB 7 — Artistic and cultural creations

In early childhood to adult educational institutions, as well as in the community, facilitate:

• the production and presentation of artistic and cultural creations in French;

• access to a variety of artistic and cultural products of the contemporary Francophonie;

• participation in existing artistic and cultural initiatives.

IB 8 — Events of the Francophonie

Facilitate access to, increase the visibility of and take advantage of events in the provincial, national and international Francophonie to contribute to identity building for learners as well as for and the community as a whole.

IB 9 — Francophone citizenship: traditional and digital media

Enhance the contribution, participation and visibility of Acadian and Francophone youth and the entire community in the traditional and digital media.

Strategies

IB 10 — Role of conveyor of culture

Raise the awareness of, mobilize and equip all partners in the education system regarding their role as conveyors of culture.

IB 11 — Partnership and coordination

Establish mechanisms of coordination and cooperation among all education partners, promoting:

• exchange of best practices in identity building;

• maintenance and consolidation of existing partnerships;

• development of new partnerships.

Identity Building

Identity building encompasses a number of inter-related, superimposed dimensions which complement each other, but above all which influence each other. It is essential that we define a few key concepts to make it easier to understand the foundations underlying the strategies of this focus area. Therefore the next section will deal with the actual concept of identity building, as well as the concepts of self-determination, culture, and a few of its subcomponents (collective culture, individual culture, and cultural appropriation), citizen participation, the contribution made by the various fields (such as the arts, sports, and the humanities), the role of conveyor of culture, the specific role of the Francophone school in a minority setting, and the importance of the school-family-community partnership.

Toward a common understanding of identity building

We adopted the definition proposed by ACELF in 2006 to serve as a benchmark throughout the consultation and drafting process:

> Identity building is defined as "a highly dynamic process during which individuals define and recognize themselves by their way of thinking, acting, and desiring in the social contexts and natural environment in which they live their lives."

This definition, which appears frequently in the various education policies of the Canadian Francophonie, has been adopted by all of the education partners working in Francophone minority settings across Canada.

As the definition of "identity building" indicates, identity is not something that is imposed; rather it is something that is built. Individuals cannot be forced to see themselves as Acadian and Francophone, just as they cannot be forced to love and safeguard the French language and Acadian culture. All the same, it is possible to create conditions that foster positive linguistic and cultural experiences and that satisfy a person's basic psychological needs, i.e. feelings of belonging, competency and autonomy (Deci and

Ryan, 2000 and 2002; Landry, Allard and Deveau, 2010). Individuals who feel that these needs have been met develop a sense of self-determination and may therefore feel intrinsically motivated toward language and culture.

Culture and some of its subcomponents

Culture is a complex concept that encompasses a number of dimensions. While many definitions of this term exist, the policy adopts the one advocated in UNESCO's Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies (1982, p. 1):

> …In its widest sense, culture may now be said to be the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs…

Culture therefore refers to a set of characteristics of a group of individuals or a society. It is also something that can be attributed to an individual. This is why it is important to differentiate collective culture from individual culture.

Collective culture is based, among other things, on values, beliefs, traditions and ways of living together which change depending on the individuals who participate in its evolution (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009; CMEC, 2012). The collective Acadian and Francophone culture of New Brunswick is distinguished by the colour it lends to all of these components, originating in its history and evolving according to the diversity of the individuals who embody it. Individual culture, on the other hand, is defined as personal history as shaped by the events in an individual's life and everyday world (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009; CMEC, 2012). The concepts of collective and individual culture as defined above underlie the importance of respect and the contribution of cultural diversity in the identity-building process. Leaners approach what they learn and develop the skills they need to live their lives on the basis of their individual culture. It is therefore essential that the educational approaches used as well as the environment in

which leaners develop, take these elements into account.

In a minority language context, it is important to take action to help make the collective culture of the minority accessible to individuals. When a person can become aware of the collective culture and participate in its development, that person may be able to recognize himself or herself in it, to develop a sense of belonging to it, and to connect, either consciously or not, certain aspects of their identity to the cultural referents of the collective culture to which they are exposed—in this case, the Acadian and Francophone culture (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009; CMEC, 2013). It is therefore important for students to be able to come into contact with the collective culture through an environment and an education that incorporate the minority cultural dimension in all subjects and at all levels.

Promoting citizen participation

To ensure its sustainability, Acadian and Francophone society must grasp the opportunity and the context made available through the child's entire educational path, from early childhood to post-secondary studies, so as to educate a citizenry that is open, inclusive, engaged, unified and responsible. It must aim to develop citizens who are creative and conscious of the co-existence issues specific to the context of their lives. If Acadian and Francophone society wants to help develop the identity of its youth, it has to perceive them as citizens as soon as they start school—citizens in training, of course, but full citizens all the same. To do this, schools must offer students a democratic lifestyle and every possible opportunity to play a role in resolving and managing the co-existence issues with which they are themselves confronted. In this way, students will be able to better understand the responsibility that comes with civic engagement, and will be better equipped to becmoe involved in maintaining and developing their environment at every level (classroom, school, community, region, province, national, international).

Schools must also encourage students to adopt a critical attitude toward the events going on around them and toward the players and institutions concerned. But above all, every citizen must become self-critical. Being critical means suspending judgment so as to take time to determine criteria that are reliable, to take context into consideration, and to correct oneself, where necessary, before making a decision, before committing to or refraining from action (Lipman, 2004). Critical thinking encourages citizens to engage in an ongoing dialogue that can help to build common sense and a shared understanding of the meaning of the events of everyday life (Lang, 2010).

Finally, it is important that all education partners contribute to making young people autonomous, by allowing them to be directly involved in identifying the problems in their environment, both in school and in their community, as well as in seeking out and implementing solutions. In short, work *WITH* youth and stimulate the development of projects and initiatives *BY and FOR* youth.

Optimizing the contributions of the different fields

The Acadian and Francophone education system is concerned not only with academic success, but also with the personal and social development of all students, including by creating the conditions necessary to build their identity and their civic skills. It is important that identity building and citizenship education encompass every field encountered in the child's educational career (e.g. sciences, mathematics, trades, languages, personal and social instruction, physical education, arts education, social studies), from early childhood to the post-secondary level, and that they favour contexts that are integrative (e.g. environmental education, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary projects). Certain fields are more specifically concerned with the building of linguistic and cultural identity, such as social studies, arts and sports. For this reason, they will be discussed in greater detail in the following paragraphs.

◼ *Contribution of social studies*

Students construct the various facets of their identity (e.g. individual, group, societal) in interaction with others, the world around them, and their different life experiences. In studying the past, historical and current societal issues, and traditional and contemporary heritage, social studies serve to develop critical thinking through educational approaches that promote questioning and research. The very development of this historical thinking, which is designed to be critical, results in the education of informed and participative citizens, as it helps to build their identity in light of their research, their realizations and the positions they adopt on the issues studied. Hence, students play an active role in society through their understanding of the interdependencies that exist between their social, natural and built environments and the development of their consciousness of self and others, skills in living in harmony with others, and ability to make responsible decisions. Finally, the study of social studies fosters reflection, personal growth, consideration of others, and ability to contribute to the sustainable development of the community. In short, it teaches students how to "make a society."

◼ *Contribution of the arts*

Identity building cannot be discussed without mentioning the important place held by creativity and the arts in this process. The arts express people's emotions, thoughts and values. They help "[Translation] to make the person's individual imagination tangible and to integrate it with the collective imagination of the community and the world" (ACELF, FCDEF, FCCF and DOE, 2009, p. 20). The term "arts" evokes creative activities for the purpose of self- or group expression (visual and media arts, music, dance, drama and theatre, literature, film, multidisciplinary arts). The arts foster the development of all the spheres of identity (intellectual, emotional, physical, social, aesthetic, cultural, linguistic).

The appreciation of works by local artists also plays an important role in developing the cultural identity of young people by facilitating contact with the collective culture. Through their work, artists "[Translation] help to question culture and move it forward, to make it vibrant and contemporary. Artists express their vision of the world as coloured by their identity process and their cultural experiences […]. In discovering these local creators and their works, young people develop their sense of belonging, and take pride in displaying their culture in their own way" (ACELF, FCDEF, FCCF and DOE, 2009, p. 21). Also, contact with works and artists from different cultures allows youth to open up to the world and appreciate the richness of diversity. Finally, artistic creation and expression are also excellent identity building tools because they provoke reflection and awaken the creative affirmation of identity.

The report of the Commission on Francophone Schools (2009) emphasized the importance of encouraging "further integration of the arts and culture into school life and teaching activities" (p. 30). To that end, it specified the need to "[a]llocate adequate instructional resources (books, music, etc.), human resources (cultural facilitation), and material resources (infrastructure, technologies) to Acadian and Francophone schools for full artistic and cultural curricula that reinforce identity building and attachment to the community" (p. 30). The Association acadienne des artistes professionnel.l.e.s du Nouveau-Brunswick, with the support of all of its partners, confirms this priority by devoting an entire focus area to the integration of arts and culture in education in the *Global Strategy for the Integration of Arts and Culture into Acadian Society in New Brunswick* (2009).

■ *The contribution of sport*

Sport offers multiple benefits. As pointed out in *A Sport Plan for New Brunswick: One Day...* (Higgs, 2008), in addition to personal health and wellness benefits, sport can help develop greater self-esteem, for example, and be a vehicle of personal growth and development. Sport can also kindle pride in the community, and even promote social inclusion and the emergence of a sense of identity and attachment. It is therefore advisable to encourage young people to participate in certain sporting activities and events conducted in French, whether at the local, regional, provincial, national or international levels.

Fully playing the role of conveyor of culture

Many educational, cultural and artistic stakeholders in Canada's Francophone minority communities have begun to think about the role and responsibility of French-language minority schools in safeguarding the French language and the growth of French-speaking culture. In 2009 this produced the concrete result of the pan-Canadian project called the *Trousse du passeur* culturel. In this document a definition of the concept of *passeur culturel* [conveyor of culture] is proposed, which has now been adopted by all the government education authorities in every province and territory (ACELF, FCDEF, FCCF and DOE, 2009, p. 10):

> The conveyor of culture supports the person, whether [young] or adult, in the building of his or her cultural identity by creating meaningful opportunities for discovery and expression of the French-speaking culture while remaining open to other cultures. Through actions that prompt feelings of attachment, competency and autonomy, the conveyor of culture encourages serious consideration of the relationship to oneself, to others and to the environment.

The individual is encouraged to make informed choices that will contribute to the development and affirmation of personal identity. The resulting motivation will in all likelihood lead this person to identify with the Francophone culture and to live it in the way he or she conducts himself or herself.

Therefore, all of the education partners must play their role as conveyors of culture—this includes parents, grandparents, the community, the various early childhood workers, daycare staff, school staff (including post-secondary institutions), employees of the government departments concerned, and young people themselves. Young children and teenagers who have the opportunity of daily contact with role models who convey a positive image of the French language and of Acadian and French-speaking culture will be more likely to themselves develop a positive relationship to that language and culture.

Identity Building Focus Area

Choosing instructional activities that assist in identity building

In French-speaking minority settings, schools play a leading role in creating conditions conducive to building the students' identity, language learning, valuing of both traditional and contemporary heritage, cultural vitality, and development of civic skills. The school is central to the students' Francophone cultural space. Hence, all members of the school staff have an important role to play in this regard, especially the teachers. To support the teachers, ACELF (2008) proposes eight guiding principles designed to provide direction for instructional activities that can foster identity building among the students while showing them how to "make a society":

1) **Become full members of the contemporary Francophonie**

   Students must have the opportunity to experience learning situations that allow them to see and define themselves as French-speaking citizens of Canada and the world, as well as to open themselves to cultural diversity and the multiple global realities of today's world.

2) **Focus on creativity and innovation**

   Learning situations must allow students to create, to think, and to build their knowledge base. The use of multiple technological tools can promote communication with other Francophones on a local, regional, provincial, national and international level. Learning activities that are grounded in community life encourage creativity and sustainability, since the community then has the benefit of a product that is adapted and reusable.

3) **Value diversity**

   In order for students to be receptive to and respectful of differences, and to encourage them to appreciate their own experience, they must have an opportunity for learning situations that increase their awareness of the diversity around them, in the form of different individuals, diverse French-speaking communities across the country, and diversity of origins and of social, cultural, religious, historical and geographic contexts. This frequent contact with diversity will allow the students to see their own differences as legitimate, thereby helping to build their identity.

4) **Facilitate joint action by school, family and community**

   School-family-community collaboration helps students to learn and assists in their overall development. This collaboration and consistency of action must take place in every sphere and at every level, from early childhood to post-secondary level. For students to develop in a harmonious atmosphere and to have sustainable, balanced and meaningful learning experiences, the local community must have a role in learning and in education environments.

5) **Develop a positive relationship with the French language**

   Students must be exposed to learning situations that allow them to develop a positive and secure relationship with the French language. Those situations must focus on the modernity of the French language, its relevance, its usefulness and its everyday effectiveness, but without questioning the undeniable place of English in the students' immediate environment as well as in the world. Students must be encouraged to see the French language as a tool of self-discovery, a tool for thinking, dreaming, acting and growing.

6) Create ties within the Canadian Francophonie

It is important for activities to spur the development of appropriate and effective networks among the country's French-speaking communities at all levels and in all areas of community life. They must also encourage exchanges within the Canadian Francophonie so as to promote better mutual understanding and the sharing of best practices. Understanding other people's realities will open up dialogue and muster strengths for dealing with common problems.

7) Encourage engagement

Students must be motivated to become engaged and actively involved in finding solutions to the common concerns and challenges that exist in the various French-speaking communities. They must have the opportunity to talk to Francophones whose realities are different but who are facing challenges similar to theirs, so they can find out what unites them as Francophones and what makes them different as communities. When young people have the chance to speak with other Francophones and to recognize the expertise of other individuals or French-language organizations, they are in a position to engage in effective collaboration.

8) Target sustainable impacts

Educators must ensure that students are exposed to learning situations that will encourage them to take concrete actions that can be reinvested and lead to sustainable changes for the local or extended community. Instructional activities must be effective and make it possible to go further in terms of "thinking, acting and desiring." Schools must train citizens who are agents of change, who will have a taste for embarking on meaningful projects and becoming community leaders.

These eight guiding principles must serve as a backdrop for any educator who wants to work in a French-speaking minority setting. The learning situations to which students are regularly exposed have a major impact on the way they perceive themselves as Francophone learners. For that reason all teaching staff must know and above all understand how to actually apply the eight guiding principles recommended by the ACELF. While these principles have been formulated specifically for the K-12 clientele, early childhood workers and post-secondary teaching staff should of course also welcome their guidance in structuring their own activities.

Developing a Francophone cultural space using the school-family-community partnership

The importance of the school-family-community partnership in promoting identity building has been frequently emphasized. The coordinated action of these three pillars of the Acadian and Francophone community contributes not only to children's educational success, but also to their social, emotional, physical and intellectual development. The school-family-community partnership fosters students' language development and their feelings of attachment to the Acadian and Francophone community. Community partners play a critical role in the learners' cultural and civic life by offering them various opportunities, both in and outside school, to express themselves and participate in the development of their community, as well as in the "making a society" project. The dynamic created by the school-family-community partnership is essential for the development of a Francophone space that encourages identity building as well as citizen participation. It facilitates the coexistence of the collective and individual cultures.

Strategies and Possible Actions

Area of intervention: Curriculum, programs and instruction

In order for the Acadian and Francophone education system to fulfill the identity aspect of its dual mission, it is important for the instructional activities and tools used throughout the educational process (curriculum, programs and resources), from early childhood to post-secondary level, to take into consideration the unique features of minority education, reflect the needs and reality of the community, and incorporate the cultural dimension.

Anticipated outcome:

Every individual, from early childhood to adulthood, has the benefit of an education that fosters:

- development of a positive relationship with the language and culture;
- the building and expression of the person's identity;
- development of the skills necessary for citizen participation;
- openness to the Francophone communities of New Brunswick, Canada and the world.

IB 1 — Curriculum and instructional resources

Provide all educational staff, from early childhood to the post-secondary level, with programs and instructional resources that contain cultural referents which reflect the Acadian, Francophone, and world cultures, as well as educational activities to make effective use of them.

IB 2 — Education in minority settings

Provide all teaching staff, including school principals, with initial and continuing training that fosters the emergence of shared cultural leadership, as well as instructional know-how that is focused on the minority setting.

PHOTO: BRIAN ATKINSON

Crowd at the tintamarre, *Festival acadien de Caraquet.*

Identity Building Focus Area

STRATEGY IB 1:
Curriculum and instructional resources

> **Provide all educational staff, from early childhood to the post-secondary level, with programs and instructional resources that contain cultural referents which reflect the Acadian, Francophone, and world cultures, as well as educational activities to make effective use of them.**

In 2009, the report of the Commission on Francophone schools stressed the importance of all educational staff having access to programs and resources[20] that genuinely reflect the Acadian and Francophone community of New Brunswick.

According to the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC, 2012), instructional resources, being essential tools for the appropriation of culture, make a significant contribution to building the learners' identity. It is important that the instructional resources used, whether intended for learners or for educational staff, reflect "[Translation] the pluralism of Francophone culture, highlighting its referents and putting them in perspective, so that students who have to process the information can […] put its subject matter in a cultural context" (p. 13). The cultural referents that are meaningful to the French-speaking community are defined as "elements and attributes characteristic of the Francophone community at the local, provincial or territorial, regional, pan-Canadian and international levels; they can be used as a topic of study to make learning more meaningful and to stimulate the student's cultural and identity development" (CMEC, 2012, p. 13). These can be drawn from any sector of human activity that has some connection to the Francophonie, and can take different forms (local, provincial, national or international event; heritage; artistic and literary works; personalities; linguistic expressions; values and behaviours, etc.).

In addition to containing cultural referents that reflect the Acadian, Francophone, and world cultures, the programs and resources must provide teachers and educators with concrete information on how to make effective use of these referents in their various educational approaches and activities, so as to make the learning process even more meaningful. It is therefore important to equip and train the teaching staff.

Possible actions   IB 1

- Incorporate in all curricula, regardless of subject matter:
  - cultural referents that reflect the Acadian, Francophone, and world cultures;
  - cultural referents associated with the various First Nations cultures;
  - instructional content and educational activities that can make use of the cultural referents and promote identity building;
  - instructionall activities that promote the development of intercultural and transcultural competences.
- Incorporate in the daycare educational curriculum cultural referents that reflect the Acadian, Francophone, and world cultures, as well as educational activities to make use of them.
- Utilize community resources (e.g. artists, cultural industries, research centres, community organizations) to produce and disseminate instructional resources to support students' cultural and linguistic development.
- Utilize and adapt resources developed at the national level or in other provinces and Francophone regions.
- Develop instructional tools that facilitate educational initiatives by members of the community (e.g. the arts, sport, scientific or business sectors).

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20. By "programs" we mean all school and post-secondary curricula, as well as the educational curriculum used in daycare. By "instructional resources," on the other hand, we mean all materials used to support delivery of the curricula.

FRANCOPHONE SUD SCHOOL DISTRICT

Given all of these realities and requirements, it seems entirely logical to favour resources that have been or will be produced expressly for Acadian and Francophone youth. That being said, it may still be relevant to use resources from elsewhere, provided they are adapted to the Acadian and Francophone context, thus making it easier to truly meet the learners' needs and contribute to their identity building.

STRATEGY IB 2:
Education in minority settings

> Provide all teaching staff, including school principals, with initial and continuing training that fosters the emergence of shared cultural leadership, as well as instructional know-how that is focused on the minority setting.

French-language schools play a leading role in building the identity of students and of the community as a whole, by developing educational initiatives that promote self-expression in various ways, help make students aware of issues in the minority setting, make citizen participation possible, and create conditions that make for a dynamic Acadian and Francophone culture. This means that teaching staff and school administrations alike must ensure that the curriculum adopted takes the realities of education in a minority setting into account.

Those realities are many and varied. The students, their parents and the community are not always aware of the issues and challenges that face the growth and development of the minority community. For various reasons, they may also have a poor understanding of the minority language and culture, or harbour feelings of linguistic insecurity. The educational approach that should be taken in minority communities is to introduce initiatives that promote awareness raising and engagement, for example, by encouraging community leadership among the students. This approach also emphasizes the importance of developing a positive relationship with the language and appropriation of the collective culture. Schools must also be aware of how to welcome and include immigrant students and their parents, by inviting them to participate in the collective project of the school and the minority community. This is how the schools participate, and indeed become leaders in promoting a contemporary, pluralistic and dynamic Acadian and Francophone culture.

Possible actions **IB 2**

- Implement strategies that develop feelings of belonging, confidence, competency and autonomy, and that support the teachers' and students' desire to learn.
- Provide coaching and guidance for all educational staff in the area of identity building.
- Incorporate a component on education in minority settings in initial and continuing training for school principals.
- Incorporate a component on education in minority settings in all initial didactic teachers training.
- Provide all educational staff with initial and continuing training in cultural, intercultural and cross-cultural realities.
- Develop and distribute resources that equip educational staff to deal with ethnocultural diversity.
- Create formal and informal discussion forums where teaching staff can share best practices with respect to education in minority settings.
- See that best practices are shared through the professional learning communities as well as the *Portail éducatif*.
- In every course offered by the districts or the EECD department, include a component on education in minority settings.
- Refer to the conveyor of culture concept in the courses, as well as at pedagogical meetings in the schools.

To guarantee a school environment that serves to raise consciousness and works to deal with the above-mentioned challenges, the teaching staff as well as the school principals need to be effectively prepared through solid initial training based on the principles of education in a Francophone minority setting. Provision must be made for continuing training to keep teachers up to date, and all teachers must be encouraged to take personal responsibility for this ongoing training.

The training must familiarize teachers with numerous effective instructional approaches and principles that are particularly important in a Francophone minority setting. For example, it will equip them to incorporate learning activities that promote citizen participation, community participation, openness to the world, a positive relationship with the language and culture, and a place for oral communication, self-expression and creativity, especially through the arts.

It must also enable the teaching staff and school principals to develop shared cultural leadership. Shared cultural leadership guarantees that the vision of every school is clearly stated, shared, understood and implemented by all stakeholders (CMEC, 2012). This will permit the teachers to have a genuine dialogue, on the basis of which they will collaborate on the best instructional and cultural practices to use. They will also see to creating a climate of confidence that will allow every individual to contribute to the collective culture.

Area of intervention: Francophone cultural space

The vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community depends on the commitment of all of its members to play a role in developing a Francophone cultural space where all can see themselves reflected and can affirm themselves. This space refers to a "[Translation] physical or virtual dimension where the French culture can be expressed" (Bélanger and Lafrance, 1994, p. 218). According to the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadiennes du Canada, the Francophone cultural space encompasses the various spheres of culture (e.g. history, heritage, the arts, values, behaviours) and the means used to express and convey that culture. It is important for this space to promote cultural expression and to be created with and for young people.

Anticipated outcomes:

From early childhood to adulthood, individuals have the benefit of a Francophone cultural space in school and in the community, so that they can develop in terms of their identity, culture, language and citizenship.

Educational institutions are hubs of cultural vitality for the Acadian and Francophone community.

Learners, parents and the community contribute individually and collectively to the growth of Acadian and Francophone culture.

IB 3 — School as a hub of cultural vitality

Enhance the ability of schools to become hubs of cultural vitality for learners, their families and the community, and the ability of the community to help make the school a success.

IB 4 — School as a space for democratic citizenship

Enhance the ability of schools to become spaces for democratic citizenship.

IB 5 — Development and sustainability of initiatives

In collaboration with partners in the education system, ensure the development and sustainability of initiatives concerned with:

- integration of the arts, artists and their works in education;
- access to a variety of sports, scientific and recreational activities in French;
- the transmission and highlighting of Acadian and Francophone history and heritage;
- citizen participation;
- cultural facilitation and community development;
- promotion of the accomplishments of the Acadian and Francophone community in different fields.

IB 6 — Regional cultural development

Make all community partners aware of the importance of:

- coordinating their activities and cooperating in the implementation of French-language cultural development strategies;
- contributing to the Francophone linguistic and cultural landscape;
- offering the entire population a variety of enriching activities in French in artistic, cultural, heritage and recreational settings.

IB 7 — Artistic and cultural creations

In early childhood to adult educational institutions as well as in the community, facilitate:

- the production and presentation of artistic and cultural creations in French;
- access to a variety of artistic and cultural products of the contemporary Francophonie;
- participation in existing artistic and cultural initiatives.

IB 8 — Events of the Francophonie

Facilitate access to, increase the visibility of and take advantage of events in the provincial, national and international Francophonie to contribute to identity building for leaners as well as for the community as a whole.

IB 9 — Francophone citizenship: traditional and digital media

Enhance the contribution, participation and visibility of Acadian and Francophone youth and the entire community in the traditional and digital media.

Zwick, mascot of the Fédération des jeunes francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick. (FJFNB).

STRATEGY IB 3:
School as a hub of cultural vitality

> Enhance the ability of schools to become hubs of cultural vitality for students, their families and the community, and the ability of the community to help make the school a success.

French-language schools play an essential role in creating conditions favourable to the vitality of Acadian and Francophone culture and to building the identity of the students, their families, all of the staff, and the community they serve. It is important for schools to provide a dynamic Francophone cultural space in which individuals can see themselves reflected, affirm their identity, and grow (CMEC, 2012). The cultural autonomy model proposed by Landry, Allard and Deveau (2010, p. 32) assigns a central role to schools, seeing them not just as a public institutions and places of learning, but also as places for socialization and identity building. For schools to be real hubs of cultural vitality, it is essential that they make identity building a key part of their mandate and that they coordinate their actions with those of the community.

Schools can engage in cultural outreach in many ways, for example by offering learners plenty of opportunities for cultural and language experiences as project designers, producers and managers and by organizing, often in collaboration with the community, a variety of local or large-scale events in French.

Pilote and Magnan (2008) maintain that schools cannot be dissociated from the societal project desired by Acadian and Francophone communities. As stated by Thériault (2007), school is a place where it is possible to "make a society" in French. In promoting access to its infrastructures for the holding of various activities, the school supports the cultural, linguistic and identity development of the students, their families and the community. It becomes a focal point for the school-family-community partnership as encounters are organized and opportunities arise to hold joint projects that reflect the community's rich cultural diversity.

Possible actions   IB 3

- Ensure that school infrastructures can be accessed to hold various activities in support of the cultural and identity development of the community.
- Make use of school infrastructures to create a network for student-parent-community dialogue.
- Amend policies to make it easier for community organizations to access school infrastructures.
- Offer learners, parents, school staff and members of the community multiple opportunities to become better acquainted with their community's Acadian and Francophone resources.
- In each school and in partnership with the community, develop educational programming that is specific to the school and reflects its community.
- Support the implementation of cultural projects *BY and FOR* young people.
- Implement a strategy for enriching the Francophone content offered at school and in cultural, artistic, heritage and recreational settings.
- Set up projects that promote cross-generational communication and collaboration.
- In each school, set up a cultural committee with a varied membership (staff; students; parents; community members; community, cultural, arts, sports, scientific or heritage organizations, etc.).

It offers an environment conducive to the individual and collective appropriation of Acadian and Francophone culture and to participation by each and every individual in the enrichment and renewal of that culture.

The establishment of two-way structures and mechanisms for communication and coordination will facilitate the establishment of sustainable partnerships, both within the education system itself and between school, family and community, thereby enhancing the ability of schools to become hubs of cultural vitality for the community and the ability of the community to contribute to the school's success. Such structures and mechanisms might include the introduction of a community structure within the school and the coordinated development

of educational programming that reflects the strengths and needs of a school and its community, as well as their diversity and their assets. In a document on civic community schools, the Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones (2011, p. 14) mentions that the school becomes a "community school" when it is an integral part of its community, when it fills its community's needs and when it engages the members of its community in its growth. Furthermore, collaboration with artists and with cultural and heritage organizations plays an important role in enhancing the Francophone content offered both in the schools and in the community's cultural, artistic, heritage and recreational settings. The education partners can also benefit from mechanisms such as regional cultural development and cultural mediation. The latter can be a springboard to closer relations among sectors that are sometimes far removed from each other. In summary, these methods can establish and maintain partnerships between school, family and community with the aim of collectively increasing the capacity of French-language schools to fulfil their dual mission and to become a real hub of cultural vitality for the community.

Identity Building Focus Area

Strategy IB 4:
School as a space for democratic citizenship

Enhance the ability of schools to become spaces for democratic citizenship.

New Brunswick, like other places, is faced with increasingly complex environmental, economic and social conditions. As a result, it needs to train citizens who are aware, informed, creative, critical, responsible, engaged and unified, and who are capable of lifelong learning both on their own and with others. Consequently, schools are called upon to become spaces for democratic citizenship, where students can learn and develop the skills needed for life in society. Schools must also promote understanding of our democratic system, the current issues of society in general, and the issues of the minority community. In this context, students will develop a desire to play a role in the future of their community, both locally and globally, and to participate in the project of "making a society." This will make them full-fledged citizens contributing to the vitality, sustainability and growth of their community. Since they will then know how to be members of society, their engagement will be all the more natural and self-evident.

To increase the capacity of schools to become spaces for democratic citizenship, it is essential to integrate education on citizenship in all curricula and to create an academic environment in which the student can be fully engaged in the school's activities. It is also fundamental to make all educational staff aware of the importance of drawing on current societal issues, both locally and internationally, in formulating meaningful learning situations that will encourage students to develop skills and attitudes, such as environmental consciousness, that wil allow them to exercise citizenship that is aware, critical, active, responsible and interrelated, both today and in the future. The instructional approaches advocated in this sphere are those that encourage the student's engagement as a project initiator, doer and manager as a member of society, and that

Possible actions

IB 4

- Include in all curricula :
  - know-how related to education in citizenship;
  - learning content and instructional approaches that promote the development of critical thinking and a scientifc culture, citizen participation, and awareness of current societal issues in general as well as challenges specific to the linguistic minority setting.
- Introduce training and coaching mechanisms for citizenship education, including development of tools and resources, for all educational staff.
- Incorporate the concepts of citizenship education in all initial didactic teacher training.
- Strengthen the place of the social studies, for the reflection they permit and the dialogue they initiate between past and present, here and elsewhere.
- Encourage the community and all education partners to create opportunities and organize initiatives which promote the engagement and active contribution of young people to the quality, viability, vitality and growth of their environment, their culture, their community, and society as a whole.
- Coordinate the efforts of different government departments on initiatives concerned with citizenship education and the development of autonomous, responsible and engaged citizens.
- Create forums for all education partners that allow for the sharing of best practices in citizenship education.
- Support the establishment of student councils and various comittees promoting:
  - youth leadership;
  - participation by as many young people as possible, reflecting the diversity of the school population;
  - the experience of real intramural citizenship;
  - a unique contribution to the life and operation of the school;
  - application of the concept of *BY and FOR* youth.
- Highlight, support and profit from initiatives of the Fédération des jeunes francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick and other youth organizations.
- Set up mechanisms to assess the benefits of citizenship education initiatives for youth.

also call upon the community to play a role in what the student learns.

Special emphasis needs to be placed on the teaching of social studies, personal and social education, and science and technology. These are fields that will help students become aware of their role and responsibilities as citizens in society. Social studies help students to develop their critical thinking by offering them opportunities to reflect and take positions on various dimensions that define society (democracy, cultural diversity, geographic diversity, economic trends and societal responsibilities). They allow for an understanding of how different societies are organized, and invite students to compare local conditions with how things are elsewhere, yesterday and today, thus opening their eyes to change and diversity. Personal and social education facilitates openness to and understanding of the various methods of organizing life in society. It encourages development of the intra- and interpersonal skills that are necessary to the functioning of a harmonious society. Finally, science and technology enable students to develop a better understanding of their world and reasoning abilities, refinement of problem-solving skills, and the habit of questioning. Science and technology are also awareness-raising tools, as they influence the formation of attitudes and life habits, especially those related to individual and collective responsibilities to the individual and his or her environment.

Many innovative communities all over the world value and support the civic participation of young people, thus serving to develop their sense of community. A community can expect a leveraging effect if it fosters conditions that allow young people to participate fully in its development and in the life of its regional organizations. Participation takes on its full significance, since the young person is given training in democratic life and in community management (Bah and Lanteigne, 2010, p. 7). The Acadian and Francophone community of New Brunswick has an important role to play. A solid partnership between that community and the school is essential for this sort of dynamic to occur.

Strategy IB 5:
Development and sustainability of initiatives

> In collaboration with partners in the education system, ensure the development and sustainability of initiatives concerned with:
> - integration of the arts, artists and their works in education;
> - access to a variety of sports, scientific and recreational activities in French;
> - the transmission and highlighting of Acadian and Francophone history and heritage;
> - citizen participation;
> - cultural facilitation and community development;
> - promotion of the accomplishments of the Acadian and Francophone community in different fields.

There are numerous initiatives in New Brunswick that contribute to the vitality and enrichment of the Francophone cultural space. Some are the work of the various educational authorities, in the context of either formal education (e.g. *ArtsSmarts*, *One school, one artist*, *Expo-sciences*, *Heritage Fairs*, *Fête des mathématiques*) or after-school or extracurricular activities (e.g. community schools à la carte programming). Others are the product of a variety of community partners, in the arts, culture, heritage, community or sports sectors (e.g. *Jeux de l'Acadie*) or in the science and mathematics sector. Whether through artistic and literary expression, sports, science or mathematics, or through the transmission and highlighting of the collective memory and of Acadian and Francophone heritage, these initiatives allow young people to have authentic and meaningful experiences in French, fostering the development of a positive relationship with the language and a feeling of attachment. They also foster the individual and collective growth of these youth, the development of civic skills and attitudes, the appropriation of Acadian and Francophone culture, and the desire to participate in its vitality and its renewal. Similarly, these initiatives play a fundamental role in the various facets of educational success. Many of them facilitate the forging of ties between students, school and community by encouraging all parties to commit to a common project.

Possible actions   IB 5

- Set up mechanisms to guarantee the consolidation and sustainability of existing initiatives and to encourage the creation and development of new ones.
- Consolidate existing collaborative structures (e.g. AGCFS, *Table de concertation Arts et culture en éducation*, partnerships with different government departments) and create new ones in different areas.
- Consolidate cultural facilitation and community development initiatives in the schools and school districts.
- Make all the education partners, including the community, aware of the contribution made by sports, the arts and the human and natural sciences to identity building.
- Implement strategies to ensure access to a variety of extracurricular sports, scientific, artistic and recreational activities in French.
- Highlight and support initiatives of the Fédération des jeunes francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick (FJFNB) and other youth organizations.
- Include young people in the process of developing and setting up initiatives.

In view of the benefits of these initiatives, it is vital to ensure their consolidation, development and sustainability. It is also advisable to develop new ones, right from early childhood, and it is important to find innovative ways to provide these initiatives with the resources they need to thrive.

Their sustainability depends on the commitment of all the education partners, for example, through permanent collaborative structures and the establishment of maintenance and support mechanisms. Conditions must be conducive to the development and smooth operation of active partnerships by arranging times and places to meet, where the partners can gather and undertake common projects.

The CMEC (2012) also underscores the importance of cultural facilitation and community development programs in French-language schools. The objects of the work done under these programs include the promotion of the French language and French-speaking culture both here and elsewhere, the identity building of the students, parents, school staff and the community as a whole, and development of a sense of belonging to a dynamic and pluralistic French-speaking community. Often this sort of action will generate commitment on the part of the students to their studies and to the cultural life of the school and the community (ACELF, FCDEF, FCCF and DOE, 2009). The areas of activity addressed by the cultural facilitation and community development programs are diverse, and include the collective memory, the arts, social issues, and events of the Francophonie. To summarize, maintaining cultural facilitation and community development programs is essential in order to fulfill the dual mission of Acadian and Francophone schools, and that is why the key players who will be implementing these programs need training and support, so that their work will be successful and have positive short- and long-term impacts.

STRATEGY IB 6:
Regional cultural development

> **Make all community partners aware of the importance of:**
> - **coordinating their activities and cooperating in the implementation of French-language cultural development strategies;**
> - **contributing to the Francophone linguistic and cultural landscape;**
> - **offering the entire population a variety of enriching activities in French in artistic, cultural, heritage and recreational settings.**

In developing all of the various cultural activities held in their region, schools, educational institutions and all sectors of community activity help to create a space that showcases the French language and a contemporary, pluralistic Acadian and Francophone heritage and culture. That space promotes the cultural, identity and linguistic growth of both the individuals who live there and the community at large.

This collaborative way of working is suited to the concept of *regional cultural development*, where all the stakeholders in a community (cultural, economic, municipal and education sectors) agree to formulate strategies to integrate the arts, culture and heritage within their territory and in their respective spheres of action. This allows the community to develop while taking the best possible advantage of the artistic, cultural and heritage potential of its region. The benefits of *regional cultural development* are many, especially in regard to quality of life, creativity and health of individuals, strengthening of the social fabric of communitles, and regional economic development.

For proper coordination of the various French-language cultural development initiatives and activities, it is important for the partners to share a common vision of *regional cultural development*. Among other things, this multisectoral collaboration mechanism allows the various stakeholders in a given region to share their knowledge of cultural activities and to make better use of their human and material resources and their infrastructures by pooling them. In short, *regional cultural development* extends the scope of activities by making them more complementary.

Possible actions **IB 6**

- Train the stakeholders involved in the concept of regional cultural development, and provide them with common tools that allow them to act with consistency and efficiency.
- Arrange collaborations between cultural development or heritage organizations, arts organizations, artists and the education community for the implementation of activities both within and outside educational institutions.
- Build partnerships with municipalities and other sectors of the community to offer a variety of French-language programming (e.g. sports, recreational, artistic or cultural activities) and to increase its impact both at school and in the community.
- Ensure that students are involved in the various cooperation and collaboration mechanisms.
- Consolidate the role of those responsible for cultural and community development in the schools so that they act as real student-school-community liaison officers.

The implementation of linguistic and cultural development measures that promote cultural heritage and the unique character of a community has an impact on the linguistic landscape of a region. For example, public signage that reflects a region's demographic reality in linguistic and cultural terms and promotes the French fact in both official languages serves to appropriate the public space and mark a French-speaking community that offers meaningful opportunities for exploration and expression of Acadian and Francophone culture. The development and consolidation of artistic, cultural and recreational facilities are also fundamental to successful regional cultural development, so as to offer rewarding activities in French that can meet the diverse interests of the population.

A regional cultural development initiative can be modelled on practices used in the cultural mediation approach, which facilitates citizens' appropriation of culture, by taking advantage of society's ties to the spheres of culture, art and heritage. Cultural mediation is often used in situations of integrating non-majority cultures, regional revitalization and social development. It makes it possible to create special meeting-places between artists and citizens, thereby fostering interpersonal exchange, learning and civic engagement. Schools are considered an important gateway for introducing such an initiative in a community.

Finally, sharing a common vision of the arts and contemporary culture and coordinating action strategies for all the sectors of Acadian and Francophone society help to strengthen the linguistic and cultural identity and engagement of young people as well as all members of the community, and assist in the sustainable development of Acadian and Francophone communities.

STRATEGY IB 7:
Artistic and cultural creations

In early childhood to adult educational institutions as well as in the community, facilitate:

- the production and presentation of artistic and cultural creations in French;
- access to a variety of artistic and cultural products of the contemporary Francophonie;
- participation in existing artistic and cultural initiatives.

In 2007, at the *Grand rassemblement* of the *États généraux on Arts and Culture in Acadian Society in New Brunswick* [Summit on arts and culture], all the stakeholders in the province's Francophone education system affirmed their conviction of the essential role that the arts play in building the students' identity by adopting a common vision: "Acadian and Francophone schools in New Brunswick integrate arts and culture as core values of learning. Schools are places that nurture the student's sense of self and cultural belonging and thereby contribute to cultural development, valuing the arts as a mode of expression and a tool for self-development. They offer each student high-quality learning experience in all arts disciplines. Through their art and cultural education and their contact with artists and their work, students, from the beginning of their schooling, develop their creativity, construct their identity, appreciate the richness of their cultural heritage, become citizens who are proud of belonging to their community and who combine a desire to contribute to it with a global perspective and an open and positive attitude towards the world" (Association acadienne des artistes professionnel.le.s du Nouveau-Brunswick, 2009, p. 121).

Possible actions   **IB 7**

- Continue the work started by the various partners on the *Table de concertation Arts et culture en éducation* with regard to implementing the Education focus area of the *Global Strategy for the Integration of Arts and Culture into Acadian Society in New Brunswick* (2009).
- Incorporate in all curricula educational activities that promote:
  - development of creativity;
  - use of the various modes of personal expression (e.g. music, dance, theatre, visual arts);
  - learning through the arts;
  - interdisciplinarity;
  - appreciation of works by Francophone artists from NB and elsewhere, past and present, that are related to the field of study.
- Introduce mechanisms that offer training and guidance in artistic and cultural education and in education through the arts for all teaching staff.
- Develop a strategy for recruiting teachers who specialize in arts education.
- Introduce initiatives that allow students to undertake innovative projects, develop their creativity and create their own works of art, and that showcase their accomplishments.
- Create more opportunities to include artists and their works in the school setting and in the community.
- Ensure that artists and their works have access to school and community infrastructures.
- Develop a provincial cultural and community facilitation program designed for all levels of the education system as well as the community, which ensures that diversified cultural programming is regularly available all year long.
- Make all partners in education aware of the importance of the arts, culture, heritage and creativity for the learners' educational success and identity building.
- Set up mechanisms for evaluating the benefits of initiatives for integrating the arts and culture in education.

To make this vision a reality, the education partners must coordinate their actions in order to create conditions favourable to a quality education in arts and culture, throughout the child's entire educational path as well as in different facets of academic and community life. A special effort must be made to improve the offering of arts courses, to integrate educational activities related to the arts, culture, heritage and the interdisciplinarity of all curricula, to recruit specialist educators, and to train and equip teachers and artists for teaching through the arts. It is also essential to develop and consolidate initiatives that expose students to historical and contemporary works through direct contact with those works and with artists, and by visiting cultural, artistic and heritage sites.

Strengthening the school-family-community partnership is of critical importance for supporting the artistic and cultural vitality of academic and community life. This collaboration makes it possible to take action that supports and complements what is taught. The participation of the artistic and cultural community is fundamental to the development of initiatives that promote introduction to and understanding of the various forms of artistic expression for the child, the teaching staff and members of the community. Training and guidance mechanisms must be put in place to make the various partners better able to maximize the potential of initiatives for integrating the arts and culture in the school and the community, and thereby make a conscious contribution to the blossoming of individual and collective creativity.

The creative experience and the appreciation of artistic and cultural works promote the development of identity, culture and language in individuals of all ages and encourage individual and collective participation in the enhancement of Acadian and Francophone culture and society in general.

STRATEGY IB 8:
Events of the Francophonie

> **Facilitate access to, increase the visibility of and take advantage of events in the provincial, national and international Francophonie to contribute to identity building for learners as well as for the community as a whole.**

There is an abundance of events in the provincial, national and international Francophonie that celebrate the French language and French-speaking culture (e.g. *Semaine provinciale de la fierté française, Concours Accros de la chanson*, Provincial debating tournament, *Jeux de l'Acadie, World Acadian Congress, Jeux de la francophonie canadienne, Sommet de la Francophonie, Francofête en Acadie, FICFA, Heritage Fairs, Expo-sciences, Fête des mathématiques*). The youth activities organized in connection with these events facilitate encounters and exchanges among young Francophones from various circles and also among the various youth organizations. These activities allow young people to discover different French-speaking cultures and to become aware of their realities. They can also help them to understand the place that their own culture holds in their life and how they can contribute to its development. Young people's participation in these unifying events is definitely meaningful in their identity building process. Among other things, that participation awakens feelings of attachment and pride, a sense of leadership, and the desire to be and to become active, engaged citizens in their local and global communities.

All the education partners must ensure that the potential of these events is maximized by taking advantage of existing youth initiatives organized specifically for them or by creating new opportunities for youth to come together when this aspect is not significantly present in the programming. They must also ensure that mechanisms are put in place to spur participation in these events by a greater number of young people and community members, as organizers,

volunteers, participants or spectators. Lastly, it is vital to encourage networking during and after the activities, especially through virtual networking.

Special emphasis must be placed on the educational use of these Francophone events. When well integrated with education, they can offer multiple opportunities for meaningful learning and discovery of different cultural referents of the Francophonie as it exists here and elsewhere. They are also an occasion to celebrate student successes and to recognize students, teaching staff, schools and community members who distinguish themselves, in a context of promoting the language and culture.

Possible actions   IB 8

- Increase the opportunities for young people to participate in unifying regional, provincial, national and international events, and make those events more accessible.

- Ensure to include young people in the organization and coordination of activities, and to apply the principle of *BY and FOR* youth.

- Ensure that as many youth participate as possible.

- Encourage community participation in events celebrating language and culture.

- Utilize instructional approaches that awaken students to the French fact here in New Brunswick, in Canada and around the world.

- Employ mechanisms that encourage networking and the creation of ties between young Francophones from New Brunswick and elsewhere.

- Maximize the visibility of the initiatives and promote student successes in multiple media formats.

- Make select places for culture, the arts, sports, heritage, science and recreation during the events.

- Promote the websites of the Canadian and international Francophonie in order to cultivate interest in the national and global Francophonie.

In short, encouraging youth and members of the community to take part in the various events of the Francophonie can only have positive impacts on community vitality, as well as on the identity building of individuals and the community alike. Strengthening and enhancing relations among young members of the various local, national and international Francophone communities will surely mean a promising future for the French language and French-speaking culture.

STRATEGY IB 9:
Francophone citizenship: traditional and digital media

> Enhance the contribution, participation and visibility of Acadian and Francophone youth and the entire community in the traditional and digital media.

Young people have an important contribution to make to society and to the Acadian and Francophone community. It is therefore essential that they be encouraged to immediately take their rightful place in the various traditional and digital media, while cultivating a desire and willingness to affirm and promote themselves in French, even though they live in an environment where contact with the English language and Anglo-American culture is predominant.

The scope of what is expressed and created by young Acadians and Francophones must not be confined to the physical space of the schools they attend. It is important to motivate them to emerge from the usual framework of the school, college or university and to embark upon substantive discussions, whether oral or in print, in the traditional or digital media, on the issues that matter to them (such as social justice, the Francophonie, the environment, anti-bullying, etc.). Indeed, the multiple media formats offer a powerful arsenal with which young people can express their identity.

It is vital to promote the acquisition of digital literacy skills by the young and the not so young, so that they can take full advantage of the possibilities of local, national and international communication. It is also important to ensure that everyone clearly understands the concept of digital citizenship, that is, the ability to demonstrate critical thinking while making judicious use of the various digital technologies. While digital technologies offer countless possibilities, those who use them must also be conscious of the risks and limitations involved, which is why young people must be made aware, right from the elementary level, of their role as citizens in the traditional and digital media context, by advising them to cast a critical eye on the ways they use the Internet (e.g. online gaming, social networks, downloading, chatting, information searching, respect for copyright, etc.) and by raising questions relating to responsibility and the impact of their actions on the Web (e.g. blogging, taking positions on sociopolitical issues, using social media to inform and sensitize the public), not only as young people, but also as Acadians and Francophones.

Possible actions   IB 9

- Provide initial and continuing training, formal and informal, that allows for judicious integration of digital technologies in teaching and learning.
- Encourage the citizen participation of young people through the various media platforms, both traditional and digital (e.g. taking positions on and community awareness of current issues in society).
- Sensitize young people, families and the community to the importance of using French-language technology tools.
- Facilitate access to an open, secure online network within the general network used by schools, school districts and the Department.
- Implement a training strategy on the proper management of digital identity, directed to students, teaching staff, school administrators and parents.
- Promote Francophone websites in the social media.
- Promote online content creation and sharing by young people discussing their projects and productions in the social media.
- Enhance French-language content on the virtual multimedia.

On another topic, it would seem essential to make all key players in the Acadian and Francophone community conscious of the importance of their role as conveyors of culture on the Web. Affirming and representing oneself in French in the virtual realm and on social networks definitely helps to build a positive image and contributes to the appropriation of the French language and culture. The more that young Acadians and Francophones encounter and recognize each other on the different media, the more they will value their culture, the more they will develop a positive relationsip with the language, and the more they will tend to express themselves publicly in French. All of this will have positive impacts for the entire Acadian and Francophone community.

Finally, it must be emphasized that development and support of virtual Acadian and Francophone communities must take place through established networks, not just on closed ones. Linking the digital spaces now popular with young people (Tumblr, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Skype, etc.) to "local" initiatives or websites, encourages the support, interaction, vitality and outreach of these communities. This strategy must be developed in tandem with strategies ES 13 (Digital learning environment) and V 10 (Networking and collective capacity in the digital age).

Area of intervention: Partnerships

Education is a collective responsibility that requires firm partnerships, especially in order to achieve the identity building component of the dual mission of the French education system. It is important to promote the pooling of a variety of skills for the collective good. The school-family-community partnership, a collaborative process which refers to the ties between schools, families and individuals, community organizations and businesses that directly or indirectly support and promote the educational success of children or adolescents and their social, emotional, physical and intellectual development (Deslandes, 2004), contributes immensely to the establishment of conditions favourable to both individual and collective identity building.

Anticipated outcome :

All the partners in the education system are collectively committed to building the identity of all members of the Acadian and Francophone community.

FJFNB youth rally.

IB 10 — Role of conveyor of culture

Raise the awareness of, mobilize and equip all partners in the education system regarding their role as conveyors of culture.

IB 11 — Partnership and coordination

Establish mechanisms of coordination and cooperation among all education partners, promoting:

- exchange of best practices in identity building;
- maintenance and consolidation of existing partnerships;
- development of new partnerships.

STRATEGY IB 10:
Role of conveyor of culture

> Raise the awareness of, mobilize and equip all partners in the education system regarding their role as conveyors of culture.

Every person in the child's environment exerts some degree of influence on how that child's identity is built. Consequently, all partners in the Acadian and Francophone education system, including parents, teaching staff and the community, have an important responsibility, which is to fully play their role as conveyors of culture.

Special emphasis must be placed on the parent's role as the first conveyor of culture to the child. As for all the responsibilities that parents have to assume (first educators, first caregivers, etc.), it must be realized that this role develops and changes over the years. Schools, the various educational settings and the community must be sensitive to this reality and ensure that parents, whether Francophone, Anglophone or allophone, receive the support they need to help build their child's identity.

Similarly, for Acadian and Francophone schools and the different French-language educational environments in New Brunswick to become real hubs of cultural transmission, it is vital to reinforce the cultural dimension in all disciplines and learning activities (Thibault, 2009). Identity building must be made central to the school's educational mission by integrating culture into learning, making use of local cultural resources, maintaining a dynamic Francophone cultural environment, and offering a variety of academic, extracurricular and after-school cultural programming at regular intervals all through the year. The school administration plays a critical role here in inspiring the engagement and the individual and collective leadership of its partners and in promoting the consistency of initiatives.

Possible actions　　**IB 10**

- Implement an awareness strategy to promote the mobilization and commitment of all the partners in education, including students, parents and all school personnel (teachers, principals, cafeteria staff, bus drivers, librarians, caretakers, etc.), to the building of the children's identity.

- Develop inclusive tools, resources and training so that parents who do not speak French can participate in the implementation of the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system.

- Make all educational staff aware of the importance of including all parents in the educational mission of their respective community.

- Set up support measures and create training tools and resources that allow the various stakeholders, including artists and sports coaches, to fully play their role as conveyors of culture.

- Set up mechanisms that promote the exchange of best practices between schools and the various educational settings, as well as between the education partners, on the identity building component of the dual mission of the Francophone school.

- Adopt a cultural facilitation and development strategy at the various levels of intervention.

- Create heterogeneous cultural committees to ensure that the role of conveyor of culture is kept up to date, at the various levels of intervention.

- Incorporate the cultural, linguistic, identity, heritage and civic dimensions in the schools' educational projects.

To ensure that both individual and collective responsibility is assumed, an awareness-raising strategy must be established, to develop new resources and make use of existing ones, develop training tools, and set up support mechanisms adapted to the realities and needs of the various partners, for all school staff, early childhood workers, parents and the community, including artists and sports coaches. Such measures will equip the various education stakeholders to launch a personal and/or professional initiative in this area and to play this role of conveyor of culture on a daily basis. They will also guarantee the availability of dynamic and committed conveyors of culture.

The actions taken by the conveyor of culture must promote individual accountability, cultural affirmation, development of a sense of belonging to a dynamic and pluralistic Francophone community, citizen participation, self-expression, openness to the world, respect for diversity, and creativity. They must also advance the application of the concept of *BY and FOR* youth. When young people are active participants in organizing events and activities, there is often a catalyzing effect on all of the school's students.

In actively accepting the mission of conveyor of culture, the various education partners contribute both to successful identity building by children and young people and to the development and growth of the Acadian and Francophone community of New Brunswick.

STRATEGY IB 11:
Partnership and coordination

Establish mechanisms of coordination and cooperation among all education partners, promoting:

- **exchange of best practices in identity building;**
- **maintenance and consolidation of existing partnerships;**
- **development of new partnerships.**

The aim of all the strategies proposed in the Identity building focus area is the growth and vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community and its members, and the development of an engaged citizenship as well as a way of living together in solidarity. These strategies are concerned with the individual (as both person and citizen), as well as with the community and the environment (Gilbert and Lefebvre, 2008), in its physical, social, academic, community and digital dimensions. Implementation of these strategies necessarily involves the establishment of partnership structures as well as mechanisms of interdepartmental, intersectoral and community coordination and cooperation.

It is important for the education partners at all levels of intervention as well as in the different public and private spheres of New Brunswick society to develop and adopt a common vision of their collective role with respect to building the identity of Acadian and Francophone individuals and communities. It is also critical for the leaders of this mobilization, the school principals and directors of partner organizations to understand the extent of the benefits of an organizational culture that values the partnership approach and consistency of action. To achieve this end, all partners must be offered ongoing support, and tools must be developed to meet their particular needs and mechanisms must be established that promote the sharing of knowledge and best practices.

Establishing sustainable, two-way partnerships allows the community, on the one hand, to contribute to the dual mission of the education system and to train fulfilled, balanced, critical and engaged citizens, and schools, on the other, to meet the community's needs by making their services and infrastructures available. Many strategies of the Identity building focus area explain how certain approaches, such as regional cultural development and cultural mediation, can become real gateways between the school, family and community.

In summary, the individual and collective commitment of all the education partners and the various sectors of society, together with the establishment of mechanisms of interdepartmental, intersectoral and community coordination and cooperation, will surely contribute to the creation of a vibrant Francophone space which, for individual and community alike, promotes the building of linguistic and cultural identity, the confidence and desire to express and affirm oneself in French, and participation in the growth of Acadian and Francophone culture and society.

Possible actions **IB 11**

- Make the different sectors of society aware of the importance of the partnership approach and its benefits for the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone communities.

- Consolidate those initiatives that enable schools to establish sustainable partnerships (e.g. cultural development officers and community development officers).

- Make sure that parents and partners are involved in development and implementation of the school's and district's educational projects and of school-community projects.

- Create spaces that allow for the sharing of best practices in identity building and in the development of sustainable partnerships.

FRANCOPHONE NORD-EST SCHOOL DISTRICT. PHOTO: DANIEL DOUCET

Opening ceremony for *Semaine provinciale de la fierté française* 2012.

Early Childhood Focus Area

"Early childhood intervention entails addressing the assimilation issue upstream and providing for early intervention with young people and their parents in the areas of learning, developmental issues, and identity building."

Report of the Commission on Francophone Schools, p. 5

"French-language services to young children are one of the best ways to ensure the community's survival. Preschool education seems to be one of the leading factors for the preservation and growth of Francophone communities, and every necessary measure should be implemented to develop it."

A. Gilbert and J. Y. Thériault, quoted in the Report of the Commission on Francophone Schools, p. 41

Introduction

The Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy assigns a central place to early childhood by allocating it an entire focus area. This decision recognizes the importance of collective management of the overall development and identity building of every young person, right from early childhood, in a French-speaking environment. Children develop language skills and acquire the bases of their identity in their first years of life. What is learned in those first years, and the contexts in which it is learned, is decisive not only for the child's individual development and success, but also for the vitality of the community.

This understanding of the importance of early childhood from both an individual and a collective perspective is reflected in anticipated outcomes that are ambitious, but fundamentally necessary. The early childhood focus area provides a framework with the best conditions for increasing the ability of parents, early childhood professionals and the community to work together to achieve the anticipated outcomes. The strategies developed for this focus area propose certain actions that can better meet the needs of all children. They are organized around three areas of intervention, one targeting greater consistency of services, another providing support to parents in their role as first educators, and a final one designed to train and prepare professional early childhood personnel working with children as well as with parents and families. These strategies will promote sustainable changes to ensure the best possible future for every child and for the Acadian and Francophone community as a whole.

The strategic goal of the Early Childhood focus area

Foster among children 0 to 8 years of age:

- their overall development;
- the building of their own identity;
- the learning of the French language;

through the implementation of an integrated network of services which:

- is based on partnership and shared leadership by public and private institutions, families, and the community as a whole;
- gives children and their parents access to services in French that meet all of their needs, delivered in a consistent and integrated manner by qualified individuals who are aware of and trained in the specific characteristics of early childhood intervention in a Francophone minority setting.

The mandate of the Early Childhood focus area

New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system recognizes:

- the crucial importance of the early childhood period for language learning, the laying of the foundations for identity, and the overall development of each person;
- the fundamental role of parents in their children's development and education, in partnership with workers in various community sectors;
- the importance of quality services in French that are adapted to the needs of children 0 to 8 years of age and their parents, in both rural and urban areas;
- the importance of quality initial and ongoing training in French, including raising awareness among all individuals working with children and their parents, of their role as conveyors of culture.

To that end, it:

- provides access to an integrated network of services in French;
- recruits, welcomes and supports parents;
- provides quality programming and interventions in French.

Summary table of the early childhood focus area

Areas of intervention		
Access to an integrated network of services in French	**Recruitment, welcoming and support for parents**	**Quality programming and interventions in French**
Anticipated outcome Children 0 to 8 years of age and their parents have: • access to quality French-language services that meet all of their needs, based on the overall development of the child; • effective, continuous services starting in the perinatal period, delivered within an integrated network.	**Anticipated outcome** Parents of childen 0 to 8 years of age, as first educators of their child, receive support, guidance, quality resources and information about their rights, enabling them to: • choose care, services and education in French, starting in the perinatal period; • participate fully in their child's French-language education; • contribute to the overall development of their child; • fully play their role as conveyors of culture; • strengthen their feeling of attachment to the Acadian and Francophone community.	**Anticipated outcome** The early childhood sectors have personnel who: • have the skills and knowledge to welcome and support parents; • play their role as conveyors of culture; • offer care, services and education that take into account the specific characteristics of intervention in a Francophone minority setting; • contribute to children's overall development.
Strategies **EC 1 — Integrated network** Establish and maintain collaboration and partnerships among public and private institutions, parents and the community which ensure: • the interdependence and complementarity of early childhood services accessible from a single entry point in both urban and rural areas; • the coordination of an early screening system; • information sharing and the creation of a single file for each child, whatever the number and type of services received; • smooth transitions as a result of continuity in the delivery of quality French-language services at all stages of the education of children 0 to 8 years of age. **EC 2 — Equal acccess to services in French** With the assistance of a transition plan, adapt policies and structures to establish duality in the management and delivery of all early childhood services.	**Strategies** **PE EC 3 — Recognition of care, services and education in French** Implement communication strategies to raise public awareness and inform rights-holder parents about their rights to care, services and education in French from the perinatal period throughout their child's educational path. **EC 4 — Welcoming and support** Set up structures and develop welcoming and support tools for parents so they can fully assume their roles as first educators of their children including the role of conveyors of culture. **EC 5 — Services and resources for linguistic and cultural development** From birth, offer quality French-language services, programs and resources that include Acadian, Francophone and international cultural referents.	**Strategies** **EC 6 — Human resources** Implement strategies: • that value early childhood education and intervention professions; • that support the recruitment and retention of professional staff capable of working in French with children 0 to 8 years of age. **EC 7 — Staff training** Provide persons working with young children with access to support and to initial and ongoing training that incorporate: • knowledge of sections 16.1, 23 and 24 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*; • specific characteristics of intervention and education in Francophone minority settings. **E 8 — Programs and instruction** Implement a mechanism that serves to coordinate programs and curricula designed for children 0 to 8 years of age, incorporating instructional approaches that respect the overall development of each child in an inclusive setting.

Early Childhood

According to the research (Friendly, 2000; Willms, 2002; McCain, Mustard, & McCuaig, 2011), a public policy on early childhood can be decisive in reducing the development gap that often begins in a child's early years. Not only does this gap put the child's development at risk, it also generates major economic and social costs for society. In Francophone New Brunswick, where a significant percentage of adults do not have an acceptable level of literacy, it is even more important to have a policy that aims to reduce the development gap starting in the child's first years.

The research (McCain & Mustard, 1999; Landry & Rousselle, 2003) also shows that the most effective public policies for early childhood are those that take the child's overall development into account. Better knowledge of this development will allow for the use, as needed, of child-focused educational practices, services and care. This also leads to the sustained offer of parental support services and increased involvement of the community as a whole. In addition, in a Francophone minority setting, such a policy has to pay special attention to transmission of the French language and appropriation of French-speaking culture, while remaining sensitive to and respectful of the various cultures that may exist within families (First Nations, immigrants, etc.). The quality of services offered is all the more important since it must promote the building of cultural identity and support the parents, the professional early childhood staff, and the community in their role as conveyors of culture. The early childhood focus area of this policy has been developed on the basis of these elements, offering child care workers, decision makers, educators, and parents some serious food for thought in relation to preferred actions.

Toward a common understanding of "early childhood"

The province of New Brunswick follows suit with UNESCO in defining early childhood as the period from birth up to age eight. This new outlook is being adopted by numerous countries, which also recognize that an approach that combines health, nutrition, care and education is more effective in enhancing the child's well-being and development than approaches limited to only one aspect. The former is more respectful of the child's needs, and at the same time facilitates the establishment of an integrated network of services, care and education as well as greater cohesion of service delivery. The result is improved sharing of intervention strategies and smoother transitions when the child moves from the family circle to daycare and then to school. In other words, this approach favours the sharing of necessary information, access to user-friendly services for parents, and complementarity of services and programs.

In addition, when services are delivered within an integrated network, it becomes easier to include children who have special needs. Under this definition of early childhood, specialized services offered during this stage of life are extended up to age eight. Traditionally, many services offered to children (such as specialized autism or speech therapy services) or parental support services would end or be stepped down once the child entered the school system. By extending the early childhood period up to age eight, continuity of services is guaranteed, thereby increasing every child's chances for educational success.

The use of this definition implies a paradigm shift, which will change the way caregivers and educators work, involving the establishment of partnerships, an integrated service network, and instructional continuity between programs at different levels that will be more respectful of children's overall development and specific needs. Furthermore, adopting this definition implies certain changes within the school system

itself, i.e. from kindergarten to Grade 3, where the instructional approaches advocated will have to be aligned with the child's development, and where greater collaboration with external agencies (daycare centres, specialized services, etc.) and with parents will guarantee the best possible start for the child.

Again according to UNESCO (2000), integrating early child care with education creates many advantages for children, parents, caregivers and educators, in addition to allowing for more effective management of the system. In New Brunswick, this integration is already in place in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). The strategies of the early childhood focus area explain how to move beyond this physical integration to the harmonization of practices in the field.

Focusing on learning the French language and on identity building

The brain starts developing in the very first years of life. While this development is influenced by children's interactions with nature and the people around them, it is also influencd by an entire community. The various social and cultural contexts, including the quality of stimuli, availability of resources and ways of interacting within communities, exert an influence on the development of every child (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2005; Greenspan & Shanker, 2004). All of these influences form a complex whole that must be consciously taken into consideration, in parallel with knowledge about the child's brain development. In a minority settting where children are mainly exposed to the language and culture of the majority, it must be ensured that their interactions from birth take place in French as often as possible, so that they acquire the language skills needed for their development and so that they can grow up in the Acadian and Francophone community. Special attention must be paid to the persons who interact directly with the child, such as family members, educators and caregivers. Parents

must receive the support they need to be able to fully play their role as conveyors of culture, since it is recognized that the relationship established between child and parent helps to shape the child's cultural identity.

It is therefore essential that the care, services and education provided directly to the child or the child's parents be available in French through the early years. Language development research (Boysson-Bardies & Hallé, 2004; Papalia, Olds & Fellman, 2009) shows that the areas of the brain begin to differentiate and specialize before one year of age, depending on the sounds and language to which the baby is exposed. We now know that the critical period for language learning is from the sixth month of pregnancy up to age three, and that oral language is the most important vehicle of learning. Hence the *Cadre d'orientation pédagogique de la maternelle* (2011) [kindergarten instructional framework] indicates that [Translation] "the development of oral and written language is recognized in the literature as one of the biggest indicators of success for the child in kindergarten" (p. 23).

Research (Landry, 2003b) also demonstrates that, in a minority community, language learning and familiarization with the culture deserve special attention in order to promote the development of a sense of belonging to the Acadian and Francophone community. Corbin and Buchanan (2005) stress the importance of a Francophone education service from early childhood, something they identify as a necessary counterbalance "because the surrounding society cannot offer minority children a linguistic environment that can guarantee them satisfactory linguistic and cultural development". Similarly, Gilbert and Thériault (2004) argue that, in a Francophone minority setting:

> *[Translation:]* ... early childhood services in French [...] enable children to develop their French-language abilities at a critical time of their lives. They will acquire the linguistic knowledge necessary to start school with confidence in French, while becoming familiar with the French culture. Socializing in French in school will also contribute to their sense of attachment to the community. (p. 164)

In New Brunswick, many rights-holder parents and many newcomers do not opt for French-language care, services and education, because they are not aware of their rights to these or of the importance of language transmission and cultural appropriation for the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community or their child's overall development and identity building. Furthermore, Anglophone parents within exogamous couples and newcomers may feel that it will be difficult to find their own place in the French-language education of their child. While it is essential for all parents to receive support, special attention must be paid to newcomer parents and parents in exogamous couples.

In this context specific to the Francophone minority setting, educators and persons working with young children have to be made aware of and trained in the role they must fill in ensuring French-language acquisition, identity building and overall development of the children who are around them every day in the course of their duties. These goals are attained by these professionals interacting directly with the children and making sure that the parents have the services they need to fully play their role as first educators of and conveyors of culture to their children.

Communities also have to be made aware of the impact they have on the children's identity building process and development of their sense of attachment to a community larger than their family. When communities take action within their linguistic landscape and offer meaningful opportunities for discovery and diverse expression of Acadian and Francophone culture, they are building the capacities of families and the early childhood sector to meet the children's needs and contributing to their harmonious development in a Francophone minority setting.

The strategies described in the next section are intended as a response to issues relating to children's overall and identity development and as a tool to awaken the collective conscience and arouse the interest of rights-holder parents and newcomers with respect to their rights to care, services and education in French and to the importance of their role in the transmission of the French language and appropriation of the culture. The proposed strategies list the actions that will produce the best possible start for children in a minority setting, while ensuring the survival and vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community of New Brunswick.

Strategies and Possible Actions

Area of intervention:
Access to an integrated network of services in French

Early childhood services fall under various umbrellas, such as health, social services and education. Those services are:

- prenatal services;
- services for infants;
- early childhood services;
- parental support and instruction;
- instruction from kindergarten to Grade 3.

These services are the responsibility of different government departments and sometimes of public agencies. In most cases, however, they are offered by not-for-profit organizations and the private sector.

Anticipated outcome:

Children 0 to 8 years of age and their parents have:

- access to quality French-language services that meet all of their needs, based on the overall development of the child;
- effective, continuous services starting in the perinatal period, delivered within an integrated network.

Strategy EC 1 — Integrated network

Establish and maintain collaboration and partnerships among public and private institutions, parents and the community which ensure:

- the interdependence and complementarity of early childhood services accessible from a single entry point in both urban and rural areas;
- the coordination of an early screening system;
- information sharing and the creation of a single file for each child, whatever the number and type of services received;
- smooth transitions as a result of continuity in the delivery of quality French-language services at all stages of the education of children 0 to 8 years of age.

Strategy EC 2 — Equal access to services in French

With the assistance of a transition plan, adapt policies and structures to establish duality in the management and delivery of all early childhood services.

STRATEGY EC 1:
Integrated network

Establish and maintain collaboration and partnerships among public and private institutions, parents and the community which ensure:

- the interdependence and complementarity of early childhood services accessible from a single entry point in both urban and rural areas;
- the coordination of an early screening system;
- information sharing and the creation of a single file for each child, whatever the number and type of services received;
- smooth transitions as a result of continuity in the delivery of quality French-language services at all stages of the education of children 0 to 8 years of age.

It is important for children 0 to 8 years of age to get the best start possible and to develop the necessary skills to help them succeed in school. An integrated network of services encompassing both care and education allows for a comprehensive approach to child development through collaboration and information sharing among the education, health, social services and community sectors. Such a network can develop a more effective system focused on the needs of children and their parents. The foundation of an integrated network is based on the principle that every early childhood service is interdependent and complementary to other services, and that networking is essential to promote the overall development of the child. In rural and urban communities alike, the network facilitates the establishment of a single entry point, simplifying access to the information and resources that parents need. The factors of success for this integrated network are the capacity to respond consistently to the needs of children and their parents beginning in the perinatal period, the ability of the partners to work together and the quality of the services offered. It is also essential for the partners to pay special attention to the specific needs of disadvantaged families, because research shows links between socio-economic status and educational success.

For children with special needs, the effectiveness of the integrated services network is partly dependent on early screening. These children may be vulnerable, in the sense that they may have difficulty meeting the social and emotional criteria of child care services or the school (Lareau, 2003; Lero, Irwin & Darisi, 2006). A system of prompt and accurate early screening carried out by multidisciplinary and intersectoral teams will allow for the appropriate and necessary interventions to be defined, while avoiding duplication of services. This screening system must also ensure access to all services in French, with no wait time. Creating a single file for each child, whatever the number and type of services received, promotes smooth transitions through every stage of the child's educational career. While the early screening system

Possible actions   EC 1

- Structure partner relations through intersectoral committees, memoranda of understanding, contractual arrangements, mergers, consultation mechanisms etc., to facilitate successful integration of the network.
- Include in the strategic plans of the various partners elements that can change an institution-oriented culture to a network culture.
- Form a multidisciplinary team to ensure continuity of services (e.g. integrated services delivery model).
- Appoint individuals to take charge of planning, establishment and operationalization of the integrated network.
- Assess the impacts of the integrated network and adjust actions according to the analysis of the results.
- Implement a school transition plan that considers the overall development of the child and parents' support needs.
- Enhance and improve services offered at school, e.g. early childhood centre, daycare centre, after-school program, family literacy services, homework help, etc.

and the ensuing interventions are important for all children, an integrated services network is essential for providing special-needs children with access to all resources in French with no wait time, as well as follow-up after they enter the school system. Whatever the nature of the need—a language problem, emotional difficulty, physical need, need created by giftedness or any other special need—an effective integrated network will offer appropriate service in support of the overall development of every child.

For these services to be delivered effectively, the various partners need to share a common vision and understanding of the integrated network concept. Every partner has to embrace certain values such as collaboration and interdependence, and must redefine its organizational boundaries so as to expand them, and redefine the tasks of the professional staff in terms of the collaboration that is expected within a network of integrated services delivered in French. The result will be optimum use of financial, human and material resources.

STRATEGY EC 2:
Equal access to services in French

> **With the assistance of a transition plan, adapt policies and structures to establish duality in the management and delivery of all early childhood services.**

As an integral part of the Acadian and Francophone educational system within a continuum of learning that starts in early childhood and continues to adulthood, the early childhood sector must endorse the dual mandate of educational success and identity building for every child. To contribute to the overall development of children 0 to 8 years of age, this sector must offer care, services and education that respect the reality of the Francophone communities while affirming the French language and French-speaking culture. It must also be inclusive and make room for Anglophone parents in exogamous couples, immigrant parents, and parents of First Nations children who opt for French-language services. Furthermore, Francophone early childhood services in the communities can help to safeguard the language and promote the appropriation of French-speaking culture. The research (Landry & Allard, 1997b; Coghlan & Thériault, 2002) points out that the early childhood period is crucial for the future of the French-language school, and indirectly, for the future of the Acadian and Francophone communities. The choices made by parents during this period, including the language that is used in child care or at school, are often influenced by the availability of quality services in French, and those choices have a major impact on both the Frenchness of the family (Landry & Allard, 1990) and the vitality of Acadian and Francophone communities (Landry, 2003a). Quality services in French can also contribute to the development of both identities of children born of exogamous couples, who often grow up in Anglo-dominant environments. These services help to balance out the presence of both languages in the social environment of these children (Landry & Allard, 1990; Landry, 2003a).

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The government must adopt policies and structures to manage the delivery of these services properly in each linguistic sector. This dualistic approach to the management of early childhood services ensures and safeguards the fundamental elements of the province's linguistic and cultural character, and takes into consideration the actions required for the vitality of the official-language minority communities under sections 16 and 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* by guaranteeing services in French.

Duality in the management and delivery of all services for children 0 to 8 years of age and their parents is essential to the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community. It allows for all these services to be delivered in a homogeneous environment, and for children to be properly prepared to enter the Acadian and Francophone school system by encouraging their learning of the French language and the development of their identity.

This duality has to be implemented gradually, by means of a transition plan, which will permit early childhood institutions and workers to receive education in and adapt to this new reality, while ensuring that there is no interruption in the offer of care and services. To attain the outcomes anticipated by this strategy, policies will have to be formulated to manage and support the necessary initiatives. An issue table composed of individuals representing the various sectors and agencies involved will need to be set up to prepare and implement an action plan. This plan must include such elements as a review of clauses of legislation that have to be amended, a study to clearly identify the early childhood services that will be subject to duality, a plan to educate and raise the awareness of service providers, parents, decision makers and the community in general, a plan for making the transition to duality in early childhood services, and any other relevant action.

Area of intervention: Recruitment, welcoming and support of parents

It is in the home, the first social context of the child even before birth, where the attitudes, behaviours and traditions that shape the child's overall development, including development of identity, are formed and perpetuated. For the parents to fully play their role, they must be offered orientation and support adapted to their particular needs that consider the diversity of family contexts (nuclear families, single parents, same-sex parents, blended families), socio-economic status, and also the language spoken at home (endogamous Francophone couples, exogamous Francophone-Anglophone/allophone couples) (Landry 2010). The situation of newcomer parents also needs to be considered.

Anticipated outcome:

Parents of children 0 to 8 years of age, as first educators of their child, receive support, guidance, quality resources and information about their rights, enabling them to:

- choose care, services and education in French, starting in the perinatal period;
- participate fully in their child's French-language education;
- contribute to the overall development of their child;
- fully play their role as conveyors of culture;
- strengthen their feeling of attachment to the Acadian and Francophone community.

Strategy EC 3 — Recognition of care, services and education in French

Implement communication strategies to raise public awareness and inform rights-holder parents about their rights to care, services and education in French from the perinatal period throughout their child's educational path.

Strategy EC 4 — Welcoming and support

Set up structures and develop welcoming and support tools for parents so they can fully assume their roles as first educators of their children including the role of conveyors of culture.

Strategy EC 5 — Services and resources for linguistic and cultural development

From birth, offer quality French-language services, programs and resources that include Acadian, Francophone and international cultural referents.

STRATEGY EC 3:
Recognition of care, services and education in French

> **Implement communication strategies to raise public awareness and inform rights-holder parents about their rights to care, services and education in French from the perinatal period throughout their child's educational path.**

Research shows that too many rights-holder parents are unaware of their rights to care, services and education in French, even if their child speaks little or no French. In some parts of New Brunswick, just over half the rights-holder parents enrol their children in English school because they are facing language barriers and have not received the necessary support upon the birth of their children to understand the benefits of opting for care, services and education in French.

It is the responsibility of the education system to inform rights-holder parents and the general public of the rights that flow from sections 16.1 and 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.* The education system must discuss and implement a communication strategy to make rights-holder parents aware of their rights to care, services and education in French, as well as the long-term consequences of not exercising these rights for their young children and for the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community.

The communication strategy must clearly explain to the public and to rights-holder parents the conditions that afford access to French-language education according to section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and section 5 of the New Brunswick *Education Act.* This strategy must also make the public aware of the fact that section 16.1 of the *Charter* states that the English linguistic community and the French linguistic community in New Brunswick have equality of status and equal rights and privileges, including the right to distinct educational institutions and such distinct cultural institutions as are necessary for their preservation and promotion.

The communication strategy must also underscore the importance of intervention and education in French starting in early childhood. If people choose to exercise their rights, in the long term it leads to numerous advantages for individuals as well as for the community. First, all children can develop fully, particularly with regard to their identity. Second, when more rights-holder parents decide to act upon their rights, their decision fosters the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone communities, while contributing to the advancement of bilingualism in the province. It is important to focus on the above-mentioned benefits when communicating with the public, so that people are encouraged to exercise their rights.

Possible actions   **EC 3**

- Build partnerships with different organizations or agencies to develop and implement a communication strategy that:
  - makes the public aware of the importance of intervention and education in French beginning in early childhood;
  - informs parents of their rights and the benefits if they choose to act on them;
  - encourages rights-holder parents as well as immigrants to choose services in French from early childhood all through their child's time educational path.
- Produce and disseminate tools (leaflets, brochures, websites, etc.) to inform parents that services in French are available for all children 0 to 8 years of age.
- Produce and disseminate tools (leaflets, brochures, PowerPoint presentations, etc.) to inform service providers of their obligations and responsibilities under sections 16 and 23 of the Charter.
- See that information is distributed on the rights of rights-holder parents and the benefits of exercising those rights, for example, for prenatal courses and vaccination clinics.

STRATEGY EC 4:
Welcoming and support

> **Set up structures and develop welcoming and support tools for parents so they can fully assume their roles as first educators of their children including the role of conveyors of culture.**

While strategy EC 1, "Integrated network," proposes that services be integrated to support parents and promote the overall development of children, the aim of the present strategy is in a way to provide an orientation for that network, centred on collective realization of the role of the parents as the first educators of their child.

All the structures and tools that exist or that will be developed must share the same ultimate goal, which is to provide support to parents. Even though the notion of welcoming and support includes different components, based on the specific needs of the child or the parents, the common feature is the sound overall development of the child.

High-quality orientation and support, grounded in genuine collaboration among the different service providers, parents, school and community, are perfect ways to facilitate positive initial experiences for the child, whether in the family, in daycare or at school. Often these initial experiences are decisive for the child's linguistic, cultural and overall development.

The first stage of the welcoming and support strategy is to develop a parent-centred culture among the various early childhood caregivers and educators. This requires that they be made aware of the crucial role that parents play in the overall development of their child, based on a foundation of research and proven practices. Once they have come to appreciate the expertise and skills of parents, the various caregivers and educators must then support the parents in their role as first educators and conveyors of culture (see Strategy IB 10, page 96).

Possible actions   **EC 4**

- Provide training for caregivers, educators and teaching staff so that they have a good grasp of their role in providing welcoming and support for parents.

- Develop partnerships between early childhood services, the school system and parents that allow parents to engage in and contribute to the educational success and identity building of their child.

- Develop more early childhood and family centres in the schools, which are ideal structures for welcoming and supporting parents in their role as first educators.

- Establish affirmative, open welcoming structures that are sensitive to the needs of Anglophone or allophone parents and immigrant parents, while guaranteeing the promotion of a Francophone environment.

- Establish affirmative, open orientation structures that are sensitive to the needs of First Nations families who choose Francophone welcoming structures.

- Use existing resources or design new ones adapted for parents who speak little or no French and whose children are receiving services or attending school in French.

- Make the Acadian and Francophone community aware of the welcoming and support needs of newly arrived families.

Some parents require more targeted welcoming and support, and it is vital to have structures and tools that can identify these parents and address their specific needs. Parents who lack confidence in their parenting skills, those who suffer from linguistic insecurity, Anglophone parents within exogamous couples, single parents, parents newly arrived from another country, parents living under the poverty line, and parents of special-needs children must be given special consideration. The welcoming and support structures have to customize their services and adapt tools to the realities of the children and their parents. When parents receive the proper support and have positive experiences, they are able to fully play their role and to promote the French language and culture in their family activities.

In any parent welcoming and support structure, it is necessary to ensure that they are made aware of their linguistic and cultural rights, and that Anglophone parents within exogamous couples have a say in the linguistic and cultural development of their children. For parents newly arrived in Canada, who may or may not understand French, it is important not only to inform them of the services available in French, but also to ensure that a partnership exists between early childhood service providers and immigrant reception centres. And the existence of immigrant reception centres notwithstanding, it is still important for early childhood workers themselves to be welcoming to immigrant children and their families, recognizing and respecting beliefs or values that may be different. Children realize the importance of their identity when they grow up in communities that promote fair and democratic attitudes, beliefs and values (Bennett, 2004). It is also essential that there be openness to, recognition of, and respect for the traditional attitudes, beliefs, and values of First Nations families who opt for French-language services, which may be different from those of the early childhood staff. Similarly, right from early childhood, it is beneficial for children to be in educational settings where they learn to live in harmony with children who speak another language or whose appearance is different from theirs (McCain & Mustard, 1999; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). The early childhood welcoming and support structures must develop strategies that aim for respect and openness with regard to the various linguistic, cultural, ethnic and religious origins of the families they serve, thereby creating an inclusive environment while promoting the influence of the French language and culture.

Particular attention must be paid to low-income parents, to ensure that socio-economic or other challenges do not prevent them from receiving the full benefit of welcoming and support structures that meet their needs. Often a parent's difficult financial situation can curb his or her participation in the various activities proposed by the early childhood and school settings. This withdrawal can be harmful to the achievement of equitable outcomes for all children (Bernhard, Freire & Mulligan, 2004; Lareau & Weininger, 2007). Also, these structures as well as all welcoming and support tools must be accessible to all parents and all children, in rural and urban areas alike.

STRATEGY EC 5:
**Services and resources
for linguistic and cultural development**

> From birth, offer quality French-language services, programs and resources that include Acadian, Francophone and international cultural referents.

Access to quality services, programs and resources in French in every region of the province is essential so that parents, early childhood professionals, educators and the community can fully play their role as conveyors of culture. The service providers, education sectors and community and cultural organizations share responsibility for ensuring that this access is available. Community and cultural organizations such as family resource centres, public libraries and cultural centres can be places that offer a variety of French-language resources, including books, music, games, cultural, sports and social activities, and so on.

However, this accessibility is insufficient on its own to create a sense of belonging, something that is essential to the development of any individual's identity. This sense is developed, among other ways, through cultural referents, so it is important to include cultural referents in early childhood programs and resources, ranging from the prenatal programs designed for parents to daycare and school curricula. Cultural referents are meaningful reference points with which parents and children can identify and in which they can see themselves culturally reflected; they serve to strengthen their individual relationship with the Acadian and Francophone community, while increasing the feeling of collective attachment to the local, national and global Francophone communities.

EC 5

Possible actions

- Use existing French-language resources and design new tools for endogamous and exogamous families and for immigrant families at different stages, in order to build the parents' identity and make them aware of their role as conveyors of culture.
- Make accessible to families, and to the early childhood community, arts and culture that reflect the specific characteristics of the Acadian and Francophone communities of New Brunswick.
- Make available and continuously offer francization and language upgrading programs for children who speak little or no French.
- Make available and continuously offer literacy and family literacy programs in French for all New Brunswick parents, whether they live in urban or rural areas.

Cultural referents can take many forms: values, traditions, a local event, response to a national or international event, heritage, works of art and literature, inventions, personalities, linguistic expressions, ways of doing things, etc.

The leaders of the different sectors working in early childhood must understand the importance of cultural referents for identity building when the various services are being delivered. Based on that understanding, they must acquire existing resources or design new ones that reflect the cultural reality of the community where the services are delivered. It is important that the various early childhood leaders and professionals themselves be models for the selection of Acadian, Francophone or international cultural referents, while at the same time affirming the value of other cultures.

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To ensure a greater number of resources featuring local cultural referents, it is vital to develop partnerships between the various early childhood service providers and agencies with an artistic, cultural, heritage or other relevant mission. It is a good idea to work together on targeting early childhood needs, and then to produce and provide access to quality French-language resources (books, games, music, concerts, multimedia events, family activities, etc.). This cultural grounding is indispensable for children and their parents living in a minority setting who may be called upon to define their identity in an environment dominated by the majority language and culture.

Area of intervention: Quality programming and interventions in French

Early childhood interventions can be in the area of health care as well as education and social services. Professionals from all of these fields work with children 0 to 8 years of age, as well as with their parents. The Acadian and Francophone community expects these qualified people to have a range of skills and knowledge which equip them to deliver services and programs in French that meet all the needs of children and their parents.

Anticipated outcome:

The early childhood sectors have personnel who:

- have the skills and knowledge to welcome and support parents;
- play their role as conveyors of culture;
- offer care, services and education that take into account the specific characteristics of intervention in a Francophone minority setting;
- contribute to children's overall development.

Strategy EC-6 – Human resources

Implement strategies:

- that value early childhood education and intervention professions;
- that support the recruitment and retention of professional staff capable of working in French with children 0 to 8 years of age.

Strategy EC 7 – Staff training

Provide persons working with young children with access to support and to initial and ongoing training that incorporate:

- knowledge of sections 16.1, 23 and 24 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;
- specific characteristics of intervention and education in Francophone minority settings.

Strategy EC 8 – Programs and instruction

Implement a mechanism that serves to coordinate programs and curricula designed for children 0 to 8 years of age, incorporating instructional approaches that respect the overall development of each child in an inclusive setting.

STRATEGY EC 6:
Human resources

> **Implement strategies:**
> - **that value early childhood education and intervention professions;**
> - **that support the recruitment and retention of professional staff capable of working in French with children 0 to 8 years of age.**

If we as a society recognize the early childhood period as being crucial to the child's overall development, then we must value the profession of all those who contribute to the development and education of young children and to the welcoming and ongoing support of parents.

The professions that work in the early childhood field must be promoted by explaining to communities and decision makers the linguistic, cultural, societal and economic issues relating to a holistic approach to child development, right from the perinatal period. Along with this understanding, we must develop personnel recruitment strategies and make more spaces available for initial training in collaboration with the Francophone post-secondary institutions concerned. These recruitment strategies must indicate the skills and expertise specific to the different fields of early childhood services. For example, a strategy to recruit childcare educators is not going to focus on the same skills as a strategy to recruit social workers, even though all strategies have to emphasize the personnel's role as conveyors of culture and their role in an environment that is intended to be inclusive.

It will subsequently be essential to ensure that there are retention strategies in certain early childhood sectors. For example, there is regular turnover in childcare personnel, which can be detrimental to establishment of the stable relations that are needed for sound child development, so the conditions required for greater retention must be created.

EC 6

Possible actions

- Establish partnerships between departments and with the private sector to value recruit and retain professional early childhood personnel.
- Mobilize community and institutional stakeholders around the importance of the educational and social role of professional early childhood personnel (awareness campaigns, presentations, etc.).
- Recruit more professional staff in all fields (e.g. health, education, social services) that are capable of working in French with young children, by means of scholarships or other incentives. Ensure at the same time that post-secondary institutions are able to meet the demand.
- Staff all school districts with personnel assigned to preschool intervention, guidance for the transition to school, and support for kindergarten to Grade 3 teaching staff.
- Develop policies that guarantee a competitive salary and fringe benefits for early childhood professionals working in sectors that have a shortage of skilled labour.
- Provide high school guidance counsellors with relevant and helpful information for students about career opportunities in the early childhood sector.

Strategies to value, recruit and retain professional staff capable of working in French with children 0 to 8 years of age are also excellent opportunities to promote the social and educational function of early childhood services, thereby helping to reinforce the integrated services network.

STRATEGY EC 7:
Staff training

> Provide persons working with young children with access to support and to initial and ongoing training that incorporate:
> - knowledge of sections 16.1, 23 and 24 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;
> - specific characteristics of intervention and education in Francophone minority settings.

Possible actions   **EC 7**

- Offer French-language university training in early childhood education.
- Make training in early childhood education mandatory when hiring childcare staff.
- Include a component on early childhood development in intial and ongoing training for school principals.
- Train more people in early childhood education and intervention by offering ongoing training and adapted support in French in different regions.
- Adapt initial and ongoing training for early childhood workers to ensure that it takes into consideration the specific characteristics of intervention in Francophone minority communities.
- Inform persons who work with children 0 to 8 years of age and their parents of the importance of services in French.
- Raise awareness of, train and equip persons working with children 0 to 8 years of ange and their parents about their role:
  - as conveyors of culture;
  - of providing welcoming and support for parents.

The values and attitudes that inspire this policy must be found in the initial and ongoing training of the professional staff who work in the early childhood sector. It is therefore expected that instructors will know and support the vision, mission and mandate of the policy, and that these elements will be present in the training they offer and in its follow-up.

In a minority setting, the personal commitment of every professional in the early childhood sector and the collective commitment of every entity operating in the service of early childhood act as a necessary counterbalance to create more of a level playing field between the province's two official languages. While obtaining care, services and education in French is among the rights recognized by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, part of the responsibility for acting on those rights lies with the early childhood professionals. By promoting better understanding of the benefits to the family and the community of exercising these rights, the professional staff will themselves become more conscious of the importance of this responsibility.

This understanding begins with education, hence the importance of initial and ongoing training that explains minority rights and the specific characteristics of interventions and education in minority settings. Initial and ongoing training must also offer practical ways for the professional staff to fully play their role as conveyors of culture. Then, it is the responsibility of the directors of the different service providers in the integrated early childhood network to affirm and protect the attitudes and values promoted in the policy and to define them properly within the roles of their team members. Those roles must incorporate the specific features needed to offer quality interventions and education in a minority setting.

The role of conveyor of culture, actions relating to parental welcoming and support, and the concept of quality services in French adapted to the specific features of the minority setting must form the common backdrop to all initial and ongoing training. For this to happen, all staff must advance their knowledge of the language and culture, while developing their own cultural identity.

Strategy EC 8:
Programs and instruction

> Implement a mechanism that serves to coordinate programs and curricula designed for children 0 to 8 years of age, incorporating instructional approaches that respect the overall development of each child in an inclusive setting.

The successful overall development of children 0 to 8 years of age depends, among other things, on programs and curricula that respect the characteristics of that development, and that have coordinated approches and philosophy for smoother transitions from one stage of the child's life to another. Early childhood is a critical period for development and for the acquisition of aptitudes, attitudes, skills, knowledge and values that will be useful to them all their lives, and a time when action can be taken to reduce the performance variations between different children.

The implementation of this strategy requires programs and curricula that focus especially on the development of language, social skills, cultural identity, citizenship, and creativity, physical development, management of behaviours and emotions, and the ability to reason and solve problems, as well as on the choice of instructional approaches to deliver these programs and curricula. Play-based learning, instruction in minority settings, and differentiated instruction, for example, respect the development and needs of the child. Programs and materials must also be adapted to respond inclusively to the needs of all children. Finally, any early childhood program or curriculum has to have a parental support component. Early childhood development research must be the foundation for drafting programs and selecting approaches.

Possible actions   **EC 8**

- Ensure that a quality curriculum in French is used for the childcare sector, and update it as required.
- In all programs and curricula, include possible actions that improve orientation and support for parents.
- Provide more training in child development for teaching staff up to Grade 3.
- Develop partnerships with families and the community in order to enrich the learning in programs and curricula and make it more meaningful.
- Implement the instructional framework for kindergarten.
- Set up an issue table to ensure that programs and curricula are coordinated and that instructional approaches specific to education in a Francophone minority setting are incorporated.
- Reassess the ways that various specialized services are delivered (speech therapy, early intervention, services for autistic children, etc.) to ensure that they reflect the early childhood period.

There needs to be a mechanism to facilitate the coordination of programs and curricula and to provide for instructional continuity. The joint governance structure of the early childhood integrated services network could serve as such a mechanism. Governance encourages community participation and engagement, while seeing to coordination by developing policies to that effect. Another mechanism with a coordinating function would be collaboration among the different professional staff delivering the early childhood programs and curricula. Their management must ensure that they are given time for sharing and training, so that instructional practices can be harmonized. In addition, they must ensure, through an advisory committee for example, that programs and curricula are coordinated with each other.

Educational Success Focus Area

[Translation] "A quality education is the product of a system, and not just the individual work of teachers."

CMEC, 2011, p. 7

Introduction

The educational success of every student is at the very heart of the mission of the Acadian and Francophone schools of New Brunswick. In a constantly changing world and a period so critical for the survival of the Acadian and Francophone people, schools must ensure that they are educating citizens who are not only proud of their identity but also have the skills to thrive in every area and to participate fully in society. To do this, schools must, in addition to being a place where students can think about the meaning of what they learn, be a place where students can learn to interact with others, to negotiate, to understand differences of opinion, and to develop their critical and creative thinking.

Educational success encompasses much more than school success, a term that refers mainly to academic performance, that is, achievement of the expected course results. While it is critical to have high learning expectations and to train students who will be able to succeed at their courses and master the results of learning, the other personal aspects that will make students attending Acadian and Francophone educational institutions accomplished human beings must not be neglected. So educational success includes academic success, but beyond that it also includes the development of a strong identity, an engaged citizenship and solid social, personal and interpersonal skills. In fact, in focusing on educational success, we focus on the overall development of the student, encompassing the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and moral dimensions. This overall development will enable them to make informed choices about their future, to adapt to the many changes intrinsic to life in the 21st century, and to participate fully in the vitality and development of the Acadian and Francophone community and the province of New Brunswick.

The educational success of students obviously requires the participation and collaboration of numerous key stakeholders, and does not lie solely on the shoulders of the teaching staff. While the latter are clearly responsible for providing quality teaching and instructional leadership and for establishing an inclusive learning environment where all students can thrive, it must be remembered that the parents and the community also play a determining role in realizing the full learning potential of every student and in creating a culture of excellence in education.

There is no question that the educational success of every student is paramount for the expansion and prosperity of the Acadian and Francophone community. It is therefore completely natural that the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy for the French education system should make it central to its strategic actions by devoting an entire focus area to it.

To that end, four areas of intervention have been identified that will guide the actions and strategies to facilitate educational success:

- Quality teaching;
- Instructional leadership;
- Stimulating and engaging learning environment;
- Partnerships.

These strategies are in response to the recommendations in the report of the Commission on Francophone Schools and to consultations with the community and various stakeholders to establish the main components of this strategic focus area.

The strategic goal of the Educational Success focus area

Ensure that students develop knowledge and skills that will:

- make them lifelong learners;
- guarantee their educational success;
- enable them to express themselves fluently in French and to assert themselves with confidence;
- enable them to engage in and contribute fully to the vitality and development of the Acadian and Francophone community;

through educational experiences which reflect the specificity of the Acadian and Francophone community and are supported by:

- a quality education based on effective and proven practices;
- leadership that promotes a culture of learning;
- an inclusive learning environment;
- the engagement of the parents and a ll the partners.

The mandate of the Educational Success focus area

New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone education system provides each learner with:

- an environment rich in learnings and experiences that promote educational success;
- a diversified and balanced education allowing for the development of one's full potential.

To that end, it:

- provides quality teaching;
- stimulates instructional leadership;
- creates an inviting and engaging learning environment;
- establishes strong school-family-community partnerships.

Summary table of the educational success focus area

Areas of Intervention			
Quality teaching	Instructional leadership	Stimulating and engaging learning environment	Partnerships
Anticipated outcomes Students have the necessary skills to succeed in their studies and to choose a life/career project based on their fields of interest and their passions. Teachers provide quality instruction that considers: • the diversity of the school clientele; • the skills necessary for life in the 21st century; • literacy and numeracy in every subject; • the importance of language as a communication tool; • the unique characteristics of education in a Francophone minority setting.	**Anticipated outcomes** School prinicpals are equipped to fully play their role as instructional leaders in a minority setting, conveyors of culture and mobilizers, so as to create a climate conducive to quality learning and the full development of every student. All levels of action and decision making have access to effective collaborative practices.	**Anticipated outcomes** Students benefit from a learning environment that: • allows them to thrive and to develop to their full potential; • meets their interests and needs, both personal and educational; • enables them to be and to become responsible, informed and engaged citizens, in their school, in their local and extended community, and in the digital space; • makes them aware of the importance of contributing to the Francophone digital space; • allows them to take charge of their overall health; • allows them to engage and participate in decision making at their school.	**Anticipated outcomes** As the first educators of their children, parents are fully involved in their educational success throughout their educational path. All the partners in the education system collaborate and work together to further the educational success of every student.
Strategies **ES 1 — Awakening passions and developing skills** Transform the teaching and learning environment by creating conditions that allow students to: • discover new passions and new fields of interest; • develop the skills necessary for their life/career project in a complex and changing world. **ES 2 — Critical and creative thinking** Adopt instructional practices that enable students to develop their critical and creative thinking. **ES 3 — Knowledge building** Adopt instructional and assessment practices that allow students to manage their own learning process and knowledge building. **ES 4 — Literacy** Incorporate in all subjects, at every academic level, instructional practices that allow students to develop solid literacy skills. **ES 5 — Francization** Provide quality francization and language upgrading services for children who speak little or no French. **ES 6 — French- language proficiency and a positive relationship with the language** Equip all members of the teaching staff to guide students in effective use of the French language, both oral and written, in a context that promotes a positive relationship with the language.	**Strategies** **ES 9 — Instructional leadership of principals** Implement support measures and mechanisms that allow school principals to fully play their role as instructional leaders in a minority setting within their school and school district. **ES 10 — Culture of collaboration** Consolidate collaborative practices designed to improve learning at every level of intervention and decision making.	**Strategies** **ES 11 — Inclusive learning environment** Adopt inclusive and differentiated instruction and flexible class management that can respect the styles, paces of learning, kinds of intelligence and particular needs of every student. **ES 12 — Diversified courses and learning experiences** Put structures in place that allow both rural and urban students to access diversified courses and learning experiences that meet their needs and interests. **ES 13 — Digital learning environment** Transform the teaching and learning environment by optimizing the instructional use of technologies and social networks. **ES 14 — Comprehensive school health approach** In collaboration with the different partners and government departments concerned, implement a comprehensive school health approach. **ES 15 — Engagement in school life** Create an academic environment in which the students, as citizens of today: • are fully engaged in school life and the operation of the school; • participate in sports, artistic, cultural, scientific, civic, heritage and community programs that correspond to their tastes and fields of interest.	**Strategies** **ES 16 — Parents as first educators** Implement measures which: • make parents aware of their role as first educators of their children all through their children's educational path; • make school staff aware of the importance of the parents' role and of the school-family relationship; • get the parents and the school staff to work closely together for the educational success of every student. **ES 17 — Community structure of the school** Set up in every elementary and high school a community structure that promotes participation by the community partners in the school's education plan. **ES 16 — Collaboration and partnerships** Establish structured, effective partnerships that ensure close collaboration among the education stakeholders so that the particular needs of every student can be met.

Summary table of the educational success focus area (continued)

Areas of Intervention			
Quality teaching	Instructional leadership	Stimulating and engaging learning environment	Partnerships

Strategies

ES 7 — Numeracy

At every academic level, adopt instructional practices that allow students to develop solid numeracy skills.

ES 8 — Initial and ongoing training

Implement initial and ongoing training programs and support mechanisms that permit all teaching staff to be constantly on the watch for proven instructional practices that meet the needs of the Acadian and Francophone education community.

Educational Success Focus Area

Educational Success

Educational success encompasses many inter-related dimensions that play an important role in realizing the full learning potential of every student. All the same, certain elements, such as awakening passions and the development of skills, literacy and numeracy, inclusive education and the school-family-community partnership, are of particular importance and deserve closer attention.

Awakening passions and developing skills

Acadian and Francophone society, like the rest of the global population, has been plunged in a sea of constant change for many years now, as it will surely continue to be for many more. Whether it is the increasingly predominant place of information and communication technologies in our daily lives, the precarious economic situation that exists just about everywhere, the aging of the population or the environmental problems all over the world, these challenges are causing uncertainties, and overcoming them requires citizens with a whole range of skills and an exceptional capacity for adaptation.

In the face of these realities, it must be acknowledged that the Acadian and Francophone education system has to adjust and evolve so that it can better prepare students to deal with the constant transformation in the world around them. From a culture of transmission of knowledge, Acadian and Francophone schools are now changing to a culture of the development of sustainable, transposable skills in every area.

It is the role of school to prepare students for their future—even without knowing what that future will look like. This is why it must change from offering general, universal education to education that is based more on the needs and passions of each student. More specifically, students must have the chance to acquire the knowledge and develop the skills and attitudes they will need to implement their life/career project, something which involves their personal, social and family life, their physical and mental health, their work and their recreational activities. In addition, school must lead students to become more conscious of the world in which they live and its characteristic societal issues, so they can make informed choices about their career and their citizen engagement.

To successfully implement their life/career project, students also need the opportunity for meaningful and authentic learning experiences that foster knowledge of themselves and of their community. These learning experiences must promote the development of an entrepreneurial spirit, that is, must enable them to take initiatives, meet challenges, finish what they start, and become the lead architects of their own present as well as their future.

Finally, learning experiences at school must allow each student to acquire much more than just knowledge; they need the skills necessary for life in the 21st century, such as critical and creative thinking, communication, collaboration, problem solving, digital literacy and innovation. These skills will equip them to adjust and to readjust, in their personal and working lives, and to participate fully in society as full-fledged citizens.

Focusing on literacy and numeracy

It is generally recognized that having solid literacy skills has beneficial impacts on learning. Indeed, students' success throughout their academic career is largely dependent on their reading, writing and oral communication skills, since they make constant use of these in each of their courses. If they cannot understand what they see, hear or read, or cannot communicate their ideas orally or in writing, it will be difficult for them to make satisfactory progress in school. And obviously, students' success in school also depends in large part on their numeracy skills. Skills in problem solving, reading graphics and communicating results are essential in mathematics, but also in other fields including science and social studies.

Literacy and numeracy are important in the academic career of all students, but they also have an impact on the well-being and general quality of life of all citizens.

Literacy plays a key role in the struggle for social justice, and promotes fairness, peace, and social, political and economic development (MacFarlane & Serafini, 2008). UNESCO even calls it a fundamental human right, which encourages personal empowerment and serves to "increase self-esteem, confidence and assertiveness and helps to build a sense of personal competence and independence together with better awareness of one's rights" (2009, UNESCO website).

Green & Riddell (2007) explain that:

> … in any attempt to build a better society, the distribution and generation of literacy is of fundamental importance. Literacy is also potentially important for instrumental reasons. An individual who improves his or her literacy might plausibly be expected to have better employment opportunities and command higher earnings, leading to a higher level of well-being. From a societal point of view, a more literate workforce may be better positioned to adjust to change and to adopt new technologies. Thus, improving literacy for individuals may have spill-over effects on the productivity of the economy as a whole. (p. 8)

The National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (Carpentieri, Litster & Frumkin, 2009) is in complete agreement. Persons with good numeracy sklls are paid above the average and make a positive contribution to the economy since they generally hold stable jobs, unlike persons with fewer skills. The same organization goes on to point out that individuals with limited numeracy are at greater risk of developing health problems and suffering from depression, hence the importance for any society of ensuring that its population is equipped with solid numeracy skills.

Given these findings, it is not surprising that the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development should continue to ascribe such importance to these two areas for promoting educational success and improving the chances of success of every students throughout their educational path and all through their lives. In focusing on literacy and numeracy, the policy is also contributing to the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community and the entire province of New Brunswick by improving the quality of life of its citizens over the long term.

Creating an inclusive learning environment

For years now, New Brunswick has been among the world leaders in inclusive education. As early as 1999, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) took note of the success of the province's schools in this regard. Numerous efforts have been made and many initiatives deployed over the last 20 years to ensure that all students receive a quality education, whatever their differences and whatever their needs. Just recently the Porter-Aucoin report, *Strengthening Inclusion, Strengthening Schools* (2012), presented the situation with respect to inclusive education in New Brunswick schools, and proposed possible actions to continue improving the work already being done.

Among other things, subscribing to the philosophy of inclusive education means that teaching staff take care to customize the education they offer, provide access to the curricula prescribed by the DEECD, and differentiate their instruction (Paré & Trépanier, 2010). Such practices enable teachers to plan diversified learning situations that meet the particular needs of each of the students in their classroom (Porter-Aucoin, 2012).

FRANCOPHONE NORD-EST SCHOOL DISTRICT

Fête des mathématiques.

However, inclusive education extends well beyond the classroom. As indicated in the definition of this concept, inclusive education "promotes social cohesion, belonging, active participation in learning, a complete school experience, and positive interactions with peers and others in the school community" (DOE, 2009a). Students in an inclusive learning environment feel secure, feel that they have a place in the classroom and also in the entire school and in all other spheres of school life, whether it be sports, student councils, cultural committees, clubs of all kinds, and so on. In a truly inclusive school, students interact extensively with others and learn how to "make a society." They develop excellent self-esteem because they have opportunities to realize their full potential in every area: cognitive, social, physical and emotional.

Given these facts, this policy cannot do otherwise than prioritize the establishment of an inclusive learning environment in each of the schools, in light of the huge impacts it can have on students' educational success. It is only by recognizing that all students have individual characteristics and diverse learning styles that Acadian and Francophone schools will be able to ensure that each student can realize his or her full potential.

Cultivating the school-family-community partnership

The positive benefits of the contributions made by family and community for the students' development and for implementation of the educational project of the Acadian and Francophone society are considerable. Without the support and contribution of the community and parents, it would be difficult for schools to discharge on their own their dual mission of educational success and identity building for each student.

This observation has been made many times, including in the report of the Commission on Francophone Schools (2009), which states that:

> Acadian and Francophone schools must reflect their community. In concrete terms, the community must support the schools to make learning meaningful and be a key partner in the education plan. This in no way factors out the school's obligation to form citizens aware of the bigger picture—the national and international Francophone community (*la Francophonie*) in particular—or the socioeconomic and environmental issues of the early twenty-first century. But schools must also avoid being isolated and disconnected from the local community development plan. (p. 24)

There is no doubt that opening up to and initiating real collaboration with the community will make Acadian and Francophone schools even stronger. It is vital for the survival and renewal of Acadian and Francophone society to set up a constructive dialogue and create real synergy between these two important pillars. If education is a collective priority and a societal project, it naturally follows that all stakeholders must be active contributors to it. In allowing community members to engage more and participate much more closely in the school's educational mission, learning is made more meaningful for the students and their feeling of attachment to the community is nourished.

FRANCOPHONE SUD SCHOOL DISTRICT

Place aux compétences program, training and work component.

While community and school play a determining role in the students' educational success, it definitely must not be forgotten that the parents are the first educators of their children. Therefore the school system must support the parents by including them in their children's learning process throughout their educational path. Parents also need to be given the tools and resources required to be able in turn to support their children, whether they are Francophone, non-Francophone, or newcomers.

Strategies and Possible Actions

Area of intervention: Quality teaching

Quality teaching is essential for development of a culture of excellence in the Acadian and Francophone education system. It is based on proven instructional approaches that consider the linguistic minority setting in which the students live. It also allows for acquisition of the skills and knowledge, both theoretical and practical, necessary for all students to achieve their life/career project and develop to their full potential.

Anticipated outcomes:

Students have the necessary skills to succeed in their studies and to choose a life/career project based on their fields of interest and their passions.

Teachers provide quality instruction that considers:

- the diversity of the school clientele;
- the skills necessary for life in the 21st century;
- literacy and numeracy in every subject;
- the importance of language as a communication tool;
- the unique characteristics of education in a Francophone minority setting.

ES 1 — Awakening passions and developing skills

Transform the teaching and learning environment by creating conditions that allow students to:

- discover new passions and new fields of interest;
- develop the skills necessary for their life/career project in a complex and changing world.

ES 2 — Critical and creative thinking

Adopt instructional practices that enable students to develop their critical and creative thinking.

ES 3 — Knowledge building

Adopt instructional and assessment practices that allow students to manage their own learning process and knowledge building.

ES 4 — Literacy

Incorporate in all subects, at every academic level, instructional practices that allow students to develop solid literacy skills.

ES 5 — Francization

Provide quality francization and language upgrading services for children who speak little or no French.

ES 6 — French-language proficiency and a positive relationship with the language

Equip all members of the teaching staff to guide students in effective use of the French language, both oral and written, in a context that promotes a positive relationship with the language.

ES 7 — Numeracy

At every academic level, adopt instructional practices that allow students to develop solid numeracy skills.

ES 8 — Initial and ongoing training

Implement initial and ongoing training programs and support mechanisms that permit all teaching staff to be constantly on the watch for proven instructional practices that meet the needs of the Acadian and Francophone education community.

STRATEGY ES 1:
Awakening passions and developing skills

> **Transform the teaching and learning environment by creating conditions that allow students to:**
> - discover new passions and new fields of interest;
> - develop the skills necessary for their life/career project in a complex and changing world.

Here as elsewhere, young people and adults live in a world of accelerated change caused by the new social, cultural, economic, environmental and technological realities around us. More specifically, the labour market is being affected by some major trends, such as the unstable economic situation, the aging population, technological innovations in the workplace, the ever-higher level of skills demanded for new jobs, and the lack of a qualified workforce to fill those jobs. To be equipped to deal with all these changes, students must be able to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to carry through with their life/career project and their civic engagement, so as to advance their personal and vocational development.

To better support young people and their life/career project, the education system sees value in a culture of the guidance-oriented school, in which all students have opportunities throughout their time in school for experiences that help them to know themselves better and discover their passions and areas of interest. These experiences serve to shape their entrepreneurial spirit, that is, they lead them to take initiatives, meet challenges, finish what they start, develop abilities to co-exist with others, and become actively engaged citizens of the world.

Students need to acquire the tools that will be necessary to live in a society that is constantly evolving. The school's role in this regard is therefore to put the conditions in place that will allow students to receive an education that is based on their life/career project. All the school staff, the parents and the community support the students and offer them a variety of opportunities to explore, experiment, discover, question and decide—in short, to be actively engaged in what they learn and in their overall development. The introduction of a variety of inclusive academic paths, a wider range of course options, and the guidance-oriented approach to learning are some of the ways that schools can take into consideration the best interest and the strengths and needs of each student. This approach is leading the school system to change its orientation from a general, universal education to an education that is based more on the students' needs and areas of interest, one that allows them to discover their passions, build their identity, shape their plans for the future, and develop the skills required for the various transitions they will face in their personal and working lives.

> ### ES 1
> **Possible actions**
> - Promote groupings that respect the students' pace and style of learning and takes their achievements into consideration.
> - Give preference to learning sequences that are based on interdisciplinarity.
> - Provide students with meaningful opportunities to engage in different activities that involve interacting with others in different fields, in school and in the community.
> - Implement strategies to inform students, school staff and the community of the various possibilities of life in French in the working world and in the community.
> - Implement strategies that give students, teachers and the community a positive perception of their individual and collective capabilities for educational success.

Educational Success Focus Area

The crucial importance of developing sustainable skills from a very early age is now a point of consensus among many international organizations. For example, the OECD, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and the Conference Board of Canada emphasize that young people will have to demonstrate certain key skills if they are to meet the challenges of the 21st century, regardless of the particular route they decide to take. Multidisciplinary skills such as ability to adapt to change, critical and creative thinking, problem solving, oral and written communication, collaboration, digital literacy, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurial spirit, identity affirmation and global citizenship, life/career development and wellness are all considered indispensable for living in, contributing to and prospering in our knowledge-based society.

Given this perspective, schools must continue to transform teaching and learning so as to support the development of sustainable skills as explicit learning objectives. By promoting interdisciplinarity and creating instructional strategies that are relevant, differentiated and based on real life, schools can offer a multitude of meaningful, engaging experiences that support all students in awakening their passions and fields of interest, achieving their full potential, constructing meaning, and achieving their life/career project. To attain these goals, the rationale of the school-family-community partnership takes on its full meaning through a general focus on a common objective: guiding and coaching students to become the lead architects of their own present, as well as their future.

STRATEGY ES 2:
Critical and creative thinking

> **Adopt instructional practices that enable students to develop their critical and creative thinking.**

Because of the preponderant place of the media in their lives, Acadian and Francophone students are more exposed than ever to a sea of information they have to learn to navigate effectively in order to make informed decisions, whether simple or complex, of a personal or a social nature. Furthermore, as they are growing up in an increasingly pluralistic society, they are confronted on a daily basis with opinions and values that differ from theirs. Whether it be different interests, political opinions or religious, scientific or moral beliefs, young people have to deal with these realities constantly, and are thus led to make critical judgments, either consciously or not.

Without supervision from the adults around them or guidance from the school, these judgments can often lack objectivity, creating certain challenges, both interpersonal and in terms of their educational success. In fact, students who are unable to assess the relevance of certain information when doing their assignments, unable to make a judgment on the texts they read so as to then react to them, or unable to take a position on topical, historical, scientific or other subjects during classroom debates, often find themselves academically disadvantaged. What is more, it is difficult for them to be effectively engaged in the social arena if their perception and understanding of the world around them are coloured by prejudices and mistaken concepts (e.g. racism, sexism, homophobia, etc.). Critical and creative thinking is thus essential to be able to function effectively in society.

Possible actions   ES 2

- Incorporate in all curricula, regardless of the subject, learning content and instructional avenues that promote the development of critical and creative thinking.
- Develop support tools and resources relating to critical and creative thinking for the teaching staff.
- Review initial and ongoing training to make more room for critical and creative thinking.
- Develop support documentation relating to critical and creative thinking for parents.
- Make the community aware of the importance of including youth in debates about current issues in society.
- Encourage the establishment of an institute on critical thinking (such as the Foundation for Critical Thinking).
- Suggest texts (such as novels), particularly in language courses, which are more engaged and which present issues that invite reflection on the human condition.
- Propose learning activities (e.g. writing opinion pieces, debates, creation of "engaged" works of art, etc.) that allow students to take positions on various subjects.
- See that students have access to newspapers and news magazines at school.

It is essential for the education system and the Acadian and Francophone community to ensure that students acquire skills that allow them not only to make a judgment with a minimum of prejudice or preconceived ideas about various situations, but also to propose solutions that are relevant, effective and respectful of all parties involved in the course of remedying situations they view as problematic. For this to happen, the instructional practices used in class, at all levels and in all subjects, have to require students to demonstrate critical and creative thinking. Critical thinking and creative thinking are reinforced in particular in fields that naturally call for informed positions to be taken. The sciences and social studies are examples, but so are French, language courses, or the arts with their appreciation and creation of literary or artistic works, analysis and resolution of problems in mathematics and in the trades, or simply in physical education and personal and social development courses, in the choices a person makes concerning all the facets of his or her well-being. In this sense, critical thinking and creative thinking are crosscutting skills, since they need to be developed in every academic field.

UNESCO (2007) considers critical thinking to be necessary to the life, appropriation of freedom, and exercise of citizenship of every individual. It is defined as the art of analyzing and assessing thinking in order to improve on it (Paul & Elder, 2008). In other words, students who demonstrate critical thinking learn to think, decide, and adopt a point of view with a minimum of prejudice. Creative thinking, on the other hand, employs multiple initiatives to generate new ideas and possibilities. It often calls recognized principles into question (Manitoba Department of Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2007). In addition, creative thinking harmonizes intuition and logic. It leads students to define the elements of a situation, imagine different scenarios, and explore, express and carry out their ideas in different ways (Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec, 2006). In summary, when students make use of critical and creative thinking, they are able to assess the issues, consider the facts, evaluate their accuracy, and put them into perspective so as to adjust their position and propose solutions.

While it is imperative that students be brought to develop critical and creative thinking, teachers also need to be provided with the appropriate tools for discharging this important task they are assigned. Initial and ongoing training must of course address critical and creative thinking as a "learning object", but it must above all promote the development of this sort of thinking in current and future teachers as part of every initial training course or on professional development days. Furthermore it must provide up-to-date resources, suggesting possibilities for action and reflection to teachers.

Finally, since education does not take place only within school walls, parents and the community must also play a role in young people's development of critical and creative thinking. For this reason it is fundamental that these two pillars be made aware of the necessity of developing these skills, which are of the utmost importance for any individual, and of summoning their exercise by including youth in different discussions on the future of their community or on environmental issues, for example. For it is only by training students who are capable of thinking by and for themselves that the Acadian and Francophone community will continue to evolve and to open up to the world.

STRATEGY ES 3:
Knowledge building

> Adopt instructional and assessment practices that allow students to manage their own learning process and knowledge building.

The central place that students must hold in their learning process and in building their knowledge has been confirmed many times in recent years in research on cognitive psychology. As early as 1992, Tardif said that teachers have a mandate to [Translation] "create an environment in which all the elements likely to facilitate and trigger this knowledge building are placed at the students' disposal" (p. 78). The New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has been saying the same thing for years. The theoretical framework for all curricula clearly indicates that teachers must select approaches that allow students to build their knowledge through peer interaction and collaboration and to become responsible stakeholders in their own learning. Another objective is for students to be capable of learning in depth and of establishing connections between what they learn in different subjects.

According to the cognitive notion of learning, learners have to actively build their knowledge in a continual, gradual fashion. To do this, they need a school environment that allows them, among other things, to build on their previous knowledge, but also to appropriate, with the assistance of strategic instruction, for example, a range of cognitive and metacognitive strategies. It is also necessary to help students reinvest these strategies through authentic learning and assessment situations that generally require the superior thinking skills described in Bloom's taxonomy (e.g. analyzing, understanding, evaluating, creating).

Possible actions   ES 3

- Give abundant attention to strategic and explicit instruction of various cognitive and metacognitive strategies that allow students to better manage the ways they learn and understand.

- Facilitate learning transfer by means of interdisciplinary projects.

- Utilize a wide range of instructional approaches to take into account students' different learning styles and different forms of intelligence.

- Make more room for reciprocal education.

- Propose meaningful projects to the students.

- Present early learning subjects in elementary school using an interdisciplinary teaching approach.

- Step up efforts to develop literacy and numeracy in elementary and high school.

- Adopt assessment practices in the service of learning (assessments *for* learning, not *of* learning).

- Encourage students to set their own learning targets after engaging in self-assessment.

- Set up training and coaching mechanisms for teaching staff who need to master proven instructional and assessment practices that foster knowledge building (e.g. strategic instruction, assessment for learning, etc.).

- Refer to the CMEC kit on reading and writing strategies during training and at school staff meetings.

- Develop capsules for teachers on proven instructional practices (e.g. strategic instruction).

- Refer to the provincial student assessment policy during training and at school staff meetings.

If the aim is to make students capable of managing their own learning process, it is important to adopt assessment practices that will not leave them passive while being assessed. They should therefore have the opportunity to self-assess on a regular basis, as this allows them to take a critical, constructive look at their own processes and the strategies they have used to carry out the various tasks required. Furthermore, the assessment practices adopted by teachers should be consistent with regular teaching practices, and the feedback given to students in the wake of these assessments should be prompt and specific, as indicated in the provincial student assessment policy (DEECD, 2013).

The idea of making students active participants in their learning is certainly not new. However teachers need ongoing training and support to ensure that all the principles of this philosophy are applied in all classrooms.

Educational Success Focus Area

STRATEGY ES 4:
Literacy

> Incorporate in all subjects, at every academic level, instructional practices that allow students to develop solid literacy skills.

Literacy is essential in order to understand the world and participate in it fully as a citizen. It does not amount to simply reading and writing. While reading and writing abilities are essential for the development and acquisition of certain skills in school, literacy has a much broader meaning: it also encompasses the ability to communicate orally and to employ superior thinking skills. More specifically, in a knowledge-based society, literacy is defined as the ability to understand, interpret, evaluate and make advised use of information found in various situations and various messages, written or oral, in order to communicate and interact effectively in society (DEECD, 2012a).

Literacy is the basis of all learning, because oral and written language is the engine and vehicle of learning. All teachers, whatever the subject and level taught, use oral and written language to communicate and interact with their students, and to help them learn. In that sense, all teachers, whatever the subject and level taught, are in a way literacy teachers: they must be aware of the essential and critical role they play in advancing the development of their students' literacy skills. Without the contribution that all teachers provide, students may not get the benefit of essential learning specific to a given discipline, not because they are challenged by the discipline as such, but because they are challenged with respect to their abilities to understand and communicate, whether orally or in writing.

Literacy has an impact on the academic path of all students as well as on their general quality of life. Acquisition of solid skills in reading, writing and oral communication allows individuals to realize their full potential and achieve their goals—in short, to succeed in every area, and long past the years they spend in school. As Statistics Canada has reported (2010):

Possible actions

ES 4

- Include a component on literacy in each of the initial training courses, particularly the didactics courses.
- Offer both teachers and principals literacy training in all subjects.
- Offer training for parents and community members who want to learn more about literacy so that they too can provide students with support.
- Include instructional avenues in teaching resources and in curricula that allow teachers to better incorporate best literacy practices in their courses.
- Develop tools that allow teachers, parents and the community to adopt best literacy practices.
- Set up collaboration sites that allow teachers to share and discover best literacy practices.
- Develop tools that allow principals to better support their staff with regard to the integration of literacy in all courses.
- Make reference to and/or use of the CMEC kit on oral communication and reading and writing strategies in training courses offered for principals or teaching staff.
- Make reference to and/or use of the CMEC kit on oral communication and reading and writing strategies at teachers' meetings at schools.
- In each course, create opportunities to speak, read and write, in informal knowledge building and formal knowledge communication situations.
- Support the development and implementation of community programs such as CLEF and *Lire et faire lire Acadie* to support students in developing their reading and writing skills.

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Students leaving secondary education without a strong foundation may experience difficulty accessing the postsecondary education system and the labour market, and they may benefit less when learning opportunities are presented later in life. Without the tools needed to be effective learners throughout their lives, these individuals with limited skills risk economic and social marginalization.

Faced with these realities, it is imperative that efforts be constantly deployed to keep literacy a priority for the Acadian and Francophone education system and for the entire population of New Brunswick. It is of course necessary to continue to train all teaching staff so that every teacher is better able to support students through instructional practices proven to be effective for literacy, but it is also important to ensure that parents and all community partners are equipped so that they too are able to guide Acadian and Francophone students toward the acquisition of solid literacy skills that will be useful all their life. Parents and the community can and must play a leading role in literacy, which is why the school must work closely with them so that everyone's efforts can be productive. The community programs and school programs that have been set up to promote the acquisiton of literacy skills by elementary students must remain in place, but as suggested in the report of the Commission on Francophone Schools (2009), this initiative should now "be broadened to meet the needs of students of all ages in all grades" (p. 36).

Educational Success Focus Area

STRATEGY ES 5:
Francization

> Provide quality francization and language upgrading services for students who speak little or no French.

The report of the Commission on Francophone Schools (2009) mentions how important it is for the Acadian and Francophone education system to pay special attention to exogamy-related issues. The report targets two issues in particular: the need to better inform exogamous families of their right to an education in French (see the Vitality strategy V 1, page 50) and the need to offer quality francization services in schools. Many children of rights-holder parents start school with insufficient knowledge of French to learn effectively in a French-speaking environment. It is therefore essential to ensure that teaching staff have the necessary knowledge related to learning a second language to deliver quality francization service to all children who are not proficient in French. Francization services are of course intended both for children whose parents are rights-holders and for children whose parents are newcomers who do not speak French.

In addition, it often happens that Francophone children arrive at school without much previous contact with the written and literacy aspects of French, and this affects their language abilities. These children may not necessarily require francization services, but they do need language upgrading, that is, they need to expand their linguistic repertoire to be able to make effective progress in their learning. Since the language used in the school setting is more like normative French and some children have been exposed mainly to a vernacular French (e.g. *chiac*) before entering school, these children go through a period of adjustment when they find themselves in a setting where the dialect used by the school staff is significantly different from that used at home. For this reason it is important to ensure that parents and the community are made aware of the importance of exposing children to various registers of language, including normative French,

right from their earliest years. The teaching staff must employ multiple instructional strategies and see that a learning climate is established that is reassuring, word-rich, and conducive to speaking out and to peer interaction, so that all students are able to enrich their vocabulary and develop their linguistic knowledge.

Possible actions   ES 5

- Make sure that all families have access to family literacy and francization services.
- Establish ongoing communication between parents and school staff.
- Make parents and the community aware of the importance of exposing the children to various registers of language, including normative French, right from early childhood.
- Introduce francization and differentiated instruction that meets the needs of every student.
- Collaborate on the advancement of research in francization and language upgrading.
- Ensure stability of staff working in francization.
- Offer training in francization and language upgrading for teaching staff.
- Ensure coordination between academic services and early childhood services.
- Develop didactic principles in francization and language upgrading at the provincial level.

While the research has yet to demonstrate with total certainty the best francization model that should be adopted at school, there is no question of the importance of the quality of student-teacher interaction, whatever the model recommended. Then again, we often hear about how important it is for children to have the opportunity to be exposed to and learn the French language before they start school (see section 1.2 of the Early Childhood focus area). In fact, in the interest of the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone communities and the children's educational success, it is best to consider offering francization services right from early childhood, so it would advisable to focus efforts on pre-schoolers and their parents.

That being said, children who in spite of everything still need francization service when they enter school must receive quality services that facilitate both social integration and learning, and this requires appropriate teacher training. Francization, learning support and home room teachers have to clearly understand and adopt the instructional practices that allow for acquisition of the French language, but they also need a good grasp of the differences between the language used in social contexts and the language used in the school context, because it is by developing the vocabulary used in the school context that students will best be able to learn. In addition, the training provided to the teaching staff involved has to cover many other elements, such as the reception of students not fluent in French, the building of partnerships with parents—including non-Francophone parents—and the instructional practices to be recommended. The training must also address the use of monitoring tools that will allow teachers to check the students' language skills regularly. And it is important for teachers to know how to create a stimulating, reassuring atmosphere that will permit the students to take risks in this new language they are learning. Finally, it is necessary to take account of the anglicization aspect often found in settings where there are more students requiring francization services than students already proficient in French.

STRATEGY ES 6:
French-language proficiency and a positive relationship with the language

> **Equip all members of the teaching staff to guide students in effective use of the French language, both oral and written, in a context that promotes a positive relationship with the language.**

Teaching in French in a minority setting requires teachers to have a special kind of expertise that enables them to develop their students' proficiency in French and to instill in them a positive relationship with the language.

There is no question that one role of Acadian and Francophone schools is to guide students toward becoming proficient users of the French language: this is attested by the curricula requirements and the various linguistic and cultural policies in the school districts. However, it should be realized that language skills have to be acquired in a manner that does not feed the sense of linguistic insecurity from which many students suffer. Many students have the feeling or impression that their language skills are inferior to those of other Francophones, and the result is a drop in their self-esteem. This sense of linguistic insecurity can be detrimental to the development of their language, culture and identity, thereby affecting their educational success.

We must also be aware of the fact that some teachers may themselves suffer from linguistic insecurity, and feel the need to refine their language skills so they can provide better support to their students. The need to master the French language and develop a positive relationship with it is not confined to the students: the teaching staff might also benefit from some form of coaching in this area.

Given this situation, it is imperative that teachers receive support in developing their own linguistic skills, on the one hand, so they can bolster their sense of pride in the language throughout their professional career. And it is extremely important on the other hand to train and equip them to make use of instructional practices that generate respect for the French language, while leading their students to see its richness and diversity, in all of its forms and shades, without however disparaging other languages by confining their praise to French. As the Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française explains (2008b), [Translation] "a positive relationship with the French language does not mean fear of other languages. French is actively favoured in the interest of its usage and vitality, not out of mistrust of other languages" (p. 13). In this regard, it is important to remember that learning situations that involve the community are often highly appropriate for developing a positive relationship with the French language. As Cormier (2006) points out, [Translation] "students should have positive experiences which give them a sense of attachment to the community and of competency in their language. The context should be motivating, not threatening" (p. 2).

If the students do not come to see the French language as valid and important, it is likely that the efforts made to teach it will not have the desired effects, because the students will not see them as relevant. [Translation] "People who love their language and feel proud of the identity it confers will more easily withstand assimilation and will want their culture to radiate around them" (Cormier, 2005, p. 12). Youth who live in minority settings are often grappling with identity tensions caused by a strong attraction to the English language and culture. Certainly the last thing to do is to disparage that language and that culture, but ways have to be found to showcase French through meaningful activities that are language-related. Teachers also have to be wary of constantly challenging the French-language abilities of their students, for that will do nothing to help develop the feeling of attachment to and pride in the language and culture.

Possible actions   **ES 6**

- Offer training in instruction in a minority setting and in developing a positive relationship with the language.
- Implement strategies that will allow teachers to improve their language skills throughout their career.
- Develop tools or make use of existing tools that allow teaching staff to master instructional practices that foster a positive relationship with the language.
- Implement strategies that give students, teachers and the community a positive perception of their individual and collective capabilities for educational success.
- Have high expectations and offer instruction that is matched to students' specific needs in terms of development of their language skills.
- Increase the number of formal and informal occasions to read, write, hear and speak French (films, music, correspondence, meaningful research) in all courses.
- Promote language as a learning tool in all school subjects.
- Be open to the language variations expressed by students.
- Use meaningful activities as opportunities to develop vocabulary.
- Watch for signs of linguistic insecurity in students and take steps to address it.
- Organize community activities (cultural, sports, scientific, etc.) that allow students to have positive experiences in French.

Finally, so as not to harm students' self-esteem and to prevent efforts to highlight the French language from being futile, it is necessary to reiterate the importance for all teaching staff to legitimize the students' vernacular (i.e. chiac) at school. Boudreau and Dubois (2001) say that teachers who accept the vernacular language will encourage their students to adopt positive attitude changes toward it, because words and speech that have long been a source of shame can finally be expressed openly and without fear. The objective however is not to move from the "ideology of standard" to the "ideology of dialect," but rather to get the students to understand

that there is a happy medium. In other words, the more standard variety of French (normative French) should be presented as a particular linguistic code appropriate to certain communication situations, and not as the only variety that is acceptable. In this way, students will understand that it may be all right to speak popular or vernacular French at certain times, but they also have to be able to understand normative French and have it at their disposal at other times.

By taking into account the students' various language experiences, building on their achievements and having high expectations, teachers will have a much greater chance of ultimately seeing their students develop solid language skills, and of inspiring them to value and safeguard the French language—in short, of their developing a positive relationship with the language. However, developing that relationship will be much easier if the parents and the entire Acadian and Francophone community are working with the school toward that end.

STRATEGY ES 7:
Numeracy

> At every academic level, adopt instructional practices that allow students to develop solid numeracy skills.

Every day, consciously or not, people utilize various sorts of knowledge and skills that are closely linked with mathematics. In this world of constant change in which citizens have to solve increasingly complex problems, whether personal, economic, social or environmental, mathematics plays an increasingly predominant role, so it goes without saying that the citizens of today and tomorrow need solid skills in mathematical literacy, or numeracy. It is the responsibility of the Acadian and Francophone education system to ensure that all students acquire numeracy skills that enable them to live as engaged citizens of their community and the world. Having strong numeracy skills allows one to better understand the world, to be more actively involved in society, and to substantially improve one's future prospects (Expert Panel on Student Success, 2004). In light of these facts, special importance should be placed on numeracy throughout the students' time in school, to ensure they have a better understanding of the vital role played by mathematics in their daily lives and for their future.

According to *Leading Math Success: Mathematical Literacy, Grades 7-12, Report of the Expert Panel on Student Success* (2004), mathematical literacy is defined as all of the essential competencies in mathematical concepts and related skills that enable a person to function in society, that is, to effectively process and manage life situations, solve real-life problems and communicate solutions. Students therefore need access to various strategies for managing and understanding situations which call for calculations and estimates, while identifying trends that can predict outcomes or events in a variety of contexts. Students also need to develop certain important skills, such as the ability to identify

and solve complex problems, to understand and interpret information to which they have access, and to manage and process relevant information drawn from various situations. Lastly, students need to be able to communicate their reasoning effectively, supporting it with solid arguments, and to make informed decisions in light of the solutions obtained.

All of the school's teaching staff play a vital role in the acquisition of numeracy. Where there are problems to be solved in any discipline, it is imperative that students and teachers alike realize that mathematics can contribute to the growth of other disciplines, depending on the nature of the problem in question. It is through meaningful, real-life situations that students will have the opportunity to develop these skills, as they will then see the contribution and power of mathematics in their daily lives. Hence it is essential, on the one hand, to train and coach teachers so they can effectively help their students see and make connections between mathematics and

the other disciplines, and on the other, to keep up efforts to advance instructional practices, in mathematics courses as elsewhere. The time has come to depart from more traditional education based mainly on the acquisition of knowledge, and to opt instead for learning situations that present students with more authentic tasks that will make their learning much more meaningful, sustainable and transferable.

Possible actions ES 7

- Offer training in numeracy for all elementary teachers and for elementary and high school resource teachers.
- Follow up regularly on the use of numeracy resources recommended by the DEECD (e.g. PRIME kits) for working with all students.
- Provide principals and school administrators with numeracy-related tools to support the teaching staff.
- Make use of teacher training opportunities to present ways of integrating numeracy with the other subjects.
- Offer all high school students a variety of paths in mathematics, oriented toward their fields of interest, passions and life/career choices.
- Incorporate, as much as possible, a component on numeracy in initial training didactics courses.
- Include instructional methods in teaching resources and curricula that allow teachers to incorporate numeracy with subjects other than mathematics.

STRATEGY ES 8:
Initial and ongoing training

> Implement initial and ongoing training programs and support mechanisms that permit all teaching staff to be constantly on the watch for proven instructional practices that meet the needs of the Acadian and Francophone education community.

If the students are the heart of the Acadian and Francophone education system, the teaching staff are in a way its engine. It is impossible to imagine any improvement to the quality of education without the contribution of the teachers. The report of the Commission on Francophone Schools (2009) states:

> Teachers play a crucial role in the overall success of the education system. They constitute the raw material, if you will, or the most basic resource of our education system. (p. 53)

There is no question that the Acadian and Francophone community and all of the education partners are focused on developing a culture of excellence in the Acadian and Francophone education system. Obviously, this culture of excellence cannot exist and grow without initial training that is of very high quality, at the cutting edge of research in such fields as minority education, assessment, literacy, numeracy and inclusive education. These fields naturally have to be addressed as well in ongoing training.

To be truly effective, we now know that this training must also be combined with some form of continuous coaching, whether of teaching graduates just coming into the profession or of experienced teachers or administrators. Without this coaching, it is more difficult for the teaching staff and school principals to apply the knowledge learned during initial training or ad hoc training (professional development). Hence there is good reason to implement a variety of support mechanisms to ensure the transfer of knowledge and expertise in the schools and the classrooms.

The school districts, the Association des enseignants et enseignantes francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick (AEFNB) and the New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) have a big role to play in the ongoing training of teachers and principals, but they are not the only parties responsible. Teaching staff and school principals are also responsible for their own ongoing training, according to their needs and fields of interest, by taking part in various seminars, forums and institutes, or through regular perusal of educational literature. To build collective capacity, it would also be desirable to see more collaboration on various education research projects between teachers and the province's post-secondary institutions such as the Université de Moncton. The school districts, the AEFNB and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development should provide teachers with support in this regard.

Possible actions   **ES 8**

- Considering existing professional profiles (e.g. profile of the faculty of education), develop performance evaluation tools that are linked to the requirements of the mandate of the Acadian and Francophone education system.
- Review the initial training programs in light of this professional profile.
- Set up welcoming, mentoring and integration programs for teaching staff and school principals.
- Develop a culture of professional development and ongoing training by:
  - developing a comprehensive ongoing training strategy, in partnership with the entities concerned;
  - developing mentoring programs for teaching staff and school principals;
  - establishing and continuously improving professional learning communities;
  - providing hands-on instructional support for teachers.
- Encourage the teaching staff to play an active role in their own professional development, at times individually and on their own.

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School-community project, François-Xavier-Daigle school, Allardville, N.B.

It is also necessary to identify the skills, knowledge and attitudes sought in teaching staff and school administrators generally in order to develop or update professional profiles and performance evaluation tools for each of these key stakeholders. That way, expectations will be clearly stated and it will be easier to identify the strengths and challenges of each professional and to determine methods of self-improvement, which will then indirectly build the capacity of the teaching staff and principals to discharge the dual mission of the education system. What is more, the professional profiles will make it easier to plan initial and ongoing training toward acquisition of the desired skills. All of the partners working on the development of education professionals should cooperate on building these professional profiles. Partners should include members of post-secondary institutions, DEECD employees, district leaders and members of the AEFNB.

Area of intervention: Instructional leadership

The people who hold positions of responsibility at the various levels of the education system (school, district, department) are called upon to demonstrate instructional leadership. They must be on the lookout for proven practices, and have the necessary skills to provide effective guidance to those they come in contact with in the course of their work, as well as to help them become leaders in turn within their own school or organization. Instructional leaders must also see that a culture of cooperation is developed within schools, districts, the department and the community, with the goal of fulfilling the dual educational and identity mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system.

Anticipated outcomes:

School principals are equipped to fully play their role as instructional leaders in a minority setting, conveyors of culture and mobilizers, so as to create a climate conducive to quality learning and the full development of every student.

All levels of action and decision making have access to effective collaborative practices.

ES 9 — Instructional leadership of principals

Implement support measures and mechanisms that allow school principals to fully play their role as instructional leaders in a minority setting within their school and school district.

ES 10 — Culture of collaboration

Consolidate collaborative practices designed to improve learning at every level of intervention and decision making.

STRATEGY ES 9:
Instructional leadership of principals

Implement support measures and mechanisms that allow school principals to fully play their role as instructional leaders in a minority setting within their school and school district.

The development of the new organizational model for school districts in 2012 has given rise to major changes in the mode of operation within the districts. The school is the cornerstone of the education system, so the entire structure around it has to provide it with support. That is why, instead of favouring a management style in which decisions are made and transmitted "from the top down," the new organizational model instead favours a hierarchical management style whereby key stakeholders at different levels are more involved in the decision-making process for education planning.

The roles and responsibilities of school principals have therefore changed substantially, since they are now required to exercise their instructional leadership in even more obvious fashion. The emphasis is no longer solely on administrative tasks, as was often the case in the past, but on the learning and identity path of the students. Among other things, this means that the principals' priority must be to ensure at all times that all students are receiving quality instruction, and that requires constant and effective staff support. However the principals cannot work in isolation: they need to establish a climate of collaboration in their school and encourage the leadership of every staff member if they want to see improvements to learning.

It is clear that in a linguistic minority setting, principals play a decisive role in making their school conducive to learning, identity building and citizenship education. Many things are expected of Acadian and Francophone schools: they must target excellence, be open to the community, and be hubs of cultural vitality and spaces for democratic citizenship; this requires them to be headed by persons with exceptional leadership qualities. Because of the new responsibilities they are assigned under the organizational model, school principals need support and guidance to carry out these important tasks properly. This support can take various forms: supervisory meetings, ongoing training, mentoring programs, various types of guidance materials, etc.

School administrators must also have opportunities for collaboration and exchange with their counterparts in their district, the province, the country and even the world, in order to broaden their horizons, assimilate new ideas and find solutions to the sometimes very complex problems that they face on a daily basis. This new knowledge and these new skills will enable them to be better instructional leaders within their school, their school community and their district. It is therefore necessary to put mechanisms in place—such as the professional learning communities—that can allow for regular collaboration and exchange among principals.

The courses offered for the master's degree in school administration and the courses required for principal certification should also reflect the new realities of the Acadian and Francophone education system. It is essential to highlight the special role of the principal in a linguistic minority setting. It is also essential for all principals to be very attentive to the most recent research and to proven instructional practices in minority settings, so that they can tailor them to their school. In addition, they must have a good grasp of the various policies, notably the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy for the French education system, that have a particular impact in minority settings. Therefore the DEECD and the school districts must ensure that this important information is made easily accessible.

Possible actions   ES 9

- Develop a provincial competency profile for principals that incorporates their new role as instructional leaders.
- Coordinate graduate university education, principal certification and ongoing training with the principals' competency profile.
- See that the administrative tasks of principals are reduced so as to give priority to tasks that focus on students' educational success.
- Develop tools (or make use of existing ones) that allow principals to better play their role of conveyor of culture.
- Put mechanisms in place that promote collaboration and communication among principals, school districts and the DEECD.
- Make sure that principals have opportunities for formal and informal exchange.
- Develop a coaching program for all principals and a mentoring program for new principals.
- Organize regular face-to-face or virtual meetings between principals in order to promote a common understanding of the role of instructional leader in a linguistic minority setting and to share best practices.
- Develop a mechanism for collaboration between the DEECD and AEEFNB in order to develop and deliver ongoing training for principals.

STRATEGY ES 10:
Culture of cooperation

> Consolidate collaborative practices designed to improve learning at every level of intervention and decision making.

The students are at the heart of the Acadian and Francophone education system. The organizational structure and all the decisions made should contribute first and foremost to improving the students' learning at school. It is often said that the best decisions are the ones made in collaboration. And indeed, the gains in terms of student learning are undeniable when the strengths of a number of individuals are turned to advantage. Hence it is natural to endorse a form of shared leadership so that all key stakeholders in the education system can contribute to the improvement of learning.

There are certainly many benefits to collaboration within the education community, particularly in the schools. A good deal of literature[21] published over the last two decades reminds teachers and school administrators that developing collaborative practices among education professionals makes interventions more effective and promotes innovative instructional practices, indirectly resulting in substantial improvements in learning. For that reason, the majority of the province's Acadian and Francophone schools adopted the professional learning community model some time ago. While the spirit of teacher collaboration is alive and well in the schools, we must continue to work to spread it to other levels of action and decision making. For example, principals should have the opportunity to collaborate among themselves, but they should also cooperate with the educational staff in the school districts (mentors, learning specialists, executive directors of learning, dirctors of learning support services, etc.).

Similarly, it might be worthwhile to further solicit the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, post-secondary institutions and the various community and governmental organizations with an education affiliation, when possible, to join with the schools and districts to consider the best ways of improving the learning process for every student. Developing closer working relations between school, district, department and community cannot help but foster the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone education system.

Possible actions — ES 10

- Schedule meeting and collaboration time for teachers, including principals, in the school calendar.
- Ensure that principals and management staff in the school districts and DEECD adopt a shared leadership style that encourages commitment by the various stakeholders to the improvement of student performance.
- Communicate the expectations and vision for education to all stakeholders in the Acadian and Francophone education system.
- Clearly define the roles of all stakeholders in the education system in order to clarify ambiguous situations which might impede the work of collaboration.
- See that the interpersonal skills of all stakeholders are developed in order to facilitate exchange and establish a climate of confidence.
- Ensure that stakeholders have access to the tools required for online collaboration.
- Facilitate the participation of all stakeholders in school decision making.
- Cultivate an organizational culture conducive to communication between all those who offer school programs and services and all those who receive them.

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21. Plauborg, 2008; Dufour, Dufour & Eaker, 2008; Dufour, Dufour, Eaker & Many, 2006; Beaumont, Lavoie & Couture, 2009.

In addition, since expertise cannot always be drawn from the same community, it might be worthwhile to take greater advantage of the media and social networks to collaborate with professionals working outside the province, or even the country. Such extended cooperation would allow the key stakeholders of the Acadian and Francophone education system to broaden their horizons and become familiar with other successful approaches or best practices.

Finally, it is by continuing to build collective capacity, that is, by ensuring that all stakeholders can collaborate and learn from each other on an ongoing basis, that Acadian and Francophone students will be able to receive the best possible education.

Area of intervention: Stimulating and engaging learning environment

A stimulating and engaging learning environment forms a dynamic whole that brings together all of the educational, human, physical, sociocultural and technological conditions that interact to collectively make for educational success.

Anticipated outcome:

Students benefit from a learning environment that:

- allows them to thrive and to develop to their full potential;
- meets their interests and needs, both personal and educational;
- enables them to be and to become responsible, informed and engaged citiizens, in their school, in their local and extended community, and in the digital space;
- makes them aware of the importance of contributing to the Francophone digital space;
- allows them to take charge of their overall health;
- allows them to engage and participate in decision making at their school.

ES 11 — Inclusive learning environment

Adopt inclusive and differentiated instruction and flexible class management that can respect the styles, paces of learning, kinds of intelligence and particular needs of every student.

ES 12 — Diversified courses and learning experiences

Put structures in place that allow both rural and urban students to access diversified courses and learning experiences that meet their needs and interests.

ES 13 — Digital learning environment

Transform the teaching and learning environment by optimizing the instructional use of technologies and social networks.

ES 14 — Comprehensive school health approach

In collaboration with the different partners and government departments concerned, implement a comprehensive school health approach.

ES 15 — Engagement in school life

Create an academic environment in which the students, as citizens of today:

- are fully engaged in school life and the operation of the school;
- participate in sports, artistic, cultural, scientific, civic, heritage and community programs that correspond to their tastes and fields of interest.

STRATEGY ES 11:
Inclusive learning environment

Adopt inclusive and differentiated instruction and flexible class management that can respect the styles, paces of learning, kinds of intelligence and particular needs of every student.

In an inclusive learning environment, education takes into account the uniqueness of all learners right from its design stage. It provides them the opportunity to learn in collaboration with their peers, while respecting their various individual needs. The DOE (2009a) defines inclusive education as follows:

> […] a pairing of philosophy and pedagogical practices that allow each student to feel respected, confident and safe so he or she can learn and develop to his or her full potential. It is based on a system of values and beliefs centred on the best interests of the student, which promotes social cohesion, belonging, active participation in learning, a complete school experience, and positive interactions with peers and others in the school community […]. (p. 1)

However, it is important to acknowledge that inclusive education is not just a philosophy based on a system of values, but also a right, proclaimed in the New Brunswick *Human Rights Act*, which prohibits discrimination on various grounds, such as physical or mental disability, race, colour, place of origin, social condition and others. An inclusive learning environment is therefore an environment where all students, regardless of their culture, religion, sexual orientation or special learning needs, can learn alongside their peers.

Possible actions   ES 11

- Utilize a wide range of instructional approaches to take into account students' different learning styles and kinds of intelligence.
- Implement a culture of differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students, including gifted students, students in need of enrichment, and students with learning difficulties or disabilities.
- Put in place strategies that allow all school stakeholders to become proficient in a pedagogy of inclusion.
- Promote close cooperation among all education workers in order to better meet students' needs.
- Offer school staff training and coaching in connection with inclusive education.
- Establish structured and effective interdepartmental partnerships in order to better meet students' specific needs.
- Reduce wait times for specialized services.
- See that the recommendations of the *Strengthening Inclusion, Strengthening Schools* report are implemented.

To promote the successful inclusion of all students in all spheres of education, two interrelated approaches are advocated: differentiated instruction, which consists in considering the styles and paces of learning and the kinds of intelligence of all students in the class when preparing learning and assessment situations; and universal design for learning, which takes into consideration students' particular needs from the stage of curriculum design and during the planning and implementation of instruction, learning and assessment.

It is interesting to note that the *Strengthening Inclusion, Strengthening Schools* report, published in June 2012, shows that responsibility for inclusive education lies with all academic stakeholders and cannot be successful unless leadership is assumed at all levels of the education system, collaborative structures are clearly defined, and initial and ongoing training is provided for all workers.

Jeux de l'Acadie.

STRATEGY ES 12:
Diversified courses and learning experiences

> Put structures in place that allow both rural and urban students to access diversified courses and learning experiences that meet their needs and interests.

The education system is undergoing major transformations so it can provide optimal responses to the needs of all students, instead of requiring them to adapt to just one path of learning. With inclusive education as the basic premise, numerous initiatives are being introduced to meet the academic, socio-emotional and life/career needs of young people. These projects or programs inevitably draw their strength from collaboration among various academic stakeholders, so as to benefit from the expertise and contribution of each.

In an inclusive school, it is important to develop programming that allows for the differentiation of learning content so as to better respond to students' needs and fields of interest related to their life/career project, while offering services that support diversity. Programming that offers different academic paths gives students the benefit of sustainable learning that is transferable to their field of post-secondary study, to the working world and to their everyday lives.

To create the conditions necessary for educational success and for the achievement of each student's life/career project, schools take full advantage of their partnerships with the community, so as to propose meaningful and varied learning situations. Community and guidance-oriented projects are based precisely on the rich school-family-community relationship, to enhance and give meaning to the students' learning experiences by linking curriculum content to real-life contexts.

Educational Success Focus Area

> ### Possible actions ES 12
>
> - Offer a flexible curriculum that opens up a range of pathways, in line with students' needs and interests.
> - Set up innovative, flexible structures that can meet the challenges facing rural schools, e.g. optional courses, online courses, itinerant courses.
> - Encourage projects that target the use of sustainable skills and abilities, focusing on the skills that are essential for work.
> - Develop and implement a program for prior learning assessment.

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Recognition of achievements and learning in the community is another way to take advantage of community partnerships, while allowing young people to have experiences that enrich their educational path and contribute to their personal, social and life/career development.

Access to a variety of elective courses also contributes to the life/career development of students by giving them the opportunity to discover new passions and acquire knowledge and skills in various fields. Schools can profit from online courses to broaden the spectrum of offerings they make available to their students: this is one way of dealing with rurality, decline, lack of resources or scheduling conflicts. Directed to students in grades 10 to 12, and increasingly to those in grades 8 and 9, online courses are supported by differentiated instruction and can therefore accommodate students with special needs and different paces of learning.

In addition to online courses, other strategies are now demonstrating the key role of technology in the enhancement and upgrading of teaching and learning strategies. Hybrid learning[22], which combines face-to-face instruction with digital learning management tools, development by each student and teacher of his or her personal learning environment, and the judicious integration of social media for learning, for example, by inviting students to bring their own digital devices, are some of the methods that permit the school to better meet the needs of 21st-century learners, while ensuring more fairness in the programs and services they are offered, whatever their school.

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22. Face-to-face learning.

STRATEGY ES 13:
Digital learning environment

> Transform the teaching and learning environment by optimizing the instructional use of technologies and social networks.

In this digital age, the role of the information and communication technologies (ICTs) in education represents much more than added value. ICTs boost capacities, for example, to search for, process, produce and communicate information. Development of students' digital literacy thus becomes something that is unavoidable, essential and indeed central for learning. The new realities related to the omnipresence of ICTs at school are exerting considerable influence on the way learning is approached, since factual knowledge is increasingly in the palms of students' hands with tools such as digital tablets and smart phones, facilitating access to the many search engines available on the Internet.

The creation of a digital learning environment necessarily means a transformation of instructional practices. Those practices, as well as the proposed learning activities, have to be inclusive and guidance-oriented, take the principles of minority education into account, and be consistent with learning outcomes, while permitting students to engage in knowledge building through judicious use of the digital and technological spaces and tools at their disposal. There is no question that information and communication technologies offer teachers a multitude of opportunities to create a rich and effective learning environment. However, they have to be used wisely, so that instructional practices are genuinely transformed: they cannot be used simply as tools for transmitting content in the conventional way. This metamorphosis of the teaching and learning environment will certainly lead students to become more engaged, to communicate, collaborate, create, connect and criticize more—in short, to learn through the lens of their reality and that of society.

Clearly, the appropriation and exploitation of the instructional potential of ICTs demand time, effort and creativity on the part of the educational staff. This professional mission can find substantial support in the social media available at the educator's fingertips. The same applies for those responsible for initial and ongoing teacher training. These trainers have to ensure that the necessary training mechanisms are implemented and updated, whether they are formal or informal, individual or collective, classroom or virtual. They also have to see that resources are developed to meet the needs of teaching staff, and they must facilitate access to digital instructional resources in French. It is also important to encourage learners, both students and teachers, to develop and share resources, thereby helping to enrich the Francophone digital space at all levels—local, provincial, national and international.

Possible actions — ES 13

- Promote access and contribution to digital resources through various platforms, and encourage contribution to these platforms.
- Put mechanisms in place for education staff that support the effective integration of ICTs in teaching.
- Promote the leadership of school principals, especially on social networks.
- Promote judicious use of digital technologies to encourage networking and social learning (e.g. online meetings, sharing).
- Provide initial and ongoing training, both formal and informal, that allows for judicious integration of digital technologies in teaching and learning.
- Facilitate access to an open and secure online network for all schools, districts and the Department.
- Implement a training strategy on the proper management of digital identity for youth, teachers, school administrators and parents.
- Leave evidence (blogs, videos, testimonials) of experiences of mastering digital tools for learning and collective capacity building.
- Consider the most recent research relating to the classroom use of ICT on an ongoing basis.

Educational Success Focus Area

Finally, the leadership of the various educational entities (schools, school districts, the department, colleges, universities) is crucial for the transformation of the digital learning environment. Their vision and their action plans must reflect the constantly changing technological realities. The digital technologies will continue to reshape the ways that people communicate, consume, socialize, collaborate and work. They must provide leverage for learning and help to move the science of education forward. Note that this strategy should be worked on in tandem with strategy IB 9 (Francophone citizenship in traditional and digital media) and strategy V 10 (Networking and collective capacity in the digital age).

STRATEGY ES 14:
Comprehensive school health approach

> In collaboration with the different partners and government departments concerned, implement a comprehensive school health approach.

The *Comprehensive School Health Approach* is an internationally recognized wellness model whose objective is to improve students' educational success as well as their health. In New Brunswick, the departments of Education and Early Childhood Development, Health, and Healthy and Inclusive Communities share this same vision of health and wellness promotion, so that the province's youth can be better prepared to make informed, healthy choices regarding every aspect of their life (e.g. diet, physical activity, interpersonal relations, spirituality, substance use, sexuality).

Adopting the premise that young people who are healthy learn better and are more successful, the comprehensive school health approach underscores the fundamental role of the school in students' acquisition of the skills they need to lead a physically and emotionally healthy life.

There are a number of models or initiatives that can help schools implement strategies in support of the comprehensive school health approach. Among the more important of these are the *Joint Consortium for School Health, the Health Promoting Schools* program, the *Racines de l'espoir* project of the Fédération des jeunes francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick, New Brunswick's Wellness Strategy, and the Mouvement Acadien des Communautés en Santé du Nouveau-Brunswick inc. (MACS-NB).

There is a multitude of resources available to the schools that permit them to offer a variety of programs and services promoting the adoption by all students of a healthy, active lifestyle. In this regard, the departments of Health and of Healthy and Inclusive Communities identify four pillars of wellness associated with a healthy lifestyle:

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physical activity, mental fitness and resilience, healthy eating, and tobacco-free living. Mental fitness and resilience, in particular, are recognized as triggers of positive behavioural change in the direction of wellness. Mental fitness is now one of the central concerns of schools, from a perspective no longer confined to the problem itself, but which sees itself as more proactive and preventive. The school environment is replete with opportunities for generating self-esteem, resilience, and positive interpersonal relationships.

Health and wellness being major issues in our society, schools can only gain from collaborating with parents and various community partners to bring about and maintain a healthy, respectful and welcoming school environment that values the health and wellness of staff and students alike. Schools, parents and community must therefore join forces and resources to set up inclusive, participative and holistic structures and practices that can facilitate the positive development of children, so that society as a whole can reap the rewards. A joint vision of child health points the way to a culture of wellness for all citizens of New Brunswick.

STRATEGY ES 15:
Engagement in school life

Create an academic environment in which the students, as citizens of today:

- are fully engaged in school life and the operation of the school;
- participate in sports, artistic, cultural, scientific, civic, heritage and community programs that correspond to their tastes and fields of interest.

Possible actions   **ES 15**

- Create an environment that welcomes the unique contribution that young people make to the life and operation of the school.
- Increase the number of opportunities for students to design, deliver and manage projects.
- Increase the number of opportunities for students to get involved at different levels (e.g. school and community activities, advisory processes).
- Increase the students' participation in various committees (e.g. school councils, interest groups, advisory committees).
- See that students participate in the life of the school, with an emphasis on the emergence of civic and democratic thinking and practices on the part of the students.
- Support the Fédération des jeunes francophones (FJFNB) du Nouveau-Brunswick in the development of its programs and activities.
- Highlight the engagement of youth in the community and with other young people.
- Strive for an environment that meets the needs of youth and that offers multiple activities.
- Promote student participation in the creation and maintenance of a Francophone cultural space.
- Facilitate the sharing of best practices among schools.
- See that the DEECD, the school districts and the DECs consult with youth and involve them more when developing school programs, policies and services.

The engagement that can be found among the Acadian and Francophone students of New Brunswick is truly vibrant. Youth participation mechanisms serve, for example, to promote self-expression, discussion of ideas, decision making, and implementation of collective projects. All of the partners should share the desire to create a learning environment that allows students to be active in their school and their community, and that promotes the emergence of leadership and engagement in building their individual and collective identity.

For students to be active and engaged citizens in their school, it is essential that all the education partners offer a range of opportunities and experiences that promote citizen participation. It is also fundamental for the partners to act as guides and mentors for young people, to facilitate their identity building and help them develop citizenship-related skills (see strategy IB 4, page 85). Particular support should be given to school life monitors for the implementation of a democratic governance process to apply the concept of *BY and FOR* youth and to allow young people real power in managing the school and its affairs.

The school and the community also need to coordinate their efforts to offer a variety of school, extracurricular and after-school programming (e.g. sports, arts, cultural, and community activities) in fields in which the students are interested, and they must ensure that all students have access to this programming.

GénieArts Nouveau-Brunswick (*ArtsSmarts*) program.

Finally, so that schools can make a harmonious transition toward the principle of democratization and student empowerment, it is vital to establish permanent, ongoing dialogue between the government and youth organizations, to ensure that actions of the partners in education are consistent and complement each other. A good deal of effort will be required to develop new youth participation mechanisms and diversified programming. However the benefits of this effort will be significant in terms of students' development of feelings of attachment, autonomy, competency and confidence, and will make definite contributions to educational success, individual and collective identity building, and the sustainable development and vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community.

Area of intervention: Partnerships

Educational success depends on two-way partnerships which provide the ground for exchanges and collaborations, as well as a collective engagement by all the education partners. This includes academic partners at all levels (department, districts and schools), institutional partners (post-secondary institutions, departments other than the DEECD playing a role in education), community partners, and parents.

Anticipated outcomes:

As the first educators of their children, parents are fully involved in their educational success throughout their educational path.

All the partners in the education system collaborate and work together to further the educational success of every student.

ES 16 — Parents as first educators

Implement measures which:

- make parents aware of their role as first educators of their children throughout their children's educational path;
- make school staff aware of the importance of the parents' role and of the school-family relationship;
- get the parents and the school staff to work closely together for the educational success of every student.

ES 17 — Community structure of the school

Set up in every elementary and high school a community structure that promotes participation by the community partners in the school's education plan.

ES 18— Collaboration and partnerships

Establish structured, effective partnerships that ensure close collaboration among the education stakeholders so that the particular needs of every student can be met.

STRATEGY ES 16:
Parents as first educators

Implement measures which:

- **make parents aware of their role as first educators of their children all through their children's educational path;**
- **make school staff aware of the importance of the parents' role and of the school-family relationship;**
- **get the parents and the school staff to work closely together for the educational success of every student.**

According to social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1986), people prefer to identify with groups that can have a positive effect on their self-esteem. This theory becomes very relevant in the school context when considering the welcoming and support role that the teaching staff play with the parents. The parents are the first educators of their child, a fact which gives them a select place throughout the child's educationanl path. As a result, the teaching staff have to be welcoming and to make the parents feel that they have an important and indeed essential contribution to make to the educational success of their child. And that in fact is the conclusion of a good deal of research.
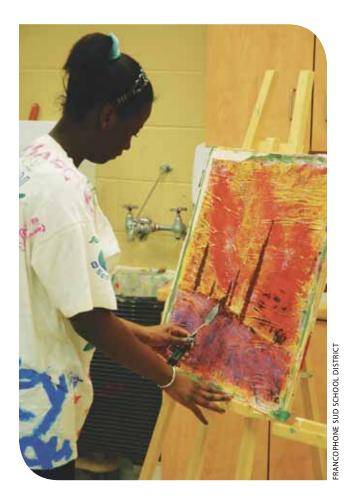
In a linguistic minority setting, the feeling that one's individual or collective cultural identity is not valued by society often leads to low self-esteem and identity tensions. However, when teachers acknowledge the parents' role as first educators and work with them, the feeling of attachment to the school is reinforced for parents and students alike, and this promotes identity building and fosters the school-family relationship. This is why it is necessary to remind all teaching staff that it is important to welcome and include the parents in what their child learns over the child's entire educational path. The parents' place in school should never amount to simple participation in extracurricular activities: they need to be actively involved in their child's education.

It is crucial for parents to understand that, first of all, their contribution is essential to their child's success in school, whatever their own level of schooling may be. Second, they need to be aware of their role as conveyors of culture in a linguistic minority setting. Therefore the education sector and the entire Acadian and Francophone community have a duty to make parents aware of the paramount role they play

Possible actions   **ES 16**

- Get parents to realize that their child is the primary beneficiary of their involvement with the school.
- Publicize and highlight the variety of roles that parents can play with the school to contribute to the educational success of their child.
- Train the teaching staff and other workers in welcoming and supporting the parents.
- Develop for and offer to parents resources, services and programs that allow them to support the educational success of their child, such as:
  - francization programs for parents;
  - homework help;
  - parent-child-teenager communication;
  - follow-up for newcomers;
  - services for exogamous couples;
  - services for families at risk;
  - mutual parental support (twinning).
- Implement strategies to encourage and facilitate volunteerism among parents.
- Support family literacy programs.
- Develop effective strategies for multilateral family-school-community communication.
- Publicize the role that parents play in school governance.
- Review the structures of the Parents' Committee and the Parent School Support Committee in order to combine their strengths.
- Promote and showcase the importance of the role of parents in parental structures.

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in the educational success and identity building of their child. This awareness raising must be followed by concrete actions that can kindle parental engagement and collaboration among all the key stakeholders.

With high-quality support and opportunities for influencing decision making in the school system (e.g. through parent school support committees), the parents will want to identify with the Acadian and Francophone education system because that system will have helped to raise their self-esteem as parents. Ultimately, it is the children who will be the big winners from this school-family collaboration.

STRATEGY ES 17:
Community structure of the school

> **Set up in every elementary and high school a community structure that promotes participation by the community partners in the school's education plan.**

Over 40 years of research show that parent and community involvement in the life of the school has a more important impact on student performance than do orderly schools or the professionalism of the teachers (Marzano, 2003). What this means is that schools can no longer assume the education of the young all alone. They are places where the community can mobilize in a critical and responsible fashion around the importance of education as a pillar of the future. This mobilization focuses on a meaningful educational program[23] which is coloured by the school and its community. Silos fall away and resources are synergized which serve to:

- systematically seek out the assistance of parents and other community partners in motivating the children, enriching their learning and thus promoting their identity building;
- establish two-way, win-win partnerships where parents and the community respond to multiple needs of the school, and where the school responds to multiple needs of parents and the community.

School, parents and community in symbiosis can define and implement the educational program specific to their community, which will serve to:

- embody the vision and mission of the school;
- orient actions according to school-family-community strengths and needs;
- orient actions according to the socio-economic life of the school and the region;
- mobilize all players around the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system;
- create opportunities for youth to become actively engaged in their learning and to discover their strengths and passions as they explore the society around them;
- develop in every student feelings of attachment, confidence, autonomy and competency, which will consolidate a positive Francophone identity.

To achieve these goals, three winning conditions are necessary. First, the school principal must work closely with the community development officer, the guidance counsellor, the staff members and strategic partners in the community. Next, continuous mobilization of the staff and partners must be established. Finally, there must be a real willingness to work together. In this way the school team, the parents and the community partners will achieve the goals they have set for themselves.

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23. In this context, the *educational program* of a school reflects the needs of the school and its community. It involves all of its stakeholders and lends meaning and coherence to the instructional and educational actions implemented.

Possible actions   ES 17

- Encourage the development in every school, in collaboration with partners in the surrounding community, of an education program that reflects that community.

- Adopt a supportive community structure to ensure that partnerships and initiatives are sustainable.

- Encourage the emergence of collaborative structures that feature youth, parents, teachers, community and cultural development officers, learning specialists from the Department and the school districts, recreational workers, artists, athletes and other professionals involved in the school environment.

- Consolidate initiatives that permit schools to benefit from community and cultural development officers.

- Ensure there is effective, constant, two-way communication with parents (e.g. social networks).

- Take into consideration the comprehensive strategy for integrating arts and culture into Acadian society when planning school activities.

- Develop strategies of collaboration:
  - with artists and the various arts and culture organizations;
  - with business people and employers from the region;
  - with professionals from the region who work in various fields.

- Create occasions for pride which showcase and celebrate what students have learned as well as effective school-community partnerships.

STRATEGY ES 18:
Collaboration and partnerships

Establish structured, effective partnerships that ensure close collaboration among the education stakeholders so that the particular needs of every student can be met.

It is important for all students, whether they live in the country or the city, to have the best possible services so they can develop the skills necessary to realize their personal and occupational dreams, as they become citizens capable of contributing to the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community. The very notion of the "best possible service" demands close collaboration and sharing of information among the various education stakeholders. This collaboration is achieved, among other ways, by developing structured partnerships based on the principle that every service offered to the student is interdependent and complementary to other services.

The factors of success in creating these partnerships are:

- capacity to respond consistently to the student's needs;
- establishment of effective mechanisms of communication between teaching staff, workers and parents;
- capacity to engage parents in the development and implementation of plans designed to meet the particular needs of their child;
- capacity of the partners to work in collaboration;
- quality of the services offered.

Possible actions   **ES 18**

- Establish effective collaborative structures for all stakeholders in the school system—parents, students, teaching and non-teaching staff, and principals.
- Make the school a single entry point for a variety of services.
- Set up structured mechanisms of interdepartmental collaboration.
- Create a unique file for each student.
- See that other integrated programs and services are set up in the province.
- Offer training for leaders in order to develop a culture of excellence in service delivery, and introduce ways to encourage individual and collective commitment in each organization.
- Offer training to the staff concerned in order to minimize any obstacles to the integrated services program, such as delivering another administration's program, managing the collection of another administration's fees, coordination of services, etc.

It is also essential for the partners to pay particular attention to the specific needs of disadvantaged families, because the research demonstrates important links between socio-economic status and educational success. To maximize the effectiveness of partnerships, all services have to be available from a single point of entry, and all the stakeholders have to work together to better meet the particular needs of each student. In addition, a single file will facilitate the delivery of necessary complementary services, again to better meet the particular needs of the student. To effectively mobilize service providers and promote the improvement of services in the community, instructional leaders and the management of the various service providers must ensure that information on the students is shared, that the various service providers in the community are known, and that the information is used in the service of the students.

To establish structured and effective partnerships, the different partners must have a common understanding of the concept of partnership, based on the adoption of values such as collaboration and interdependence. In addition, every partner must expand its organizational boundaries and redefine the tasks of professionals as they relate to the level of collaboration expected within an effective partnership. The result will be optimum use of financial, human and material resources.

5

Implementation Mechanisms and Monitoring of Progress

The strategic goals of the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy for the French education system are ambitious and will have a significant impact on the vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community of New Brunswick. The implementation mechanisms and monitoring of progress introduced will be essential to the success of this social endeavour.

The policy, which will be implemented gradually over a period of approximately 10 years, involves all education partners, including departments and departmental sections that play a role in the Acadian and Francophone education system from early childhood to the postsecondary level, as well as all other public, private and community stakeholders contributing to the success of this collective educational project. Designing the implementation this way underlies a change in culture at all levels of involvement (local, regional, and provincial), based on collaboration, dialogue, individual and collective accountability, and on shared leadership by all partners of the Acadian and Francophone education system. This partnership culture will be rooted in a common vision built on individual and collective engagement to fulfill the dual mission of Acadian and Francophone schools in order to contribute to the development of young Acadians and Francophones in the province, the Acadian and Francophone community, and New Brunswick society as a whole. The implementation mechanisms and monitoring of progress should be established with this in mind.

Moreover, as a societal project, the policy must move forward. If its vision and strategic goals remain the same throughout the implementation process, the efforts to achieve them will need to constantly adapt to accelerated change relating to, among other things, the social, cultural, economic, demographic, environmental, and technological conditions, as well as the evolution of the education system. These efforts will also have to draw inspiration from the research and practices that have proven useful. The implementation mechanisms and monitoring of progress introduced should be positive, unifying, and promote continuous improvement, and will support the leaders in their decision making.

6

Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure that this policy becomes a genuine societal project, the partner organizations involved have decided to assume collective responsibility for its implementation. They will work together collaboratively and cohesively, developing a collective action plan with shared responsibilities, and will see to the expansion of the network of partners at the local, regional, and provincial levels by rallying various sectors of New Brunswick's society around this collective undertaking.

Similarly, the partner organizations will define certain components of accountability and establish measures to evaluate the policy's spin-offs (e.g. common framework of monitoring of progress). By analyzing the data collected by the various continuous improvement mechanisms that will be established, the partners will be able to set common and specific priorities, in order to better target the actions to be taken and to regulate the strategies in place in terms of the needs of each setting.

Lastly, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will assume special responsibility throughout the implementation process by facilitating the introduction of mechanisms to encourage cooperation among the partners so that they can work together to achieve the policy's anticipated outcomes.

7

Conclusion

In adopting the Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy, the Government of New Brunswick reaffirms to the Acadian and Francophone community a commitment to contribute to its sustainability and development, thus reiterating the importance it places on having all students reach their full potential. In this way, the government is joining forces with the Acadian and Francophone community to carry out this societal project together, believing that the policy's success rests on the strength and the momentum of the multi-sector partnerships at all levels of the education system (local, regional, provincial).

The policy's strategic goals will enable all stakeholders in the Acadian and Francophone education system to direct and better target their actions in order to contribute individually as well as collectively to the educational success and the identity building of each student. These goals will also guide the partners towards an instructional approach in a minority setting that focuses on cooperation, accountability, commitment, and shared leadership.

The policy is a crucial step in the history of New Brunswick Acadians and Francophones. By identifying certain challenges of education in a minority setting and by proposing strategies that can meet them, the policy will contribute not only to the vitality of the French language and the French-speaking culture, but also to the evolution of the Acadian and Francophone community and that of New Brunswick society as a whole. The growth and momentum of the Acadian and Francophone community can only lead to positive spin-offs in terms of the province's sustainable development.

Glossary

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: Engagement - individual or collective, ad hoc or regular - that enables people to participate actively in the development of their community or environment for the purpose of contributing to the collective well-being.

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: Education that enables individuals to acquire the skills they need to integrate into and engage in all aspects of the world around them, a world perceived as being in a state of constant flux owing to the globalization of economic markets, increased immigration, and political, social, and moral changes (Pilote, 2006).

COLLECTIVE CULTURE: Characteristics of a society or a social group based on values, beliefs, traditions, and ways of living together that change depending on the individuals who participate in its evolution (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2012).

CONVEYOR OF CULTURE: Person who supports a child or adult in the building of their identity by creating meaningful opportunities for discovery and expression of the Francophone culture while remaining open to other cultures. Through actions that prompt feelings of attachment, competency, and autonomy, the conveyor of culture encourages serious consideration of the relationship to oneself, to others, and to the environment (ACELF, FCDEF, FCCF, & DOE, 2009).

CULTURAL FACILITATION: Structured service based on identity-building activities and promotion of the French language and culture designed to result in and support engagement in academic studies and cultural life at school and within the community.

CULTURAL IDENTITY: Process by which a group of individuals who share a partially common way of understanding and acting on the universe and of communicating their ideas and models for action become aware that other individuals and other groups think, act, and communicate in a way that is somewhat different from theirs (Dorais, 2004, p. 5).

CULTURAL MEDIATION: Approach that facilitates citizens' appropriation of culture by taking advantage of the relationships between the spheres of culture, art, and heritage of a society.

CULTURAL REFERENTS: Elements and attributes characteristic of the Francophone community at the local, provincial or territorial, regional, pan-Canadian, and international levels. They can be used as a topic of study to make learning more meaningful and to stimulate the learner's cultural and identity development (definition based on the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2012, p. 47).

CULTURE: Set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of a society or a social group that encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions, and beliefs (UNESCO, 1982).

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION: Instruction designed to adapt a wide range of educational situations to individual differences so as to enable each learner to learn to the best of his or her ability (definition based on Legendre, 2005).

DIGITAL LITERACY: Set of skills and knowledge to use a variety of digital media software applications and hardware devices to critically understand digital media content and to create with digital technology (Canada's Centre for Digital and Media Literacy, 2010).

EARLY CHILDHOOD: Period from birth to age 8 during which brain development lays the foundations for future learning.

EDUCATION CONTINUUM: Quality of the education system that makes it possible to provide seamless instruction of its curricula, from early childhood to adulthood.

EDUCATION PARTNERS: Groups and individuals engaged in a collaborative process designed to enhance various components of the education system and its impact on the community.

ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT: Set of aptitudes and attitudes that enable students to take initiatives, meet challenges, and finish what they start.

EQUITY: Principle of justice that takes into account the special needs of Francophone minorities in order to provide them with a standard of education equivalent to that of the official-language majority (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2006).

EXOGAMOUS COUPLE: Couple of which one spouse speaks French and the other speaks another language, generally English.

FAMILY LITERACY: Approach used to improve the literacy skills of parents to help them support their child more effectively during his or her academic journey.

FRANCIZATION: Process that involves a set of measures taken at the pre-school or school level to assist learners with under-developed or non-existent language skills in French (definition based on the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2002, p. 2).

FRANCOPHONE CULTURAL SPACE: Physical or virtual dimension where the culture of Canada's Francophone and Acadian communities can be expressed and conveyed and that encompasses the history, heritage, arts, behaviours, and values of those communities.

GUIDANCE-ORIENTED APPROACH TO LEARNING: Approach coordinated by the school team and its partners, which sets goals and puts in place services (individual and collective), tools, and educational activities to support students in the development of their identity and in their career path. These are therefore activities and services that are incorporated into an institution's success plan and education plan, rather than simply a series of isolated actions that involve the school team very little (Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec, 2002, p. 18).

HERITAGE: Tangible and intangible aspects of our natural and cultural past, from prehistory to the present. Tangible aspects include buildings and structures, archaeological and historic sites, cemeteries, sacred places, monuments, artifacts, specimens, and collections. Intangible aspects include beliefs, ideas, customs, language, religion, stories, and many others.

IDENTITY BUILDING: Dynamic process during which individuals define and recognize themselves by their way of thinking, acting, and desiring in the social contexts and natural environment in which they live their lives (Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française, 2008a, p. 2).

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A pairing of a philosophy and a set of instructional practices that enables each student to feel valued, confident, and safe such that he or she can develop to his or her full potential. It is based on a system of values and beliefs that are centred on the best interests of the child and promote not only active participation in learning and school life, but also a feeling of belonging, social development, and positive interactions with ones peers and school community (New Brunswick, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2009).

INDIVIDUAL CULTURE: Personal history fashioned by events and the individual's familiar universe (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2012).

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES (ITC): Set of tools and techniques that enable users to communicate, access sources of information, store, manipulate, produce, and transmit information in all of its forms.

INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH IN A MINORITY SETTING: Instructional approach relating to the sociodemographic and linguistic context of Francophone communities that seeks to act on identity-based tensions, react to social injustice, develop a sense of community, and build a positive relationship with the language. This

is a comprehensive form of education that is transformative, actualizing, differentiated, and community building (Cormier, 2005).

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP: Ability of an educator to set clear goals for a collective educational group learning project, to motivate colleagues and learners, and to promote their ongoing learning (based on Legendre, 2005).

INTEGRATED NETWORK OF SERVICES: Series of interrelated and complementary public and private institutions that provide or ensure the delivery of a continuum of coordinated services, from a single entry point, to a defined population within a defined area, and that is collectively responsible for the overall development of children aged 0 to 8 and for supporting parents beginning in the perinatal period.

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE: Attitude that is manifested by the ability to interact effectively with people from cultures that are different from our own (definition based on Lussier, 2007).

INTERDISCIPLINARITY: Teaching approach that promotes the development of links among the learning outcomes of various curricula.

LANGUAGE UPGRADING: Approach that seeks to expand the linguistic repertoire of students who already speak French so they can make appropriate progress at French-language school.

LIFE-CAREER PROJECT: Lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transitions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future (Canadian Council for Career Development, 2012). A student's life-career project includes personal, social, and family life, physical and mental health, work, and leisure.

LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION: Implementation, by educational institutions and their education partners, of planned, systematic, and coordinated actions designed to ensure the protection, promotion, and transmission of language and culture.

LINGUISTIC DUALITY: Principle recognizing the equality of status of French and English and involving the equitable treatment of Francophones and Anglophones in all aspects of life (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2006).

LITERACY: Ability to understand, interpret, evaluate, and use wisely the information found in various situations and messages, in written or oral communication, to communicate and interact effectively in society (New Brunswick, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2012a).

NEWCOMERS: Newly arrived immigrants to Canada who may or may not speak French.

NUMERACY: Set of skills requiring mathematical concepts that enable learners to handle and manage life situations effectively, solve problems in a real context, and communicate their solutions.

PERINATAL PERIOD: Period surrounding birth, i.e., pregnancy and the first weeks of a child's life.

PLAY-BASED LEARNING: Type of instruction that uses play as a means of development and learning (Legendre, 2005).

SUBSTANTIVE EQUALITY: Principle of justice that recognizes that, in minority situations, a community or group must receive appropriate resources in order to enjoy the same fundamental rights and the same services as the majority.

REGIONAL CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: Approach that makes cultural development a central rallying point for all sectors of a community for the purpose of developing and implementing strategies for the integration of art, culture, and heritage in the region.

RIGHTS-HOLDER: Parent or legal guardian who, under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, s. 23(1) and 23(2), has the right to have his or her children educated in the language of the minority.

SCHOOL SYSTEM GOVERNANCE: Structure of shared management of the school system where certain authorities contribute to student success by sharing responsibilities and decision-making power in education. In New Brunswick, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the district education councils (DECs), and the parent school support committees (PSSCs) ensure school governance pursuant to the *Education Act*. Also, sections 16.1 and 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* give parents and the linguistic minority community the right to management and control over schools in relation to aspects affecting their language and culture, through the DECs.

SELF-DETERMINATION: Intrinsic motivation that arises when the context makes it possible to meet three basic needs: autonomy, competency, and belonging.

SHARED LEADERSHIP: Management style that promotes the participation and accountability of all members of a team or group with respect to the achievement of common goals.

SINGLE ENTRY POINT: Physical or virtual place that offers information and directs people to the community or institutional services required, based on an assessment of their needs.

SOCIAL MARKETING: Approach modelled on commercial marketing but that seeks social change and sustainable development based on a needs assessment and best practices that promote the well-being of a target population.

TRANSCULTURAL COMPETENCE: Integration and respect of other values, which derives from the coexistence of different ethnic groups and cultures evolving in a same society or in distinct societies while advocating the enrichment of identity (Lussier, 2007).

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The Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy

A Societal Project
for the French Education System

The Linguistic and Cultural Development Policy is much more than just a document. It is the realization of a dream and a vision of a community that has mobilized its strengths to adopt a strategy that will contribute not only to the development of current and future generations, but also to its own vitality as well as the vitality of its language and culture.

Through this policy, New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone community, together with the government of New Brunswick, has committed to a genuine societal project to take on the many challenges associated with its minority linguistic situation, which can be adapted, over the years, to the multiplicity and the ever-changing nature of its realities. The purpose of the policy is to enhance the capacity of all the education partners to fulfill the dual mission of the Acadian and Francophone education system, i.e. to ensure the educational success and identity building of each learner, while contributing to the sustainable development of the Acadian and Francophone community and of the province of New Brunswick.