The Vitality of the English-Speaking Communities of Quebec: From Community Decline to Revival

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Preface

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« La démocratie ce n'est pas la dictature de la majorité, c'est le respect des minorités »
Albert Camus

The goal of this book is to provide a current portrait of the group vitality of the English-speaking Communities of Quebec. The enduring stereotype about the Anglophones of Quebec is that it is a pampered minority whose economic clout is such that federal or provincial support for the maintenance and development of its institutions is hardly necessary. This view of the privileged status of Quebec Anglos is widely held not only by the Francophone majority of Quebec but also by many leaders of Francophone communities across Canada. On the few occasions that Anglophones in the rest of Canada (ROC) spare a thought to the Anglophones of Quebec, either this idealised view of the community prevails, or they are portrayed as residents of a linguistic gulag whose rights are trampled on a regular and ongoing basis.

We cannot blame Francophone minorities outside Quebec for envying the institutional support and demographic vitality of the Anglophone minority of Quebec. Why should Francophone minorities outside Quebec feel they have to share precious federal resources with Quebec Anglophones who are doing so much better than themselves on the institutional support front? The first obvious response is that government support for official language minorities is not a zero-sum game and that evidence based needs should be sufficient to justify the maintenance and development of both Francophone and Anglophone communities in Canada and Quebec. The second complementary response is that the institutional support achieved by the Anglophones of Quebec during the last two centuries can be used as a benchmark goal for the further development of Francophone minorities across Canada. The combined efforts to maintain and develop the vitality of the Francophone communities outside Quebec and of the Anglophone minority within Quebec, contribute to the linguistic and cultural diversity of Canadian and Québécois societies.

But what is the current vitality of the English-speaking communities of Quebec? Taken together, the chapters in this book tell a sobering story about the decline of this historical national minority in Quebec. On the status, demographic and institutional support fronts, Quebec Anglophones are declining, especially in the regions of the province but also in the greater Montreal region. Though much of the chapters are devoted to documenting the ups and down of this decline, some effort is made in each chapter to propose options and strategies to improve and revive the vitality of the English-speaking communities of Quebec. We hope this book, along with past and future ones, will be used by Quebec Anglophones as a tool to develop their community vitality in the present and for the sake of future generations. It is also hoped that this book will inspire Quebec decision makers to pay more attention to the vitality needs of Quebec Anglophones, a minority community who contributed so much to the social, cultural and economic development of Quebec society.

Finally, a word of thanks is owed to all those who made this book possible. The editor and chapter contributors wish to thank in particular the following: the Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities (CIRLM), the Quebec Community Group's Network (QCGN), the Department of Canadian Heritage, and the dedicated staff of the Centre d'études ethniques des universités montréalaises (CEETUM) at the Université de Montréal.

ENGLISH EDUCATION IN QUEBEC : ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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In 1906, in his book on "race relations" in Quebec, André Siegfried wrote the following:

> *"From the point of view of the relations between the French Catholics and the English Protestants, the educational system of Quebec has produced the best results: the two sets of schools co-exist without fear or conflict or dispute, because they have no points of contact. The situation is exactly that of two separate nations kept apart by a definite frontier and having as little intercourse as possible"* (Siegfried, 1906).

This describes well the co-existence of English and French speakers in Quebec prior to the sixties as well as the two separate school systems which had developed over time: one French Catholic, the other English Protestant. To this day, two school systems co-exist with very few points of contact. In 2006, however, an advisory committee set up to look for solutions to the challenges facing Quebec's English school system proposed something new:

> *"The path to a vibrant and strengthened English public school system, and thus, to greater English-speaking community vitality, will best be set through the active pursuit of new and mutually productive partnerships with the francophone majority community." (*QAC to QESBA, 2006, p.8)

Similarly, in 2005, the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) proposed a community development plan for Anglo-Quebec that would have been hard to imagine a decade ago, putting forward the need for greater integration to the French-speaking community and for a strengthened sense of identity, belonging and commitment to Quebec. An era in Quebec's language politics has come to an end and the Anglo-Quebec community is signalling its willingness to move into a new phase. This is a timely moment to look at how the English school system has weathered a period of important change as well as address the question: where to from here?

In this chapter, I will briefly trace how the Anglophone community and its school system have adjusted to the changing language dynamics of Quebec in the past and how things stand at the present. I will then describe some of the major challenges facing Quebec's English sector in the near future.

1. Historical Background and Present Administrative/Legal Context[1]

The origins of Quebec's dual school system predate Confederation (1867). Originally, the division was confessional and the two school systems developed quite independently until the 1960s and the massive reform of education, a key

[1] For a chronological summary of laws that have been passed in matters related to language of instruction in Quebec: http://ww.oqf.gouv.qc.ca/charte/reperes/reperes.html. For section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms entitled "Minority Language Educational Rights" (Canada Clause): http://laws.justice.qc.ca/fr/chaarte/const_en.html. For an overview of language legislation and education in Canada, see Bourhis (1994) and Martel (2001).

element in Quebec's Quiet Revolution. With the arrival of Irish, Italian and Polish immigrants toQuebec in the twentieth century, English schools had developed within Catholic school boards, but at the school board level remained under the governance of the Francophone majority. During this same period, Protestant schools were becoming more diversified linguistically and culturally as they integrated most immigrants from non-Catholic backgrounds (McAndrew, 2002).

In Canada, education is a provincial jurisdiction. Canada's initial constitutional agreement, the British North America Act (BNA Act, 1867) did not provide the right to education in English or French. It did provide some constitutional protection of denominational rights to education and these protected to some degree not only religious practice, but also linguistic and cultural identity (Mallea, 1984). As time would reveal, the BNA Act in reality offered little protection to Francophone minorities outside of Quebec. In contrast, Quebec's Anglophone minority, up until the 1970s, was a thriving community with easy access to services and well-developed cultural and social institutions, including a complete educational system. In effect, when the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (RCBB; Canada, 1968) was conducted in the 1960s, Quebec's Anglophone community was under no threat of linguistic or cultural assimilation, wielding significant economic power. In its recommendations, the RCBB granted a critical role to French and English schools in minority contexts, describing them as the basic agency for maintaining language and culture, thus setting the stage for constitutional reform of educational rights. By 1969, the federal government adopted the Official Languages Act which included a clause on educational rights, worded in such a way as to respect provincial jurisdiction over education, hence lacking in legislative bite.

In response to the findings of the RCBB and those of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education (Parent Commission, 1966), Quebec undertook its own study of the language situation in the province known as the Gendron Commission (Quebec, 1972). The Quebec Government made its first move to define minority rights to education within the province (Mallea, 1984). After unsuccessful attempts at language legislation (e.g. Bill 63 in 1969; Bill 22 in 1974), the newly elected Parti Québécois adopted the Charter of the French Language (Bill 101) in 1977. The educational clauses of the Charter limited access to English language schools only to children whose parents had attended an English language school in Quebec. This right, passed down from parent to child would effectively protect the prerogatives of Anglophone Quebecers living in Quebec at the time, as well as the children of immigrants who had already integrated the Anglo-Quebec community via schooling prior to 1977 (Mallea, 1984). The Charter, however, blocked access to English schools to all new immigrants, as well as the Francophone majority of the province and initially to Canadians from provinces which did not offer schooling to their Francophone minority.

In 1982, Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, using wording very similar to that found in the Quebec Charter, recognized the 'historical rights' to education in the official minority language: Francophone minorities outside of Quebec and the Anglophone minority within Quebec. Section 23 of the Canadian Charter would force provincial governments to provide for a "dual" school system like that already in existence in Quebec (Fortier, 1994). Hence, the educational clauses of both Bill 101 and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantee schooling in English in Quebec for those who are legally considered to be rights-holders ('ayants-droit'; Landry & Rousselle, 2003). Given that this right is transferred from a parent who attended an English language school in Quebec or Canada, it does not include new international immigrants who speak English as a first language (e.g. from the US, UK, India). The category "ayants-droit" does, however, include many Anglo-Quebecers of Italian, Portuguese, Greek and Jewish background whose parents attended English schools in Quebec. It also

includes some Francophone children who, through a mixed marriage or because one of their parents went to an English school, have the right to schooling in English (Jedwab, 2004; McAndrew & Eid, 2003). Following the adoption of the Canadian Charter in 1982, Bill 101 was contested by the Quebec Protestant school boards in the Supreme Court of Canada. In 1984, the Supreme Court ruled that limitations of eligibility to English language schooling for Anglophones from provinces other than Quebec in Bill 101 were inconsistent with the new constitutional guarantees of Section 23 of the *Constitution Act*. Consequently, Sections 72 and 73 of Bill 101 were struck down and Canadian parents settling in Quebec who had been schooled in English anywhere in Canada (Canada clause) were allowed to send their children to English schools in the province.

The reform of education undertaken in the 1960s brought Protestant schools and school boards under the control of the Quebec Ministry of Education (MEQ). A number of attempts were made in the following years to deconfessionalize school boards, but it would take until 1998 for linguistic school boards to replace confessional boards. This strengthened Anglophone governance over the education of their children but also required a fair amount of adjustment as two quite distinct school cultures, developed separately over time, merged into new organizational entities.

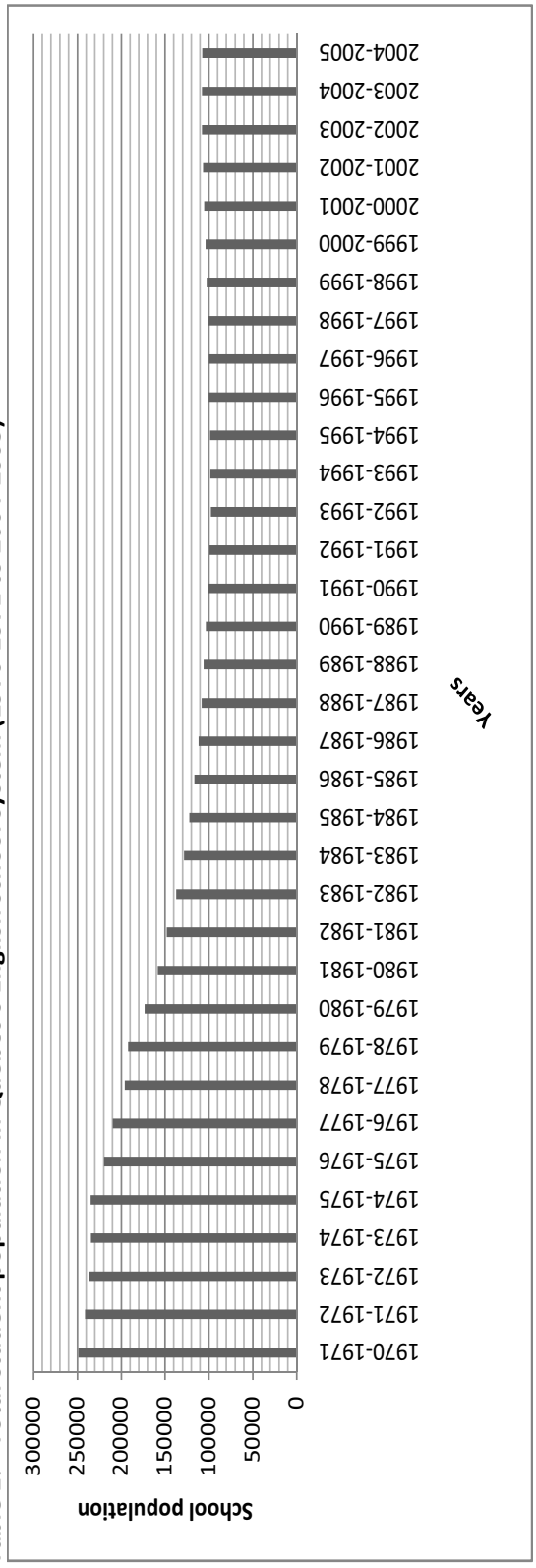
Schools in Quebec are subject to the regulations and curriculum set out by the Quebec Ministry of Education (currently *Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport* or MELS). At the ministry level, the Anglophone community is represented through an Assistant Deputy Minister. Services to support English language schooling (*Services à la communauté Anglophone* - SCA) are provided through the *Direction des politiques et des projets* as well as the *Direction de la production en langue anglaise*. The SCA manages the Canada-Quebec Agreement for Minority Language Education and Second Language Instruction on behalf of the Education Ministry and carries out its mandate under the authority of the Assistant Deputy Minister for the English-speaking community. In the 1990s, an Advisory Board on English Education (ABEE) was established to advise the Quebec Education Ministry. Currently the English school system is managed by nine English language school boards who collectively form the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA). English school boards can cover huge territories and many administrative regions and are often responsible for providing a quality education to relatively small student populations, in some cases 1500 to 2000 students.

Slightly more than half of the student population in the English sector is to be found in two English language school boards on the island of Montreal. Today's English language pre-school, elementary and secondary school population counts 107,742 students enrolled in 360 English schools under school board governance. Another 15,000 students are enrolled in forty-eight English language private schools (Québec, 2006b). Private schools are more popular among mother tongue Anglophones than Francophones: some 12% of the entire Anglophone student population attending English schools is enrolled in private schools as compared to 7.5% for mother tongue Francophone students (Jedwab, 2002). There are no legislative restrictions on access to Quebec's post-secondary educational system and high school graduates are free to choose instructional services in either English or French. Roughly 28,400 students are enrolled in English language colleges (CEGEPs) while 63,000 undergraduate and graduate students attend the three English language universities of the province (Quebec, 2006a).

2. Decline of the English sector: A school population more than halved

Quebec's Charter of the French Language (Bill 101) has had a strong impact on the English language school system. As shown in Table 1, student enrolment in English schools has declined rapidly: from 248,000 in 1971 to just under 108,000

Table 1: Total student population in Quebec's English school system (1970-1971 to 2004-2005)



Source: Research Team, Department of Canadian Heritage, based on data from the Centre for Education Statistics, Statistics Canada.

Table 2: Students from immigrant families and total student population, by language of instruction and level of education, Quebec, 2003-2004

2003-2004								
Language of instruction	Preschool		Elementary		Secondary		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
First generation students	5,114		30,998		33,286		69,398	
▪ In French schools	4,742	92.7%	27,643	89.2%	30,005	90.1%	62,390	89.9%
▪ In English schools	367	7.2%	2,587	8.3%	3,279	9.9%	6,233	9.0%
Second generation students	12,590		70,642		48,684		131,916	
▪ In French schools	9,644	76.6%	48,729	69.0%	31,798	65.3%	90,171	68.4%
▪ In English schools	2,922	23.2%	17,782	25.2%	16,846	34.6%	37,550	28.5%

Source: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS), Quebec (2004). Educational profile of students from immigrant families, 1994-1995 to 2003-2004.

today (public sector only). This decline can be explained in part by a drop in the school-aged population in Quebec;; however, the decline in the English sector is more pronounced than that experienced in the French sector. If looked at proportionately, in 1977, students enrolled in English language schools represented 16.3% of the total student population of Quebec: this dropped to 9.6% in 1992 but has since increased to 11.2% in 2004 (Béland, 2006).

A factor contributing to the decline of the English sector is the outmigration of Anglophone families following the election of the Parti Québécois but also as part of the shift of economic activity in the country. Outmigration was particularly strong in the 1970s and 1980s (Caldwell, 1984, 1994a,b; Caldwell & Waddell, 1982) and remains important today (Floch and Pocock, this volume). Bill 101 restrictions on access to English schooling have also contributed to the decline of the English school sector. Today, as seen in Table 2, over 90% of first generation immigrants are enrolled in French language schools; whereas in 1971, 85% of such first generation immigrants were enrolled in the English sector (Quebec, 1996). Second generation immigrant students are less likely to be enrolled in French schools (68.4%), as many have a parent who attended an English school prior to Bill 101, thus making them eligible for schooling in English.

The decline in student populations, and hence funding for services, are among the most critical issues facing English schooling in Quebec today. The recent increase in school closures is a traumatic experience for Anglophone families and the local community. Enrolment numbers in English schools have stabilized during the last decade with a slight increase evident in the last few years (as seen in Table 1). The continuing decline of the English sector predicted in the Chambers Report (1992) seems to be offset by the growing number of Francophone and Allophone children who are eligible for English schooling, thanks to an increase in "mixed" marriages (Jedwab, 2004). At present, 80% of Anglophone students in Quebec are enrolled in English language schools. The remaining 20% are enrolled in French schools: roughly half are there by choice and the other half through legislative constraints which block their access to English schools (Béland, 2006). To this day, the majority of Allophones (mother tongue other than French or English) with the right to choose have enrolled in English rather than French schools (Jedwab, 2002, p.13). Despite some stability in the number of students enrolled in the English sector, recent community consultations demonstrate a

continuing concern for the declines in English school enrolments (GMCDI, 2007, p.13).

3. Demographic change: just what is an Anglo-Quebecer?

A continuing issue concerning the Anglo-Quebec community is just who we are talking about and how to measure this diverse linguistic community (Caldwell, 1984, 1994a,b; Jedwab, 2004; this volume). Regardless of how it is measured, since the 1970s there has been a decline in the percentage of Anglophones in the province due mainly to its low birthrate and outmigration (Floch, 2006a). Thus, English mother tongue speakers dropped from 789,200 in the 1971 census to 606,165 in 2006, a loss for the Province of Quebec of 182,035 Anglophones (Jedwab, this volume). Currently, 60% of Anglo-Quebec youth expect to move outside of Quebec in the next five years, as compared to 13% of Francophone Quebecers (Floch, 2005a). Quebec's retention rate of Anglophones has clearly suffered since 1971, dropping from 69% to 50% in 2001 and the higher the level of education, the lower the retention rate (Floch, 2005a; Floch and Pocock, this volume).

An important characteristic of the Anglophone community today is its high degree of ethnic and religious diversity, with over 30% born outside of Canada and almost 21% declaring that they belong to a visible minority (Floch, 2006b). Part of this diversity can be explained by the history of schooling in Quebec: more specifically, a Catholic predominantly French system that, until the 1970s, did not accept students who were non-Catholic (McAndrew, 2002) and a "Protestant" English system open to religious and cultural diversity. In effect, Quebec's Protestant school system, by being open to religious diversity, contributed importantly to the integration of immigrants to Quebec's Anglophone population, a demographic minority within the province. This trend came gradually to an end as application of Bill 101 affected growing numbers of pupils entering the French school system. However, depending on their country of origin and/or their previous experience of schooling, many new immigrants arriving in Quebec today speak English as a first or second language, and therefore contribute to the diversity and vitality of the English-speaking community, even though their children do not have the right to attend English public schools.

When it comes to multiculturalism within Anglo-Quebec, an urban-rural divide is evident: Anglo-Montrealers are often of "mixed" multicultural ancestry and have very diverse historical, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Mixed marriages are also commonplace for Anglophones living outside of Montreal (47%), but as many as 93% of these marriages tend to be with Francophone spouses. So while exogamy has contributed to the hybridity of the Anglophone community living in the regions, it is not as culturally and linguistically diverse as that found in Montreal (Jedwab, 2004 and this volume; Floch, 2006b).

A final factor contributing to the diversity of the Anglophone community is the degree of bilingualism and multilingualism to be found in its population. Almost 10% of Anglophones provide multiple answers when asked to identify their mother tongue, refusing a single primary identification. Furthermore, many have mixed linguistic practices at home: roughly 60% of mother tongue Anglophones report speaking English only or mostly in their homes while the remainder, roughly 40%, report speaking English and French, or English and another language.

As Jedwab (2004) points out, demographic trends within the English-speaking community are very mixed, characterized by a growing multiethnic and multiracial community. In addition, there is significant increase in the mixing of English and French among the population. This cultural and linguistic diversity within the Anglophone community has an impact on how institutions, such as schools and CEGEPs, define their mandates, challenging the role historically given to educational

institutions for official language minorities: to protect, promote and essentially reproduce a linguistic community and its culture.

4. Two defining sociolinguistic realities: Greater Montreal vs. rest of Quebec (ROQ)

As of 2001, roughly 75% to 80% of Quebec's English-speaking population resides in the Greater Montreal region and primarily on the island of Montreal, where they represent 18% of the population. Roughly 25% of the English-speaking population, however, lives dispersed over the different regions of Quebec and can be characterized by the aging of its population and the exodus of its young people to Montreal or other provinces. In effect, it is the Anglophone communities residing in the rest of Quebec (ROQ) that most severely felt a decline in population; whereas in Montreal, outmigration has somewhat been compensated by international immigration and migration from other provinces (Jedwab, 2004). Unlike Anglo-Montrealers, who tend to be densely concentrated in certain neighbourhoods and suburbs with easy access to English-speaking community organizations and municipal services in English, Anglophones living in the regions are scattered geographically over a vast territory where issues of linguistic and community vitality as experienced by Francophone minorities outside of Quebec become relevant (Landry, Allard and Deveau, 2007; Johnson and Doucet, 2006). The challenges facing English schooling are affected by this urban/regional divide.

4.1 Challenges of English schools in the ROQ: coping with dispersion.

Recently, the Quebec English School Board Association (QESBA, 2002), in a listing of major challenges for English schools, put forward the need for a plan to protect the viability of small schools and the particular conditions facing regional English communities across the province. Among the very serious challenges facing English schools in the regions are: the dispersion of the English-speaking population; huge catchment areas; and school populations that are frequently under 200 and even under 100 students (QESBA, 2002). However in the ROQ, English schools are often the only remaining public institution dedicated to the specific needs of the English-speaking community, and as such "are seen as the focal point for the expression of the community's identity" (QESBA, 2002). As the centre of social and community activities, the closure of a school packs a strong blow – not the least of which is increased travel time, with some students travelling over two hours a day to attend the nearest English school (QESBA, 2002).

Faced with the desire to maintain educational institutions, even when the school population drops below 200 or even 100 students, the English school system has had to look for creative organizational solutions. One solution is to provide elementary and secondary schooling in the same building rather than in separate facilities, allowing students to remain in their communities for the duration of their studies. A second but less common solution has been to share a school building with the local French-speaking community, in situations where the school-aged population of both communities is small (QESBA, 2002). There are even a few instances of teacher exchange, with a teacher from a French school teaching music in French to students in the English school, and a teacher from the English school taking on the responsibility for physical education in the French school. Legally, two schools can choose to share the same building while each maintains its own educational projects. This model offers opportunities for collaborative activities and reduces building maintenance, but requires extensive community consultation and commitment (QESBA, 2002).

Other problems facing the English school system in the regions is the recruitment and retention of teachers and other school personnel: in particular, teachers at the secondary level who can teach in the specialized areas of mathematics

and sciences, and in technical-vocational options. To counter these problems, considerable importance is placed on new communication technologies and distance education courses such as those organized through LEARN Quebec[2] in the hope that they can offer educational services, particularly specialized courses, to students in outlying regions. A further issue facing English schools in the ROQ is the availability of complementary student services (QESBA, 2002). Schools have difficulty providing student services linked to the mandates of regional or local health and social services and many schools simply do not have access to social workers and other professionals. A final feature increasingly characterizing English schools in the regions is the growing number of mother tongue Francophones found within the school population. In some regions the very viability of some English schools depends on the presence of Francophone students (Jedwab, 2004). Putting aside this challenge, the English school system faces challenges similar to those faced by rural Francophone minorities in English Canada and other rural communities in Quebec. In urban Anglo-Montreal, a very different set of challenges exists.

4.2 Challenges for English schools in Montreal.

To many French Quebecers, Anglo-Quebecers are still perceived as a wealthy White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) elite. In Montreal, this representation is a myth, as demographic information clearly shows (Floch & Pocock, this volume). Urban poverty in the Anglophone community is a reality. The number of English schools eligible for extra financial support such as that provided through the "New approaches, new solutions" (NANS) program of MELS, while still relatively low, has increased over the past years. At the present time, twenty-nine high schools and thirty-five elementary schools are eligible for support through NANS. Complaints about degraded buildings and the lack of equipment are frequent, and as Jack Jedwab commented, the "emptying of central Montreal in favour of suburbs has further strained educational services in the city core" (Jedwab, 2002, p.21). Meeting the needs of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds could become an increasingly important issue in the English sector as those who are leaving the province are generally those with economic mobility, educational credentials and bilingual skills (Floch and Pocock, this volume).

In the past, a social class divide along linguistic lines existed between Francophones and Anglophones (Coleman, 1984; Stevenson, 1999, 2004). A new social class divide exists today, still tied to language, but which now separates bilinguals from unilinguals. For both Francophone and Anglophone communities, youth situated at the lower end of the socioeconomic ladder are those who have lower rates of bilingualism and, according to many second language teachers (both ESL and FSL) are the students most resistant to French second language learning. A challenge then for English schools in poorer socioeconomic urban areas will be convincing these students that bilingualism is not only an advantage but a necessity for life in Quebec. This brings us to a quite unusual success story: bilingual education in English schools.

4.3. Bilingual Education in Quebec English schools.

Over the past decades, Quebec's English schools have adjusted rapidly to the changing status of French and to increasing pressure for better second language programs, particularly in the greater Montreal area. The percentage of Quebecers with skills in both official languages is on the increase (Marmen and Corbeil, 2004). In the Anglophone community, the rate of bilingualism increased dramatically, from 37% in 1971 to 63% in

[2] Learning English Education and Resource Network : www.learnquebec.ca

1996 and to 69% in 2006. Today, for Anglo-Quebecers between 15 and 24 years old, the rate of bilingualism stands at more than 80%. While French is increasingly necessary for social and economic integration into the life of the city and the province, bilingualism has also become attractive for Allophones whose French/English bilingualism rose from 33% in 1971 to 50% in 2006. What distinguishes the bilingualism of Anglophones from other language groups in Quebec is the age at which it is acquired. Francophones and Allophones tend to learn English as young adults as they move into the workforce or into post-secondary education. While bilingualism also increases for young Anglophones as they move into the workforce, their rate of bilingualism is already high in their early years of schooling, in part thanks to bilingual programs offered in English schools. This trend appears to be on the increase, given that 60% of Anglophones between the age of five and nine were reported as knowing both English and French in 2001 as compared with 50% in 1996 (Jedwab, 1996, 2004). In effect, over the past thirty years, a very "quiet revolution" has taken place within the English school system. Without much noise, Anglophone parents have found ways of improving their children's French language skills by lobbying for better second language programs (Lamarre, 1997). By the late 1980s, over 90% of students in the English schools were receiving more instruction time in French than required by the provincial curriculum (Quebec Ministry of Education, 1990, 1992; ABEE, 1995). At the present time, more than 40% of the entire student population in English schools is enrolled in French immersion programs (see Table 3) and almost all of the remaining student population is in some form of enriched French program. This leaves the "English only" stream heavily populated by students with learning disabilities.

Table 3: Student Population (part time and full time) in French Immersion in Youth Sector, English School Board, Quebec, 1999-2000, 2001-2002, 2003-2004

Level	1999-2000	2001-2002	2003-2004
Preschool	4,704	4,903	4,310
Primary	23,955	27,211	26,589
Secondary	12,749	11,827	13,785
Total of students in French Immersion	41,408	43,941	44,684
Percentage of students in French Immersion in English School Population	39.8%	41.1%	41.3%

Source: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS), Quebec (2004) : Déclaration des clientèles scolaires (DCS) et Déclaration des clientèles en formation professionnelles (DCFP).

In effect, Canada's well-known French immersion program originated in an upper middle class suburb of Saint Lambert on the south shore of Montreal (Melikoff, 1972) and quickly gained in popularity (Lamarre, 1997; Hamers & Blanc, 2000). The program was driven by parents who felt "a change in the wind" in the sixties and considered it normal that their children should learn French to remain in Quebec. While these first parents represent a far-seeing group, there can be no doubt that general dissatisfaction with traditional French second language programs existed at the time, as revealed in numerous recommendations emanating

from the Quebec Home and School Association and in briefs presented to the Gendron Commission in the early 1970s (Lamarre, 1997).

The initial response of school board administrators to the immersion program, however, was resistance, which quickly evaporated as legislation on the status of French was adopted (Lamarre, 1997). By the 1970s, in tandem with the political heat generated by the language question, the popularity of French immersion programs grew to the point where school and board administrators in the Protestant school system were solidly backing French immersion programs and at times, even considered making it the universal program for the primary school system (Stern, 1973; Lamarre, 1997). In effect, bilingual education has since come to be seen as a "necessary component of English schooling" and a means "to safeguard English schools". In its early years, parents hoped that their children would attain a "functional" level in French, and this was largely understood as good oral skills. While not all parents opted for immersion, the success of the program led to the development of enriched French programs. As the Quebec Ministry of Education had chosen to adopt a "hands-off" approach to bilingual education within the English sector, a startling number of models (forty-eight) for enriched French and bilingual education developed during this period in the English sectors of the Catholic and Protestant school boards.

In the Estates General on Education held in the early 1980s, parents indicated a high level of satisfaction with immersion programs (ABEE, 2001b). However by the late 1980s, some parents began to feel that immersion was insufficient when it came to providing their children with the written skills of a native speaker of French. A weakness identified in French immersion was that the programs were offered within English schools, hence not a very French environment but one under Anglophone management, where parents felt they had decision-making powers (Lamarre, 1997). In the 1970s, however, Protestant school boards had started to open French language schools for the immigrant population, newly required by the Bill 101 legislation to attend French schools. This offered a new option to English-speaking families who could now send their children to French Protestant schools that were under the management of the Anglophone community. This in effect marks the beginning of what can be dubbed a "crossover" phenomenon in which "ayants-droit" families voluntarily choose to send their children to French schools - at least at the elementary level (McGlynn et al., 2008; Laperrière, 2006). Though the percentage of Anglophone "ayants-droit" students in French schools has dropped at times, their presence remained relatively stable in the last two decades (Jedwab, 2002). According to Béland (2006), there are currently 10,000 English mother tongue students with a right to English schooling voluntarily enrolled in public French schools.

While some English-speaking families were choosing to crossover to French schools, others put increasing pressure on English schools to improve French second language teaching, particularly in respect to writing. By the 1990s, French had become a high profile subject in English schools on a plane with English Language Arts and Mathematics (ABEE, 1995, p.8). Parents' perception of the level of French skills needed to live in Quebec had clearly heightened, as have their expectations of what schools should provide (ABEE, 1995, p.6). Although a minority of parents still feels that a functional level of French-English bilingualism is enough, the majority want their children to graduate from high school fully bilingual and biliterate. High level bilingual skills are obviously tied to the employment opportunities of young Anglophones in Quebec. They are also tied to the search for a "comfort zone" within a French Quebec that will allow the next generation of young Anglo-Quebecers to stay and be employed in the province and hopefully feel like full citizens (ABEE, 1995, Laperrière, 2006).

Whether a family has chosen French immersion or to cross over into a French school, when it comes to the acquisition of bilingual skills, the trend is to rely on the elementary school years. As students move into high school, the preoccupation with obtaining French skills loses ground to the need for good marks in preparation for post-secondary education in English. As Table 3 shows, there is a decline in the number of high school students in immersion programs at the secondary level. For example, in 2003-04, 40.8 % of students in primary schools were in French immersion, dropping to 32% at the high school level. Furthermore, fewer hours of instruction time are allocated to French within French immersion programs at the high school level, as compared to the models found at the primary level. Similarly, very few of the children that crossover to public French elementary schools continue into French public high schools (McAndrew & Eid, 2003).

As regards French language skills, "teachers remark that the advantages which students have gained in the elementary grades are lost by the end of high school" (ABEE, 1995, p.17). Questions can also be raised concerning the level of French skills achieved by grade six and it is clear that a major challenge in the coming years will be how to provide Anglophone students with the required biliteracy needed for full participation in Quebec society. And just how well are English schools doing at producing bilingual graduates? This is a difficult question since bilingualism depends not just on the school, but also on the local sociolinguistic context in which the school is located and language use in the family. While in some school boards, English sector students are writing and doing well on high school subject examinations intended for mother tongue Francophones, students in other school boards are showing strong oral skills but not necessarily strong reading and writing skills in French (ABEE, 1995, p.14). In its report, the QCGN identified the lack of proficiency in written French at the high school graduate level as a major issue, one that could impede the ability for further studies or entry into the workforce in Quebec (QCGN, 2006, p.22).

The development of French programs in the English sector has had strong repercussions on English schools and brings to the fore questions of equity in school settings. The "English-English" stream has dwindled. Children with special needs and learning disabilities tend to be enrolled in the regular "English-English" stream and hence follow the basic FSL curriculum which provides only a minimal level of skills in French. Regularly, there are calls to provide better support to these students so that they can reach and stay within bilingual programs and acquire the language skills needed to live and work in Quebec. Questions of whether the mastery of French skills will come at the expense of mastery in English are also raised periodically. Thus the problem of subtractive bilingualism is emerging as an issue for some English-speaking students, an ongoing concern for Francophone minority pupils in the rest of Canada (Landry & Rousselle, 2003). Ironic as it may sound, there is a fear that eventually the "English-English" stream will entirely disappear in English schools and only bilingual options will remain, "as English schools become more French" (ABEE, 1995, p.23). Bilingual education has also transformed the staff profile, as many teachers hired in such boards are Francophone generalists with very different cultural referents. This again challenges the role assigned official minority schools, i.e., that they serve primarily as settings for the linguistic and cultural reproduction of a community.

In the Greater Montreal Area, over the past thirty years, the English school system has been involved in a major quest for bilingualism and one of the key challenges for the foreseeable future will be how to provide students with high level skills in both French and English. While some very effective second language programs have been developed, parents are increasingly calling for French-English biliteracy and it seems likely that more and more pressure will be put on the secondary level to maintain what students have acquired at the elementary level, whether through French immersion and enriched French programs or crossover to French schools. In its recent report,

the Greater Montreal Community Development Initiative (GMCDI, 2007) recommended that an assessment be made of the French language skills that Anglophone students need to effectively integrate into Quebec's labour market.

5. French mother tongue students in English schools: crossover of another sort

By virtue of mixed marriages and other personal circumstances, a number of Francophone children are legally entitled to the English school system in Quebec. In effect, during the 1990s, enrolment of mother tongue French students in English Montreal elementary and secondary schools increased by about 35%, while in the regions, it increased by nearly 115% - a startling increase indeed. In total, between 1991 and 2003 the percentage of mother tongue French students in English language schools rose from 15.2% to 27.9% (Jedwab, 2004). As Table 4 shows, the number of mother tongue French students (hence ayants-droit) who enrolled in English schools increased from 20,413 in 2002-03 to 21,950 in 2006-07. The percentage of Francophones in English schools of the Greater Montreal area currently stands at 6.2%, whereas outside of Montreal it stands at 25% (Jedwab, 2004). While these students represent an important proportion of students in English schools, when looked at in terms of the total Francophone student population of the province, they represent less than 2.5% (Béland, 2006).

The increase of Francophone students in English language schools has done a great deal to offset the continuing decline of the English school population. However, as noted by Jedwab, demographic changes to the clientele of English-language schools inevitably undercut the degree to which such institutions can reproduce the culture and heritage of Anglo-Quebec (Jedwab, 2004). In some cases, the English school is described as a "language learning school", populated by children from Francophone families. In much the same spirit, some French schools on the West Island of Montreal heavily populated by English mother tongue students are referred to as "immersion schools" by Francophone families. As Table 4 shows, the number of English mother tongue pupils enrolled in French schools across Quebec increased from 17,801 in 2002-03 to 19,617 in

Table 4: Student population (part time and full time) in youth sector, Quebec schools, by mother tongue and language of instruction, 2002-2003 to 2006-2007

Mother tongue	Language of instruction	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
French	In French schools	883,045 97.7%	871,246 97.6%	860,519 97.6%	846,880 97.5%	829,494 97.4%
	In English schools	20,413	21,033	21,402	21,719	21,950
		2.3%	2.4%	2.4%	2.5%	2.6%
Total French mother tongue (1)		903,470	892,291	881,932	868,610	851,454
English	In French schools	17,801 18.9%	18,322 19.4%	18,739 20%	19,270 20.7%	19,617 21.4%
	In English schools	76,495 81.1%	76,101 80.6%	75,184 80%	73,918 79.3%	72,163 78.6%
Total English mother tongue (1)		94,327	94,455	93,957	93,206	91,807

Source: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS), DCS, Quebec (2007).
1. Total French and English mother tongue students include a small minority (N= 15-30) who attend First Nation language schools in each year.

2006-07. Overall, both the French and English school system benefit from "crossover" students: mother tongue students who voluntarily attend school in the other language. In terms of numbers, English mother tongue students in French schools and French mother tongue students in English schools are roughly approximate. If looked at proportionally, however, the impact on the two school systems is quite different: 21% of all English mother tongue students are in French schools (roughly 10% by choice and the other 10% by law) as compared to 2.6% of the total French mother tongue student population who have crossed over (by choice) to English schools.

In contrast to research on French 'ayants-droit' pupils in the rest of Canada (ROC; Landry & Rousselle, 2003), there is little research dealing with the motivational profile of Quebec Francophone "ayants-droit" families who choose English schooling for their children. It is quite likely that these Francophone families are using the school system, much like Quebec Anglophones, as a strategy to acquire bilingualism – an option only open to families who are "ayants-droit". The educational clauses of Quebec's Bill 101 prevent the majority of Francophones from enrolling in English language primary and secondary schools. Quebec's Education Act furthermore limits the amount of time allocated to instruction in English, making it impossible to establish a bilingual stream within French language schools. An experimental English program however has been put in place in grades 5 and 6, thanks to Francophone parental pressure. Essentially, children make their way through an accelerated version of the elementary curriculum which frees them to enrol in an intensive, usually five-month English immersion program (www.speaq.qc.ca).

Francophone 'ayants-droit' students enrolled in English schools arrive with their own set of linguistic needs:

> *"They may have one English parent but their home and community language is French and they have come to school to learn English. To meet the goals of biliteracy, they need English, not French."* (ABEE, 1995, p.27)

This is very true for some schools in regional Quebec, but it is also true in some English schools in the eastern end of the island of Montreal. Taking this into account, some schools are trying out new bilingual education models and experimenting "with a judicious mixture of French mother tongue and English mother tongue in their curricula" (ABEE, 1995, p.27). As the Advisory Board on English Education notes: "Providing for the needs of these different levels of proficiency necessitates flexibility and is susceptible to constant change" (ABEE, 1995, p.27).

Like Anglophone families, Francophone families seem to prefer to crossover to the other sector at the elementary level, when children are believed to be more permeable to languages and when the need for good marks to pursue postsecondary education is seen as less crucial. Since their passage in English schools is temporary (at the elementary level), their commitment to English minority schooling is perceived as less rooted and some propose that these families are less likely to invest in English-speaking community and school initiatives. Nevertheless, it is the presence of French-mother tongue students in the English school sector which has headed off continued decline of student numbers and school closings. Currently, 70% of French mother tongue students who have a right to an English education do in fact exercise it, and the percentage has gone up slightly in recent years (Jedwab, 2002).

6. Beyond Secondary: English language CEGEPs and Universities in Quebec

According to a report by the ABEE (2004), over 80% of Quebec's total student population will obtain a secondary diploma, either a Secondary School Diploma (SSD) or a Diploma in Vocational Studies (DVS), in the youth or adult education sector. Nearly 60% will enrol in college (CEGEP), leaving close to 40% who will enter the workforce after high school, about half of whom (20%) are

without a secondary diploma (ABEE, 2004). Only half of the students who receive their secondary diploma from the youth sector (72%) will enter university (36%) (ABEE, 2004). At the post-secondary level (CEGEPs and universities), there has been an increase in the number of diplomas being granted in both English-language and French-language institutions for the period 1999 to 2003 (Quebec, 2005, table 3.4.2).

Statistics on the performance of the total student population of Quebec are fairly easy to find on the MELS site, however finding statistics on just how well students in the English sector are doing proves a challenge. An obvious recommendation is that a report of this sort should be undertaken. The last report found which provided a picture of how well students in English schools are doing dates back to the Chambers Report (1992). In the early 1990s, the English sector had a lower percentage of dropouts than the French sector: roughly 17% as compared to 25% for the French sector (Chambers, 1992). In the official Ministry of Education examinations for secondary school graduation, both the average mark and the success rate in the English sector were higher than in the French sector. The success rate in the English sector was 88.6% as compared to 82.5% in the French sector in 1990. At the present time, data on secondary school graduation is provided by school boards within their administrative region. For the two English school boards on the island of Montreal, the percentage of students obtaining a high school leaving certificate is high. For example, for the cohort of students who started high school in 1999 and obtained a high school leaving certificate within the next seven years, the percentage for both English boards is roughly 80% as compared to 65.9% for all school boards within that administrative region (Québec, 2006c). Generally speaking, English school boards have a higher percentage of students graduating from their high schools than other boards within their administrative regions. However, not all school boards are showing as high percentage rates as those on the island of Montreal.

In Quebec's college or CEGEP system, there are forty-eight CEGEPs, five of which deliver services in English[3]. In both sectors, more female students are graduating from CEGEP than male students (Québec, 2006b). In Quebec's English-language CEGEPs, in 2003, there were 26,489 students enrolled in the regular program and another 5,286 in adult education programs. As mentioned earlier, high school graduates, regardless of their linguistic origin, are free to pursue post-secondary education in English or French. In 1991, mother tongue Anglophones constituted approximately 55% of the English CEGEP sector; by 2000, this percentage had dropped to 49.4%. The percentage of Allophones in English CEGEPs has also shown a drop, as a growing number of Allophones educated in the French sector are choosing to continue in French: 60.4% of Allophones chose French CEGEPS in 2006 as compared to roughly 18% in 1980 – a trend which in recent years shows a steady 1% increase annually (McAndrew, 2008). However, the percentage of mother tongue French students in English language CEGEPs in Quebec increased and at the present time is gaining on the percentage of Allophone students (Quebec, 2005). Again, this is particularly true in English language CEGEPs outside of Montreal where mother tongue French students currently outnumber mother tongue English students. The majority of English mother tongue college students, however, are in English-language CEGEPs and crossover to French language institutions is low (roughly 850 students a year). The majority of students in English-language CEGEPs (roughly 75%) are in pre-university programs (ABEE, 2004, p.21).

Students enrolled in English language CEGEPs (regardless of mother tongue) are graduating in

[3] http://www.fedecegeps.qc.ca

higher numbers. In pre-university programs, for the cohort enrolled in 1990 the percentage to obtain a *Diplôme d'études collégiales* (DEC) was 62.5%. For the cohort enrolled in 2001, the percentage to obtain a DEC was 73.3%. In technical programs, if we compare the cohort starting in 1990 and the cohort starting in 2001, the percentage obtaining diplomas jumps from 51.8% to 57.5% (Quebec, 2007b). If we look at the entire cohort to enrol in English CEGEPs in 2001, the percentage who obtained a DEC is well above the average for the province: (regardless of mother tongue).

In a recent report, the Advisory Board on English Education stated that it considered Quebec's English-language CEGEPs in the Montreal and Quebec City regions to be "generally in good health" (ABEE. 2004, p.20). Nevertheless, it was felt that English-language CEGEPs face important challenges not necessarily faced by French-language CEGEPs. They underlined the need for "precise and distinct data from English institutions" (ABEE, 2004, p.21). While CEGEP attendance is declining in many regions of Quebec, there is growth in nearly all the regions where English-language CEGEPs are located; only Champlain Regional College's Lennoxville and St.Lawrence (Quebec City) campuses are not located in growth areas. An important factor to keep in mind, however, is that the health of this sector comes from its ability to attract Francophone students and that the percentage of Anglophone and Allophone students in the student population is in decline.

According to census data (Bourhis & Lepic, 2004), the percentage of Quebec Anglophones who obtain a university degree is higher than that of Quebec Francophones, as well as other Canadians. This, however, does not necessarily give us a clear picture of how well English language universities in Quebec compare to other universities given that the student population in these universities, as in English language CEGEPs, is very diverse. Quebec has three English language universities as compared to sixteen universities that function in French. As Table 5 shows, there are currently 64,410 students in English universities. Anglophone crossover to French-language universities is very low, whereas an

Table 5: Total student population in Quebec Cegeps and Universities (part time and full time), by language of instruction, 2003-2004

	Regular program	Adult education	Total
Cegeps : total student population	147,820	27,163	174,983
▪ In French colleges	124,226 84%	22,361 82.3%	146,587 83.8%
▪ In English colleges	23,594 16%	4,802 17.7%	28,396 16.2%
Universities: total student population			258,324
▪ In French Universities			193,914 75.1%
▪ In English Universities			64,410 24.9%

Source: Déclaration des clientèles scolaires (DCS); Déclaration des clientèles en formation professionnelles (DCFP); Système d'information financière sur la clientèle adulte (SIFCA); Système d'information et de gestion des données sur l'effectif collégial (BIC, 2005-05-04); Gestion des données sur les effectifs universitaires (SGDEU).

important number of French mother tongue students are enrolled in English universities.

When it comes to mother tongue speakers of other languages (Allophones), this population is almost evenly distributed between the two linguistic post-secondary systems. In 2003, there were 63,612 students in English universities 17,090 had a mother tongue other than English or French. In 2003, there were 19,211 foreign students in Quebec's university system 8,677 of this population, or slightly less than 50%, were enrolled in English universities. It would appear that English language universities are drawing a large share of students from other countries and other language groups. Furthermore, within English-language universities, the percentage of mother tongue Francophones has risen from 18% in 1991 to 20% in 2000, while Allophone students increased from 20% to 25% and Anglophones dropped from 60% to approximately 55% (Jedwab, 2004). Looking at recent enrolment statistics, it would appear that English post-secondary education in Quebec is healthy, while elementary and secondary schools are facing major challenges. At both levels, however, there appears to be a need to take into account the very varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the student population.

7. Where to from here? Some thoughts and opinions

From this overview emerges a portrait of an English school system well rooted in the history of Quebec, but also a portrait of a system that cannot be taken for granted. Particularly at the elementary and secondary level, serious challenges are obvious and they risk becoming more serious in the years to come. If, in comparison, post-secondary education in English seems to be well and thriving, it is also challenged by the linguistic diversity of its student clientele and it would seem timely to require a more in-depth report on how post-secondary institutions are coping.

7.1 Legislative Concerns.

If we look to the legal/administrative context, an immediate issue of concern is the continued existence of school boards in the provincial school system. Currently, linguistic school boards provide the Anglo-Quebec minority with some control over the educational development of its communities, as well as jobs in education. However, the very existence of French and English school boards in the province has recently been challenged by the leader of the conservative 'Action Démocratique du Québec' (ADQ) party, and in response, the role of Quebec school boards in general is currently being reconsidered by the Minister of Education. To counter a possible reorganization of administrative structures, public support for English school boards should be mobilized and strong arguments, including constitutional ones, prepared. Francophone minorities have, since the Canadian Charter, fought on constitutional grounds for the right to linguistic school boards and won (Landry & Rousselle, 2003).

It seems unlikely that any changes to the legal underpinnings of official minority education at the elementary and secondary level are on the horizon (see Foucher, this volume). Both the federal and Quebec governments have found a legislative solution to the provision of official minority schooling. At both levels of government, access to official language minority schooling is defined as transferred from a parent who attended a minority language school in Canada to their offspring. In both the Quebec Charter and the Canadian Constitution, the right to an education in the official minority language of a province is not universal - as Anglophone parents have found out in English Canadian provinces when they have tried to obtain French programs for their children in the courts, arguing a constitutional right and losing. Since the legislative and constitutional solutions in place are based on a historical right to minority schooling and not on the mother tongue of students, this has resulted in a rather ironic situation in Quebec in which some English mother tongue students, such as children of international immigrants, are not "ayants-droit" and do not have

access to English public schooling, whereas some French mother tongue students have the status of "ayants-droit" and are entitled to English language schooling. To reopen this issue of how to define rights to official minority education, however, is to reopen the Pandora's Box of linguistic tensions and constitutional battles that caused much strife in previous decades. It is unlikely that either Ottawa or Quebec would care to undertake a costly and likely contentious redefinition of linguistic rights, at least in the near future (see Foucher, this volume). Over time, however, the increasing presence of Francophones in English schools might erode the legitimacy of the discourse supporting the existence of a distinct English school system in the province.

Statistics show that roughly 20,000 English mother tongue students are currently in the French sector of the provincial primary and secondary school system: half of these by choice and the other half, primarily of immigrant origin, because of the educational clauses of Bill 101. A legal fight against the educational clauses of the Charter of the French Language to win back these students from the French sector seems futile and has no constitutional foundation. Indeed, Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is based on a conception of educational rights that is very similar to the one found in the Quebec Charter of the French Language (Landry & Rousselle, 2003). Furthermore, access to English schools based on language competence is an experiment already tried and which proved an administrative catastrophe in the early 1970s (Bill 22) under the Bourassa government (d'Anglejan, 1984). Defining access in terms of language competence could also call into question the presence of French mother tongue students in English schools, a presence which has countered the decline of English schools in the past decade and is likely to contribute to its stability in the decade to come. It should also be remembered that there are roughly 20,000 French mother tongue students in Quebec's English schools by choice, as compared to 10,000 English mother tongue students in French schools through legislation (the other 10,000 have voluntarily crossed-over). In terms of numbers, to define access to official minority schooling on the grounds of mother tongue would actually have a negative impact on the English school sector.

Continuing to fight Bill 104, the provincial law passed to "plug" a legal loophole to Bill 101, might perhaps stand a better chance of success in the courts (see Foucher, this volume). Bill 104 prevents non-"ayants-droit" parents from enrolling children in non-subsidized private English schools for a year and then transferring them to English public schools on the grounds that they have received their prior education in English. Bill 104 was recently contested by a prominent Anglo-rights lawyer. In 2007, a Quebec Court of Appeal judge ruled that Bill 104 was unconstitutional. The ruling, based on the 1982 Canadian Constitution, confirmed that children who received private schooling in English could subsequently gain access to the public English school system in Quebec. The Liberal Provincial Government, fearing a backlash if it upheld this decision, submitted the Bill 104 case to a higher court of appeal. According to the President of the Quebec English School Boards Association, Marcus Tabachnick[4], the number of potential English sector students affected by this judgment is estimated at about 500 a year, most of whom would attend Montreal-island schools. Though these cases account for less than 0.25 % of the Montreal French school enrolment of close to a million pupils, 500 students a year is significant within the minority English school system. For English-speaking communities, continued application of Bill 104 might further contribute to the decline of the English public school sector.

[4] Statement from Marcus Tabachnick, President of the Quebec English School Boards Association, August 22, 2007.

As Foucher (this volume) argues, access to pre-elementary and post-secondary education are not covered in either Quebec's Charter of the French Language or Section 23 of the Canadian Constitution Act and periodically, the question of putting legislation in place to limit access to English CEGEPS is raised in Quebec. As Foucher (this volume) argues, if ever Section 23 were to be reworked, this issue could quite easily find itself on the table. It remains to be seen if Francophones pushing for a hardening of Bill 101 by limiting access to English language CEGEPs, will gain ground. This is an issue that has surfaced periodically (Lisée, 2007), but has been rejected so far, regardless of which provincial party is in power.

7.2. Building bridges across language solitudes.

The above legal considerations take us back to the decline of the Anglophone student population. They also bring us back to the real crunch issue: the exodus of Quebec's young Anglophones and what can be done to keep young adults in the province. At present, their exodus represents a serious loss not only to the Anglophone community but also to Quebec society at large in terms of valuable human resources (see Floch and Pocock, this volume).

One of the main ways to keep young Anglophones in Quebec is to provide them with bilingual skills, and it is clear that Quebec's English school system has made tremendous progress on this front since the 1970s. Expectations concerning the level of bilingual skills needed, however, keep rising. What seemed like enough in the 1980s is deemed insufficient at the present time. Also, French language learning takes place mostly at the primary school level whether in the form of French immersion or in the form of crossover to French schools. While students are obtaining a fairly high level of oral proficiency, it is obvious that the oral and written French skills of a grade six student are below what is required of adults in many jobs in Quebec. At the high school level, instruction time in French diminishes and the question of maintenance of bilingual competence comes to the fore. Furthermore, Anglophone parents are increasingly realizing that contact with French speakers is required not only to improve the language skills of their children, but to help young Anglophones feel comfortable and at home in Quebec society (Quebec Advisory Council, 2006; Laperrière, 2006). Meanwhile on the other side of the educational divide, French schools are struggling to provide students with good English teaching and meet the growing demand for bilingual skills among French speakers.

This brings us full circle to the beginning of this chapter and to recommendations made by an advisory committee to the QESBA in 2006, which essentially proposed that the future of the Anglophone community rests in part on its ability to enter a new relationship with the French majority population of Quebec. For this new French/English relationship to emerge, the old stereotypes need to be replaced by new representations and this entails much work and good will on both sides of the educational fence. One way to break down isolation is through increased exchange programs between English and French schools, for which funding currently exists at the MELS but is chronically underused. There are also less traditional solutions to explore, such as a recent initiative undertaken in two high schools in a suburb of Montreal, with French students spending half the academic year in the English high school and vice versa. Another avenue to explore is that of citizenship education, part of the core curriculum for Quebec schools. An approach to citizenship education which takes into account new realities of what it means to be an Anglophone, a Francophone, an Allophone, a Quebecer/ Québécois in an increasingly complex linguistic and identity dynamic could contribute to a better understanding of the different communities in Quebec and their respective fears and challenges.

A further conclusion emerging from this overview is that Quebec's Anglophone community is anything but homogeneous - and the same can be said of the English language school system in Quebec. Incorporating students from many different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, including French mother tongue youth, it is clear that "official language minority" schools in Quebec cannot serve to reproduce the English-speaking community of the past. Its mission must be forward-looking and grounded in a new non-static definition of community diversity and individual identities. This challenge is also felt by Francophone minorities in the rest of Canada (Heller, 1999; Landry & Rousselle, 2003), and by the Francophone majority in Quebec as well. Not only are the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of students in Quebec's English sector diverse, their language needs are as well. As noted by the Advisory Board on English Education:

> *"English schools exist in all kinds of different sociolinguistic environments from those where French is heard and used only in school by students whose mother tongue is English to those in which students often speak French at home and at play and may even be struggling with English at school. What draws these together is a common search for the best ways to insure high levels of biliteracy"* (ABEE, 1995, p.6).

While this statement overlooks the presence of Allophone children in English schools who are in the process of becoming trilingual, it does make clear that a major preoccupation across the English school system is providing high level bilingual skills in English and French and this in a variety of sociolinguistic contexts, both rural and urban. Historically, English language schools have been able to meet this challenge with a great deal of flexibility and have developed models that work for their local context and student population. And this should remain the case within Quebec's recently reformed educational system, which promotes each school's power to choose its orientation and educational project. This said, Quebec's educational program remains centralized and strongly circumscribed by its Educational Act and a common curriculum. It should not be forgotten that in the past, in order to provide bilingual education programs, the English school system relied on a derogation clause from Quebec's Education Act. However, it seems highly unlikely that any Quebec government would choose to restrict instruction time in French within the English school sector. As the Commissioner Gérald Larose stated in his final report following public audiences on the vitality of French in Quebec:

> *« Pour contribuer pleinement à l'essor de la société québécoise et pour en influencer le développement, les membres de la communauté québécoise d'expression anglaise sont en droit de réclamer que leur réseau de commissions scolaires leur assure une maîtrise de la langue officielle et commune en permettant aux élèves de pénétrer l'univers culturel qui la porte. »* (Québec, 2001)[5]

7.3 Promoting educational equity and community development.

Two final challenges in English schooling need to be considered: the case of schools in urban centres with students from economically disadvantaged homes; and that of rural schools with very small student populations and little access to services, struggling to provide secondary and vocational education. While the number of English schools located in economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods is low, it has doubled in recent years. With the chronic exodus of young educated Anglophones, it seems likely that dealing with disadvantaged school populations will become a more important concern in the future. Given the

[5] "To contribute fully to the future of Quebec society and play a role in its development, members of the Anglo Quebec community have the right to demand that their school boards provide them with the mastery of the official and common language (French) to allow students to be part of the cultural universe that carries that language." (free translation).

changing demographics of the Anglo community, questions of educational equity and racial discrimination are likely to become more important in the years to come (Renaud, Germain & Leloup, 2004). As for small schools in the regions, the challenges already present are not likely to change. However, to meet these challenges new administrative solutions need to be explored. These include: the sharing of resources with local French schools which face the same difficulties; provision for distance education; outreach to diverse communities in urban settings; and the upgrading of buildings and equipment through new partnerships. This brings us to an initiative that seems particularly interesting: Community Learning Centres.

One exciting initiative with the potential to tackle some of the major challenges facing Quebec's English schools has already been launched and is already moving beyond the initial phases of implementation. In 2006, with funding provided by the Canada-Quebec Agreement for Minority Language Education, the *'Services à la communauté anglophone'* launched a new three year project to establish Community Learning Centres (CLCs). The main goal of CLCs is to transform schools into "hubs" for community development in a range of different urban and regional settings (cf. Francophones in the ROC: Landry & Rousselle, 2003). The hope is that by developing collaborative partnerships between schools and the communities they serve, CLCs will enhance access to services for the English-speaking community and improve student retention and success. Furthermore, a CLC that houses a number of different services and is open to the broader community can attract funding from non-traditional sources, such as municipal funding in exchange for community use of the school facilities. All of the CLCs have been provided with video-conferencing equipment, making the possibility of regional outreach to urban centres for services such as telehealth and distance education much more feasible. A school that has been transformed into a CLC not only becomes a key institution in a community that might be devoid of any other major cultural institution, but it may fireproof the school from eventual closure. In urban Montreal, it allows for multicultural associations to have a more prominent profile in the school and hopefully act as a bridge between families, students and the school system. Currently, there are fifteen CLCs created in Phase One of the project, and a further seven CLCs are in the early stages of Phase Two across the province. Obviously, many are watching this unusual educational initiative to see how well it can meet its challenges.

8. **Concluding notes**

Quebec's English school system serves as a rather unusual example of how a school system can respond, and rapidly, to social change – a trait already clearly demonstrated in the development of French immersion and other bilingual education models (Lamarre, 1997, 2005). To continue to meet the needs of their student population and take account of the tremendous diversity of their sociolinguistic make-up, Quebec English schools must be granted the flexibility and autonomy they need to develop "locally tailored solutions" (Quebec Advisory Council, 2006) – something have done amazingly well in the past. But they will also need funding to put these solutions into place. It has often been said that Quebec's Anglophone community cannot be compared to Francophones in minority situations in the Rest of Canada and that the community does not require the financial help provided to Francophone minorities. While this statement may have been true in the past, it no longer holds. The challenges already present are large and all signs point to an increasing need for strong creative initiatives.

The CLC project represents one very promising effort to redefine schools and use them to contribute to the vitality and well-being of the local community they serve. It is an important element in a plan for the future but not the only piece needed. In effect, the Quebec English school system reveals the complexity of minority language schooling. Given its role to "safeguard" the

development of its local community, one mandate of English schools should be the "creation of a biliterate school program environment" (ABEE, 1995, p.29). Energy and funding needs to be devoted to ways of attaining the level of French-English biliteracy needed to keep young Anglophones in Quebec and provide them with the tools needed to integrate into the job market and the social and political world of Quebec society. More French media attention needs to be devoted to the decline of the Anglophone minority in Quebec and to what such an attrition represents in terms of loss, not only to the local Anglophone community, but to Quebec society as a whole, in terms of technological and scientific know-how, economically as well as culturally.

In some perhaps not too distant future, Canada and Quebec might need to revisit and rethink issues of official minority schooling, bilingualism, and notions of collective and individual identity. At the moment, however, Quebec's Anglo community has signalled its willingness to move into a new phase and build a new relationship with French speakers in the province, a challenge that to succeed will need to be heard and met by Quebec's Francophone majority. As Quebec comes out of the spin of "accommodement raisonnable", the question bears asking: What place for the English-speaking "other" in "le Québec de demain"?

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