



MEASURING WHAT MATTERS: FOCUS ON THE FRENCH- LANGUAGE SCHOOL

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MEASURING WHAT MATTERS

People for Education – working with experts from across Canada – is leading a multi-year project to broaden the Canadian definition of school success by expanding the indicators we use to measure schools' progress in a number of vital areas.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2013, People for Education proposed the implementation of an initiative entitled *Measuring What Matters* (MWM). This initiative was designed to broaden the definition of school success which, for the previous 20 years, had been measured in Ontario and in Canada in terms of literacy and numeracy. People for Education considers that, by limiting itself to these two domains, the education system could achieve only a limited understanding of its own performance as a system. People for Education also believed that physical and mental health, social and emotional learning, creativity and innovation, and citizenship and democracy also needed to be measured in order to give the public (as well as parents, school staff, and political decision-makers) a more specific, refined, and adequate overview of success within the walls of its schools.

People for Education assembled a team of experts¹ to demonstrate the wisdom of tracking these additional domains, and the atmosphere within the school, a necessary and essential condition for the success of all children and young people. These experts wrote five papers on the theoretical and practical implications of these domains, both on a conceptual level and in terms of strategies and ways of evaluating them. Rather than adding to the workload of teaching staff, the intention was to expand the vision of assessment and to offer interesting perspectives on preparing students for life in society—one of the fundamental roles of the school.

French-language schools in a minority context were considered in full in People for Education's initiative, and it was decided to add a sixth paper on the characteristics of these schools and the children and youth who attend them. It is useful to note here that the five original papers are completely relevant to the vision of success for all children, whether they are members of a minority community or members of the majority community. However, over and above the task of teaching academic subjects and disciplines, French-language schools have the additional and ongoing task of French-language acquisition, identity-building, parental and community engagement. Over and above the prescribed curriculum, schools in minority French-language communities take on responsibility for the linguistic and cultural vitality of an increasingly diverse Francophone community.

Before demonstrating how the five papers will make it possible to integrate a Francophone vision of assessment that has been expanded and adapted to the realities of these schools, we will describe the characteristics of Francophone communities in Ontario and in Canada. These characteristics will help us grasp the perspectives developed in the papers, their complementarity and interrelatedness with respect to the realities of Francophones and their needs. It is important to bear in mind that the authors who were consulted provide a far more comprehensive portrait of the Francophone linguistic minority than is offered in this summary.

This text is divided into three sections. In the first section, we have drawn on the work of a number of researchers to describe the issue of the Francophone community and to provide a context for a number of key elements that will have a direct impact on how success is imagined, talked about, and achieved in French-language schools.

In the second section, we look at strategies and pedagogical approaches promoted in French-language education and how educators view their practice. Whether or not it is based on research, this practice is grounded in the mandate

that French-language education institutions have adopted in order to meet the requirements of s. 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Therefore, this practice is not only pedagogical; it is also social. It seeks to be the contribution that the world of education makes to the strength, vitality, and sustainability of Canada's Francophone community—what is referred to in French as *la pérennité*. For this reason, the mandate of French-language schools is the starting point for the discussion in the second section.

In the third section, we look at the reality of French-language schools in minority French-language communities in the specific context of the papers that were produced for People for Education and determine the extent to which this initiative to assess a broader range of domains fits within the Francophone context.

SECTION ONE: ASPECTS OF THE FRANCOPHONE ISSUE THAT HAVE AN IMPACT ON SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS

Like their majority-language counterparts, French-language schools have a duty to provide the prescribed instruction in order to meet all of the requirements of the Ministry of Education with respect to student success. In French-language schools in minority French-language communities, there are two additional outcomes: transmission of the French language and culture and community vitality.

When considered as a whole and linked to the initial mandate of offering instruction in the language of the minority, these three features of French-language schools—language, culture, and community—reveal the magnitude of the relationship that can develop between the school and its communities. Bascia (2014) writes that “*understanding the context of particular schools enables educators, parents, students, and policy-makers to comprehend the possibility for change and school improvement*” (p. 13). For French-language schools in a minority community, this context is a function of the quality of the pedagogical and social environment within the school and the engagement of parents and the broader communities within which the school operates. As a consequence, the position of policy-makers on these requirements has a direct impact of the feasibility of implementing the mandate of these schools.

According to Grin and Moring (2002), decision-makers aiming to improve the linguistic environment of speakers in minority-language communities should consider the following when introducing a language policy. Linguistic vitality means that members of the minority group feel comfortable and capable of using the minority language; are able to do so in a variety of contexts; and are able to do so in regards to their language rights. They have access to cultural life and community life in which their language is valued as a means of expressing a rich and varied culture. Increased frequency of use of the language in turn leads to an increase in the number of places and areas in which the language is spoken and the number of people who speak it in their public life. These authors deduce that an increase in linguistic vitality is largely a function of the language behaviour of a language's speakers.

Three interdependent factors determine whether people speak French, express themselves in French, and live their lives in French, publicly and privately. These are their *capacity* to use the language, the *opportunities* they have to speak the

Three interdependent factors determine whether people speak French, express themselves in French, and live their lives in French, publicly and privately. These are their capacity to use the language, the opportunities they have to speak the language, and the personal and social desirability of speaking the language (Grin and Moring, 2002).

language, and the personal and social *desirability* of speaking the language (Grin and Moring, 2002).

Capacity refers specifically to language competencies that are generally acquired by means of education (both formal and informal). Where the French-language school is concerned, the key to *capacity* is a full articulation of the conditions that must be met for an appropriate pedagogy in a minority setting. These are discussed in the section on practice.

Opportunity refers to the existence of a variety of contexts in which the language may be used. These opportunities are provided by multiple sources, including public services. However, the private sector and the cultural industry should also be invited to create opportunities so that the language can be used at different times and in different ways.

Desirability means that a speaker feels socially and psychologically comfortable and free to express himself or herself in French in any setting.

These three factors—ability, opportunity, and desirability—are essential to the vitality of a minority language and can be used to describe the mandate of the French-language school more concretely. The school must concern itself with the progress that each student must make academically in order to acquire the language competencies needed to achieve school success, as prescribed by the Ministry of Education. In this way, the school must create an environment conducive to *capacity*. Through the relationships that it builds with parents and community organisations, the school must also contribute directly to the creation of *opportunities* for students to speak the language in their immediate environment. In other words, the French language must be seen and heard not just in the school but in the broader community.

Lastly—and this factor is no doubt more complex and difficult to describe and implement—the school must concern itself with creating, maintaining, and inculcating the *desirability of speaking French*. Students must have the self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-worth to speak French; they must see the relevance of speaking French and enjoy speaking French. In his paper on social and emotional learning, Shanker (2014) states that social and emotional competencies are as important as more formal academic skills and can be learned just like any other competency (p. 5). The challenge is to see how these core competencies are woven into learning at school.

One of the ways in which policy-makers in the Ontario Ministry of Education have been successful in giving the French-language school a specific mandate that reflects its role in its minority-language community is the development of a policy entitled *La Politique d'aménagement linguistique pour les écoles de langue françaises de l'Ontario (2004)* (PAL). This *aménagement linguistique*² policy presents a number of system-wide areas for intervention with specific goals. Some of these intervention areas address the linguistic and cultural needs of students (e.g., interventions with respect to instruction and identity-building³), expressed as competencies. Other intervention areas target parental engagement and community engagement and reciprocal support between the school and its various communities of parents, business people, cultural stakeholders, and so forth. These are expressed as opportunities.⁴

The PAL provides education and community stakeholders with a common vocabulary; it offers a systematic way to target the interventions they feel are appropriate. The PAL addresses not only student success and identity-building, but also the needs of families, communities, and institutions, in a vision of community vitality.

Just like their English-speaking counterparts, students in Ontario's French-language schools are assessed on literacy and numeracy. However, by 2004, the Ministry of Education also considered that oral communication skills were essential to school success. The definitions of literacy and numeracy that are found in the PAL (on pages 35 and 36 respectively) provide the foundation for the intervention area of learning and are considered cross-curricular competencies.

Oral communication competencies are also important for identity-building, because language "*is a tool that provides access to a system of values and a way of interpreting the world [...]. The language of instruction contributes to the definition of both personal and collective identity.*" (PAL, 2004, p. 47). Any pedagogical strategies suggested to school staff must therefore include a discussion on identity. This is where the pedagogical strategies in the document entitled *Pédagogie à l'école de langue française* (PELF) [Pedagogy at the French-language School] come in. These are presented in the second section.

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The general thrust of the mandates of schools in minority communities and the PAL can be described very simply as the creation of a community of language(s) and culture(s) or as the creation of schools that reflect a community of language(s) and culture(s).

Why language(s) and culture(s)? Why not one language and one culture? The answer, quite simply, is that in some parts of the province, French-language school boards report that their students speak over 60 languages. Because culture is transmitted through language, we must speak of languages and cultures. We speak of cultures *plural* because Ontario's and Canada's Francophone population has changed a great deal over the past 20 years. Immigrants represent 13.2% of Francophones, and Ontario receives the largest percentage (71.8%) (Gilbert, Gallant and Cao, 2014). The increasing diversity of the student population in certain regions of Ontario has led to profound changes in its Francophone communities, their relationship to language, culture, and identity, and even their notion of community. The evolution of these concepts explains the complexity of the school environment and the pedagogical dynamic that results from it.

While taking into consideration the importance of the school context, as described by Bascia, and the importance of social and emotional learning, as described by Shanker, the Francophone school community is also aware of the linguistic insecurity that comes from living in a minority community. Dalley (2008) writes that a student's motivation to become or to remain a Francophone is based on his or her perception of the value of the French language and Francophone communities and on his or her ability to identify with the dominant definition of the Francophone community and its language and culture (p. 294). This observation refers to one of six sociolinguistic principles proposed by Dalley for creating French-language schools that welcome the diversity of languages spoken by their students. And it illustrates the interdependence of the themes identified by Bascia and Shanker and those of the minority setting.

Dalley (2008) makes the important point that language is a tool for identity-building and culture construction and that this construction relies mainly on the relationships that we develop with others. Students become aware of their own value as French speakers when the school values the variety of languages spoken by its students. The pluralistic French-language school⁵ must examine the way in which it portrays “good French” and “real Francophones”, because, as Dalley has pointed out (2008), we construct our identity through relationships with others.

Lastly, students need social and cultural institutions so that they can develop the ability to respond in French in communication situations outside school (the opportunities referred to by Grin and Moring, 2002). In a study on linguistic security/insecurity, Desabrais (2013) demonstrates that this state of security/insecurity can affect a student’s decision to pursue a postsecondary education, to become involved in the minority Francophone community, and to think of himself or herself as a social actor who can have an impact within the Francophone community, and so forth. This research emphasizes the role of the school in developing a student’s attachment to the Francophone community.

This paper does not claim to explain all of the factors that can cause linguistic insecurity; however, it does seem important to understand how it develops and to propose interventions for French-language schools, particularly in reference to the papers written by Bascia and Shanker.

Researchers have used surveys by Statistics Canada to create profiles of Canada’s official language minorities. Led by Rodrigue Landry, 19 researchers analysed data from these statistical surveys and presented their findings in a document entitled *La vie dans une langue officielle minoritaire au Canada (2014)*. In this work, they refer to minority communities as official (French or English) language minority communities (OLMC). They do not describe Francophone minority communities as being *hors-Québec* (outside Quebec), since it is appropriate to speak of people in terms of where they actually live. Allard (2014) and Landry (2014) make it possible to describe the linguistic situation in communities and schools in Ontario. The numbers mentioned in their respective chapters vary from region to region and this text does not convey all of the nuances that Allard and Landry provide. However, these statistics point to the changes that are occurring in these communities and make it possible to infer the impact that they have on schools, students, and school staff generally.

Four important observations can be made about the Francophone community. First, residents of rural Francophone communities are migrating to urban centres (Gilbert, Gallant and Cao, 2014). Second, as a percentage of the majority population, the Francophone population is shrinking (Landry, 2014). Third, the rate of mixed French-English marriages is increasing (32% to 95% depending on the region) (Landry, 2014). And fourth, the decrease in the rate at which French is spoken in the home is not being offset by speakers of other languages. In other words, newcomers to Ontario who speak other languages are not necessarily adopting French; in fact, 98.5% of them are adopting English (Landry, 2014). To varying degrees and depending on the region, each of these factors is increasing the fragility of minority language communities and has an impact on the relevance of wanting to speak French (desirability/insecurity).

Landry and Allard (1997, cf. Landry 2014) observe, however, that the children of mixed French-English couples who speak French with their Francophone parent and English with their Anglophone parent identify with both language groups and are as competent in French as children with two Francophone parents and as

competent in English as children with two Anglophone parents when they attend a French-language school (p. 7). This is an important point, because it dispels the notion that mixed marriages are responsible for all of the challenges that students encounter with language acquisition.

As Grin and Moring (2002) point out, many factors affect the vitality of a language and schools cannot ensure this vitality on their own. This supports Dalley's contention (2008) that interaction is an essential condition of the construction of a language, a culture or an identity (p. 287). The French-language school must provide an environment full of opportunities for spontaneous communication that is free of judgment, a factor in linguistic insecurity. In order to understand what this entails, a more fulsome consideration of the ability of students/ children to speak French is in order.

Allard (2014) states that when French is not spoken routinely in the home (as is the case with 63% of the children⁶ in the survey sample), up to 50% of children will have a weak or passable ability to speak French and a level of fluency and vocabulary that does not meet the standard. There is a gap between the expectations in the curriculum and the students' knowledge of the spoken language. When a speaker does not meet a standard considered legitimate or even prestigious, linguistic insecurity sets in, followed in many cases by the decision to remain silent. One very simple way to combat this is to provide a school environment that builds on the communication skills and knowledge that students already have when they begin school. These prior skills and knowledge are referred to in French as *le déjà-là* (what is already there) (Boudreau and Dubois, 2008, p. 167). The concept of *déjà-là* is found in the PELF and is partially described in the second section. Boudreau and Dubois state that the school must also understand the students' own representation of the place of the French language in their life and in society. French is often seen as a family language and a school language that has little importance or prestige in the real world. Because of this, the school and the family must find ways to place value on the French language in the general context of globalization.

The fact remains that English continues to influence parents' choice of language of instruction for their children; a mere 50% of parents who have the right to have their children educated in French actually exercise this right. Francophone education institutions and community institutions are addressing this reality with campaigns to promote and provide information about the French-language system. This pertains to the governance of institutions, a topic that cannot be addressed in depth here.

The discussion so far has focussed primarily on the more global environment of the schools, i.e., the issue of minority/minoritization, the three factors of ability, opportunity, and desirability that are so essential to community vitality; individual and collective understandings of the importance of the French language; the issue of linguistic security/insecurity; and the essential role of the school as an institution that contributes to the strength, vitality, and sustainability of Francophone communities. As stated earlier, the French-language school cannot achieve this all by itself. Landry, Allard and Deveau (2010) insist on the complementary roles of the school, the family, and the community in order to promote and contribute to the linguistic and cultural development of students and the vitality of the community.

Educators working in French-language schools have considered Landry, Allard and Deveau's perspective in order to articulate their vision of the school and its

perspectives on learning, on relationships to its communities, on parental roles, and on the vitality of the Francophone community. Therefore, it is interesting to consider Talbert and McLaughlin's model (1999, cf. Bascia, 2014, p. 6) which describes the school as a set of interdependent systems in order to illustrate the context of the school on its environment. In their model, the outermost ring represents the impact of the community on the organisation of the school. In Francophone communities, this outermost ring can be dominant, depending on the minoritization of the community, and it can have a direct impact on every other level of the model, i.e., on school governance (the role of the principal and the school board vis-à-vis the special mandate of the French-language school), on the professional learning community or PLC⁷ (in terms of the impact of pedagogical strategies on language competency development and identity-building), and on the dynamic in the classroom *per se* (student appropriation and engagement toward the Francophone communities).

It is through the perspectives of practitioners as presented in the second section that we illustrate how these interdependent systems and perspectives support the school in the process of educating students and engaging the community.

SECTION TWO: ACTUALIZATION OF THE MANDATE OF THE FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOL FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF COMMUNITY VITALITY

Three initiatives are currently being implemented by various school boards in minority communities in Canada. The first incorporates mechanisms essential to the linguistic and cultural vitality of Francophone communities and the role that schools play in this vitality. The second incorporates training strategies for staff that are conducive to school success and identity-building. The movement for Civic Community Schools (CCS) [*Écoles communautaires citoyennes* (ECC)] was founded by the *Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones* (FNCSF). *La Pédagogie à l'École de langue française* (PELF) was created by the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF). In addition to these two initiatives, the *Association canadienne d'éducation de la langue française* (ACELF) has undertaken an initiative on identity-building and the appropriate pedagogy for this. Section Two essentially describes these three initiatives.

Even though only partially presented below, it is possible to grasp how the various papers for the People for Education initiative are in synch with the aims of the initiatives proposed. References and pertinent research are included.

THE FÉDÉRATION NATIONALE DES CONSEILS SCOLAIRES FRANCOPHONES (FNCSF) AND THE CIVIC COMMUNITY SCHOOL (CCS) MOVEMENT⁸

Where the vitality of Canada's Francophone community is concerned, those living in minority language communities must think critically about their engagement toward their community and its effect on their own identity. This engagement can be facilitated and take shape when the school becomes a civic community school or CCS. The CCS is a place of learning, socialisation, and identity-building, and maintains a symbiotic relationship with the community it serves. It strives for the success of all learners irrespective of age, for a thriving and prosperous community, and for the emergence of an overarching sense of solidarity. To achieve this, the school draws out and mobilises all of the stakeholders.⁹ Learners are of all ages and, thus, the CCS concerns all members of the community, not just students in school. The focus of the CCS is lifelong learning.

While taking into consideration the importance of the school context, as described by Bascia, and the importance of social and emotional learning, as described by Shanker, the Francophone school community is also aware of the linguistic insecurity that comes from living in a minority community.

The FNCSF explains this approach in two complementary yet distinct documents. The first is a foundational document (FNCSF, 2011) that presents the overall objectives and vision of the CCS and focuses on the relationship between the school, the community, learning, and success. The second is a framework document (FNCSF, 2012) that describes the features of modes of governance and leadership that are conducive to implementations of the CCS and adapted to local conditions (FNCSF, 2012).

Civic community schools are based on partnerships that seek to redefine the relationship between communities and their schools, in order to encourage all of the stakeholders to help minority Francophone communities across Canada to flourish. This is the overarching aim of the CCS movement. In order to play this role, the school must be an integral part of the community it serves while, at the same time, being open to the world. The school is grounded in the life of the community; it provides a real-life learning environment that gives meaning to new knowledge, imbuing it with social and cultural meaning. Students are given opportunities to learn in the community—beyond the walls of the school. Members of the community are invited into the school to share their knowledge and life experience with the students.

This new knowledge must be a part of a global approach to learning, and the school must be open to others, building bridges between the past, the present, and the future. It must build bridges between “here” and “there” so that students—indeed, all members of the community—become aware of the historical weight of the knowledge that is being transmitted and feel a sense of solidarity with their contemporaries in creating a better world (FNCSF, 2011, p. 6). In this way, the school adopts a “cultural approach to teaching and learning”.

The cultural approach was presented in the *Politique d'aménagement linguistique* (PAL) as an essential pedagogical strategy (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 52),¹⁰ and has since been expanded upon. This approach calls for the creation of conditions that make it possible to reconnect the past with the present, helping students to become aware of the full weight and depth of the history in which they are embedded and to develop a sense of solidarity with the men and women who came before, the history that is their legacy, and the ability to engage with it and transform the world (Simard, 2007; cited in: FNCSF, 2011, p. 10). This approach reflects Sears' proposition in applying the *historical thinking* approach to the curriculum (2014, p. 11).

When this approach is implemented, the CCS becomes infused with “citizenship” in the sense that it allows all members of the community, to develop an awareness that contributes to the success of the entire community academically, professionally, and socially. This sense of citizenship also contributes to the development of a sense of belonging to the community and to identity-building. The CCS mobilises students, educators, parents, and partners (community, social, cultural, municipal, governmental, and economic) engaging them critically and democratically in the political, economic, social, and cultural life of the local community, the nation, and the world (FNCSF, 2011, p. 11).

While this vision of the school as a member of the community and as a citizen complements the ideas expressed by Sears (2014), it goes beyond the scope of a curriculum that teaches citizenship (Sears) to include the engagement of all of the partners in the linguistic and cultural vitality of Francophones.

It is, however, important to consider that, generally, the CCS must be a part of a vision that is open to diversity and globalisation. The thoughts and feelings that Francophones have about the future (coming back to Simard, cited above) are profoundly impacted by the changes of recent decades, in particular, the fact that the Francophone population is increasingly diverse, mobile, scattered, and urbanised (Gilbert, Gallant and Cao, 2014). The question of what constitutes *the* Francophone culture and *the* Francophone community is no longer quite so straightforward. Gérin-Lajoie (2012) puts it plainly when she writes that the Francophone community is no longer as homogeneous as it once was and that it is, in fact, more accurate to talk about Francophone communities *plural*. For example, life in Toronto and life in Hearst are very different (p.153).

In order to more fully grasp, if only theoretically, the initiatives being proposed by stakeholders within minority language communities, Heller and Labrie (2003; cited by Madibbo and Labrie, 2005) analyzed the discourse on pertinent social actions and its ability to shed light on how minority Francophone communities are adapting to social change in general and to the sweeping changes that are resulting from globalisation, immigration, and urbanisation in particular. One discourse, according to these authors, is the modernising discourse (*discours modernisant*), counting on the Welfare State to create autonomous Francophone organisations and agencies in which affiliation with the ethnolinguistic community remains central. Another is the globalising discourse (*discours mondialisant*) according to which the economy takes precedence over politics; allegiance to the linguistic community, which now has multiple identities, is no longer central. Yet another is the traditionalist discourse (*discours traditionaliste*) and its vision of a homogeneous community in which life revolves around the parish (Madibbo and Labrie, 2005).

The documents proposed by the FNCSF emphasize the role of the CCS in mobilising students, educators, parents, and partners (community, social, cultural, municipal, governmental, and economic) and engaging them critically and democratically in the political, economic, social, and cultural life of the local community, the nation, and the world (FNCSF, 2011, p. 12). It is in this spirit that the general thinking points to a desire to contribute both to the development of ethnolinguistic affiliation (the modernising discourse with its emphasis on the mechanisms necessary for identity-building) and to economic and political vitality as a source of social change and the consolidation of minorities (the globalising discourse). We must consider that, for Richards (2012), the social changes that are at work force us to deconstruct not only what we mean by Francophone, bilingual, and bilingualism, but also what we mean by family, immigrant, communication, and class (p. 102). They force us to question the status quo—our givens.

These changing conditions can be problematic in schools where teachers are seeing dramatic changes in their student mix in some cities in Ontario, more than 80% of the students in the French-language schools are from Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, and other parts of Canada. Where does the traditionalist discourse on French-Canadian culture fit into this reality? These changes and the ambivalence they can generate are illustrated in the following example from Gérin-Lajoie's study on the discourse of educators (2010). Gérin-Lajoie concluded that many French-language schools in minority language communities are still teaching a "folkloric" notion of culture. Culture becomes multicultural through celebrations of the traditions of each group, consistent with a vision of inclusion and diversity. Language, culture, diversity, and identity are always the central focus, questioning our ways of doing things and our ways of living together.

This sense of citizenship also contributes to the development of a sense of belonging to the community and to identity-building.

So, how do we engage in the deconstruction that Richards is proposing?

It is difficult to say how each French-language school will articulate its understanding of the civic community school in this diverse, multicultural context. The FNCSF proposes to answer this question on its website by offering a number of best practices for implementing the vision of the civic community school in Francophone communities across Canada. We see that these best practices are designed to engage young students as well—something that is missing from Sear’s document (2014), which focuses mostly on teens. This can be explained by the fact that, in most jurisdictions, courses on citizenship are taught in high school.

Sears focuses more closely on creating conditions in the classroom conducive to learning about citizenship in a political/democratic context, following a curriculum, and not necessarily from the perspective of community vitality. However, Sears does endorse Peterson’s idea that citizenship is defined as a practice (Sears, 2014, p. 6). The civic community school seeks to create conditions in which every member of the school community can apply this notion of citizenship as a practice. This is because a civic community school can only come about if it is firmly grounded in the broader school community. This relates to Sears’ notion of *service*. The conditions for service are particularly relevant to the vision of the CSS: integrated into the curriculum, choice (of service) based on issues identified by the students, a range of opportunities, and community school partnerships/community mentors (p. 9).

The descriptions of best practices found on the FNCSF website are fairly broad, in terms of core concepts, criteria for collaboration and partnership, and the means of determining whether these best practices have an impact. How do we determine whether or not a best practice is working? It would be useful to consider the *core concepts* about citizenship being proposed by the FNCSF and those being proposed by Sears in order to blend their perspectives and, potentially, describe the conditions for the creation of a CSS, in terms of the pedagogical requirements for learning about citizenship. School (academic) success and connection with the community may be articulated at the school level, even though they are not articulated on the FNCSF website. Without this information, however, there is a risk that the CCS will be seen as an extension of the concept of school-family-community, which often takes the form of isolated activities, with no underlying philosophy.

As Bascia (2014) points out, the civic community school requires leadership and governance that focus on the creation of an environment in the school that goes beyond the community life of the school, embracing a vision of service, collaboration, and sharing and a stronger, more vital minority Francophone community. The civic community school movement calls for a deeper understanding of language rights and the importance, for Francophone community stakeholders, of mobilising and owning the social issues that affect the students’ engagement with the community and their sense of being citizens of the community. This movement should enable the CCS to enter into authentic partnerships with members of its communities.

However, a full articulation of the French-language school must include other conditions that operate in minority language communities. The approach of the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF) and ACELF take these conditions into account by consolidating pedagogical strategies that are conducive to teaching/learning in a minority language setting.

THE CTF AND LA PÉDAGOGIE À L'ÉCOLE DE LANGUE FRANÇAISE (PELF) [PEDAGOGY AT THE FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOL]¹¹

Summits on French-language education were held in Ottawa in 2005 and in Edmonton in 2012. These summits placed pedagogy at the centre of the needs of the French-language schools, in terms of success. In co-operation and consultation with Francophone officials from the ministries of education of Canada, the pedagogical component of these summits was given the ambitious goal of coming up with a conceptualization of a pedagogy for minority language education and of developing innovative ways to teach this pedagogy, in light of the need to provide staff with pedagogical coaching and to develop relevant resources. The Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) took on the task of developing a pedagogical strategy appropriate for educators working in minority language communities. Called the *Pédagogie à l'école de langue française* (PELF), it was developed to support and equip staff personally and professionally in their work with students (CTF, 2014).

School staff members have been able to access the PELF portal since the fall of 2014; this portal offers information on working and living in a minority Francophone community and deals with a number of important issues for French-language schools. These include linguistic and cultural identity, the quality of the language, linguistically mixed families, language rights, and the importance of giving young people an active role in the community.¹² Through the PELF portal, school staff members are offered professional development through access to key concepts, to perspectives of researchers whose area of expertise is minority language communities, and various initiatives based on Canada-wide initiatives that support education in minority settings.

Reflecting a constant desire to integrate theory and practice, the foundations of the PELF rest on two essential conditions (sharing influence and interpersonal relationships) and four key concepts (raising awareness and taking action, mobilising, creating meaning, and making learning real and relevant to the present moment). These are summarized below.

TWO ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS

SHARING INFLUENCE

Students and educators share influence over how learning unfolds. They have a sense of autonomy (what Shanker refers to as *self-regulation*) in the tasks they perform. In Francophone minority communities, decisions about learning must not be controlled by a single person in the classroom (either a student or a teacher). Decisions about learning must reflect the full range of diverse and complementary points of view. Influence is power.

In order to assume their share of influence responsibly, the individuals involved must be aware of the issues that affect their actions. For issues relating to language and culture, the PELF relies on the notion of *conscientisation*, a portmanteau word for the necessary combining of awareness and action. The power of influence is found in this "action". In order for individuals to truly take charge of the action, they must feel that they understand the issues that affect it, while remaining able to choose the way in which they act. This sharing of influence happens at the school (Bascia, 2014 and Sears, 2014) and with all of the participants in the school community (including Anglophone parents and newcomers). This also requires recognition of the Student Voice (Shanker, 2014).

A classroom environment that reflects healthy interpersonal relationships is an essential condition of the PELF. These relationships offer students and staff an opportunity to explore the potential of their linguistic and cultural development and to reflect on this environment.

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

A classroom environment that reflects healthy interpersonal relationships is an essential condition of the PELF. These relationships offer students and staff an opportunity to explore the potential of their linguistic and cultural development and to reflect on this environment. These relationships foster a sense of safety, belonging, and self-confidence, and a desire to engage (Landry, Deveau, Losier and Allard, 2009 cited by pelf.ca/relations-interpersonnelles).¹³

These relationships make socialisation positive and pleasant, for it has been noted that when they feel comfortable suggesting ideas and expressing their true feelings about the French language, students and teaching staff are more likely to place value on the language, affirm their membership in the Francophone community, and even demand respect for their rights (pelf.ca/relations-interpersonnelles).

THE FOUR CONCEPTS (FROM THE PELF WEBSITE)

RAISING AWARENESS AND TAKING ACTION

Students and educators become aware of the issues facing the Francophone community and act upon their situation. This process is derived from the work of Freire (1985) on the pedagogy of the oppressed. In this work, Freire makes connections between awareness and education, endeavouring to make workers understand that in order to improve their lot in life and that of their families, they must understand the issues that are shaping their lives and they must become engaged in transforming situations that do not work for them, by participating in decision-making and speaking up on any issues that affect them. Through a pedagogy of awareness-raising and power-sharing, Freire leads them to learn how to read and to claim their rightful place in society by thinking and taking action with others. It is through this process of taking charge (*la prise en charge*) that awareness emerges and the impulse to take action develops in students, staff, and communities and they become engaged in a process to make their community more vital.

MOBILISING

Students and educators build confidence in their language and culture and build motivation to engage with the Francophone community. The concept of mobilising is multilayered; it relates to confidence, engagement, school success, and well-being. It is derived from the theory of self-determination (Reeve, J. and Halusic, M., 2009). In the PELF, the word *dynamisation* (mobilising) was coined because there was no specific term to describe what would lead a person to feel confident enough to internalize motivation. Mobilising is a process that triggers a person's self-determination. In the context of a minority Francophone community, this means that promoting mobilising attitudes and behaviours in the classroom encourages students and educators to take charge. A PELF classroom encourages individuals to take their rightful place; think big; discover their potential; feel that their aspirations are attainable; and believe in the possibility of thriving, through respect for their linguistic and cultural identity.

CREATING MEANING

Students and educators experience contextualised learning that gives meaning to their experience of the Francophone community. Due to the minority context in which many French-language schools in Canada operate, we need to think about the concept of meaning and its role in motivation and learning. Throughout

the world, systems of education are primarily designed by and for the majority; programs, textbooks, and, more recently, technological resources reflect the dominant ideology. In order to restore balance in the significance of the experiences of young people in relation to who they are, we need to offer them strong cultural models. We need to offer them activities and projects that provide them with Francophone referents that reflect their reality and the context of the French-language school. The PELF has coined a new word for this imperative—*sensifier*—which means to create or ascribe meaning. This is closely linked to a previously described PELF concept, *mobilisation*. The process of ascribing meaning assumes that efforts have been made to meet the basic psychological needs of individuals so that they can see the point of becoming engaged and taking initiative. Just like meeting the need for autonomy, competency, and belonging, the meaning that individuals ascribe to things is closely linked to their motivation.

MAKING LEARNING REAL AND RELEVANT TO THE PRESENT MOMENT

Students and educators are able to enrich their linguistic and cultural baggage as they explore the Francophone community here and now, together. Clearly, new technological advances, social media, and globalisation underscore the importance of the present moment for students and teachers. There are no more boundaries or dividing lines, and life is happening at a faster pace. Around the world, the English language is dominating these advances. In Canada, English continues to be a source of undeniable attraction for Francophones. Creativity and innovation¹⁴, two elements that are generally well-received in schools, should not be overlooked in the quest for identity-building and community development in Francophone minority settings. The first step in making learning real and relevant to the present moment is to take stock of the linguistic and cultural baggage of students and educators. Schools that take the *déjà-là* (Boudreau, A. and Dubois, L., 2008), or prior knowledge and skills of their students and educators into account help them on the path to self-realisation. The PELF recommends that schools address the issue of linguistic diversity (Dalley, 2008) and cultural diversity within the French language in a safe, contemporary, and stimulating way.

To assist with the implementation of concepts and conditions essential to pedagogy in a minority setting, the Canadian Teachers' Federation recommends a set of best practices and reflections for raising the awareness of, and equipping, teaching staff. The PELF website provides videos, reference works, and opportunities to interact as part of a professional community (www.pelf.ca). By accessing these resources, teaching staff can learn how to integrate concepts into their pedagogical planning and into the creation of a real-life, relevant atmosphere in the classroom and in the school. This will help students to become aware of the relevance and benefits of living their life as Francophones.

However, one question remains: how do we go about evaluating the impact of the conceptual framework of the PELF? For now, there isn't much in the way of a framework for monitoring the strategies that educators are using. The researchers involved in the *Measuring What Matters* project will no doubt have some thoughts about evaluation.

ACELF AND THE IDENTITY-BUILDING MODEL

In 2006, ACELF decided to focus on articulating a coherent vision of identity-building generally and Francophone identity-building in particular. The model that was developed by a team of experts in 2006 can be found in a series of

documents entitled *Comprendre la construction identitaire*, the first document of which deals with the definition and the model (2011, from the 2006 document). While the definition and model may seem highly theoretical, the other documents offer practical and concrete strategies for creating an environment conducive to identity-building for students. In addition to the document on the definition of, and model for, identity-building, there are documents on identity-creation itineraries, pedagogical intention, eight guiding principles, the construction of a Francophone identity and evaluation, the role of educators, the role of the school principal, the role of early childhood educators, and working with parents. A document on transcultural skills and competencies will be published in the near future.

ACELF offers a set of resources to support its identity-building model. These include a series of pedagogical activities for teaching staff entitled *Banque d'activités pédagogiques* and a kit for principals and vice principals who are referred to as *passseurs culturels* (cultural guides). Developed in partnership with the CTF, the collection *Voir Grand* offers practical suggestions for supporting identity-building in the home, at school, and in the community (early childhood, childhood, adolescence, in a context of diversity, and in response to new technologies).

To sum up, the goal of any activity relating to identity-building is for the student to acquire practical information about the Francophone community in general; to develop an awareness of the issues around linguistic minorities; and to develop a positive attitude toward the Francophone community (article 5). Once again, responsibility for identity-building is not the responsibility of schools and teaching staff alone; it is also the responsibility of the school's many broader communities and policy- and decision-makers.

CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST TWO SECTIONS OF THE DOCUMENT

Francophone institutions are working harmoniously to find mechanisms for consolidating Francophone communities and ensuring that they thrive in their current context. And this is true for all levels of education, from the early years to the completion of secondary school and postsecondary education. With all of these partners and collaborators, the French-language school should be able to propose to its teaching staff and students a better understanding of the social issues shaping their lives and an (active) appreciation of their partnership in the Francophone community. In so doing, the French-language school will substantially accomplish its mandate for individual and collective identity-building.

Most of the initiatives that have been proposed by PELF practitioners are fairly recent and have yet to be documented by researchers. In addition, the efficacy of these strategies and the achievement of the expected outcomes have yet to be monitored or measured.

However, the Ontario Ministry of Education has just released a report entitled *Recherche en construction identitaire and communication orale*, written by Dalley in co-operation with Demers (2012). Following up on the aims of the PAL, action research was conducted in Ontario's 12 French-language school boards over a period of three years. The findings of this research are very interesting and practitioners in the field who are introducing initiatives would do well to consider them.

Shanker’s competencies can be used to create specific pedagogical actions that can be taken in response to linguistic insecurity.

For example, the researchers recommend:

- Creating an atmosphere that is inclusive of the varieties of language spoken by the students in order to reassure them about their French language competency;
- Ensuring that the staff have developed awareness of their identity as Francophones; they noted that staff tend to focus on designing a pedagogy for oral communication and fail to take into account the impact that this pedagogy has on identity-building;
- Explaining the definition of “culture” so that staff stop assuming that responsibility for the development of an appreciation for French-language culture rests solely with the schools’ cultural development staff or *animateurs culturels*;
- Promoting the creation of a “relational” pedagogy that embraces diversity of language, culture, and identity (e.g., bilingual and multilingual identities);
- Creating a stimulating environment so that students are able to speak up and the Student Voice is heard (pp. 201 and following);
- Ensuring that school governance and leadership support, encourage, and create a shared, participatory vision of the implementation of the mandate of the school and of identity;
- Integrating into programs of study our knowledge of French-language education in a minority setting, based on the research, in order to fully appreciate the uniqueness of these schools and in order to truly transform them.

Although the initiatives presented in the second section are generally consistent with the findings of the researchers cited in both sections of the document, some issues relating to recurring concepts in the practical portion of this document remain unresolved and some have not been fully tackled. For example, there has been little discussion of the bilingual identity of young people and its impact on their vision of the world and ways of learning. And there are few references to mechanisms for embracing diversity of language (e.g., Anglophone parents) or diversity of ethnicity (e.g., refugees, immigrants, and migrants) or the emotional, social, and personal characteristics linked to this welcoming stance.

And yet, in reading Dalley (2008, 2014) and Gérin-Lajoie (most of her publications), we realise that we must cast a critical eye on society, not just from the standpoint of the democratic recognition of language rights, but also from the perspective of bias and prejudice against the Other (the one that is not Us). For example, the PELF and the CCS propose a process for individual and collective awareness but this process must include a reflection not only on minority rights but also on more generalised discrimination by the dominant group based on race and privilege; French-language education in a multicultural and multiethnic minority setting cannot ignore the perspectives brought by newcomers—Others. This is evident in an Ontario Ministry of Education document on equity and inclusive education (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009b). According to Traisnel, Violette and Gallant (2013), the diversity of the Francophone community in certain regions of the province appears to be leading

to fragmentation and erosion of cohesiveness within the community (p. 24). How are we to ensure the vitality of the community when, in issues regarding the linguistic minority, references to such concepts are not clearly articulated, discussed or taken into account by education institutions?

SECTION THREE: REFLECTIONS ON THE FIVE PAPERS PREPARED FOR PEOPLE FOR EDUCATION

The CCS and the PELF are likely to be relevant to the reality of Francophones in every Canadian jurisdiction; because of this, criteria for evaluating the strategies that are implemented in schools are not necessarily specified in online or print documents. However, collections of best practices could be monitored through generalizable evaluation frameworks; these would have the advantage of providing an appreciation of the implementation of these initiatives and the extent to which the general objectives had been achieved.

The five papers for People for Education offer interesting perspectives on this; all of the evaluation frameworks and processes described in these documents should take into account the particularities of the school in a minority setting as described—very generally—in the first section.

The first two sections of this paper make regular reference to Bascia's paper on the school context/environment, Shanker's paper on social/emotional learning, and Sears' paper on citizenship. For example, Sears' profile on civic engagement may be helpful in meeting the objectives for the recognition and exercising of (political) rights found in the framework for the CCS and in the PELF. Sears' entire thought process appears to be based on the fundamental notion of democratic education. But we also know that learning about democracy requires more than formal training within an academic subject such as citizenship. Schools that view themselves as democratic not only believe in respect for rights, but they also ask questions about social justice. These concepts should be included in our discussions on the CCS and they need to be more fully articulated, using the models proposed by Sears.

Most of the work of raising the awareness of students attending French-language schools focuses on the development of a positive relationship with the French language as a source of knowledge, identity, and community engagement. This is the common thread of all efforts to raise awareness. This positive relationship can develop when special attention is paid to the core competencies of social/emotional learning (Shanker) and when they are related to the competencies in the PELF that are derived from Deci and Ryan's theory of self-determination (2002). For Shanker, these competencies are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, interpersonal relationships, and decision-making. All of the elements that relate to these competencies are found in the PELF's orientations. For example, Shanker's competencies can be used to create specific pedagogical actions that can be taken in response to linguistic insecurity.

Dalley's sociolinguistic principles (2008) can serve as guides for the collaborative work of school staff. Applying these principles to the pedagogy will make it possible to connect the competencies (social, emotional, and academic) that the students need to develop and the environment in the school discussed by Bascia.

What about Ferguson and Power's perspectives on physical and mental health and Uptis' perspectives on creativity and innovation? How can we integrate these specific domains into our discussions around schools in minority settings and the assessment of learning?

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION, A CRITICAL THOUGHT PROCESS (UPITIS)

Where creativity and innovation are concerned, one of the most worrisome aspects of the discourse on the arts (in general), as presented in the French-language school, is the tendency to lock the artist into the role of standard-bearer (the artist as cultural leader or cultural mediator). Thenceforth, artists can and must be engaged in the social and cultural life of the community (Hotte, 2012). Denizot (2008 in Hotte, 2012) describes two possible representations of the artist: the artist as creator concerned with purely aesthetic questions and the artist as activist engaged in the role that art plays in society (p. 14).

However, in schools in minority settings, art is often seen as the highest expression of a language and culture that must be preserved. In minority communities, culture is often associated with the spoken language and the written language. It is often associated with artistic expression that places value on a particular body of work that tells its story; describes its inhabitants; describes its spaces; and delineates its reality (Hotte, 2012, p. 14). Moreover, the community expects its artists to play an active role in the preservation of the minority language and culture.

The tension that Hotte identifies around the expectations that the minority community places on the artist (as creator-activist) is illustrated in the following excerpts from a document entitled *Trousse du Passeur Culturel* (ACELF, 2009), a collection of resources for school principals to use in their role as *passseurs culturels* or cultural guides. Interestingly, in spite of the fact that this document mentions that culture can be manifested in a number of different ways such as religious practices, sports, the arts, and so forth, it only associates the concept of *passseur culturel* with artistic expression. From this perspective, language and the arts, favoured manifestations of culture, become the foundation of identity-building. Three excerpts from the collection illustrate this:

[Unofficial translation]

Among the visible expressions of a culture, the arts play a fundamental role. The term "arts" refers to creative human endeavours expressing the thoughts, feelings, and ideas of an individual or group. This term encompasses media arts, visual arts, singing and music, dance, theatre, literature, film, and multidisciplinary arts. The arts express our emotions, feelings, values [...]. They help to create a tangible expression of individual imaginings, integrating these imaginings into the collective imagination of the community and the world (p. 20).

Contact with artists in the local community plays a particularly important role in the identity-building of youth. Artists become a model of someone who is not afraid to show his or her culture or to express it creatively.

In the eyes of young people, this culture is validated. In discovering these members of the community and their artistic creations, youth develop a sense of belonging and they are proud to show their

culture. Arts education can help them to acquire the tools and means to express this culture. (p. 21).

Artistic and cultural activities breathe life into a community, whether urban or rural, giving it energy and defining its uniqueness. The arts and culture also help young people to actively participate in civic life (p. 23).¹⁴

Upitis (2014) describes various models that can be used to develop creativity and innovation. These models are not necessarily associated with the “engaged arts”, to use Hotte’s expression. A review of the *Trousse du Passeur culturel* raises a number of questions about the expectations that we have of student creativity. For example, must students use their creativity (and their art) in the service of the community? Must their work reflect their minority situation? In the French-language school, must all cultural expression be that of Francophone artists?

And, lastly, should the domain of culture be expanded beyond the arts to include science or technology or a historical and political vision of Canada?

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH (FERGUSON AND POWER)

Beyond the transmission of language and culture and beyond the actualisation of the right to instruction in the language of the minority, there is the fact that students and teachers are human beings. Taking care of one’s body and mind are also important concerns of the French-language school. Ferguson and Power pretty much say it all. Their arguments in favour of physical and mental health apply to all children, as do the need for physical activity and mental health.

The programs mentioned in their document are consistent with the social and emotional needs identified by Shanker and offer viable solutions to problems such as addiction and bullying. Some programs have been prescribed by the provincial government.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned above, this paper does not claim to describe all of the nuances and characteristics of French-language education in a minority setting. However, certain key observations do emerge and these provide an overview of the perspectives that have been adopted and the work that has been accomplished. First, there is the collaborative aspect of the documents from various associations of minority French-language education decision-makers and artisans. Generally speaking, comments are based on the research and are designed to integrate a practical component that school staff will find accessible and user-friendly. Second, the documents speak to all of the groups concerned with the implementation of the school's mandate (parents, early childhood, governance and leadership, etc.), and documents have been produced specifically for these groups.

Second, the discourse is consistent and coherent: language, culture, identity-building, community engagement. These concepts require further fleshing out, particularly where their implementation is concerned; however, there is a clear desire on the part of Francophone education stakeholders to see the French language minority community prosper and thrive and for it to be open and welcoming. It goes without saying that each is acting within its own sphere of expertise and influence.

The third observation concerns the evaluation and monitoring of the initiatives that have been proposed. The various documents and websites that we consulted contain very little in the way of practical materials for evaluation. Implementation focuses primarily on the sharing of best practices. We should point out that, at this point, French-language educators are not yet equipped with a variety of R & D tools that would enable them to document and evaluate the relevance of practices in school communities.

While, like any other school, schools in a minority setting consist of subsystems¹⁵ that interact to varying degrees (cf. the representation of Talbert and McLaughlin's model in Bascia's paper), we must be mindful of the need for a broader understanding of what matters, determining how best to ensure that each of the subsystems is included in, and equipped for, the changes being proposed.

In its renewed vision of excellence (2013, 2014), the Ontario Ministry of Education currently assumes that the next step in the area of leadership (the subsystem of governance practices) will be the development of specific capacities, including the capacity to promote a co-operative learning culture, the capacity to use data to guide actions, and the capacity to take part in courageous conversations in order to promote innovation. The Ministry hopes that its leaders will take ownership of the notion of system and systemic thinking, which makes Talbert and McLaughlin's model, with its graphic representation of the interdependence of the systems in which a school is immersed and acts on a daily basis, even more relevant.

We cannot overlook the issue of governance and leadership in the changes that are required in order to more fully evaluate student learning. Beyond literacy and numeracy, how can—and how should—school leaders integrate this broader understanding of what matters into what is prescribed by the Ministry? And how should these visions be integrated into concerns over the strength, vitality, and sustainability of the linguistic minority, which is increasingly diverse and profoundly impacted by globalisation?

ENDNOTES

- 1 The experts and the domains they wrote about are as follows: Bascia (The School Context Model); Ferguson and Power (Physical and Mental Health in Schools); Sears (Citizenship); Shanker (Social/Emotional Learning), and Upitis (Creativity: The State of the Domain).
- 2 Aménagement linguistique refers to the concept of language planning
- 3 In 2006, the Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française defined identity construction as: [Unofficial translation] "a highly dynamic process in which the individual comes to define himself or herself and to see himself or herself thinking, acting, and responding in social contexts and in the natural environment in which he or she is evolving" (ACELF, 2011, p. 4).
- 4 Appendix A contains the strategic aims and expected outcomes of the PAL and the mandate of the French-language school as described in the PAL.
- 5 In the spirit of this text, a pluralistic school = a diversified school = a multicultural school = a heterogeneous school.
- 6 In the Statistics Canada survey, the term "child" refers to individuals who are 14 years of age or younger.
- 7 In a professional learning community (PLC), each person is encouraged to make a contribution; staff members are encouraged to collectively undertake activities and discussions that will enable them to continually improve student performance (Eaker, Dufour and Dufour, 2004). The PLC is based on a shared vision of the school; it describes an environment in which people share their opinions and knowledge and are constantly learning (Hord, 1997). It is based on collaboration amongst all of the stakeholders. Consulted at <http://www.aefo.on.ca/fr/services/formation/communautes-d-apprentissage-professionnelles>
- 8 Most of the descriptions [in the French version of this text] were taken from the websites of the FNCSF and the CCS.
- 9 Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones (FNCSF): <http://ecc-canada.ca>.
- 10 In 2009, the Ontario Ministry of Education produced a document on a cultural approach to teaching in French-language schools entitled *Une approche culturelle de l'enseignement pour l'appropriation de la culture dans les écoles de langue française de l'Ontario, Document d'orientation et d'intervention*. This document followed up on the recommendations contained in the PAL.
- 11 As was the case with the section on the CCS, this section is largely drawn from the PELF website at <http://www.pelf.ca>
- 12 An overview of this pedagogy can be found [in French] at <http://www.pelf.ca/page/Survol>.
- 13 <http://www.pelf.ca/tf/RelationsInterpersonnelles>
- 14 References to Upitis' text are provided in the third section.
- 15 Excerpts from La Trousse du passeur culturel (ACELF, 2009).
- 16 These subsystems are the environment outside the school, the school and its governance practices, the professional practice community, and the classroom.

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APPENDIX A - POLITIQUE D'AMÉNAGEMENT LINGUISTIQUE (PAL, 2004)

STRATEGIC AIMS, EXPECTED OUTCOMES, AND MANDATE OF
FRENCH-LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

STRATEGIC AIMS

TABLE 1. Ttkk

<p>Aims that foster academic achievement and personal development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to foster, within a lifelong learning approach, the academic achievement of every student by implementing relevant quality programs and services that reflect the unique nature of the Francophone community and that take into account the impact of the English language-dominant environment on learning in all school subjects and disciplines to promote identity-building and the development of self-confidence of young Francophones through the implementation of conditions conducive to the creation of a Francophone environment that takes into account the vitality and pluralism of Ontario’s French-language community 	<p>Aims that foster institutional capacity-building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to develop, through a learning-community model, the capacity of school staff, parents, and students to sustain the linguistic and cultural development of the community within a vision that fosters lifelong learning to increase the capacity of educational institutions to develop the necessary programs, resources, and services by creating meaningful partnerships among the school, the family, and the community to increase the vitality of Ontario’s educational institutions through leadership that facilitates capacity building and strategic changes that foster the sustainable development of both these institutions and the Francophone community
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TABLE 2. Expected Outcomes

<p>1. Students:</p> <p>Increased capacity to acquire oral communication skills to maximize their learning and identity-building.</p>	<p>2. School staff:</p> <p>Increased capacity to work in a minority setting to support the academic learning and identity-building of every student.</p>
<p>3. School board:</p> <p>Increased capacity to maintain and increase the student population to contribute to the vitality of French-language schools and the Francophone community.</p>	

TABLE 3. Mandate of French-Language Schools

<p>A French-language school is a learning environment whose goal is to help students achieve personal and academic success by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing students' competence to communicate in French, both orally and in writing; • teaching the knowledge and skills related to all subjects and disciplines in French, except Anglais and Anglais pour débutants from Grade 4 to Grade 8 and English and Anglais pour débutants at the secondary level; • adopting an approach that places lifelong learning at the centre of educational activities; • implementing the curriculum with a focus on improving student achievement; and • developing in students the competencies that will help them make wise choices throughout their lives. 	<p>A French-language school environment fosters identity-building through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the development of a cultural identity; • the development of a sense of belonging to a dynamic culture; • the intellectual, affective, linguistic, physical, cultural, moral, and spiritual growth of all students, while respecting their rights as set out in the <i>Ontario Human Rights Code</i>; and • a commitment to a diverse Francophone community that appeals to its members and develops their sense of belonging.
<p>A French-language school environment provides for participative leadership and equips staff with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pedagogical approaches designed to provide quality education in a minority setting; • resources for transmitting the French language and culture; and • conditions conducive to the development of a learning community within the school 	<p>A French-language school environment promotes individual and collective commitment through alliances with parents and partnerships with families and various groups in the wider community to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exercise a positive and decisive influence on student achievement by incorporating planned performance-improvement objectives; • find realistic solutions to the challenges of language acquisition and cultural ownership; • focus on early childhood interventions to ensure the integration and academic achievement of Francophone preschoolers; • design and offer school-community projects based on community needs and that incorporate subject-specific knowledge and skills and identity-building activities; • offer guidance and career education programs as well as work-experience opportunities, cooperative education programs, and school-to-work transition programs; and • participate in the sustainable development of the Francophone community, that is, meet the needs of the present without compromising opportunities for future generations to satisfy their own needs.

DOMAIN LEADS/SECRETARIAT

To ensure that each step of the initiative is based on strong evidence, People for Education has recruited a secretariat of domain experts to oversee and conduct the research component of Measuring What Matters:

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MEASURING WHAT MATTERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

This project is guided by an advisory committee, representing leading organizations from across Canada, the United States and Europe, and institutions in fields of relevance to the project. For more information about the advisory committee, go to: www.peopleforeducation.ca/mwm.

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