

**ACTION PLAN FOR THE
FRENCH FIRST-LANGUAGE PAN-CANADIAN PROJECT**

PHASE II

2005-06 to 2007-08

Corporation of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada

PREAMBLE

CONTEXT – THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA’S ACTION PLAN FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

This project is part of the Action Plan for Official Languages of the Government of Canada. This horizontal initiative, carried out with the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), will support the objectives of Canada’s Action Plan by proposing pan-Canadian educational projects to advance research and development in education in Francophone minority-language settings. Joint projects in areas such as the development of didactic and pedagogical resources, the development of intervention strategies, and professional development could become the basis for partnerships working toward common objectives within the minority Francophone educational sector. Provinces and territories will profit from the pooling of resources and expertise from the various jurisdictions.

Through bilateral agreements with the Department of Canadian Heritage, provinces and territories set out their vision of French-language education while pursuing the objectives of the Government of Canada’s Action Plan for Official Languages. Overall, provinces and territories aim to foster the expansion, growth, and development of French language and culture, the recruitment of a greater number of entitled children in French-language schools, and an increase in the number of young bilingual graduates by offering a range of choice in programs, services, and resources in French. The partnership between Canada and the provinces and territories will help broaden access to French-language education and enhance student performance. These programs will be supported by competent and committed teachers enabled to teach in a minority setting.

BACKGROUND – FRENCH FIRST-LANGUAGE PAN-CANADIAN PROJECT (FFLPCP) – PHASE I

CMEC takes note of the many efforts undertaken under FFLPCP and of the considerable work that remains to be done and consolidated. At their Fredericton meeting in October, 2000, Ministers of Education gave their support to the first phase of FFLPCP. That project was aimed at optimizing the conditions for learning French as a first language in francophone schools in minority-language settings in order to improve student performance.

In April 2003, ministers received comments and recommendations on segment A of FFLPCP, consisting of an analytical report on the performance of 13- and 16-year-old Canadian students in the School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) assessments. Here are key findings from the report of professors R. Landry and R. Allard of the Université de Moncton:

- Francophones students in minority-language settings perform most poorly in reading and writing when compared to all Canadian students.
- Francophone students in minority-language settings are weakest in writing.
- The written component of the science assessment reveals that the average results for the group of Francophone students in minority-language settings are the lowest among the four assessed groups, for both boys and girls.
- Research on the teaching of science confirms that students in minority-language settings can experience vocabulary difficulties that interfere with understanding science concepts.
- Although SAIP assessments offer little evidence to help analyze students’ language experience, they do confirm that the average Francophone student in a minority-language setting experiences language difficulties.

The authors state that an analysis of the links between context variables and the performance of Francophone students in minority-language settings demonstrates “the importance of language skills for school success in all subjects”. It therefore appears urgent to develop pedagogical tools to support and foster the development of language skills and students’ comfort in using the various aspects of these skills within a minority-language setting. Other researchers have shown that the acquisition of learning skills is enhanced by the development of oral

language skills as well as by the emergence of metalinguistic skills (Françoise Armand, 2000), while Lieury (1991) shows that correlations between school success and lexical knowledge are higher than those between school success and intellectual quotient. Therefore, optimizing the teaching and learning of oral expression would be the preferred path to improving students' school success, according to the authors.

In light of the findings outlined in the analytical report, the FFLPCP Steering Committee has established priorities for additional joint work and reviewed the feasibility of undertaking practical projects to improve the performance of Francophone students in minority-language settings. Following the Steering Committee's consultation with Francophone curriculum directors in the jurisdictions, two priorities have been established:

Priority 1: Development of an oral communication training kit

Priority 2: Development of a training kit of cognitive and metacognitive strategies for reading and writing

Therefore, CMEC agrees to implement pan-Canadian educational projects to further research and development in the area of Francophone education in minority language settings, especially in view of new didactic and pedagogical resources.

BACKGROUND – AMÉNAGEMENT LINGUISTIQUE POLICY – ONTARIO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Parallel with the FFLPCP analysis, the Ontario Ministry of Education established an *Aménagement Linguistique* Policy (ALP). This policy is generally recognized as a constructive and necessary initiative for the Franco-Ontarian community. The ALP establishes five areas of intervention that will also be the pillars of the proposed oral communication training kit:

1. Learning
2. Identity construction
3. Participative leadership
4. Parent and community involvement
5. Institutional vitality

Thanks to this initiative, Ontario now has the relevant expertise that will allow it to implement confidently the first segment of the second phase of FFLPCP.

FRENCH FIRST-LANGUAGE PAN-CANADIAN PROJECT (FFLPCP) – PHASE II

At the October 2003 CMEC meeting in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, ministers of education supported the proposal for this project, including continued cooperation in the area of French first-language education in minority-language settings. The 11 provinces and territories in the FFLPCP Consortium approved the proposal.

The second phase of the French First-Language Pan-Canadian Project will have two segments matching the two priorities identified following completion of the first project:

Segment 1: Development of an oral communication training kit

This kit will include an inventory of material dealing with major trends and research in the teaching of oral expression as well as an inventory of the resources (teaching/learning and diagnostic assessment) used in various jurisdictions; a continuum of oral communication from kindergarten to grade 12; scenarios setting out various facets of the teaching/learning of oral expression (spontaneous and rehearsed); a parent brochure; and a training plan for educators.

Segment 2: Development of a training kit of cognitive and metacognitive strategies for reading and writing

This kit will provide training on the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in reading and writing, integrating oral communication into various subjects. The resources could include diagnostic tools, pedagogical resources, and strategies to meet the needs of Francophone students in minority-language settings.

ROLES OF JURISDICTIONS AND PARTNERS

With the exception of Quebec, all provinces and territories will participate in the project. Here are the various roles and responsibilities involved.

CMEC

Ministers and deputy ministers, via the appropriate CMEC mechanisms, will:

- approve project deliverables;
- ensure that appropriate staff are assigned to work on the project and are given the necessary time and resources to guarantee effective participation.

CMEC Secretariat

The CMEC Secretariat will:

- provide logistical support to lead jurisdictions to prepare reports for CMEC and the Advisory Committee of Deputy Ministers of Education (ACDME) in the form determined by the Steering Committee;
- ensure the provision of project-related translation and interpretation services;
- provide logistical support to the Steering Committee and Francophone curriculum directors (e.g., arrangements for meetings at CMEC Secretariat and teleconferences, distribution of meeting agendas);
- ensure liaison with education-sector partners;
- assist lead jurisdictions in disseminating project-related information across Canada, in accordance with CMEC's communication strategies and the communication strategy agreed on for the project;

- provide participating jurisdictions with project-related information, according to the established communication strategy, and oversee the implementation of the two segments (priorities) for this second phase.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee of Assistant Deputy Ministers responsible for Francophone curriculum and representative of participating jurisdictions in Canada will provide overall project management, as was the case for phase I of FFLPCP. This committee will:

- identify major policy issues;
- if needed, make recommendations to CMEC and ACDME;
- resolve disputes.

Francophone Curriculum Directors

Francophone curriculum directors from participating jurisdictions will:

- manage project needs within their jurisdiction;
- communicate project-related information according to the agreed-on communication strategy;
- ensure that their jurisdiction signs off at every step where consensus is required.

Lead Jurisdictions – Ontario (Segment 1) and Prince Edward Island (Segment 2)

The lead jurisdiction for each project segment will provide logistical support, including:

- coordinating the project from beginning to end, in accordance with Steering Committee recommendations;
- providing for effective communication between all participating jurisdictions through their Francophone curriculum directors;
- ensuring the effective implementation of the project (meeting arrangements, word processing, revision, proofreading);
- preparing project documentation for the Steering Committee, as needed;
- ensuring appropriate linkages with CMEC Secretariat staff;
- providing appropriate staff support at the stages set out in the work plan;
- supervising the production and preparation of the final document in French (and in English, if needed), working with CMEC Secretariat staff;
- supervising researchers and contractors.

Work Teams

In addition to the above structure, each project segment will have a work team made up of a representative from each participating jurisdiction. Each province and territory can choose whether or not to participate in the overall project or one component. Jurisdictions may choose to participate individually or through a regional organization (e.g., the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training [CAMET] and the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol).

Role of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)

Education NGOs with a pan-Canadian reach will be consulted in order to tap the expertise of their provincial/territorial and local representatives. These include:

- Association canadienne d'éducation en langue française – ACELF
- Canadian Teachers' Federation – CTF
- Association canadienne des responsables des enseignantes et des enseignants en français (langue maternelle) – ACREF
- Commission nationale des parents francophones – CNPF
- Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones – FNCSF

In addition, jurisdiction representatives within each work team will consult other community organizations within their jurisdiction throughout the development of their respective projects (e.g., psychologists, educational psychologists, school boards, and school principals).

First and foremost, these consultations will be designed to inform stakeholders, to ensure they sign on to the project, and to gather their ideas about the content of the oral communication training kit (Segment 1) and the training kit on cognitive and metacognitive strategies in reading and writing (Segment 2). Stakeholders will later have an opportunity to comment on drafts of each of the two kits. Finally, stakeholders will be part of the joint implementation activities for the project, thereby enhancing links between NGOs and ministries and departments of education.

Funding

Not all jurisdictions have the same resources to invest in a project of this scope, although all have the same needs. Most jurisdictions appear interested, as in the first phase of FFLPCP, in a 50-50 split formula with 50 per cent financed collectively by jurisdictions according to an equitable weighting formula and 50 per cent funded by Canadian Heritage. The financial participation of the federal government is a necessary condition for the implementation of this project.

**ACTION PLAN FOR THE
FRENCH FIRST-LANGUAGE PAN-CANADIAN PROJECT – PHASE II
2005–06 to 2007–08**

Corporation of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada

Segment 1: Oral communication training kit – Lead: Ontario			
Results expected in 2007–08	Strategies / Measures	Performance indicators	Anticipated investment
1. Development and improvement of oral communication skills for students from kindergarten to grade 12 2. Improvement in the capacity of teachers to teach oral communication from kindergarten to grade 12 3. Increased access to teaching tools for oral communication 4. Increase in the number of entitled students in schools	Development of an oral communication kit made up of six elements: 1. Inventory of resources and status report on oral communication 2. Continuum of oral communication from kindergarten to grade 12 3. Inventory of teaching and learning resources and diagnostic tools 4. Scenarios showing various facets of the teaching/learning of oral expression (model lessons) 5. Parent brochure 6. Training plan	1. Identification of target thresholds in oral communication based on diagnostic tools	2005–06
		2. Distribution of kit and implementation of training plan in all Francophone school boards in minority-language settings	Federal \$ 41,625 CMEC \$ 75,000 Total: \$ 116,625
		3. Integration and use of kit in teacher training programs	2006–07
		4. Use of strategies for teaching oral expression in the classroom	Federal \$ 62,875 CMEC \$ 75,000 Total: \$ 137,875
		5. Evaluation of the kit by users	2007–08
			Federal \$ 45,500 CMEC \$ 0 Total: \$ 45,500

Segment 2: Training kit of cognitive and metacognitive strategies for reading and writing – Lead: Prince Edward Island			
Results expected in 2007–08	Strategies / Measures	Performance indicators	Anticipated investment
1. Increased mother tongue fluency and increased knowledge to help students become better readers and writers 2. Improved teacher training on best practices in respect of cognitive and metacognitive strategies to develop literacy 3. Improved access to teaching tools for teachers on cognitive and metacognitive strategies 4. Increase in number of entitled students in schools	Development of a kit of teaching tools in reading and writing made up of six elements: 1. Inventory of material on cognitive and metacognitive strategies in developing literacy 2. Inventory of available resources (diagnostic tools, assessment tasks, information sheets, booklets, CD-ROMs, tables) 3. Directory of cognitive, metacognitive, motivational and catch-up strategies and development of a supporting teachers guide 4. Inventory of best practices in reading and writing focusing on motivational and learning strategies 5. Student brochure 6. Training plan	1. Distribution and implementation of training plan in all Francophone school boards in minority-language settings 2. Integration and use of kit in teacher training programs 3. Use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in the classroom 4. Evaluation of the kit by users 5. Student outcomes on School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP)	2005–06
			Federal \$ 41,625 CMEC \$ 75,000 Total: \$ 116,625
			2006–07
			Federal \$ 62,875 CMEC \$ 75,000 Total: \$ 137,875
			2007–08
			Federal \$ 45,500 CMEC \$ 0 Total: \$ 45 500
TOTAL 2005–06			Federal \$ 83,250 CMEC \$ 150,000 Total: \$ 233,250
TOTAL 2006–07			Federal \$ 125,750 CMEC \$ 150,000 Total: \$ 275,750
TOTAL 2007–08			Federal \$ 91,000 CMEC \$ 0 Total: \$ 91,000
TOTAL 2005–06 to 2007–08			Federal \$ 300,000 CMEC \$ 300,000 TOTAL \$ 600,000

