



Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers
Association canadienne des professeurs de langues secondes

For immediate release

NEWS RELEASE

CASLT EMBRACES PROPOSED REFORMS TO THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

Ottawa, February 22, 2021 – The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) welcomes the legislative and administrative proposals put forward by the Government of Canada in “English and French: Towards a substantive equality of official languages in Canada.” Recently shared by the Honourable Melanie Joly, Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages, this reform document proposes to modernize Canada’s Official Languages Act (1969).

“The Government of Canada’s commitment to supporting French and English teaching and learning is crucial to the continued development of Canada’s bilingual identity. All Canadians must have opportunities to learn both of our country’s official languages,” said Gillian Blackmore, President of CASLT. “Strengthening and expanding minority-language education across the educational continuum – from early childhood to post-secondary levels – will improve equitable access to second language learning.”

CASLT is also pleased with the Government of Canada’s intention to work with provincial and territorial governments to develop a nationwide framework for the recognition of teaching diplomas in French immersion, French as a second language, and French as a first language. In addition to helping address Canada’s current shortage of French-language teachers, the implementation of this framework would both encourage success and favour mobility among them.

Explicit recognition and support of Indigenous languages is a key feature of the proposed updates to the Official Languages Act. CASLT supports the proposal to strengthen section 83, which indicates that nothing in the Act will detract from the rights of other languages, by explicitly mentioning Indigenous languages. As an association dedicated to excellence in teaching languages, CASLT stands ready to support communities and institutions working to revitalize Indigenous languages wherever welcome and appropriate.

CASLT looks forward to the modernization of the Official Languages Act and to continuing to work with partners and stakeholders to promote language teaching and learning in Canada.

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Since 1970, the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) is dedicated to promoting the advancement of language learning and teaching throughout Canada. This is achieved by creating opportunities for professional development, by initiating and disseminating research, and by facilitating the exchange of information and ideas among language educators.

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