



**PRESS RELEASE**

**ACTION PLAN FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES 2018-2023**

Ottawa, March 29, 2018. –The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) welcomes the [Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-2023: Investing in Our Future](#), unveiled yesterday by the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

The Government of Canada's goal is to increase, by 2036, the bilingualism rate of the Canadian population from 17.9% to 20%. CASLT is pleased to see that of the \$499 million in **new investments** for 2018–2023, \$100 million will be invested in promoting a bilingual Canada and in teaching and learning French and English as second languages.

CASLT's President, Janice Aubry, is pleased with the 2018–2023 Action Plan for Official Languages: "I would like to congratulate the federal government for a total investment of \$2.7 billion over 5 years for a bilingual Canada. CASLT is looking forward to playing an important role in helping the federal government in meeting the goals of this plan, and is eager to work closely with this government that values bilingualism, and the teaching and learning of official second languages."

**Investment in second-language teaching and learning**

Among the investments announced for 2018-2023, CASLT is pleased to see important investments in addressing the shortage of French as a second language teachers and in inciting youth to pursue post-secondary education in French.

- **\$31.29 million for the recruitment of teachers for French immersion and French as a second language.** The shortage of French as a second language teachers is a serious problem across Canada and these investments will allow a sustained intervention to address this shortage of qualified teachers. CASLT is committed to working with governments and stakeholders in the field of second-language education to enable all children to have the opportunity to learn Canada's official languages.
- **\$12.6 million in bursaries as incentives for English-speaking students to pursue post-secondary studies in French.** This incentive will contribute to the maintenance of French language skills among young adults.

CASLT also supports that the Action Plan includes \$70 million in additional investments for cooperation with the non-governmental sector. We anticipate that a portion of this increase will be allocated to the second-language learning sector.

Finally, CASLT looks forward to seeing this Action Plan support the implementation the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages as the national benchmarking tool for language proficiency, as part of its strategy.

*CASLT fosters and advances professional excellence in the teaching of languages in Canada.*

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