



PRESS RELEASE

Calgary Public School Board's decision detrimental to the teaching of second languages

OTTAWA, May 1st, 2011 – The announcement of the Calgary Public School Board's decision to eliminate the mandatory Core French program for grades 4 through 9 beginning in the 2011-2012 school year has greatly disappointed the second language teacher community, represented by the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT). This decision comes as a surprise since it not only eliminates access to learning French, an official language of Canada, but it also impairs the viability of second language learning as a whole.

For over 40 years, CASLT has worked to promote the knowledge and teaching of Canada's official languages by supporting teachers throughout the country with various services and activities. It recognizes the importance, value and benefits of bilingualism for Canadian society. CASLT finds deplorable any decision that makes this vision move backwards.

CASLT also believes that learning a second language is an essential part of a child's education and personal development. Many neurological and scientific studies show the benefits on brain development and long-term mental health that come from knowing and learning two or more languages.

What initially appears to be a wise move is in fact an inefficient and costly decision. Knowledge of both English and French as well as learning and maintaining other languages are assets of extreme importance to Canada in a world economy increasingly driven by mobility. Let us hope that the Public School Board will re-evaluate its decision. CASLT strongly encourages the Public School Board to reconsider doing so.

Established in 1970, the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) increases awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the importance of second language learning and teaching throughout Canada and promotes the advancement of professional excellence among language educators. See www.caslt.org for more information.

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Promoting the advancement of second language teaching and learning.
Favorise l'essor de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage des langues secondes.