



English Parents' Committee Association



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Katherine Korakakis is the President of the English Parents Committee Association (EPCA). In addition to this vital role in the Quebec educational sector, Katherine has spent most of her life working alongside start-ups in various verticals. For 10 years, she was responsible for the development of entrepreneurial initiatives and projects under the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge, a Youth Secretariat program of the government of Quebec. Katherine is Head of Entrepreneurship at ProMontreal Entrepreneurs (PME), an early stage VC fund that has been around for 22 yrs, and is currently the vice-president of PME MTL Centre-Ouest and on the investment committees of PME MTL Centre and PME MTL Centre-Ouest. Katherine has also authored and co-authored guidebooks on entrepreneurship education and has served on the Boards of numerous corporations.

President's message

The School Year is Underway - IEPs & Progress Reports

Dear Parents,

The new academic year has well and truly begun, and Governing Boards ought to have already been formed at every school. Congratulations to all the parent members who were recently elected or re-elected.

As the entity responsible for making decisions at a school, the Governing Board (GB) is an important component of Parent Governance and the educational ecosystem. Are you aware of the many opportunities and obligations that come with having a GB? The more we understand our responsibilities and authority, the more effective and engaged we can be as volunteers. And as parents, the more you can understand how to hold your school and the GB accountable for the educational decisions that affect your child. You can consult our guide manual [here](#).

Another important event happening currently is that IEP's are being written for your children. EPCA has written a couple of blog posts to help guide you as you make the most of your child's IEP meeting, including how to prepare to have conversations about your child's IEP.



Finally, the first progress reports have just come out for this academic year. This is an important milestone in your child(ren)'s academic journey this year and an important time to reflect with them – and their teachers if necessary – on how things are going. Don't feel overwhelmed... there are many supports available if required!

Information on all of the above can be found in this edition of the newsletter as well as on our website at epcquebec.org and our partner site at parents.quebec.

Have a wonderful start to Fall!

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

What is an IEP and How can it Help?

An IEP builds on the curriculum that a student with a handicap, social maladjustment, or learning difficulty is following. It is designed to set out the strategies being used to meet the student's specific identified needs. This plan is created with short and long term goals to help measure the effectiveness of the interventions used to help your child in his/her school life and beyond.

The IEP is:

- A flexible, working document, helping the school and parent/guardian plan for, monitor, evaluate, and communicate the student's growth.
- An opportunity for schools, students, parents, and external agencies to work together to create a workable record of your child's developmental journey, both academic and social.
- A process embracing the philosophy that success has different meanings depending on the different abilities and needs of the student.
- An identifier of the entire child's needs, how the school will meet these needs, and how the school will measure the child's progress.

Why should parents participate in the IEP meeting?

YOU know your child better than anyone else and can provide critical information to the school team. YOU have the best understanding of your child's social, developmental, physical, and academic history. YOU chart your child's future with every step that they take and are ultimately responsible for your child's development and overall success. As a parent, you are your child's best advocate. Your child will have a greater chance for success when the school and the family work together!

Who is involved in the IEP?

The development of the IEP is a team process, which involves the principal, the parents, the student (where appropriate) and the staff working with the student. Although the principal is responsible for the implementation and periodic evaluation of the IEP, it may be coordinated by a key professional involved with the child (e.g. classroom teacher, resource teacher), and may be facilitated by an aide or technician.

IEP interventions can be expressed as “adaptations” or “modifications”... what is the difference?

- Modified Program, Competency, or Subject: End of cycle objectives will be modified to reflect the student's particular level of functioning (i.e. student will learn to count to ten).
- Adapted Curriculum: Students will be able to meet standard end of cycle outcomes with specific adaptations in place (i.e., preferential seating, adapted materials, etc.).

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Things Parents can do Before an IEP Meeting

The key to being a successful, confident advocate in your child's IEP sessions is preparation. Here are five things you should do before an IEP meeting.

1. Gather and examine your records.

Take out any official documents you have copies of, such as your child's current IEP, recent progress reports, and report cards. Collect samples of your child's homework, tests, and teacher notes. Make your own notes and observations as well. (An IEP binder is a handy method to collect all this information in one spot.)

When you've gathered everything, search for areas that want attention. Where is your child progressing or struggling? What resources and services are (or are not) beneficial? Is there anything fresh to report?

2. Invite visitors and supporters.

If you believe you will require assistance at the meeting, request someone to accompany you. This might be a family member or friend, a professional who works with your child, or an advocate. Explain how you believe they can assist you.

You may wish to meet with them before the meeting to discuss your issues, obtain their perspective, and prepare your approach. If your child is attending an IEP meeting, be sure to prepare them as well.

3. Plan your questions and suggestions.

You may have a lot on your mind after reading your records and speaking with your child, family, or invited guests. Making a short list of the points you wish to make during the meeting might be beneficial. Consider the fundamentals: your worries, questions, and ideas. During the meeting, you might refer to this list.

4. Inform the school about your visitors and requests.

Inform the IEP team leader of any visitors you want to bring to the meeting. Give their names and explain how they are related to you and your kid. If you or any of your visitors require special accommodations, such as videoconferencing or a translator, please notify the team leader in advance.

5. Unwind and think about your child.

Once you've prepared everything for the meeting, try to unwind and concentrate on your child's skills, interests, and problems. Pay attention to what your youngster has to say about school and learning. Remember that you are the only one on the IEP team who knows and understands your child. That frame of mind will allow you to approach the IEP meeting with power and confidence.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Things to do During an IEP Meeting

1. Discuss your child.

No one on the IEP team is as familiar with your child as you are. Share your thoughts about your child's personality, challenges, and strengths. You are not required to limit your remarks to academics. Discuss your child's performance on sports teams and with other extracurricular activities. This provides the team with further information about your child's strengths and interests.

2. Maintain an open mind.

If someone brings up an issue or solution that you are unsure about, hear them out. Sometimes obstacles arise at school that you do not encounter at home. After all, school is a unique setting with its own set of rules and objectives. You can create the best plan for your child if you work together with members of the school team.

3. Make inquiries.

Laws and programs governing special education are complex. Even if you're well prepared, new terminology may be introduced at an IEP meeting. When this occurs, request an explanation. You have the right to be informed about every aspect and choice. You can also request ahead of time that someone take notes during the meeting. Then, at the end of the meeting, request a copy of the notes.

4. Concentrate on the end result.

Verify that the staff is aware of your expectations and goals for your child. This puts everyone on the same page while you work on a plan together. Inquire about the team's proposals. You can also make changes. Share your concerns if you're not sure how something supports your child's objectives.

5. Advocate for your child's - and your own - rights.

The following are examples. If you are told that the school would not cover specific services, request to see a copy of the section of the Education Act that supports that claim. If you are hesitant about the IEP draft, do not feel obligated to sign it. And finally, you have the right to take the IEP draft home and think about it. Be polite yet firm and ensure that you have what you, and your child, need from the IEP.



Progress Reports

WHAT ARE PROGRESS REPORTS?

Teachers assess the previous year's competencies as well as begin the current year's curriculum. The progress report gives a snapshot of these early assessments and provides feedback about how your child is doing so far in each subject. Teachers share strengths as well as recommendations to help your child develop any lagging skills.

For example, English Language Arts has 3 competencies that are evaluated for each report card. See below for key features of each.



Competency 1: To read and listen to literary, popular and information-based texts

Key Features of the Competency

To construct meaning by applying appropriate reading strategies

To self-evaluate her/his reading development

To use a response process when reading and listening to literary, popular, and information-based texts

**TO READ AND LISTEN
TO LITERARY, POPULAR
AND INFORMATION-
BASED TEXTS**

To construct her/his own view of the world through reading and listening to literary, popular and information-based texts

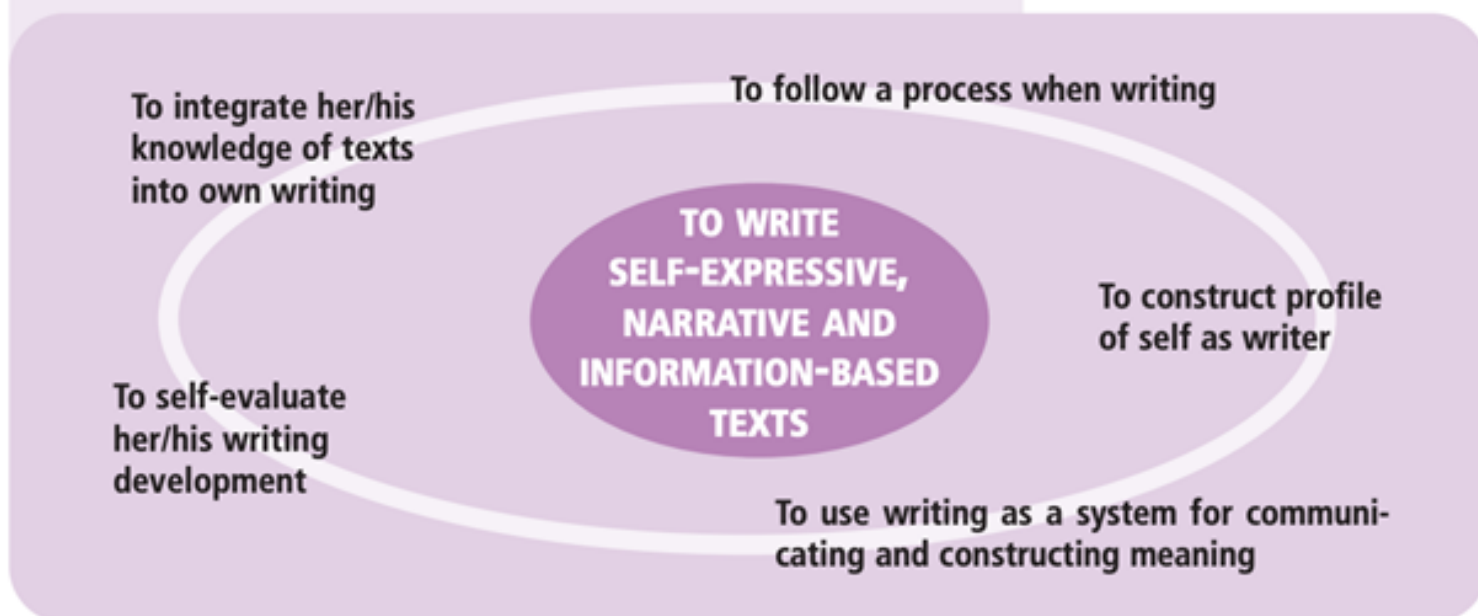
To construct a profile of self as reader

Progress Reports

cont.

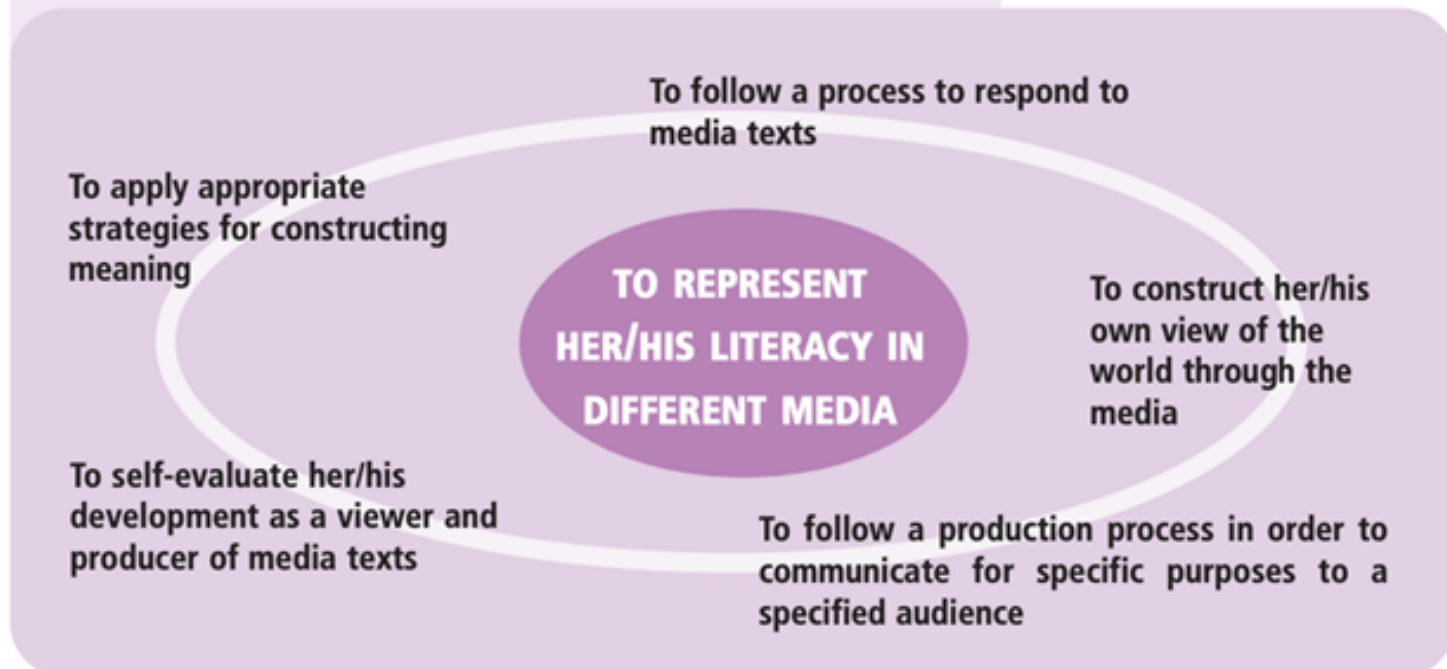
Competency 2: To write self-expressive, narrative and information-based texts

Key Features of the Competency



Competency 3: To represent her/his literacy in different media

Key Features of the Competency



Progress Reports

cont.

NOW WHAT?

PREPARE FOR PARENT-TEACHER INTERVIEWS

- Read your child's progress report
- Write down all your questions and concerns

AT THE MEETING

- Listen to the teacher review your child's progress reports
- Ask your questions
- Share your concerns
- Be respectful, but also be firm if you don't feel heard
- Ask for a follow-up meeting if your allotted time runs out and you still have more questions

AFTER THE MEETING

- Talk to your child
- Focus on the positive things that were shared by the teacher
- Create **SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time Oriented)** goals with your child to support their learning (especially if they are experiencing any difficulties in a specific subject)
- Hire a qualified tutor for your child if they are struggling- now is the time to act to ensure that your child develops essential skills that are needed to succeed in school



Who is eligible to attend English Schools in Quebec?

The following are the guidelines for English language eligibility. More information can be found on EPCA's website under [Eligibility](#).

In Quebec, there are three situations which permit a child to attend an English school:

- children who are residing in Québec permanently and who qualify for a Certificate of Eligibility for instruction in English
- children who are residing in Québec permanently and who are entitled to receive instruction in English under a Special Authorization
- children who are living in Québec temporarily and who qualify for a Temporary Authorization to receive instruction in English

Who may obtain a Certificate of Eligibility?

A certificate of eligibility is generally issued to children:

- who have received the major part of their elementary or secondary school instruction in English in Canada;
- whose brother or sister did the major part of his or her elementary or secondary studies in English in Canada;
- whose father or mother did the major part of his or her elementary studies in English in Canada;
- whose father or mother attended school in Québec after August 26, 1977, and could have been declared eligible for instruction in English at that time

Who may receive instruction in English under Special Authorization?

- children with serious learning disabilities as defined in the government regulation under section 81 of the Charter
- children admitted to receive instruction in English by the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur by reason of a serious family or humanitarian situation, following a recommendation to this effect by the examining committee, and after an assessment by a person designated by the Minister stating that the child's situation is not covered under any provision of the Charter.

Who is eligible to attend English Schools in Quebec?

cont.

Who may receive Temporary Authorization?

Children who may receive temporary authorization to receive their instruction in English fall into three categories :

First, the dependent children of persons living in Québec temporarily to study or work, including:

- the dependent children of foreign nationals who hold a Québec certificate of acceptance or an employment authorization or a student authorization issued in accordance with the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, or who are exempted from holding such a certificate or authorization under a statute applicable in Québec
- the dependent children of Canadian citizens or permanent residents domiciled in another Canadian province or territory of Canada who are temporarily living in Québec to study or work

Second, the dependent children of persons who are not Canadian citizens and who are posted in Québec temporarily as representatives or officers of a country other than Canada or of an international organization.

Last, the dependent children of members of the Canadian Armed Forces who are posted in Québec temporarily.

When a child is granted a temporary authorization to receive instruction in English, this is valid for the period of validity of the immigration document issued to the parent or child, or for the duration of their temporary stay, as stated in a sworn declaration. This stay can be for a maximum of three (3) years and expires on June 30 of the school year in which the temporary stay of the parent or child ends.

A temporary authorization to receive instruction in English may be renewed provided that the applicant still meets the same criteria as in his or her first application.

However, temporary authorization cannot be granted to the children of foreign nationals who are claiming refugee status for themselves or their children, or of foreign nationals who choose to settle in Québec on a permanent basis and obtain a Québec selection certificate. If an authorization has already been granted, it expires on June 30 of the school year in which the selection certificate is issued.

Bullying and Learning Disabilities

Bullying is a widespread problem. Many children harass others in order to feel strong. As a result, they target children who they perceive to be weaker or less likely to protect themselves. Children who study and think differently than their peers are more likely to be bullied. One reason is that their uniqueness can set them apart from the rest. They may have difficulties in school, such as difficulty reading or sitting quietly. Alternatively, they may get specialized services such as tutoring or Individualized Learning Plans (IEPs) to help them with their academic journeys. These can make them targets for bullying.

Another factor that can contribute to increased bullying is that academic difficulties might undermine a child's confidence and self-esteem. Children who bully may target other children who appear to be less inclined to stand up for themselves. However, it should be noted that not all bullied children are fearful. Some kids are hyperactive or misbehave (whether they mean to or not) and so they may be targeted if they are aggressive or easily agitated. It is also normal for bullied children to bully others in return either out of a sense of helplessness for their own situation or because they don't think there is anything wrong with the behavior, especially if people in power are not properly addressing the issue for them.



What exactly is bullying?

Kids argue with one another... this is a fact of life. They become agitated, say hurtful things to one other, and even fight. Bullying, however, involves more than just confrontation. Bullying occurs when someone exploits their authority to manipulate or injure another person. It's on purpose. And it occurs repeatedly, with the insensitive act being repeated.

Bullying children typically feel more powerful when they target children who are physically smaller or less popular. However, not all bullying is physical. Words may sometimes be used to hurt. Bullying does not have to take place in person. Bullying can happen everywhere, even at home on a computer, thanks to texting and social media.

Bullying may be dangerous to children. It can have an impact on their emotional health as well as their academic performance. Students that are bullied may find themselves participating in class less and less. They are also more prone to missing, skipping, or dropping out of school.

Bullying and Learning Disabilities

cont.

Bullying Examples:

Threatening to cause harm

Hitting/kicking

Pushing or tripping

Theft/damage

Rumors

Mean tweets or texts

Ridiculing

Name-calling, taunting

Bullying is not only bad, it is also illegal. There is anti-bullying legislation that requires schools to report and investigate bullying. Bill 56: An Act to Prevent and Stop Bullying and Violence in Schools was enacted by the Quebec legislature in 2012, revising the Education Act and the Act Respecting Private Education to expressly address bullying. The amendment outlines the roles and responsibilities of school boards, public and private schools, and the Ministry in providing a safe and secure learning environment in which every student may reach his or her full potential, free of bullying and violence. Learn more about Bill 56.

Bullying Resources:

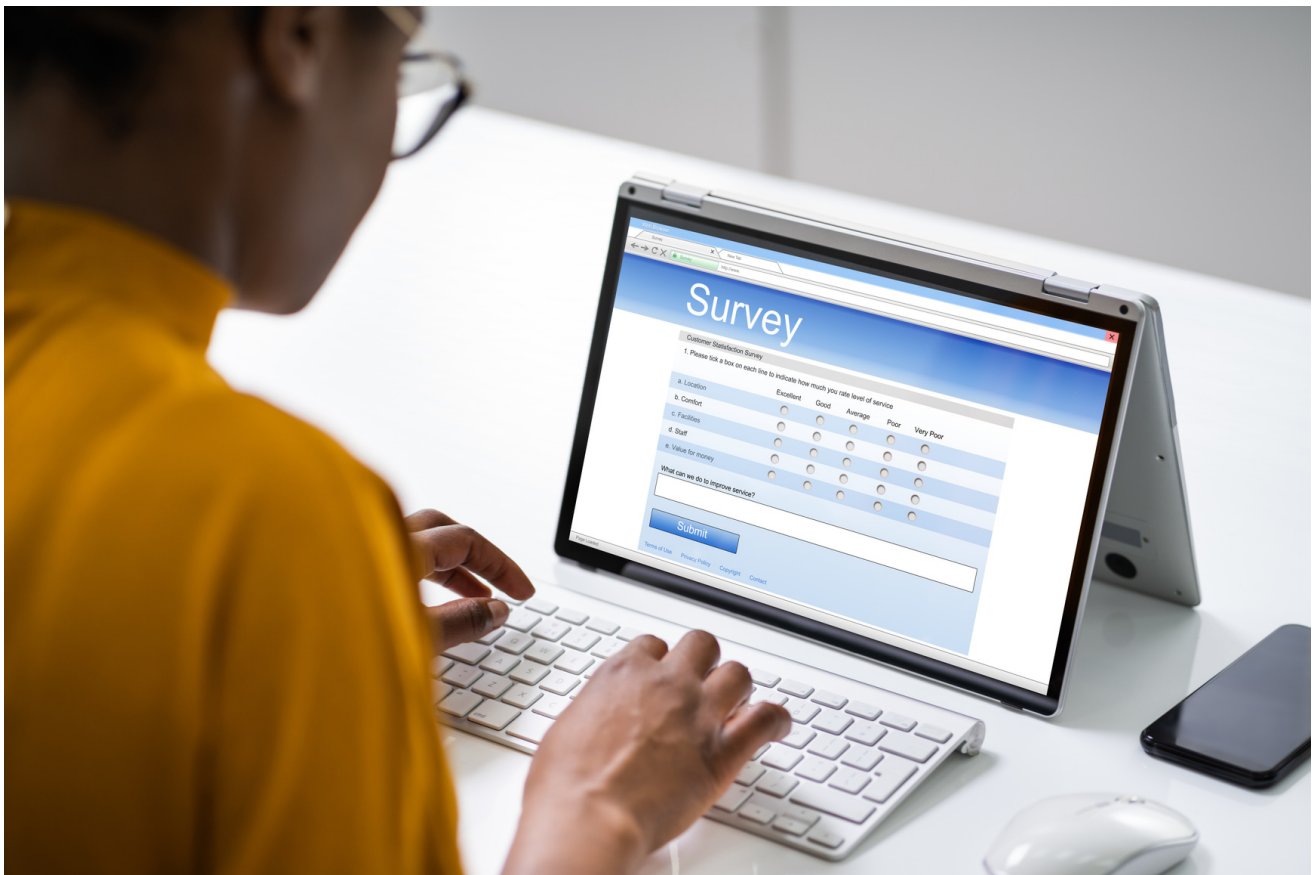
- Info-Social 811
- Your CLSC
- LigneParents or 1-800-361-5085 (in French only)
- Ligne Aide Abus Aînés or 1-888-489-2287
- Tel-jeunes or 1-800-263-2266 - Helpline for young people 5-20
- Kids Help Phone or 1-800-668-6868
- Sport'Aide or 1-833-211-2433
- Interligne or 1-888-505-1010
- Cybertip.ca - Canada's tipline to report the online sexual exploitation of children.
- NeedHelpNow.ca - Canadian Centre for Child Protection



Survey

For Parent Governance to function, it is fundamental for us, as representatives, to understand parents' concerns, priorities and opinions on the range of topics impacting their children. It is for this reason that we regularly invite you, our parents, to respond to periodic EPCA surveys. Please take the time – usually five minutes or less – to answer our survey questions so that we can work more effectively in the interest of our English educational community in Québec.

EPCA has prepared a new survey for parents – please click [here](#) to fill it out.



Parent Resources

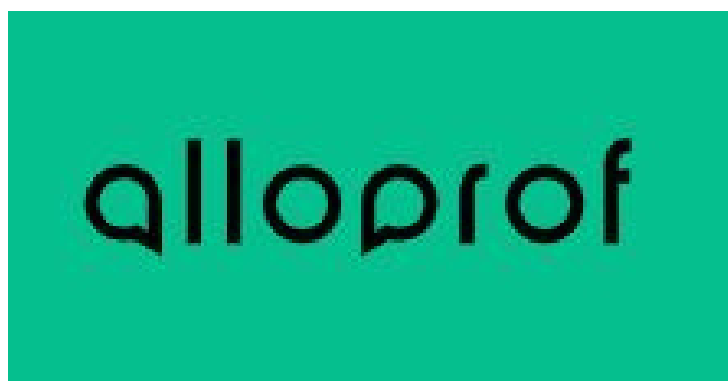
To find out how you can get more involved as a parent, check out EPCA's Back to School Guide to Involvement for Parents.

The Government has introduced new rules and regulations for **daycares**. More information can be found at the following link (in French only).

Tutoring



Homework Help



Supporting the journey to bilingualism, the Canadian Parents for French has many resources on their website to foster French second language learning.

SCHOOL TAXES

Please make sure you are paying your school tax where you want to, be it to the English System or the French System. This does not have to be where your child goes to school and can be your choice even if you don't have child currently going to school.

If you have don't know where your taxes are going or if you want to change where your school taxes are going, please call your school board and they will be able to assist you. For contact information, see our website.

News for You

What Impact Is Law 96 Having on Your Life? *The QCGN would like to know...*

BILL 96 BECAME LAW on June 1, 2022, but the discussions about this revision of Quebec's language laws are far from over. These discussions are happening within families, communities, and in the provincial courts.



The Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) is gathering information on how the new language law is affecting Quebec's English-speaking community. The QCGN describes the potential impacts of Law 96 as follows:

It could be a change in plans for education, work, or place of residence; an unexpected financial burden; challenges related to education or employment; difficulties communicating with the Quebec government or accessing Quebec government services due to language barriers; or any other tangible impact that you or an immediate family member have experienced.

In what ways is Law 96 affecting your life? Share your experiences with the QCGN by completing their short survey. You will find a link to the survey on the Home page of the QCGN website: qcgnc.ca. You can also use this link: <https://bit.ly/3vEu9KW>.

EPCA MISSION STATEMENT

The English Parents' Committee Association (EPCA) is a coalition of parents' committees of Quebec's English-language public school boards, representing more than 100,00 students in the youth sector.

EPCA advocates for a strong and sustainable English-language public education system to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for our children, while respecting the culture and language of anglophone Quebecers.

To do so, EPCA seeks to engage and motivate parents across Quebec to contribute to strong, representative and effective parent governance, to foster positive relationships with stakeholders across the educational spectrum, and to provide guidance and support to all member organizations.

What would you like to see in
our upcoming editions?

[TELL US HERE](#)

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EPCA STRATEGIC PILLARS

INFORM

Using all communications tools at our disposal, offer up-to-date information on public education initiatives, parent governance interests, best practices and issues management to ensure a healthy, well-engaged anglophone parent community.

CONSULT

Ensure strong, high-quality and consistent feedback mechanisms with members and partners across the English-language public school network through both electronic and in-person methods.

SUPPORT

Provide training and professional development at all levels of parent governance, optimize the sharing of best practices and provide multiple support services for parent committees, governing boards and parent delegates in need.

ADVOCATE

Push for appropriate policy change and improvement through enhanced partnerships with like-minded organizations, Government working groups/tasks forces, and related organizations, through well-considered political positions on behalf of English- Language parents committees across Quebec, taking into account regional difference and the urban/rural divide.