



QAIS Statement on Bill 96

Bill 96 Presents Unnecessary Hurdles for Families of Foreign Professionals

Arguing that reducing access to English schools for the children of professionals temporarily working in Quebec to three years from the current six is bad for the Quebec economy, Quebec Association of Independent Schools (QAIS), the 23-member association of English private schools, is calling on the Quebec government to modify Bill 96 and maintain the status quo.

“Studies suggest that the quality of education is a key factor in professionals’ decision-making regarding the pursuit of a job opportunity,” explains QAIS President Marnie Stein. “If Bill 96 is not amended, Quebec will be at a competitive disadvantage as business groups have pointed out.”

Whether it is senior executives in the corporate sector, medical experts or uniquely specialized university professors or religious leaders, the competition for top talent is now global. Many prospective candidates for leadership positions in Quebec have children who are studying in English elsewhere in the world. For the stability of the family, these newcomers to Quebec often select English schools as a reasonable form of continuity.

“Limiting children to only three years of English education would be reason enough for a lot of top talent to simply bypass coming to Quebec,” adds Ms Stein. “We need to do better in the challenging global competition to attract the best people in today’s global economy. They are critical to our province’s ongoing quest for leadership in competitiveness and innovation.

We have already heard from foreign nationals in our schools that the proposed Bill 96 3-year limit of access to English education would force some families to leave the province – and it will surely prevent top talent from ever coming to Quebec in the future. This is a serious situation, and we hope that the government will recognize the need to amend bill 96”.

It is important to note that many professional work contracts for foreigners are for five years, and family stability is critical in the initial decision to accept important leadership positions in Quebec.

The QAIS community includes several schools that have been serving Montreal and other regions for well over a century. Each school recognizes the primacy of French in the province. This is reflected in robust French language programs, including many mother-tongue offerings. So, QAIS schools are particularly well-placed to support incoming families who seek a unique balance of both English and French during critical periods of family transition.



“Further limiting the temporary access to English education for these families sends a very negative message to those considering Quebec as part of a new career and family pathway,” added Ms Stein. “Family transitions are challenging enough. Why present unnecessary and frustrating hurdles? Given the pressures of global talent recruitment, Quebec should instead lay out a larger welcome mat to attract more skilled leaders to our province. That’s at the crux of this issue and why the governing party (CAQ) should make no changes to temporary access to English education for children of professionals on temporary work visas.”

For further details on this issue and QAIS schools,
please contact Holly Hampson at (514) 483-6111

May 14th Rally details can be found on the Quebecers Against Bill 96 -
Québécois-es contre le projet de loi 96 page here:

<https://www.facebook.com/CitizensCoalitionBill96>
