



## Open Letter in support of the FJCF and their Call to Action on Linguistic Security

March 5, 2021

Last week, the *Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française* (FJCF) published an open letter on the need for immediate action to address linguistic security among all French speakers in Canada. At Canadian Parents for French, we wholeheartedly support the FJCF in its efforts to bring to light this obstacle which is impeding the advancement of a bilingual Canada.

We believe that French is an integral part of Canada, and both our organizations work tirelessly to create opportunities for youth across the country to learn, use and live in French. We are very aware that the linguistic insecurity experienced by many French speakers and learners dampens their motivations to use the language and to be able to fully participate in Canada's bilingual society.

In 2020, CPF published a research brief on the subject: [Linguistic Security: Be Brave! Speak French!](#) inviting readers to consider their attitudes, perceptions and actions towards other French speakers and to work towards ensuring that there are welcoming, safe and inclusive spaces to encourage use of language in authentic communications with French speakers everywhere across the country. We consider in particular how linguistic insecurity impacts both FSL teachers and learners:

*“These manifestations of linguistic insecurity, increasingly documented in francophone communities across Canada (e.g., Boudreau & Perrot, 2005; Freynet & Clément, 2019; Walsh, 2019), are equally significant among second language speakers of French, including the majority of French second language (FSL) teachers who teach French immersion, core, extended or intensive French in our schools. (p. 2)*

*“The recent OCOL report (2019), Accessing Opportunity: A study on challenges in FSL education teacher supply and demand in Canada links teachers' lack of confidence to challenges in recruitment and retention, which in turn contribute to French teacher shortages across Canada.” (p. 9)*

*“If schools, school boards and faculties of education were to acknowledge that ongoing linguistic development is a necessary educational/professional requirement, this stance could shift the current way of thinking where linguistic proficiency is viewed as a static point rather than an active “work in progress”. This requires sustained effort, structure and support.” (p. 10)*



We offer the FJCF, as well as the Linguistic Security Task Force, our support in working together to foster linguistic duality in Canada and engaging stakeholders at all levels to ensure bilingualism is a top priority, including identifying and discussing the roots of the problem and building strategies that will allow French speakers from all levels and backgrounds to increase their linguistic security. We agree modernizing the Official Languages Act is a perfect opportunity to guarantee French learning opportunities for all Canadians and help French linguistic minorities thrive. It is a perfect time to shine!

We are here to help and we are all working towards the same goal. After all, linguistic duality makes Canada more Canadian! Most sincerely,

Derrek Bentley  
National President

Nicole Thibault  
National Executive Director

*Canadian Parents for French is a nationwide, research-informed, volunteer organization that represents 25,000 members across Canada and champions the opportunity to learn and use French for all those who call Canada home*