

For immediate release

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French Immersion enrolment in Ontario's public education system has reached a record 8th year of consecutive growth

Mississauga - According to the Ministry of Education's latest statistics*, French Immersion enrolment in Ontario's public education system has reached a record 8th year of consecutive growth. Latest figures indicate 164,635 students in French Immersion and another 31,295 in Extended French, or 9.6 percent of the student population, are now registered in these popular programs.

In addition, there are over 780,000 students learning French through basic Core French.

"We believe French Second Language programs are popular because they are widely recognized by parents as providing young students with the tools and experiences that will enrich their lives, help them prepare for the future and participate in Canadian life to the fullest," said Mary Cruden, President Canadian Parents for French (Ontario).

The life-long benefits of learning French as an additional language include social mobility, career advancement, cultural understanding, and cognitive development.

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Information:

Canadian Parents for French (CPF) is the national network of members that values French as an integral part of Canada and is dedicated to the promotion and creation of French Second Language learning opportunities for all young Canadians.

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Background:

*MOE enrolment statistics for 2011-2012.

*Bloomberg Magazine has ranked French as the "third most useful language for international business." (Bloomberg)

*Official-language bilinguals all across Canada, regardless of mother tongue, have an employment rate higher than the national average, and an unemployment rate of 4%, which is well under the national average of 7.7% (Statistics Canada)

*Research has demonstrated the following cognitive and developmental benefits for youth learning French as a second language: increased cognitive abilities to understand complex and abstract concepts, enhanced listening skills, stronger problem solving skills, greater insight and understanding of other cultures, amongst many others. (Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science).