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Chair

The Honourable Michael Chong

Standing Committee on Official Languages

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•(0845)

[Translation]

The Chair (Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC)): Welcome to the Standing Committee on Official Languages. Today is Tuesday, April 3, 2012, and this is our 35th meeting. We are here pursuant to Standing Order 108 with respect to a study on the Evaluation of the Roadmap: Improving Programs and Service Delivery.

Today we have three groups appearing before us.

[English]

We have Mr. Childs and Mr. Rodgers of the English Language Arts Network Quebec. We have Mr. D'Aoust, Mr. Chiasson, and Mr. Birnbaum of the Quebec English School Boards Association. Finally, we have Mr. Cutting and Madame Marini of the Townshippers' Association. Welcome to all of you.

We will begin with an opening statement from the English Language Arts Network Quebec.

Mr. Charles Childs (President, English Language Arts Network Quebec): Good morning.

My name is Charles—although everyone calls me Chuck—Childs, and I am the president of the English Language Arts Network.

I'm here with Guy Rodgers, the executive director of ELAN.

We want to thank the Standing Committee on Official Languages for undertaking these hearings and for inviting us to make a presentation.

Arts and culture are vital components of community vitality. The importance of arts and culture for minority language communities has been well documented in recent years in a number of important reports: Bernard Lord's 2008 *Report on the Government of Canada's Consultations on Linguistic Duality and Official Languages*; the 2008 report of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, *Federal Government Support for the Arts and Culture in Official Language Minority Communities*; and the 2011 report of the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages, *The Vitality of Quebec's English-speaking Communities: From Myth to Reality*.

Current situation: By the mid-1980s, an arts community that had once produced internationally acclaimed artists such as Oscar Peterson, Mordecai Richler, Christopher Plummer, William Shatner, and Leonard Cohen was greatly diminished, and the theatre scene was virtually dead.

Guy Rodgers and I have been actively involved in our community for more than 30 years and have witnessed an amazing transformation in recent years. At the dawn of the new millennium, an artistic community was beginning to re-emerge with the assistance of recently created cultural institutions such as the Quebec Writers' Federation and the Quebec Drama Federation.

A major boost to the Quebec minority language community was provided by the IPOLC, a matching funds program between the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council. IPOLC contributed directly to the work of artists, but equally importantly, it brought together a number of community leaders for several years in an IPOLC oversight committee, which formed the nucleus of ELAN.

The English Language Arts Network was created in 2005 following the Quebec Arts Summit, which brought together 200 senior artists and partners to examine the situation of English language artists in Quebec. The creation of ELAN as a hub and network gave the Quebec English-speaking community a nucleus of capacity that had not previously existed.

Another important structuring element was the creation of the Cultural Development Fund as part of the current road map. The English-speaking community of Quebec had lacked the capacity to be involved in preliminary discussions with PCH and FCCF concerning the creation of a cultural fund. To ensure that Quebec's English-speaking communities in all regions received equal consideration, equitable support, the Quebec Community Groups Network hired a consultant to work with ELAN and the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network. The work group developed a policy framework, which articulated the context and challenges of cultural expression for the English-speaking community of Quebec as well as key strategies with desired outcomes.

Mr. Guy Rodgers (Executive Director, English Language Arts Network Quebec): Thank you, Chuck.

The policy framework devised some key priorities for the Cultural Development Fund. There were three.

The first was visibility. English-speaking artists in Quebec seek greater visibility, of course, within the English-speaking community. Because there has been so much recent growth, there's a lot of connecting to be done there. We're also trying to connect with the francophone majority, and some good work is being done there. Of course, within the francophone community, until recently, English-speaking artists were thought of as being Toronto and further west. We're slowly emerging the idea, thanks to Arcade Fire in some part, that there are anglo artists in Quebec. We're also trying to connect with the rest of English Canada...that there is still an English-speaking artistic community within Quebec, and that's coming forth as a revelation to a lot of people.

Another aspect of visibility is for artists to present a modern face for the English-speaking community. There's no need to remind you of the negative stereotypes that the English-speaking community has been saddled with for many generations. It is time to lay them to rest now that 80% of our community is bilingual. Those numbers are even higher amongst our youth.

Over the past four years, many individual projects supported by the Cultural Development Fund have addressed the challenges of visibility for arts and culture in the English-speaking community. The most broadly based was ELAN's Recognizing Artists: *Enfin Visibles!*, which we called RAEV. Almost 2,000 names of artists were submitted for this project, artists who were considered important enough by their peers to receive greater recognition. We chose 150 from all disciplines and regions to present a family portrait of the current artistic situation in Quebec. We created 25 short videos that talk about why these artists live in Quebec, how it benefits them, the degree of bilingualism, their integration within the larger community—again to break down the stereotypes. We created short histories of each discipline—writing, theatre, film, etc.—to talk about how there was a golden era, there was a crash, and there's a steady rebuilding. Guernica Editions thought the story was so interesting that they brought it out last year in book form. If anybody wants to order copies, I'd be happy to take orders.

So visibility is a process we've been working on, and fairly successfully, certainly in the last two or three years.

The other big issue is access. What that means is access for artists to audiences, but more importantly, or as importantly, is access for the English-speaking community to live arts and culture. This is particularly important as you get away from Montreal. The townships have a pretty lively indigenous art scene, but as you get further removed, the need for live artists becomes greater and greater.

The most influential project for access so far has been ELAN's arts and community culture on the road, which is developing a network between artists and regions, to send artists to regions, to send artists between regions, and to develop local arts and culture—theatre groups, choirs, book clubs—to really mobilize the people who are interested in arts and culture.

The third leg of this plan for our strategy and the Cultural Development Fund was the creative economy. We're just in the process of putting the final touches to a research project that was funded by Industry Canada through the Quebec English language research program out of Concordia University, and we're hoping

that's going to give us some really clear guidelines on where we can develop our community over the next five to ten years.

On access to supports and services, because ELAN is a fairly late arrival on the scene, we've worked very closely with our francophone colleagues to look at how the Official Languages Act and support has benefited them. There is, for example, a CRTC support group, and we attend those meetings twice a year to find out the issues in broadcasting. Because the English-speaking community has lacked resources, expertise, and capacity, we've neglected the entire communication-broadcasting dossier, so there's practically no representation of the English-speaking community in Quebec. We're working on that, but it's a big dossier and progress is fairly slow. We have also been working with the Canada Council. The FCCF sits down with the Canada Council once a year to look over all of the dossiers in arts and culture, so we have also started doing that with the Canada Council, which is extremely beneficial.

Last year the Department of Canadian Heritage set up a working group with all federal partners relating to arts and culture, which is extremely beneficial. The second meeting we had a couple of months ago brought in new partners who are not directly related to arts and culture, like Industry Canada and DEC, and that led to this research project in the creative economy. This support has been extremely helpful to us.

• (0850)

ELAN plays a national role, consulting with federal partners and agencies concerning policies and programs for the English-speaking community, serving all regions of Quebec and collaborating with other sectors, such as education, employability, and health. However, ELAN does not yet receive funding from national envelopes for the work it does at a national level. That's a whole story about regional envelopes versus national envelopes eligibility. Traditionally, you had to be present in three provinces to be eligible for the national envelopes. When there's only one province in which there's a minority anglophone community, it's hard to be eligible for some of these national programs. Groups like QCGN and ELAN, which do a lot of work at what is effectively a national level, need somehow to be brought into that national envelope.

• (0855)

Mr. Charles Childs: As with most things in Quebec, the language dynamics are complex. According to the most recent census, there are 8,500 anglophones working in arts and culture in Quebec. The percentage of artists among the Quebec English-speaking minority, almost 1%, is significantly higher than the national average of 0.65%. This is good news. Within 25 years a dramatic process of renewal has taken place. Unfortunately, increased vitality in the English-speaking community is invariably viewed by some in Quebec as a threat to the French language and culture.

The international juggernaut of English language business, politics, and Hollywood entertainment needs to be distinguished from the work of local artists. ELAN has worked very hard to link the visibility of English language artists to the benefits for the larger community. In March 2011, when Arcade Fire won a Grammy and said “Merci, Montréal!”, everybody noticed and wanted to share the glory of it all. Quebec's National Assembly passed a unanimous motion recognizing the contribution of artists, francophone and anglophone, in promoting Quebec culture.

In a recent QCGN priority-setting conference, the main story reported in the *Montreal Gazette* was that “Anglophone artists bridge linguistic divide”. The report referred to many success stories in the realm of arts and culture, but also noticed that the francophone media in recent months have been filled with stories about the troubling resurgence of English language in Quebec. This month's article in *L'actualité* is the most alarmist declaration to date. It is a reminder that no matter how bilingual anglophones become, someone will always question whether we play a positive role in Quebec society.

At a political and policy level, there's only one official language in Quebec, and it's not English. This fact complicates our relationship with the Government of Quebec and corporations and presents numerous challenges for English language artists.

What is the future for English language arts and culture in Quebec? The complex linguistic situation in Quebec makes support from Quebec City unpredictable and unreliable, at least in the near future. Therefore, federal support is vital, and the Cultural Development Fund has been immensely beneficial. A significant renewed investment in the Cultural Development Fund during the next five-year plan will have an immeasurably positive impact on minority official language communities.

Thank you, and we'll be happy to answer questions.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Childs.

Thank you, Mr. Rodgers.

Now we'll have an opening statement from the Quebec English School Boards Association.

[Translation]

Mr. David D'Aoust (President, Quebec English School Boards Association): Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the Standing Committee on Official Languages.

[English]

The Quebec English School Boards Association welcomes this opportunity to engage in an important discussion with you on the contributions, concerns, and expectations that characterize Canada's other official language minority community, which is the English linguistic minority in Quebec, or, if you like, as the QCGN developed two weekends ago,

[Translation]

we are English-speaking Quebecers. That is new.

[English]

Our focus, of course, will be on public education. QESBA is the voice of English public education. We are now approximately 87

years old in Quebec—so it's not an institution born yesterday—and we have the wonderful responsibility and honourable task of educating the children of our artists in Quebec.

QESBA is the voice of English public education, representing nine English school boards, serving some 100,000 students, 340 elementary and secondary high schools, vocational and adult centres, and of course community learning centres, which you will hear us talk more about later.

[Translation]

Our clientele is about as large as the francophone minority in 8 of the 10 provinces. Mr. Bélanger will, I'm sure, correct me if I am mistaken.

● (0900)

[English]

QESBA was proud to appear before the Senate Committee on Official Languages, when it turned toward our province in the fall of 2010, and was greatly encouraged by its final report, *The Vitality of Quebec's English-Speaking Communities: From Myth to Reality*, released last March.

In the report's preamble were three messages identified as the key ones by the committee itself. Second among them was the quote:

The government needs to recognize that since the realities and challenges experienced by the English-speaking and French-speaking minorities are sometimes similar but sometimes different, each minority must be treated in a way that takes its specific needs into account.

I would say that speaks for our francophone brethren in other provinces, as well as the anglophones in Quebec.

Our brief remarks on the contributions, concerns, and expectations facing English public education in Quebec are predicated on this federal government and future ones, heeding an important second message from your Senate standing committee. Allow us to speak on four key contributions, and to hope that our subsequent discussion will leave time for a more complete list.

Firstly, with the vital help of the Canada-Québec Entente on minority and second language education, our students are graduating from English public schools with an increased capacity to live and work in French—I have three of those graduates in my family—who stay in the province and work in both languages. Our school system is a world pioneer of bilingualism. If you look at what's happened as a result of the financial support in this vital agreement, we have produced students who not only see it as not a chore to speak French, but see it as an *automatisme*. It is part of their daily life and culture, like our poutine would be to the kids.

Second, as you will surely hear from other groups, the growing network of community learning centres, CLCs, within our English schools is breathing new life, stability, creativity, and cooperation in urban, rural, and suburban communities across English-speaking Quebec. In some rural communities, the federal support for the CLC has made the difference between compromising the future of a community by closing down a school and building new coalitions and partnerships toward an invigorated community. Remember, for some communities, if there is no school, there is no more sustainability. Even if it's not in your little village, it may be the centre for many villages.

I'm going to turn this over now to my colleague, Michael Chiasson. Mike, by the way, is the chairman of the Western Quebec School Board, just across the river from here. It covers the territory from east of Gatineau to the Ontario border. We count the beavers in his enrollment as well.

Mr. Michael Chiasson (Executive Committee Member, Quebec English School Boards Association): We certainly do.

[Translation]

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I am the product of the education system, like my mother and my children. We live in Quebec, and I work there in both official languages. I belong to the community.

[English]

Education is a provincial jurisdiction, and it is important to note that Quebec's Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport has been an instrumental partner in this new and exciting venture. The roots and the core support for the community learning centre initiative remain nonetheless the fruits of federal languages support.

Third, our English public network, by force of distance, low population density, and limited resources, has become a laboratory for innovation and invention. Twenty-first century learning techniques for distance education, e-learning, shared programs and services, and exchanges with our French school board neighbours are just a few examples of our English public schools adapting to changing needs and challenges.

Our high school graduation rates are far above the Quebec average. Compassionate and forward-looking programs of inclusion for students with special needs are hallmarks of our school system. They are also made possible, we must remind you, through the funding and oversight of the Government of Canada.

Fourth, English public schools are contributing to and not working against the common future of all Quebecers in our own province. While there remains a tendency within Canada's majority language communities—often exploited by the media and aggravated by certain political figures—to frame every question of language as a tug of war with a winner or loser, our English schools and the communities we serve are increasingly involved in contributing to the economic and cultural life of Quebec. Furthermore, they are actually contributing to the strength and security of the French language in Quebec. There need not be winners and losers on this matter.

As far as our concerns, support for and interest in the vitality and development of minority language communities has not always

topped the list of priorities identified by Canadians or embraced by governments. Too often, and falsely, there is a perception that linguistic duality is a burden rather than a fundamental characteristic of Canada. English-speaking Quebec, in all its diversity, is among Canada's most bilingual communities, and becoming more so each day. That is an asset for the country, but assets must be nurtured.

Any weakening of the levels of federal support in future Canada-Quebec education accords, any lessening of the community's strong consultative role in decisions on the allocation of funds under those accords, any structural shift that would weaken, and any structural shift that would remove federal oversight over transferred funds for minority language education in Quebec would be of real and present concern to us.

Quebec enjoys a legislative regime of English and French school boards, elected by universal suffrage. While there are some questions about the status and timing of those elections, we remain confident in the future of this vital level of local government that is so important to our community. But the political winds often shift in Quebec, and a vigilant and solid federal government regime of official language support is a beacon that must not fade.

• (0905)

[Translation]

Mr. David D'Aoust: Let's talk about our expectations.

[English]

Our first expectation is that the concern we just voiced will prove unfounded, and a future road map will be developed, embraced, funded, and enforced by this government, securing the place of future ententes, and moving forward from the end of the current ones in 2013.

In the short time available today we think that QESBA must echo an expectation that is longstanding and was reinforced only last weekend at an important and inspiring gathering of some 185 community partners organized by the Quebec Community Groups Network. Mr. Chair, we were honoured by your presence and encouraged by your words at that event. We even got to shake your hand over coffee, which was nice. You stayed for a while, and it was very noticeable.

Our second expectation is for equity. The gathering produced a draft declaration of very progressive priorities for the future of English-speaking Quebec. It won't satisfy everybody, but at least it is a central communication. It was adopted in principle in a spirit of real optimism and strength. But to move further there must be equitable federal funding and support for the visions outlined in that declaration for community building; inclusion of English speakers of all origins, mother tongues, and cultures; expanded research; and economic development and guaranteed service access in English.

Canada's English-speaking minority community has benefited from a founding presence and a critical population mass around the city of Montreal. No doubt a dispersed francophone community across Canada has not had that luxury, and we recognize that. Nonetheless, our diverse needs are there, and they must be addressed equitably.

Based on the measure of first official language spoken, our total population is roughly equivalent to that of francophone Canada outside of Quebec. The needs are there, particularly when in the region there are six-year-olds on school buses for as long as two and a half hours a day or more. Students are waiting for appointments with school psychologists and speech therapists for years, not months. There are still challenges in renewing our communities and encouraging newcomers to join us.

We are looking for equitable support from our federal government as QESBA joins other community partners in addressing these challenges.

Thank you. We look forward to exchanging with you. Please do not be shy about asking us any questions.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Now we'll have an opening statement from the Townshippers' Association.

Mr. Gerald Cutting (President, Townshippers' Association): Bonjour, Monsieur Chong.

Thank you, all members of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages.

Thank you for granting us this opportunity to appear before you this morning and to share some of our experiences concerning the road map for Canada's linguistic duality.

I am Gerald Cutting, president of the Townshippers' Association. Just to set a context, our territory is as large as some European countries.

We have been working on behalf of the English-speaking community since 1979, and since then, we have had 32 townshippers' days, awarded 56 individuals as outstanding townshippers for their amazing contributions, and celebrated 23 youth for their incredible demonstrations of leadership and commitment to our community.

Our association has evolved greatly over the past three decades, but so has our community.

We are the door that the English-speaking community knocks on. We are a reliable source of information and the go-to place for

multiple services and resources. We work with the federal government to ensure that the English-speaking community in the townships has the best possible access to services, information, and representation. We continue to find innovative and sustainable ways to mobilize and inform our community.

As the cost of operating a non-profit organization rises, the funding available to answer to the increasing demands of our population becomes scarcer, while contribution agreements add tremendous administrative requirements that place additional burdens on administration, leaving fewer funds available for ground work.

Fortunately, our association has gained momentum over the years. We have a solid knowledge base and the experience to represent our community, rally on its behalf, and build capacity.

Helping community members mobilize and form sustainable support groups and grassroots initiatives is just one example.

Network development through strategic collaboration has been an objective of our association over the past five years, and it will continue to be in the next five. In all sectors—health and social services, community renewal, economic prosperity, youth—a strong network with stakeholders that work collaboratively to achieve positive results is a key factor to guarantee this success.

Road map funding over the past five years has contributed to the development of these networks, and through these programs we have recognized very positive and concrete results.

These networks have become solid structures that are crucial to help support us in our important mission to maintain the vitality of the English-speaking community of the Eastern Townships. Over the past five years we have hired eight students with the Young Canada Works program.

We have helped support 20 interns studying in the health and services sector, and we have helped them find employment in the regions through the McGill recruitment and retention program funded by Health Canada.

We also helped 21 young adults gain experience and reintegrate into the work market with funding from Service Canada and their skills development program. This is not to mention the artists we have helped with marketing their work; the thousands of participants annually at our townshippers' day; the hundreds of underprivileged families that we help with income tax clinics, legal information hotlines, referral services; and so much more.

Although requests for our service have increased, our credibility rises and we accomplish solid, measurable, and sustainable results with the funding that is accorded to us, despite the fact that our reality is one of an aging, low income, scattered community with low levels of education. We can no longer rely on donations and membership fees to support all of our initiatives. Government funding is crucial to our existence. And I assure you of this: our existence is crucial in assuring the vitality of our community, granting us a voice, and forging for us a place within Quebec society.

The federal government must continue to recognize the importance of developing programs that support official language minority communities, through both program funding and project funding that will allow us to continue our work and to maintain the momentum we have gained over the past years, and by supporting us in the continual development of relationships with our public and community partners through our well-established networks, while continuing to recognize the concrete and measurable results we have achieved.

● (0910)

To reiterate some of the points already made in the Senate report, *The Vitality of Quebec's English-Speaking Communities: From Myth to Reality*, there were 16 excellent recommendations that were made.

We trust that you will consider these recommendations, as well as the issues and priorities that have been identified by community groups from across Quebec, along with the help of the Quebec Community Groups Network. The big three for us are consultation, communication, and cooperation between governments, with community organizations, and within the networks. These are the keys that will ensure positive results and help identify key priorities. Through the implementation of these strategies together, as partners working in support of our linguistic minority communities, we can continue to accomplish outstanding positive results.

Thank you once again for granting us this opportunity to demonstrate the crucial nature of this funding and the necessity of supporting our association. We remain humbled by this opportunity to appear before you, and we are ready to attempt to answer any and all questions.

Thank you again.

● (0915)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll have about an hour and 15 minutes of questions and comments from members of the committee, beginning with Monsieur Godin.

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to welcome you all here this morning. As you saw, we're doing this study on the road map. It has been the longest study I've ever seen in my life. I know sometimes we pass a bill in the House within two days, but here's a study we've been doing since September. I hope that something good comes from this.

First of all, I want to say that I am sorry that I was not at your event two weeks ago, your convention, because I do love to go. I

was there when you came to Gatineau; I attended. They're really good events and I wanted to be there. But as you know, we had our NDP convention to choose our next prime minister of the country, and I wanted to be there. We were trying to find Pierre Poutine; we didn't find him. He's going to come later on.

To get to the study, when we look at education—and you said it well, Mr. D'Aoust, when you said that education is under provincial jurisdiction. At the same time, in the Official Languages Act, if you look at part VII, I believe sections 41, 42, and 43 talk about the federal government promoting in provinces where there's a minority.

There's this question of whether they're using the money in the right place. We raised the question with the Commissioner of Official Languages, who said it wasn't his responsibility to investigate in the provinces. And we're not just talking about Quebec; we're talking about across the country. I'm not going to pick on Quebec. I'll pick on New Brunswick. Is New Brunswick taking the money and putting it in the right place for francophones? Is Nova Scotia taking the money and putting it in education?

The commissioner said, when he was talking to one of the education ministers, that when they get the money they put it where they feel it's most important to put it. Sometimes it doesn't even go to education.

Do you feel that you get the money? We have you here, Mr. D'Aoust, and you work in education. Do you feel you get the money? That's one thing.

Is the money spread well across the province? I'm talking about Quebec now. I'm coming back to Quebec. The English minority is only in Quebec. It's not in New Brunswick, it's not in Nova Scotia, it's not in Ontario—it's not any place in the country except Quebec.

But is it going...? For example, I don't think Montreal is the worst served. You've got the universities, you've got the health care, the hospitals and all that, but when we're talking about Rivière-au-Renard, for example, the Fox River.... The first time I heard that was when I went for a tour. Official language...and they were talking about the Fox River. I didn't know they had a Fox River, but now I know this was Rivière-au-Renard.

Are you getting what you're supposed to get? That's one question.

The other question I want to raise, because we only have seven minutes and I want to get an answer.... To the three groups, do you think the road map should continue? If the road map is good and if there are programs where you people can attach yourselves with your organization and get something noticeable, do you think it should continue, and not just last until 2013? In the last budget they said they would not touch the road map; they will do it, but what about the future?

I think it's serious if you say you feel it's good or not, because that gives a signal to the government.

I'd like to hear you on this.

• (0920)

Mr. David D'Aoust: Perhaps I'll speak and my colleagues will join me.

You're quite right. My experience and education go back to 1967, when I first became a teacher. I must tell you, I was an associate deputy minister and also saw some of the spending of this money. Years ago, my elected minister was Mr. Ryan. When I commented to him that I was concerned that all of the money being received for the minority linguistic community wasn't being spent on that community, he corrected me quickly and said, "No, Quebec spends more money on its minority linguistic community in education than it receives from the federal government." I don't know if that has changed with regard to the money, but I will tell you that we are pleased with what we have received with minority spending.

Out of the Canada-Québec Entente we have seen more of it over the last few years, especially since we've had a deputy minister for the English-speaking community. We have seen it in particular recently with the CLCs. If it were not for that money, I don't think we would be able to offer our school network up in Lourdes-de-Blanc-Sablon, with the Littoral School Board, as far away as the Gaspé, and up in parts of northwestern Quebec and in central Quebec. We would be closing more schools, and that total of 340 I told you about would have diminished.

Do we get the money? Yes, we get the money. I'm pleased to say that. Can I tell you that we get it all? I can't tell you that, but I would say we're getting a big chunk of that money and that it is well spent.

Mr. Yvon Godin: I'm sorry, but I want you to explain that to me: "Yes, we get the money. Yes, we have lots of money. Do we get it all?" Are you saying you're not getting it all?

Mr. David D'Aoust: I can't tell you if we're getting every bit of it that reaches our schools. That's what I'm telling you.

David.

[*Translation*]

Mr. David Birnbaum (Executive Director, Quebec English School Boards Association): We agree that a large portion is allocated to Quebec, because we have the good fortune, under the act, to have two education networks: one anglophone and one francophone.

[*English*]

But there is about \$26 million a year that is designated to community initiatives that are absolutely essential. As the president mentioned, the CLCs are one of them. One of our main reasons for being here, first of all, is to give you a "yes" in capital letters to the absolute urgency for the road map to be renewed. If it is not, it is our view that the meaning of sections 41 to 43 of the Official Languages Act is evacuated. Federal oversight is absolutely essential, and the Official Languages Act and subsequent decisions say there has to be an active offer and protection of services, so the road map has to be renewed.

We're getting our share of the money, with some real accountability difficulties at times, but under the current regime—and we want to make sure that regime remains—there are at least two pillars that are essential. One is that for the money that is not simply put

into the general coffers for the delivery of a two-language education system, there is a defined, clear, and transparent consultation process during which we get to recommend the kinds of services that are not equitably offered under the Quebec regime on its own. Those include community learning centres. They include all kinds of support and training for teachers and students. They include adaptations to programs that fall through the cracks for us.

We can give you an example just very quickly. The major expenditure we've seen over the last number of years is on lowering class sizes in Quebec. Because of the dispersed nature of our schools and the small populations, eight of our nine school boards have not benefited by getting a single additional class, despite an expenditure of over \$400 million.

We fill those gaps by virtue of the money we receive through the Canada-Québec Entente, so it is absolutely essential to us.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

Thank you, Mr. Godin.

• (0925)

[*English*]

Mr. David D'Aoust: Mr. Chairman, yes, we do want the program to continue.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Somebody should confirm that with the other two also, because I want everybody to know their opinion on this.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Menegakis, the floor is yours.

[*English*]

Mr. Costas Menegakis (Richmond Hill, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good morning. Welcome to you all.

I listened quite attentively to your presentations. It was very interesting to hear what you had to say, particularly in relation to the road map.

As you know, this is a fairly significant initiative for our government. It represents somewhere in excess of \$1 billion, hence the length we are taking to study it. We believe, on the government side, that we need to meet with as many stakeholders as possible. Had we finished the study, we wouldn't have had an opportunity to meet you today and hear what you have to say. We're delighted that you're here and delighted to hear your comments.

I'd like to begin with the Quebec English School Boards Association, partially because I'm a little biased that way. I was born, schooled, and raised in Montreal. I'm a product of, I believe, one of your school boards, the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal. I went to Van Horne school, Northmount high school, and Concordia University, and I had to live through the trials and tribulations of Bill 22 and Bill 101. Certainly in my professional career, on several occasions, I had to deal with l'Office québécois de la langue française, which was, I believe, a good initiative at the time. I don't know if they still do what they used to do.

Getting back to the road map, I heard you loud and clear that you'd like to see the road map continue. We're about 60% into it now. We're studying it midway because we want to see its impact. We want to hear what kind of impact it's had on you, the stakeholders, and on the community across the country.

What would you like to see in the next phase of the road map? This is assuming that we're going to renew it; we're hearing a lot of that from a lot of people who are coming here to testify before us. People would like to see it renewed.

So what would you like to see, and where would you focus your efforts in the next phase?

Mr. David D'Aoust: Certainly the whole area of special education is depleting our reserves. We have more and more needs in our schools in terms of psycho-educators, psychologists, and behaviourists to help out in the classroom at the resource level.

We don't have to worry about class size in the outer areas. They're either split classes or, if they are a single-level class, they're very small. As David said, when they applied new norms and reduced the norms, it didn't give us anything.

We are concerned about the increasing demand by parents for bilingualism. We're having to strive to keep our kids in our school system.

Remember, with Bill 101,

[Translation]

breathing new life into our schools is no easy task.

[English]

It's not easy to bring in new enrolments. We depend on our kids. As René Lévesque said in 1976, the future of your generation is in the power of your loins.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. David D'Aoust: You'll notice that having children is being put off to a later date. Childbirth is not a number one priority for young married couples or couples that get together.

Certainly the language issue is a big challenge for us to produce bilingual graduates, and it takes a lot of money to do that.

[Translation]

This responsibility of the neighbouring francophone school board was not a burden.

[English]

We do it out of our existing funds, and we need more funds to carry that out.

Then there's the recognition in those communities of sustaining small schools. Nobody wants to hear that their small school is going to be closed. If you're in the vicinity of Montreal, people will tell you if you close one school here in Montreal, it's still a tragedy despite the fact that you have to commute a few kilometres to another. In the country, you're talking 20, 30, 40, or 50 kilometres to the next school, so when you put an end to that school, bingo.

We require help in maintaining those schools, physical accommodations that have to be changed, and schools that don't have a gymnasium. You have helped us with those structures through that Canada-Québec Entente. We need to expand on that.

They are also beneficial to CLCs, because if you have, for instance, a national art gallery attached to your school, and I jest.... If you do have an auditorium attached to your school, you can bring people in for the arts and drama, which is part of the culture that has to be perpetuated and maintained. People will rally to support their school when they know that it is a centre of community life. That is very important to us.

The CLCs are new. They are taking hold. They're bringing communities together. Communities are turning more and more to their English-speaking school that has a CLC attached to it or that is becoming a CLC for services.

Rather than knocking on 15 doors, those schools are becoming *un guichet unique* for a lot of our community members. It's not a new idea in the French communities of Canada. Many of them have asked for money for the physical expansion of their schools and for physical projects. I remember reading one. I think it was in the Saint-Boniface area and how the attitude of the whole community, and toward their own French language, changed when they brought in a new gymnasium and an auditorium. It became like a British pub, a centre for people to meet.

● (0930)

Mr. Costas Menegakis: Thank you. I have a minute left.

Mr. David D'Aoust: Oh, sorry.

Mr. Costas Menegakis: No, that's okay. I'd like to hear, if possible, from the other groups as well.

Mr. Childs, I assumed from your presentation that your focus was really on the professionals providing arts and culture. Are the youth programs that you're affiliated with a little bit in line with what we just heard about the gymnasiums? I think sports and culture programs among youth really help promote the language as well.

Mr. Charles Childs: Well, ELAN is focused on art and supporting professionals. As Mr. Rodgers said, there's no question that, especially in communities involved in existing book clubs, amateur choirs, whatever's going on within the community, this would provide a structuring element to bring those together. It would also provide an opportunity, we feel, and the desire to include professional artists, so that we could invite professional singers to join the choir on one or two particular occasions.

So it goes to the vitality of the community, to the development of arts and culture and heritage within the community, and, yes, indeed, in answer to the question, it is the road map that is critical to our survival. I would like to see an opportunity to expand the concept of the network.

In Quebec, we have an organization like RIDEAU, which provides touring opportunities, but we need to create a network in those communities and give them the resources and infrastructure to present art and heritage in their communities.

Mr. Costas Menegakis: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Bélanger.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Welcome, gentlemen, Madame.

A couple of quick things first. I totally agree that the report done by the Senate last year was a very good one. I was just wondering if there has been a response from the government to that.

The Chair: There has, and I've asked the analyst, Madame Lecomte, to distribute an electronic copy of the report to all members of the committee. So you should get that shortly.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: And the response.

The Chair: We'll also ask her to distribute the response.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: That would be useful for all of us.

I've read the report, but I haven't read the response, so I'm curious to read that. A minority report...you might have problems with the copyright on that.

Mr. Guy Rodgers: Tom Cruise is an old friend of mine.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: No, no, no, it wouldn't be Tom Cruise. It was Philip K. Dick who wrote the book, *Minority Report*. I'd like to see, if I can, you know....

And shame on you for not mentioning Irving Layton, sir.

Mr. Charles Childs: Oh, I'm sorry.

Mr. Guy Rodgers: Especially after his anniversary last month.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Indeed, indeed.

[Translation]

First of all, let us talk about the linguistic school boards.

[English]

You may recall, sir, that I was part of the committee that looked at that. How has it worked out for the Quebec anglophone community?

Mr. David D'Aoust: Let me start by saying that I was one who didn't want that, because we offered French and English education in a Protestant milieu. All those who said they were Protestant got through the door. So we had a 50-50 system of French schools and English schools, and I loved it.

On the other hand, I have to tell you, in all sincerity, that I think it has worked well. The decision taken by the provincial government leader at the time, which I objected to, has worked out very well. I think it's brought our English-speaking community together even

more. We've experienced losses of enrollment. Many of our anglophone students, by the way, roughly 9,000 to 14,000—it's a big spread—still attend French schools, because it's a big attraction language-wise. We're competing with our French neighbouring school boards, and we are competing hard because

• (0935)

[Translation]

they are able to provide a francophone setting that we cannot provide in our schools.

And finally, the ministry of education views us as a minority. They often consult us, but not necessarily before legislation is passed, as was the case with Bill 56: the ministry did not consult us and it landed in holy water.

We are treated the same way with respect to ratios and per capita. However, there is never enough financing because our needs are not the same any more. One of our major requirements is language learning.

[English]

You know that the first immersion class was founded in a board I worked for. And I have to tell you that it was not a school board effort; it was a parent effort. The community put pressure on that school board and said that if they didn't want to make our kids bilingual, they were going to do it themselves. They paid for a teacher for an immersion year in kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2. It was a wealthy community, and they did it. Only then did school boards see the light, and then you had the research done by Wally Lambert, etc.

I would tell you

[Translation]

that our parents are as fervent today as they were back in 1964.

[English]

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Merci.

Do you agree?

Mr. David Birnbaum: The portrait our president has laid out reminds us of why we must see in any future road map the maintenance of Canada-provincial ententes that are not contribution agreements. We've heard some ill winds about that possibility, which would be an absolute and unmitigated disaster. We need the community opportunity to tell you how this money gets spent. We need this government to have the accountability measures in place to see that your legal duties in seeing the official languages respected work. That must be in the new road map.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: You're okay with the constitutional amendment on the school boards as well.

Mr. David Birnbaum: I'll agree with my president on that.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: You will?

Voices: Oh, oh!

[Translation]

Mr. David D'Aoust: We live with that.

[English]

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Townshippers, I had a good time a couple of years ago when I went to your AGM. When's your next one? Let me know.

Ms. Ingrid Marini (Executive Director, Townshippers' Association): It is June 1.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: June 1? Oh, I have something else the same weekend.

Ms. Ingrid Marini: We'll be doing a vernissage celebrating young artists.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Oh, great.

What StatsCan and you folks did was excellent. It was very useful. So congratulations again on that document.

I have a more touchy question on this week's *L'actualité*. May I have your comments on this?

Mr. Guy Rodgers: I have thought about that.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Please.

Mr. Guy Rodgers: Fifty percent of anglophones are married to francophones.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: For colleagues who don't know, *L'actualité* is the *Maclean's* equivalent, if you will. I know the chairman is aware.

They ran a cover this week that could become rather controversial, or rather is controversial, about the future of French in Montreal. It's not very complimentary. I'll just leave it at that.

Mr. Guy Rodgers: I mean, 50% of anglophones have married francophones. Partly that's because of love and partly it's kind of strategic. If you want your kids to stay in Quebec, they have to be bilingual, so having a francophone spouse is a very good advantage. I'm one of the traitors who's raised his kids in French.

This study somehow excludes all of those bilingual kids. Half of those kids are the most integrated, the most forward-looking part of our population, but he only interviews people who are not in that category. There's a ton of transient students. It's a completely biased, unfocused, unjust, reprehensible portrait, so there's a lot of controversy. We have made tremendous strides to increase our level of bilingual integration. Where this came from and what Jean-François was trying to do with this is a complete—

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: I think we know what Jean-François might—

• (0940)

Mr. Guy Rodgers: He's written a couple of letters saying what he didn't intend to do, which makes no sense at all.

[Translation]

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: All right.

[English]

Mr. David Birnbaum: It's important that the committee knows that the person who did this study is the chief advisor to future, former, and current Parti Québécois leaders. That was not noted in the study itself.

[Translation]

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: This was by Mr. Lisée, right.

[English]

Mr. David D'Aoust: It's a sad indictment of the anglophone community that it's gotten off its butt and tried to learn to speak French, not just to speak French but to function in French.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: You're not in Montreal, but would you care to comment, Madame Marini? We'd like to hear from you.

Ms. Ingrid Marini: Myself...?

Mr. Gerald Cutting: I would reiterate that in a certain sense, whenever we look at something that claims to be scientific we should apply a certain rigorous analysis to it. Right away, one of the first things that came out is that it was written by someone who came at the study hoping for the results he obtained. Anyone who has done any type of polling or surveying will know that you have to spend a great deal of time constructing the instrument that you're going to use. Anyone who is going to look at it will first of all question what kinds of methodologies were applied. In this sense, I don't want to offend anyone, but I would certainly question the methodology.

The Chair: Thank you.

Madame Marini.

Ms. Ingrid Marini: The information in this book will prove contrary to the information in that article. We're quite confident of the methodology used to get this information.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I've been looking through your book. It's very impressive. It's your second edition, I understand.

Congratulations.

Ms. Ingrid Marini: If you'd like a copy of the first, I can send one out to you.

The Chair: Okay.

Thank you.

Monsieur Trottier.

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to thank the witnesses for coming here this morning.

As my colleague Mr. Godin said, we have been examining the Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality for several months now.

[English]

Thank you for coming in this morning.

We've been talking to several stakeholder groups, people who've received funding under the road map. Not surprisingly, every single one of them has said to maintain the funding or increase it. I don't want to ask you that question, because all things being equal, people would prefer more funding so they can attain their objectives.

I want to talk more about the how and the functioning of your interaction with the various levels of bureaucrats and civil servants who are well-meaning and want to assist official languages development in minority situations in particular. I'll give the example of the English language art network. You mentioned that you deal with Heritage Canada, Industry Canada, and you deal with some bureaucrats from Official Languages. Is there a sense that within your group you're spending a lot of your resources and time doing grant applications and dealing with your interaction with the different levels of government? Of course, I didn't even mention some of the provincial and regional bureaucrats you must have to deal with.

Is there a way to streamline the delivery of these things to have a better operating road map or a better operating support for official languages in Canada, and especially in your context?

Mr. Guy Rodgers: I alluded to that earlier on. ELAN, in particular, does a lot of national work. We spend a lot of time consulting about policy and programs. It is time consuming. Currently, our organization is not funded for that kind of work so we do it in our spare or volunteer time. We have very positive relationships with our federal bureaucrats. We find it well-invested time. Of course, some of the forms are a little time-consuming, and the reports, etc., can be streamlined. We find our relationship with our federal partners extremely beneficial.

We have tremendous problems within Quebec. If we had more time, I could tell you stories about trying to deal with Quebec City, not *le Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec*, which is arms length and artist-driven; it's impeccable. But as soon as we start dealing with the ministry of culture, some sort of mid-level bureaucrat who controls the doors, it's horrifying in some cases.

At least for the time we spend working on federal funding applications the outcome is normally positive and is a result that makes the effort worthwhile, compared to other places where we can devote our effort and have no results whatsoever.

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Just within the federal government, though, do you find that you have multiple points of contact? Or are you seeing at least the coordination between different branches of the federal government?

Mr. Guy Rodgers: There's a problem for us in Quebec in that we're a region, so everything goes through the Quebec office. So there is a disconnect between all the national envelopes, the national programs. We have a problem being pigeonholed into the region. We have a different relationship to Ottawa than to anywhere else within the country when we're dealing with national dossiers. Certainly, we would like to see some of those layers of administration ironed out so that we could go directly to the dossier instead of having to go through Montreal, back to there, and.... You know, it's quite a complex system of connecting with Ottawa.

• (0945)

Mr. Bernard Trottier: One of the objectives of the road map was to provide better coordination across the departments. What I'm hearing is that it doesn't seem to be fully achieved yet.

Mr. Guy Rodgers: The road map itself has worked quite well. It's other departments within Canadian Heritage that are not part of...

well, the Cultural Development Fund, for example, a direct road map program, worked very well.

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Okay.

Now I'll turn my attention to the Quebec English School Boards Association.

Obviously, education is a provincial area of responsibility. You mentioned that contribution agreements aren't necessarily the way to go. In other areas, for example, in labour and skills development, there's a federal ministry of labour and there's a provincial ministry of labour. There's no such thing as a federal ministry of education, for example. But when it comes to labour market agreements with the provinces, what we have found is that it has actually worked very effectively. People who receive funds to deliver training and skills development services prefer dealing with one level of government, rather than having to submit grant applications to two levels of government and having to deal with two levels of bureaucrats.

Can you expand on why you think contribution agreements are ineffective, and why you'd rather deal directly with the federal government when it comes to funding for some of your programs?

Mr. David Birnbaum: To start with, we have no assurance that one penny of that money would go to what the Official Languages Act and the Constitution of Canada requires this level of government to worry about, which is an equitable delivery of services to all Quebec students. We're not imputing any bad faith in saying so, but the fact is that education policy quite normally gets established by the needs of the majority community in Quebec.

There are close to one million French sector public school students. We are at about 100,000. That results in our having school boards with kids on buses for an hour and a half, school boards the size of Belgium, and school boards and students who don't automatically get to benefit from the bottom-line services each day in school, with this being left exclusively to the provincial jurisdiction.

It should be noted that there's absolutely no parallel with those areas where you get reports that contribution agreements work. We absolutely need the oversight here. The items we've mentioned, the community learning centres, would not exist. There's no parallel in the majority French community as there's no parallel in English Canada, but there is in French Canada. They would not exist if this becomes simply an agreement. The notion of our continuing, as we do, to be Canada's leaders in second language education would likely be rather impossible. We've had very little recognition from our Quebec government about the fundamental role we play in helping Quebecers master French. That wouldn't happen without this agreement.

We can tell you in each sector of student activity where a designated agreement requiring community consultation and federal government oversight is serving our students. We're Canada's leaders in including students with special needs in the overall education experience. We do that with your money, to a greater extent than our francophone counterparts. We have reading enhancement programs that are a result of this current regime. We have student services that are a result of this current regime. We have consultation processes with our parents that are largely a result of the current regime.

Just a very quick segue, through Monsieur Bélanger's intervention. The *L'actualité* report should be a lightning rod for showing you why federal oversight is required. We wouldn't dare get into a comparison game

[Translation]

with our francophone colleagues in the rest of the country. However there is a marked difference that we experience every morning. We have to do right by the anglophone minority community in Quebec and do so despite the political wishes of certain individuals. The situation here is not the same as that in the rest of the country. That's another reason why we need your protection.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Weston.

Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I too would like to thank our witnesses.

Mr. D'Aoust, I was not surprised to learn that our chair participated in your event.

[English]

In fact, we all expect him to be chairman of the year of all of the committees—

Voices: Oh, oh!

• (0950)

Mr. John Weston: It's just one more part of his campaign, I think.

[Translation]

I was struck by Mr. Lévesque's comment.

What was it...?

It was that back in 1977 he said to the anglophones, when they were scared about Bill 101—and rightfully so—“Don't worry about it: your future is in the power of your loins.” That was his response. It was a public comment.

Moreover, Mr. Rodgers said that 50% of the anglophones were married to francophones.

[English]

So perhaps we have two road maps going on. There's the bureaucratic, governmental one that we're talking about, and then there's the fact of Canadians who really appreciate our bilingualism. My question is about the intersection of these two road maps.

My experience comes from British Columbia, where my kids have gone to a French immersion school. My family has embraced the notion of bilingualism. In fact, as we've discussed in this committee, bilingualism leads people to take on other languages and better prepares them to face the world in a more competent way. My kids have gone on to learn Chinese, and hopefully will continue. Bilingualism is very much in our bones. One might say that just the intermarriage—the power in the loins and the desire to learn the language—is ultimately going to be what drives us to be the nation on earth that epitomizes the importance of bilingualism.

Then we have the fact of the need to pay educators and administrators. The people who have taught my children, without my knowledge, I'm sure, were recipients of part of the \$1.2 billion. In fact, I know that to be the fact. Most Canadians probably don't appreciate what's going on under the radar. I guess my question is this. How long in the future is it? Is it forever...? Do we need to continue investing this kind of money—as my colleague said, \$1.2 billion—and is it something we will always do, do you think? Or do you think we will reach a point in Canadian history where we have become so much...? Somebody said it's like eating the poutine. What did you say? Was it

[Translation]

"autotism"?

Mr. David D'Aoust: I was talking about automatism.

Mr. John Weston: Automatism?

[English]

Mr. David D'Aoust: People who react naturally in one language or the other develop patterns of speech. It's not a search for their words or—

Mr. John Weston: There are about three minutes left, I'm guessing. Two minutes?

Let's go really fast. We'll start with you, Ingrid, because you haven't had much to say, and we'll go quickly.

Give us 15-second bursts. How much of it is the

[Translation]

automatism

[English]

of Canadianism and how much of it is the investment of government dollars?

Ms. Ingrid Marini: It's a good combination of both, but we have to recognize and demonstrate the opportunities. That's part of the responsibility of the federal government, because even if we are bilingual...

[Translation]

I'm a perfect example: I was raised in Quebec, I went to an English school, in a full immersion program, and I now consider myself to be part of the anglophone community, although I do get along quite well in French.

[English]

It's our richness. It's what we have and what we can bring to Canada through our Quebec roots, so—

Mr. John Weston: All right. Thank you.

Gerald, do you want to give me a quick...?

Mr. Gerald Cutting: Well, I'd like to come back to perhaps a couple of terms here that are really crucial as far as we are concerned. On investment, take a business model. What is the federal government investing in? It's investing in a population that must become bilingual, and as a result of that, we can in fact become a model that is exportable.

So I would say one of the most critical issues in all of the investments that are made is to sustain the kinds of programs that are in place. By doing that, it will in fact do what a road map is supposed to do: it will take us from one location to a destiny. We have to be very clear on our destiny, though, and I'm delighted to hear that bilingualism is part of the destiny of Canada. It's a part of our vision.

[Translation]

Mr. John Weston: As we know, the budget has not—

Mr. Gerald Cutting: Exactly. We can explain ourselves in either language, easily and clearly, and have a vision of things, but first of all this vision needs to exist.

Mr. John Weston: Mr. D'Aoust, could you summarize your vision?

Mr. David D'Aoust: Social harmony in Quebec depends on our ability to make our students bilingual, and this will always be the case. We must never stop trying.

[English]

Mr. John Weston: Mr. Childs or Mr. Rodgers.

Mr. Guy Rodgers: I think the *L'actualité* article demonstrates that we're the cusp. The response to that article has been almost entirely favourable towards the English-speaking community, recognizing the efforts we've made, how we're being integrated. As to whether this investment will be in perpetuity, maybe not, but the next five to twenty years will be critical to our being recognized and accepted within Quebec. There are still tremendous political and ideological barriers that we're working our way through. In the short term, this support is essential to our ongoing survival.

• (0955)

Mr. John Weston: I look forward to hearing about your new matchmaking service.

Mr. Guy Rodgers: My son's in love with a Russian girl right now.

The Chair: Madame Michaud.

Ms. Éline Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP): Thank you.

First of all, I want to welcome you all and thank you for your interventions.

[Translation]

Your comments interest me a great deal.

[English]

In my riding there is the small community of Shannon. It's a vibrant and involved English community that's probably working closely with some of you. It's helping me with my understanding of their situation, a bit.

I had a question for Mr. Rodgers and Mr. Childs. You were talking about the importance of the Cultural Development Fund and all the impacts it had on your community. Could you tell us more about how it helped you?

Mr. Guy Rodgers: Prior to the Cultural Development Fund, there was the IPOLC-PICLO program, which was very beneficial. It was the best thing in arts and culture—it came via the Canada Council, but it was focused on professional arts. The Cultural Development Fund is invested in the link between arts and community. The current project for touring arts in the communities is very important. We had an excellent session in Montreal a couple of weeks ago with regional associations, where we saw all kinds of links. There are many ways of integrating arts and culture into health and youth at risk; schools are very important. We have a culture-in-the-schools program in Quebec that is well-funded and works very well. But it doesn't work so well in the English sector. In fact, we were given some money from the Minister of Education to figure out where the problem is. The Cultural Development Fund has enabled us as professional artists to expand beyond our normal preoccupations with creative art into working with art and community and looking into spheres such as education and health. It's been extremely helpful.

Ms. Éline Michaud: Thank you.

Did you want to add anything?

Mr. Charles Childs: I want to add that one of the crucial elements of the touring project, the ACCORD touring project, is that it's linking professional artists in Montreal to the communities while allowing the professional artists and the artists in the regions access to a broader audience that includes communities besides Montreal.

Ms. Éline Michaud: How is that done more concretely in the rural areas?

Mr. Charles Childs: One of our activities is to have the community associations build a capacity to present artists. This allows professional artists or up-and-coming artists to present their work, with an opportunity of linking with other communities in another region. It's a way of sharing artists and experiences.

Ms. Éline Michaud: My next question is more for QESBA. I was quite concerned about the issue of equity in financing, which is not really there for the anglophone community. Could you tell us a bit more about the differences you've seen in the investments for the francophones outside Quebec and in your community?

Mr. David D'Aoust: There is no differential funding for us to teach more than the core French second language program. That is not enough for our parents. They are at our doors all the time.

[Translation]

They are always after us. They regularly rattle the cage. They want more for their children.

[English]

They don't want their kids to feel they have to leave and go to work in Toronto, Vancouver, and Alberta, even though the opportunities are there and they'll want to go west at some point in their life. But they want them to come back and live in their communities. Otherwise there's no sustainability in those communities. For what we do, we do not get funded. We have to find it here and there in our budgets. The Canada-Quebec Accord is very helpful in that regard.

Then there is the whole area of special education. If you have children who need services and you're in the Montreal area, it's fine. But if you're in the rural areas, you don't have that service. It has to be brought in. School boards are finding it very difficult. For instance, psychologists are paid more in the private sector than they ever could earn from a school board. We can't keep them. We have to start trying to match those salaries. If we want to do that, we have to find the resources elsewhere.

Also, when you run schools today, the world is the classroom. It's no longer an isolated room. There are trips outside, there's video conferencing, there are the whiteboards, there are the laptops. Our schools have invested heavily, not only in the implementation of gadgetry, as we would call it, but also

• (1000)

[Translation]

regarding teacher training. This is very important and there's not enough money for that.

[English]

The government is offering, by the 2015-16 school year,

[Translation]

intensive French training in Grade 6 of primary school. We asked what we would be getting? We have been providing immersion for a very long time and we are prepared to cooperate. We have heard nothing, not a single thing. To date not one red cent has been allocated for us.

Ms. Éline Michaud: Yes.

[English]

Mr. David Birnbaum: On the question of equity with respect to our francophone neighbours, it's a very sensitive but important question. And as you will hear from other groups, they'll talk to you about our being part of another national linguistic minority. Now, as we mentioned in our brief, we have the luxury of a community with history, with a critical mass in Montreal that built universities and hospitals and so on. But there's the notion of every dollar for official languages—I don't have the accurate statistics in front of me—being divided nowhere near 50-50. With the greatest respect to our

[Translation]

francophone colleagues throughout the country, we would urge you to show the appropriate level of caution. There are some very significant questions about the distribution of money available for both linguistic minorities.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[Translation]

Thank you, Ms. Michaud.

[English]

Mr. Williamson.

Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

It's been an interesting morning so far. I'm actually pleased that Mr. Bélanger brought up that article. I actually read that, and I was surprised. I was at McGill 20 years ago, roughly, and my impression is that the English community in Montreal has changed.

[Translation]

I come from New Brunswick. I do have an accent, but I speak reasonably well all the same.

[English]

Where 20 years ago a young Montrealer *parlait comme moi*, today I hear them and *ils parlent comme vous, d'après moi*. There's been a sea change, where I think the families in Montreal recognize that for their kids to stay home, they have to be able to operate in both languages. I'm pleased, at least, to hear there's some skepticism about the accuracy of that article.

My question is actually for the townshippers. You have one line here that stands out in relation to some of the other things I've heard this morning. You say your reality is still one of aging, low income, scattered communities with low levels of education. Could you explain that a little bit? Is that a reflection, would you say—and this is very good—of where the township is today and what its future might be?

Mr. Gerald Cutting: I'm going to have to introduce another term here; it's called the missing middle. What we have experienced in the townships is a continued outward migration of those people who have already graduated. Many times they are professional, highly employable, and highly mobile. What has happened is this. There has been a steady outward migration of this group, the middle, leaving, and then the youth and the elderly. As the professional—the middle class is also a part of it—has left, those people who have found themselves behind have often been the high-risk students in the schools to begin with. It's those who are more likely to drop out, those who are less employable, and oftentimes those individuals who will be struggling with a number of other types of difficulties—addictions, poor health, etc.

So in order to look at the townships and think about how we are going to address the difficulties we have and how we are going to be able to, in effect, create what is, in many senses, a normal society on a bell curve, we have to be able to encourage more and more of the younger people to stay. And also what we have to do is go within Canada to increase our level of immigration back to Quebec.

Ms. Ingrid Marini: Migration.

Mr. Gerald Cutting: In order to do that, what we have to have in place are sustainable, well thought out, and effective mechanisms to get people at critical times to ensure that they can have a sense that they are still a part of a community. In many of the small towns and small villages the church is gone, the school has closed, and where do you go?

• (1005)

Ms. Ingrid Marini: The perception of opportunity is a big issue that we face constantly. A lot of the youth don't know why they would want to go to school, why they would want to go further in school, because where is it going to bring them if they want to stay home? And some of them don't want to leave. Those are the youth who are very low educated.

In one of the regions in the townships, the Montérégie, we work very closely with our public partners in the health system and youth protection system. Just in one particular region, the anglophones represent 20% of the population, but in the youth protection services they were over 50% of the caseload. That's drastic, and it demonstrates the reality of our community.

Mr. John Williamson: This is interesting. Do you believe that if you build it, they will come, or is this a case of changing demographics?

Correct me if I'm wrong, but the townships and the number of things that support this have undergone a tremendous change. It's no longer really an English-speaking part of Quebec the way it might once have been considered. Are we hoping for something that is not going to happen? It's changed.

I have a big rural riding and there are pressures there, and some of them sound similar to what you're describing, except what is different here is that there is replacement. New families are moving in and the population is growing. It just happens to be French-speaking, as opposed to an outmigration. How do you counter that, and should you counter that?

Ms. Ingrid Marini: How do we counter the outmigration?

Mr. John Williamson: Or how do you ensure that the English community in the township is restored, is returned, is revitalized? Do you do that when it's not just one way, it's not just declining without replacement? There are other families moving in, it seems, and they just happen to be—

Ms. Ingrid Marini: You have to demonstrate the opportunity. You have to demonstrate the services that are available and the structures that exist. We have to maintain the vitality of all of our institutions, so that will help draw forward new people and keep them, and demonstrate that it's okay to be bilingual in the townships and it's okay to be anglophone in the townships.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Williamson, and Madame Marini.

Go ahead, Mr. Harris.

Mr. Dan Harris (Scarborough Southwest, NDP): Welcome again to everyone. For those from the townships, I can certainly understand some of the challenges you face. My mother was from Sherbrooke and my grandparents lived in Lac-Mégantic. I spent many a summer in Lac-Mégantic, and it was very difficult to find anyone who spoke English in the area. Of course, for me the purpose

was to be fully immersed in French. As a franco-Ontarian from Toronto, it's not something you get to experience at home.

As with the English school boards, we faced many similar parallels as a French language minority in Toronto. Back then, it was, like those in the townships say, a minority within a minority within a majority situation. We had a small number of French schools in what was then the largest English school board in Canada in the largest English city in Canada.

In terms of the funding we got, it was not on par with what the English schools in our own school board were getting. One of the best things that happened was when we finally got our own school board, and then suddenly the money started to flow, which led to positive changes.

It's a challenge. In the townships, if the economic opportunities for highly mobile young people and those getting educated aren't at home, they'll have to go elsewhere. It's unfortunate, and it presents another challenge.

I'm going to veer off from discussing those things. In terms of speaking about equity, as we talked about earlier, we have in this committee, with virtually all of the French language groups in minority situations, asked about the importance of Radio-Canada to their communities in terms of being able to access French language programming. Of course, according to last week's budget, CBC is now facing some rather hefty cuts.

In Quebec, there's a little bit more English programming than there is French programming outside of Canada. I'm going to ask each group to talk about the importance that CBC brings to maintaining those English communities in your minority situations.

We'll start with the arts.

• (1010)

Mr. Guy Rodgers: Obviously, in Quebec, the problem is not language. We just have to look south and we're swamped by English language products. It's not English language products, per se.

What CBC does is provide local content. CBC radio does a very fine job of telling local stories. Television is more complex. It tends to be Toronto-driven. There was a big article in the *Montreal Gazette* a few months ago about why has it been 30 years since there was a drama produced in Montreal. It's the most exciting, interesting city in Canada, in the view of many. Why can't we have a TV show produced there?

CBC radio does an excellent job and CBC television, despite being controlled from Toronto, does a better job than most of the private broadcasters.

Mr. David D'Aoust: For our minority communities in Quebec, I think CBC radio is essential. As a listener to Radio-Canada and CBC for the past two or three years of my life...I know that people depend on it more than ever. I guess you reach a point in time when you want to hear more about the news of what is happening across this nation; it keeps us together.

I know there was \$10 million in cutbacks for CBC—or was it \$10 billion?

Mr. Dan Harris: It's 10%.

Mr. David D'Aoust: Oh, it's 10%, \$115 million.

That's a big whack of money to a service that serves both languages across this country. I wish it were different; I wish the government would change that. I know that in the final passing of the budget they may let up on some of those things.

That's just my message to you, Mr. Chair. I'm sorry.

[Translation]

When you listen to Radio-Canada's French programming, you realize that they provide high-quality, good programs. I have seen that our young artists are being showcased more and more. We have discovered that there is a whole pool of culture amongst francophones in Quebec that we were totally unaware of when I was young. It is wonderful to see that, it is exciting.

[English]

It shows that we have two solitudes coming together, because often you hear French and English in productions. I know the program is not on the air on CBC, but *Belle et Bum* is a fine example of bringing francophones and anglophones together. They're artists and they need to be discovered and enjoyed.

Don't let Radio-Canada go down.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Boughen.

Mr. Ray Boughen (Palliser, CPC): Thank you, Chair, and let me take a minute to thank the panel for visiting with us today and sharing its expertise.

I look at our agenda. We have three groups this morning, and other mornings we've had other groups. I forget the total number of groups we've had, but we have had a lot. I'm wondering whether it's time to redesign the structures. Certainly in education there has been a redesign that has happened because of issues outside of the classroom, having to do with issues of disobedience in young people and behavioural problems—as the chair said, bringing in people with a background in psychology and working with special needs students.

When you look at the whole spectrum of the language question, English and French, it seems to me we have a whole lot of different compartments. These compartments build on one another, and sometimes there's some interface, but most times they seem to go their own ways. I'm wondering whether it's not time to redesign these.

For example, in a school there's nothing wrong with having the municipal government in that school; just design the building so that it happens. There's nothing wrong with a school offering adult education programs. You can do it; just design a room for adult education.

I guess I'm wondering, as we are examining the road map, whether it's not time for agencies to examine their own operations and either confirm that what they're doing is very good or is okay or ask whether it needs to be changed.

May I have your comments on that, Madame, and gentlemen?

•(1015)

Ms. Ingrid Marini: I believe many of the big victories we've had and the measurable positive results over the past few years go almost against that perception, because of the building of the networks, because of the application of the CLCs, which bring together multiple players from many different groups and give us the opportunity to exchange and interchange and discuss and view things from different points of view.

Those structures that are being developed are just starting to gain momentum with the past road map, and there's so much potential going forward. The more opportunities we have to consult and to cooperate, the more chance we will have to verify and bring forward the best practices so that we can evaluate which ways are the best ways to move forward. We don't always have to reinvent the wheel. We can build and learn from each other's experiences, and we'll only be able to do that if we work within these networks and discuss together, absolutely.

Mr. Michael Chiasson: Our CLCs are perfect examples of that. We have CLCs that have the health services in there and adult education and elementary education. We have engineers coming in to help our children with science and technology; we have musicians and artists coming in with our art students, competing in some of the competitions, whether provincial or regional. We have all these people who are coming together at these CLCs. They are so precious.

With the video conferencing equipment we have there, we can communicate with other regions. We often have resources that are absolutely precious to us that come in over video conferencing. When you see a student or someone saying "I finally got it, I finally understand", and you go to that student's graduation at the end of the year, you feel like a million bucks. Those CLCs are bringing results that I never would have estimated back then, and I see it regularly now.

Mr. Charles Childs: I would also agree. I think what we've seen in our field is that without the community groups, without the people in the communities to share their experience and knowledge and share best practices among them.... For us to build on that is absolutely necessary.

It's about the partnership. You're absolutely right: we can't do it alone. We shouldn't be trying to do it alone, and I don't think we are. That's what we have learned, and I think the road map has definitely helped us move forward in that way.

Mr. David Birnbaum: I understand the question to be going at economies of scale and efficiencies and so on. On that ground we would stand by everything we've told you so far.

Quebec school boards offer one example. They have a ratio of administrative costs to direct student services of about 6%. There's not a municipality in Quebec—and certainly not *l'ensemble*—that's anywhere near that rate of efficiency. There's not a government department that's near that rate of efficiency.

So we would reject any oblique suggestion, with respect, that there's a sort of *tour de Babel* of bureaucracies here that are getting in the way. We would tell you that the table you are setting to allow us to serve our official language minority communities is working. We're worried that some of the accountability measures that are there to make sure we're using the money efficiently might be compromised in the absence of a future road map, or, as we say, in contribution agreements rather than bilateral ententes, whereby you get the oversight you need and you protect our communities' involvement in how the money is spent.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you very much.

I'm going to go to Madame Boutin-Sweet.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet (Hochelaga, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, to the witnesses.

First of all, I would like to make a comment. To quote Mr. Rodgers, I come from a strategic marriage.

Mr. Guy Rodgers: That is wonderful.

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: My last name is Boutin-Sweet. Sweet is my husband's name.

Mr. Guy Rodgers: Vive la différence!

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: He is completely *Sweet*. I, however, am only half *Sweet*.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Ha, ha! Tell me about it!

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: My children attended several schools in your school board.

• (1020)

Mr. Michael Chiasson: That must have been a good choice.

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: It varied, sometimes yes, sometimes no. The alternative schools were good choices for my sons. The schools that did not necessarily enjoy the best reputations were some of the best schools. So we have to pay attention.

I am talking about approximately six different schools. Obviously, I am a francophone and my husband is an anglophone. I wanted my children to be as bilingual as possible. I fully agree with you, you need more funding for bilingualism. I do not feel that they were sufficiently bilingual after attending these schools. I am one of those parents who rattle the cage. I encourage the government to provide you with more funding so that you can make our children even more bilingual. That would have been useful, in the case of my two sons. I encourage you on that front.

My question is for Ms. Marini or Mr. Cutting. Mr. Cutting, you stated that you had helped 21 young adults acquire experience and become part of the labour force thanks to funding from Service Canada and a skills development program. That intrigues me. I would like to hear more information about that, please.

Mr. Gerald Cutting: Yes, go ahead.

Ms. Ingrid Marini: Luckily, in the Eastern Townships, we have a very good relationship with the officers responsible for applying part VII of the act, in order to ensure that minority language communities have access to these programs.

By working in collaboration with them over the last three years, we have gained access to two projects under Service Canada's Skills Link program. The program was set up to help anglophones get back into the job market by developing expertise and providing hands on job-related experience.

In our little region alone, the Sherbrooke region, we set up two theatre projects. We integrated the arts, which allowed us to help youth acquire artistic skills. In doing so, we provided them with an opportunity to learn new skills, which could help them do marketing, and to further develop their skills and allow them to explore their full potential.

Twenty-one youth came through our doors for this program, which comes from the roadmap. In fact it is a secondary program. Afterwards, the youth either returned to school or found a job. We stay in touch with them. This is just one example of the concrete way we use the funds, that is to say, directly to help the members of our community.

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: Earlier, you mentioned that there was no more funding, but that there was greater need, since a large portion of the funding is used for administration, leaving less for services.

Is it through such programs that you manage to offer more services, or how do you go about offering services?

Ms. Ingrid Marini: It is funny that you would raise that point, since that program still exists, except it wasn't renewed last year. In fact, the administrative details for managing that program and the expectations of the department with respect to reporting are so atrocious that the bookkeeper who works in our office finds it difficult to follow and understand them. The requirements and responsibilities are so demanding that we have decided to take a break this year.

We are going to consult the community to find out whether this program is going to be the most useful for us, or whether we should think about other types of programs to help our young people. It has become so complicated to manage this program that we have decided to look elsewhere this year.

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: Perhaps if the administration was funded separately, you would have more money left over for services.

Ms. Ingrid Marini: Absolutely.

Ms. Marjolaine Boutin-Sweet: Apart from that, for the services in general, how do you manage, if it's not a particular program?

Ms. Ingrid Marini: Volunteers, volunteers! Without our volunteers, we would not be able to get anything done. We have some extraordinary people. Mr. Cutting is a good example. I think he must work between 20 and 25 hours a week on a volunteer basis to support the association, whether that means coming here this week, coming into the office, preparing reports, speaking with people at the municipal, provincial or federal levels.

Without these volunteers, we could not support any of our initiatives. We provide many services thanks to Information and Referral, the legal hotline, the Income Tax Clinic. Accountants come to our offices to provide training sessions on how to fill out tax statements.

Thanks to these volunteers, we can offer these services. It's not that we received increased funding; it's that our community has become increasingly mobilized. That is how people give back to the community.

We also have excellent relationships with schools in our region, and we benefit from the expertise of interns. In any given month of the year, there may be between one and four interns at the same time in our building. This is why we have been able to increase the services we offer.

• (1025)

The Chair: Thank you.

[*English*]

Mr. Richards.

Mr. Blake Richards (Wild Rose, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I appreciate everyone being here today. There is a good collection of opinions and a diversity of views, and we appreciate that very much.

I want to start with the Townshippers' Association, and if there is time I do have a couple of questions for the Quebec English School Boards Association as well.

I have to be honest. I'm still a little unclear about what the Townshippers' Association is exactly and what you do. I listened to your presentation and I do understand some of the programs you're providing and some of the funding you receive. I'm from Alberta, and at this point I believe it would be a cross between what we would call a community association and, in the town I'm from, community links that pull together various types of programming for those who may need help in various ways, whether it be housing or programs.

Am I correct in that assumption? Is that exactly what your organization is?

Ms. Ingrid Marini: We're a regional community organization that develops programs to help sustain and increase the vitality of the English community, but within all sectors. We'll develop projects to support the community, to help them access information in the area of arts and culture, health and social services, education, youth, seniors. Wherever the need is, that's how we will help the community on a regional scale.

Mr. Blake Richards: Okay. I just wanted to make sure I was clear on that.

You mentioned government funding and you discussed a few programs you use from the federal government, but I'm trying to understand how your organization is funded.

Obviously you do receive some federal funding. Can you tell us the amount of federal funding you do receive and what percentage of your budget that funding would comprise?

Ms. Ingrid Marini: Approximately 50% to 60% of our annual budget comes from federal funding. Our core program funding comes from Canadian Heritage. We have funding that comes through McGill from Health Canada for the retention and recruitment program, and the CHSSN, the Community Health and Social

Services Network, funds our initiatives regarding health and social services as well.

We have other regional projects that are funded through the provincial government or the local regional governments, such as the [*Translation*]

Regional conference of elected officials

[*English*]

or the MRCs, which are other structures that are more on a regional local level. If we consider that we have approximately seven MRCs in our territory, the administration would be atrocious to have to go after each one of those MRCs for little envelopes to be able to do something.

The funding is divided approximately in that way.

Mr. Blake Richards: So 50% to 60% is federal funding. You mentioned there is some provincial funding, and there is some local funding from the different municipal regions—

Ms. Ingrid Marini: And partners. Yes.

Mr. Blake Richards: What percentage of funding would be provincial and what percentage would come from municipalities?

Ms. Ingrid Marini: Depending on the year and the programs we manage to get, I'd say approximately 60% would be federal, 30% would be provincial, and then the 10% would be local/regional.

Mr. Blake Richards: There are no other sources of funding. You don't have private sector partners. You don't do fundraising.

Ms. Ingrid Marini: It's so minimal. Obviously we have to because we have responsibilities for contributions that come from our organization to be able to access these other funds. We will more often get partners who will sustain us with in-kind contributions to support the work we're doing within the other program.

We have membership fees and we hope to generate about \$10,000 a year on an \$800,000 budget. We have not been able to get more than that over the past few years. Contributions and donations would represent approximately the same amount.

Mr. Blake Richards: It certainly sounds like you're creating programming that would be valuable to the community. I'm just trying to understand why there would be no ability to fundraise or pull in private sector partners. I'm trying to understand why that would be.

Ms. Ingrid Marini: We do the best we can. We spoke quickly before about CBC. The CBC is a huge partner of ours. Their in-kind contribution annually reaches about \$45,000 to \$50,000 in added publicity, the information and access, etc., to their programming.

We do the best we possibly can. We do solicit, but we're not the only ones out there. We'll work on developing little projects, for example, with the CLCs. We'll go and get money, but the money will go directly to the collaboration project with the CLC instead of coming directly to our association.

• (1030)

The Chair: Okay. Thank you very much, Mr. Richards and Madame Marini.

I want to thank all of our witnesses from the three English language organizations in Quebec for appearing in front of our committee. Your testimony has been very valuable and informative.

We're going to take a brief suspension now to allow our panel to leave the table, and then we're going to resume in camera for a discussion of the outline of our draft report.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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