

Franco-Ontarian Education and Training Council

Activity Report

July 1995 – August 1996



Ministry of Education
and Training

**Franco-Ontarian
Education and
Training Council**

**Le Conseil de l'éducation
et de la formation
franco-ontariennes**

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Mr. John Snobelen
Minister of Education and Training
Queen's Park
22nd Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
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Dear Minister:

Since 1972, your predecessors have felt it worthwhile to have a Franco-Ontarian Education and Training Council at their service. However, you notified me in writing in May that FOETC would be abolished on August 31, 1996.

The Activity Report for July 1995 to August 1996, which I am sending you on behalf of the members of FOETC, will therefore be the last in a long series of reports. In my opinion, its contents prove the need for an independent organization such as FOETC to provide the Minister with up-to-date information on the educational needs of the Franco-Ontarian community.

I hope you will read it attentively and that your team will be able to devise an alternative means of obtaining the kind of judicious advice we have provided you over the past year.

Yours sincerely,

Rolande Faucher
Chair of the Council,
on behalf of the Council members

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Message from the Chair

The Franco-Ontarian Education and Training Council (FOETC) Activity Report for July 1995-August 1996 is one in a long series of reports produced by the Minister of Education and Training's various advisory councils since 1979. Since the government has abolished FOETC as of August 31, 1996, this report, unfortunately, will be the council's last.

The development of French-language education in Ontario is far from complete. As long as the Franco-Ontarian community lacks access to a comprehensive education system, the Government of Ontario must provide for the community to continue to develop and must ensure its preservation. The existence of an organization such as FOETC has made a significant contribution towards the development that has taken place over the past fifteen years, and it's easy to acknowledge here the immense progress that has been made.

Without FOETC, however, and without the budget needed to fund the activities that are part of the council's mandate of liaison, joint action, analysis, and research, the Franco-Ontarian community lacks the broader public-sector support to which it is nonetheless entitled. It is regrettable that the current government has decided to realize savings in a still-developing sector, and that it is erasing a part of the corporate memory that concerns French-language education.

I would like to remind you of the truly informative research papers produced under the aegis of FOETC, such as those by Churchill, Bordeleau, and Gilbert, and of the *Plan directeur de l'éducation franco-ontarienne/Master Plan for Franco-Ontarian Education*, the guide to the development of the French-language education system produced by FOETC. I would also like to mention the consultations FOETC conducted with French-language education organizations and the productive discussions we held with the joint consultation committee comprising the chairs of these organizations. These efforts have been the driving force behind the development of French-language education in Ontario. Unfortunately, FOETC must now close up shop before our ultimate goal has been achieved.

At its June 1996 meeting, FOETC undertook to examine what it does, by reviewing its membership, method of operating, work undertaken, and accomplishments. The review findings argue in favour of maintaining a council with ten to twelve members and a full-time chair, analysts, and a budget enabling it to conduct face-to-face as well as teleconference meetings. Such a council should remain in place for as long as the French-language education system is in the process of development. This is the message, then, that the council wishes to leave the Minister and the government.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the members of the council who have given me their full confidence and have also worked extremely hard over the past year. I would also like to extend a special thank you to two members who had to leave the council in the fall of 1995 – Lyne Michaud and Ali Maachar – and to the chairs of FOETC committees who acted as my right hand – Anne Gagné on the Elementary–Secondary Committee, Gaétan Gervais on the Postsecondary Committee, and Fernand Bégin on the Vocational Training Committee.

The dedication of FOETC's permanent staff was incomparable. I extend my warmest thanks to the FOETC analysts and Marie-Lison Fougère, who left us last October; Mireille Duguay, who worked on contract during a most interesting year; and Marie-France LeFort, our longest-standing member and an extremely keen worker. Our administrative assistant, Monique Laliberté, the office's corporate memory, decided to retire at the end of August. The former chairs, Marc Godbout and Gaétan Gervais, join me in thanking her for her tireless devotion. And, finally, I would like to express my gratitude to Lise Montplaisir, who, as secretary, was most instrumental in helping FOETC to run smoothly.

I. General

The mandate of the Franco-Ontarian Education and Training Council (FOETC) is to advise the Minister on all issues related to French-language education and training in Ontario. Its role is to ensure that the services delivered by the ministry appropriately and truly meet the needs of the Franco-Ontarian population, in compliance with the Education Act and section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The council provides the Minister with the necessary perspective on the nature of these needs and the best way to respond to them.

Brief History of the Franco-Ontarian Education and Training Council

In September 1971, two years after the establishment of French-language public schools, the then Minister of Education, Robert Welch, announced that a commission of inquiry had been set up, chaired by Thomas H.B. Symons, to review the legislation governing French-language education at the secondary school level in Ontario.

In February 1972, in response to the Symons Commission's report, the government created the Council for French-Language Schools, chaired first by Laurier Carrière, and later by Gérard Raymond. The council's mandate was to submit recommendations on all aspects of French-language elementary and secondary education in Ontario. As an internal committee, the council was composed primarily of government officials, but also included some representatives from the Franco-Ontarian community.

Later, in 1979, the Council for French-Language Schools was renamed the Council for Franco-Ontarian Education (CFOE) by the then Minister of Education, Bette Stephenson. In November 1980, its mandate was expanded to enable it to present recommendations for French-language postsecondary education, which had been the responsibility of the Council on Franco-Ontarian Affairs since its inception in 1974. In its new role as a ministerial advisory body, the CFOE comprised mainly six outside members chosen from the Franco-Ontarian community, and was chaired successively by Onésime Tremblay and Marc Godbout.

Between 1980 and 1989, the CFOE submitted five activity reports to the ministers of the time, and carried out major research projects, the findings of which were published in *Éducation et besoins des Franco-Ontariens/Education and Needs of Franco-Ontarians* (1985; 2 volumes) and *Plan directeur de l'éducation franco-ontarienne/ Master Plan for Franco-Ontarian Education* (1988; 5 volumes).

In June 1991, after a ten-month hiatus, the council was re-established, and became an advisory body not only to the Minister of Education, but to the Minister of Colleges and Universities as well. At the same time, another committee, the Advisory Committee on Francophone Affairs (ACFA), was set up to advise the Minister of Colleges and Universities on postsecondary education. CFOE was chaired by Gaétan Gervais, and ACFA by Dyane Adam.

In January 1994, the then Minister of Education and Training, Dave Cooke, abolished these two councils and announced the creation of a new body to advise him on all aspects of education and training for the Franco-Ontarian community. For the first time, the chair became a full-time position. Rolande Faucher agreed to chair the new council, known as the Franco-Ontarian Education and Training Council (FOETC).

After the provincial election in June 1995, the new Conservative government maintained FOETC, which continued its activities in accordance with the mandate it had received in January 1994. On April 26, 1996, the government sent the chair a new Order-in-Council that reduced the number of council members from sixteen to fourteen, but kept its mandate intact.

One month later, however, on May 29, 1996, the Chair of Management Board announced in the House the elimination of twenty-two provincial government agencies, boards, and commissions whose mandates, he claimed, were obsolete or whose work was complete. The government included FOETC in this list. That same day, the Minister of Education and Training, John Snobelen, informed the chair of the council in writing that FOETC's mandate would expire on August 31, 1996. He reiterated the importance of French-language education for Ontario's

francophone community, but proposed using various methods for obtaining advice from specialists and the public, without needing to turn to an official independent body. It was the end of a twenty-four-year-long tradition, but, more than that, it was the end of an organization whose mandate to oversee the full development of French-language education had not yet been fulfilled.

Mandate and Composition of the Council

FOETC was created by Order-in-Council 3213/93 to advise the Minister of Education and Training on all issues related to lifelong education and training for Franco-Ontarians. The council's mandate was to:

- advise the Minister of Education and Training on priority issues related to French-language education and training;
- participate in the design of a distinctive vision for Franco-Ontarian education by noting and evaluating, in the context of continuing education, current and emerging trends in education and training in the Franco-Ontarian community, and proposing appropriate policies to the Minister;
- examine the possible effects of policies thus proposed on the Franco-Ontarian community and its ethnocultural diversity, and inform the Minister of its conclusions;
- recommend the appointment of members of the Franco-Ontarian community to such committees, agencies, and commissions as the Minister may set up;
- as required under its mandate and within the limits of its budget, sponsor research projects that would not otherwise be undertaken by or for the Ministry of Education and Training;
- as required, set up task forces to deal with issues affecting education and training for the Franco-Ontarian population.

Under the same Order-in-Council, the council was set up in January 1994, and was composed of sixteen members selected by the Minister, including:

- a full-time chair,
- one member of the Ontario Parent Council,
- three members from the college sector,
- three members from the university sector,
- five members from the elementary and secondary sector,
- three members of the general public.

Council members did not represent any particular institution or agency, but were chosen for their personal or professional commitment within the Franco-Ontarian community.

Under Order-in-Council 594/96, dated April 17, 1996, council membership decreased from sixteen to fourteen members, with representatives of the general public being reduced from three to one. Since Lyne Michaud and Ali Maachar had resigned for professional reasons, FOETC was able to continue its activities with no other membership changes.

List of Members

Rolande Faucher, Chair,
Ottawa

Fernand Bégin,
Gloucester

Michel Bégin,
Marathon

Marc Cazabon,
Waterloo

Bernard Dubois,
London

Lillian-Anne Gagné,
Penetanguishene

Gaétan Gervais,
Sudbury

Diane Gibeault,
Ottawa

Gaston Grondin,
Timmins

Benoît Hubert,
Gloucester

Carole Lamoureux,
Chelmsford

Mueni Malubungi,
Willowdale

Jacques Michaud,
Sudbury

Nicole Ouimette,
Vanier

FOETC Resources

As part of its commitment to reduce the size of government and its bureaucracy, the government asked FOETC in January 1996 to cut its budget by 20 per cent. The council was able to implement the cut through the voluntary exit of one analyst and the reduction in the council's membership by two members.

The FOETC team now consisted of a full-time chair, two analysts, an administrative assistant, and a part-time secretary.

FOETC's expenditures for fiscal 1995-96 were \$434 165; \$238 556 of this amount went towards salaries, and \$195 609 went to other expenditures, including the \$150 per-diem allowance each member received while council was in session. From April to August 1996, FOETC operated without a budget because one had not been allocated. Its expenses for these five months ran to \$170 913.

Operation of the Council

From July 1995 to August 1996, FOETC held seven regular, face-to-face, two-day meetings, and five special meetings by teleconference. The Postsecondary Committee and the Elementary-Secondary Committee each held five one-day meetings, and the Vocational Training Committee held two, after which it suspended its activities for two reasons: the government was about to announce a restructuring of vocational training that would lead to the abolition of the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board (OTAB) and the absorbing of its activities into the ministry, and FOETC had lost the analyst who specialized in this area.

In April 1996, FOETC's regular meeting took place, held in this particular instance, in Windsor. This choice of location gave council members an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the francophone reality in this region. They met with directors of Place Concorde, the French-Language Sections of Essex and Windsor, the Collège des Grands Lacs site, and the newspaper *Le Rempart*.

Partnerships

Minister's Office

As of July 11, 1995, the FOETC Chair began meeting with the new Minister of Education and Training, John Snobelen, to inform him about the council's activities and about current priorities in Franco-Ontarian education. FOETC also provided him with a package of information on these issues.

At its regular meeting in September, FOETC welcomed Mr. Snobelen and took the opportunity to discuss four subjects with him: school governance; college funding; the French-language university and French-language vocational training; and relations between his office and FOETC. The Minister promised to hire a member of the Franco-Ontarian community as part of his office staff within the next three months, so as to maintain his office's ties with the community and FOETC. Unfortunately, the fact that this promise was not kept had a telling effect on relations between his office and FOETC.

The last meeting with the Minister took place at the FOETC office, following the announcement that FOETC was to close, and was attended by the chairs of the francophone education organizations (Regroupement des organismes francophones en éducation [ROFE]). The organization chairs spoke out against the closure and expressed concerns primarily about the loss of resources dedicated to analysis, research, and joint action pertaining to francophone issues. The Minister undertook to find new ways of ensuring that communication between his office and the principal stakeholders in Franco-Ontarian education would be maintained.

Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs

The FOETC Chair met twice with the Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs, Noble Villeneuve, to discuss the following issues: Collège d'Alfred; school governance; the French-language medicine program at the University of Ottawa; and tfo, TVOntario's French-language channel.

Office of Francophone Affairs

The Chair served on the Office of Francophone Affairs's (OFA's) ad hoc committee on the French-language medicine program at the University of Ottawa, and met regularly with the OFA's new executive director, Denis Fortin.

Ministry of Education and Training Officials

The election of a new government meant considerable staff and structural changes within the Ministry of Education and Training. A new deputy minister, Richard Dicteri, assumed responsibility for the ministry in August 1995. The FOETC Chair met with him in October to discuss the ministry reorganization and the place that those responsible for French-language education should hold within the ministry.

The assistant deputy minister for French-language education, Mariette Carrier-Fraser, generously agreed to a schedule of monthly meetings with the FOETC Chair, and Richard Gauthier, Team Leader of French-Language Education Policy and Programs, had regular discussions with FOETC, as did a number of his team members. FOETC is grateful for their ongoing commitment to French-language education.

Last year saw immense changes to some areas of the Ministry of Education and Training. The Independent Learning Centre was completely restructured, and its director, Teresa González, met with the FOETC Chair several times to discuss the status of French-language services in her organization. Similarly, Ruth Taber, Team Leader of MET's Provincial Schools Project, and Roger Frappier, Director of Centre Jules-Léger in Ottawa, often took part in meetings to discuss the improvement of services for children with special needs.

Two new organizations came into being over the past year, the College of Teachers and the Education Quality and Accountability Office. After meeting with their respective directors, Margaret Wilson and Joan Green, FOETC was able to send the Minister memoranda about the new services and French-language education.

In May and June, Richard Dicteri, Deputy Minister, announced the ministry's new structure and the cuts that would take place. The FOETC Chair promptly requested meetings with the assistant deputy ministers to discuss their responsibilities in

the area of French-language education. Accordingly, in May and June, she met with Mariette Carrier-Fraser, Assistant Deputy Minister, Elementary and Secondary Operations and French-Language Education Division; David Trick, Assistant Deputy Minister, Postsecondary Education; Joan Andrew, Assistant Deputy Minister, Training Division; and Jill Hutcheon, Assistant Deputy Minister, Elementary–Secondary Policy Division.

Ministry of Education and Training Organizations

OTAB had a trying year and finally learned that it would be abolished in May 1996 and that its services would be integrated into the ministry. The agency's Chief Executive Officer, Garth Jackson, had a few discussions with the FOETC Chair about French-language vocational training and support for French-language literacy work. Although OTAB had a good theoretical grasp of its responsibility to the Franco-Ontarian community, in practice its interventions lacked the coordination and effectiveness required to meet the community's needs.

In March 1996, the FOETC Chair addressed the Ontario Parent Council to request its support for a memorandum FOETC had sent to the Minister concerning the language of communication for school councils.

In the summer of 1995, the FOETC Chair welcomed the new Chair of the Ontario Council of University Affairs, Stefan Dupré, and, in November 1995, the new Chair of the Ontario Council of Regents for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, Howat Noble. In both cases, discussion focused on the development of French-language postsecondary education in a climate of significant cutbacks. In March 1996, the FOETC Chair also attended the general meeting of the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario (ACAATO) in Windsor. She also served on the Francophone Affairs Committee of the Ontario Council of Regents (OCOR) and on the Prior Learning Assessment Group, whose mandate expired in March 1996. In October 1996, she attended the National Conference on Prior Learning Assessment in Ottawa.

Teaching Institutions

As part of its mandate, FOETC organized two meetings with stakeholders involved in the development of French-language university education. The Chair also met individually with Marcel Hamelin and Denis Carrier from the University of Ottawa; Dr. Pierre Jean and Dr. Peter Walker from the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ottawa; Gratien Allaire from Laurentian University; Raymond Tremblay from Collège universitaire de Hearst; Pierre Hurtubise from St. Paul University; the Reverend Father Michel Gourgues from Dominican College; and Dyane Adam from Glendon College.

The three presidents of the French-language colleges also had regular discussions with the FOETC Chair on current college education. Rolande Faucher had the pleasure of attending the official openings of three colleges: Collège Boréal, in Sudbury in September 1995; the Toronto site of Collège des Grands Lacs, in October 1995; and La Cité collégiale's new facilities in Ottawa, also in October 1995.

Community Agencies

In the past year, the Regroupement des organismes francophones en éducation (ROFE) held four meetings at which the FOETC Chair gave regular presentations. This joint action group plays a key role in encouraging its member organizations to work together on issues of concern in French-language education. To keep up to date on the activities of various organizations, the FOETC Chair also attended the annual meetings and activities of the following organizations: the Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario (ACFO); the Association des juristes d'expression française de l'Ontario (AJEFO); the Association française des conseils scolaires de l'Ontario (AFCSO); the Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO); and Direction Jeunesse.

National Organizations

Ontario plays an important role in the development of French-language education across Canada. To contribute to this development, the FOETC Chair attended the following activities: the annual general meeting of the Association canadienne d'éducation

de langue française (ACELF), in August 1995 in North Bay, and the symposium held by the Alliance canadienne des responsables et des enseignants en français (ACREF) on French-language education, in April 1996 in Ottawa. The FOETC Chair also took an active part in the ACELF's Ontario regional symposium on the specific nature of the French-language school in a university environment.

Other Partnership Activities

In April 1996, the Centre de recherche en civilisation canadienne française (Centre for Research on French-Canadian Culture) organized a one-day symposium titled "Les Franco-Ontariens: Une Valeur ajoutée" (Franco-Ontarians: Value-added). The Centre de recherche en éducation franco-ontarienne (CREFO) at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) organized a one-day session on student evaluation in Ontario's French-language schools. FOETC attended both events.

Section II provides a more detailed description of the issues on which FOETC focused its attention from July 1995 to its closure in August 1996.

II. Issues by Activity Sector

Elementary and Secondary Education

Background

The elementary and secondary education sector has always been a major focus for FOETC in its preparation of memoranda and community-based actions undertaken in collaboration with education stakeholders.

The arrival of a new Minister in the summer of 1995 resulted in numerous changes to the work of the Ministry of Education and Training and its agencies, boards, and commissions. Nonetheless, a number of reforms prompted by the report of the Royal Commission on Learning in Ontario have remained on the current government's agenda, especially the reform of secondary school education, the creation of the College of Teachers and the Education Quality and Accountability Office, education finance reform, and school governance.

In other activity sectors, such as early childhood education, however, the basis for government decisions is the Progressive Conservative party's manifesto, *The Common Sense Revolution*, and the attack on the deficit. These philosophies are succinctly expressed in the *Business Plan for the Ministry of Education and Training*, which was published on May 28, 1996:

Many parents are worried about their lack of involvement in their children's education and are generally not satisfied with the responsiveness of the school system. They wonder whether their children are really learning and are concerned about their children's achievements.... To respond to these concerns, the Ministry of Education and Training will strengthen its leadership role in providing strategic direction for reform of the province's education and training sectors. We will build a new, streamlined education and training system with a renewed focus on quality and accountability. (p. 6)

FOETC's activities in the area of elementary and secondary education fall into three main areas:

- undertaking a detailed analysis of the issues and the impact of the reforms on French-language education, proposing changes or additions where warranted;
- where FOETC can play a role, helping French-language education organizations reach consensus on key issues;
- developing arguments in favour of ministry intervention in as yet unresolved French-language education issues, and, where useful and appropriate, meeting with ministry and government officials and leaders.

School Governance

The past year saw the publication of the *Final Report* of the Ontario School Board Reduction Task Force (Sweeney Report), and the anticipation of a government decision on this issue.

Although the Franco-Ontarian community had held high hopes for the Sweeney Report, it will probably have to accept the fact that, for the first time, a model for French-language school governance was developed by a largely anglophone task force and that the specific recommendations documented in the report dealt with both French- and English-language schools.

The two task forces set up under the former government, the Sweeney Task Force and the Working Group on Education Finance Reform, were to produce reports proposing an overhaul of the system. The arrival of a new government changed this mandate. Instead, the recommendations made by these task forces will contribute to a new process in which every aspect of education will be redefined, including the role of the boards as the primary instrument of school governance in Ontario. In fact, in late May 1996, a new committee, chaired by a former mayor of Toronto, David Crombie, was struck to make specific recommendations on the best way of avoiding a duplication of functions at the various levels of government in areas such as transportation, social assistance, property taxes, and education. The

minister in charge of this project has intimated that the recommendations will be implemented swiftly and that school-governance reform will follow shortly afterward.

Since the start of its current mandate, FOETC has tried to emphasize the inalienable principles that must underlie governance by and for Ontario's francophones. FOETC discussed these principles in two papers: "Vers une solution prochaine à la question de la gestion scolaire pour et par les francophones en Ontario", and "Réflexion sur les principes fondamentaux de gestion scolaire par et pour les francophones", which we developed out of a brainstorming session in June 1996.

FOETC used its status as an independent organization to organize two forums on school governance, the first in October 1995 and the second in March 1996. These forums were instrumental in enabling the Franco-Ontarian education organizations to reach a consensus on a model of school governance that would incorporate the interests of stakeholder groups, whether education officers, school trustees, teachers, students, or parents. The forums were unique opportunities to remind participants of the importance of school governance to the development and growth of French-language education in Ontario. FOETC produced reports on both of them.

The education partners agree that reforms to elementary and secondary school finance and to the existing school-governance system are necessary. The link between the current government's platform (reform, streamlining, efficiency, and accountability) and the desperate need for reform of the current system leads us to hope for a swift resolution of this issue. However, FOETC pointed out that school governance by and for francophones could take a number of forms. The Franco-Ontarian community must be prepared to consider various models of governance and to examine the underlying principles.

Furthermore, FOETC confirmed the extent to which the federal government, through Heritage Canada's language-retention program, provides financial support to those Canadian provinces that have already honoured their constitutional obligation to grant school governance to their linguistic minorities. FOETC circulated a document in table format showing that, in fact, this support is in most cases quite substantial. The Ontario government could therefore expect similar support if it were to set up a system of school governance by and for Ontario's francophones.

On July 31, 1996, Brian Fleming, Manager of the School Governance Branch and a member of Assistant Deputy Minister Jill Hutcheon's team, replied to FOETC's concerns regarding the issue of school governance. He stated that the government would be in a position to announce an implementation plan for school governance in the fall of 1996, and that the government would take FOETC's recommendations into account. Unfortunately, by then FOETC will have ceased to exist and will be unable to support its position on the issue.

Secondary School Reform

Before its defeat, the previous government had begun to overhaul the secondary school system in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Learning. A reference group, divided into three subcommittees, was formed to study three issues: secondary school diploma requirements, the transition from school to the job market, and the transition from school to college. The structure was to include a francophone forum consisting of the francophone members of the reference group and its three subcommittees, as well as public forums. Public consultation was to take place, and the project was to run for eighteen months.

The new government endorsed the concept of secondary school reform, but reduced the project to a ministerial initiative with no committees or francophone consultation. Further, fewer consultations were to be held, and the time frame was reduced. It would appear that the new time frame was insufficient as, in August 1996, the Minister announced he was delaying the entire project for a year. While FOETC agrees in principle with a review of secondary school diploma requirements, such a substantial reform must take into account the specific nature of the French-language secondary school. Francophone education organizations will have to pay close attention to what happens with regard to this issue.

Ontario College of Teachers

In 1995-96, FOETC turned its attention from the issue of teacher education, which it had been following for a number of years, to the creation of an Ontario College of Teachers.

This change of focus does not mean, however, that teacher education has been put on hold; in fact, the college will become the vehicle for accrediting preservice and in-service teacher education pro-

grams, thereby opening the way for improved coordination in this area.

In April 1995, FOETC had already clearly expressed to the College Implementation Committee its support for the college, as long as both the implementation and the final outcome reflected the concerns of FOETC and the Franco-Ontarian community – namely, that the college should facilitate the development of French-language education, recognize the specific nature of instruction in the French language in a minority environment and the status of French as an official language of instruction in Ontario, and, by extension, give teachers in French-language schools a place within the college that reflects this special status.

The committee published its final report, *The Privilege of Professionalism*, in September 1995. This report discussed the self-regulation of the teaching profession, and defined the college's mandate and structure, as well as the rules for setting it up. Lastly, it clarified the college's role in preservice and in-service teacher education together with the fundamental principles that should underlie it, and also set forth the elements of an in-service education framework.

FOETC analysed the report's recommendations in three main areas of interest: francophone representation, especially the representation of francophone teachers on the college's Governing Council and various committees; the creation of a Francophone Affairs Committee with exclusive jurisdiction over certification, standards of practice (development of teacher education programs and learning standards), and vocational training; and the definition of the rights of both members and the public to French-language services in their dealings with the college, as well as the college's responsibilities in this matter.

Following the tabling of legislation to create the Ontario College of Teachers (Bill 31), FOETC expressed concerns regarding areas of the bill that could be subject to amendment – namely, guarantees concerning the use of French in dealings with members of the college, and provisions for representation and selection for the Governing Council. Although at the time of publication of this Activity Report, the Minister had not responded formally to those concerns, section 44 of Bill 31, which received royal assent on June 27, was in fact amended to define more clearly the guarantees concerning the use of French for both members and the public in their dealings with the college.

Following passage of An Act to Establish the Ontario College of Teachers, the college came into being in the fall of 1996. The college must lose no time in studying the accreditation of teacher education programs, an issue the government has put off handling in a coherent and sustained manner.

Education Quality and Accountability Office

Over the past few years, student achievement assessment has made the headlines in Ontario and elsewhere in Canada. The general trend is to assess student achievement on a regular basis. In fact, the Royal Commission on Learning had recommended evaluating the school system in terms of students' achievement at a minimum of two curriculum levels. The NDP government had fleshed out this recommendation by proposing to set up an organization independent of the ministry that would assess students four times during their thirteen years of school attendance. The current government changed the proposal, recommending that the Office it planned to create administer reading, writing, and mathematics tests to all Grade 3 and Grade 11 students, and to a sampling of Grade 6 and Grade 9 students. The Education Quality and Accountability Office was to start up officially after the adoption of Bill 30 at the end of June 1996.

In order to ensure that the activities of the ministry's new, independent body would reflect the linguistic duality of education in Ontario, FOETC proposed that a preamble be enshrined in the act, to set out the Office's responsibility towards both French-language and English-language schools, and that the Office, once its initial organizational structure had been put in place, demonstrate how it would comply with the requirements of the French Language Services Act.

In his reply, the Minister claimed that the Office's responsibilities with respect to French-language services were implicit in the new act.

Early Childhood Education

In its final report, submitted in January 1995, the Royal Commission on Learning had recommended creating a program in the schools for three-year-olds, and giving priority to its implementation in French-language schools, since the advantages for children from homes in which French is rarely, if ever, spoken are well documented.

Starting in the summer of 1995, however, early childhood education underwent cuts occasioned by budget restrictions, as announced in the spring of 1995:

- Elimination of fourteen pilot projects for four- and five-year-olds, including six projects in French-language boards or sections. The goal of these pilot projects was to combine Junior and Senior Kindergarten programs and child-care services for 700 children in 1995-96, and nearly 2000 children in 1996-97. The estimated saving was \$1.5 million in 1995, and \$6.7 million in 1996.
- Cancellation of grants announced in July 1995 for boards that were to receive capital funding to integrate child-care services into the schools. The capital-funding envelope was approximately \$350 000. In addition, the Ministry of Community and Social Services announced its withdrawal from agreements granting start-up funds for new child-care services.
- Closure of the Réseau ontarien des services de garde francophones (Ontario Network of French-Language Child-Care Services) with its approximately sixty members, half of them operating out of schools, as a result of cuts by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, its main sponsor.

The one French-language education issue on which the entire Franco-Ontarian community agrees is that early childhood education, specifically Junior (four-year-olds) and Senior (five-year-olds) Kindergarten programs, are a very important tool for ensuring the integrity of French-language education in a minority environment, and, as such, are a vital component of Ontario's French-language education system.

In fact, it is quite apparent that French-language students, when they start school, are not a homogeneous group and have different levels of French comprehension and oral expression. Studies and experience indicate that the earlier children have a chance to develop French-language skills, the more likely they are to be successful in school.

The *Actualisation linguistique et Perfectionnement du français (ALF/PDF)* curriculum guideline constitutes the basis of the boards' linguistic-development policy. Funding for implementing the program helps boards sustain the key aspects of their work in this area, such as preschool education.

The Minister recognized the importance of ALF/PDF in meeting the challenge of linguistic heterogeneity, pointing out that, in the Speech from the Throne in September 1995, the government promised to restore Junior Kindergarten as a local option. Most French-language boards and sections have apparently managed to continue funding Junior Kindergarten on a half-time, and even a full-time basis.

The Minister did not completely close the door on this issue, however, declaring that his government was giving preschool education priority attention. He did not, however, provide any indication of what the main points of the new policy might be.

Various committees, including the "Who Does What" committee on service duplication, and the review committee chaired by MPP Janet Ecker, looking at preschool services in Ontario, indicate the government's will not to sacrifice early childhood education altogether in its fight to get the deficit under control.

The ministry, for its part, is developing learning standards for Junior and Senior Kindergarten so it can round out the Common Curriculum.

Special Education: Centre Jules-Léger

The Centre Jules-Léger is a school, founded by the University of Ottawa and funded by the Ministry of Education and Training, for French-speaking children with learning difficulties or special needs that the boards cannot accommodate or meet. In the summer of 1995, the Centre attained the status of a Provincial and Demonstration School comparable to the English-language Demonstration Schools, which were themselves in the middle of a broad administrative reform that began in 1993 and focused on their funding and governance.

FOETC notified the Minister of the council's concerns regarding the special challenges facing the Centre, given its mandate to meet the needs of the full spectrum of French-speaking students across the province requiring its services.

FOETC put forward seven recommendations, addressing, for example, the governance, funding, and administrative structure of the Centre Jules-Léger; the program for learning-disabled students diagnosed with hyperactivity and attention deficit disorder (ADD); the physical supervision of students; and the still-unresolved issue of deaf-education teacher training.

In response the Minister informed FOETC that the Provincial Schools Project team was still studying various models of operation and governance.

The ministry's Business Plan, published in June, has little to say on the administrative reform mentioned above. Instead, it urges the Provincial Schools to "continue to find savings outside the classroom by reducing administrative costs through measures such as joint purchasing". Since the current government does not favour direct service delivery to the public through institutions such as Centre Jules-Léger, it is expected to propose a method of governance for the Provincial Schools that would be independent of the ministry. The impending school-governance and education-finance reform will undoubtedly have a considerable impact on the future of the Provincial Schools. This reform, as is the case with Centre Jules-Léger, in fact, must incorporate governance by and for francophones as an inalienable principle.

School Councils

The Royal Commission on Learning in Ontario had recommended the establishment of school councils to advise school principals and boards on issues such as the curriculum and student services. The ministry followed up on this recommendation with its Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 122 that required the boards to set up school councils beginning in June 1996.

As PPM 122 made no mention of the language of work in the school councils, FOETC asked the Minister to revise PPM 122 to require that the language of work in French-language school councils be French. At first glance, this requirement may appear unnecessary, but, in reality, this is far from the case. In fact, many parents who send their children to French-language schools are English-speaking; they may be in mixed marriages or be section 23 right-holders who have been assimilated themselves, or they may be anglophones who have successfully made it past the admissions committees of the French-language schools. FOETC considers this measure necessary to protect the integrity and specific nature of Ontario's French-language schools. The government had not replied to the FOETC request by the time the council was dissolved.

Pluralist Education

In June 1995, FOETC set up an ad hoc committee to tie the ministry's antiracism policy in with the specific context of French-language education in Ontario. Our main inspiration in developing an appropriate policy framework was the work of Marie McAndrew, a Quebec researcher who has published widely on this issue. FOETC subsequently proposed a pluralist-education framework, based on a mix of interculturalism and antiracism, that emphasized common values and sought to eliminate the barriers caused by imbalances of power in institutions within the host society. Such an approach would create a common civic space at the heart of pluralist education, based on "mutual responsibility" and a "moral contract".

In response to the FOETC proposal, the Minister introduced some new features to the new government's policy on this issue: a two-part equal-opportunity plan, including a policy statement with a planned release of February 1996; and the establishment of an antidiscrimination education program based on the guidelines in the Common Curriculum, the antiharassment and discrimination policy for the postsecondary sector, the antiracism policy, and the linguistic-development policy framework. Unfortunately, the Minister's response did not address the concept of pluralist education.

The Minister did indicate that the antiracism approach will be replaced with a policy of antidiscrimination, its scope as yet undefined. The equal-opportunity program announced on December 14, 1995, suggests the concept of a system of education wherein the individual is protected by the Human Rights Code and has recourse in instances of discrimination and harassment. At the same time, however, there is no longer active recognition of the structural inequalities inherent in the host society or adjustment through measures to increase certain groups' participation in school (or college or university) life.

In reality, there is no longer any ministry follow-up with the school boards with regard to the implementation of the antiracism policy, even though the policy has not been cancelled officially. This absence of policy framework and guidelines frees the French-language education system from an antiracism policy to which the Franco-Ontarian community was not able to relate. The current ambiguity will perhaps

allow for the development of a model that better corresponds to its reality, and FOETC's proposal could act as a basis for this new, as yet undeveloped model.

The Minister's response indicates, moreover, that the ministry will use the "aménagement linguistique" (linguistic-development) policy as a reference when developing an antidiscrimination program. This response recognizes, to some extent, the importance of a special approach to French-language education. One cannot, however, substitute the linguistic-development policy for a French-language education policy on antiracism, interculturalism or pluralism, and antidiscrimination. FOETC's members recommended that the pluralistic education policy be based on the historical special foundations for the character of French-language schools in a minority environment, and be in sync with the principles underlying the "aménagement linguistique" policy that MET and its education partners have created.

FOETC's proposal regarding pluralist education was submitted to the members of the Regroupement des organismes francophones en éducation and was very enthusiastically received. It was also discussed with ministry officials in both Toronto and Ottawa. As it happens, the ministry had recently approved funding for pilot projects in the Ottawa–Carleton region designed to adapt the schools' approach to the new demographic reality in this region. We hope that FOETC's work will continue to inform future initiatives dealing with this issue.

Vocational Training

The observations on vocational training documented in FOETC's previous annual activity report remain valid. The current changes in the economy are having an undeniable impact on job-skills development. The restructuring that is under way requires large investments in training to create an increasingly skilled and versatile workforce. The Franco-Ontarian community is experiencing this reality and wishes to apply the concept of *lifelong* education to train and develop its own human resources more effectively. In order to achieve this goal, the community must have access to the required means to pursue its quest for independence and emancipation. Francophones still lag significantly behind in the area of vocational training and labour adjustment.

Literacy and "Refrancisation"

Because francophones lag behind in job-skills training and show extremely high rates of illiteracy, FOETC has made certain observations about literacy training. With a functional-illiteracy rate of approximately 21 per cent, the francophone community has far to go to reach the rate of Ontario's overall population, at 10 per cent. The pernicious effects of illiteracy manifest themselves in a considerable loss of productivity, inferior products, a high percentage of industrial accidents, increased absenteeism, and so on. It goes without saying that an economically advanced society such as Ontario's cannot afford to fail to act against illiteracy.

Furthermore, French-language literacy centres, in addition to teaching the rudiments of reading, writing, arithmetic, and oral communication, transmit linguistic and cultural pride. The Franco-Ontarian community's unique sociocultural characteristics make it difficult to address literacy training independently of the various components such as "refrancisation" (relearning French) that are part of adult education.

In an effort to shed some light on this complex issue, FOETC submitted its recommendations on literacy and "refrancisation" in a minority environment to the Minister in the fall. FOETC recommends that:

- the ministry recognize the specific nature of French-language literacy and the original mission of community literacy centres as vehicles for propagating the language and culture of Ontario's official language minority;
- the ministry create an administrative unit responsible for French-language adult education that includes *literacy training* and "*refrancisation*" components, and that this unit be part of a team responsible for French-language education policy and programming;
- the ministry assess the appropriateness of integrating literacy training and "refrancisation" work with deaf adults into this administrative unit;
- the ministry, together with the network of French-language colleges, develop a training program for French-language literacy practitioners;
- the training program lead to accreditation and remuneration appropriate to the professional requirements of this area of specialization;

- the ministry, in consultation with the colleges and school boards, carry out an analysis of equivalencies between the Ontario Basic Skills (OBS) programs and the secondary school programs;
- the ministry, in line with the principles of prior learning assessment, examine the possibility of expanding current accreditation procedures so that Ontario Basic Skills graduates can obtain a high school diploma;
- the ministry develop funding criteria that promote fiscal responsibility and an equitable distribution of funds in literacy centres;
- the ministry fund the development of literacy learning materials and coordinate their development on a province-wide basis.

The Minister sent FOETC's recommendations on to OTAB's CEO, because literacy was OTAB's responsibility until April 1996. Since that time, OTAB's portfolios, including literacy, have been incorporated into the ministry.

In addition, in May 1996 the Minister announced the creation of a new service, the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB), to be administered by the Independent Learning Centre. The tests will enable adults aged eighteen and over, who have been out of school for at least one year, to obtain the equivalent of a secondary school diploma in both French and English. This is a worthwhile initiative that has existed in the United States for some time now, as well as in almost every Canadian province.

Other Vocational Training Issues

Vocational training is still in transition. With the advent of a new government and a new political vision of the issue, most vocational training matters have been sidelined for the past year. During this period, the need for the retention of Ontario Training and Adjustment Board (OTAB) was called into question, resulting in the April 1996 announcement of its dismantling. OTAB's activities are to be incorporated into the ministry, and, to this end, an assistant deputy minister responsible for vocational training was appointed in May.

Since its inception, FOETC had had a vocational-training committee. Unfortunately, in October 1995, as a result of the initial cutbacks, FOETC lost the services of its vocational-training analyst and had to suspend the activities of the vocational-training committee. Despite these difficulties, OTAB continued to follow the progress of vocational-training issues as they affected francophones. Accordingly, it

maintained close ties with the Comité consultatif francophone (Francophone Advisory Committee), the reference group set up as a support for the francophone representative on OTAB's board of directors. This committee also ceased operations in the spring of 1996.

Over the year, FOETC continued to promote the idea of a francophone body that would be part of three regional commissions whose geographic areas would correspond to those of the three French-language colleges. The commissions would evaluate francophone needs and be responsible for distributing funding for French-language training. The FOETC Chair met with OTAB's CEO on this matter and received a favourable hearing. Moreover, since the ministry no longer intends to provide vocational training, the colleges could become the focal point for service planning and delivery. The idea of three regional commissions seems to have gained ground over the last year and become much more feasible.

The FOETC Chair also wished to inform OTAB's CEO, as well as other ministry stakeholders, such as the assistant deputy minister, of the publication of the *Investigation Report Concerning the Labour Force Development Strategy for Francophones in Ontario* by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages in December 1995. The investigation is the result of a complaint submitted by ACFO. The investigation "found that there are indeed inequities in training programs with respect to the quality and quantity of courses offered in French in Ontario, compared to what is available in English, as well as weaknesses in the referral process" (Executive Summary, p. 1). Since many programs are managed jointly by the two levels of government, FOETC considered it important to keep Ontario's principal vocational-training stakeholders informed of the outcome of the investigation, as well as the nature of the Office's recommendations for remedying the situation.

FOETC also made sure that the key stakeholders were aware of the content of the *Plan directeur de l'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre de la francophonie canadienne*, prepared by the Comité d'adaptation des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne (French-Canadian Human Resources Adjustment Committee). The plan proposes to focus vocational training on local economic development, a proposal that is also the Franco-Ontarian community's vocational-training priority.

In addition, FOETC turned its attention to the incorporation into the ministry of OTAB's French-language vocational-training activities, in order to make sure that francophones would have access to a structure responsive to their needs and special situation. Accordingly, FOETC proposed that French-language vocational training have its own branch within the ministry. It had also, over the year, recommended that literacy be incorporated into the ministry, no matter what happened to OTAB.

Finally, at the time its closure was announced, FOETC was involved in in-depth discussion and consideration of the "target markets" concept. FOETC feels that the working definitions the ministry produces should not hinder the development of vocational-training programs for francophones. FOETC was intending to produce a memorandum on this issue.

Postsecondary Education

As FOETC pointed out in its previous activity report, the development of postsecondary services in French has long lagged behind that of services in English, despite appreciable progress over the last thirty years. Nevertheless, the changes in the elementary and secondary sector have led to postsecondary education following suit and developing to better meet the needs of francophones. Two new French-language colleges opened in September 1995: Collège Boréal and Collège des Grands Lacs. What with these colleges, and La Cité collégiale, we can certainly state that all of French Ontario will now have access to college services in its own language, even though programming for the three colleges is not yet fully extant. The past ten years have seen the bilingual universities create programs tailored to the Franco-Ontarian community and its needs, with the help of special start-up and development funds.

FOETC's activities clearly promote the development of postsecondary education by and for francophones. The past year, however, has not been one of unhindered growth. The election of a new government in Ontario, and the public funding crisis that the province is currently experiencing, have called into question priorities that have long been established. The previous twelve months have therefore seen FOETC working on the development of French-language services but within a context of budget restraints.

College Sector

Appointments to the Boards of Directors of the French-Language Colleges

FOETC advised the Francophone Affairs Committee of the Ontario Council of Regents (OCOR) on appointments of outside members to the boards of directors of the three French-language colleges when vacancies occur. FOETC signed a memorandum of understanding with OCOR on this matter to allow for effective coordination of this mandate.

Prior Learning Assessment

In the past year, FOETC made a number of recommendations regarding prior learning assessment. The council supported the creation of an Ontario evaluation service for academic credentials acquired outside Ontario and also recommended that the Minister offer the service in both official languages, French and English. The Minister replied that the ministry had plans to create such a service and would offer the service in both French and English. The council also made four recommendations to the Minister for the implementation of prior learning assessment in the French-language college sector. The first recommendation concerned an implementation period that would be fair for all the colleges. In fact, the two new French-language colleges, Collège Boréal and Collège des Grands Lacs, received only one year of support for implementing prior learning assessment, while the other colleges had three. The second recommendation was that FOETC be given the responsibility for French-language prior learning assessment. The Minister rejected these two recommendations on the basis that prior learning assessment had been made the responsibility of the colleges alone. The third and fourth recommendations concerned funding for prior learning assessment, with a view to helping the ministry make a decision as soon as it receives the report from the task force in charge of making recommendations on funding for prior learning assessment. The ministry is waiting to receive this report before making its decision.

The FOETC Chair was a member of the Prior Learning Assessment Advisory and Coordinating Group, until its dissolution. FOETC also coordinated activities for PLA facilitators in the French-language colleges after the dissolution of the Prior Learning Assessment Secretariat and before the portfolio was transferred to the ministry.

Funding of French-Language College Teaching

The fall of 1995 saw the start-up of two new French-language colleges at the same time as the 15 per cent cut to Ontario colleges' basic funding was introduced. Given this situation, FOETC is extremely concerned about the future of the new colleges. Furthermore, the three French-language colleges differ from Ontario's twenty-two other colleges in their recent creation, their size, and the large geographic area they have to serve. The announced cutbacks take on a whole new meaning for them. For this reason, FOETC expressed its concerns to the Minister on November 6, 1995. Following an initial overview, FOETC intended to expand on the issue in consultation with the French-language colleges. The objective was to safeguard the stability of the French-language colleges and to allow them to grow.

Other College Committees and Partnerships

FOETC also took part in the activities of certain committees to make sure they were giving consideration to francophone concerns. FOETC was consequently represented on the College Standards and Accreditation Council, the Comité de direction sur la mise en oeuvre de l'initiative collégiale en langue française (Steering Committee on the Implementation of French-Language Colleges), and the Comité de restructuration collégiale (College Steering Committee).

Promoting Postsecondary Education among Franco-Ontarians

Two studies, one in 1985 (Churchill, Frenette, and Quazi, *Éducation et besoins des Franco-Ontariens/Education and Needs of Franco-Ontarians*) and the other in 1990 (Frenette and Quazi, *Accessibilité aux études postsecondaires pour les francophones de l'Ontario/Accessibility to Postsecondary Studies for Franco-Ontarians*), showed that Franco-Ontarians still lagged behind significantly (50 per cent of the rate of non-francophones) in participation in postsecondary studies. The ministry is at present updating these studies, again with the help of a grant from the EducAction program. FOETC played an active role on the validation committee for the new follow-up study, which will soon have its findings published.

The ministry created the EducAction program to promote postsecondary education in French for Franco-Ontarians. Postsecondary institutions serving the francophone population can submit promotion

projects, but these must be "re-rooted in the community through cooperation with a community agency or create impacts" for the community. Every year, FOETC is part of the committee mandated to select priority projects for which the necessary completion funds will be granted.

Advanced Training

Vision 2000, a report published in 1990, proposed a concept of advanced training that would forge links between the college and university levels and between both levels and the workplace. The 1993 Pitman Report, *No Dead Ends*, examined the conditions for advanced training. After this report was tabled, the Minister invited postsecondary institutions to work as a consortium to develop advanced training programs, and also gave FOETC a mandate to study mechanisms for French-language advanced training. FOETC produced a report entitled *Pour un rapprochement entre les collèges, les universités et le monde du travail/Bringing Colleges, Universities and the Workplace Together*. It also submitted a proposal to the Minister (see previous Activity Report) which sought to advance this issue in institutions serving the Franco-Ontarian community.

Since FOETC's previous Activity Report, enough progress has been made to see the creation of the Consortium responsable de la formation avancée (Advanced Training Consortium). The text of the agreement creating the consortium stipulates that FOETC will help select and review the projects submitted for funding purposes. FOETC chose first to give attention to how it would work with the consortium, which started up in the spring of 1996. It put forward two mechanisms to the assistant deputy minister in charge of the portfolio and to the consortium's two co-chairs. These mechanisms show the role FOETC could have played within the consortium, and its involvement in the development of advanced training. With regard to the *revision* process, FOETC would have evaluated the francophone advanced training proposals from a Franco-Ontarian perspective, that is, taking into account the community's needs and realities, and it would then have submitted this evaluation to the consortium committee responsible for making the final selections. At another stage, FOETC would have taken part in the *selection* process, representing the Franco-Ontarian viewpoint. FOETC deplores the fact that no funding has been set aside for French-language initiatives. FOETC's dissolution makes us fear for the maintenance of francophone participation

in the development of advanced training projects. Despite the fact that available resources are limited, and may become more so, the institutions serving the francophone community cannot allow themselves to disregard advanced training.

University Sector

Development of French-Language University Education

FOETC has become aware through its work over the past year that current French-language programming in Ontario universities has not yet attained even the minimum level. On November 24, 1995, FOETC expressed its concerns, and those of the community, to the Minister about the current and expected state of this programming, especially given the uncertain future of the start-up and development grants that enable universities to increase and improve French-language programming.

The start-up and development grants are earmarked for the creation and maintenance of French-language university programs. The objective is to help the French-language university sector make up for the fact that it lags significantly in this regard. These grants are allocated on the basis of priorities set out in the *Multi-Year Framework for the Expansion of French-Language University Education*. FOETC has a mandate to advise the Minister of Education and Training on the allocation of this funding, since he is in charge of updating the *Multi-Year Framework*.

In 1995, the Minister had asked FOETC to advise him on the allocation of \$1 million in additional funding for these grants for 1995-96 funding in the amount of \$10 016 506 had already been earmarked in previous years. After analysing the institutions' proposals, FOETC recommended distributing \$775 800 among various projects submitted by the institutions (see previous Activity Report). After receiving clarification on certain projects, FOETC recommended that the Minister allocate the remaining sum (\$224 200) to the development of the French-language medicine program at the University of Ottawa. FOETC had already identified medicine as a priority. In 1994 (see previous Activity Report), the council expressed its concern that there was no proposal for a program in medicine, especially since the medicine component of the Ontario-Quebec program had just been cancelled. FOETC also served on an interministerial committee responsible for the start-up of a French-language program in medicine in Ontario. In response to the FOETC recommendations,

the Minister announced that MET would in fact allocate this sum to the University of Ottawa's French-language program in medicine.

In addition, the province's financial situation led to cuts of 15 per cent to maintenance funds, the complete withdrawal of sums invested in 1995-96, and substantial cuts to the additional sum allocated for 1996-97. Furthermore, this sum will no longer be allocated automatically, as it was in the past. In view of these parameters, the Minister asked that FOETC make recommendations, in consultation with Ontario's bilingual universities, as to the general principles that should guide the restructuring of the maintenance funds, as well as recommendations concerning the distribution of the sum of \$626 000 among the eligible institutions.

In order to prepare its reply to the Minister, FOETC began by meeting with the representatives of the institutions serving the Franco-Ontarian community. Using this consultation and guided by FOETC's traditional philosophy in this area – "for and by francophones" – FOETC submitted a three-part proposal to the Minister.

Part 1 offers an overview of French-language university education. FOETC feels that the development of French-language university education is incomplete, and that the current budget cuts must be temporary, as it is essential to at least stabilize programming at its current level. FOETC also cautions the ministry against relying too heavily on distance education as a way of streamlining the delivery of French-language university education. FOETC also recommends that the ministry carry out a thorough review of funding mechanisms for French-language university education.

Part 2 proposes using the following objectives as a guide for restructuring and reallocating funding within the institutions. The three primary objectives are those of the *Multi-Year Framework*: equity of participation, equity in diversity, and equity in relevance and quality. FOETC also established specific restructuring objectives: make the maintenance of all recent significant gains in programming a priority, and plan programming at an interinstitutional or province-wide level.

Finally, Part 3 deals with the principles for allocating the new sum, which FOETC calls a "transition support fund". Funding would be allocated to three categories of proposals: (1) one-year projects intended to support the institution's restructuring

exercise; (2) one-year projects intended to support institutions' interinstitutional restructuring exercises; (3) longer-term projects intended to support the institutions' intra- or interinstitutional restructuring but that will ultimately receive funding from other sources of revenue.

In its final submission to the Minister, FOETC assigned priority to the institutions' proposals, recommended a moratorium on cuts to French-language university programs, and recommended that the ministry make the universities accountable for the new funding allocated.

Program Approval

The Minister of Education and Training gave FOETC the mandate to evaluate any proposal submitted to the Ontario Council of University Affairs (OCUA) by a university, prior to funding approval being given to a new bilingual or French-language program. When OCUA receives such a proposal, it sends a copy to FOETC, which in turn forwards a recommendation to OCUA and sends a copy directly to the Minister of Education and Training. FOETC's specific mandate is to evaluate the program proposal in light of the Franco-Ontarian community's needs.

FOETC developed a grid to facilitate the evaluation of the new bilingual and French-language university program proposals submitted to OCUA, the Minister, and the institutions on June 25, 1995. The evaluation grid consists of three criteria: the rationale for the program, the extent to which the program meets the Franco-Ontarian community's needs, and the demand for creation of the program among Franco-Ontarian students. The categories include a variable number of criteria, each accompanied by one or more test questions to guide the evaluation. Ideally, the proposal should reply to these test questions. The institutions can include any other information not mentioned on the grid that they consider essential. FOETC studies each proposal and makes a recommendation to OCUA and the Minister.

This year OCUA asked FOETC to evaluate the University of Ottawa's funding proposals for an Honours bachelor degree in Environmental Studies, and for the restructuring of the Bachelor of Fine Arts program.

In December 1995, FOETC made three recommendations to OCUA concerning the bilingual Honours bachelor degree in Environmental Studies. FOETC recommended that the program be approved, that it become a French-language program over the next few years, and that this be accomplished

through linking it with the relevant courses and programs that already exist in the French-language colleges.

In January 1996, FOETC made two recommendations to OCUA concerning the restructuring of the Bachelor of Fine Arts program. First, it recommended that the restructuring of the program be approved, and, second, that the University of Ottawa seek to develop an articulation agreement with Collège Boréal, which offers a similar program.

The French-Language University

FOETC feels it is responsible for making the Minister, government, community, and universities aware of the issue of university services in French. FOETC has become the community spokesperson in dealing with various government and community officials, informing them of the importance of this issue to the development and consolidation of French-language education in Ontario. Accordingly, in 1994 FOETC recommended setting up a royal commission of inquiry on French-language university education in Ontario. The ministry rejected this recommendation.

To be in a more solid position in the future, FOETC developed a large-scale project, with three components. The first component, published in the summer of 1996, was a fifteen-page chronology and annotated bibliography outlining research on the issue since 1969.

The second component was a study on the transition mechanisms for francophones who have managed to obtain the creation of exclusively French-language institutions. The original objective of the study was to give the ministry and community examples of transition procedures to be followed should a French-language university be created. It quickly became clear, however, that a study of this kind needed to be more general. In fact, in the fall of 1995, the Franco-Ontarian community saw its years of struggle rewarded by the opening of Collège Boréal and Collège des Grands Lacs, and La Cité collégiale's permanent campus. At almost the same time, a task force submitted a report to the Ontario government recommending the creation of fifteen French-language school boards. FOETC felt the time was right to step back and evaluate the implementation of Franco-Ontarian institutions before any new ones were created.

FOETC therefore commissioned Anne Gilbert to analyse transition mechanisms for the principal French-language teaching institutions in Ontario, in an effort to see what lessons could be learned from

milestone experiences in the Franco-Ontarian community's development. The report, published on August 23, 1996, only a few days before FOETC's abolition, endeavoured to provide the answers. FOETC hopes the Franco-Ontarian community will be able to refer to this document when next setting up an educational institution, whether a school board or a French-language university.

The third and last component, still in its initial phase, consisted of striking a committee to devise one or more organizational models for French-language university services governed by francophones. FOETC held a number of discussions with community representatives to take stock of the issue of the French-language university. Now that FOETC has been dissolved, however, it will be unable to complete this work.

University Funding

Through Minister Dave Cooke, the preceding government had asked OCUA to conduct a study of the system of funding for universities. In July 1995 the new government received the memorandum arising out of OCUA's in-depth study. FOETC responded to the OCUA memorandum on funding systems, at the Minister's request. Its comments focused on those aspects affecting French-language clients.

First, FOETC expressed its regret that OCUA's memorandum contained no mention of French-language university services and the fact that they are at the developmental stage. FOETC feels it is essential for French-language university services to receive a fair and appropriate portion of the funding allocated to the universities.

FOETC supported OCUA's recommendation that a cost study be carried out and the different programs weighted, as long as the study included an analysis of the cost of French-language university education. FOETC asked to participate on an equal footing in the cost study in the area of French-language and bilingual university education, including developing the study's parameters. FOETC questioned whether the proposed mechanism, which was in fact quite static, would encourage innovative programming. This is especially important in light of the fact that French-language university education, which is still at the developmental stage, is lagging behind its English-language counterpart. Any ministry restructuring of university funding processes should provide for program expansion (through a special funding envelope or other means). On the subject of funding, FOETC maintained, as always,

that it is vital to maintain the start-up and development funds because programming is far from complete.

FOETC believes a university has three main functions: teaching, research, and community service. It does not feel that OCUA's memorandum fully reflected the importance of the third function, community service.

FOETC supported OCUA's recommendation that a special funding envelope be created to enable more Ontarians belonging to underrepresented groups to attend university, provided the envelope included a francophone component. FOETC also supported OCUA's recommendation of a special funding envelope for various projects, such as the streamlining of French-language university education.

FOETC cautioned against a deregulation of tuition fees for master's- and doctorate-level professional and semi-professional programs, as it might make these programs less accessible, especially for underrepresented groups. FOETC supported OCUA's recommendation that, in order to obtain funding, universities be required to set up a transfer system for first- and second-year university credits between institutions, as this would encourage student mobility. Such a system should, in fact, be adopted Canada-wide. FOETC wishes that OCUA's recommendation had gone further in the matter of university accountability. Should the ministry adopt accountability procedures, FOETC would like to point out the importance of holding the bilingual institutions accountable as far as their special status is concerned. To date, there has been no follow-up to OCUA's memorandum, and it does not appear that the current government will make use of it.

Furthermore, on the issue of French-language university funding, the council's proposal regarding start-up and development grants also recommends that the Minister review the different funding methods for French-language university education so as to consolidate them and make them consistent.

After several months of waiting, the Minister, Mr. Snobelen, published a discussion paper on the future of postsecondary education in Ontario and released the information on the composition of the committee that is to advise him on this issue. David Smith is to chair the five-member Advisory Committee. Unfortunately, the government chose not to appoint a representative from the Franco-Ontarian community. According to the comments it made at the time of this announcement on July 16, 1996, the

government would be in favour of privatizing post-secondary education in Ontario. The Franco-Ontarian community will need to fight to defend the programs and services it now has in this key sector and ensure that it develops fully.

Ontario–Quebec Exchanges

FOETC serves on the selection committee for candidates who receive Ontario–Quebec scholarships to study in Quebec. FOETC was able to have the selection criteria changed to include Franco-Ontarian candidates wishing to study in French in Quebec. The objective of these exchanges was in fact to give candidates an opportunity to become familiar with their second language and its culture.

The Future of the Small Universities

Over the past year, FOETC has been very concerned about the future of the small universities, especially Dominican College of Philosophy and Theology and Collège universitaire de Hearst, the only unilingual French-language universities in Ontario. Their size and specialized mandates make their future uncertain. Over the year, FOETC has tried to maintain these two universities, which are so important for the Franco-Ontarian community.