



April 23, 2015

Brittany Jakubiec, President
CPF PEI Branch
P.O. Box 2785
Charlottetown, PE
C1A 8C4

Dear Ms. Jakubiec,

Thank-you for your letter and your pertinent questions on the important cultural and educational issues of bilingualism and French education.

Please find attached the Green Party response to your questions on Official Language Bilingualism and French as a Second Language. I also invite you and the members of the PEI Branch of the Canadian Parents for French to take a look at our complete policy platform, *Real Change 2015* (www.greenparty.pe.ca/policy). I welcome any questions or suggestions that you may have regarding our positions with respect to bilingualism, French studies, or any of our other policies.

Sincerely,

Peter Bevan-Baker
Leader, Green Party of PEI

How do you see Canada's Official Language Bilingualism playing a role in a competitive global economy where languages like Mandarin and Spanish, to name two, are growing in importance as dominant international languages?

While we do see an increase in Mandarin and Spanish in the global marketplace, English and French are still languages which are widely spoken throughout the world as official languages, from North America to Europe, Africa, South America, and Oceania. They are also commonly learned as second languages by many nations, and as such, both French and English have a dominant role to play in communication in international relations, trade, and markets. We in the Green Party believe that it is critical to prepare our students for a future in which digitally-based media, education and business brings other nations closer than ever, and our belief is that a solid foundation in both English and French will certainly stand them in good stead in this regard.

Do you believe that all Island youth are entitled to learn both official languages through access to French Second Language (FSL) education? If you do, what will your government do to ensure that Island children have unfettered access to quality FSL education programs on PEI? If you do not, why not?

The Green Party believes that it is essential that children from any community on Prince Edward Island have access to high quality second-language education. We would take a second look at the distribution of FSL opportunities, including immersion education, across schools on PEI, in order to ensure that students in rural areas have the opportunity to pursue studies in FSL as easily and readily as their urban counterparts. We do not feel that it is acceptable that small children must be bussed exceptionally long distances to access FSL services when immersion is not offered in their community. Through dialogue with teachers, school boards, and the department, the Green Party would work toward ensuring changes to the FSL offerings such that any student will be able to enjoy, learn, and excel in French as a second language, close to home.