

Presentation to Miles Turnbull, CPF PEI Educator of the Year 2012-13

May 16, 2013 Main Building, UPEI

Bonjour et bienvenue! I would like to welcome you here this afternoon on behalf of Canadian Parents for French - PEI.

At the beginning of Confederation in 1867, the Canadian Parliament adopted two official languages: English and French. Although it was only Parliament that was officially bilingual in the beginning, it was soon realized that there was great value and importance in using both French and English, as both languages began to appear on stamps and bank notes in the 1920s and 30s.

In addition to the establishment of the Translation Bureau in 1934, the previously unilingual public service sector began to communicate with the province of Quebec in French. These were the initial first steps leading to a bilingual nation.

Let us fast forward to 1969, when the Official Language Act was voted for, passing with no opposition and soon became national policy.

Canadians soon began to realize the importance that bilingualism plays in the development of our nation. Soon after, many Anglophone parents across the country wanted their children to have the bilingual advantage.

Let us fast forward once more to 1975 and to Prince Edward Island. At this time, it has only been a couple of years since the first Immersion program started in St. Lambert, Quebec. Ron Elliot, the Superintendent of Regional School Board Unit 3, was interested in having a French Immersion program in his jurisdiction. Even though French was already being taught in some schools across Prince Edward Island, there was no official recognition or curriculum associated with these programs. Mr. Elliot did not

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speaking French himself, but believed that the addition of French language education was necessary in ensuring quality education for PEI students.

To begin this process, Mr. Elliot contacted Clair Smitheron, who was a Core French teacher at the time. Ms. Smitheron looked into the establishment of French Immersion programs and succeeded in offering this program to our students in 1977, where pilot programs were launched at the Sherwood School, involving over 100 students. Canadian Parents for French, a national organization devoted to providing students with French-second-language learning opportunities, was established soon after.

Claire Smitheron was the first recipient of our Educator of the Year Award in 1984. Since then the award has been given annually to a person who has shown exceptional support for French-second-language education in Prince Edward Island.

The nomination process involves receiving letters of recommendation and support from peers, professional associates, and community members. The documents are carefully reviewed by a panel of three volunteers and after thoughtful consideration, a winner is selected.

Today we are happy to recognize Dr. Miles Turnbull, dean of the Faculty of Education, as the 31st educator to receive this honour. Nous tenons à souligner l'engagement sans pareil de Dr Turnbull à l'enseignement du français langue seconde tout au long de sa carrière, non seulement en tant que professeur et doyen de la Faculté de l'Éducation de l'Université de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard, mais en tant que chercheur, auteur, praticien, et facilitateur.

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L'ampleur et l'importance de son engagement représentent une avancée significative pour la promotion, l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues secondes à l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard, ainsi que partout au Canada.

If you look at Dr. Turnbull's long history with the French language, it is quite possible that he could have attained this award several times over the last twenty years. Dr. Turnbull is well established in the field of French language education. He is well known for his research and contributions, for his work at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, and for his role as volunteer and leader at the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers. He obtained his Bachelor of Arts (majoring in French) from the University of Prince Edward Island, his Master of Arts (in teaching French as a second language) from McMaster University, and his PhD in Second Language Education from the University of Toronto.

Even with all of that said there is more to tell about Dr. Turnbull's vast and varied career in which he has supported FSL education and teaching excellence. For us at Canadian Parents for French, we would be remiss if we did not mention his role in establishing the Bachelor of Education – Enseignement en Français Langue Seconde at UPEI.

In 2002, with encouragement from Vianne Timmons, the former Vice President of Academic Development, Dr. Turnbull returned to Prince Edward Island to establish this program. We are fortunate indeed as the program generates qualified, articulate, knowledgeable, and skilled French-second-language teachers, who for the most part are available to teach in our PEI classrooms.

I have heard it said that you can have the best curriculum in the world but if you don't have engaged, resourceful, and creative teachers to pass on the information, you have nothing. The fact that we have teachers with all of these attributes plus the

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pedagogical know-how and the language requirements for FSL teaching is quite phenomenal. It is a benchmark that we thought **would always be beyond our grasp.**

J'ai rencontré Dr Turnbull l'été dernier, lorsque j'ai travaillé dans la Faculté d'éducation à l'Université de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard.

Je tiens à vous dire une chose: Dr Turnbull est un chef incroyable, qui possède des qualités de dirigeant extraordinaires, surtout les qualités communicatives et personnelles.

I think I speak for everyone when I say that he is truly an inspirational figure, deserving of this recognition.

Il est une vraie source d'inspiration.

Thanks to Dr. Turnbull, his team, and Vianne's vision we can offer students teaching excellence in second language education. Félicitations, Dr Turnbull.