



**La Fédération des francophones
de la Colombie-Britannique**

For Immediate Release

Serious Threats to Immersion Programs

Vancouver, January 26, 2010 — The Fédération des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique - FFCB (Francophone Federation of British Columbia) is concerned about the impact the budget cuts imposed by the Minister of Education on the school boards could have on the accessibility of immersion programs.

For the president of the FFCB, the measures that certain school boards are considering, specifically school consolidation, could have a negative impact on Francophone families and Francophiles, especially in small towns or remote regions. "The possible school closure implies that the immersion programs will not always be offered near the place of residence. Distance and transportation could force parents to abandon the immersion programs. From this perspective, we must remain vigilant in front of the risks that those budget cuts imposed by the government. In collaboration with our local associations and Canadian Parents for French, we are closely following what is happening within our communities. The popularity and accessibility of the immersion programs is extremely important for the community represented by the FFCB. The increase of the "Francophone space"(espace francophone) that we all wish for could be at risk by the cuts being considered within certain school boards" Dr. Réal Roy concludes.

This evening the parents in Prince George are meeting to discuss possible cost saving measures for School District 57 and try to avoid the closing of a number of schools in the region. More than 612 children in immersion programs at the primary level could be affected by these closures.

The FFCB is dedicated to promoting an open and welcoming French-speaking community. The majority of its work is aimed at expanding the French-speaking community and strengthening the capacities of francophone and francophile society in British Columbia.

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