

Petition

To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

WHEREAS

1. Ontario is a province of great linguistic diversityⁱ
2. Many Ontarian families want to enable their children to develop speaking and literacy skills in their heritage language(s)
3. Many Ontarian families want to enable their children to learn new languages beyond their heritage language(s)
4. Ontario's International Language Education (ILE) program is not able to allow children to either maintain literacy in their heritage language or to learn a new language
5. Ontario's current Education Act prohibits the implementation of multilingual programs designed to promote multilingual skills beyond French and English in publicly-funded classrooms
6. Other Canadian provinces, such as Alberta and British Columbia, have for many years allowed multilingual education programs in public education for a diversity of languages, including Arabic, Filipino, German, Hebrew, Italian, Mandarin, Spanish and Ukrainianⁱⁱ
7. Other countries, such as the United States, have expanded multilingual education programs intended for all students including programs that teach through the medium of languages such as Spanish, Mandarin, Korean, Japanese, and Portuguese
8. Rapid language loss after the start of formal schooling is extremely common among children whose initial home language is other than English or Frenchⁱⁱⁱ
9. The Indigenous languages are in decline, and the achievement gap between Indigenous students and all students needs to be closed, both of which could be assisted by multilingual education in Indigenous languages where children of these language groups form the population
10. Multilingual education promotes a variety of well-established cognitive benefits for children^{iv}
11. Multilingual education broadens the cultural awareness of students^v
12. Multilingual education expands career opportunities for graduates in a global economy
13. For families speaking a heritage language, multilingual education increases the ability of children to maintain vital community and family ties

We the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

Change the Education Act to allow languages of instruction beyond French and English to be used for enrichment purposes in Ontario's publicly-funded classrooms

Name _____

Address _____

Signature _____

Please return signed petition to: Ontario Multilingual Education, C/O 1004-4091 Sheppard Avenue East, Scarborough, ON M1S 3H2.

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10. Multilingual education promotes a variety of well-established cognitive benefits for children^{iv}
11. Multilingual education broadens the cultural awareness and 21st century global competencies of students^v
12. Multilingual education expands career opportunities for graduates in a global economy
13. For families speaking a heritage language, multilingual education increases the ability of children to maintain vital community and family ties

We the undersigned residents of Ontario urge the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to change the Education Act to allow languages of instruction beyond French and English to be used in Ontario’s publicly-funded classrooms

	First and Last Name	Full Address (printed)	Signature
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ⁱ Over 100 mother tongue languages in Ontario (2001 Census, <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/economy/demographics/census/cenhi4.html>). Mother languages include Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin), Italian, Spanish, Punjabi, Portuguese, Tagalog, German, Arabic, Polish, Vietnamese, Dutch, Greek, Ukrainian, Urdu, Tamil and many more (2011 Census, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/demo11b-eng.htm>).

ⁱⁱ The following Canadian boards have bilingual programs:

Calgary Board of Education - Mandarin, German and Spanish (<http://www.cbe.ab.ca/programs/program-options/language-programs/Pages/default.aspx>)

Calgary Catholic School District - Italian, Spanish and Filipino (<http://www.cbe.ab.ca/programs/program-options/language-programs/Pages/default.aspx>)

Edmonton Public School Board – Arabic, German, Hebrew, Mandarin, Spanish (<https://www.epsb.ca/programs/language/>)

Vancouver School Board – Mandarin (<https://www.vsb.bc.ca/programs/k7-students>)

Manitoba boards – German, Hebrew, Ukrainian (<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/languages/>)

ⁱⁱⁱ For example, see Cummins, J. (2012). Foreword. In R. Chumak-Horbatsch, *Linguistically appropriate practice: A guidebook for Early Childhood practitioners working with immigrant children*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

^{iv} For example, see Cummins, Dr. Jim. "Bilingual Children's Mother Tongue: Why Is It Important for Education?" I Teach I Learn. <<<http://iteachilearn.org/cummins/mother.htm>>>

^v For example, see Collier, Virginia P. and Thomas, Wayne P. *The Astounding Effectiveness of Dual Language Education for All*. Page 3. <<<http://njrp.tamu.edu/2004/PDFs/Collier.pdf>>>