



GENERAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

ETHICS AND RELIGIOUS CULTURE PROGRAM REFORM

On October 19, Premier François Legault announced that a new course on Quebec culture and citizenship will be launched in the 2023-2024 school year, replacing the outdated Ethics and Religious Culture program. The FNEC has been working with several organizations over the last two years to convince the Minister of Education to include an Indigenous perspective in the program reform. This latest unilateral announcement, in addition to the totally unacceptable prejudiced and assimilationist name of the new course show complete disregard for the government's own consultations where we compelled public officials to stress the importance of having our experts develop the Indigenous content.

On October 24, it was the Minister of Education's turn to make a grand announcement that the Ethics and Religious Culture program would undergo a "major transformation." Curiously, no mention of this announcement nor of the extent of the reform had been made at the meeting held only the week before by the provincial panel on Indigenous student success. The provincial government's announced changes are clearly politically motivated.

In an open letter to the Minister of Education, the FNEC and Institut Tshakapesh expressed their disagreement with the reform and the lack of consultation. They asked the Minister for measures that would allow for genuine consultation, inclusiveness, and Indigenization of the provincial curriculum, including giving the course a more culturally inclusive name.

For more on this issue, go to: <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/espaces-autochtones/1834959/ethique-culture-ecr-jeunes-besoin-devenir-quebecois-disent-autochtones>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/first-nations-groups-object-to-new-citizenship-culture-course-quebec-1.6227160>

BILL 96

Last May, the provincial government introduced Bill 96 that if adopted, would make changes to the Charter of the French Language. Even though the proposed amendments do not affect our inherent right to speak our Indigenous languages and promote Indigenous cultures, it does not remedy the linguistic disadvantages some students consistently face in Quebec's education system.

On September 28, AFNQL Chief, Ghislain Picard, and Gesgapegiag Chief and Chief Responsible for Education, John Martin, went before a parliamentary committee to submit a document containing five proposed amendments and ten recommendations. The chiefs made history in the National Assembly by making their statements in their respective Indigenous language—Innu and Micmac, while simultaneous interpretation was provided to the MNAs.

The FNEC is continuing to work with the AFNQL to ensure that all our students have equal opportunities for success. Meetings with the government and the opposition parties, as well as a social media campaign are currently in the works.

To watch the chiefs' presentation: <http://www.assnat.qc.ca/fr/video-audio/archives-parlementaires/travaux-commissions/AudioVideo-91359.html>

To read the AFNQL's brief: <https://cepn-fnec.ca/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/bill96.pdf>

EXAMINATION OF THE VENTILATION SYSTEMS OF THE FNEC MEMBER SCHOOLS

It has been almost a year since the FNEC began the ventilation review in its member schools. To date \$1,750,000 has been committed to upgrading ventilation systems. Almost all schools will be up to date by 2022.

The Introduction to *Building Mechanics and Building Maintenance* training will be provided in collaboration with the workforce training and development centre (CDFM) in Wendake will begin in April 2022. All the necessary information will be distributed after the holidays.

Also, we will begin the review of the school buildings next April to upgrade them.

For more information, we invite you to contact Éric Gros-Louis at the following e-mail address: egroslois@cepn-fnec.com