



O A C S

**ONTARIO ALLIANCE
OF CHRISTIAN
SCHOOLS**

617 GARNER ROAD EAST
ANCASTER, ONT. L9G 3K9

TEL: (905)648-2100
FAX: (905)648-2110
EMAIL: oacs@oacs.org
WEB SITE: www.oacs.org

Memo 07-P-30
February 22, 2008

To: Principals
From: John Vanasselt, Director of Communications
Re: Heritage Canada French language grants

Greetings from the OACS.

You recently received a letter from the Ontario Ministry of Education, French Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, informing you that beginning in 2008-09 the French grants would only be available to inspected non-public/Catholic secondary schools offering French instruction a minimum of 25% of the school week.

We have researched the matter and have been informed of the following:

1. Canadian Heritage “down-loaded” the administration of this second-language grant program to the province last fall, because there was no mechanism at the federal level to ensure schools were actually meeting the goals of the grant program.
2. The French-Language branch at the Ontario Ministry of Education investigated a number of independent schools in Ontario and found significant abuse of the program. Apparently there were a number of schools using these grants for instruction in languages other than French (e.g. German, Hebrew) – the cost being in the “thousands of dollars.”
3. The Ontario Ministry of Education has decided that the only efficient accountability process for independent schools would be through the high school inspections, thus the letter you received.

It has been made very clear to us that the Ministry of Education has no interest in restoring French grants to elementary independent schools. This is not surprising. We have been working since 2001-02 to correct the inequity of small schools not receiving French grants, and although initially there was some progress, since 2003 there has been no movement on this issue. It is evident to us that Ontario has no commitment to the federal policy of bilingualism.

Therefore, OACS has taken up contact directly with the Ministry of Canadian Heritage to seek a new agreement which will promote and support French language instruction in Ontario’s independent schools.

We ask that you write to your federal member of parliament (contact information can be found at www.oacs.org/advocacy) to register your dissatisfaction with the Ontario government’s unilateral action. It would be helpful if you would contact the OACS on your correspondence.

Blessings on your work.