Multicultural Education and Heritage Language Education Policies

Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment
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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe the role of education in a multicultural society and to outline Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment’s commitment to programs and activities which contribute to the enhancement of multiculturalism in Saskatchewan and Canada. It strives to reinforce other policies and initiatives that affect multicultural education* and to accommodate Saskatchewan’s diverse cultural perspectives.

Multiculturalism

Definition/ Meaning

Multiculturalism is a recognition of the diversity of cultural differences which exist in a pluralistic society and an endorsement of a society in which individuals of all cultures are accepted and accorded respect. Thus, it encourages a positive acceptance of races, religions and cultures, and recognizes such diversity as healthy.

Principles

Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment adopts the following statement of principles inherent in multiculturalism:

- respect for the right of self-determination for individuals and groups within the context of national unity;
- equality of status of all cultural and ethnic groups within the framework of our officially multicultural and bilingual country;
- equality of access by all individuals and groups to employment and promotion, services and support;
- the freedom of all individuals and groups to the retention and development of their cultures as a part of the Canadian identity;
- a commitment to sharing our cultures within the mainstream of Canadian society;
- an undertaking to participate in Canadian citizenship and the democratic process in terms of both rights and responsibilities;
- a belief that individuals have the freedom to choose the particular cultural attributes they prefer within the framework of democratic principles; and,
- respect for and observance of human rights and civil liberties as exemplified in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the common law, and human rights codes.

Background

Saskatchewan’s population reflects a high degree of cultural and linguistic diversity. There exist hundreds of ethnic organizations, representing people from all parts of the globe and Canadian Aboriginal peoples. The major aims of these organizations include the preservation, development, and sharing of their languages and cultures.

In the past decade, the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan (MCOS) has become the coordinating body for local multicultural councils and organizations. Recently formed provincial organizations, such as the Saskatchewan Association for Multicultural Education (1984), and the Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages (1985), have brought an educational perspective to cultural and linguistic issues.

In Saskatchewan, government responses to the cultural and linguistic diversity have been influenced, in part, by federal policies and community presentations to agencies and departments.

The federal Official Languages Act (1971) set the stage for subsequent provincial legislation and activities. The Act designated French and English as the two official languages and announced a national policy of “multiculturalism within a bilingual framework.”

The Saskatchewan Multicultural Act was passed in 1974, thereby officially recognizing multiculturalism in Saskatchewan, supporting multicultural projects and forming the Saskatchewan Multicultural Advisory Council to advise government on a wide range of issues pertaining to multiculturalism. In the Act, multiculturalism means:

* For example, the Indian and Métis Education Policy from Kindergarten to Grade XII
the preservation and development of the multicultural composition of the province and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes recognition of the right to every community, whose common history spans many generations, to retain its distinctive group identity, and to develop its relevant language and its traditional arts and sciences, without political or social impediment and for the mutual benefit of all citizens.

The intent was to raise public awareness of multiculturalism and to facilitate acceptance in society.

It is the policy of the government of Saskatchewan to promote and to support financially, where applicable, programs designed to provide language opportunities for students and adults both in the official languages and in other heritage languages.

Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment has responded to the spirit of The Saskatchewan Multicultural Act in a number of ways.

Most notably:

1974 *The School Act* is amended to permit a language other than English to be taught or used as a language of instruction (for a limited time per school day) in support of the linguistic aspect of multiculturalism. In addition, a grant structure aimed at providing additional incentive and financial support for the development of second language instruction is established.

1978 *The Education Act* (1978) provides an opportunity for the expansion of heritage language education. Section 180 of the Act and the accompanying Regulation make it possible for a heritage language to be used as a language of instruction 100% of the time in kindergarten and up to 50% of the time in grades 1 to 12.

The Act also guarantees access to education in French. It recognizes the status of French as one of the national official languages and the provincial government's responsibility to ensure access to both of Canada's official languages.

1978 The Minister of Education establishes two advisory committees - the Official Minority Language Committee and the Minister's Advisory Committee on Heritage Languages to provide recommendations on issues concerning minority language education.

1980 An Official Minority Language Office (OMLO) is created and made responsible for program development and consultative services to Core/Oral French programs.

1982 The Minister of Education establishes the Native Curriculum Review Committee.

1984 A permanent ongoing Indian and Métis Curriculum Advisory Committee is established.

1984 The Minister of Education initiates a province-wide consultation regarding the issue of Native education. The resulting report, *Reaching Out - The Report of the Indian and Métis Education Consultations (1985)*, contains 29 specific recommendations, calling on the existing educational system to change in order to better meet the needs of Indian and Métis children.

1984 The Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee (established in 1981) presents its final report. The Committee acknowledges that while Saskatchewan has a good system of education, there are indications that some students' needs are not being met. The Committee notes the province's diverse population and the many and varied needs of its children and suggests that the educational system strive to better respond to student aspirations.

1984 The Minister of Education releases the *Goals of Education for Saskatchewan* which clearly states that the attainment of these goals is a shared community responsibility, involving the school, home and church. Community participation in setting educational directions is, therefore, a desired step in the process of establishing policies and programs.

1986 The Minister of Education's Advisory Committee on Heritage Languages
(ACOHL) presents its report. It identifies major concerns in Saskatchewan with respect to heritage language instruction and recommends that Saskatchewan Education develop a policy on multicultural education.


1991 Discussion papers are developed on Multicultural Education and Heritage Language Education policies.

**Vision Statement**

Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment envisions a society that takes pride in its heritage and one that encourages a collaboration among home, school, and community in realizing equality of access and opportunity for all.

It is a society that recognizes the richness inherent in pluralism and one that benefits from cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

It is a society that enables its children to develop self-confidence and self-esteem, a sense of individual worth, a respect for others, compassion, and a desire for social justice.

It is a society that encourages all of its members to be sensitive to the social, spiritual, and economic needs of other individuals and groups.

Finally, it is a society that recognizes human resources as its most valuable asset and strives to guarantee equality of experience, opportunity and outcome for everyone.

**The Role of the Educational System in a Multicultural Society**

**Goals and Responsibilities**

The goals of education for Saskatchewan, developed as a result of extensive province-wide public consultations, were released by the Minister of Education in 1984 as a statement entitled *Goals of Education*.

This statement declares that:

"The goals of education recognize the inherent worth and value of each individual. Education, then, should develop the potential of each person to the fullest extent. It should also enhance the ability of each individual to cope effectively in a changing physical, economic, and social environment.

The attainment of these goals is a shared responsibility. The school, the home, the church, and the community all play roles in the educating of a child*.5

The goals statement itself deals with the knowledge, skills and attitudes considered necessary for functioning in a changing world. It states an intention to develop a number of abilities in students, among them the ability to:

- perceive themselves in a positive way;
- act on the belief that each individual is worthwhile;
- base actions on the recognition that people differ in their values, behaviors, and lifestyles;
- interact and feel comfortable with others who are different in race, religion, status, or personal attributes;
- act with honesty, integrity, compassion and fairness;
- work toward greater social justice; and,
- respect family, religion and culture in a pluralistic society.

Pluralism is and will continue to be a fact of Canadian life. Recognition that we live in an increasingly pluralistic society and that cultural and linguistic diversity is characteristic of
students in our schools is reflected in the Goals of Education.

The public educational system has a responsibility to prepare students for living in this multicultural environment. It must address a variety of issues ranging from ethnocentrism to unity through acceptance and understanding, from discrimination to equality of experience and opportunity. Sound teaching practices, such as being aware of a child's social and psychological background, encouraging the development of self-esteem and security in identity, and responding to individual needs, are consistent with the philosophy underlying multicultural education. Multicultural education:

- is broadly conceptualized and comprehensive;
- first develops an awareness or recognition of one's own culture and ethnicity;
- develops an understanding of similarities and differences among cultures;
- stresses the acquisition of skills in analysis, communication and inter-group relations, which enables one to function effectively in varying cultural environments;
- includes the ability to formulate creative and novel solutions to personal and social issues; and,
- fosters positive attitudes towards self and other ethnocultural and racial groups.

The development of multicultural perspectives enables individuals to live more enriched and fulfilled lives while contributing harmoniously to a democratic society.

Goals/principles

The goals of multicultural education are consistent with, and flow from, many of the knowledge, skill and attitude objectives for Saskatchewan students contained in the Goals of Education statement. This relationship is demonstrated in the chart which follows.

Self-Concept Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals of Education for Saskatchewan</th>
<th>Goals of Multicultural Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• perceive themselves in a positive way</td>
<td>• enable students to develop self-confidence, self-esteem and a positive self-concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• enable students to develop a sense of pride in their own ethnocultural identities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• enable students to study their cultural and linguistic heritages and those of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• enable students to view their own ethnocultural backgrounds and those of others as personal and societal assets</td>
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</table>
### Understanding and Relating to Others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals of Education for Saskatchewan</th>
<th>Goals of Multicultural Education</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• act on the belief that each individual is worthwhile</td>
<td>• foster in students the value of human dignity, irrespective of race, colour, gender, language, cultural heritage, religion, ethnicity, physical and intellectual diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• base actions on the recognition that people differ in their values, behaviours and lifestyles</td>
<td>• enable students to understand and appreciate concepts such as the &quot;commonness&quot; of humanity and the uniqueness of the individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• interact and feel comfortable with others who are different in race, religion, status or personal attributes</td>
<td>• enable students to understand and appreciate the validity and legitimacy of people's identification with their ethnocultural heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• provide an opportunity for all students to understand and appreciate the cultural diversity of our province by exploring the social, economic, historical and cultural impact that this diversity has had on Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• equip students with knowledge, skills and strategies that support interpersonal and intergroup relationships and are necessary for functioning in our pluralistic society</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• develop in students a positive attitude towards members of other ethnocultural groups</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Spiritual Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals of Education for Saskatchewan</th>
<th>Goals of Multicultural Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• respect family, religion and culture in a pluralistic society</td>
<td>• familiarize students with the needs and aspirations of cultural groups in the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• make students sensitive to and aware of the meaning of cultural diversity in Canadian life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• encourage students to understand and respect the cultural heritages of all students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Membership in Society**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals of Education for Saskatchewan</th>
<th>Goals of Multicultural Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• participate in the democratic process of government and perform the duties of citizenship</td>
<td>• empower students to become politically and socially active so that they can promote constructive social change and provide for self-determination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• act with honesty, integrity, compassion and fairness</td>
<td>• increase students' capacity for examining their own ethnocultural attitudes and values in the light of history and the current situation in the province and country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• work towards greater social justice</td>
<td>• enable individual students to feel comfortable in choosing the particular cultural attributes they prefer within the framework of democratic principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• enable students to develop an acceptance for and understanding of differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• enable students to recognize and understand how ethnic polarization, tensions and conflict, racism, discrimination and prejudice occur in society and strive for ways to resolve these issues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• develop a sense of national pride and acknowledge the need for international understanding

• develop in students an attitude of support for individuals and groups working to retain and develop their cultures as a part of the Canadian identity
• expose students to curricula that reflect the historical and sociological realities of ethnicity and promote cultural and intercultural understanding
• enable students to have access to accurate portrayals of the history and contemporary life of all ethnocultural groups in our society
• enable students to understand the interdependence of all members of their own cultural group, as well as of the wider community

Ultimately, multicultural education strives to create a harmonious society or culture, integrating diversity to establish a new and consistent body of normative standards. In this process, individuals and groups from different racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds preserve the essential elements of their distinctiveness as they, together with members of the broader society, fashion a mutually acceptable transformation.

Policy For Multicultural Education

Saskatchewan society is made up of indigenous peoples, descendants of the original settlers and recent immigrants from the four corners of the world. Together, they represent many cultures. Some have chosen to maintain and develop elements of their culture and traditions within the Saskatchewan setting.

Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment recognizes cultural and linguistic diversity as characteristic of our society and as a positive contributor to the social, political and economic life of the province. It acknowledges a responsibility, shared with others, to develop and implement programs and policies that reflect the needs of this increasingly pluralistic population. These needs include:
• self-fulfilment, self-esteem and self-actualization, security of identity, positive self-concept;
• fair and equitable treatment in all aspects of living; and,
• intercultural, intergroup sharing and communication to achieve understanding, appreciation and mutual respect.

The following Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment multicultural education policy statements are consistent with:
• The Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
• The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;
• The Multiculturalism Act of Canada;
• The Goals of Education for Saskatchewan;
• Saskatchewan Education’s Core Curriculum initiatives.

Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment’s Multicultural Education Policy Statements

1. Regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, economic or social status, it is the right of every individual to expect:
• equal access to education and equal opportunity for success in education in an atmosphere free of discrimination, racism, prejudice and intolerance; and,
• departmental programs, services and practices that recognize and are sensitive
to differences (cultural, spiritual and physical), while facilitating full participation in the cultural life of the larger society.

Neither assimilation nor segregation is considered to be a viable objective for education.

2. The nature of multicultural education suggests an interdisciplinary approach to curriculum development and program delivery.

Multicultural literacy * becomes an essential learning for all partners in education. The department will work to provide the necessary services and support.

3. Curriculum content, devoid of stereotyping, romanticizing and emphasis on the exotic, can support the development of intercultural respect and understanding. It must recognize and respect cultural similarities and differences; involve both cognitive and affective knowledge and skills; and deal with minority and majority group values, attitudes and assumptions. Curricula developed by Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment will feature content that is carefully researched with a variety of perspectives noted.

4. Participation of non-governmental organizations in the development of policies, programs and materials supporting multicultural education is one illustration of how government and community can work together to realize Saskatchewan's Goals of Education. It is a process that will be pursued.

5. The inseparable nature of language and culture suggests that language programming has a place in multicultural education, particularly in those aspects dealing with cultural maintenance and intercultural understanding. Providing access to a variety of languages is a departmental objective.

Policy Implementation

A basic understanding emerging from Saskatchewan's Goals of Education is that education is a shared responsibility. Implementing multicultural education policy will require collaboration on the part of all stakeholders in education.

Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment

The department will provide leadership in translating these policies into action and it undertakes:

* to circulate the proposed multicultural education policy for public input;
* to establish a Multicultural Education Unit, responsible for implementing multicultural education policy and incorporating existing personnel, programs and services in heritage languages and English as a Second Language;
* to review existing organizational structures and procedures within Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment to determine if barriers exist to policy implementation, and develop any necessary recommendations;
* to develop a plan to ensure that all departmental personnel are aware of and sensitive to the principles incorporated in the multicultural education policy;
* to participate in any interdepartmental initiatives designed to coordinate government services in multiculturalism. This includes identifying and supporting educational needs of immigrants to Saskatchewan;
* to review The Education Act and Regulations to ensure compatibility with multicultural education policy, and make any necessary recommendations for revision;

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* Multicultural literacy is the ability to recognize that Canadian society is characterized by cultural pluralism and that cultural retention is an individual and group right. The goal is to develop cognitive and affective knowledge and skills that will enable positive self-concept development, will facilitate intercultural understanding and appreciation and will lead towards the elimination of racism, prejudice and intolerance in order to create a politically, socially and economically just society.
• to examine testing, assessment and placement procedures for compliance with the spirit of the multicultural education policy;
• to prepare inservice programs and activities designed to sensitize audiences to multicultural issues;
• to propose strategies for implementing the multicultural education policy. Potential audiences include departmental staff and the partners in education;
• to ensure that curricula, programs and materials in all subject areas reflect the principles inherent in multicultural education. This will involve development of evaluation criteria and a curriculum audit process, collaboration between curriculum committees, and consultation with representatives of non-governmental organizations;
• to promote the multicultural education policy among the partners in education and in the broader community through proactive practices such as disseminating information and facilitating dialogue on policy initiatives;
• to support policies, programs and practices that enhance the languages of the Aboriginal peoples and the official minority language;
• to develop a comprehensive policy on heritage languages;
• to examine existing practices and programs for English as a Second Language and, in collaboration with other agencies, develop a policy on ESL programming; and,
• to establish a procedure to assess progress in implementing the multicultural education policy.

Partners in Education

Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment considers the partners in education to be all individuals, agencies, institutions and organizations who share a responsibility for, and/or interest in, education. These include:

• students and their families;
• teachers and teacher organizations;
• boards of education;
• educational administrators;
• post-secondary institutions - universities,
colleges and institutes;
• community agencies and organizations - municipal governments, police, media, service clubs, religious and church groups; and,
• ethnocultural/multicultural agencies and organizations.

Assistance and support from all of these partners are essential to the successful implementation of this multicultural education policy. Towards this end, Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment encourages organizations and institutions:

• to review their existing multicultural/intercultural/race relations policies for compatibility with the proposed Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment policy or, where applicable, to develop a multicultural education policy;
• to develop an implementation plan for their multicultural education policy. Collaboration with the other partners in education and with Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment during this development is encouraged;
• to review their current organizational structure, procedures, employment and promotion practices for consistency with the intent of the multicultural education policy;
• to develop introductory and on-going inservice programs for all staff, designed to: increase awareness and sensitivity to multicultural issues; facilitate growth in the acquisition of skills and strategies for implementing multicultural policy initiatives;
• to encourage all staff to participate in these programs;
• to establish a process to assess progress in implementing the multicultural education policy;
• to promote the multicultural education policy among their audiences; and,
• to recognize the special relationship between language and culture and to promote the teaching of languages (Aboriginal, official minority, heritage, ESL) as an integral component of multicultural education.

The department will continue to assist through appropriate policies and practices.
Post-secondary and teacher education institutions are key agents in education. Traditionally, these places of higher learning provided opportunities for the acquisition of skills specific to particular professions, as well as a general grounding in humanistic/liberal arts education and spiritual development. More recently, perhaps as a result of economic and societal pressures, these institutions have begun responding to community needs. Professional schools, colleges and university faculties are acknowledging the need to prepare graduates for living and working in a pluralistic society.\[10\]

Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment encourages post-secondary education institutions:

- to recognize the interdisciplinary nature of multicultural education and to incorporate the principles inherent in the multicultural education policy into all courses of study;
- to develop and to offer multicultural literacy courses, especially in teacher education programs. Such courses should strive to develop both cognitive (knowledge and skills) and affective (attitudes and values) multicultural competencies in students;
- to recognize the economic, social and personal values of second language education and their special place in multicultural education by introducing a second language requirement for either entrance or graduation;
- to acknowledge the pluralistic nature of Saskatchewan society by offering courses dealing with the cultures, histories, literatures and fine arts of the province's ethnocultural communities. This initiative could be supported through the establishment of a Chair of Multicultural Studies; and,
- to promote broad intergroup and intercultural relationships through the establishment of exchange programs and activities with national and international post-secondary institutions.

Social and technological change impacts on the nature of the school community, bringing with it new challenges. Responding to an increasingly culturally diverse classroom is one such challenge. Teachers, including classroom teachers, principals, in-school administrators and all educators who have direct contact with students, are central to the educational process. Like all professionals, they strive to keep abreast of changes which affect their professional activities.\[11\]

Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment seeks the support of all partners in education in encouraging teachers:

- to participate in local and/or provincial in-service programs, seminars, and short courses that deal with multicultural education awareness, sensitivity, instructional skills and teaching strategies;
- to become familiar with the content and intent of the multicultural education policy; and,
- to enrol in university and college courses dealing with multicultural education issues such as:
  - cross-cultural and intercultural instructional strategies and techniques;
  - evaluation and analysis of curriculum and instructional materials for bias, prejudice, racism and discrimination;
  - interdisciplinary approaches to multicultural education.

The first and most lasting influence on a child is that of the home environment. It is here that children begin developing their values, their self-concepts and their attitudes towards others. Families play a significant role in this developmental process.

Educators and educational institutions alone cannot and should not assume total responsibility for preparing children to function in our culturally diverse society. Promoting mutual understanding and respect for the rights of others, rejecting intolerance and modelling open-mindedness are responsibilities that families share with the educational system. Communication and co-operation between the home and the school are critical in this process. Saskatchewan's Goals of Education statement is very clear on this issue.

Families are encouraged to become involved in all aspects of their children's education through formal and informal contact with the teachers, administrators and school board officials. Some opportunities for involvement include:
• initiating correspondence (notes), telephone calls and informal meetings;
• offering to help in school as parent volunteers and guest speakers;
• attending regularly scheduled student/parent/teacher conferences (interviews);
• participating in Home and School Associations and Community Advisory Committees; and,
• attending public meetings of the school board.

To assist in implementing the intent of the multicultural education policy, Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment encourages families:

• to participate in school-centred or community-based lectures, workshops and seminars designed to enhance awareness, increase sensitivity, provide factual knowledge and offer skills and strategies;
• to explore, at home and at school, issues such as the negative impact of stereotyping and discrimination and the concept that being "different" is not necessarily better or worse, but another way of doing things; and,
• to consider the relationship of personal attitudes and assumptions to the goals and principles of the multicultural education policy.

Today more than ever before our world is characterized by an interconnectedness of people and resources. The increasingly rapid changes evident in today's world affect this interdependence and issue a challenge to society to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for humanity to develop into the 21st century. While this task has been largely passed on by society to the educational system, the ultimate responsibility for education rests with all members of society.

The implementation of any policy will succeed only to the extent that it receives support from all members of the community. Thus, Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment seeks the support of the educational partners in implementing this policy for multicultural education.
References


2. Adapted from: Multicultural education policy discussion paper. (1986). Winnipeg: Manitoba Education.


8. Goals/principles of multicultural education adapted from:


   Multicultural education policy discussion paper. (1986). Winnipeg: Manitoba Education.


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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe the role of heritage languages in the development of a multicultural society and to describe Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment's commitment to in-school and out-of-school heritage language programming.

Heritage Languages

Definition/meaning

For the purpose of this policy, Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment includes as heritage languages, 'languages other than Aboriginal languages or the two official languages (English and French).

Background

Inherent in federal and provincial legislation and policies is a recognition that heritage languages are fundamental to the multicultural nature of our province and our country. Heritage language instruction in Saskatchewan has been funded both federally and provincially. Many heritage language programs are operated throughout the province by ethnocultural and community groups. More than twenty-five languages are taught. In addition, some heritage languages are taught within the public school system. Federal and provincial policies and activities supporting both types of heritage language instruction are outlined below:

Federal Legislation and Policies

1969 Royal Commission on Bilingualism & Biculturalism suggests that languages other than English and French be

* French and Aboriginal Languages are served by other specific programs through the Official Minority Language Office (OMLO) and the Indian and Métis Education Branch within Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment.

1971 Pronouncement of a national policy of "multiculturalism within a bilingual framework" provides the framework for subsidies for out-of-school heritage language programs, support for materials development, sponsorship for national heritage languages conferences, and the establishment of a national heritage language centre.

1988 The Multiculturalism Act of Canada states that it is the policy of the Government of Canada to "facilitate the acquisition, retention and use of all languages that contribute to the multicultural heritage of Canada."

1989 Legislation is passed establishing the Canadian Heritage Languages Institute. Located in Edmonton, this institute will focus on national teacher training and program development. Emphasis will be given to the production of Canadian learning materials, public education, and research into all aspects of Canada's heritage languages.

Provincial Policies and Activities

1968 An amendment to The School Act permits the establishment of designated French schools. Prior to this date, English was the only language which could be used as a language of instruction in Saskatchewan schools.

1974 The School Act is amended to permit a language other than English to be taught or used as a language of instruction for a limited time of the school day.
1978 The Education Act provides that a heritage language may be used as a language of instruction 100% of the time in Kindergarten and up to 50% of the time in Grades 1 to 12.

1986 The Report of the Minister of Education’s Advisory Committee on Heritage Languages provides recommendations for heritage language programming in Saskatchewan.

1989 The Report of the Task Force on Multiculturalism emphasizes the cultural and economic importance of heritage languages.

1989 The Minister of Education establishes a heritage language liaison/reference committee.


The Role of the Educational System in a Linguistically Diverse Society

Saskatchewan is enriched by many cultures and languages.

The educational system has an important role to play in keeping Saskatchewan's heritage languages alive. The school, in partnership with the family and the community, transmits to children and young adults the knowledge and values which society considers important. When heritage languages are taught through the regular educational system, students receive a powerful message about the value and worth of heritage languages in Saskatchewan society.

Heritage Language Education Programs

Heritage language education should consist of formal, planned, structured programs that are intended to increase students' knowledge of heritage languages. Heritage language programs:

- may be offered through the formal school system or through community initiatives;
- may be designed for students of any age;
- may emphasize the culture of which a heritage language is a part; and,
- may use community resources in addition to educational materials.

Policy For Heritage Language Education

The study of a heritage language allows students to develop communication skills in the language being studied, to develop a sensitivity to the culture, and to develop skills and attitudes necessary for learning additional languages. Encouraging students to take pride in their own cultures promotes respect for members of other cultures.
This province's strength and uniqueness come in large part from its linguistic and cultural diversity. Language instruction is integral to the maintenance of culture and thus to Saskatchewan's identity.

Teaching a variety of languages facilitates individual and societal participation in the global economy. Because Saskatchewan's economic well-being is dependent on the rest of the world, language learning has an economic value as well as a cultural one.

Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment supports the provision of opportunities for students to acquire, maintain, or regain languages, through in-school or out-of-school programming.

All provincial government services for heritage languages will be coordinated by Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment. This includes both regular in-school programs and out-of-school programs for preschool to grade twelve. Universities, colleges and community language programs provide language education for adults. Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment's responsibilities include the revision of The Education Act and Regulations relating to issues concerning:

- **administration** of out-of-school heritage language classes;
- **granting student credits** at the 10, 20, and 30 levels for out-of-school classes;
- **certification procedures** for heritage language teachers;
- **financial support** for out-of-school classes; and,
- **grants to school boards** to defray equipment and facility rental costs for classes offered beyond normal school hours.

### Policy Implementation

Saskatchewan's *Goals of Education* emphasize that education is a shared responsibility. Because community and cultural groups are both advocates for, and providers of, heritage language instruction, this principle is fundamental to the implementation of heritage language education.

### Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment

Policy for heritage languages is implemented by a unit within Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment in cooperation with the partners in education. Aboriginal languages and the official languages of English and French are administered under separate guidelines and administrative structures that exist in Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment.

To provide students with an opportunity to learn heritage languages, Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment will:

- **develop legislation, regulations, and policy for heritage language programs**;
- **provide financial assistance to school boards**;
- **provide financial assistance to heritage language schools**;
- **seek to acquire or develop curriculum guides**;
- **assist in obtaining program and resource materials**;
- **facilitate assistance through the Correspondence School and/or distance education networks for student instruction when requested**;
- **establish procedures for recognizing student competencies for academic credits**;
- **work with the universities in Saskatchewan to develop teacher education programs for heritage language teacher certification**; and,
- **work with appropriate organizations to meet inservice needs**.

In order to serve the needs of students, the Saskatchewan Government Correspondence School may provide heritage language classes. This service may be offered through the existing textbook/audio cassette format or by distance education using Saskatchewan Communications Network (SCN) television programming. Credits may be granted at the 10, 20, and 30 levels.
School Divisions

The role of school divisions includes providing in-school courses and programs appropriate to their communities. Their role extends to providing access to facilities and equipment for out-of-school programs, contingent upon receipt of recognized funding from Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment.

School divisions are encouraged to respond to requests for consultative and supervisory assistance from community organizations providing out-of-school courses and programs.

Maintaining the highest possible standard of instruction is a goal of both school divisions and community organizations. When out-of-school classes are being offered at the 10, 20, or 30 level, school divisions may assist the heritage language school to recruit a certified teacher. If after the normal recruiting procedure, a teacher who is otherwise ineligible for a professional teaching certificate is hired, the school division will assist the heritage language school by applying to the board of Teacher Education and Certification for a Provisional Certificate for the non-certified teacher.

Heritage Language Organizations

Heritage language organizations such as the Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages, the Saskatoon Multilingual School, and the Regina Heritage Language School continue to play a major role in the delivery of heritage language instruction in Saskatchewan.

In addition to organizing out-of-school programming, the ethnocultural community will continue to serve as a stimulus for the establishment of in-school heritage language classes. When there are enough students to make up a class, community organizations may request that the school division offer the classes through the regular educational system.

Other classes may be offered by the school division outside regular school hours. If the class is taken for an academic credit at the 10, 20, or 30 level, the regular prerequisites of Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment must be met.

The implementation of any policy will succeed only to the extent that it receives support from all members of the community. Thus, Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment seeks the support of the educational partners in implementing this policy for heritage language education.
Bibliography

The following publications were consulted during the preparation of this Heritage Language Education Policy.


Education programs: Languages other than English or French. (1988). Edmonton: Alberta Education.


Report of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Heritage Languages. (1986). Regina: Saskatchewan Education.

