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# Autonomy and Evolution of Education Models: A Comparative Perspective

## The Canadian Case

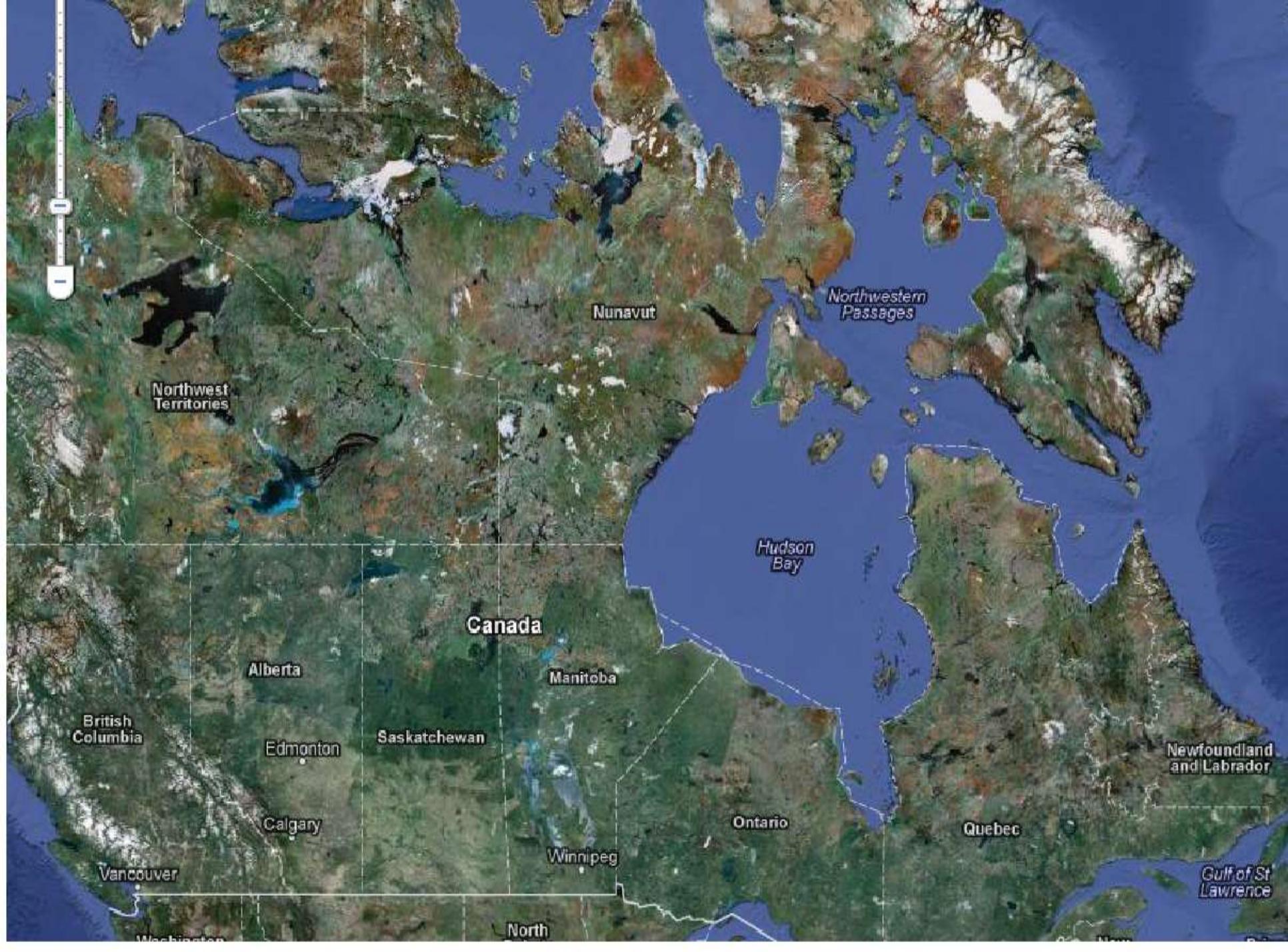
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Jim Cummins

The University of Toronto

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR: "AUTONOMY AND EVOLUTION  
OF EDUCATION MODELS IN FEDERAL AND DECENTRALIZED  
COUNTRIES - A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE AND RECENT  
TRENDS FROM SPAIN"

Zaragoza, 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2013



Northwest Territories

Nunavut

Northwestern Passages

Canada

Alberta

Manitoba

Hudson Bay

British Columbia

Saskatchewan

Edmonton

Calgary

Ontario

Winnipeg

Vancouver

Quebec

Newfoundland and Labrador

Gulf of St. Lawrence

North

## Overview of Policies

- **1971: Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework**

Two official languages but no official culture;

No formal policy in relation to languages other than English and French;

- **Education is a provincial (or territorial) responsibility**

Federal government has indirect influence but much less than in the United States; influence is exerted by:

- providing funds for official minority language education (FSL in English Canada and ESL in Quebec);
- funding free official language instruction for adult immigrants;
- funding settlement services (located in local schools) to assist immigrant integration; etc.

- **Provinces implement their own education policies within the context of the Canadian constitution, particularly the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which protects minority rights (e.g., in relation to language).**

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# Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982)

- **Equality rights:** (section 15): equal treatment before and under the law, and equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination.
  - **Language rights:** generally, the right to use either the English or French language in communications with Canada's federal government and certain provincial governments.
  - **Minority language education rights:** (Section 23): rights for certain citizens belonging to French or English-speaking minority communities to be educated in their own language.
  - In Quebec, only students who have at least one parent educated through English in the province of Quebec have the right to go to English-language schools. English-speaking immigrants or temporary workers (e.g., from the United States) must send their children to the French-language school system. These policies were enacted in order to protect the French language as most immigrants had tended to go to the English school system.
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## Recent Quebec Language Controversies

(protests in March 2013 against Parti Québécois restrictions on English)



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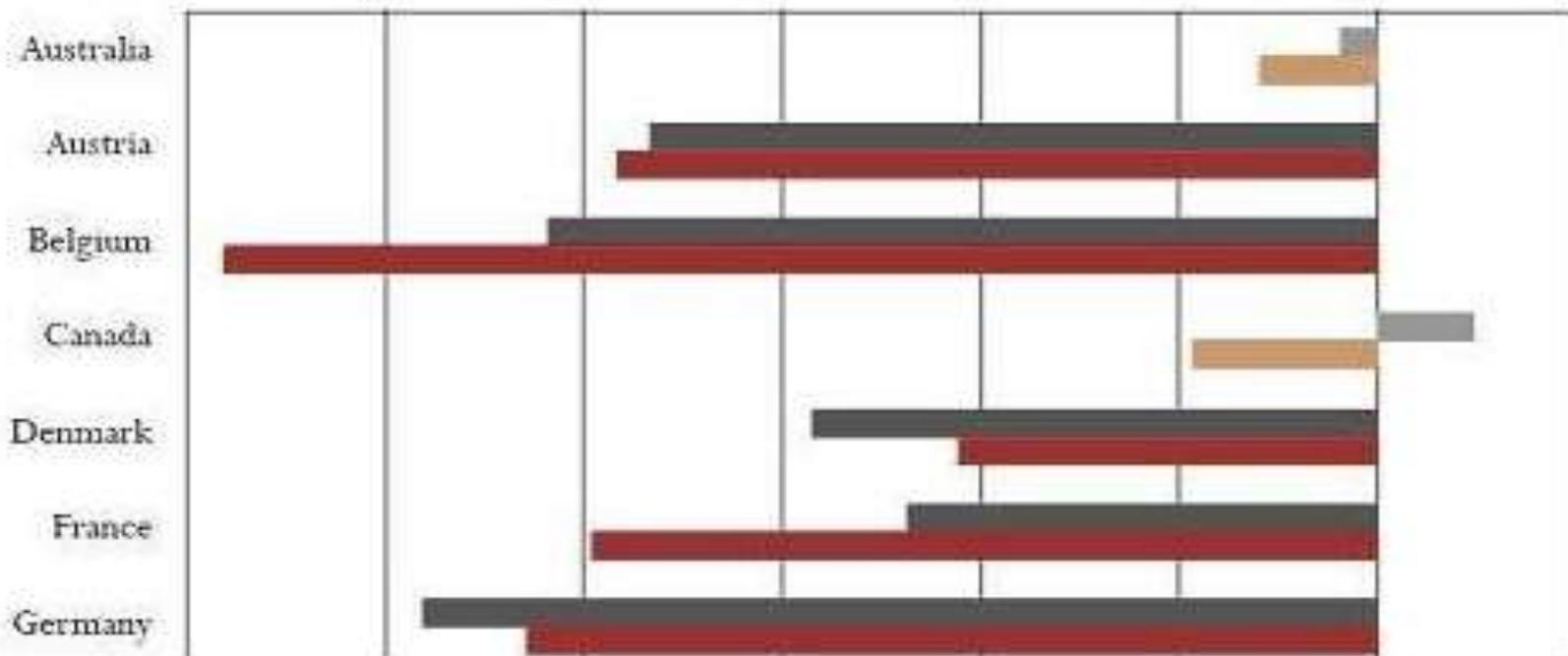
## Alberta's Enlightened Language Policies

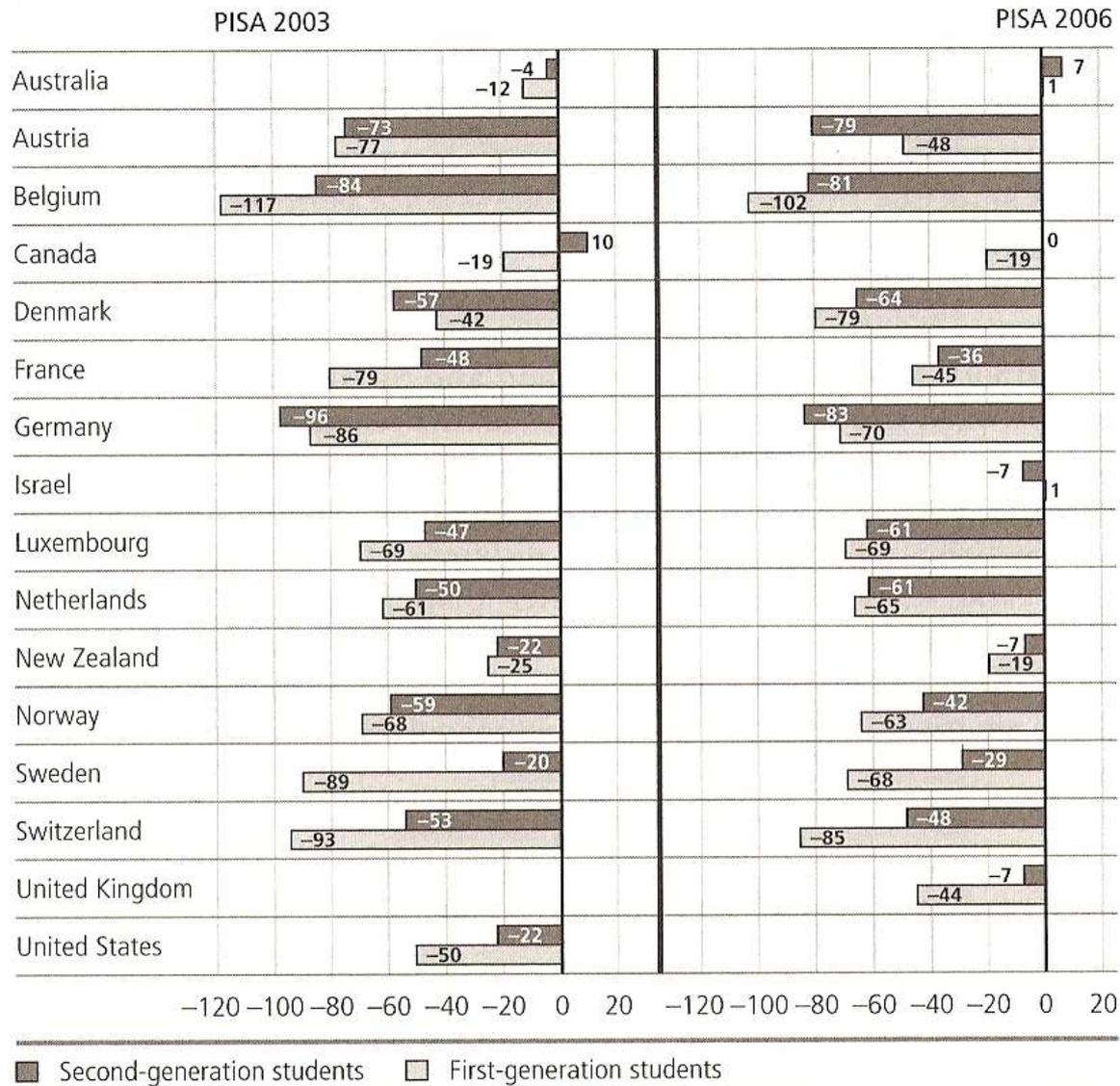
- Since the mid-1970s, Alberta (usually viewed as Canada's most conservative province) has permitted and funded 50/50 bilingual programs involving not only English/French programs but also programs involving Ukrainian, German, Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, Polish, Hebrew, Cree, Arabic, etc.
  - These programs have been evaluated as highly successful in helping students develop fluency and literacy in a "heritage" language at no cost to their English proficiency.
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# PISA Data on First and Second Generation Migrant Student Achievement

Figure 2.1b ■ Differences in reading performance by immigrant status

- Difference in reading performance between native students and second-generation students
- Difference in reading performance between native students and first-generation students





Source: OECD PISA 2003 & PISA 2006 database, Table 3a & 3b.

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# Ontario Case Study (OECD PISA Report)

Since 2000, Canada has become a world leader in its sustained strategy of professionally-driven reform of its education system. Not only do its students perform well, they perform well despite their socio-economic status, first language or whether they are native Canadians or recent immigrants.

Canada has achieved success within a highly federated system, which features significant diversity, particularly with respect to issues of language and country of origin.

This chapter ... shows how consistent application of centrally-driven pressure for higher results, combined with extensive capacity building and a climate of relative trust and mutual respect, have enabled the Ontario system to achieve progress on key indicators, while maintaining labour peace and morale throughout the system. (OECD 2010, p. 65)

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## Contrast to the United States

Of all of these points, ... gaining teacher support was perhaps most important to the new strategy. To improve skills across 5 000 schools would require a continuous and sustained effort by hundreds of thousands of teachers to try to improve their practice. ...

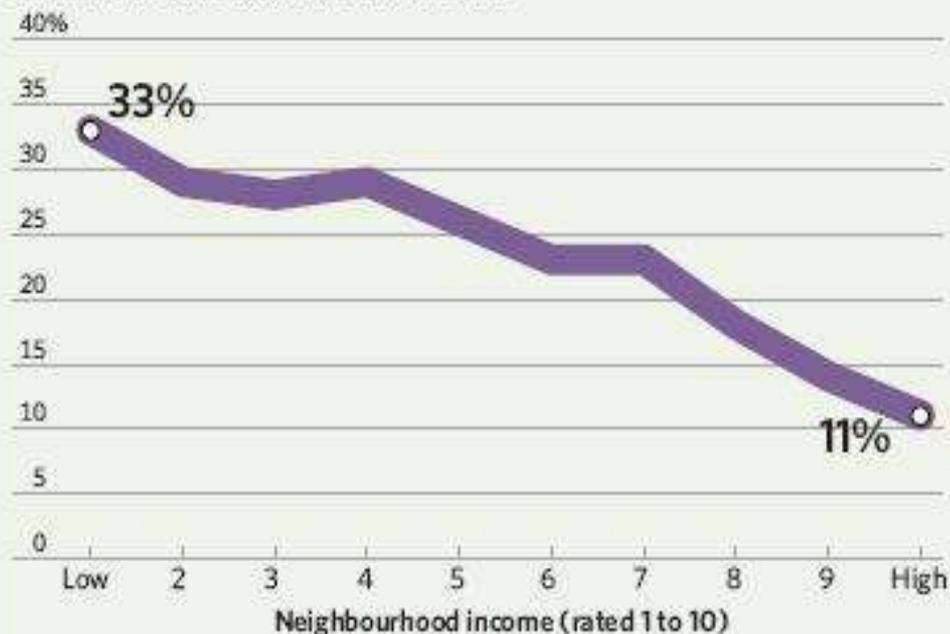
To this end, the ministry [of education] drew a sharp contrast between its capacity-building approach to reform and the more punitive versions of accountability used in the United States, and, to a lesser extent, in Britain. They chose to downplay the public reporting of results, and they emphasised that struggling schools would receive additional support and outside expertise rather than be punished or closed.

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## Dropout rate vs. language and income

Children from Toronto's poorest neighbourhoods are three times as likely to drop out of high school than those from richer areas, new research shows. But it's not just money that makes a difference; mother tongue also plays a part in how long at-risk students are in the school system. The board says this information will help determine where help is needed.

PER CENT OF STUDENTS WHO DROPPED OUT



Language	Per cent dropouts
Portuguese	42.5%
Spanish	39.1%
Somali	36.7%
Punjabi	34.6%
Persian (Farsi)	30.6%
Arabic	27.8%
Vietnamese	24.6%
English	22.9%
Korean	20.0%
Russian	19.6%
Urdu	19.5%
Greek	17.7%
Tamil	16.9%
Bengali	16.7%
Gujarati	14.3%
Chinese	12.0%
Romanian	10.8%

SOURCE: Toronto District School Board study of students who started Grade 9 in 2000

TORONTO STAR GRAPHIC

# Creating an Identity-Affirming School Environment

## (a) Validating Home Language and Culture



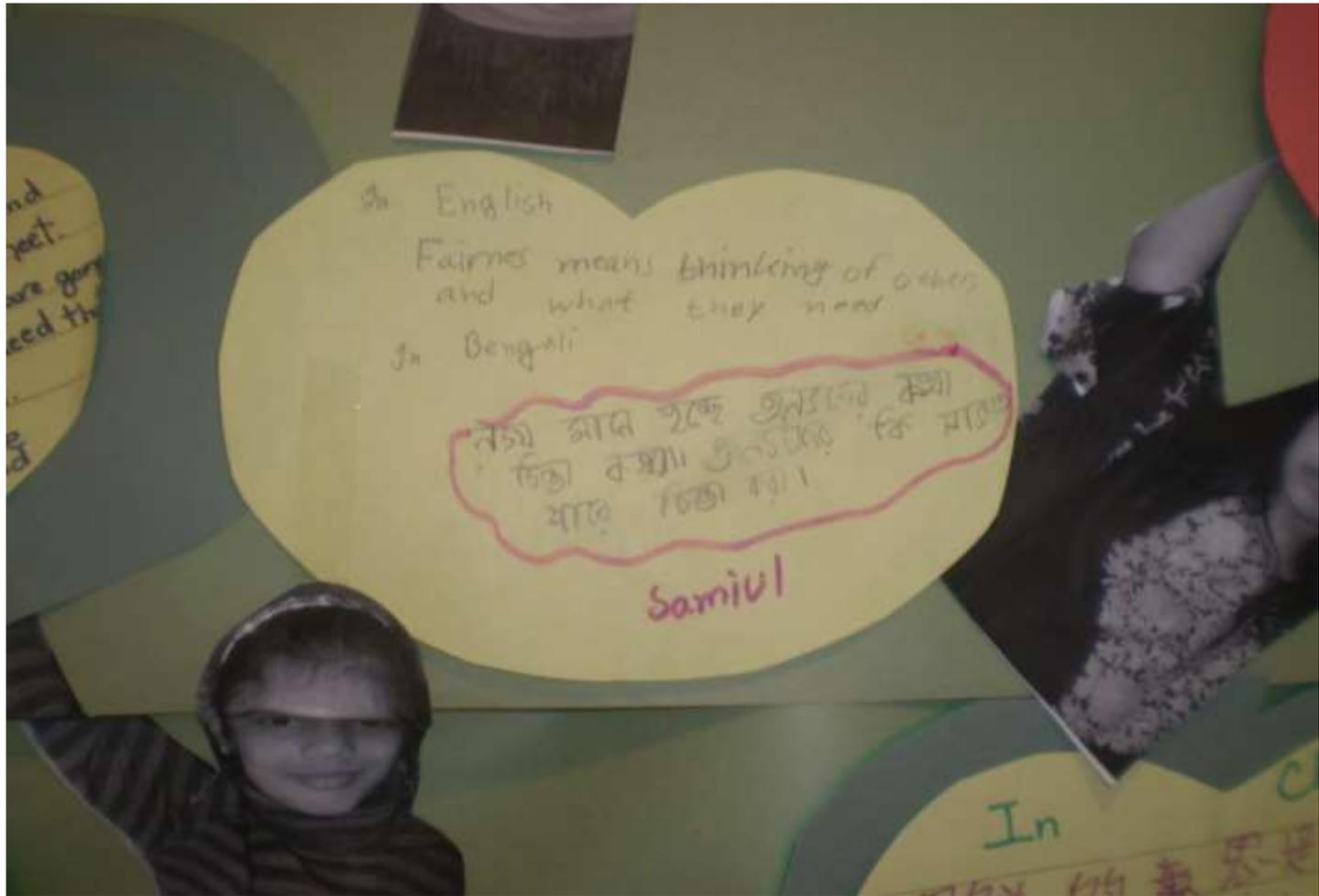
# Creating an Identity-Affirming School Environment

## *(a) Validating Home Language and Culture*



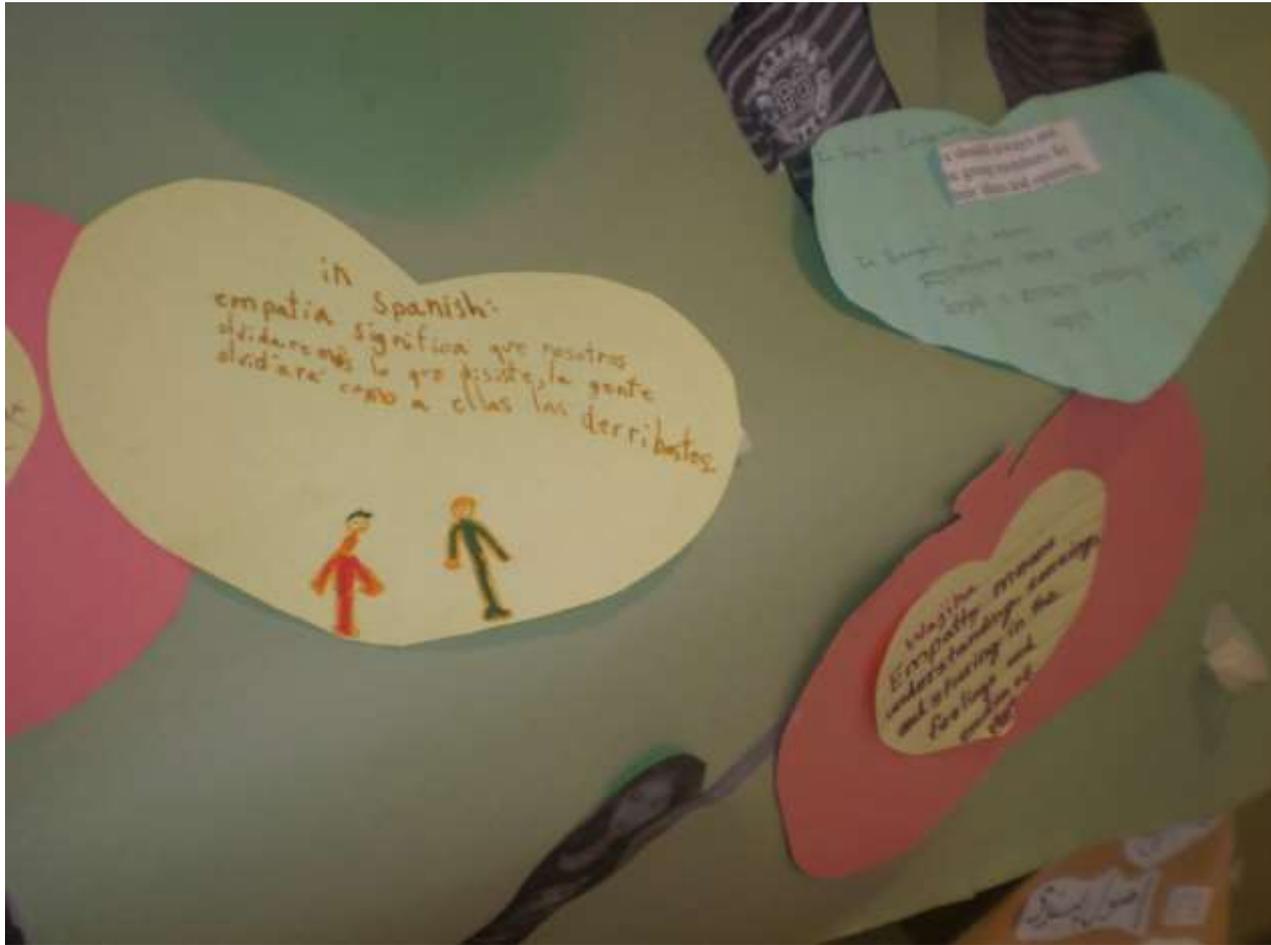
# Creating an Identity-Affirming School Environment

## (a) Validating Home Language and Culture



# Creating an Identity-Affirming School Environment

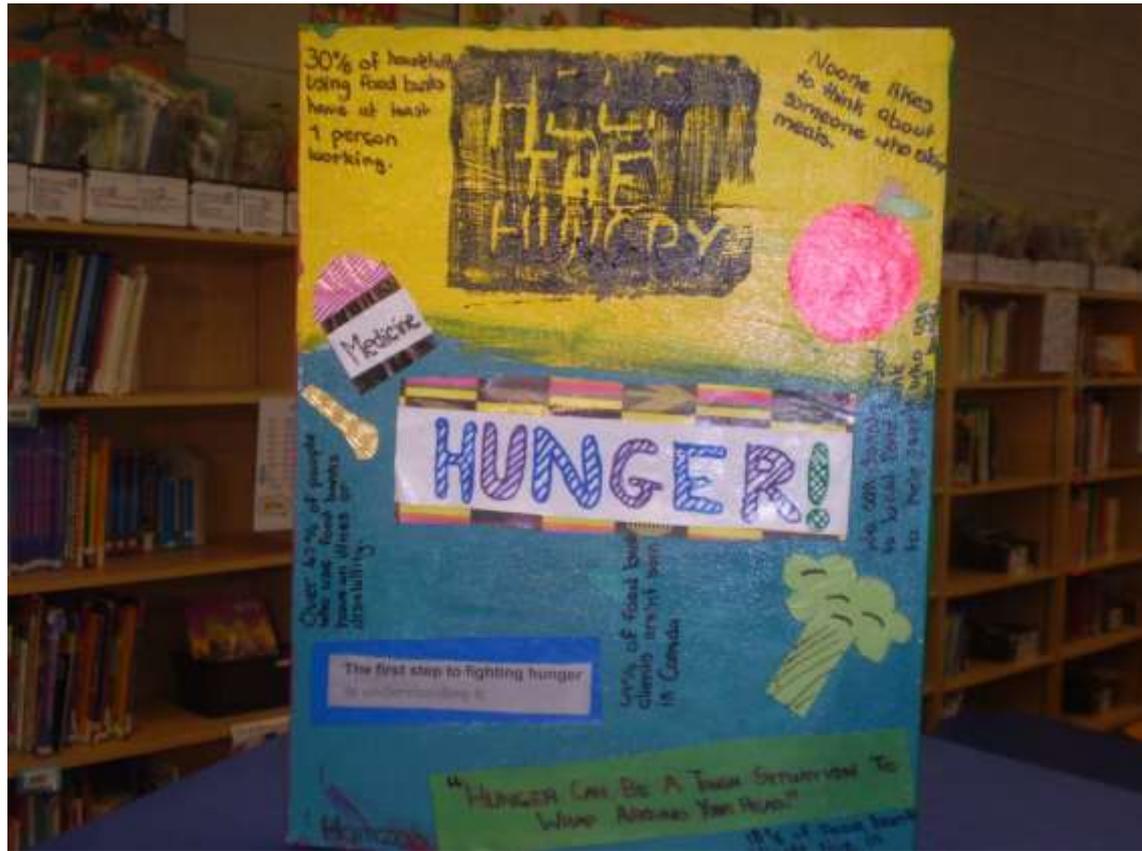
## (a) Validating Home Language and Culture



# Creating an Identity-Affirming School Environment

(b) *Capable of thinking about and finding solutions to social issues?*

(c) *Capable of higher-order thinking?*



# Conclusions (1)

- **Strong educational achievement is certainly possible within a federal system;**
  - although Canadian federal/provincial cooperation is often difficult and controversial, with respect to education, the Canadian system seems to work better than the U.S. system where the federal government exerts a stronger influence (e.g., NCLB legislation).
  - the federal influence is nevertheless extremely important in creating the framework for successful provincial policies; for example, diversity issues have been addressed in a relatively successful way as a result of (a) the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, (b) federal immigration policies such as citizenship after 3 years residence and provision of settlement and language training support for adults.

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## Conclusions (2)

- **Potentially problematic issues remain**
  - Interpretation of Quebec language laws continues to be controversial (e.g., recent "Pastagate" crack-down on an Italian restaurant in Montreal);
  - Some immigrant groups continue to perform poorly in the educational system (e.g., refugees, First Nations (Aboriginal), low-SES and other socially marginalized communities);
  - Federal policies can change, creating difficult educational conditions for local schools (e.g., a "get tough" policy in relation to Roma refugee claimants from Eastern European countries has created considerable insecurity among these families and reduced motivation to attend school);

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# Resources

- [www.multiliteracies.ca](http://www.multiliteracies.ca) (Multiliteracies project)
  - [www.curriculum.org/secretariat/archive.html](http://www.curriculum.org/secretariat/archive.html) (webcast on *Teaching and Learning in Multilingual Ontario* [scroll to first webcast])
  - [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/whatWorks.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/whatWorks.html) (short pdf files on “what works” including *Literacy Development in Multilingual Schools* by Jim Cummins)
  - Dual Language Showcase (<http://www.thornwoodps.ca/dual/index.htm>)
  - *Literacy, Technology and Diversity: Teaching for Success in Changing Times* (Jim Cummins, Kristin Brown, & Dennis Sayers; Allyn & Bacon, 2007)  
(<http://www.allynbaconmerrill.com/bookstore/product.asp?isbn=020538935X&rl=1>)
  - *IdentityTexts: The Collaborative Creation of Power in Multilingual Schools* (Edited by Jim Cummins and Margaret Early; Trentham Books, 2011)  
<http://trentham.styluspub.com/Books/BookDetail.aspx?productID=241727>
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# What Do We Know about Causes of Underachievement and What Are the Appropriate Instructional Responses?

## Deconstructing Educational Disadvantage

Societal/Community Contexts  
Potentially Conducive to  
Construction of Disadvantage

Socioeconomic Status

Immigrant Status

Marginalized Group Status

Conduits of Disadvantage

- Prenatal care
- Nutritional adequacy
- Lead exposure
- Housing segregation
- School quality
- Range of language interaction
- Access to print
- Cultural and material resources  
etc.

- Home-School  
language difference

- Societal discrimination
- Identity devaluation
- Stereotype threat
- Low teacher expectations

Evidence-based  
Instructional Response

- Maximize literacy engagement
- Demystify and reinforce  
academic language  
across the curriculum

- Ensure effective  
scaffolding of language  
and literacy across  
the curriculum

- Connect instruction to  
students' lives
- Create contexts of student  
identity affirmation and  
empowerment through  
culturally responsive  
instruction