

## Some important milestones – Secondary School Community Centre

- 1982** Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, enshrined in the Constitution of Canada, sets out and protects the right to minority language education.
- 1983** Teachers and parents who are members of the *Association franco-yukonnaise* (AFY) seek support from the school committees of the eight Whitehorse schools to establish a French-language program in Whitehorse. Four committees respond favourably. A survey shows that 67 students are eligible for French-language education. AFY asks the Department of Education to institute a French-language program.
- 1984** Creation of a French First Language curriculum, called the “programme-cadre de français”, for Grades 1 to 6. Thirty-four students attend the program’s two classes, which are held in the basement of Whitehorse Elementary School. A school committee composed of three members is formed.
- 1985** Extension of the French First Language program: kindergarten is integrated into the Grade 1 and 2 class, and a Grade 7, 8 and 9 class is added. The latter class takes place at G.A. Jeckell School, now Vanier Catholic Secondary School.
- In October, the Yukon Legislative Assembly adopts the name *École Émilie-Tremblay* for the French First Language program.
- 1988** The French First Language program is officially granted school status after a petition containing 125 signatures is submitted to the Minister of Education Piers McDonald.
- Creation of the *Société des parents francophones du Yukon* (Yukon Francophone Parents Society – SPFY) under the auspices of AFY.
- 1989** There are sufficient kindergarten registrations at *École Émilie-Tremblay* to create a separate class for this grade.
- Because the school is located in two places and there are problems arising from the cohabitation of Anglophone and Francophone students, the SPFY decides to study the obstacles hindering *École Émilie-Tremblay*’s mission and explores possible options for improving the situation in a document on *École Émilie-Tremblay*’s future entitled “Rapport sur les hypothèses d’avenir de

l'École Émilie-Tremblay". Based on a survey and two consultations, the report recommends the establishment of an all-French school.

**1990** École Émilie-Tremblay becomes an all-French school. The school year starts in a prefabricated complex on Nisutlin Street in Riverdale next to Christ the King Elementary School. The Minister of Education commits to renovating these dilapidated buildings which provide only a temporary solution for Francophone students.

The SPFY becomes the *Bureau de parents franco-yukonnais* (Franco-Yukoner Parents Bureau – BPFY), which represents three organizations: the École Émilie-Tremblay school committee, the *Garderie du petit cheval* daycare and AFY.

**1991** Elections take place to elect Francophone school trustees. The École Émilie-Tremblay school committee becomes a School Board.

Additional prefabricated classrooms are added to the school to accommodate the secondary school. The lack of a gymnasium constitutes a major problem. Funding for French-language education remains insufficient. The School Board begins its demands for a new school.

**1993** Grade 10 is offered at the French-language school for the first time.

**1994** The École Émilie-Tremblay School Board participates in a tripartite consultation with the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Yukon Department of Education on the subject of the educational needs of the community.

Grade 11 is added to École Émilie-Tremblay's curriculum.

The federal and territorial governments commit to funding the construction of a new school for Francophones.

**1995** Grade 12 is added to École Émilie-Tremblay's curriculum.

**1996** In June, École Émilie-Tremblay awards its first secondary school diploma.

The new building housing École Émilie-Tremblay opens its doors on Falcon Drive in September. Built to accommodate 250 students, a little more than 100 attend the French-language school.

The *Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon n° 23* (Yukon n° 23 School Board – CSFY) is created, the first and only school board to date in the Yukon. The first executive director/secretary-treasurer is hired.

The first contribution agreement is signed between the Department of Education and CSFY n° 23.

**1999** One hundred and ten students are enrolled at École Émilie-Tremblay.

**2004** One hundred and twenty-five students are enrolled at École Émilie-Tremblay.

**2006** Submission of the final Landry/Johnson report on the conceptualisation and implementation of the French-language secondary school curriculum at École Émilie-Tremblay.

Federal and territorial funds are allocated to establish a pilot project called "Académie Parhémie" for secondary school students.

**2007** Almost 150 students are enrolled at École Émilie-Tremblay and Académie Parhémie.

A consultation is launched to assess the different avenues that could be explored in order to meet the space requirements of the secondary school, as the current space is becoming limited. The idea of a secondary school community centre is explored.

**2008** École Émilie-Tremblay and Académie Parhémie have more than 160 students.

**2009** École Émilie-Tremblay and Académie Parhémie welcome approximately 170 students.

The CSFY files a court action in February 2009 against the Yukon Government seeking the implementation of full school governance.

**2010** The trial between the CSFY and the Yukon Government before the Honourable Justice Ouellette begins on May 18 and continues until January 27, 2011.

A location for the secondary school becomes a priority. The CSFY wants to acquire a separate building for the program.

One hundred and eighty-five students are enrolled in CSFY schools.

**2011** On July 26, the Honourable Justice Ouellette issues his final decision in the trial between the CSFY and the Yukon Government. Among other matters, the CSFY is granted full school governance and the construction of a new French-language secondary school.

Following the final decision of the Honourable Justice Ouellette, the Yukon Government decides to appeal the case before the Honourable Justice Groberman, who accepts the appeal application in November.

**2012** The Honourable Justice Groberman hears the appeal filed by the Yukon Government on March 5, 6 and 7, 2012. The appeal aims to overturn the decision of the Honourable Justice Vital O. Ouellette which granted full school governance to the CSFY.

Two hundred and six students attend École Émilie-Tremblay and Académie Parhémie.

**2013** Two portable classrooms are added in the fall to meet the space needs of École Émilie-Tremblay.

CSFY programs welcome 233 students.

**2014** On February 11, a unanimous Court of Appeal decision overturns the Supreme Court of Yukon ruling and orders a new trial between the CSFY and the Yukon Government. The CSFY now turns to the Supreme Court of Canada.

**2015** The Supreme Court of Canada issues its decision on May 14, upholding the Court of Appeal decision with regard to the possible appearance of bias on the part of the trial judge. The two parties are remanded to trial court for a new trial.

In August, the CSFY and the Yukon Government agree to establish a settlement committee in order to negotiate solutions to the outstanding issues and a sub-committee to help plan and manage the construction of a French-language secondary school.

The CSFY welcomes 244 students, as well as 12 students enrolled in French First Language home schooling.

**2016** The Yukon Government amends the French as a First Language Instruction Regulation under the Education Act in order to delegate control of admissions to the CSFY.

For the first time, the CSFY manages its programs according to a funding formula developed with the Yukon Government.

The planning stage of the secondary school community centre gets underway. A funding application is submitted to Canadian Heritage in the spring to finance the community centre components and the architectural firm Kobayashi & Zedda is hired to develop the school's design.

The CSFY adopts the name "École Nomade" for its French First Language home schooling program.

A third portable classroom is added to École Émilie-Tremblay.

The CSFY welcomes 269 students, in addition to nine students enrolled in École Nomade.

**2017** In April, the Yukon Government confirms that the new French-language secondary school will be built on the Riverdale Education Reserve.

In November, the federal government announces that it will invest up to \$7.5 million, which confirms that community spaces will be developed and that the school will be a French-language Secondary School Community Centre.

The CSFY welcomes 282 students, in addition to 15 students enrolled in École Nomade.

**2018** In December, the local firm Ketz Construction is awarded the design-build contract for the construction of the Secondary School Community Centre.

Two hundred and ninety-seven students attend CSFY schools.

**2019** Construction work on the Secondary School Community Centre begins in the spring.

**2020** On March 12, a settlement agreement is signed between the CSFY and the Yukon Government which ends the legal process that began in 2009. The agreement clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the CSFY and the Department of Education with regard to French First Language education.

In May, the name *Centre scolaire secondaire communautaire Paul-Émile-Mercier* (Paul-Émile Mercier Secondary School Community Centre – CSSC Mercier) is unveiled during the *Journée de la francophonie yukonnaise* (Yukon Francophonie Day – JFY).

On November 13, 85 Grade 7 to 12 students attend their first day of classes at CSSC Mercier.

A total of 340 students are enrolled in CSFY schools, including École Nomade.