

Sample Argumentative Essay

In 1969 the New Brunswick legislature adopted the Official Languages Act, which gave the English and French languages equal status under the law and ensured New Brunswickers' right to receive services from the government in their preferred language. At the time, many citizens expressed concerns over bilingualism. Recently, the debate about official bilingualism has been reignited. Many people have called for the end of bilingualism in New Brunswick; some even question the value of bilingualism altogether. However, New Brunswick should remain an officially bilingual province because it protects the rights of the French-speaking minority and it is both culturally and economically valuable for the province.

First, New Brunswick should remain officially bilingual because it will help ensure equal rights for the French-speaking minority in New Brunswick. For instance, the Official Languages Act ensures that citizens can educate their children in their first language. This means that French-language public schools are funded and protected by the provincial government. Without this provision, Francophones may not have access to education in their native language. Moreover, the Official Languages Act guarantees French speakers access to health care in their first language. This is important because if patients aren't able to express themselves in their first language, they may not be able to communicate their symptoms properly, and this may lead to misdiagnoses or poor medical treatment. In short, official bilingualism is vital in ensuring the rights to health and education for the French-speaking citizens of New Brunswick.

Some New Brunswick residents and politicians have expressed concern over the costs associated with official bilingualism. For instance, in September 2012, Conservative MLA Dr. Jim Parrott spoke out against duplicating health services in francophone and anglophone communities. While it may cost more to provide education and medical treatment in two languages, these services are so essential that the need for them outweighs the cost. Furthermore, rather than being an economic drain, bilingualism may actually benefit the province financially.

New Brunswick should maintain its officially bilingual status because it is valuable both economically and culturally. Official bilingualism helps promote economic development and is especially valuable in areas of international business. While English is currently the international language of business, French is the language of international diplomacy. Businesses that function in both official languages are therefore in good standing globally and are in a better position to build relationships with foreign investors. In addition, official bilingualism allows free cultural exchange between the two language groups. This enriches New Brunswick's own culture: if New Brunswick remains officially bilingual, the distinct traditions, music, and art of both language groups will be able to contribute to the texture of life in New Brunswick. Having a rich local culture may also attract tourists, which can further boost the province's economy.

In conclusion, New Brunswick should remain officially bilingual because it helps ensure that all citizens have access to vital services in their native language. Although some critics have complained about the high cost of maintaining the equal status of English and French, official bilingualism has great cultural value and may even improve the province's economy.*

* **NOTE:** In order to make this a strong research paper, many of the statements made in this essay would need to be supported by other sources (e.g. books, articles, online sources).