

Dafne Ungerer

My experience as a spokesperson for 30 families who requested to be able to study also in Spanish in a school in Castelldefels. Barcelona

- 2012, I moved to Spain from Argentina. I have 2 children aged 2 years and 11 months.
- A few months later she starts kindergarten, she is **3 years old**, **everything is in Catalan.**
- How is it possible that nothing can be studied in Spanish? I ask and talk to other families in the center
- I discover that **legally the school in Catalonia must use** the 2 languages: **Catalan and Spanish.**
- I informed other families and **we decided to ask the school principal about it.**



- The director replies that it is **NOT** possible to study in Spanish
- The Assembly for a Bilingual School advised us and together with other mothers we began to inform the rest of the families.
- **100 parents of the center support** with their signatures a change in the linguistic project to include **more hours in Spanish and English.**
- We wrote a linguistic project proposal, signed by 30 families, in which we ask that our children can study in Catalan, Spanish and English. **The director says NO again**
- Harassment from other families and a **hostile attitude from the teachers and principal begins**

4.- Por lo tanto, es oportuno proceder a la elaboración de un nuevo proyecto lingüístico que se sustente en los siguientes parámetros:

a) El catalán y el castellano en tanto que lenguas oficiales de Cataluña deben ser consideradas lenguas vehiculares y de aprendizaje en el CEIP Josep Guinovart de Castelldefels y deben disponer de una proporción equivalente en la distribución del cuadro horario, de manera que ninguna de las dos lenguas tenga una presencia inferior al 30% de las materias troncales.

b) De igual manera, se aspira a que la lengua extranjera (preferentemente inglés) tenga una presencia curricular también próxima al 30%. La implantación de este idioma como lengua vehicular de materias distintas a la asignatura de lengua inglesa será progresiva en función de los conocimientos lingüísticos del profesorado.



- There was only one way out: **the courts**
- **16 families** continue and we are **going to court** to get our children's rights respected.
- The court agrees with us and **someone from the school leaks the news to Catalan television** and the names of the families involved
- Opposing families advised by nationalist political parties demand the center to know the names of all parents
- **Bullying is on the rise**, not only in the school but also in the town.

- **Castelldefels City Council** issues an **official statement** and **accuses us of breaking coexistence** by asking for more hours in Spanish
- The parties that govern the city convene a plenary session to ask the Generalitat NOT to comply with the resolutions of the court
- The news is all over the media, **the families are under a lot of pressure.** One of them renounces to the sentence
- In the following years, others would drop out of school and some of them would leave Catalonia.

- In September 2017 classes begin, **the school grouped the children with sentence in groups B of all grades**
- **In group A were the children of families who were opposed** to their children studying in Spanish
- My older daughter studied in group B but in my younger son's class there were not enough students, and there was only one group
- **My son is a student with special needs who suffered the scorn of monitors, teachers for the Spanish sentence.** Some families did not invite our children to their birthdays.
- I asked for a change of center, I was denied that there was one available, until another center in Castelldefels also began to do Spanish because of a sentence. Then I was granted the change.



Conclusions

- I would not have moved to Catalonia if I had known what I know now.
- Those who govern us must comply with the law and protect us
- Nobody protected the families of the Guinovart school: the City Council and the Generalitat pointed us out as guilty.
- Please, **let no one else must struggle and suffer for their children to study in Spanish**, the official language in Spain.
- THANKS