



CPF BRANCHES HAVE IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING CHALLENGES FOR FSL EDUCATION FOR 2008:

BRITISH COLUMBIA:

- Remove enrolment caps on immersion programs. As immersion enrolment increases in every part of British Columbia while overall enrolment declines, more and more districts are finding that there are insufficient teachers and classrooms to accommodate all students wishing to enrol. Several districts have imposed caps and lotteries.
- Provide transportation at no cost for both urban and rural immersion students. Currently no school district transportation is provided to urban students and many rural districts do not offer school bus transportation to immersion students living outside the catchment area, so many parents must commit to driving students to school each day.
- Make more immersion courses, especially those at the secondary level, available via distance learning in small and remote communities. Although more and more rural schools are now connected to sophisticated technologies to enable e-learning, there is much work to be done to make courses available to immersion students. The Conseil Scolaire Francophone is increasing course options to its secondary students so there is a model/best practice for the Ministry of Education to emulate.

- Provide ESL services for allophone students who have chosen to enrol in French immersion. In spite of outstanding results in immersion programs, ESL students are regularly counselled not to enrol in French immersion.
- Ensure that every parent is regularly informed about French-second-language options and entry points. Despite the fact that more districts have established French Advisory Committees, there are still districts that do not allow teachers to distribute promotional materials about FSL programs or French-language socio-cultural events outside of the classroom.

YUKON:

- Attract qualified FSL teachers, especially in remote environments where the cost of living is higher: the department must compensate by offering higher salaries, benefits, and moving allowances.
- Implement more French immersion programs; currently, the only one available is in an elementary school in Whitehorse.
- Provide free transportation for immersion students outside the school's catchment area so that parents are not required to provide transportation.
- Ensure that learning assistance for students with learning difficulties or gifted needs is not scheduled during core French class time.



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continued

ALBERTA:

- Within the *School Act*, establish a different status for FSL learning than for other second languages and a different status for French immersion than for other “alternative” programs.
- Recruit and retain well-qualified FSL teachers. There is a serious shortage of core French and immersion teachers, and too few school districts have dedicated FSL specialists/consultants.
- Provide adequate support for immersion students with learning challenges (including difficulties, disabilities, and giftedness).
- Recognize the language proficiency of FSL graduates in a meaningful way.
- Provide adequate French immersion programs at the senior high school level to allow students to advance their language skills.
- Address funding pressures, especially in the areas of transportation and of support for very small immersion classes.
- Address the need for good support for FSL parents within all schools and jurisdictions.

SASKATCHEWAN:

- Develop a balanced plan to ensure the sustainability of FSL and all second-language programs, including First Nations’ language recovery initiatives.
- Provide FSL options via traveling instructors, as is currently the practice for other subjects.
- Implement additional French immersion entry points, as well as more intensive and enriched French programs.
- Develop a strategy to improve the retention of qualified FSL teachers.
- Restore funding for French-language consultant positions.
- Ensure adequate funding for vulnerable French immersion programs, especially those in rural areas.
- Strengthen and expand existing parent support groups.
- Develop alternatives to, or additional educational support services for, current distant education FSL options for students who lack the skills to succeed in these courses as currently offered.
- Create more opportunities for FSL students to experience Fransaskois culture and French activities outside the classroom.

MANITOBA:

- Address the province-wide shortage of qualified, linguistically competent French immersion and basic (core) French homeroom teachers, particularly in rural/remote regions.
- Ensure that classroom teachers, as well as school division consultants and school administrators, are informed of the availability of educational resources.
- Improve recruitment and retention to basic (core) French programs by ensuring that core French scheduling does not compete with other options.
- Expand intensive French programming, currently available in only one school division.
- Introduce additional French immersion entry points in rural areas.
- Ensure the sustainability of basic (core) and immersion programs in small/remote school divisions by ending capping and by combining classes rather than eliminating FSL programs when enrolment declines.
- Provide specialist services and bilingual administrators in remote and rural areas.
- Ensure that current FSL information, available on the *Bureau de l’éducation française* website, is disseminated to all parents.

ONTARIO:

- Establish a province-wide policy guaranteeing student access to French immersion.
- Offer French immersion and extended core French programs in more secondary schools.
- Provide support for students with special needs enrolled in FSL programs equal to that provided to their English-track peers.
- Require school districts to end the practice of counseling students with special needs or lower academic abilities from enrolling in French immersion or extended French programs. Clearly articulate that French immersion is not gifted programming.
- Provide funding and professional development to support these policies.
- Remove French immersion lotteries and enrolment caps currently used by several school boards.
- Establish FSL language proficiency testing and benchmarks and provide provincial recognition of student achievement for FSL graduates.

- Provide instructional, cultural, and technological resources to ensure quality FSL programming.
- Recruit and retain more qualified FSL teachers to meet the trend toward increased French immersion enrolment.
- Ensure that FSL teachers have appropriate levels of French proficiency.
- Implement a provincial policy requiring school boards to report publicly on the use of federal and provincial FSL funding.
- Ensure that consultation is consistent from school board to school board.

QUEBEC:

- Develop province-wide policies to prevent capping; currently, decisions are taken at the local level by schools.
- Provide transportation to FSL programs.
- Develop a policy prohibiting additional fees for FSL students.
- Develop specific provincial guidelines for FSL programs. The current policies are very vague.
- Monitor the minimum hours for core French programs. Core French hours are affected by FSL teacher shortages and a declining student population.
- Develop more FSL methods courses in faculties of education.
- Provide information for parents about FSL program policies and guidelines in English on the Ministry of Education website.
- Ensure that school boards have a plan for how they will continue to develop and expand FSL programming in their jurisdictions.

NEW BRUNSWICK:

- Reinstate early French immersion and core French programs. In August 2008, the Ministry of Education cancelled both the early immersion program and core French instruction from kindergarten through Grade 3. As a result, no FSL programs will be offered to New Brunswick students until middle immersion at Grade 3 or pre-intensive French at Grade 4, in the only officially bilingual province in Canada.
- Provide equitable access to FSL programs. Presently, some programs are not always available in small, rural communities. School districts do provide busing to larger communities in order to make FI available to more students.

- Fund programs that allow for a high level of French-language proficiency. Intensive French programs are designed to provide an intermediate level of proficiency. Students should not have to wait until post-secondary education to attain a high level of proficiency. As the minimum proficiency level for employment in New Brunswick is “Intermediate Plus,” the elimination of early French immersion will dramatically lower the number of employable bilingual high school graduates.

NOVA SCOTIA:

- Meet the needs of all FSL students by increasing the range of French courses offered at the secondary school level. Attrition in the early and late immersion programs begins in senior high (grades 10-12) when course selection in French becomes limited or competes with science and math courses.
- Explore innovations such as online courses and distance learning that provide increased access to FSL programs. These will help to address declining enrolments in Nova Scotia, especially in rural and under-populated areas with limited access to FSL programs.
- Recruit and retain highly qualified FSL teachers. Demand for qualified FSL teachers is an ongoing concern for many school boards, especially those in rural areas. Students often have English-speaking teachers or those with poor French skills as substitutes.
- Provide specialist or remedial services for students in FSL programs.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND:

- Maintain and enhance equitable access to a range of FSL program options in the face of declining school populations.
- Enhance Grade 12 core and immersion French proficiency outcomes.
- Offer more secondary-level immersion course offerings to reduce high school attrition.
- Increase enrolment in the University of Prince Edward Island and l'Université de Moncton Bachelor of Education, Specialization in French Immersion Program.
- Develop a retention strategy for French immersion teachers to complement the existing recruitment strategy.
- Establish FSL teacher qualifications, especially for substitute teachers in core and immersion programs, and make FSL training available for teachers' professional development to redress the shortage of FSL substitute teachers.

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continued

- Address inequitable access to immersion and core French programs. One school district offers only one entry point for French immersion (early), while another has a whole family of schools without any immersion option at all.
- Continue to work toward establishing benchmarks for FSL student achievement to determine whether students are meeting program goals.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR:

- Address the shortage of qualified FSL teachers, which is expected to increase as more French immersion and intensive French programs are implemented.
- End the practice of capping enrolment and limiting French immersion students' access to remedial teachers, library resource personnel, and accelerated reading programs to supplement French language arts.
- Improve access to FSL programs, especially for students in rural areas.
- Change the Teacher Allocation Formula to ensure that dual track schools are appropriately staffed.
- Implement a process to study and explain attrition, by which students can be tracked from kindergarten through graduation.

- Ensure that schools comply with guidelines for instructional time in all FSL programs.
- Provide provincial recognition for graduating core French and French immersion students.
- Expand the University of Moncton's program offerings, such as FSL teacher education, and courses in business, medicine and lifelong learning.
- Ensure that younger students in multi-level classes are taught at their grade levels in all subjects, not only mathematics.
- Enhance promotion and encourage parents to enrol students in French immersion and intensive French.
- Implement FSL proficiency benchmarks for core and immersion programs so that students and parents are aware of expected proficiency outcomes and to ensure that students attain FSL benchmarks.
- Implement financial reporting practices that monitor the ultimate use of funds to ensure that schools and school districts use FSL funds appropriately.