

French-language Services Plan

2021–2022

Education and
Early Childhood Development

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French-language Services Plan
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
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Message from the Deputy Minister

Hello,

I am pleased to present the French-language Services Plan for 2021–22 for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD).

EECD is unique among provincial government departments in that all its communications and publications are issued in both English and French at the same time. Nova Scotia’s Acadian and Francophone communities are an important part of our education system to whom French-language services are provided.

As a department, all branches are committed to ensuring that student wellbeing and achievement are supported in both English and French. We value the importance of educating and learning in French as well as recognize the opportunities that having a second language can provide. The French Programs and Services Branch (FPSB) is responsible for providing educational programs and services that promote and support the Acadian and francophone communities in Nova Scotia as well as French second-language education. Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the delivery of the programs and services was a resounding success. We launched the first At-Home Learning Pack to support families, created bilingual websites, catalogued online resources for students and parents, provided curricula support for French second-language teachers, and much more. The staff at EECD worked together to find new ways of teaching and learning during these unprecedented times.

This plan is informed by the objectives of the *Government of Nova Scotia Strategic Plan for French-Language Services for 2018–2023* and our commitment to an inclusive education model. Key reports such as the *Inclusive Education Policy* and the *French Education Framework* create a more inclusive and equitable education system that supports students’ well-being and academic success while strengthening collaboration among all branches within the department, the various stakeholders, and Acadian and francophone partners.

—Cathy Montreuil, March 2021

What we're doing to contribute to the growth of the Acadian and francophone community

We recognize the importance of French-language services and we endeavour to fulfil our responsibilities under the French-language Services Act and Regulations. We believe Nova Scotians should have access to quality government services in French, and this plan demonstrates our commitment to ensuring our programs, policies and services address the priorities expressed by the Acadian and francophone community. To achieve this goal, we collaborate with other designated public institutions across government—including the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie—through the French-language Services Coordinating Committee. We greatly value this partnership, which ensures a continued understanding of the unique needs of our province's Acadian and francophone community.

We encourage Nova Scotians to request services from government in French. We also encourage Acadians and francophones to have their voices heard through participation on agencies, boards and commissions, which are regularly advertised by the Executive Council Office. As we continue to maintain and improve our French-language services, we welcome feedback on our progress, and we invite you to share with us your comments or questions by contacting our French-language services coordinator. If you wish to make a formal complaint regarding French-language services, please contact the Office of the Ombudsman.

French-language services coordinator

Olivier Flibotte (olivier.flibotte@novascotia.ca, 902-471-9833)

Services we offer in French

Programs

Curriculum Development

The French Programs and Services Branch at EECD has a division that is comprised of a team of French consultants and other specialists. They work in collaboration with other branches of the department in order to support the activities related to French second-language and first-language programs including the evaluation of French second-language competency based on international language standards (CEFR).

Official Languages Programs

Destination Clic is a summer program for francophone students who are in grade 8 or 9, live outside of Quebec, and who attend French as a first-language school. This experience enables them to improve their French-language skills while doing activities that they like, and at the same time, meeting other similar students from across the country. This program will be offered online exclusively in 2021.

Explore is a program held in the spring or summer that gives the opportunity to enrich second-language skills through cultural experiences and activities with almost all expenses paid (funding up to \$2,800) and will be offered both online or in-person in one of over 40 campuses across Canada exclusively in 2021.

Odyssey is a program for students who have completed a minimum of one full year postsecondary studies and have solid French-language skills. They develop new skills in their second language while sharing their own language and culture. It allows them to get professional teaching experience while being remunerated. They work with a teacher and use games and other activities in the classroom to inspire students who are French as a second-language learners.

Nova Scotia Part-Time Language Assistant Program offers a part-time work experience to more than 20 post-secondary students. It provides an opportunity for language assistants to develop their French-language skills as well as those of students in either French immersion or in French first-language schools through cultural and linguistic activities.

Bursaries

The purpose of the **French Language Bursary Program for Nova Scotia Teachers** is to encourage teachers who hold a Nova Scotia teacher's certificate to pursue courses at Université Sainte-Anne to improve French-language competencies or to pursue courses at the master's level at a Canadian post-secondary institution.

The **French Language Bursary Program for Nova Scotia Students** is designed to encourage students to study full-time at Université Sainte-Anne or at another francophone institution in Canada where French is the language of instruction.

Support for Community Enrichment Initiatives

Arising from the Protocol for Agreements for Minority-Language Education and Second-Language Instruction, EECD administers funding to several community organizations such as

- Conseil Communautaire du Grand-Havre
- Équipe d'alphabétisation de la Nouvelle-Écosse
- Centre communautaire Étoile de l'Acadie
- Centre provincial de ressources pédagogiques
- Fédération culturelle acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse

Translation Services

The department has a team dedicated to handle translation requests. This team handles the translation of all EECD documents that are available to the public and provides support with general French-language enquiries.

We aim to have available, in both official languages, all materials related to French programs in the education system (Conseil scolaire acadien provincial as well as French Second-language). This includes:

- Communication to and from the education system (including regional executive directors/superintendent, teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders) such as
 - Emails
 - Correspondence
 - Factsheets
 - Q&A documents
- Curriculum documents
- Learning resources
- Assessment and evaluation documents
- Ministerial reports

How we communicate with the public in French

Based on the department's internal *French-Language Services Policy*, we respect the following guidelines when handling communications in French:

- All correspondence (paper or electronic) received in French must be replied to in French.
- Requests to communicate orally in French from the public are, to the extent possible, handled by bilingual staff.
- English and French versions of all EECD documents are released simultaneously.
- All EECD documents originating in English that will be provided to the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) and the French second-language population are provided in French. The same applies to public documents such as official statements by the minister, as well as regular correspondence to regional centres for education and to the CSAP from the offices of the Minister and the Deputy Minister.

What we did to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2020–21

Objective 1: Strengthen internal operational structures including policy, legislative and administration frameworks.

- Reviewed and supported the new curriculum and recommended strategies in French second-language and liaised with French first-language (CSAP) and Education and Innovation Programs and Services on curriculum development.
- Published the *French Education Framework* to support French first-language and French second language students, teachers, and programs that reflect the recommendations in the *Inclusive Education Policy*.
- Adopted the conventions from the Government of Canada *Content Style Guide* related to readability and usability as well as the Translation Bureau *Style Guide* for plain language in our French documents.

Objective 2: Develop and deliver quality French-language services and programs to the public.

- Worked at identifying resources that were not yet available in French for students and teachers.
- Translated on average 78,000 words monthly.
- Maintained a tracking system to manage all translation-related requests.

Objective 3: Maintain an ongoing dialogue and consultation with the Acadian and francophone community.

- Created partnerships to support the common areas of the French first-language (FFL) and French second-language (FSL) and FSL curriculum with a focus on language and cultural competencies for all teachers and students.
- Consulted regularly with the CSAP, Université Sainte-Anne and the Regional Centres for Education to ensure their priorities and proposed initiatives are included in the Action Plan for the Official Languages in Education Program.
- Consulted school communities when integrating new technology and programs to ensure they reflected the community needs.

How we plan to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2021-22

Objective 1: Strengthen internal operational structures including policy, legislative and administrative frameworks.

- Review the EECD *French-Language Services Policy* to reflect the *Inclusive Education Policy* and other terminology.
- Guide operations to support the *Government of Nova Scotia Strategic Plan for French-Language Services for 2018–2023*.

Objective 2: Develop and deliver quality French-language services and programs to the public.

- Evaluate and enhance systems to benefit the coordination of translation-related service delivery
- Continue to provide training opportunities to support the professional growth of the translation team (e.g. JiveFusion translation technologies, Antidote writing assistance software).
- Ensure new systems and technology integrate a French interface when offering programs and services to the public whenever possible.
- Continue to build partnerships to support bilingual positions that support public facing services offered by the department.

Objective 3: Maintain ongoing dialogue and consultation with the Acadian and francophone community.

- In order to ensure that the voice of the Acadian and francophone community is represented, through presentations and partnerships, we will work to increase the awareness of all branches in the department and other stakeholders about the importance of consulting the Acadian and francophone community while conducting the business of the department, such as public consultations.
- Consult the francophone and Acadian organizations in the province in order to support the activities related to programs and services.