

Pilot projects will boost French language instruction in some schools

Description

Some students in kindergarten to Grade 3 at four rural anglophone schools will get at least 15 minutes more of French every day under pilot projects being launched by the New Brunswick government this fall.

The French language pilots, announced last month, are aimed at improving access to French learning at schools where there is an interest, but insufficient numbers to create an immersion class.

The four schools that will provide “extended opportunities” for some K-3 students to learn to speak, read and write in French include:

- Riverside Consolidated School (Anglophone East School District)
- Miramichi Rural School (Anglophone North School District)
- Campobello Island Consolidated School (Anglophone South School District)
- Doaktown Elementary School (Anglophone West School District)

“Learning opportunities will be included throughout the curriculum in these grades including in the subject areas of literacy, numeracy, art, music and culture for a minimum of 15 minutes per day,” the government said in a news release on Thursday.

Currently, non-immersion students get about 30 minutes of French per week week, starting in kindergarten, with the focus being on “an appreciation for French language and culture,” according to the release.

Will share best practices

The four selected schools will have the flexibility to decide how exactly they want to implement their pilot project, including which grade levels will participate, it said.

All four pilots will be monitored to “see how they are working, how students are responding and how these learning opportunities could be expanded to other schools,” Department of Education and Early Childhood Development spokeswoman Kelly Cormier said in an email to CBC News.

“Schools will share best practices and participate in peer-mentoring,” she said.

- [6 more schools to offer early French immersion this fall](#)

The department worked with the school districts to select the four schools, said Cormier.

All four already had a French Second Language teacher with a minimum French proficiency level of Advanced Plus and who has successfully demonstrated early language learning competencies, she said.

‘We are pleased to follow through on this commitment and to offer this opportunity to students in kindergarten to Grade 3 at four rural schools around the province.’— *Cathy Rogers, finance minister*

And the four communities had expressed interest in enhanced French opportunities for students.

“As part of our commitment to move early French immersion back to Grade 1, your government also committed to finding innovative solutions to providing enhanced French learning in rural schools,” said Finance Minister Cathy Rogers, who announced details about the pilots at Riverside Consolidated on Thursday, on behalf of Education and Early Childhood Development Minister Brian Kenny.

Premier Brian Gallant announced the French language pilots last month, at the same time he announced early French immersion would be offered at six additional anglophone schools next year.

In May, the government announced a seventh school, bringing the total to 68.

The seven schools that will now offer French immersion, starting in Grade 1, are: Blackville School, Nelson Rural School, North & South Esk Elementary School, Keswick Ridge School, Minto Elementary Middle School, Montgomery Street Elementary School and Petitcodiac Regional School.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/french-pilot-rural-schools-new-brunswick-1.4122387>

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