



For Immediate Release

Parents for Bilingual Education NB (PBENB) Highlights Need for Strong French Second Language (FSL) Supports as Province Develops New 10-Year Education Plan

Moncton, NB - November 19, 2025 — Following a series of public consultations held across the province by the Government of New Brunswick to gather input for the province's new 10-year education plan, Parents for Bilingual Education New Brunswick (PBENB) acknowledges the government's ongoing efforts to strengthen education for all youth in the province. PBENB trusts that, as the plan is developed, the government will also give full and thoughtful consideration to the needs of French Second Language (FSL) learners in the Anglophone sector.

As a parent-led organization advocating for strong, inclusive, and sustainable bilingual education, PBENB believes this is a pivotal opportunity to modernize and strengthen FSL instruction in New Brunswick.

"We welcome the government's focus on building a stronger education system for all learners," said Bonnie Porter – Executive Director, PBENB. "At the same time, it is essential that FSL learners—and the supports they need to succeed—are clearly reflected in the next education plan."

PBENB recognizes that the Centre for Excellence for Language Learning has been a positive step in improving access to extra-curricular FSL activities, offering valuable resources for students, parents, and teachers. The organization strongly supports this initiative and calls for even more system-wide support to ensure consistent, high-quality opportunities for French language learning beyond the classroom.

PBENB encourages the province to take further action in the upcoming education plan to achieve meaningful, lasting improvements for FSL learners. The organization recommends several key priorities:

1. Strengthen Direct Support in the Classroom

- Provide French-speaking Educational Assistants (EAs) in FSL classrooms—particularly in early years and immersion settings—to deliver timely, language-rich support.
- Recruit and support resource teachers dedicated to FSL across schools or districts to help meet learning needs early and reduce attrition in FSL pathways.



2. Increase Instructional Time

Increase the number of instructional minutes dedicated to French across grade levels, including non-immersion pathways. A modest but strategic increase would help bridge this gap without displacing core subjects.

3. Make Data a Central Tool for Decision-Making

- Systematically review and share data on student progress, support needs, and outcomes across FSL programs.
- Track and publicly report attrition rates (students leaving immersion or PIF programs) to better understand when and why learners disengage.
- Disaggregate data to identify which groups of students are most in need of additional support and which interventions are most effective.

4. Reassess Program Structures and Targets

- Review Grade 5 Intensive French (IF) and Post-Intensive French (PIF) to determine whether they continue to meet evolving learner needs, or whether more flexible, modernized models are required.
- Ensure appropriate placement of students into FSL pathways based on readiness, in line with the amended Policy 309, and ensure the screening tool is valid, standardized, and consistently used.
- Update assessment methods and proficiency targets to align expectations with instructional time, program structure, and learner support levels.

5. Align Resources with Ambition

Achieving the government's goal of ensuring students graduate with functional bilingualism requires robust supports, including:

- Sufficient human resources (EAs, resource teachers, and qualified FSL instructors)
- Adequate instructional time
- Early, targeted interventions
- Updated program design and assessment models



“The vision of a province where all students can confidently learn French as an additional language is essential to New Brunswick’s future,” said Jane Keith – President, PBENB. “But this vision will only be realized if bilingual education is treated as a priority, backed by the resources, staffing, and program structures required for students to truly succeed. We cannot afford to set ambitious goals without providing the support needed to achieve them.”

PBENB urges the government to embed these recommendations in the new 10-year education plan to build an FSL system that empowers every student on their path to bilingualism.

About PBENB

Parents for Bilingual Education New Brunswick Inc. is a parent-driven, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting, supporting, and expanding opportunities for French second language education in New Brunswick’s Anglophone school system.

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