

FRENCH LANGUAGE EDUCATION

On March 15th, 2021, Manitoba Education announced significant changes to the education system in Manitoba. **Better Education Starts Today: Putting Students First** was developed in response to the Commission on Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education and incorporates the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The **Better Education Starts Today** strategy commits to strengthening French language education and our French Immersion Program across Manitoba. We will build on what teachers and school divisions have accomplished to put students first and strengthen the implementation of French language education in Manitoba.

Our goal is to support students in developing their French-language proficiency, academic success and plurilingual identity. To achieve this goal, we will take the following actions.

Strengthen French Immersion program delivery

- ✓ Revise policy to create actionable steps for schools to take to **fully implement the French Immersion Program**.
- ✓ Launch a **provincial online high school** for the Français, French Immersion and English programs—including summer school—allowing more students to graduate with a French Immersion diploma.
- ✓ Develop a strategy to recruit and retain **more French language teachers**.
- ✓ **Increase professional development** and training opportunities in French, including certification for French educational assistants.

Connect students to each other and to French culture

- ✓ Form **French language student networks** so French learners across the province can engage and learn together.
- ✓ Expand successful projects piloted during the pandemic, including the use of **virtual workshops** to provide all French language learners with more opportunities to interact with French culture.

Connect students to career development

- ✓ Work with partners to **expand apprenticeship programs**, with a specific focus on students in the Français and French Immersion Programs.
- ✓ Increase **work-integrated learning, career development and technology education** opportunities for French Immersion students.

An online high school will improve the delivery of French-language education

- ✓ Virtual, online French Immersion programming will address the shortage of qualified French teachers in northern and remote areas. This will also apply to French courses in the English Program.
- ✓ French Immersion students will have access to more high school courses, both specialized (Math/Science) and optional, delivered by subject matter specialists.
- ✓ An increased number of students will be able to graduate with a French Immersion Diploma.
- ✓ Students in rural and northern areas will have greater access to French culture.

How will French Immersion Programming be addressed as the changes move forward?

We will continue to collaborate with existing school divisions and new regions as we respond to the evolving needs of the French Immersion Program and improve its implementation in schools.

Our consultations on the structure and roles of the new Provincial Education Authority (PEA) will ask for input on the needs of the French Immersion Program across the province and the context and issues of French-language education. We will ensure that these considerations are incorporated in the design of the PEA structure, policies and decision-making.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

- ✓ Upcoming consultations for the **Better Education Starts Today** strategy will allow you to give input on French-language education in Manitoba. For consultation details visit Engage MB website: <https://engagemb.ca/better-education-starts-today>
- ✓ A website has been set up for regular updates. Please check back often: www.bettereducationmb.ca
- ✓ To reach out to the Education Transformation team, please email edutransformation@gov.mb.ca

