



Making the Choice on Learning French

New Brunswick has three education program options to support students learning French. This document provides information on these programs to help parents make a choice with their child who is entering Grade 3 or Grade 6.

All students in New Brunswick's Anglophone school districts begin school — Kindergarten through Grade 2 — in English Prime. At this level, students participate in a variety of learning experiences that introduce French language and culture to develop their interest in learning a second language.

In Grade 3, a program choice is available: remain in English Prime (with Intensive French) or enter French Immersion. At the end of Grade 5, another program choice is available: continue in English Prime (with Post-Intensive French) or enter Late French Immersion. Parents and their children are encouraged to consider all program options. French Immersion programs are available where enrolment numbers warrant.

All program options support French language learning through a literacy-based approach. Speaking, listening, reading and writing are developed in an integrated fashion. The key focus of Intensive French is to develop a student's second language through age appropriate topics. In French Immersion, students develop their second language, while at the same time learning subjects such as science, social studies, and mathematics in French.

Program Options

Grades	New Brunswick Education Program Options	
K-2	English Prime with learning experiences to introduce French language and culture	French Immersion
3	English Prime with learning experiences to introduce French language and culture	
4	English Prime with Pre-Intensive French	
5	English Prime with Intensive French	
6-10	English Prime with Post-Intensive French	
11-12	Blended High School Program	

English Prime (Kindergarten to Grade 10)

From Kindergarten to Grade 3, students spend 30 minutes per week participating in a variety of learning experiences that expose them to French language and culture. In Grade 3, examples of the learning experiences include celebration of French culture (in the class, school or community), a virtual tour of French cultural landmarks in New Brunswick, exploration of French art and contemporary music, and participation in readers' theatre.

From Grade 4 to Grade 10, students participate in three phases of Intensive French: Pre-Intensive, Intensive and Post-Intensive, all of which use a similar approach. The focus is on oral communication first, helping students to develop their conversational speaking ability. Oral communication is then supported by reading and writing activities. All skills are developed through projects based on topics related to students' interests.

In Grade 4, Pre-Intensive French is offered two or three times per week for a total of 150 minutes. Oral communication and either reading or writing in French occur in each class.

In Grade 5, Intensive French is offered 60 per cent of the day (approximately 3 hours and 15 minutes) for five months of the school year, generally in the first term. Oral communication, reading and writing in French occur daily. In the remaining 40 per cent of the day, mathematics, and other subjects such as music and physical education are taught in English. During this part of the school year, students do not receive instruction in English language arts, science, social studies, health or personal development and career planning. However, students are encouraged to continue reading at home in English.

In the other part of the Grade 5 school year, instruction in French is offered two or three times per week for a total of 150 minutes. All other subjects are taught in English. Some combining of learning outcomes in English language arts, science, social studies, health or personal development and career planning is necessary in order to achieve the goals of these subjects.

From Grades 6 to 8, Post-Intensive French is offered three or four times per week for a total of 200 minutes. Oral communication and either reading or writing in French occur in each class.

In Grades 9 and 10, Post-Intensive French is offered as a 90-hour course each year, giving students a total of 180 hours of instruction over the two years.



French Immersion (Grade 3 to Grade 10)

In Grade 3 French Immersion, students spend the first three months of the school year, approximately three hours per day, learning to speak, read and write in French by exploring topics such as their interests, their preferences, their school and their community.

From the start of Grade 3, mathematics and art are learned in French; music and physical education may be learned in French and/or English. The goal is to have 80 per cent of instructional time in French over the course of the year. Students have 150 minutes of English language arts instruction per week to support continued development of first language skills. Some topics, such as citizenship and invisible forces, from science and social studies are addressed through English language arts. At the beginning of December, students ease into an expanded study of language arts, science, social studies, health, and personal development and career planning in French while continuing to build language proficiency.

In Grades 4 and 5 French Immersion, the majority of subjects continue to be taught in French resulting in 80 per cent of instructional time in French over the course of the year. Students have 150 minutes of English language arts instruction per week to support continued development of first language skills.

In Grades 6, 7 and 8 French Immersion, students have 70 per cent of their instruction in French over the course of the year. Students also have English language arts instruction to support continued development of first language skills.

In Grades 9 and 10 French Immersion, students will take a minimum of 50 per cent of their courses in French, each school year.

Late French Immersion (Grade 6 to Grade 10)

Grade 6 is the second entry point for French Immersion in the New Brunswick school system. Students build on the French language skills developed in earlier grades. At the beginning of the school year, an emphasis is placed on developing students' speaking, reading and writing skills in French. This initial focus helps students transition more easily to learning subjects in French.

In Late French Immersion, Grades 6 through 8, the majority of subjects are taught in French resulting in a minimum of 70 per cent of instructional time in French over the course of the year. Students continue to have English language arts instruction to support development of first language skills.

In Grades 9 and 10, Late French Immersion students take a minimum of 50 per cent of their courses in French each school year.



Blended High School Program (Grades 11 and 12)

Instruction in French is compulsory until the end of Grade 10. Students are encouraged, however, to continue taking courses in French until the end of Grade 12 to strengthen their skills and help them achieve the oral proficiency targets. The oral proficiency targets established for both programs are based on the understanding that students will continue in the program of their choice until high school graduation.

French second language courses in Grades 11 and 12 are open to all students who achieve an oral proficiency level of Intermediate or higher at the end of Grade 10. Such courses include French language arts and a range of compulsory and elective courses offered in French. The availability of these courses may vary according to the size of the school. Students who do not reach Intermediate have additional instructional opportunities to improve their French language skills in Grades 11 and 12 through Post-Intensive French courses.

Oral Proficiency Targets of the Program Options

French Immersion — Grade 3 Entry → Advanced by Grade 12

Late French Immersion — Grade 6 Entry → Intermediate Plus by Grade 12

Intensive French within English Prime → Intermediate by end of Grade 10
→ Working toward Intermediate Plus by Grade 12

Advanced Proficiency Description

Students at this level are able to use the language in practical, social, and academic or work-related topics with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary. Communication is effective in most formal, and in all informal conversations. They can describe in detail and narrate accurately. They can discuss abstract topics, ideas and events as well as support opinions and form hypotheses. They may not sound like a first language speaker but their accent never interferes with their ability to express themselves clearly. Their control of grammar is good and speech is fluent. Errors may occur, but they do not distract or interfere with communication.

Intermediate Plus Proficiency Description

Students at this level are able to satisfy the requirements of a broad variety of school, work, and everyday situations. They can discuss concrete topics relating to special fields of competence as well as subjects of current public interest. Normally they do not have to search for words. They often show a significant degree of fluency and ease in speaking, yet, under pressure, may experience language breakdown. Students may exhibit good control of language structures, but be limited in overall language production; or, conversely, may demonstrate ample speech production, but have uneven control of structures. Some misunderstandings will still occur.

Intermediate Proficiency Description

Students at this level are able to satisfy routine social demands and limited requirements in school/work settings. They can provide information and give explanations with some degree of accuracy, but language is awkward. They can handle most common social situations, including introductions and casual conversations about events in school and community and are able to provide autobiographical information in some detail. Students can give directions from one place to another and give accurate instructions in a field of personal expertise. They have a speaking vocabulary sufficient to converse simply, with some paraphrasing. Accent, though often quite faulty, is intelligible. They use high frequency language structures accurately, but do not have a thorough or confident control of grammar. In certain situations, diction would probably distract a native speaker.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if parents cannot speak French?

There is no expectation that parents of students in any of the program options must be able to speak French. All program options are designed for children whose first language is not French.

How can I help my child?

Parents can help by communicating regularly with their child's teachers. It is also valuable for parents to encourage their child to read and write in both English and French; to listen to French music, radio or television; and to speak to others in French when opportunities arise, such as in a store or restaurant.

What if my child is having learning difficulties?

All children have the opportunity to learn their second official language to the extent that they are able to do so. Program options can be adapted to address a full range of learners, including students on Special Education Plans. Resource teachers, in consultation with teachers and parents, personalize programs based on student strengths to support optimum success in learning. It is felt that with appropriate accommodations, modifications and support, all students can achieve success.

For more information or to view the video on program options, visit
<http://www.gnb.ca/0000/index-e.asp>