



# French Second-Language OLEP Action Plan Consultations

## What We Heard

### Summary of Consultations

Alberta Education hosted a webinar on February 27, 2023, specific to French immersion (FI) and French-as-a-second-language (FSL) funding recipients, to discuss its next Official Languages in Education Programs (OLEP) action plan, scheduled to take effect in the 2024/25 school year. During this webinar, 17 representatives from 16 school authorities across Alberta gathered to discuss the current French second-language action plan initiatives and propose changes to the next action plan as part of the new *Canada-Alberta Agreement on Minority-Language Education and Second-Language Instruction*. Following the webinar, 11 school authorities completed an online survey through the OLEP Alberta Engagement Hub, answering specific questions related to priority initiatives.

### Existing Initiatives

In its current action plan, Alberta has 14 French second-language initiatives under five areas of intervention. All five areas of intervention continue to hold importance for funding recipients. Research, a sixth area of intervention, is perceived as better targeted at the post-secondary level where it currently sits. Below are the current initiatives listed in the order they appear in the action plan. They have been colour coded based on the level of priority identified through consultations: those identified as highest priority are in blue text; those identified as medium priority are in black text; and those identified as lowest priority, with the potential of being removed and/or collapsed into another existing initiative, are in grey text.

#### 1. Learner Participation

- French Immersion Student Recruitment and Retention
- French Immersion High School Retention
- French as a Second Language Student Recruitment and Retention

*“Student retention and recruitment is an issue, especially since the pandemic.” -Survey respondent*

#### 2. Provision of Programs

- French Immersion Expansion: Adding Classes
- DELF/DALF: Exam Centres
- DELF/DALF: Students Writing Exams
- French Resource Centres: Resources
- French Resource Centres: Partnerships

#### 3. Academic Achievement of Learners

- Literacy for French Immersion Learners
- Numeracy for French Immersion Learners

*“Cultural enrichment is an essential component of second-language learning programs as it improves language fluency, facilitates communication, encourages cultural empathy, enhances job prospects, and enriches personal growth.” -Survey respondent*

#### 4. Enriched Learning Environments

- Cultural Activities
- Quebec-Alberta Exchange

#### 5. Support for Educational Staff

- Individual Teacher Bursaries
- Professional Learning for Teachers and School Administrators

*Support for staff is also a priority...and support for staff impacts teacher retention.” -Survey respondent*

## Potential New Initiatives/Activities

Participants expressed appreciation for the open nature of initiatives that allow for flexibility and a variety of activities but stated that more explicit examples were needed to support school authorities in their allocation of OLEP funding.

According to participants, initiatives of high priority that may or may not stand alone in a revised action plan include:

- recruitment and retention of qualified staff (e.g., incentivization);
- full-day French immersion kindergarten;
- online options for French immersion and FSL students;
- collaboration among school authorities on cultural activities;
- supports for students with diverse needs (e.g., assistive technology, educational assistants);
- a provincial mandate on second-language learning;
- staff French-language proficiency assessments; and
- a system to recognize French immersion program graduates (e.g., diploma).

## Next Steps

- Draft initiatives that incorporate input from these consultations will be presented for feedback in a second engagement session and survey in October 2023.
- Alberta Education has received federal approval on its application for federal funding to develop a staff language proficiency framework and assessment model and is moving forward with this project.
- Alberta Education is looking at ways to incorporate provincial standards for a French immersion credential into department initiatives to support teacher career growth and consistency in programming.
- Alberta Education has posted the document [Examples of Activities for French-Second Language Initiatives](#) to the reporting section of the [OLEP webpage](#) and will continue to provide more examples as the initiatives evolve.
- The OLEP Alberta Engagement Hub was made available to all French second-language school authorities after the first engagement webinar and remains open for participants to collaborate, ask questions, share ideas, and participate in the consultation process.
  - To register for an account, go to [your.alberta.ca](https://your.alberta.ca).
  - An access code will be sent to your email to confirm registration.
  - Once confirmed, you will be routed to the main [your.alberta.ca](https://your.alberta.ca) engagement page. You can then return to [your.alberta.ca/olep-alberta](https://your.alberta.ca/olep-alberta) to access the hub.
  - If you are not able to access the hub, please email [EDC.Officiallang@gov.ab.ca](mailto:EDC.Officiallang@gov.ab.ca).