



Response to Succeeding at Home: A Green Paper on Education in New Brunswick

Seizing the Opportunity: *Preparing New Brunswick Schools and the Education System to Support a Growing Population of Immigrant Students with Diverse Ethnic, Cultural and Linguistic Backgrounds.*

Executive Summary

As the Government of New Brunswick works to improve the education system in the years ahead, the New Brunswick Multicultural Council (NBMC) urges that particular attention be placed on the growing percentage of immigrant and ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse learners in the system. NBMC recommends that specific strategies be developed to address the unique challenges and needs of immigrant learners from diverse ethno-cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The recommendations below are based on the voices and lived experiences of newcomers, as well as those of individuals working on the front lines with newcomer students and families, in addition to drawing from data and information from a recent report on immigrant enrollment projections prepared by Jupia Consultants¹. The projections were modelled using the new provincial immigration targets; Statistics Canada population projections; the expected age breakdown of immigrant arrivals; an expected loss from outward migration; temporary international student estimates; and various other assumptions. The projection concluded that the total immigrant and international student population could **more than double by 2024-2025 (from 6,735 to 13,841)** and **nearly triple by 2029-2030 (from 6,735 to 18,841)**. Ultimately, the projections suggest the immigrant population in New Brunswick schools could grow from roughly 6% of the total student body in 2020, to more than 18% by 2030.

The following is a summary of NBMC's recommendations:

1. Training for educators and those working in the education system.

- Prioritize professional development opportunities for educators, resource personnel, and administrators on cultural competency, unconscious bias, anti-racism and discrimination, and other related topics, in order to create safe, inclusive and supportive environments for immigrants and ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse learners.
- Activate upstream collaboration with post-secondary institutions in New Brunswick to ensure that Bachelor's and Masters of Education programs include required courses related to teaching and supporting immigrants and ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse learners.

¹ Full report publication forthcoming winter 2020.



2. Enhanced supports for additional language learners.

- Increase the availability of English as an Additional Language (EAL) and French as a Second Language (FSL) teachers, tutors, and mentors for immigrant students.
- Improve capacity building, retention, and consistency of EAL and FSL mentorship and tutoring across the province.
- Increase the numbers of hours for intensive EAL and FSL supports to which immigrant students have access.
- Identify alternate education pathways for high school aged immigrant learners who may have experienced gaps in education and face significant language barriers.
- Explore opportunities to provide more enrichment and competitive learning opportunities for all students, including immigrant students with high academic objectives.

3. More inclusive and representative school communities.

- Establish departmental goals and strategies related to future hiring, in order to ensure teachers and support staff reflect the growing cultural diversity within classrooms across the province.
- Reinforce the historical and contemporary contributions of immigrants to both Canada and New Brunswick in existing K-12 curriculum and educational materials.
- Introduce and develop policy statements in all schools that declare a commitment to anti-racism and discrimination-free environments.
- Increase parent-teacher supports in order to facilitate a higher engagement of immigrant student's parents in the school system and in their child's education.

4. Stronger and more effective data collection and evaluation tools to inform/drive strategies.

- Add support to Welcome Centers to assist in data collection and analysis.
- Improve current data collection and evaluation tools to capture growing diversity and better understand trends, gaps, and opportunities to better support newcomer learners.
- Review and revise the funding formula so that it factors community differences and learner needs, including those of immigrant students, in order to enable a more strategic needs-based allocation of funding resources throughout the education system.

5. Apply the concept of a *Collaborative Economy* to maximize existing services and resources.

- Build stronger and deliberate partnerships between the school districts and the settlement sector and multi/ethno-cultural associations, especially in cases where there is challenging behavior.
- Support promising extra-curricular programs, activities, and practices that have been proven to foster language development, inter-cultural learning and cultural inclusion.

