

Zimbra

Fwd: French immersion student enrolment falls for the first time in 20 years. Parents call for expanded online learning

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Objet: Fwd: French immersion student enrolment falls for the first time in 20 years. Parents call for expanded online learning

----- On Sep 7, 2021, at 10:02 AM, glewis <glewis@cpf.bc.ca> wrote:

Fewer students from abroad in
2020-21 explains drop in overall,
FI enrolment numbers in BC

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BC French immersion student enrolment falls for the first time in 20 years.

Parents call for expanded online learning.

Vancouver, B.C. (Sept. 7, 2021) — The 2020/2021 school year was like no other. Both overall public school enrolment and French immersion enrolment fell, reversing years of growth. According to the BC Ministry of Education, the decline was largely attributed to the loss of non-resident students. However, there were other forces as well, including a movement towards homeschooling and online learning. The availability of online French courses during the pandemic proved to be grossly insufficient which limited accessibility

and participation.

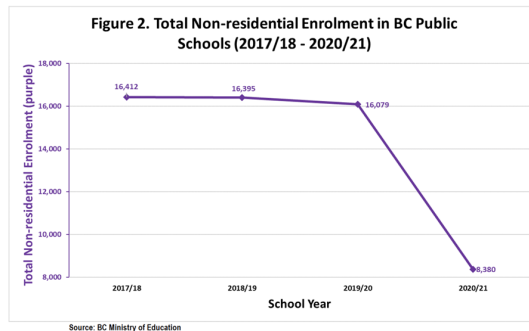
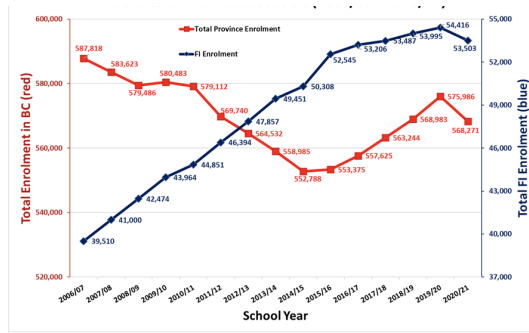
"When COVID first hit, and many families were looking for distributed or hybrid learning, we realized there was a significant inequality in our education system. There were many well-supported online courses available in English, but very few in French," said Glyn Lewis, Canadian Parents for French BC & Yukon Executive Director. "Parents sent hundreds of letters to the BC Minister's office calling for greater online French course availability and support. Unfortunately, some parents have reported they felt they had to transfer to English during the pandemic because the program was better supported. This caused part of the unprecedented fall in French immersion enrolment in 2020/21."

Looking ahead to the BC Ministry of Education's plan to launch "[Provincial Online Schools](#)" in 2022/23, CPF BC & Yukon wants to guarantee French learners don't get left behind again. Lewis added, "We call on the provincial government to ensure French second language courses are readily available and supported through the Provincial Online Schools. This past year showed French programs are not equal when it comes to online learning and they should be. Over 53,500 B.C. students are participating in French immersion, or roughly 9.4 per cent of the student body. This is a popular and life-changing educational experience within our public education system and no child should be left out."

Canadian Parents for French recently launched a report [Logging in to Learn! Se brancher pour apprendre!](#) which compiles research and best practices and also highlights some of the challenges of virtual learning.

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Non-resident enrolment for BC schools dropped by nearly 50 per cent between 2019/20 and 2020/21, explaining the drops in total and French immersion enrolment numbers for the year as well.



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