



CANADIAN
PARENTS
FOR FRENCH

Access First: Ensuring an Open Door to Second-Language Learning

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Bonjour

Objectives

- **Clearly define “access”** and explain why it must become a guiding principle for FSL programs.
- Highlight the **current barriers that limit access** for students and families.
- Present the **policy and legislative levers that can ensure real and equitable access**.
- Show **how concrete reforms can make access universal** across the country.



CANADIAN PARENTS FOR FRENCH

Mission:

Furthering bilingualism by promoting opportunities to learn and use French for all those who call Canada home.

Vision:

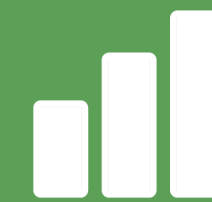
A Canada where French and English are an integral part of everyday life.



Universal
Access



Effective
Programs



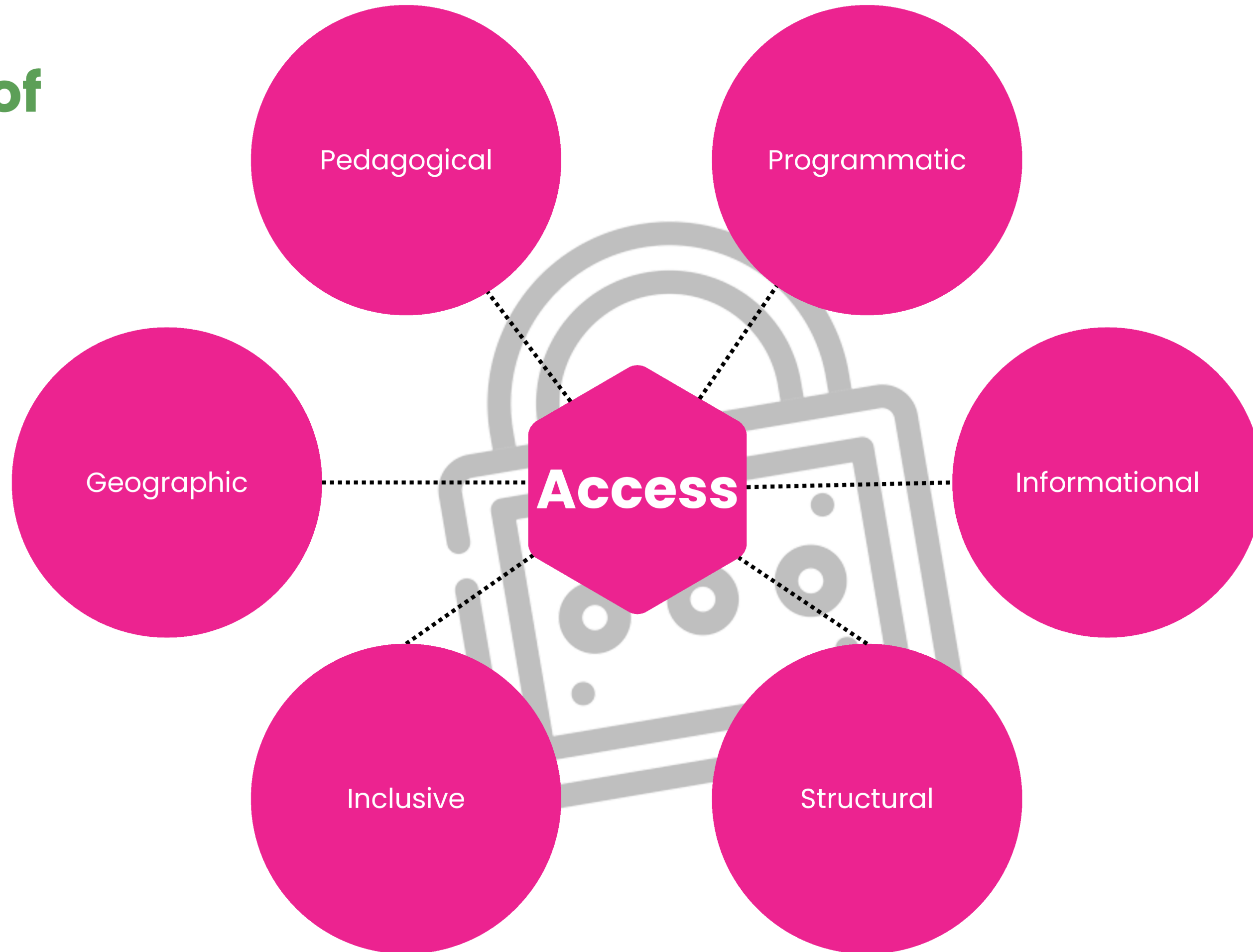
Recognized
Proficiency
Levels



Leadership
Accountability

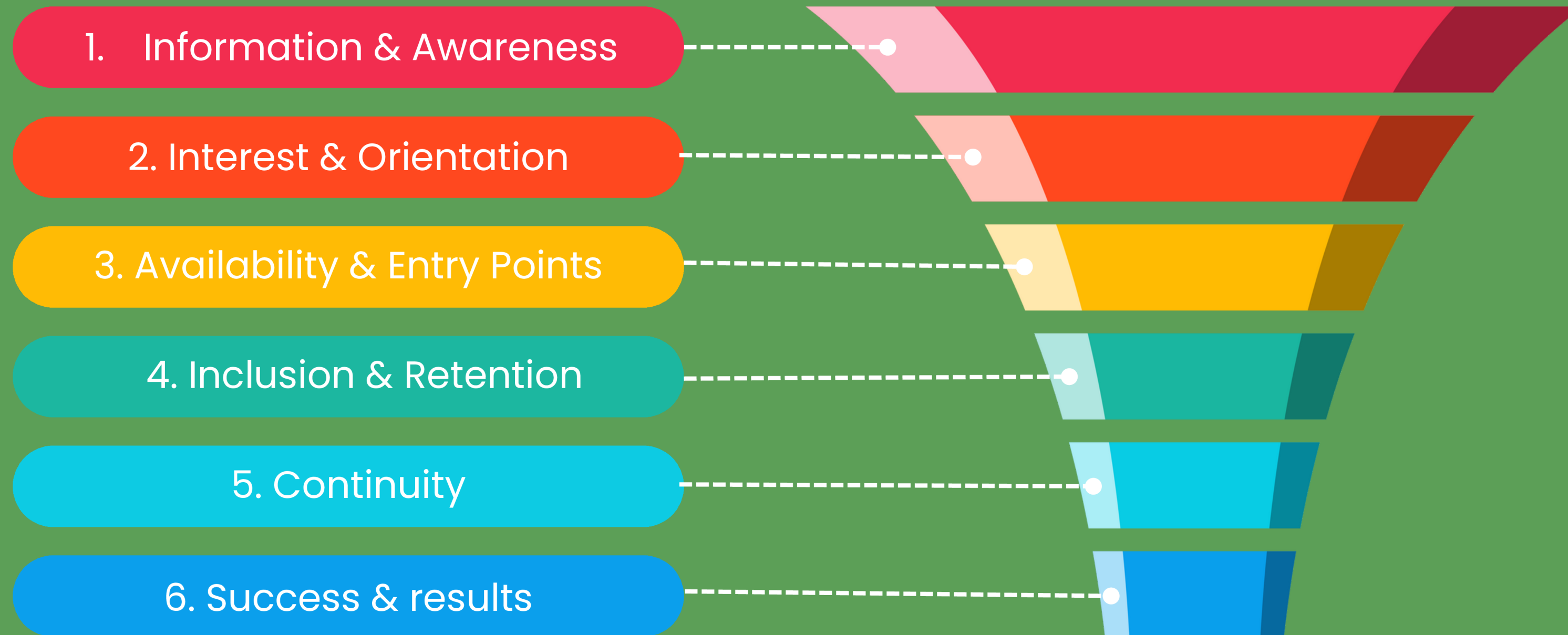


Layers of Access





What does universal access look like?





The legislative and policy framework for FSL in Canada



Jurisdiction	Reality
British Columbia	Discretionary offering; Access conditional on available space and school district policies
Yukon	Discretionary access; no legislative guidance
Alberta	Discretionary offering; the board decides based on available resources and may charge fees
Northwest Territories	Discretionary offering; the District Education Authorities decide based on available human and educational resources
Saskatchewan	Recommended framework – see slide 9
Manitoba	Recommended framework – see slide 9



Le cadre législatif et politique du FLS au Canada (cont.)



Jurisdiction	Réalité
Nunavut	No offering; no access
Ontario	Discretionary offering; the board decides based on demand and local resources Patchwork access according to board policy
Québec	Discretionary offering; models vary
Newfoundland and Labrador	Discretionary offering; legislation is silent. Policy states that the program can be established when interest and adequate resources make it viable.
New Brunswick	Discretionary offering; the superintendent establishes the program based on demand. A policy exists outlining the criteria required to set up a program.
Nova Scotia	Discretionary offering
Prince Edward Island	Discretionary offering based on available resources and demand

Proven Solutions for Guaranteed Access

In Manitoba

- The *Public Schools Act* of Manitoba stipulates that **if there is sufficient demand (23+ students) from parents**, a school division is required to offer French immersion (Art. 79(3)).
- The *Regulation on Languages of Instruction and Languages Taught, R.M. 469/88 R*, provides additional mechanisms to allow the creation of French immersion programs (i.e. **ministerial discretion**) and establishes a framework for doing so.



In Saskatchewan

- The *Education Act* of Saskatchewan also provides that the minister can establish French immersion programs (Art. 180[3]), **at the request of a school board** (Art. 36[1]) or **by petition from parents/guardians when 15 students can be grouped** together (Art. 36[2]).





French Immersion in Ontario: The Current Landscape

Over 251,000 students enrolled across Ontario

3.9% annual growth over 20 years

Since 1977, school boards have had the **flexibility to design and implement French immersion at their own pace**, fostering innovation, research, and success tailored to local realities.

Access challenges **limit student mobility** and **weaken the consistency and quality** of French immersion outcomes across Ontario.

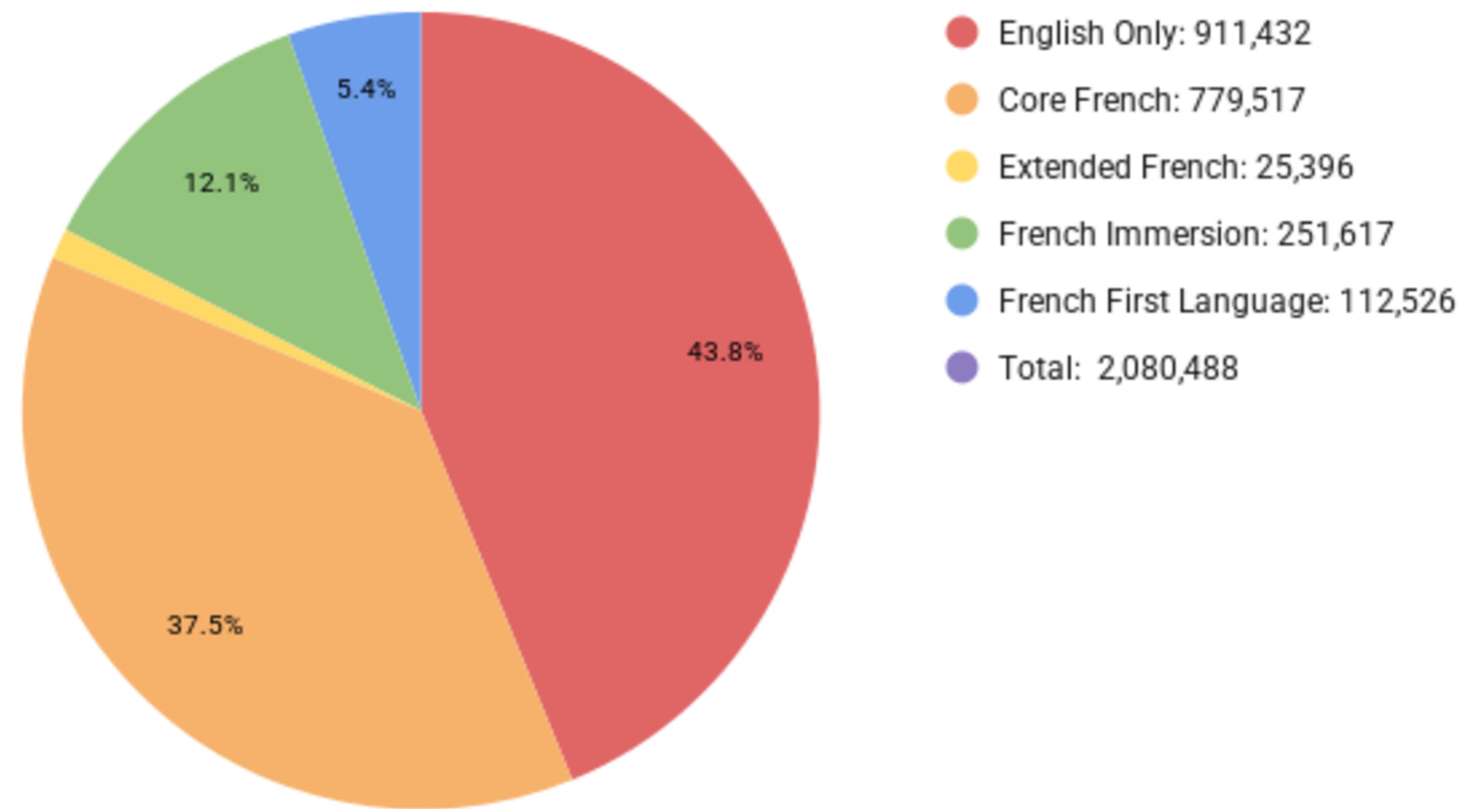
~14,000 qualified teachers with quality resources: FSL curriculum, FSL Framework, TFO Idélo platform

Localized implementation leads to **disparities in access and growth** of French immersion. **Patchwork admission policies** set by school boards limit opportunities.

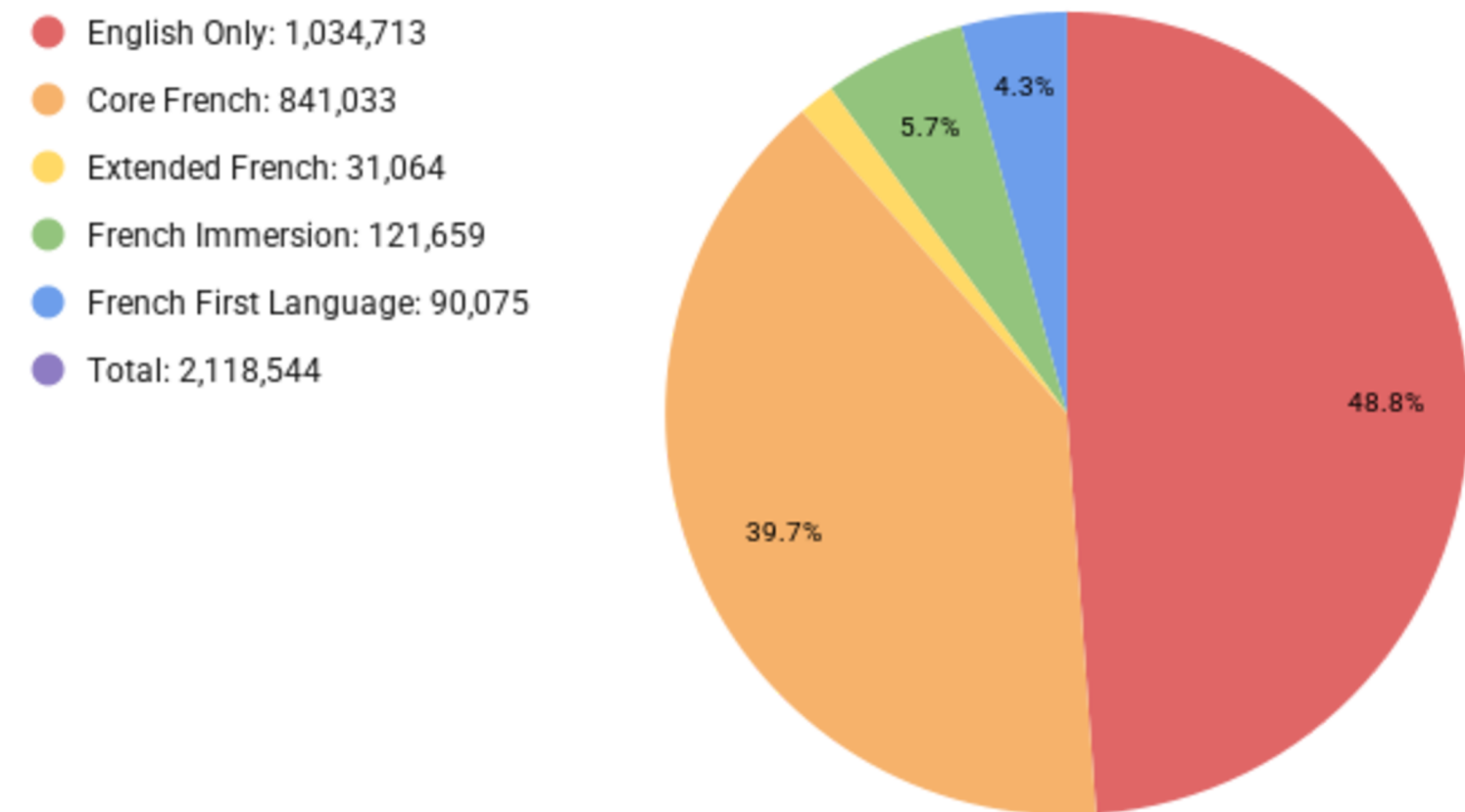


Enrolment by Program in Ontario

K-12 Enrolment by Program in Ontario, 2023-2024

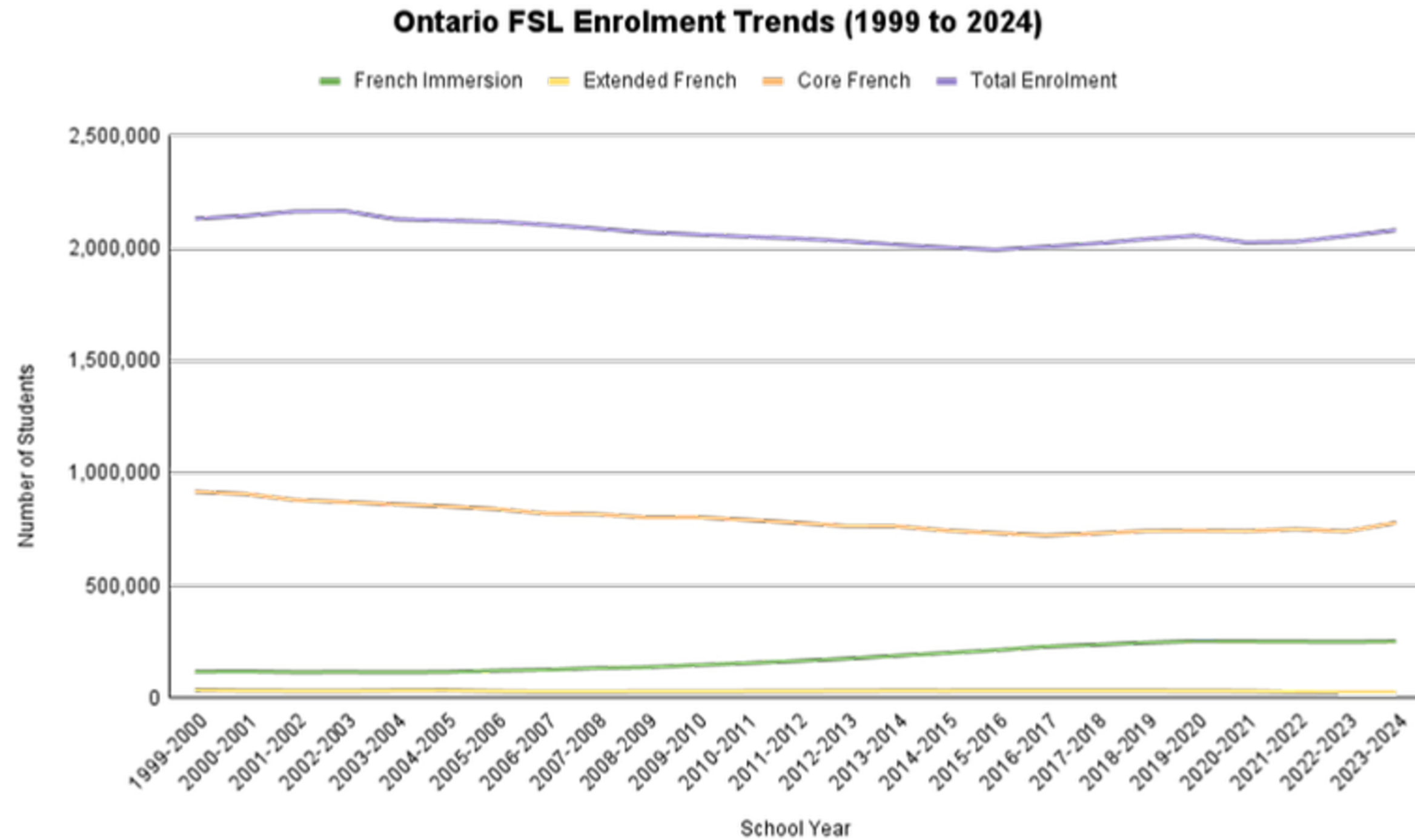


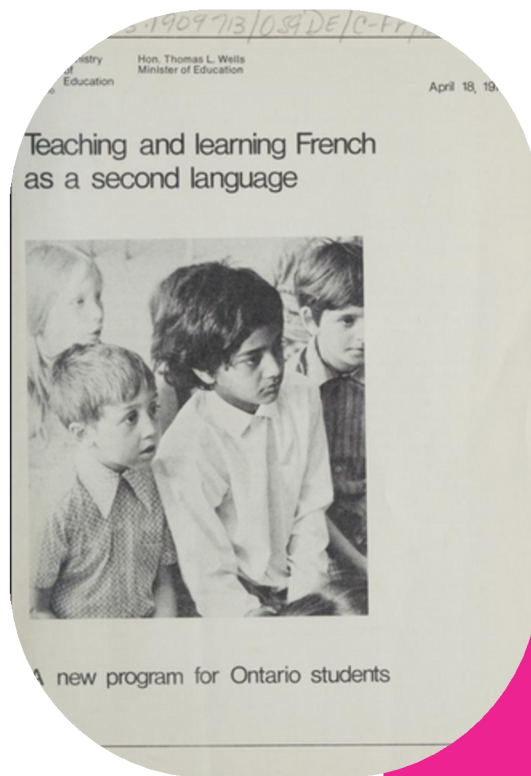
K-12 Enrolment by Program in Ontario, 2005-2006





FSL Trends in Ontario

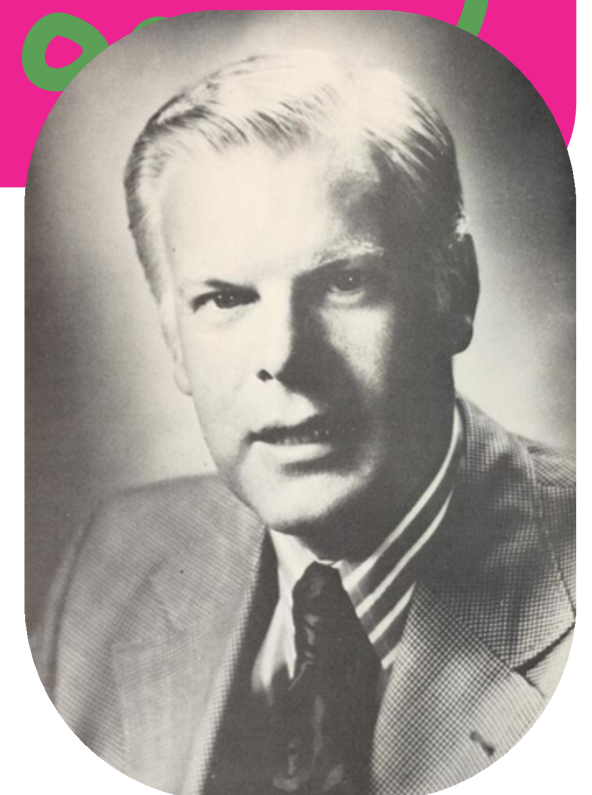




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"It is the **basic right of every child in the Province to learn French** by the best available methods for as many school years as he can profit from the experience."

-The Hon. Thomas L. Wells,
Progressive Conservative Minister of Education, 1977





Our Proposal: **Universal Access to French Immersion in Ontario**

That the Government of Ontario ensure universal access to French Immersion across all English-language district school boards through legislative, regulatory, and/or policy powers.

We advocate for the creation of:

- 1) The obligation for English-language district school boards to offer French Immersion programs; and
- 2) the right of students to attend French Immersion programs.





Outcomes:

Universal Access to French Immersion in Ontario

**French
Immersion for
All Aspirants**

**Better Learner
Outcomes**

**Ontario's
Bilingual
Competitive
Advantage**

But why now?

**Less Red Tape
for Parents**

**Bigger Ontario
Bilingual
Workforce**

**Allies to
Ontario's
Francophonie**



Thank you!

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