



NOVA SCOTIA - QUEBEC STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
FRENCH SECOND LANGUAGE DIVISION
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Note: For a more detailed overview of the program, including the application and selection process, please see [Nova Scotia-Quebec Student Exchange Program: Program Guide](#)

Participating students and families are also responsible for fully understanding the expectations contained in the [Nova Scotia-Quebec Student Exchange Program: Participant Guide](#)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Nova Scotia-Quebec Four-Month Student Exchange Program is designed to further second-language skills development and cultural awareness through an exchange between French Second Language high school students from Nova Scotia and English Second Language high school students from Quebec.

From mid-September to mid-November, participating Quebec students live with Nova Scotia host families and attend the same school as their exchange partner.

From February to early April, participating Nova Scotia students live with and attend the same school as their exchange partner in Quebec.

This Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development French Second Language Programs initiative is supported by the 2024-2028 [Canada-Nova Scotia Agreement on French-language Services](#).

Participants in this exchange program can apply for an additional high school credit (Cultural Experience 12). An official application must be submitted by April 15th prior to the school year in which the exchange takes place. For more information, and the application form, please see: <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/dpslf/fr/experience-culturelle-12-exc-12>

OBJECTIVES

The program's main objectives are to:

- support Nova Scotia students to improve their French language skills, and support Quebec students to improve their English language skills
- foster cultural awareness and understanding
- encourage bilingualism
- develop students' independence and ability to adapt to a new environment
- expose students to another educational system

DEFINITIONS

Provincial Coordinator: appointed by the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and oversees all aspects of the exchange program.

French Second Language Coordinator: appointed by their regional centre for education and coordinates French Second Language programs within their respective regional centres for education ("RCE").

Liaison Teacher: appointed by the school principal and oversees the program and participants at the school level, with support from the principal. *(While each school should designate only one official liaison teacher, a school counsellor or other school staff may assist with scheduling and programming as well as supporting both the NS and Quebec students).*

School Principal: educational and administrative leader of their school as appointed by their RCE (this may also be a school vice principal).

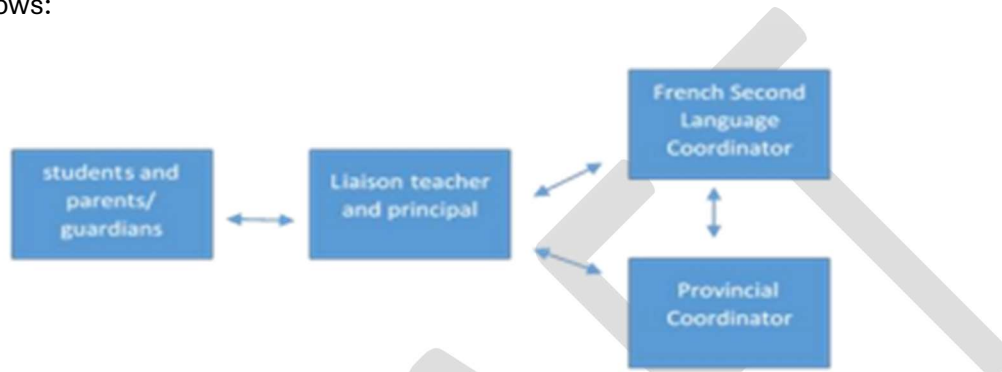
Participating students: Nova Scotia students, aged 15 to 17 who have been accepted into the program and successfully paired with a Quebec exchange partner.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): legal guardians of Nova Scotia students

Host family: parent(s)/guardian(s) and family members(s) of the exchange partner.

COMMUNICATION

The line of communication between the various parties (for all non-emergency situations) is as follows:



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PRIOR TO THE EXCHANGE

The Provincial Coordinator will:

- promote and administer the program
- coordinate communication among the various parties involved in the program
- distribute information regarding the exchange
- facilitate an information session for students and parent(s)/guardian(s)
- receive and process student applications and all other necessary documentation
- coordinate and complete the pairing process of approved Nova Scotia and Quebec students
- ensure that each member of both the Nova Scotia and Quebec families age 18 or older have provided the original criminal record and vulnerable sector check and Child Abuse Registry check (Nova Scotia only) documents
- ensure participating students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) sign the consent form
- collect medical and emergency information from all student participants and inform Quebec host families of students who are required to take prescribed medication
- inform regional coordinators and program coordinators which students have been selected to participate in the exchange

- inform students and parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of their responsibilities and requirements for the exchange
- contact the participating Nova Scotia schools to become familiar with students' academic programming

The French Second Language Coordinator will:

- organize and conduct Oral Proficiency Interviews (OPIs) for all Nova Scotia students interested in receiving the Cultural Experience 12 credit via the Nova Scotia/Quebec Exchange Program.

The principal will:

- identify the liaison teacher, in collaboration with the French Second Language Coordinator
 - the liaison teacher should be:
 - familiar with Quebec culture
 - fluent in French
 - knowledgeable about the exchange program
 - a good communicator
 - interested in promoting this exchange opportunity
 - able to mediate differences between the exchange students and/or their host families
- notify the French Second Language Coordinator of the selection of the liaison teacher (and any later changes)
- promote the program and its activities, and demonstrate the benefits of the exchange to school and staff
- inform school staff of the dates of the exchange and the student(s) who intend to participate
- arrange travel to and from school for the Quebec exchange student(s), in coordination with the liaison teacher and the French Second Language Coordinator

The school principal may also wish to participate in the selection process of the candidates for participation in the exchange program. Please note that this is not a requirement, and some school principals choose to leave this task to the liaison teacher and/or French Second Language Coordinator.

The liaison teacher will:

- confirm with the school principal and the French Second Language Coordinator that they will participate in the exchange program
- promote the program in grades 9, 10 and 11 French Second Language classrooms
- direct interested students to the online application form (<https://www.ednet.ns.ca/dpslf/fr/programme-dechange-deleves-entre-la-nouvelle-ecosse-et-le-quebec>)
- organize and conduct initial selection interviews
- inform the French Second Language Coordinator and the principal of the number of applicants in the school

- conduct home interviews of the potential participants and their families
- participate in the selection of successful applicants
- prepare and send complete student files to the Provincial Coordinator (see Program Guide for checklist of what needs to be included in student files)
- inform the participating students' teacher(s) of the rules of the exchange, with help from the principal
- inform students of the details of participation
- act as a liaison between exchange students, their host families, the Provincial Coordinator, and the French Second Language Coordinator
- ensure that students and parent(s)/guardian(s) understand that the exchange has an academic component
- ensure that students and parent(s)/guardian(s) are aware of behavioural expectations during the exchange (see Provincial Code of Conduct policy at <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/sites/default/files/pubdocs-pdf/provincialschoolcodeofconduct.pdf>)
- prepare Nova Scotia students for the exchange by discussing language learning in an immersion setting and cultural differences

Participating students will:

- participate in an initial information session
- complete and submit all forms and documentation within the required timeframe
- communicate with their exchange partner (after June 1st)

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will:

- participate in an initial information session
- review all program information/documentation
- complete and submit all forms within the required timeframe
- complete a Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sector Check and a Child Abuse Register check, and ensure all members of the household 18 years or older have done the same
- inform the Provincial Coordinator if their child can no longer participate in the program
- inform the Provincial Coordinator of any living arrangement, family dynamic, or other significant changes that may affect the exchange
- review behavioural expectations with their child
- prepare space for the visiting Quebec student – a separate bedroom is not essential, but a separate bed is required, as is the availability of a private space where the exchange student may be alone if desired
- communicate with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the Quebec student and inform them about household rules
- notify their insurance company that an additional person will be living in their home for a period of approximately two months

ACADEMIC TIMETABLE PLANNING

Planning the Nova Scotia student's academic program for the exchange year should begin shortly after the student and their family are notified of a successful pairing in May. The schedule for the following year should be completed by the end of June.

Course selection is the responsibility of the student, but should be carried out in consultation with parents, teachers, guidance counsellor, school administrators and the liaison teacher. The liaison teacher should review the student's course selection and ensure that the student's academic progress will not be negatively impacted and that they will be eligible to receive Nova Scotia credits for year-long and second semester courses. The student should have the understanding and support of the school staff.

When planning courses for the exchange year, an important consideration is the student's absence for two months. Nova Scotia students are required to take an English class at each high school grade level, so it is encouraged that participating students take their English course during the first semester of the exchange year.

Students are expected to develop written plans with teachers for the completion of Nova Scotia course requirements. Students are expected to follow the agreed upon plans for meeting the requirements for Nova Scotia courses. While in Quebec, the student will have a full schedule in their host school and will not be able to fully devote themselves to Nova Scotia coursework. Therefore, it is recommended that Nova Scotia students complete most of their Nova Scotia course requirements before and after the Quebec exchange period.

While students may have some time to work on their Nova Scotia courses during their time in Quebec, it would be unreasonable to expect students to spend their exchange completing schoolwork. The purpose of the exchange is to offer the participating students a rich cultural experience designed to broaden their horizons and enhance their knowledge of the French language. Students should not be overwhelmed with schoolwork while in Quebec or on their return to Nova Scotia in April.

DURING THE EXCHANGE PERIOD IN NOVA SCOTIA

The Provincial Coordinator will:

- coordinate communication among the various parties involved in the program
- coordinate the reception and departure of Quebec students in Nova Scotia
- conduct periodic evaluations of the exchange with the help of the liaison teachers and students
- provide mediation between parties involved in the program, if necessary

The French Second Language Coordinator will:

- act as the liaison between participating schools and the RCE
- act as the liaison between participating schools and the Provincial Coordinator
- communicate and address any issues that arise between participating schools, the RCE and the Provincial Coordinator

The principal will:

- welcome visiting Quebec Exchange coordinators and student(s)
- provide assistance with scheduling to participating Nova Scotia and Quebec students
- mediate at the school level
- waive any school-level registration fees for the Quebec exchange student(s)
- ensure that visiting Quebec student(s) receive their Nova Scotia progress report before they return home in November

The liaison teacher will:

- act as a liaison between exchange students, their host families, the Provincial Coordinator, and the French Second Language Coordinator
- welcome visiting Quebec student(s) on their first day and organize a tour of the school
- assist visiting Quebec student(s) with course selection
- maintain regular contact with the visiting Quebec student(s) and the Nova Scotia host student
- help prepare the Nova Scotia student(s) for their exchange period in Quebec
- assist Nova Scotia exchange student(s) in developing written plans with teachers for the completion of required coursework
- hold on-going discussions with the Nova Scotia participating student(s) to ensure their continued academic progress and ability to manage their course requirements before they leave for their exchange period in Quebec
- maintain regular contact with the school liaison in Quebec in order to facilitate the integration of both parties

Participating students will:

- be present for their Quebec exchange partner
- develop written plans with teachers for the completion of required coursework (with support from the liaison teacher)
- comply with all rules related to the program

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will:

- commit to ensuring the custody, supervision, and education of the visiting student, under conditions that are in the student's best interests and that respect the student's rights
- meet the Quebec exchange student at the Halifax Stanfield International Airport upon their arrival in Nova Scotia, and accompany them back to the airport on the day of their return flight
- provide a warm and welcoming environment
- treat the exchange student as part of the family and invite and encourage participation in family events
- provide three balanced meals a day and laundry facilities
- clearly explain house rules and expectations

- provide suitable cultural and recreational experiences (this may include travel within the province, local sight-seeing, etc. – costs should be covered by the host family. International travel is not permitted during the exchange periods)
- host the Quebec student in a completely Anglophone context and use English to communicate when engaging in family activities (i.e. television shows, conversations, etc.)
- devote time to spend with the Quebec student, while at the same time allowing the student a certain degree of autonomy
- ensure that teachers are aware that their own child will be absent during the two-month exchange period in Quebec
- ensure that their own child has adequate medical insurance coverage for the two-month exchange period in Quebec

DURING THE EXCHANGE PERIOD IN QUEBEC

The Provincial Coordinator will:

- make travel arrangements and accompany Nova Scotia students to Quebec
- communicate with Quebec host schools to coordinate the Nova Scotia students' schedules

The liaison teacher will:

- complete early and mid-term phone check-ins with Nova Scotia students while they are in Quebec
- remind school staff of the reason for the student's absence if needed

School Principal

- ensure students' attendance is appropriately recorded. Please note that Nova Scotia students are to be reported as present during their exchange period in Quebec. It is suggested that the Nova Scotia student is marked as ACT (school-based activity) or APP (school approved absence); both codes indicate that the student is not physically present in the building but do not count as an absence.

Participating students will:

- meet expectations of both their host family and their Nova Scotia family regarding appropriate behaviour and conduct, and comply with the Provincial Code of Conduct policy (found at <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/sites/default/files/pubdocs-pdf/provincialschoolcodeofconduct.pdf>)
- follow the rules and expectations of their host school, even if they are different than the rules of their school in Nova Scotia
- respect the house rules of their host family in Quebec and contribute to the completion of daily household responsibilities
- be respectful and polite at all times
- bring any required medication

- make every effort to communicate in French to the best of their ability and limit conversation in English
- accept the schedule offered by the host school recognizing that Quebec schools do not have a semester system and do not offer the same programs as Nova Scotia
- attend all classes and attempt to complete coursework assigned by the host school
- refrain from driving a motor vehicle during the exchange period in the province of Quebec as this is not permitted in accordance with program rules expectations
- abstain from using drugs and/or alcohol as this is strictly forbidden in accordance with program rules and expectations
- refrain from seeking employment as this is not permitted in accordance with program rules and expectations

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will:

- inform the liaison teacher of any major difficulty their child may encounter during the program
- ensure their child is provided with sufficient funds for personal expenses for their two-month stay in Quebec (approximately \$800 and access to a bank card are suggested)
- ensure their child has any required medication(s) and communicate with host family about child's medical needs, if needed
- ensure that their own child has adequate medical insurance coverage for the two-month exchange period in Quebec
- encourage their child to continue with the exchange, even though initial difficulties in adapting may be experienced
- inform the liaison teacher and the Provincial Coordinator (cultural.exchange@novascotia.ca) before any travel arrangements are made, if the Nova Scotia student must return home before the end of the exchange period
- not request a new host family once the exchange program has commenced - if a situation arises that cannot be resolved, the Provincial Coordinator will investigate the situation by consulting all parties involved

FOLLOWING THE EXCHANGE

Students who have returned from the exchange will likely go through a readjustment period and may require support.

The liaison teacher (and guidance counsellor) will:

- discuss any coursework that needs completion, and help to create a schedule (if necessary)
- invite them to discuss their Quebec experiences with other students
- coordinate a meeting with next year's applicants

The liaison teacher or the Provincial Coordinator will conduct a final assessment of the program once the student returns to Nova Scotia

The Provincial Coordinator will:

- conduct final evaluations of the exchange with the liaison teacher and students

Participating students will:

- ensure that all Nova Scotia course requirements are completed as per the plans they developed with their teachers

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The expectations, roles and responsibilities outlined above are part of the commitment that participating students and their families must make before participating in the Nova Scotia-Quebec Student Exchange Program.

It is essential that every member of the host family be supportive of the exchange program and committed to its success. It is important that each member of the family agree to participate in the exchange and actively support the new member of their family for the two-month period.

Students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) must respect religious and cultural differences and be willing to adapt to a different lifestyle. The Nova Scotia student must also respect the customs and beliefs of their Quebec host family.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development reserves the right to dismiss any student who fails to uphold any of the rules contained within the Provincial Code of Conduct policy. In the event that a student is dismissed from the program, the Nova Scotia parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for all additional expenses incurred, including return transportation costs.

INSURANCE

The parent(s)/guardian(s) of Nova Scotia students are responsible for obtaining any desired medical and liability insurance.

The Canada Health Act requires that the provinces and territories extend medically necessary hospital and physician coverage to their eligible residents during temporary absences from the province or territory (see: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hcs-sss/medi-assur/faq-eng.php#a8>). Sometimes there is a requirement for patients to pay 'up front' and seek reimbursement from their home provincial or territorial health insurance plan. The provision of additional benefits (e.g. prescription drugs, ground and air ambulance services) that provinces and territories provide are generally **not** portable outside one's home province/territory.

Most private health insurance plans provide coverage for ambulance services, prescription drugs and other additional benefits provided outside the home province/territory. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development recommends that parent(s)/guardian(s) obtain

supplemental medical insurance for their child for the duration of the exchange period in Quebec if they do not already have adequate coverage through a private plan.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should also notify their insurance company that an additional person will be living in their home for a period of two months.

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