

English as an Additional Language (EAL) & French as an Additional Language (FAL) Strategy Framework

*Prepared by Student Equity and Support Services
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development*

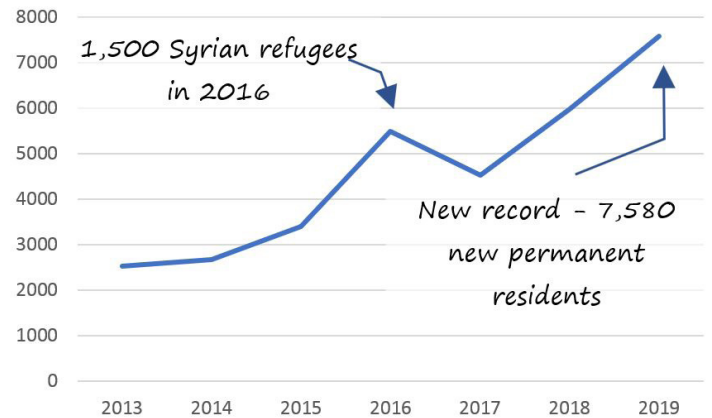
“As Nova Scotia welcomes more and more immigrants, we must do more to provide welcoming, culturally-responsive supports.”

—Recommendation 17, *Raise the Bar* (Glaze 2018)

Nova Scotia is welcoming record numbers of immigrants (Figure 1).

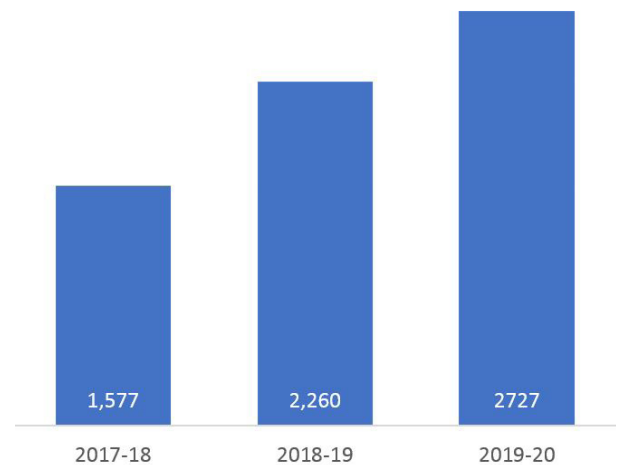
We Choose Now: A Playbook for Nova Scotians (One Nova Scotia Coalition 2015) outlined the benefits of increased landings including increasing the diversity of our population, helping to reverse our population decline lowering our mean age and building our economy.

Figure 1: Permanent Resident Landings in Nova Scotia



With increased immigration, there are increasing numbers of newcomer students arriving daily in our schools. In the 2019–20 school year there were over 6,900 newcomers. This includes permanent residents, temporary residents, refugee claimants, and Nova Scotia International Student Program fee-paying students and exchange students.

Figure 2: Students Requiring EAL Services in Nova Scotia



In the 2019–20 school year, there were over 2,700 students requiring EAL services (Figure 2) in Regional Centres for Education (RCEs). There were 37 allophone students in Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) who required FAL services. Allophone students are those students whose home language is neither French nor English.

Integration and retention of newcomers are crucial to ensuring that this increase will be sustained. Adequate settlement support and welcoming communities have been identified as key factors. Safe, welcoming, culturally and linguistically responsive schools are a key settlement support, and additional language supports are identified in the Commission on Inclusive Education report, *Students First* (Njie, Shea, and Williams 2018), as important components of Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) intervention.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development’s EAL and FAL strategy takes a proactive approach to address the well-being and achievement needs of additional language learners that incorporates their strengths and challenges.

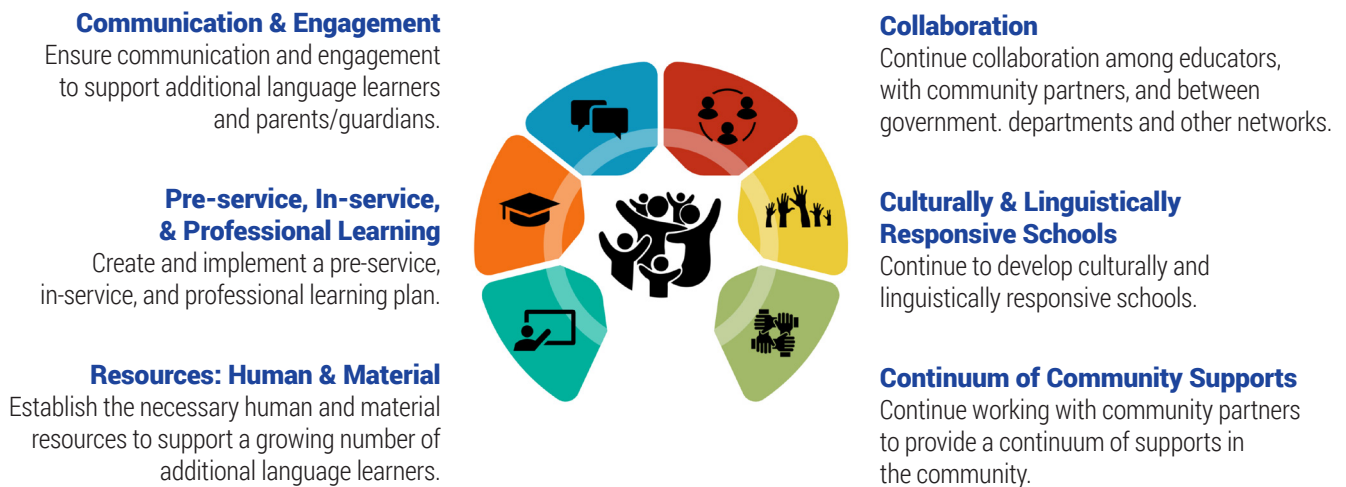
The strategy recognizes the linguistic and cultural diversity of learners:

- increased immigration, particularly in Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) but also in rural areas
- newcomers of refugee or war-affected origins
- newcomers with interrupted schooling

Responding to Recommendation 17 in *Raise the Bar*, an EAL and FAL Advisory Work Group was established in 2018 with representatives from RCEs and CSAP, the Nova Scotia International Student Program, YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth–YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs, Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS), Immigration Francophone, newcomer parents, Office of Immigration, and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD).

The first phase of the strategy was program review, including consultations that were conducted in 2018–19. In total, there were 25 focus groups, 3 interviews, and 213 responses to an online survey of educators. In April 2019, the EAL and FAL Advisory Working Group examined data gathered from the EAL and FAL consultations and identified six goals (Figure 3) with recommended strategies.

Figure 3: EAL and FAL Strategy Goals



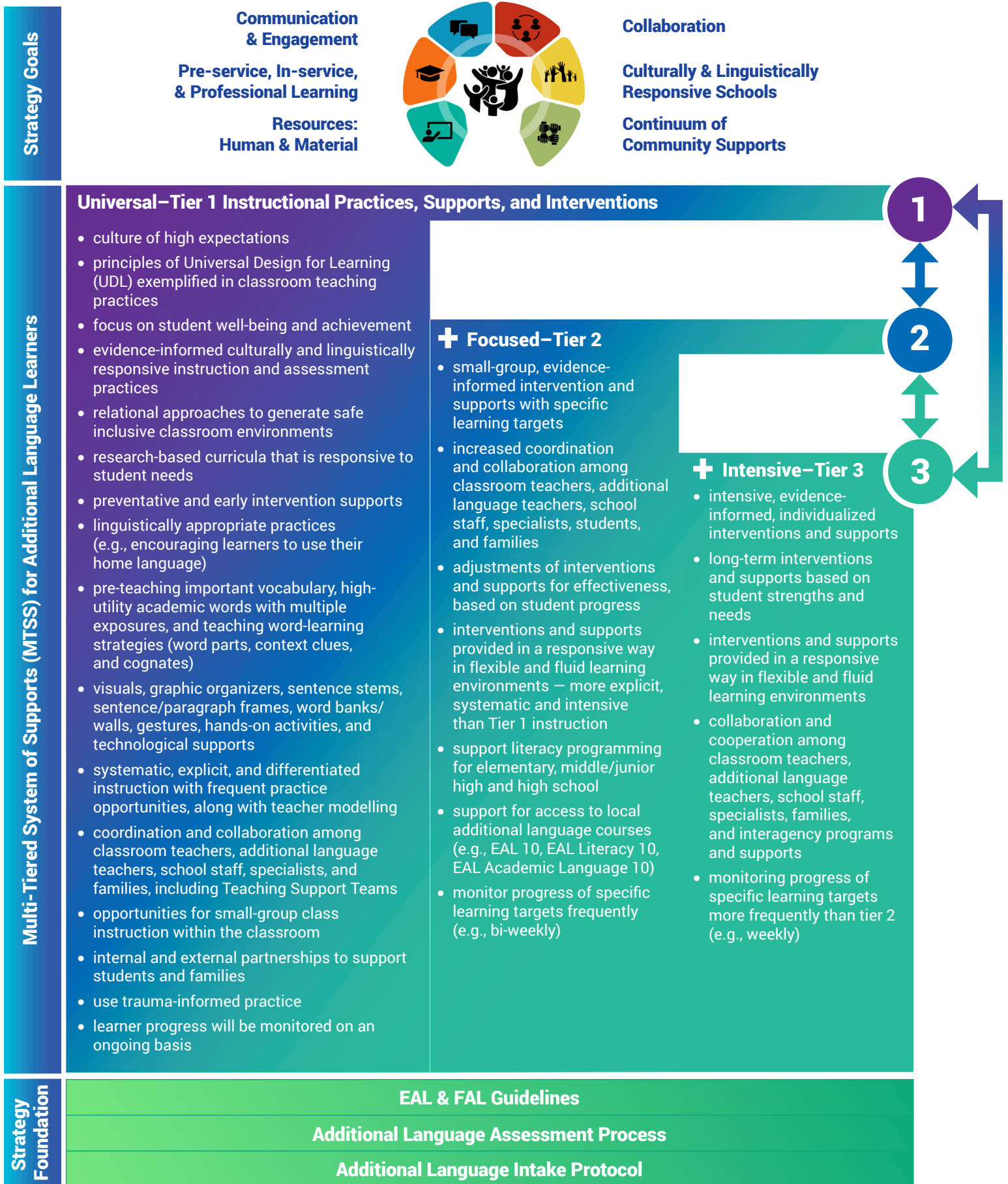
These goals, and the following three foundations of the EAL and FAL strategy, were integrated into an EAL and FAL Framework (Figure 5) that is aligned with the Inclusive Education Policy and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) (Haas and Brown 2019; Hoover, Baca, and Klingner 2016, 22–55; Richards-Tutor, Aceves, and Reese 2016; Flores et al. 2015; Cummins and Persad 2014; Sanford, Brown, and Turner 2012; Fien et al., 2011; Brown and Doolittle 2008).

Figure 4: Foundations of the EAL and FAL Strategy

1. **EAL and FAL Guidelines** to help RCEs and CSAP develop procedures that direct the delivery of programming and services for EAL and FAL learners respectively.
2. **Additional Language Assessment Process** to determine the language proficiency of students in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
3. **Additional Language Intake Protocol** to guide the reception and orientation process for additional language learners and their families and build upon current welcoming school practices for learners such as the La Classe d'accueil (Welcome Class) program.

These three foundations will also be addressed through the implementation of MTSS in an additional language context. MTSS is characterized by a continuum of integrated interventions and supports reflecting the need for learners to have fluid access to instruction at varying intensity levels.

Figure 5: EAL and FAL Framework



EAL and FAL Goals and Implementation Timelines

EAL and FAL strategy goals will be implemented over a three-year period:

- Year 1: 2020–21
- Year 2: 2021–22
- Year 3: 2022–23

An overarching goal of the EAL and FAL strategy is a mindset shift to asset-based thinking, with bilingualism or multilingualism seen as strengths for learning. Therefore, this shift in mindset would involve looking for strengths, skills, and abilities in every additional language learner, and focusing on what is “right” with the learner and not what is “wrong” (Chumak-Horbatsch 2019).

Goal 1: Resources

Establish the necessary human and material resources to support a growing number of additional language learners.

Human

Ongoing:

- Work with RCEs/CSAP to recruit the necessary human resources to support the increasing number of students requiring additional language services. Work with post-secondary institutions to ensure access to professional learning and training.
- Collaborate with RCEs/CSAP, SchoolsPlus, and immigrant-serving organizations to enhance services for newcomer students dealing with mental health and/or trauma issues.

Year 1:

- Establish clearly articulated roles and responsibilities for additional language teachers.

Year 2:

- Collaborate with RCEs/CSAP to create a volunteer strategy (e.g., retirees, university students, high school students) to build a network to support additional language learners within schools and communities.

Materials

Ongoing:

- Identify and provide class-level and personalized resources and materials for additional language learners (especially those with interrupted schooling, and little or no literacy in first language), such as: technological supports (e.g., Chromebooks, iPads, apps), and print and digital resources (e.g., home language materials, dual-language books, helpful YouTube links, information about closed captioning on devices).
- Identify and develop culturally diverse and culturally and linguistically responsive resources (print and digital) that align with the curriculum, in which learners can see themselves reflected.

Year 1:

- Develop processes in our Student Information System to effectively monitor and support additional language learners, including their language profile, assessment in listening/speaking/reading/writing, and instructional strategies for teachers. Target implementation in 2021–22.

Goal 2: Pre-service, In-service, and Professional Learning

Create and implement a pre-service, in-service, and professional learning plan.

Ongoing:

- Identify and plan professional learning for early childhood educators, administrators, teachers, and school staff, including culturally and linguistically responsive practices, trauma informed practice, language-rich classrooms, etc., at elementary, middle school/junior high, and high school. Develop an EAL/FAL Moodle site to support ongoing professional learning and sharing of high leverage teaching practices.

Year 1:

- Work with Department of Labour and Advanced Education and universities to promote and advance post-secondary learning opportunities for teachers and administrators.

Year 2:

- Review and develop next steps for additional language programs, services, and supports in pre-primary programs.

Goal 3: Communication and Engagement

Ensure communication and engagement to support additional language learners and parents/guardians.

Ongoing:

- Research and develop, in consultation with RCEs and CSAP, literacy development programs for primary to middle school/junior high for those students with no schooling or interrupted schooling. Work in consultation with RCEs and CSAP to strengthen locally developed additional language courses (e.g., EAL 10, EAL Literacy 10, EAL Academic Language 10). Consider creating additional literacy courses such as EAL Academic Language 11.
- Provide resources and information for classroom teachers on supports and strategies such as:
 - buddy system/peer support; pairing learners with a proficient English/French speaker who also speak the home language
 - use of home language in the development of English and French language
 - communication supports, such as vocabulary strategies (word walls, anchor charts, etc.), building on prior knowledge as an asset (using notes and visual supports, mini-lessons, adjusting pace of speaking, etc.)
 - assessment strategies for additional language learners
 - strategies for communication and engagement with newcomer parents/guardians, including earlier communication on how their children are doing
 - personalized technology and translation supports

Year 1:

- Provide information on the Nova Scotia school system for newcomer students and families (provincial guides in English and French and other languages).
- Use various communication mediums, including in multiple languages, to share information with additional language learners and their families about the benefits of extracurricular activities while developing an additional language.
- Create opportunities for students to share their knowledge and culture with peers and others in the school community in order to foster cultural appreciation and understanding in an inclusive and respectful learning environment.

Year 2:

- Develop provincial guidelines for interpretation and translation services.
- Examine report card, gradebook, and learner profile issues related to additional language learners.

Goal 4: Collaboration

Continue collaboration among educators, with community partners, between government departments and other networks.

Ongoing:

- Strengthen collaboration among classroom teachers, additional language teachers, resource teachers, literacy coaches, administrators, and Teaching Support Teams to ensure student success.
- Enhance partnerships within and outside of school (e.g., academic support, group activities, clubs), especially at high school.
- Encourage collaboration of key stakeholders in family-led support for learners in course selection.
- Form an interdepartmental committee, for example with, the Department of Health and Wellness, the Office of Immigration, and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, to collaborate on identifying gaps in services for newcomer children, youth, and families, or find an equivalent committee that could be tasked with this work.
- Continue to build supportive networks with partners, businesses, and community, such as with Local Immigration Partnerships, Nova Scotia Works, Inter-University Research Network, Nova Scotia Education Leadership Consortium (NSELC), post-secondary institutions, municipalities, and business councils.

Year 1:

- Schools enhance connections with community partners, such as YMCA, ISANS, and Immigration Francophone, etc., to support additional language learners. This might include
 - “endorsing” community partners of newcomer children and youth
 - inviting community partners to attend or host events and activities at school
 - inviting settlement staff to sit in on meetings and functions at school
 - organizing regular information and networking sessions to ensure that newcomer parents/guardians continue to play an active and informed role
 - working with SchoolsPlus (including representatives from immigrant-serving organizations) to strengthen Wraparound approaches/process for at-risk youth and children and to prevent early school-leavers

Goal 5: Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Schools

Continue to develop culturally and linguistically responsive schools.

Ongoing:

- Use teaching strategies that create language-rich classrooms and build on home languages to “honour and respect each students’ cultural and linguistic identities and knowledge systems” per the Guiding Principles of the *Inclusive Education Policy* and Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy.
- Provide students with the opportunities to build authentic relationships with peers and others in the school community that support language development, socialization, and a sense of belonging.
- Reach out to parents/guardians and increase participation in school activities by providing EAL/FAL supports.
- Offer professional learning that promotes strategies and activities that validate and affirm diverse cultures in the classroom and students’ ways of knowing and being.
- Support early childhood educators to develop and utilize strategies outlined in *Capable, Confident, and Curious: Nova Scotia’s Early Learning Curriculum Framework* (Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2018) to support children to develop cultural and linguistic awareness.
- Continue to embed culture in the curriculum, including culture-sharing and enrichment activities.

Goal 6: Continuum of Community Supports

Continue working with community partners to support a continuum of supports in the community.

Ongoing:

- Work with community partners, hold additional out-of-class and tutorial opportunities after school hours, especially in high school.

Year 3:

- Explore mentoring options for work skills and Recognition of Prior Learning Assessment of previous work experience for newcomer youth.

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