



## Marc G. Serré

Member of Parliament / Député

Nickel Belt

### Press Release

For immediate release

May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023

#### **Governments of Canada and Ontario announce support for École de la Rivière des-Français**

**NOELVILLE** - The development of minority-language education in Canada depends on communities being able to access the appropriate facilities. This is why funding infrastructure for the economic, cultural and community development of Francophone minority schools is essential to their vitality.

Today, Marc G. Serré, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Official Languages and Member of Parliament (Nickel Belt), announced joint funding of more than \$1.6 million for an important project for the Franco-Ontarian community and École de la Rivière-des-Français. He made this announcement on behalf of the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

The project aims to create the French River Youth, Economic and Community Development Centre. In concrete terms, the investment will provide the Francophone community of Noelville with:

- a place to host shows and celebrations in French;
- a place to house the trades and technologies workshops of the French River Cultural Industries Council;
- a fully renovated greenhouse to carry out greenhouse production projects.

The Government of Canada is providing \$829,000 over two years for this project, while the Government of Ontario is investing \$856,500 over three years.

The project is funded under the Canada–Ontario Agreement for Minority-Language Education and Second-Language Instruction for the period from 2019–20 to 2022–23.

### Quotes

“Thanks to the determination of our government and the energy and leadership of institutions such as École de la Rivière-des-Français, we are able to find constructive solutions and create a fulfilling living environment for minority communities.”

**—The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency**

“Thanks to the funding announced today, the community will now enjoy a community centre that brings together all the services it needs. I am proud to announce this important investment for the redevelopment of certain spaces at École de la Rivière-des-Français.”

**—Marc G. Serré, Member of Parliament for Nickel Belt and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Official Languages**

“I am proud to know that Noëlville community will benefit from this investment that will deliver a centre, focused on youth, community, and economic development. The new community centre will



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provide Francophone students access to a modern space where they can learn and celebrate the Francophone culture for generations to come.”

— **Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education for Ontario**

“We are thrilled and appreciative that the government will be supporting this worthy project. This program will foster innovation and entrepreneurship among our youth, and we hope this will go a long way in addressing the problem of rural exodus. I look forward to working collaboratively with all our community partners to ensure the success of the program.”

— **Gisèle Pageau, Mayor, French River**

“We are delighted to receive this funding, which will make it possible to revitalize our facilities, improve accessibility and create welcoming spaces while supporting the region’s social and economic development. Over the years, École secondaire de la Rivière-des-Français has become not only a renowned educational institution, but also an essential gathering place within this community. This investment will allow us to come together and collaborate better with our partners to build a healthy, strong and prosperous community.”

— **Anne-Marie Gélinault, Chair, Conseil scolaire du Grand Nord**

### Quick Facts

- École de la Rivière-des-Français, located in Noelville, hosts approximately 100 students. It is the only French-language high school in an area with more than 1,150 Francophones.
- Budget 2021 proposes to provide funding of \$81.8 million to Canadian Heritage over a two-year period, beginning in 2021–22, to support the construction, renovation and development of educational and community spaces serving official language minority communities.
- The Government of Canada is providing this funding through the Official Languages Support Programs, whose overall objective is to enhance the vitality of English- and French-speaking minority communities and promote English and French in Canadian society.
- On March 1, 2022, the Government of Canada introduced an enhanced bill for substantive equality among Canada’s official languages to adapt the *Official Languages Act* to a changing society. Among other objectives, this bill aims to respond to the decline of French in the country; clarify and strengthen the part of the *Official Languages Act* concerning the promotion of official languages; and support official-language minority communities.

### Associated Links

[An Act for the Substantive Equality of Canada's Official Languages](#)

[2022 Cross-Canada Official Languages Consultations](#)

[Budget 2021](#)



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