

These students who “escape” from the francophone schools of the South
(Translated using Google Translate)

Description

The recommendations of a committee of Parliament could help francophone schools southern New Brunswick expand their ranks.

The Standing Committee on Official Languages of the House of Commons tabled its report on the enumeration of rights holders in education this week in Ottawa.

Members of the three political parties that are members of the Committee are of the opinion that Statistics Canada does not do enough to identify those who are guaranteed the right to have their children educated in the language of the minority.

They are asking the federal agency to modify its questionnaire in order to resolve this issue in time for the 2021 census.

Better data on the presence of rights holders could boost the number of enrollments in French-language schools, especially in regions with an Anglophone majority, such as Miramichi, Fredericton and Saint-Jean.

According to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, there are three types of rights holders: parents whose first language learned and spoken is the language of the minority, parents who received their primary education in the language of the minority and Parents whose children have already received or are receiving instruction in the language of the minority.

However, the Census questionnaire from Statistics Canada only counts the first category of beneficiaries.

Time is of the essence, according to René Arseneault, because Statistics Canada has to plan it well in advance and carry out a variety of studies and tests before adding one or two new questions to its questionnaire.

"Since a census is only done every four years, we do not want to lose the opportunity of 2021."

The federal government has a constitutional obligation to ensure that the interests of Francophones in minority communities are promoted, says Mr. Arseneault.

The Official Languages Committee is awaiting the official response of Canadian Health Minister Mélanie Joly and the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada, Navdeep Singh, to their report.

The offices of the two ministers did not respond to our request for comments.

Statistics Canada merely indicated that the federal government should respond to the committee's recommendations by mid-September.



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