

Canada's Settlement Language Program

TESL Ontario 2020 Virtual Conference
Panel Discussion - Forging Ahead in an Era of Change
November 6, 2020



Settlement services support newcomer success

- IRCC funds a **full array of settlement programming** engaging community organizations and **civil society** to deliver services and create welcoming communities
- Programming **builds human and social capital** of immigrants and refugees to help them succeed along their integration journey
- **Provinces, territories, municipalities, employers, civil society, and others** provide employment, educational, health and social services, and complementary settlement services

Settlement services

- ✓ Pre-arrival services
- ✓ Needs/assets assessment and Information and Orientation
- ✓ **Language Training**
- ✓ Employment-related services
- ✓ **Community Connections**
- ✓ Indirect and Support Services

- Formal language training
- Employment-related language training
- Language training adapted to the needs of newcomers settling in Francophone minority communities
- Informal language learning (e.g. conversation circles)

Settlement language priorities are evolving and responsive to needs

- Direct service delivery to newcomers:
 - Flexible, accessible training up to Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB)/Niveaux level 4 to help newcomers acquire the basic language skills they need to settle in Canada
 - Opportunities to improve **employability** with training up to CLB/NCLC level 8 focused on Canadian workplace language, culture, and practices
 - Expansion of **workplace-based language training** so newcomers can improve communication skills in line with employers' needs while fostering welcoming and diverse workplaces
- Indirect delivery projects to improve infrastructure and national consistency:
 - Strengthen sector capacity through professional development in critical areas
 - Provide training and tools to support timely and appropriate assessments
 - Develop tools, content and resources support program delivery
- Service Delivery Improvement projects to test innovative delivery approaches
- Through the Official Languages Action Plan 2018-2023:
 - Language training that supports the Francophone integration pathway

Learning from measures to address COVID-19 restrictions

Reaction

- Language assessment centres closed, in-person services suspended
- Language training service providers closed, in-person services suspended
- Where possible, shift to remote delivery e.g. online, phone, hybrid



Response

- Immediate, increased, and focused engagement with sector stakeholders, service providers, and partners
- Increased flexibility (within contribution agreements) to support shift to alternative modes of service delivery,
- Reduced administrative burden, delayed reporting deadlines



Interim measures

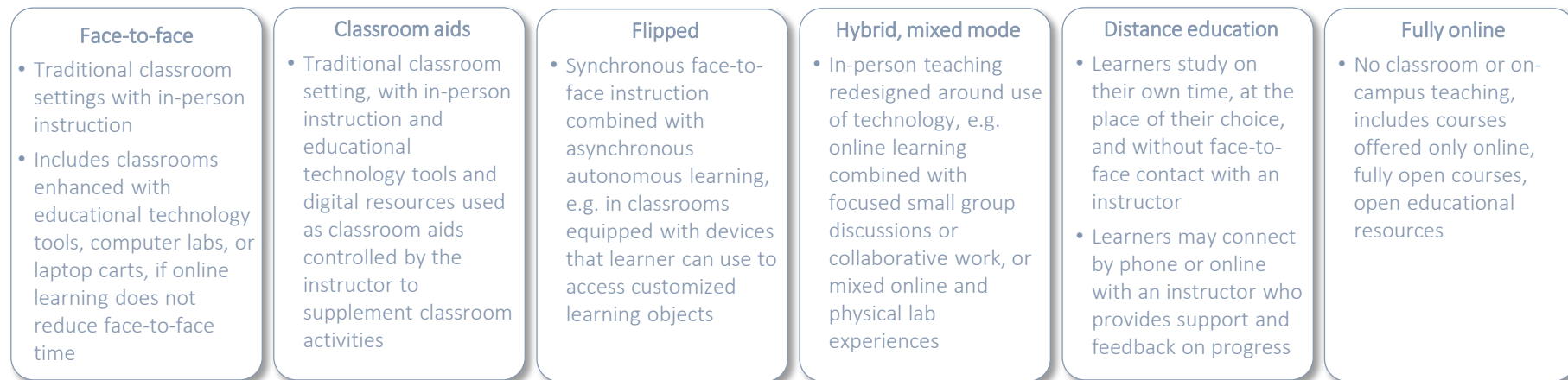
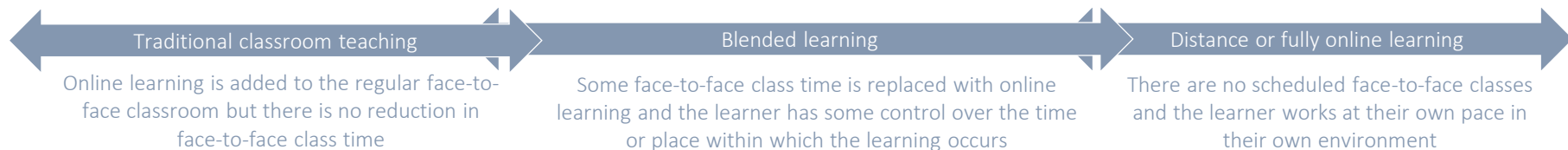
- Extended validity of previous language skills assessment results from one year to two years
- Increased distance learning seats
- Expanded supports for teacher training and mentoring, professional development
- Implemented adapted protocols for fully online assessments:
 - (1) remote CLBPT assessment without proctor
 - (2) informal CLBA/online self-assessment



Recovery

- Monitor, learn, and adapt (as needed)

Key components of the integrated national system

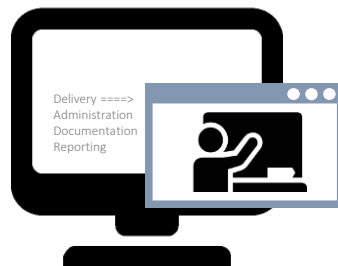


1. Learning management system (Avenue)

- Online open-source national system to support all modes of delivery

2. National curriculum guidelines

- To guide content development



3. Community of practice for second language professionals (Tutela)

- National online repository of CLB and NCLC-based resources
- Community for English and French as second language professionals across Canada



A comprehensive program evaluation has been undertaken

- An evaluation of settlement program language training has been completed, with a very comprehensive methodology and using multiple lines of evidence, e.g.
 - Document review
 - Interviews with key informants
 - Panel of independent experts
 - Survey of language learning clients and non-clients
 - Survey of language training instructors
 - Case studies
 - Administrative data
 - Milestones test to objectively examine language progression
- Builds on and responds to the 2017 Evaluation of the Settlement Program, which
 - (1) found that language training works in different ways, to varying degrees, for different populations, and
 - (2) recommended an in-depth evaluation and thorough analysis, to allow the Department to further improve language training effectiveness
- Results anticipated in late Fall 2020

Partnerships remain critical for success

- Shared responsibility with provinces and territories
 - Key bilateral agreements with provinces and territories facilitate coordination
 - Working groups facilitate multilateral efforts
 - Bilateral work with provinces, e.g. service mapping/co-planning, improving program outcomes and efficiency (e.g. by streamlining referrals, co-funding where possible) with Ontario
- Strong partnerships with settlement service providers across the country
 - High quality services for newcomers
 - Successful integration involves a “whole of society” approach that connects Canadians and newcomers
- Stakeholder engagement
 - Critical to informing program efficiency issues, challenges, lessons learned and best practices



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