



The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers
L'Association canadienne des professeurs de langues secondes
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NEWS RELEASE

Sonya LeGresley Recognized with National Language Teacher Association Award for an Intensive Approach to English in the Acadian Peninsula

Ottawa, June 7, 2010 – The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) granted this year's H.H. Stern award to Ms. Sonya LeGresley, an active member and Consultant in School District 9 in Tracadie-Sheila, New Brunswick.

LeGresley is a passionate educator who is determined to improve the language competencies of the students in her French majority school district. As Canada's only officially bilingual province, New Brunswick has set the goal of 70% of its high school graduates being able to communicate orally in their second official language at the intermediate level or above.

Faced with meeting this challenge, LeGresley consulted with experts to review research related to intensive language learning and instruction, in Intensive English programs in Quebec, and Intensive French programs then being piloted in New Brunswick. Thereafter, they set forth to create a pilot project in School District 9 of the Acadian Peninsula in the 2006-07 school year.

Special considerations included that Francophones in New Brunswick are proud of their French identity, language, and culture and strive to maintain its vitality and strength. Therefore, the goal of the project was to increase English language proficiency among students without proposing an English immersion program.

Two key principals and two interested teachers, from La Ruche and L'Escale des Jeunes schools worked tirelessly with LeGresley to deliver a program based on local needs and goals.

Student motivation to learn their official second language, increased language competence, and local support for the program were the main elements of success of the initial pilot year. The project has expanded yearly throughout the Acadian Peninsula and has grown to 19 intensive classes for 2010-11.

"It's an honour for me personally, but also especially for all of the teachers who have taken risks and have embarked on this adventure. I share this award with Intensive English teachers in School District 9 of the Acadian Peninsula," said Ms. LeGresley.

The province has recently launched an optional pilot program in other Francophone districts where provincial results indicate a need for enhanced second language programming in New Brunswick's francophone school districts.

"As an impassioned administrator responsible for advancing bilingualism, it is pedagogical leaders such as Sonya (LeGresley) that truly move us forward. She has always displayed strong professional commitment," said Caroline Turnbull, Learning Specialist, New Brunswick Department of Education.

"I would like to personally congratulate Sonya (LeGresley) and her team of Intensive English teachers who have pioneered this new approach in Francophone New Brunswick and who have committed to providing a high quality language program to their students in the Acadian Peninsula," said CASLT President, Valerie Pike.

CASLT's H.H. Stern Award is granted annually to support innovative classroom practices in second language teaching. It is named in memory of Dr. H.H. (David) Stern in recognition of his contribution to second language instruction in Canada. Dr. H.H. Stern was a highly respected educator and the visionary initiator of the National Core French Study.

Established in 1970, the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) increases awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the importance of second language learning and teaching throughout Canada and promotes the advancement of professional excellence among language educators. See www.caslt.org for more information.

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