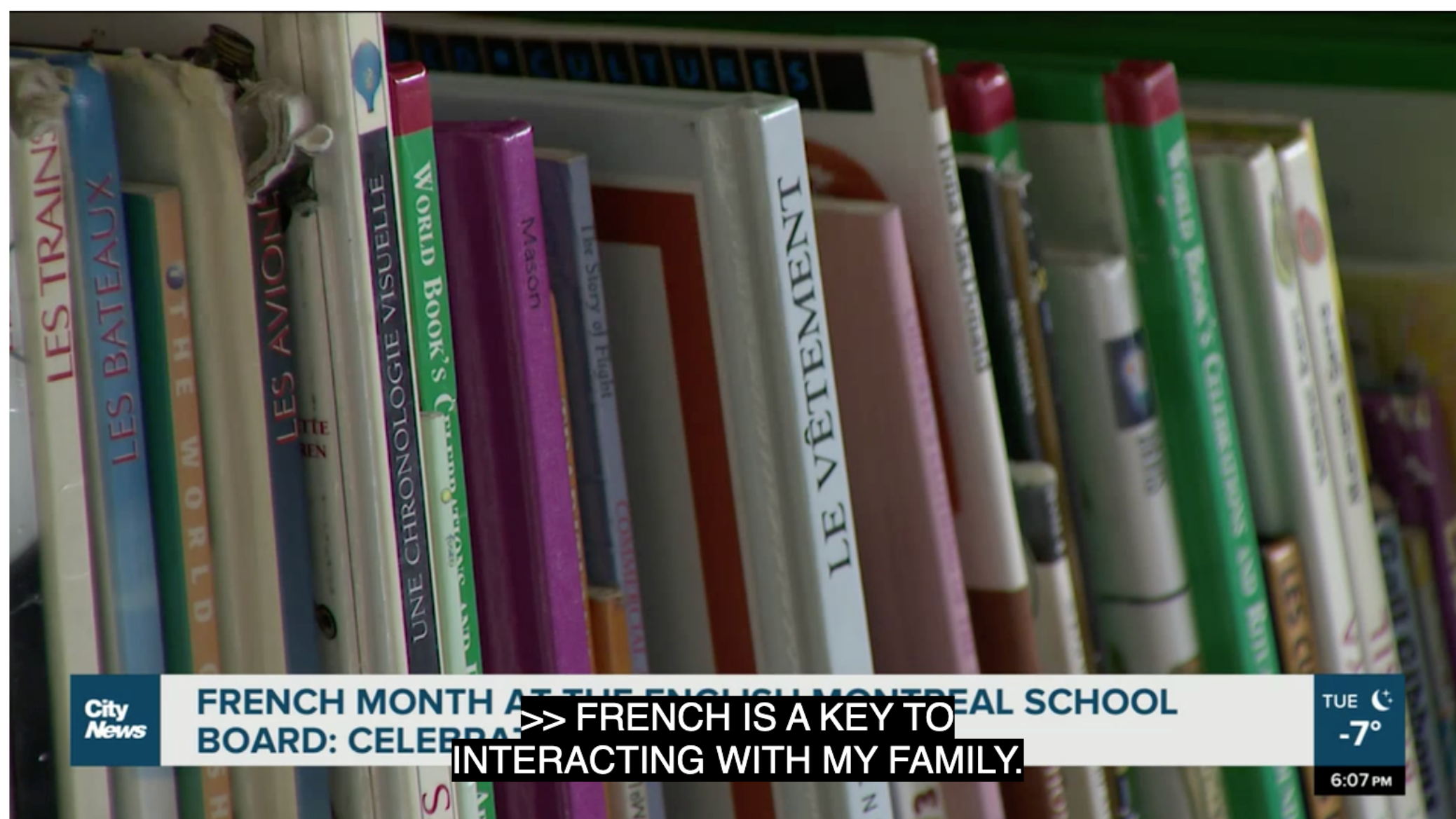




English Montreal School Board highlights the importance of bilingualism ahead of registration week



"It's important," says Jasmine Bourgeois, student at Nesbitt Elementary School on the importance of the French language. It's "French Month" at the English Montreal School Board, where celebrating bilingualism is top of mind. Pamela Pagano reports.

By CityNews Staff

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The English Montreal School Board (EMSB) is celebrating bilingualism as elementary schools get ready for the 2023-24 registration week.

Over the course of January, the EMSB will highlight “the excellent quality of French instruction available in its elementary and secondary schools” and showcase how being bilingual has benefits, such as cognitive, cultural, socioeconomic and the ability to participate fully in Canadian society.

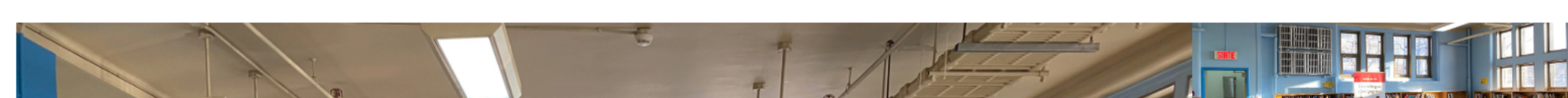
“It’s not just the English Montreal School Board. That’s our name, that’s our school board. But we promote French. We promote French in our day-to-day activities,” said Agostino Cannavino, vice-chair of the English Montreal School Board.

“We are very proud of the quality of French instruction our students receive,” said EMSB Chair Joe Ortona. “Bilingualism is a passport to the world. And if we want our kids to remain in the province of Quebec, we must provide them with the tools necessary to pursue careers here.”

Children must be eligible to attend an English school. According to the province, those who are eligible must fall within one of the three following criteria:

- Children who are residing in Québec permanently and who qualify for a certificate of eligibility for instruction in English;
- Children who are residing in Québec permanently and who are entitled to receive instruction in English under a special authorization;
- Children who are living in Québec temporarily and who qualify for a temporary authorization to receive instruction in English.

For a more detailed breakdown of eligible criteria [visit the province’s website](#).



Thousands of students in Quebec are eligible as they have at least one parent who has had the majority of their education done in English.

“By attending an EMSB French immersion program, your child will graduate bilingual,” says Mr. Ortona.

CityNews spoke with some students about English schools.

Rose Germain-Aubrey, a grade 6 student at Nesbitt Elementary School said, “I think at first speaking French was important to me because it helped me interact with my family more because my family comes from France.”

Geneva Ciampanelli, a grade 6 student at Nesbitt Elementary School said, “My favourite thing in French has to be lecture and answering the questions after.”

Jasmine Bourgeois, a grade 6 student at Nesbitt Elementary School adding, “I think it’s important too, because you can communicate and socialize with other people.”

The EMSB says three models of French are offered in its schools: Core, bilingual and immersion.

“Although our secondary schools do not offer similar programs, an extensive analysis of the different models of French instruction at the secondary level reveals that our schools provide increased time for French instruction, above the requirements of the ministry regulations,” said Mr. Ortona.

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