

## **FRENCH IMMERSION**

### **Background**

The district recognizes that French Immersion programming benefits the cognitive and social development of students and the purpose of this procedure is to ensure that French Immersion programs in the school district operate according to the Ministry of Education guidelines and program goals.

### **Procedures**

1. French Immersion is a district program that will operate according to Ministry of Education guidelines and is designed to meet the following program goals:
  - 1.1 Develop in students the ability to communicate effectively in both languages, so that they may take advantage of educational, vocational, and cultural opportunities.
  - 1.2 Develop in students an appreciation and understanding of the values and customs of Francophone people, particularly in French Canada.
  - 1.3 Develop in students a favourable attitude towards the French language and Francophone people.
2. French Immersion is offered as an equal opportunity program; there is no selection criteria or special fees for registration.
3. Students will be admitted to the French Immersion program via Early French Immersion in kindergarten (or grade 1 in certain circumstances) and Late French Immersion in grade 6.
4. Students completing French Immersion to grade 12 will receive a Bilingual Dogwood Certificate upon graduation.
5. Program size will be governed by space and staff availability.
6. Should enrolment increase or decline significantly, or if it becomes apparent that the French Immersion program is in need of strengthening and enhancement, options such as the amalgamation of French Immersion programs or relocation to another school site will be considered.
  - 6.1 Such discussions are to include parents.
  - 6.2 The district will give at least one year's notice to parents of any changes contemplated.
7. In accordance with operational procedure 380 (Student Transportation), in district French Immersion students shall be eligible for bus transportation if the bus stop is within 4.0 km of the student's residence or shall have the option of receiving transportation assistance.
8. **Early French Immersion**
  - 8.1 Early French Immersion will be offered as a district program of choice at two schools. While parents are able to indicate a preference of which school they would like their child

to attend, enrollment is dependent on the availability of space and other staffing considerations.

8.2 Ideally, students enter in kindergarten, but they may enter in grade 1 up to September 30 of that student's grade 1 year, if space is available and placement is appropriate, and (if applicable) in accordance to an existing wait list.

8.2.1 School staff, in consultation with parents who choose to register their child in Early French Immersion at the grade 1 level, should discuss the following: reasons why the child did not begin Early French Immersion in kindergarten; the child's readiness to enter French Immersion in grade 1; and establish a trial period and set a date to review the child's progress in their transition within the first six weeks.

8.3 Registration for Early French Immersion begins the first week of February for the following school year. Completed registration forms (SD72 Form 301-3 District French Immersion Kindergarten Registration) are submitted to the nearest French Immersion elementary school.

8.4 Parents or legal guardians will be informed by the last week in March as to which French Immersion school their child has been assigned to and will have one week following notification to accept the school assignment or to register their child in the English program at their neighbourhood catchment elementary school.

8.5 Siblings currently in attendance and residential addresses will be taken into consideration when making school assignments.

8.6 From kindergarten to grade 3, all subjects are taught in French. In grade 4, students receive one hour of English language arts per day. This pattern of 80 percent French, 20 percent English continues in Grades 5 and 6. In Grades 7 to 9, four to six courses in French and Grade 12, one course in French.

8.7 Curriculum parallels the English program and students are expected to develop the same level of competence in academic, social and physical skills.

## 9. **Late French Immersion**

9.1 Late French Immersion will be offered as a district program of choice at one school and is available to students entering grade 6.

9.2 The program accepts a maximum of 28 students, in accordance with class size requirements, with priority going to siblings of existing French Immersion students. After 28 registrations have been received others will be placed on a waitlist.

9.3 Registration for Late French Immersion for the next school year begins following a parent information session in mid-February. Completed registration forms (SD72 Form 201-1 District Late French Immersion Registration) are submitted to the school board office.

9.4 Parents or legal guardians will be informed as to whether they have been accepted into the Late French Immersion program or are placed on the waitlist.

9.5 The school board office will notify all regular English program schools as to the status of French Immersion applicants following the processing of applications.

- 9.6 In grade 6, all subjects are taught in French. In grade 7 to 9, students are integrated with the Early French Immersion students and receive half of their instruction in French and half in English.
- 9.7 Curriculum parallels the English program and students are expected to develop the same level of competence in academic, social and physical skills.

## 10. **French Immersion Exit Protocols (Elementary)**

Moving a student from one program to another requires careful attention as the transition can sometimes be a challenge. For that reason, the following steps are strongly recommended when considering moving a student from the French Immersion program to another program in the district. What's best for the student will be at the centre of any decision made.

- 10.1 A student or parent may request to move out of the French Immersion program by providing the rationale (and supporting evidence, if available and appropriate) in writing to the school administrator.
- 10.2 The school administrator will take the request to the school-based team, which if the rationale is based on the child's academic, social, or emotional needs, will engage in a dialogue around:
- What evidence do we have to support the rationale?
  - What other information do we need to obtain?
  - What supports are available to the child currently?
  - What other supports or strategies for intervention can we put into place?
  - The school-based team will make a draft intervention plan and proceed with section 11.3 of this procedure.
  - If the rationale is otherwise, go to section 10.5 of this procedure.
- 10.3 A draft intervention plan will be put together by the school-based team and shared with the student, parent, and teacher. The draft intervention plan will be adjusted, as necessary, based on their feedback and a follow-up meeting date will be set to discuss progress made on the intervention plan.
- 10.4 Once finalized, the school will carry out the intervention plan, closely monitor progress, communicate progress with the parents/legal guardians along the way, and hold follow-up meetings and make plan adjustments as necessary. If no progress is made, proceed with section 10.5 of this procedure.
- 10.5 Should the parent make a final decision to move a child from the French Immersion program, the school will work cooperatively to develop a transition plan which will consider the following factors:
- Time of year; moving a student two weeks before Winter Break or during the last week of school, for example, is not a good idea. Natural breaks are often most suitable with the optimal time being the beginning of a new school year.

- If a child has been receiving learning assistance at the current French Immersion school, consideration will be spent on continuing that learning assistance with a focus on English before the transition actually occurs.
- When leaving the French Immersion program, the student must apply to the neighbourhood catchment school. Approval will be based on availability of space and facilities, or program and staffing resources appropriate for that applicant.
- A conversation between the sending and receiving school will take place before the move to ensure that the school is ready for the student; supports are in place, etc.
- Both the student and parent(s) complete an exit survey.

Reference: Section 8.2, 17, 20, 22, 65, 75, 85 School Act  
School Regulation 265/89  
Education Program Guide M333/99  
Section 23 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom

Related Forms: [SD72 301-3 District French Immersion Kindergarten Registration](#)  
[SD72 201-1 District Late French Immersion Registration](#)