

FRENCH IMMERSION

Background

The Division believes that in a bilingual and multi-cultural society it is important for students to have access to courses that will help them acquire and maintain proficiency in a second language. Since French is one of Canada's two official languages, the Division believes that, whenever feasible, opportunities will be provided for students in the Division to learn French by making available French Immersion programs and related services. In learning a second language, students gain a new awareness and understanding of another culture, gain skills which strengthen their processes of communication in a variety of situations relating to academic, work or leisure activities, and extend the scope of their human relationships. They are provided with learning experiences that lead to an appreciation and understanding of local, national and international differences.

Definitions

French Immersion Program: a program in which French is used as the language of instruction in accordance with sections 3 and 17 of the Education Act.

Early French Immersion Program: a program that begins at the kindergarten and/or grade one level.

Late French Immersion Program: a program that begins in Grade 6 with full integration into the Early French Immersion program stream by Grade 9.

Procedures

1. A French Immersion program shall be provided at École Sifton School, École Charlie Killam School, and École Camrose Composite High School.
2. The French Immersion program shall be open to students throughout the Division. Transportation to the French Immersion program shall be provided for students in the Camrose City and Sifton catchment areas, in accordance with Board Policy 17.
3. The Alberta Program of Studies shall be used in the delivery of French Immersion programming.
4. Parents/guardians are to be provided with information on the French Immersion program and the necessary counseling to ensure that they, as far as possible, make the best decision about the choice of program for the student.
5. French Immersion students are eligible for participation in programs for children with diverse learning needs.
6. Active involvement, support and input of parents/guardians may be facilitated through a French Immersion Parents Organization. The schools may involve parent groups and individuals when organizing activities and special projects to promote and enhance the attainment of linguistic and cultural objectives, and to inform the community about the program.

7. The Early French Immersion program is accessible as an entry point to any child of age to enter kindergarten or grade 1 in the Division.
8. The Late French Immersion program is accessible to students entering Grade 6.
9. Registration of students from outside the Division will depend on student enrolment.
10. The kindergarten (Maternelle) program will be available to all children wishing to enrol. Children will be admitted with or without any previous French language education experience throughout the school year. However, it is recommended that, where possible, parents/guardians make decisions about placing the child in the kindergarten French Immersion program prior to September 30 in any given school year.
11. The grade one program is available to all children wishing to enrol. Children will be admitted with or without any previous French language education experience. Children wishing to enrol after September 30 in any given school year will be considered a late admission and must meet the criteria outlined below.
12. Late Admissions (Grades 1-6) -- Children will be admitted to the French Immersion program during the course of the year if:
 - 12.1 The child is transferring from another comparable program.
 - 12.2 The child is able to demonstrate sufficient strength in the French language on the basis of the results of a skills appraisal.
13. Amount of French Instruction
 - 13.1 In kindergarten to grade two, students shall receive from 90% to 100% of their instruction in French. No English Language Arts will be taught in kindergarten, grade one and grade two.
 - 13.2 English Language Arts will be introduced in grade three, and from that point to the end of grade six, students shall receive a minimum of 75% of their instruction in French.
 - 13.3 Junior high students shall receive a minimum of 50% of their instruction in French.
 - 13.4 Senior high students shall receive:
 - Grade 10: a minimum of 50% of their instruction in French;
 - Grade 11: a minimum of 30% of their instruction in French;
 - Grade 12: a minimum of 25% of their instruction in French.
14. Students who complete all course offerings available at the high school level will receive recognition from the Division through the presentation of a French Immersion Certificate of Completion.
15. Core and required courses will be delivered via direct instruction.
16. School Administrator(s) will support and encourage students to participate in activities inside and outside of the school that will provide enrichment to the French Immersion program, including opportunities for authentic experiences to converse in French.
17. Students will be encouraged to pursue supplementary courses in French that may be offered through different delivery formats (ie. Online, etc).

Reference: Section 17, 19 Education Act
 Section 23, Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom
 Guide to Education ECS to Grade 12
 Handbook for French Immersion Administrators

Amended: January 2023