

## FRENCH IMMERSION

### Background

The district recognizes that French Immersion programming provides the opportunity for non-francophone students to become multilingual with French as an additional language. Research shows that the most effective way to learn an additional language well enough to function in that language is through an immersion program. The purpose of this operational procedure is to ensure that the French Immersion program in the school district operates according to the Ministry of Education and Child Care guidelines.

### Procedures

1. French Immersion is a district program that operates according to Ministry of Education and Child Care guidelines. It is designed to meet the following program goals:
  - 1.1 Participate easily in conversation in French.
  - 1.2 Take post-secondary courses with French as the language of instruction.
  - 1.3 Accept employment with French as the language of the workplace.
2. French Immersion is offered as an equitable 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) or Late French Immersion in grade 6 (or grade 7 in exceptional circumstances).
4. Students completing French Immersion to grade 12 will graduate with a Diplôme de fin d'études secondaire en Colombie-Britannique, also known as a Double Dogwood.
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 needs 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/guardians.
  - 6.2 The district will give at least one year's notice to parents/guardians of any changes contemplated.
7. In accordance with operational procedure 380 (Student Transportation), French Immersion students shall ride School District 72 buses if the bus stop is within 4.0 km of the student's residence or shall have the option of receiving transportation assistance in accordance with operational procedure 382 (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/guardians can 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 Typically, students enter in kindergarten, however 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 any existing wait list.
- 8.2.1 School staff, in consultation with parents/guardians who choose to register their child in Early French Immersion at the grade 1 level, should discuss the child's readiness to enter French Immersion in grade 1, 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 Monday in the first week of February for the following school year. Registration is done online, following the district's kindergarten registration process.
- 8.4 Parents/guardians will be informed the week before spring break 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 2, all subjects are taught in French with English used as a layer of support. In grade 3, students are introduced to foundational English literacy skills through phonics instruction. In grade 4, students receive one hour of English language arts per day. This pattern of 80 percent French, 20 percent English continues to grade 8. In secondary school, French courses are gradually reduced: four in grade 9, three in grade 10, two in grade 11, and one in grade 12.
- 8.7 The French Immersion curriculum parallels the English program, and students are expected to develop the same level of proficiency in curricular and core competencies.

## 9. **Late French Immersion**

- 9.1 Late French Immersion is a two-year program and will be offered as a district program of choice at one school and is available to students entering grade 6 and continuing into grade 7.
- 9.2 Typically, students enter in grade 6, however they may enter in grade 7 up to September 30 of the student's grade 7 year, if space is available and placement is appropriate, and (if applicable) in accordance with any existing wait list. The program accepts a maximum of 28 students, in accordance with Ministry of Education and Child Care and contractual 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.
- 9.2.1 School staff, in consultation with guardians who choose to register their child in Later French Immersion at the grade 7 level, should establish a trial period and set a date to review the student's progress in their transition within the first six weeks.
- 9.3 Registration for Late French Immersion for the next school year begins the first Monday in the first week of February following a family information session at the end of January. Completed registration forms (SD72 Form 201-1 District Late French Immersion Registration) are submitted to the school board office in person or through email to [student.registration@sd72.bc.ca](mailto:student.registration@sd72.bc.ca).

- 9.4 Parents/guardians will be informed as to whether they have been accepted into the Late French Immersion program or are placed on the waitlist the week before spring break.
- 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 and 7, all academic subjects are taught in French except English Language Arts. In grade 8 students join their Early French Immersion peers and receive 50-75% instruction in French and the remaining instruction in English. In secondary school, French courses are gradually reduced: four in grade 9, three in grade 10, two in grade 11, and one in grade 12.
- 9.7 The Late French Immersion curriculum parallels the English program, and students are expected to develop the same level of proficiency in curricular and core competencies.

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

Moving a student from one program to another requires careful consideration. The French Immersion program is inclusive of all learners and school teams work towards supporting all students to successfully complete the French Immersion program.

- 10.1 A student or parent/guardian may request to move out of the French Immersion program can be made by providing the rational to the school administrator, or counsellor at the middle/high school, who will then share the request with the French Immersion program administrator.
- 10.2 If the rational concerns the child's academic, social, or emotional needs, the request will be taken to the school-based team where a detailed discussion about circumstances and supports will be had. If the rational is otherwise, go to section 10.5 of this procedure.
- 10.3 Recommended supports and/or an action plan will be presented to the family for feedback. A follow-up meeting will be set to discuss progress.
- 10.4 The school will carry out the intervention plan, closely monitor progress, communicate progress with the parents/guardians along the way, and hold follow-up meetings and make plan adjustments as necessary.
- 10.5 Should the parent/guardian 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; natural breaks are often most suitable with the optimal time being the beginning of a new school year.
  - If a child has been receiving inclusive education services at the current French Immersion school, consideration will be spent on continuing that support with a focus on English before the transition occurs.
- 10.6 When leaving the French Immersion program, the student must apply as a cross catchment student to the neighbourhood catchment school. Approval will be based on availability of space and facilities, or program and staffing resources appropriate for that student.
  - 10.6.1 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.

10.6.2 Both the student and parent(s)/guardian(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](#)

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