

Guidelines and Implementation Procedure for French Language Instruction

1. GOALS OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE PROGRAMS:

The Edmonton Public School District students will meet provincial program expectations and will be able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills on nationally and internationally recognized proficiency guidelines such as those of the Public Service Commission of Canada and ACTFL.

Early French Immersion

The goal of the early French immersion program is to help students successfully complete the Alberta curriculum requirements and develop an Advanced Plus level of proficiency in French by the end of Grade 12. An understanding and appreciation of francophone cultures will also be emphasized.

Late French Immersion

The goal of the late French immersion program is to help students successfully complete the Alberta curriculum requirements and develop an Advanced level of proficiency in French by the end of Grade 12. An understanding and appreciation of francophone cultures will also be emphasized.

Students who successfully complete the requirements of the French immersion programs will be able to communicate, undertake post-secondary studies and pursue employment opportunities in both English and French.

French as a Second Language

The goal of the FSL program is to have students successfully complete the Alberta curriculum requirements and develop an Intermediate level of proficiency by the end of Grade 12. An understanding and appreciation of francophone cultures will also be emphasized.

See Descriptors of French Language Proficiency.

2. THE SELECTION OF NEW SITES FOR FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAMS WILL BE BASED ON SEVERAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- community support - commitment to enroll in the program;
- availability of space;
- accessibility to safe transportation routes;
- location of elementary, junior high and senior high school sites within short distances of one another;
- centralized location of the senior high school site(s);
- equitable distribution across the district;
- organizational model: single track immersion school, immersion centre, dual track, triple track;
- costs of program and facilities; and
- availability of staff to provide instruction in a sufficient number of subjects in French.

3. LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION:

French as a Second Language

Teachers should use French as the language of instruction. French should also be the language of communication in the classroom.

French Immersion

Courses such as French language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, physical education, Career and Life Management and Career and Technology Studies should be available in French as part of regular classroom instruction at junior high, sufficient to provide 70% of instructional time in French.

All French immersion students will be expected to complete at least 45 credits in French as part of regular classroom instruction by the end of Grade 12. This will be phased in for Grade 10 students by the 2006-2007 school year. (This is expected when there is a minimum Grade 10 enrolment of 50 students at a given site.)

4. STAFF QUALIFICATIONS:

All French language teachers are expected to possess appropriate language proficiency in French and knowledge and skills in second language acquisition and second language pedagogy. It is important that all French language teachers know and understand francophone cultures in Canada and in other countries in the world.

A French immersion teacher is expected to possess an advanced level of proficiency in French if the teacher is instructing intermediate level classes and a superior level of proficiency in French if the teacher is instructing advanced level classes. The teacher should have proficiency in both official languages. An exception may be made with approval of the principal and superintendent.

French immersion teachers are expected to possess the appropriate knowledge and skills in the content areas they are instructing.

An FSL teacher in the district is expected to possess at least an intermediate level of proficiency in French if the teacher is instructing beginning level classes and an advanced level of proficiency in French if the teacher is instructing Intermediate level classes.

In schools offering a French immersion program, the district supports the assignment of personnel with fluency in both French and English to administration, librarian and support staff positions.

The administrators and support personnel in schools offering the French immersion and FSL programs should be knowledgeable about and supportive of the programs.

5. LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT TOOL:

The *Language Proficiency Assessment Tool* will be used to assess the French language proficiency (listening, speaking, reading and writing) of teacher or support staff candidates for all French language programs offered in the Edmonton Public Schools.

The assessment results may be used:

- by a staff member for any purpose, including developing a professional development plan;

- by a principal or supervisor for the purpose of supervising or evaluating a staff member's performance; or
- by Personnel Recruitment and Staffing in order to determine suitability or qualifications for:
 - employment with Edmonton Public Schools,
 - positions for which a staff member has made application, or
 - assignments for which a staff member is being considered.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF DISTRICT SCHOOLS:

District junior high schools, offering French, will implement an FSL program that is articulated with FSL programs in both feeder elementary schools and in receiving senior high schools.

District elementary schools offering FSL beginning in Grade 4 or Grade 1 will articulate their programs with FSL programs in receiving junior high schools.

Program articulation will include the implementation of grade level outcomes that help students to progress in their learning of French from one grade to the next. This articulation will enable students to experience a similar FSL learning program at a given grade level in district schools and a smooth and logical transition from elementary to junior high to senior high school FSL programs.

7. CLASSES OF COMBINED GRADES:

Schools may offer either FSL or French immersion program through the establishment of classes of combined grades if the number of students enrolled is not sufficient to offer a single grade class. FSL and FIM students must not be combined in the same classroom.

Combined grades may consist of students within one classroom from two sequential grades, for example, Grades 4/5, Grades 7/8 or other combination.

Teachers may need to implement differentiated instructional time, grouping and co-operative teaching for students who are learning at different levels of proficiency.

8. ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS FOR FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAMS:

The district will consider the following models for organizing a French immersion program:

Single Track Immersion School

The single track immersion school is a school that offers only the French immersion program. Administrative, teaching and support staff are fluent in French and English. French is the primary language of administration and communication with students and teachers. French is the language used for offering support services.

Immersion Centre

An immersion centre offers the French immersion program within a building that also provides an English language program. The centre's immersion program has its own administration and facilities. Administrative, teaching and support staff are fluent in French and English. French is the primary language of administration and communication with students, teachers and support staff. French is the language used for offering support services.

Dual Track School

A dual track school offers both a French immersion and English program within the same building and is led by a single school administration. Some members of the administrative and support staff may possess fluency in both French and English. Some support services may be provided in French.

Triple Track School

A triple track school in this district offers a French immersion, an Ukrainian Bilingual (or other language) and an English program within the same building and is led by a single school administration. Some members of the administrative and support staff may possess fluency in both French and English or in both Ukrainian (or other language) and English. Some support services may be provided in French and/or Ukrainian (or other language).

9. FRENCH IMMERSION CERTIFICATE:

The district will award a “French Immersion Certificate” to all students who have successfully completed the requirements of the continuing French immersion and late immersion programs (e.g. 45 credits in subjects taught in French as a regular part of classroom instruction). The certificate will identify the immersion program completed by the student, her or his level of French language proficiency as assessed by the district in the second semester of the Grade 12 year and the number of credits completed. This will commence by June 2005.

10. FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE CERTIFICATE:

The district will award a “French as a Second Language Certificate” to all district students who have successfully completed the requirements of the FSL program through regular classroom instruction. The certificate will indicate which FSL program the student has completed (nine-year, six-year,...), her or his level of language proficiency in French as assessed by the district in the second semester of the Grade 12 year and the number of credits completed (see Attachment 2). Students who challenge high school courses will not be eligible for this certificate. This will commence by June 2005. The district will facilitate the writing of the DELF exam for students interested in acquiring international recognition. The student would bear the cost of DELF testing.

11. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

The district encourages French language program teachers to engage in life-long professional development.

The district will organize professional development programs for French immersion and FSL teachers in both language proficiency and second language pedagogy.

The district will implement an orientation program for all administrators newly appointed to a French immersion program.

12. MARKETING AND PROMOTION:

The district will prepare and maintain a marketing plan and marketing materials for both the French immersion and FSL programs.

The marketing plan and materials will emphasize the importance of French as a national and world language and highlight the development of thinking skills and cultural understanding as well as study, exchange and job opportunities in French.

The messages will be delivered through information meetings, websites, information packages, articles, posters, media announcements, presentations to parents and educators, and displays.

13. PARTICIPATION IN FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITIES:

The district will facilitate arrangements for district French immersion and FSL students to have direct contacts with francophone communities in Edmonton, in Alberta, in Quebec and in other countries.

These opportunities will include school twinning, e-mail correspondence, short-term and long-term exchanges, visits, study opportunities, work experience placements, job shadowing and participation in special events.

14. PARENTS:

The district will support and regularly seek input from the Edmonton Chapter of Canadian Parents for French via regular meetings with the Canadian Parents for French advisory body.

15. ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF DISTRICT ACHIEVEMENT IN FRENCH:

The district in partnership with schools will celebrate the achievement of French immersion and FSL students through the Gala des arts oratoire et dramatique.

16. PROPOSED COURSES IN A REVISED FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAM:

The following two course sequences are proposed for implementation beginning in 2005-2006 based on the required instructional time of 150 minutes per week in Grades 1-9:

Nine-Year Sequential Program: Grades 4 to 12

Grade 4 French

Grade 5 French

Grade 6 French

Grade 7 Continuing French

Grade 8 Continuing French

Grade 9 Continuing French

Grade 10 French 10N*

Grade 11 French 20N

Grade 12 French 30N

* N= Nine

Six-Year Sequential Program: Grades 7 to 12

Grade 7 Beginning French

Grade 8 Beginning French

Grade 9 Beginning French

Grade 10 French 10S*

Grade 11 French 20S

Grade 12 French 30S

*S = Six