

# French Immersion Program

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

**When and where can my child enter the French Immersion program?** The School District currently offers the following entry points to the program:

Westside Family of Schools	Central Family of Schools	Mission Family of Schools	Rutland Family of Schools	Lake Country Family of Schools
<p><b>École George Pringle</b></p> <p>K-Grade 1 Early Entry</p>	<p><b>École Casorso</b></p> <p>K-Grade One Early Entry</p>	<p><b>École Dorothea Walker</b></p> <p>K-Grade One Early Entry</p>	<p><b>École Belgo</b></p> <p>K-Grade One Early Entry</p>	<p><b>École Peter Greer</b></p> <p>K-Grade One Early Entry</p>
<p><b>École Glenrosa Middle</b></p> <p>Grade 6 Late Entry</p>				

### **How is French Immersion Funded?**

The federal government pays a portion of the costs incurred in French Immersion programs, the Ministry of Education pays the majority of the cost. Once a class is established, the cost per pupil is similar to that in the regular English program.

### **Who Teaches the Program?**

In Central Okanagan Public Schools, French Immersion teachers must be fluently bilingual (French and English) and possess a current BC Teacher's Certificate.

### **What about my child's achievement?**

**French:** In all programs (early, middle and late French Immersion), students achieve a high level of proficiency in French comprehension, speaking, reading and writing.

**English:** For students entering the program in Kindergarten or Grade One, the English language arts component is introduced in Grade Three. By this time, students have learned how to read in French. The decoding skills required for reading in French are usually quickly transferred and applied to the English component of the program.

For students entering the program in Grade Four or Grade Six, the English Language Arts program is re-introduced gradually after initial immersion in French Language.

### **How Can I Help My Child?**

This is a common question asked by parents who are English-speaking. Parents are encouraged to listen to their child read out loud in French. An older sibling or friend who

speaks French can also read to your child. Sentence structures are similar in English and French, so parents can also read to their child in English.

### **Why learn an additional language?**

Knowing an additional language can:

- Increase your child's personal pleasures such as the enjoyment of literature, art, music, theatre, travel, and personal relationships
- Increase your child's understanding of and respect for other peoples and other cultures
- Help your child to understand more about himself, his country, and his fellow Canadians

The process of learning an additional language can also:

- Develop your child's listening and learning skills as well as the self-discipline that are useful throughout life
- Increase cognitive abilities, creating a more flexible thinker
- Enhance knowledge of the first language and improve communication
- Make learning a new language much easier.

### **How quickly do the children learn to speak French?**

Comprehension of spoken French develops first. The ability to speak develops more slowly. In the Early French Immersion program, students start to communicate spontaneously in French by Grade 1. In Middle or Late French Immersion, students are expected to speak with some fluency by the end of the first year of the program.

### **What percentage of classroom instruction is actually in French?**

As students progress through the French Immersion Program and develop a strong command of the French language, the percentage of instruction decreases. This allows for formal instruction of English Language Arts and flexibility in course selection at the secondary level, while ensuring the maintenance of a high level of proficiency in French.