

From: [Christine Matte](#)
To: [Board of Education](#)
Cc: [Chantal Sibbald](#); [Hudson Road PAC](#); [Lindsey Hamilton](#)
Subject: Reduction in French immersion primary support
Date: Friday, June 14, 2024 9:04:33 AM

WARNING: This email originated from outside Central Okanagan Public Schools. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Board Members,

I am writing to request that the board reconsider its recent decision to eliminate primary French Immersion support teachers from our school, Hudson Road Elementary.

It has only been a year since French Immersion was introduced to HRE and Glenrosa and in that time we have seen enthusiastic uptake from families, many of whom have no prior French speaking skills as a family. Children were also permitted to join French Immersion in grade 1 or 2, having missed out on a kindergarten foundational experience with bilingualism. It is a huge learning curve for children to learn to speak in French all day and to embrace this challenge. The added support of M. Raymond was critical to the success of children who have additional learning support needs and for children who are extending beyond the standard expected of their grade level. M. Raymond was present in the classroom but also provided regular useful language learning tools for parents to work on French with their children effectively at home. For children to become bilingual, they need both conversational opportunities to practice, be encouraged and grow their vocabulary and self expression and they also need time to focus in on areas causing them frustration or challenge. This is one of the key dual benefits of the classroom teacher and the support teacher.

Cutting the funding to this position means children who encounter difficulties in learning French are more likely to drop out of the program or experience social issues in the classroom. It will put more pressure on the primary classroom teacher to help parents who do not speak French themselves. And it sends the message that the District does not care about being an inclusive learning environment where all children's right to learning is respected by ensuring support is available to meet children where they are at and uplift them to keep trying when something is hard. The primary years are when children need to feel positive and encouraged that they can learn and that learning is hard but worth working on. The French Immersion support teacher has been a regular topic of conversation with our daughter every time he is in the class and he has greatly contributed to her writing, reading and conversation skills. The growth we have seen in her this year has been incredible and we know that small group and 1:1 time with M. Raymond has given her the motivation and encouragement to keep going and keep trying to learn more.

Please advise the next public meeting opportunity when concerned HRE families might be able to hear district reconsideration of this matter and voice their experiences to contribute to your decision making.

Thank you,
Christine Matte

Christine Matte

