

FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM

LEARNING FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE ASSISTS STUDENTS IN THEIR PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, WHILE ENHANCING PROBLEM SOLVING AND REASONING SKILLS, THE CAPACITY FOR CREATIVE THINKING AND THE ABILITY TO RESPECT AND UNDERSTAND OTHER CULTURES.

WHAT IS FRENCH IMMERSION?

French immersion is a Canadian educational program designed to give students whose first language is not French the opportunity to learn in the French language. The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board is pleased to offer the French Immersion Program starting in Grade 1 at eight school sites. Students registered in this program will spend 90% of their day learning in the French language. All subjects and activities in the French Immersion classroom, except for Religion and Family Life, will be delivered in French. In Grades 2 and 3, 70% of the instruction will be in French, with the proportion of English increasing to 50% in later years.

PROFILE FOR SUCCESS

There are many factors and considerations which parents and students should discuss before making an informed decision about registering for the French Immersion Program.

Factors and Indicators of Success

French Immersion is suitable for many children, but those with the following characteristics tend to be very successful in the French Immersion classroom:

- Enjoys and plays with language (rhyming and word games)
- Identifies and prints name, alphabet and some words
- Cooperates with others and works /plays well in groups
- Perseveres and makes an effort when responding to challenges
- Approaches new tasks with a positive attitude
- Regular attendance (known as a strong indicator for success)

Possible Difficulties Encountered

- temporary frustration with French;
- limited opportunity to use French outside of school;
- limited variety of reading materials outside of school;
- students remain with same classmates throughout the program;
- transportation arrangements are the responsibility of parents.

SCHOOL SITES

Divine Mercy School Tel: 905-812-5445
2840 Duncairn Drive, Mississauga

St. Elizabeth Seton Tel: 905-821-8877
6133 Glen Erin Drive, Mississauga

St. Gertrude School Tel: 905-568-7660
815 Ceremonial Drive, Mississauga

St. Margaret of Scotland School Tel: 905-820-5115
2266 Council Ring Road, Mississauga

St. Pio of Pietrelcina Tel: 905-361-1327
4765 Huron Heights Drive, Mississauga

Our Lady of Providence School Tel: 905-458-7080
35 Black Oak Drive, Brampton

St. Angela Merici Catholic School Tel: 905-840-1505
83 Edenbrook Hill Drive, Brampton

St. Joachim School Tel: 905-453-4472
435 Rutherford Road North, Brampton

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A STUDENT

Grade 1 French Immersion Program

- one teacher/one classroom/one desk
- most of the day is taught in French
- school may be far from home
- new surroundings
- new friends

WHAT EFFECTS MAY THE PROGRAM HAVE ON MY CHILD?

Learning a second language requires a high level of concentration. These demands, combined with adjusting to a new environment and being at school for a full day instead of only half, may lead to an increase in fatigue. Proper rest and diet is recommended to help your child cope.

HOW CAN PARENTS HELP EASE THE ADJUSTMENT?

In the first few months, all children experience a period of adjustment. The amount of time varies with each child. It is important that parents communicate with their child that this initial period, which may be frustrating, is entirely normal and that he/she is not alone. Above all, support and encouragement are of the utmost importance.

CAN I HELP MY CHILD WITH HOMEWORK WHEN NOBODY AT HOME SPEAKS FRENCH?

It is not necessary to speak French in order to assist your child with homework. You can provide moral support by showing an interest in your child's progress and accomplishments, and ensuring that the child clearly understands the expectations before registering for the program. Providing a scheduled time for homework in a quiet atmosphere is also important. In addition, it is recommended that parents/guardians establish a good rapport with the French Immersion teacher. The most significant indicator for the success of a French Immersion student is parental support and involvement.

IS THERE AN ASSOCIATION I CAN JOIN?

Canadian Parents for French is a national association of parents who work in advocacy for French as a second language education with ministers and administrators at the national and provincial levels and with school boards. Membership fees help support summer camps, special programs, contests and activities for FSL students across Canada. For more information, visit www.cpf.ca.

ADDITIONAL WAYS OF HELPING YOUR CHILD:

- establish a good rapport with your child's immersion teacher;
- show interest in what your child is doing at school;
- provide encouragement and support to your child;
- set aside a regular time for homework and check that it is complete;
- encourage your child to speak French at home, with learning 'buddies' and friends
- provide frequent exposure to:
 - . French radio and TV/films/videos
 - . French books/magazines
 - . French CDs/cassettes
 - . French computer software
 - . French cultural events/shows

HOW CAN I SUPPLEMENT/ENHANCE MY CHILD'S ENGLISH SKILLS?

You can provide opportunities for your child to develop reading and writing skills by encouraging your child to:

- set time aside to read for pleasure at home;
- write letters or stories;
- keep a diary or journal;
- read stories to family members and others

ARE FRENCH ADULT PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO ME AS A PARENT?

Yes. Conversational French courses geared to adults are available through the Dufferin-Peel CDSB Continuing Education Department or Canadian Parents for French.