

EXTENDED FRENCH 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.

EXTENDED FRENCH PROGRAM

The Extended French Program provides students with the means to develop more advanced French skills, enabling them to communicate effectively in speech and in writing, as they receive 1,900 hours of instruction by the end of Grade 8. The Extended French Program is only offered at designated schools in Dufferin-Peel.

GRADES 5 TO 8

The Extended French Program is introduced at the Grade 5 level. The instructional time is equally divided between French and English. Subjects taught in French, include: Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Music, Visual Arts and Physical Education. These classes are based on the same curriculum guidelines as the classes conducted in English.

GRADES 9 TO 11

Presently, Géographie and Histoire are offered in Grades 9 and 10, and Les Grandes Religions is available in Grade 11. Students who complete all seven courses successfully will receive a Certificate of Concentration in Extended French.

ELIGIBILITY

Admission into the Extended French Program is open to all students currently enrolled in a Dufferin-Peel school, who will be in Grade 5 the following September. Beyond the Grade 5 level, only students who have an equivalent background in French may join the program if space is available.

REGISTRATION

Extended French Program registrations are accepted for a two week period up to the first Wednesday in March. Please contact your child's school for a schedule of information meetings. Where numbers warrant, students may be selected by lottery.

When making the decision to enroll your child in the Extended French Program you should consider the following:

- Your child may have to be bused to another school, have two teachers (French and English) and additional homework.
- School locations and the board provided transportation of students to the program are subject to annual review.
- Students in the Extended French program may be required to change sites at any grade level.

This is an informed decision between parent and child, and you are encouraged to confer with the principal, FSL teacher and classroom teacher before enrolling your child in this program.

PROFILE FOR SUCCESS

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

Factors and Indications of Success

- organizes work and manages time well;
- works well independently and cooperatively in groups;
- takes risks, makes mistakes and learns from them
- is able to handle a heavy workload;
- likes French and attempts to use French outside the classroom.

Possible Difficulties Encountered

- initial frustration with French
- most parents cannot help with homework
- heavy workload in Grades 7-8
- limited opportunity to use French outside of school
- limited variety of reading materials outside of school
- students remain with same classmates throughout the program
- high achievement expectations

What effects may the program have on my child?

Learning a second language requires a high level of concentration. This, combined with adjusting to a new environment, may lead to an increase in fatigue. Proper rest and diet can help your child cope with the demands of the program.

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.

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.

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 to family members, friends, pen pals, etc.;
- keep a diary/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, McMaster University, Sheridan College, as well as other colleges and adult education centres.

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, call 613-235-1481 or visit www.cpf.ca

Additional ways of helping your child:

- purchase a French/English, English/French dictionary for use at home;
- 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