

THE EARLY FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM INFORMATION SESSION



Halifax Regional
School Board

WHY ARE WE HERE?

- ▶ To provide information about the Early French Immersion Program in HRSB
- ▶ To discuss the benefits of learning French as an additional language
- ▶ To help answer questions you may have

DESCRIPTION

- ▶ French Immersion Programs date back to 1965 in St. Lambert, Montréal, Québec
- ▶ Early French Immersion begins in primary and continues to grade 12
- ▶ Early French Immersion is an optional French program designed for students whose first language is not French and who have little or no knowledge of French prior to entering primary. ***This includes*** newcomers to Canada and/or students who are learning English as an additional language
- ▶ Instructional strategies and materials are designed with this in mind



FRENCH IMMERSION NOVA SCOTIA

- ▶ The Early French Immersion Program began in 1977
- ▶ The Late Immersion Program (Grade 7-12) began in 1985



EARLY FRENCH IMMERSION HALIFAX REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD

- ▶ As of September 2017, HRSB has 23 elementary schools offering Early French Immersion



EARLY FRENCH IMMERSION (P-12)

- ▶ When graduating High School, students receive a French Immersion Certificate upon completion of requirements



FRENCH IMMERSION CERTIFICATE

Graduates of the French Immersion Program will be able to :

- communicate effectively in oral and written French and English
- achieve expected learning outcomes of courses taught in French and English
- seek employment opportunities in French
- pursue university or college education in French

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN THE FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM

- ▶ Students acquire French language skills in an environment where authentic communication is a key piece of the learning
- ▶ Teachers are equipped with oral proficiency, literacy awareness and pedagogical knowledge of second language acquisition strategies
- ▶ The integration of subjects taught in French is also conducive to language acquisition

BENEFITS OF EARLY FRENCH IMMERSION

Students have significant advantages when they speak more than one language. Learning another language helps students:

- strengthen their problem-solving, reasoning and creative thinking skills;
- develop their understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures;
- increase their competitiveness in an increasingly global job market, and
- enhance their first-language and overall literacy skills.

PERCENTAGE OF INSTRUCTION IN FRENCH

- ▶ Primary-Grade 2 **85%-100%** (varies due to Phys Ed and Music)
- ▶ Grades 3-6 **70%- 85%** (formal English instruction begins)
- ▶ Grades 7-9 approximately **70%**
- ▶ Grades 10-12 minimum of **50%** (9 of 18 credits)

CURRICULUM

Early French Immersion students follow the *same* curriculum and outcomes as students in English Programs.

- In September, it is common for children to speak to each other and to their teacher in English
- Teachers speak to students in French
- Emphasis is on oral language development
- Language develops at different rates; progress is as individual as is each child

FRENCH PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

- Uses teaching strategies that foster a positive classroom environment
- Helps the students achieve success in French while learning the core subject matter
- Permits students to engage in meaningful and constructive dialogue
- Fosters effective communication in French in the areas of listening, speaking, viewing, reading, writing as well as other ways of representing

ENGLISH INSTRUCTION



- Formal English Instruction begins in Grade 3.
- English reading abilities may not develop at the same rate as P-3 students in the English Program, however, research shows that over time, immersion students do as well, if not better, than their English counterparts. (Bournot-Trites et Tellowitz, 2002)
- Research shows that second-language learning does not negatively affect the first language, that students rapidly catch up once English is introduced and, that many students surpass their peers by Grades 5 or 6, and that skills in French can and do transfer to English. (Renée Bourgoïn)
- Instruction of subject material will not be repeated in English

*Renée Bourgoïn, doctoral candidate at the Second Language Research Institute of Canada, University of New Brunswick, Nouveau Brunswick.

MATHEMATICS

- Students develop problem solving strategies
- Students develop visualization skills and make connections to their everyday experiences
- Students develop number sense
- Students use technologies and hands-on materials as tools for learning and solving problems



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LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

- ▶ As children enter school they continue to learn through play
- ▶ An early elementary experience infused with play helps students learn in the way that is best suited to their stages of development
- ▶ Allows time to explore, to create, to manipulate, and actively participate in their own learning

THE ROLE OF PLAY

Through play children learn how to:

- Construct knowledge
- Express their feelings and ideas
- Appreciate the feelings of others
- Listen to the ideas of others
- Interact with others
- Solve problems
- Resolve conflicts

PROGRAM SUPPORT

- ▶ Grades one and two students are eligible for Early Literacy Support in French.
- ▶ As is the case for all students, the Program Planning Team (PPT) explores support and makes decisions about student services and student programming including Individual Program Plans (IPP) and Adaptations

WHEN DECIDING WHICH PROGRAM YOUR CHILD WILL ENTER

Consider:

- How well developed are my child's home language skills?
- How might my child respond if understanding the teacher is challenging at the onset?
- How might learning, perceptual or auditory challenges play a role in my child's experience?

PLEASE NOTE:

- ▶ French Immersion Programs are specifically designed for children of parents or guardians who do not speak French
- ▶ Students will learn at different rates just as they would in an English speaking classroom
- ▶ Parents/guardians can encourage learning by providing a rich and supportive environment in their child's first language

FEBRUARY REGISTRATION

- ▶ A child must have reached his/her 5th birthday **on or before December 31.**
- ▶ At the time of registration, Parents/guardians must present:
 - the child's birth certificate
 - proof of residency such as a current utility bill, lease agreement, etc
 - the completed registration form (including your child's Nova Scotia Health Card)

USEFUL LINKS

<http://www.hrsb.ca/about-hrsb/school-administration/registration/french-programs>

www.cpf.ca (Canadian Parents for French)

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