

Toronto District School Board

Operational Procedure PR597

Title: **FRENCH IMMERSION/EXTENDED FRENCH**

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Effectuated: December 14, 2009

Revised: September 3, 2019; December 10, 2019; January 15, 2021;
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Authorization: Executive Council

1.0 RATIONALE

The French Immersion/Extended French Operational Procedure ("The Procedure") supports the implementation of the French-as-a-Second Language Policy (P080).

2.0 OBJECTIVE

To provide procedures to support the Board's commitment to Core French, French Immersion and Extended French programs.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Elementary Education

The Ontario Curriculum: French as a Second Language: Core French - Grades 4-8; Extended French - Grades 4-8; French Immersion - Grades 1-8, Revised 2013.

Core French is mandatory from Grades 4 to 8 for all students in English language elementary schools. Policy and program requirements for elementary school Core French programs dictate that students entering Grade 4 must receive French instruction in every year from Grade 4 to Grade 8, and must have accumulated a minimum of 600 hours of French instruction by the end of Grade 8.

Extended French and French Immersion are French as a Second Language (FSL) programs in which French is not only taught as a subject but also serves as the language of instruction in other subjects. The provision of Extended French and/or a French Immersion program is optional.

In a French Immersion program, French must be the language of instruction for a minimum of 50 percent of the total instructional time at every grade level of the program.

In an Extended French program, French must be the language of instruction for a minimum of 25 percent of the total instruction time at every grade level.

Secondary Education

The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12: *French as a Second Language – Core French, Extended French, and French Immersion*, Revised 2014.

French as a Second Language programs are available as Core, Extended and Immersion in secondary school. Students will select their program based on the total number of hours of French instruction accumulated by the end of Grade 8 (600 for Core French, a minimum of 1260 for Extended French, and a minimum of 3800 for French Immersion).

Core French: One compulsory credit is required for graduation, generally earned in Grade 9. Students may receive a Certificate of Achievement in Core French upon successful completion of Grade 12.

Extended French: Students who complete the program are required to take 4 consecutive courses in Extended French and a minimum of 3 courses in other subjects taught in French. Successful students are eligible to receive a Certificate of Bilingual Studies in Extended French from the TDSB.

French Immersion: Students who complete the program are required to take 4 consecutive courses in French Immersion and a minimum of 6 courses in other subjects taught in French. Successful students are eligible to receive a Certificate of Bilingual Studies in French Immersion from the TDSB.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Associate Director, Equity, Well-Being and School Improvement

5.0 APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This Procedure applies to all TDSB staff.

6.0 PROCEDURES

PART 1: Admissions and Placements

6.1. Determination of Program Locations

- (a) The system wide Early French Immersion and Middle French Immersion programs are overseen by the central FSL Department.
- (b) Program locations are determined using the following criteria:
 - (i) Continuation of exemplary program delivery and sustainability;
 - (ii) Sufficient enrolment in the Kindergarten and/or Junior classes to ensure healthy class sizes at all grade levels, considering attrition rates;
 - (iii) The maintenance of viable English programs, characterized by the relative population of the English stream to the French stream;
 - (iv) Location of site within a catchment area;
 - (v) Pathways to intermediate and secondary programs;
 - (vi) Transportation;
 - (vii) Existing Immersion/Extended programs within the school and area;
 - (viii) Other school programs (e.g. Special Education, music, child care);
 - (ix) Pupil place capacity and space utilization rate (JK to Grade 12);
 - (x) Projected enrolments over time; and
 - (xi) Portables as an option to accommodate additional students.

6.2. Admission

- (a) Every student in the TDSB may apply for French Immersion and Extended French Programs at the appropriate entry point.
- (b) Information on program availability at local schools is available at www.tdsb.on.ca/pars and at individual schools.

6.3. Entry Points

(a) System Entry Points

In the TDSB, there are a number of entry points to French Immersion Program. These include the following:

- (i) Junior Kindergarten and Senior Kindergarten (for Sept 2022 only) (Early Immersion)
- (ii) Grade 4 (Middle French Immersion)

(b) Additional Entry Points (locally managed by the school Principal)

- (i) Grade 7 (Extended French in 14 schools only)

6.4. Admission of Siblings

The Board supports a Sibling Rule which ensures that children with siblings in the French program in the school and who will be in attendance the following year will have a priority placement.

6.5. Optional Attendance

In the TDSB, students may access a program outside their French Immersion or Extended French catchment area by applying through Optional Attendance to register in that program. Parents may obtain an Optional Attendance application form at www.tdsb.on.ca/parents or from their local school and apply to the requested school for consideration. Admission will be based on availability of space in the program. No transportation is provided for students admitted under Optional Attendance.

- (a) Once admitted to a school, the student will have the right to complete the French Immersion/Extended French Program in the schools through the designated pathway for that school.
- (b) If a student changes residence, they may be moving out of the catchment area of the French Immersion or Extended school designated for their address. Where a change in address results in movement out of the designated catchment area, students must apply under Optional Attendance to continue in their current school. These admissions through Optional Attendance are automatically accepted; no transportation will be provided, consistent with the Optional Attendance Policy (P013), Optional Attendance Procedure (PR545), Admission Eligibility Requirements Procedure (PR518) and Admission to Specialized Schools and Programs Procedure (PR612).

6.6. Registration

Registration in individual schools is consistent with the Early Learning and Care Policy (P022) and the Kindergarten Registration Procedure (PR696), which describes the process and requirements for registration in all schools. This includes verification of the right to attend in selected schools.

6.7. Program Placement

(a) Admission

- (i) Access to Immersion programs is based on the English home school determined by the home address.
- (ii) Catchment areas are determined for each French Immersion program. Catchment areas may be changed at any time in accordance with Board policy and procedures.
- (iii) The application process for the two system entry points (i.e. JK Early French Immersion [including SK for September 2022 only] and Grade 4 Middle French Immersion) is managed by the central FSL department through a central online application process.
- (iv) A defined date for application is determined each year and posted on the TDSB website. Applications received before the deadline will be accommodated. Applications received after

the deadline may be accommodated after on time applications are processed based on availability of space.

- (v) Applications are available through an online application for Early French Immersion and Middle French Immersion at www.tdsb.on.ca/pars. Assistance is available at local schools for families without computer access.

- (vi) The application process for the additional entry point (i.e. Gr. 7 Extended French) is locally managed at the school level.

(b) Process for Accommodating Students Where Insufficient Space is Available (Two System Entry points)

- (i) When insufficient space is available at a particular school, students will be accommodated in schools with space available for the program.
- (ii) Where applications exceed capacity, staff will undertake the following:
 - The central FSL Department in collaboration with the Planning Department will work to determine the next closest school with available space.
 - The FSL Department will inform the local school Superintendent.
 - If there is no space in a host school in the geographic area for additional classes to be created, a program may be opened in a new site in consultation with the FSL Department, the Planning Department and the local school Superintendent.
 - Students will be admitted to the host school subject to a system-wide procedure (proximity or lottery). The remaining students will be offered placement in the next closest French Immersion School with available program space.

(c) Process for Accommodating Students Where Insufficient Space is Available

(Additional Entry point i.e. Gr. 7 Extended French)

- (i) When insufficient space is available at a particular school, then students will be admitted to the host school subject to a local school procedure (i.e. lottery). The remaining students will be held on a local school wait-list subject to available space.

(d) Catchment Areas

- (ii) Each school offering Extended French or French Immersion in TDSB has a designated catchment area, based on the English home school determined by the home address of students.

Students from this area may apply to attend the program in their designated school. Catchment areas may be changed at any time in accordance with Board policy and procedures.

- (iii) Students are ensured a placement from elementary through secondary schools. These identified elementary-intermediate-secondary schools for each catchment are defined as a pathway.
- (iv) Once admitted to a French Immersion or Extended French program, students will have the right to follow the pathway designated for the school of entry to the program and to complete the program. (See 6.21)

6.8. Admission at Other than Designated Entry Points

(a) Immersion to Extended at Intermediate and Secondary Levels

Students seeking admission from Immersion to Extended French are considered on a case by case basis by the principal in consultation with Central FSL Program staff.

(b) Last Date of Admission to Regular Entry Points

Subject to availability of space and the Ministry of Education class size requirements, the last date for admission to the regular entry points is as follows:

- (i) Early French Immersion - September 30
- (ii) Middle French Immersion - September 30
- (iii) Extended French (Grade 7) - September 30

(c) Admission from Other Jurisdictions

- (i) Students who move into TDSB may be placed in French Immersion or Extended French programs if they have been enrolled in equivalent French Immersion or Extended French programs in other, public English Language school boards in Ontario.
- (ii) For other jurisdictions or for students without an equivalent French as a Second Language background, students may apply consistent with the Late Admission Procedure in 6.9.
- (iii) Students from Francophone, Catholic or private schools that offer equivalent French programs may apply to attend a French Immersion program if space is available.

(d) Démission from French Immersion/Extended French Programs

- (i) Where students experience significant difficulties in a second language environment, students may be demitted from programs with parental/guardian consultation and consent. Such action may be taken after attempts to do the following:
 - The provision of remedial support to the student through the School Support Team at the school;
 - The creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for the student; and
 - A meeting with parents/guardians to review the achievement of the student in the program.
- (ii) Students who leave a program may be required to return to their local school for the English Program as determined by home address or to apply for optional attendance in any English Program School. Admission through Optional Attendance will be based on availability of space in the school requested.

6.9. Late Admission and Re-Entry to French Immersion/Extended French

- (a) Students may be admitted to a French Immersion/Extended French program at other than the entry point after a review of student records or confirmation of an equivalent background in French, as determined by the principal in consultation with Program staff.
- (b) Where the student's background in French is deemed to be equivalent and space is available, the student will be admitted to the program.
- (c) Where the student's background in French is not equivalent, no late admission will be allowed. The student may be referred to another entry point, where such is possible.
- (d) Where the equivalent background in French is in question, request for admission to French Immersion and Extended French program will be directed to an Admissions Committee by the Principal of the request school. The admissions committee will consist of:
 - (i) Principal or designate of the requested school;
 - (ii) Receiving teacher of the appropriate grade; and
 - (iii) Representative of the central FSL department.

PART 2: Instruction6.10. Core French in Elementary Schools

The Ministry of Education has mandated Core French from Grades 4-8 for all students in English Language Schools. By the end of Grade 8, students will receive 600 hours of French instruction.

6.11. French Immersion and Extended French in Elementary Schools

Both French Immersion and Extended French are French as a Second Language Programs in which French is the language of instruction for a portion of each school day. In French Immersion, French is the language of instruction for a minimum of 50 per cent of the day, while in Extended French, French is the language of instruction for a minimum of 25 per cent of the day, in accordance with section 6.15.

6.12. Core French in Secondary Schools

Students with 600 hours of French instruction by the end of Grade 8 will take a Core French program. One compulsory credit is required for graduation, generally earned in Grade 9. Students who complete four consecutive credits in Core French are eligible to receive a Certificate of Achievement in Core French from the TDSB.

6.13. Extended French in Secondary Schools

Students require a minimum of 1260 hours, or equivalent, of French instruction for admission to an Extended French program in secondary school. Students who complete the program are required to take 4 consecutive courses in Extended French and a minimum of 3 courses in other subjects taught in French. Successful students are eligible to receive a Certificate of Bilingual Studies in Extended French from the TDSB.

6.14. French Immersion in Secondary Schools

Students require a minimum of 3800 hours, or equivalent, of French instruction for admission to French Immersion programs in secondary school. Students who complete the program are required to take 4 consecutive courses in French Immersion and a minimum of 6 courses in other subjects taught in French. Successful students are eligible to receive a Certificate of Bilingual Studies in French Immersion from the TDSB.

6.15. Subjects

In Early French Immersion programs, from Kindergarten to Grade 3, all subjects are taught in French. From Grades 4 to 8, half the day is taught in French and half the day in English. The subjects taught in French are Language, History/Geography, Math and The Arts.

In Middle French Immersion programs, for Grades 4 and 5, all subjects are taught in French. English is introduced in Grade 6 with Science and English Language taught in English from Grade 6-8. Students from the Middle French Immersion program blend with students from the Early French Immersion program in Grade 9.

In Junior Extended French programs, from Grades 4 to 8, half the day is in French and half in English. Subjects taught in French are Language, Social Studies and The Arts. Students from the Junior Extended French program blend with students from the Grade 7 entry Extended French program in Grade 9.

In Grade 7 entry Extended French, French is taught for three periods per day. Subjects taught in French are Language, History/Geography and The Arts. Students from the Junior Extended French program blend with students from the Grade 7 entry program in Grade 9.

In secondary school Extended French and French Immersion programs, subjects taught in French will vary from school to school depending on the qualifications of the staff of the school.

Curriculum Content

The curriculum for Core, Immersion and Extended French is approved by the Ministry of Education for the province of Ontario. Complete descriptions are available at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/curriculum.html>

6.16. Combined Grades

Combined grades may be organized for the teaching of the French Immersion and Extended French programs.

6.17. English as a Second Language

Students who are new to Canada and speak a language other than English may access Immersion and Extended French programs in the same way as all other students.

6.18. Special Education

(a) French as a Second Language: Core French

- (i) Core French is part of every student's program, including students who are identified as requiring special education programming.
- (ii) Process for Supporting Students in Core French
 - As expected in all subjects, accommodations and modifications should be used to support all students, as

required, and as noted in the IEP.

- The student should be supported through the In-School Team/School Support Team process at the school.

(iii) Process for Exemptions from Core French (Elementary)

- Decisions for exemptions should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The child's teacher(s), the resource teacher and administrators will provide advice and consultation.
- Consideration for exemption may be given to:
 - ✓ Students working on alternative program expectations i.e. not working on academic expectations from The Ontario Curriculum (e.g. DD in special schools or programs), students with autism who have extremely limited or no receptive/expressive communication, and students with severe behaviour disorders/emotional disturbances; or
 - ✓ Students with severe learning/language disabilities that include significant central auditory processing deficits requiring extensive modification and accommodations.
- Initial consultation should involve the Core French teacher, the classroom teacher, the Methods and Resources teacher (MART) and the administrator(s) of the school regarding the difficulties that the student is experiencing.
- Program support should be provided to the Core French teacher by involving the MART, the central FSL Department and other teachers and/or by referring to the document entitled *Program Adaptations for Students with Special Needs in the Core French Classroom – A Resource Guide for Core French* available on the Principals' website and/or referring to the Ministry document entitled "*Including Students with Special Education Needs in French as a Second Language Programs 2015*"
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/amenagement/includingFLS2015.pdf>
- Students may be exempted after on-going attempts at program modification and diverse avenues to support the student in the Core French program have been unsuccessful.
- The School Support Team or parent may make the recommendation for exemption.
- Consultation and communication with parents are vital. The Principal must consult with the parents of the student to determine if an exemption is appropriate.

Next Steps if an exemption is appropriate:

- ✓ If a decision to exempt a student is made, the parents/guardians should

be informed **in writing** of the impact of the exemption in terms of missing a compulsory credit in secondary school when requesting a substitution.

- ✓ The parents **must provide a written, signed** request to the school for the exemption. It must state that the parent understands that Core French is a mandatory program for Grades 4-8 and that there is one compulsory credit at the secondary level.
- ✓ A description of the **alternative program** (i.e. a curriculum subject, reportable) the school is offering to the student to replace the Core French Program should also be included.
- ✓ A copy of the request is kept in the OSR.
- ✓ A copy is sent to the Learning Network Superintendent.
- ✓ The decision relating to the program exemption is recorded in the student's IEP (page 2) with a statement of the educational rationale for the decision.
- ✓ The exemption should be noted in the student's Individual Learning Profile (ILP).

(b) Process for Exemptions from Core French (Secondary Substitutions)

- (i) The same process, described above, should be used to determine secondary substitutions.
- (ii) Decisions for substitutions should be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- (iii) Consultation and communication with parents are vital. Parents should be informed in writing of the impact of a course substitution.

6.19. French Immersion and Extended French Programs

- (a) Students who are identified with exceptionalities may be admitted to Immersion and Extended programs and should be supported with appropriate accommodations and/or modifications as outlined on their IEP.
- (b) Where students experience challenges, the In-School Support Team/School Support Team will discuss the strategies, accommodations and/or modifications used to date. School administrators, together with the family and teacher(s) will review the student's progress.

PART 3: Accommodation

6.20. Accommodation Issues

Long-term accommodation issues at TDSB are reviewed regularly by the Planning Department. Planning and Program staff consider the expansion, contraction, establishment or relocation of French programs as per the Accommodation and Program Review Policy (P068).

6.21. Designated Pathway

Each school offering Extended French or French Immersion in TDSB has a designated catchment area. Students from this area may apply to attend the program in their designated school. From elementary through secondary schools, receiving schools are identified and the elementary-intermediate-secondary schools for each catchment are defined as a pathway.

6.22. Location of Schools Offering French Immersion and Extended French

A list of current schools offering Extended French or French Immersion can be found at www.tdsb.on.ca/programs.

6.23. Immersion Centers

TDSB has 6 Immersion Centres for which there is no English program catchment. French Immersion Centres deliver programming from JK only. In order to become an Immersion Centre, a Program Area Review Team must be called to consider the needs of the school and neighbourhood schools.

6.24. Enrolment Cap

Caps to student enrolment and average class size requirements are determined annually by the Ministry of Education and are aligned with Primary Class Size Legislation. French Immersion and Extended French programs are subject to a cap as required by the Ministry of Education.

6.25. Class Size: Minimum Opening

- (a) In order to maintain program viability, sufficient enrolment in the in-take class is vital. The Board recommends the following minimum enrolments:
 - (i) Early French Immersion – 1 class
 - (ii) Middle French Immersion – 1 class
 - (iii) Extended French (Grade 7) – 1 class
- (b) Program staff in consultation with Planning Department will determine entry grade classes based on space availability.
- (c) In other grades, principals, in consultation with staffing committees may adjust the Staffing Model to create combined classes.

PART 4: Financial Support

Funds are provided through the Ministry of Education from the Special Purpose Language Grant to support French as a Second Language programs. This is allocated to the Board on the basis of enrolment in all French programs: Core French, French Immersion and Extended French programs.

6.26. Startup Costs

For Early French Immersion programs, schools designated as new sites receive a subsidy for each new class to the school as well as an annual library supplement.

For Middle French Immersion/Junior Extended French, schools designated as new sites receive a subsidy for each new class to the school as well as an annual library supplement.

6.27. Operating Budgets

Immersion and Extended French schools receive a supplement which is included in school budgets. Principals in consultation with school staff determine the budget priorities for each school.

PART 5: Transportation

- (a) In accordance with the Transportation of Students Policy (P020) and Transportation of Students Procedure (PR504), and where transportation is approved by the Transportation Department, students from Kindergarten to Grade 5 will be transported by bus. Where transportation is approved by the Transportation Department, students from Grades 6 to 8 will be provided with TTC tickets.
- (b) Students may be transported to French Immersion and Extended French programs if the distance from home to school exceeds the following:
 - (i) Kindergarten to Grade 5: 1.6 km or more; and
 - (ii) Grade 6 to 8: 3.2 km or more.
- (c) Students who have elected to attend a French Immersion or Extended French program under Optional Attendance will not receive transportation.

PART 6: Human Resources

- (a) Administration of Core French, Extended French and French Immersion Programs

The administration of the program is under the supervision of a Superintendent. Program staff assists with implementation of the program and support for instruction. Principals are responsible for the day to day operation of programs in the schools.

- (b) Staffing

Staffing for French Immersion and Extended French programs is

allocated to schools on the basis of staffing formulas as well as Regulations under the Education Act and/or Collective Agreement negotiated with the teacher unions. In addition, Designated Early Childhood Educators (in Kindergarten) are assigned to the program as allocated in the current year budget.

6.28. Teacher Qualifications

- (a) Teachers will hold an Ontario Teachers Certificate which qualifies them to teach in the English Language schools of Ontario. In addition, teachers of Core, Extended and Immersion French will hold Additional Qualifications to teach French as a Second Language in an English school.
- (b) Teachers without an Ontario Teachers' Certificate may teach under a Letter of Permission as allowed by the regulation on Teacher Certification.
- (c) For teachers with Ontario Teachers' Certificates but no additional qualification in French, the Board may apply for them to teach under a Letter of Approval in certain circumstances.

PART 7: French as a Second Language Community Advisory Committee (FSLCAC)

The role of the FSLCAC is to consult with and advise the Board on French as a Second Language matters. As a Board community advisory committee, the FSLCAC will contribute to the work of trustees and staff. This partnership of trustees, staff and parents will foster excellence and growth in FSL programs at the Board.

7.0 EVALUATION

This Procedure will be reviewed as required, but at a minimum every four (4) years.

8.0 APPENDICES

Not Applicable

9.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Policies

- Accommodation and Program Review (P068)
- Early Learning and Care (P022)
- French-as-a-Second Language Programs (P080)
- Optional Attendance (P013)
- Transportation of Students (P020)

Operational Procedures

- Admission Eligibility Requirements (PR518)
- Admission to Specialized Schools and Programs (PR612)
- Kindergarten Registration Procedure (PR696)
- Optional Attendance (PR545)
- Transportation of Students (PR504)

Ministry of Education Documents

- The Ontario Curriculum: French as a Second Language: Core French - Grades 4-8; Extended French - Grades 4-8; French Immersion - Grades 1-8, Revised 2013
- The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12: French as a Second Language – Core French, Extended French, and French Immersion, Revised 2014