

Purpose/Background

The Division recognizes the merits of implementing and maintaining an Early French Immersion Program and continuation of the program at the secondary school level where feasible and desirable.

Definition

Early Immersion Program: A program that begins at the Kindergarten and/or Grade One level.

Procedures

1. The French Immersion Program will be implemented as an integral alternative program in the Division.
2. The French Immersion Program is intended to encourage learning English and French so as to:
 - 2.1 Allow all students taking English and French the opportunity to learn these languages for the purpose of communicating effectively in both.
 - 2.2 Promote in students an awareness of, and an appreciation for, Canada's two founding cultures.
 - 2.3 Provide an opportunity to facilitate communication between both English and French speaking Canadians.
3. A new French Immersion Program will be implemented in school locations where there is a registered enrolment of no fewer than twenty-five (25) French Immersion students in Grade 1 by April 30.
4. Parents are to be provided with information on the French Immersion Program and the necessary counselling to ensure that they, as far as possible, make the best decision about the choice of program for their children.
5. The Division is committed to providing an Immersion Program, once initiated, to the Grade 6 level despite fluctuations in enrolment. Continuing French Immersion Programs will be provided at the secondary school level in designated centres where numbers warrant.
6. Immersion students will be eligible for participation in programs for special needs children. Although this assistance would normally be delivered in English, teachers may be assisted in their teaching of exceptional students by the Learning Support Teacher.
7. The French Immersion Program will be accessible as an entry point to any child of age to enter E.C.S. or Grade 1 where a French Immersion Program is operating in his/her area.
8. Time allotments for the operation of the French Immersion Program are to begin with 90% French and 10% English in Grade 1. In Grade 2 the programs are to be 85% French and 15% English. From Grades 3 – 6, French will be maintained at least 60% of the total program.
9. The Division will support the continuation of the French Immersion Program at the junior high level and the provision of an enriched French Program at the high school level in Cochrane, Airdrie, Springbank, and Chestermere.
 - 9.1 In Grades 7, 8 and 9 at least 40% of instruction will be taught in French. This program will consist of a minimum of 150 hours of French Language Arts instruction, Social Studies in French

and the remaining portion of the 40% French component in the core program. Where appropriate staffing and enrolments exist, instruction in complementary subjects may also be offered in French.

- 9.2 In Grades 10, 11 and 12, French Language Arts 10, 20 and 30 (or its predecessor Langue et Littérature Françaises) is to be provided if numbers permit.
10. Transportation to Cochrane, Airdrie, Springbank, and Chestermere will be funded by the Division for students from areas with low French Immersion enrolments.
11. Where secondary French Immersion Programs are not available, a special French Language Arts course at the secondary school level will be made available provided that students have graduated from an elementary French Immersion program. Other programs in French at the secondary school level may be offered when numbers warrant.
12. The Division will assist parent organizations in providing extra-curricular activities, performance, etc. which will provide linguistic and cultural awareness.
13. The French Immersion programs will be implemented into existing schools so as to create “dual track” schools, whose program statements will reflect that French Immersion is an integral part of the system.
14. The Principal may combine grades to maintain viable class sizes.

Reference:

- Section 32, 33, 52, 53, 55, 196, 197, 204, 222 Education Act
- Funding Manual for School Authorities
- Guide to Education ECS to Grade 12
- Section 23, Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms