

Early French Immersion Program

2023



Halifax

Regional Centre for Education



French Immersion is Inclusive

The French Immersion program is open to *all students* regardless of their first language.



What is Early French Immersion?

Early French Immersion is a program designed for students whose first language is not French.

Instructional strategies and materials are designed with this in mind.

Early French Immersion begins in primary and continues to grade 12.



Early French Immersion Schools

HRCE has 25 elementary schools offering Early French Immersion.



French Immersion in Nova Scotia

The Early French Immersion Program began in 1977.

The Late Immersion Program (Grade 7-12) began in 1985.



Percentage of Instruction in French

Primary - Grade 2	90%-100% (varies due to Music and Physical Education)
Grades 3-6	80%- 85% (formal English instruction is introduced)
Grades 7-9	approximately 70%
Grades 10-12	minimum of 50% (9 of 18 credits)



French Immersion P-12

A French Immersion Certificate is awarded at High School graduation upon completion of program requirements.

High school students must complete 50% of their courses in French to receive this certificate.



Curriculum

Early French Immersion students follow the *same* curriculum as their peers in the English program for subjects other than language. However, some of the language outcomes are specific to learning French.



French Immersion P-12

Graduates of the French Immersion Program:

- will be able to communicate effectively in oral and written French and English.
- will be able to achieve expected learning outcomes of courses taught in French and in English.
- could pursue university or college education in French.



How do young children learn French?

Children will learn French in the same stages that they learn their first language.

Children in primary French Immersion will be taught simple sentences and vocabulary. They will be immersed in French and will build their vocabulary and grammar as the year progresses.

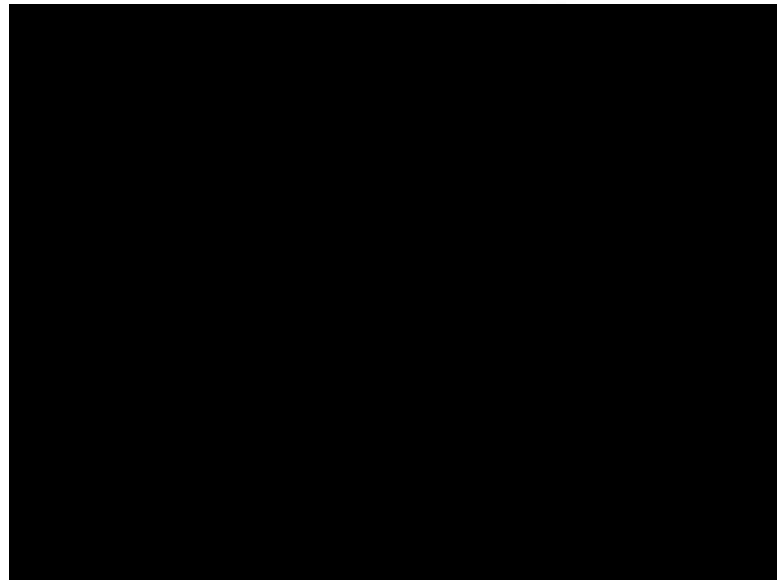


Growth over the course of the year

Beginning to Mid Year

- Ask and answer simple questions
- Speak in simple terms about themselves and their interests
- Build their vocabulary

Video of Primary French Immersion Students





Growth over the course of the year

Mid Year to End of Year

- Speak in sentences of 10 words or more
- Have short conversations in French around known subjects (likes, sports, animals, etc.)
- Tell a short story
- Be able to tap into a larger bank of vocabulary words



Language Acquisition in the French Immersion Program

- Students acquire French language skills through:
- teacher modeling and instruction
 - authentic opportunities to communicate and interact
 - linking oral language, reading, and writing



Benefits of Early French Immersion

- The student's knowledge of their first language is transferred to and interacts with the knowledge they are acquiring in the additional language.
- Language concepts and skills learned and developed in French support concepts and skills learned in their first language.
- Bilingualism can enhance some aspects of academic and cognitive growth (improved literacy, mental flexibility, creativity, divergent thinking, higher order thinking, expanded view of the world).

(Arnett & Bourgoin, 2017; Genesee, 2007)



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)
- If English is the home language, research shows that second-language learning does not negatively affect it. 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.

(Genesee, 2007)



If English is not the home language

Learning a 2nd language, such as French, can have an influence on learning additional languages. (Arnett and Bourgojn, 2018)



Learning Through Play

- As children enter school they need to continue to learn through the medium of play.
- An early elementary experience that is infused with play helps students learn in the way that is best suited to their stages of development.
- Children need time to explore, to create, to manipulate, and to design their own play. They also benefit from support, guidance, and gentle nudges to move beyond their comfort zone.
- In Immersion, interactions are supported by the classroom teacher modeling how to communicate in French.



Supports for Students in Immersion

- Early Literacy Support in French
- French Reading Recovery (in some schools)
- Resource
- Teaching Support Team (TST) provides support and guidance to teachers
- Student Planning Team (SPT) explores supports and makes decisions about the student's program.
- Adaptations and Individual Program Plans (IPP)



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 water bill, power bill, internet bill, home fuel bill, a tax receipt, property assessment or a mortgage contract);
- the completed registration form (including your child's Nova Scotia Health Card)



Useful Links

Halifax Regional Centre for Education:

<https://www.hrce.ca/about-hrce/school-administration/registration/french-programs/early>

Canadian Parents for French: www.cpf.ca

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development How Bilingual Am I: <https://sites.google.com/gnspes.ca/bilingualism/home>



Works Cited

Arnett, K., & Bourgoin, R. (2017). *Access for Success: Making Inclusion Work for Language Learners*. Pearson Education Canada.

Bournot-Trites, M., & Tellowitz, U. (2002, January). *Report of Current Research on the Effects of Second Language Learning on First Language Literacy Skills*. Atlantic Provinces Educational Foundation.

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Genesee, F. (2007, August). French Immersion and At-Risk Students: A Review of Research Evidence. *The Canadian Modern Language Review / La revue canadienne des langues vivantes*, 63(5), 654-687. 10.1353/cml.2008.0004