



Supporting your Child's Success in French Immersion

FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

French Immersion in Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools at A Glance

<p>What schools offer French Immersion?</p>	<p>Elementary: Single Track: École Sr. O'Brien, École St. Gerard, École St. Paul, École St. Matthew, Saskatoon French School Dual Track: École Mother Teresa, École Cardinal Leger, École St. Peter, École Holy Mary (Martensville), St. Luke (grade levels TBD)</p> <p>Secondary: Gr. 9-12 – approx. 50% of high school courses are offered in French.</p>
<p>Will French be the language of instruction for all subjects?</p>	<p>Elementary: K-2—90% all subjects in French except for Religious Education (English Language Arts is not taught until Grade 3) Gr. 3-8 — approx. 75—80% French instruction (English Language Arts, Religious Education and Band are all taught in English)</p> <p>Saskatoon French School – Religious Education is taught in French and Band is not offered.</p> <p>Secondary: Requirements for Bilingual Mention at graduation: must complete a min. of 12 credits taken in French. Approx. 50% of high school courses must be taken in French</p>
<p>What French language skills will my child have by the end of grade 12?</p>	<p>The goal of French immersion is to achieve “functional bilingualism” – being able to successfully manage in a personal and professional setting entirely in French and be proficient in English</p>

Single track school- The elementary school only offers K-8 French immersion programming

Dual track school – The elementary school offers both a K-8 French immersion program and a K-8 English program within the same facility.

Will my child achieve at the same level in a dual track school?

Yes, all French immersion classrooms teach the same provincial curriculum. Our student achievement data indicates that student achievement in French are similar regardless of school composition.



Frequently Asked Questions:

What if I don't speak French?

- The program is designed for children of non-French speaking families.
- Communication to parents through the school is in English
- Progress reports are in English

What is the most important thing I can do as a parent/ guardian?

TALK, TALK, TALK with your child. So much learning builds on what a child already knows and can do, and learning in French Immersion is no exception.

READ, READ, READ to your child. Talk to your child about their interests, what they see in books and in their environment. Literacy skills translate from one language to another.

Strong oral language skills provide the foundation for your child to develop better literacy skills in any language.

How can families support their children for French Immersion?

Children acquire thinking and communication skills that enable them to learn other languages by hearing and speaking the language in their home – whether it is English, Chinese, or Tagalog. We encourage you to:

- **read aloud to your child in the language you speak at home.** Talk about the story and share opinions about the story,
- **talk about what he or she is thinking about** and doing in his or her everyday life, develop their oral language skills in the language you speak at home,
- **nurture your child's creativity and curiosity** by exploring stories and their environment,
- **build their vocabulary in the language you speak at home** by reading and exploring language through stories, nursery rhymes and songs. Ask them to share words, phrases they know in French,
- **explore print language in the environment** with your child like street signs, menus and maps, and;
- encourage your child to express opinions about the world and explain reasons behind them.

Rooted Growing Reaching Transforming

What if I don't speak French, how can I help my child and be involved in the school environment?

- Provide a study area at home and develop regular routines for homework.
- Ask your child to explain what they are learning in French.
- Join the Catholic Community Council and meet other parents in the school community.
- Read to your child in English or in the language you speak at home.

Who teaches the French Immersion program?

- A qualified bilingual teacher with a minimum of a Bachelor of Education degree – many come from Saskatchewan but some come from other provinces and countries

What is the benefit of French Immersion?

- Positive effect on brain development
- Opportunity to seek jobs requiring a second language
- Many universities across Canada and the US require students to take second language courses

Is immersion curriculum different than the regular English program?

- All curricula are developed by the Ministry of Education in Saskatchewan
- English Language Arts is not introduced until grade 3 – this aligns with renewed curriculum in the province and all western provinces including the two territories
- All outcomes are similar to those that are in English except for the French language curriculum

What is the interdisciplinary curriculum that is taught in Kindergarten to grade 2?

- It is an integrated approach of all subjects taught through play, inquiry and project learning
- Develops knowledge, skills and values in an approach that encourages creative and critical thinking

How is French taught to young children?

- In the same way that toddlers learn to speak at home -- they learn by listening and speaking
- Students tend to use single words or broken phrases by about Christmas
- Child understands most of what the teacher says in French as part of classroom activities. Children are usually speaking most of their French in group learning situations at this stage
- Usually reply to the teachers and speak among themselves in English, but with some French "sprinkled" in
- By the end of June, they are able to speak more French themselves, but most would not converse in French

When do students start to learn reading and writing in English?

- Children learn many pre-reading skills between the ages 0-5 at home with their families
- Many reading skills taught in French transfer to English
- Once some fluency in French is well established, students are ready to begin formal study of English Language Arts beginning in grade 3

If a child is struggling in French immersion and transfers to the English program, will he or she do better?

- Research indicates that performance will be similar in both languages regardless of the language of instruction

How does a French immersion program affect my child's English skills?

- Current research indicates that the English language skills of French immersion students equal and in some areas exceed the achievement of students taught only in English

What are the benefits for students to continue in French immersion through high school?

- The goal of French immersion is to achieve “functional bilingualism” – being able to successfully manage in a personal and professional setting entirely in French
- Bilingual graduates are more likely to qualify for jobs in government, business, tourism and retail sectors

What high schools offer French immersion?

- Bishop James Mahoney High School
- Holy Cross High School
- St. Joseph High School
- Bethlehem Catholic High School

