

Department: Programs and Services
Section: Programs

1.0 Early Immersion Program

- 1.1 An Early Immersion Program may be implemented in grade primary.
- 1.2 Effective for the 2011-12 school year, all Early Immersion Programs will be regional programs and open to all students in the AVRSB.
- 1.3 Each Early Immersion Program shall meet the guidelines and requirements of the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for Early Immersion, PSP and Time to Learn Document.
- 1.4 Early Immersion begins in grade primary and continues to the end of grade 12.
- 1.5 In grades primary to two, 100% of instruction shall be in French.
- 1.6 In grades three to six, all instruction except English Language Arts shall be in French.
- 1.7 Notwithstanding 1.5 and 1.6, specialist subjects (Music, Physical Education) may be taught in English in grades primary to six, where staff fluent in French is not available.
- 1.8 Support for students with special needs shall be provided in French, to the extent possible.
- 1.9 In grades seven, eight and nine, a minimum of 70% of instruction shall be in French.
- 1.10 In grades seven to nine, five courses, as per the Provincial Policy in French Second Language Programs, shall be taught in French. These courses include French Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Math, and Personal Development and Relationships.
- 1.11 Additional courses may be taught in French in grades seven, eight and nine.
- 1.12 In grades ten to twelve, a minimum of nine full credits (or the minimum required by the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for students to receive the Provincial Immersion Graduation Certificate) must be taught in French.
- 1.13 To be eligible for the Provincial Immersion Graduation Certificate, students must meet the requirements set out by the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. As of November 1, 2009, those requirements state that students must have been enrolled in an Early or Late Immersion Program before entering high school and must successfully complete nine high school credits taught in French, including Français Immersion 10, Français Immersion 11, and Français Immersion 12. It is recognized that, depending on student enrollment and interest at the high school level, French Immersion course options may be limited and students will have a limited course options path to meet the requirements of the Immersion Graduate Certificate.

2.0 Late Immersion Program

- 2.1 A Late Immersion Program may be implemented in grade seven.
- 2.2 Effective for the 2011-12 school year, all Late Immersion Programs will be regional programs and open to all students in the AVRSB.
- 2.3 Each Late Immersion Program shall meet the guidelines and requirements of the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, PSP and Time to Learn Document.
- 2.4 Late Immersion begins in grade seven, and continues to the end of grade 12.
- 2.5 In grades seven, eight and nine, a minimum of 70% of instruction shall be in French.
- 2.6 In grades seven to nine, five courses, as per the Provincial Policy in French Second Language Programs, shall be taught in French. These courses include French Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Math, and Personal Development and Relationships.
- 2.7 Additional courses may be taught in grades seven, eight and nine.
- 2.8 In grades ten to twelve, a minimum of nine full credit French courses (or the minimum required by the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for students to receive the Provincial Immersion Graduation Certificate) must be available for students over the three year period.
- 2.9 To be eligible for the Provincial Immersion Graduation Certificate, students must meet the requirements set out by the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. As of November 1, 2009 those requirements state that students must have been enrolled in an Early or Late Immersion Program before entering high school and must successfully complete nine high school credits taught in French, including Français Immersion 10, Français Immersion 11, and Français Immersion 12. It is recognized that, depending on student enrollment and interest at the high school level, French Immersion course options may be limited and students will have a limited course options path to meet the requirements of the Immersion Graduate Certificate.
- 2.10 Notwithstanding 2.1, Late Immersion may be implemented in grade six in a Middle School, at the request of the principal and with approval of the Director of Programs and Services.

3.0 Current Immersion Programs

- 3.1 As of September 1, 2016 there are three Early Immersion Programs in the AVRSB accepting new students at the grade primary level. They are located as follows:
 - Kingston & District School
 - Kings County Academy
 - New Minas Elementary School

3.2 As of September 1, 2016 there is one Late Immersion Program in the AVRSB accepting new students at the grade seven level. It is located as follows:

- West Hants Middle School

4.0 Review and Discontinuation of Current French Immersion Programs

4.1 Every three years the Director of Programs and Services shall review the existing Immersion programs to ensure enrollment trends support the continuation of a sustainable program in each school/region where a program exists. The first review under these procedures will be during the 2012-13 school year.

4.2 If during the review outlined in 4.1, the official September 30th enrollment in the Immersion Program entry year (grade primary for Early Immersion and grade seven for Late Immersion) has been at least 20 students two of the previous three years, the program is approved for another three years. If the enrollment is less than 20 students two or more of the previous three years, the enrollment trend does not support the continuation of the program and, as such, it shall be discontinued.

4.3 On April 1st of each year, schools offering Immersion shall report to the Director of Programs and Services the number of confirmed registrations for the upcoming primary class (Early Immersion) or upcoming grade seven class (Late Immersion). If the number of confirmed registrations on April 1st for the upcoming school year is less than 15 students, the Immersion Program will not accept students into the entry year grade for the upcoming year (i.e. there will be no new grade primary or grade seven French Immersion class, as the case may be).

4.4 Notwithstanding 4.3, it is recognized that new student registrations in schools in the Kingston/Greenwood area are often tied closely to postings at Canadian Forces Base 14 Wing Greenwood, postings that often occur after April 1st. The principal of a school that serves families in this area can request to the Director of Programs and Services an extension to the April 1st deadline when past trends support and it is reasonable to believe registrations will reach 15 but have not done so by April 1st. As of September 2016, Kingston & District School is considered a French Immersion school that serves the Kingston/Greenwood area.

4.5 An Immersion Program that is discontinued shall cease to accept students into the entry year grade (primary for Early Immersion and grade seven for Late Immersion) but shall continue to operate for students currently in the program subject to section 8.0.

4.6 The re-establishment of a Regional Immersion Program following its discontinuation shall be considered as a new Immersion Program under section 5.0.

5.0 Establishment of New Immersion Programs

5.1 Annually, the Director of Programs and Services will determine if any new Early or Late Immersion Programs shall be established. Requests for consideration to establish a new Immersion Program may be made in writing by a parent/guardian school organization by December 1st of each year. When considering the

- establishment of a new Immersion Program, the Director of Programs and Services shall review:
- availability of space in school(s);
 - demonstrated community/regional commitment, including projected short and long-term French Immersion enrollment adequate to sustain the program;
 - historical enrollment in French Immersion in the area, if applicable;
 - program costs;
 - proximity to other Immersion Programs and the ability of a new program to meet a demand that cannot reasonably be met by existing Immersion Programs;
 - long-term viability and sustainability;
 - other considerations as relevant.
- 5.2 The location of any Immersion Program shall be determined by the Director of Programs and Services in consultation with principals.
- 5.3 Registration for Immersion Programs shall be open to all students in the AVRSB and follow the process set out in section 7.
- 5.4 The school principal, in consultation with the Director of Programs and Services, will determine the maximum number of students that can be accepted in the entry year of an Immersion Program (grade primary for Early Immersion and grade seven for Late Immersion). Actual class sizes are subject to class cap maximums, if applicable.
- 5.5 Where there are more students registered for the entry year of an Immersion Program than the program is accepting, students' names will be drawn randomly to determine the students who will be accepted. Drawing will continue to establish a wait-list.
- 5.6 The Director of Programs and Services, or their designate, will make the draw in the presence of the school principal, or designate, with an invitation to the parent/guardian school organization to have a representative present if they so wish.
- 6.0 Maximum Class Size: Entry-Level
- 6.1 The recommended maximum number of students to be accepted into an entry-level Early Immersion class is 27, unless otherwise determined by board or provincial guidelines/directives.
- 6.2 The recommended maximum number of students to be accepted into an entry-level Late Immersion class is 30, unless otherwise determined by Board or provincial guidelines/directives.
- 6.3 If the principal, in consultation with the Director of Programs and Services, determines that more than one entry-level grade Immersion class can be accommodated in a given year then the maximum accepted into the program can exceed the maximum class size allowed, providing no one class exceeds the maximum set out in 6.1 or 6.2.

6.4 Notwithstanding 6.1 and 6.2, and in keeping with other policies or procedures, the number of students accepted into a class may exceed the recommended maximum at the request of the principal and with the approval of the Director of Programs and Services.

7.0 Registration for New or Existing Immersion Programs

7.1 French Immersion Information Sessions, for parents/guardians of students entering primary (Early Immersion) or grade seven (Late Immersion), shall be coordinated and supported regionally and held during the month of February in each school where a program exists. The sessions will be led by the school principal or designate and supported by regional staff. Information on the limited immersion high school course pathways will be included during the sessions.

7.2 To allow for the proper and timely staffing of schools, registration for Immersion Programs will take place during the months of February and March, closing on the last school day of March. Signed application forms must be received by the deadline.

7.3 In January of each year, and prior to the information sessions set out in 7.1, grade six students in schools that might normally access a Late Immersion Program shall be given information on upcoming French Immersion Information Sessions. This information will be created regionally and distributed to schools as appropriate.

7.4 Applications received after the specified deadline shall be considered only in accordance with procedures outlined in sections 6.0 and 7.0, as applicable.

7.5 Annually, in advance of the sessions, the AVRSB shall inform parents/guardians of upcoming French Immersion Information Sessions through notices in local newspapers and on Board and school websites.

7.6 Notwithstanding 7.1, a school may choose to host additional French Immersion Information Sessions at the principal's discretion. Additional information sessions may include information sessions for French Immersion students transitioning from one school to another (i.e. for Early Immersion, between elementary and middle school).

8.0 Continuation of Immersion Programs to Graduation

8.1 For staffing and planning purposes, schools offering French Immersion Programs grades primary to twelve shall seek confirmation from students on or before April 1st of each year their intent to continue in the Immersion Program the following school year.

8.2 Where student attrition causes the number of students in a particular Immersion grade to drop to a level where the discontinuation of the program for those students is being considered, the principal shall work with regional staff to review different grade and class configuration options which may see the continuation of the program. Such grade and class configurations shall be consistent with Board and provincial policies and directives.

- 8.3 Where it is determined that there is an insufficient number of students to continue Immersion at a particular grade level in a particular school, that decision will be communicated to students and their parents/guardians by April 30th when possible. Should the decision be made not to continue Immersion at a particular grade, students affected may choose to enroll in another Immersion Program, provided there is room in the receiving program.
- 8.4 The decision to discontinue Immersion at a particular grade will be made by the Director of Programs and Services in consultation with the principal.
- 8.5 There shall be a maximum of three French programs in any one school: Core French, Integrated French, and Early or Late Immersion.

9.0 Withdrawal and Late Entry

- 9.1 A student who moves into the catchment area of a school where Immersion is offered, and who has been in an Immersion Program in their previous school, may join the Immersion Program, provided there is space in the program.
- 9.2 At the discretion of the principal and in consultation with the regional staff, a student who has not been in an Immersion Program may be accepted into an Immersion Program at any grade level, provided that there is space in the program and where circumstances are warranted. Note: However, as outlined in 1.13, a student who enters an Immersion Program after grade eight is not eligible to obtain a High School French Immersion Certificate.
- 9.3 Students enrolled in French Immersion are expected to remain in the program for the duration of the year.
- 9.4 Notwithstanding 9.3, individual cases for transfer out of an Immersion Program during the school year will be considered. A meeting with the student (if applicable), parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers, and the principal (with support from regional office French programs staff) will take place to arrive at a decision that is in the best interest of the student.

10.0 Transportation

- 10.1 Transportation for Immersion Programs outside a student's community school is the responsibility of the student's family.

11.0 Staffing

- 11.1 When a school implements a new Immersion Program, the school shall receive a staffing increase proportionate to the level of funding received by the Board.
- 11.2 In subsequent years of Immersion, staffing will come from the regular allocation for the school.
- 11.3 The minimum qualifications for French Immersion Teachers (grades primary to twelve) are:

- French major at university (for teachers au Français) and/or extended period of immersion in French-speaking environment and/or primary and secondary schools where French is the language of instruction or equivalent;
- an excellent command of oral and written French, equivalent to an Advanced Plus Level on the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), and a written evaluation, as assessed by the French Consultant or designate;
- a teacher who has not taught au Français for three years following the OPI and written evaluation may be requested to be re-tested, at the discretion of the Director of Programs and Services;
- knowledge and training in current second language and/or immersion teaching methodologies;
- training in the use of appropriate methods and strategies for the grade levels and subject areas in question;
- a working knowledge of English;
- teacher certification;
- university training or demonstrated competencies in the subject areas to be taught.

Monitoring:

- The Director of Programs and Services is responsible for the implementation, monitoring and revision of this administrative procedure.
- This administrative procedure will be monitored annually.

Superintendent Approved: September/02

Ref: BP 401.1, BP 402.4

Monitoring Date: Annually

Revised: September 25/07, April 12/10, March 30/17