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Saskatchewan Learning

French Education and Languages Branch

Handbook for Administrators
(Directors, Superintendents, Consultants, Principals)

French Second Language Programs

2005
Note: Websites mentioned in this document are accurate at time of print.

Note: Les sites web mentionnés sont à jour au moment d’imprimer ce document
Preface

Purpose of the Handbook for Administrators - French Second Language Programs

In October of 2002, a conference was held in Saskatoon called “Nurturing the Roots, Cultivating the Opportunities” involving Saskatchewan school board members, directors of education, University of Regina and University of Saskatchewan personnel, school administrators and central office personnel, Saskatchewan Learning employees, and representatives from Canadian Parents for French. The primary focus was a reflection on the current status of French Immersion education in Saskatchewan. Much was found to be celebrated. The second focus was the identification of opportunities for improving second language learning in the province.

The consensus of those in attendance was that L’éducation française en Saskatchewan : Guide à l’usage des administrateurs (1988) should be revised to provide administrators at all levels with a document containing current information on French second language (FSL) programs. Since its publication, extensive changes have occurred in instruction, curriculum, and governance as a result of the implementation of Core Curriculum and the institution of Fransaskois school boards. School and school division administrators, who may be inexperienced in second language education and who are often unilingual Anglophones, require a handbook, written in English, that would assist them in their role as supporters and facilitators for teachers, students and parents.

The federal government’s renewed commitment to linguistic duality, as stated in The Next Act: New Momentum for Canada’s Linguistic Duality, The Action Plan for Official Languages (Government of Canada, 2003), has given further impetus to the development of this support document for Saskatchewan administrators. The goal is to double the number of youth in each province and territory who can function in both official languages. Renewed calls from many sectors for excellence in educational opportunities and for improved assessment of French Second Language achievement provide additional reasons for the development of this administrative handbook.

The handbook is intended to meet the needs of the educational personnel identified below:

School division central office administrators who have administrative and supervisory responsibilities for FSL programs (French Immersion, Core French, and Intensive French) in their school divisions;

School-based administrators who have administrative and educational leadership responsibility for schools that offer FSL programs;

Teachers of French Immersion, Core French and Intensive French by ensuring that the administrators responsible for these programs have access to essential information that will assist them in providing students, teachers, and career counsellors with appropriate support to ensure excellent opportunities for Saskatchewan students.
Message from the Executive Director
Official Minority Language Office,
Saskatchewan Learning

To directors of education, education consultants, school principals and partners in French-language education in Immersion and Core French programs in Saskatchewan, the Official Minority Language Office (OMLO) is pleased to provide the Handbook for Administrators - French Second Language Programs. This document is an update of an earlier guide with some important and useful additions.

The development of this document was a collaborative undertaking.

I would like to thank Mary Reeves, writer of the handbook.

I want to acknowledge the contribution of Alberta Education and thank them for allowing us to use their document.

I would like to thank the Consultation Committee for their precious feedback and guidance. These members were Sandra Pace (Superintendent with Regina Public Schools); Aurèle Duperreault (School Principal in Regina) and Geri Hall (School Principal in Prince Albert). Your work is very important and the OMLO greatly appreciates your dedication. Thank you also Joan Boyer for your contribution.

Lastly, I express my gratitude to the OMLO team members who were supportive and diligent in their work, notably Bev Anderson and Dan Fletcher. I would like to mention that this document is the result of initiatives taken under the direction of French Curriculum Development in OMLO, a position previously held by Stan Frey and now by Simone Gareau.

I hope this guide will serve you well.

René Archambault
Executive Director
Official Minority Language Office
Saskatchewan Learning
Message du directeur général
Bureau de la minorité de langue officielle
Ministère de l’Apprentissage de la Saskatchewan


L’élaboration de ce document représente un travail d’équipe.

Je remercie Mary Reeves, la rédactrice du guide.

Je veux reconnaître la contribution de la province de l’Alberta et les remercier de nous avoir permis d’utiliser leur document.

Je tiens à remercier Sandra Pace (surintendante des écoles publiques de Regina); Aurèle Duperrault (directeur d’école à Regina) et Geri Hall (directrice d’école à Prince Albert) qui ont fait partie de l’équipe de consultation pour ce guide. Votre travail a été des plus précieux et le BMLO apprécie grandement votre dévouement. Je tiens aussi à remercier Joan Boyer pour sa contribution.

Je tiens enfin à exprimer aussi ma reconnaissance aux membres de l’équipe du BMLO qui ont travaillé de façon soutenue et diligente, notamment Bev Anderson et Dan Fletcher. J’aimerais bien mentionner que ce document est le résultat d’initiatives prises sous la direction de l’Élaboration des programmes d’études français du BMLO, ancienement tenue par Stan Frey et maintenant par Simone Gareau.

J’espère que ce guide vous sera utile.

René Archambault
Directeur général
Bureau de la minorité de langue officielle
Ministère de l’Apprentissage de la Saskatchewan
Section 1

The Context for French Second Language Education

The National Legislative Context

1969 The first Canadian Official Languages Act (OLA) declared that English and French would enjoy equality of status in all institutions of Parliament and the Government of Canada.

1982 Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms gave the right (where numbers permit) to schooling in both official languages in every province and territory.


2003 The federal government renewed the Canadian commitment to the linguistic duality of Canada through The Action Plan for Official Languages. The implementation of this vision will challenge not only educators and government personnel, but also people in the fields of communication, sports, culture, and business.

2004 The Office of the Official Languages Commissioner sponsored consultations with national and provincial stakeholders to gather information to assist them in developing strategies to meet the targets of The Action Plan. The challenge for the education sector in each province and territory of Canada will be meeting the target of doubling, by 2013, the number of youth who can function in both official languages.

The Canadian Social and Cultural Context

English and French are fundamental to the Canadian identity. Building upon this foundation of linguistic duality, Canada has become a country distinguished and enriched by the many different origins of its population. Having more than one official language has helped Canadians to develop a sensitivity to and respect for diversity, characteristics we offer to new immigrants.

This legacy is one that Canada celebrates and one that is acknowledged internationally as a unique characteristic of Canadian culture. Federal government support for the preservation of the diverse languages and cultures that enrich our nation is provided through the federal department of Canadian Heritage. The French language in Canada is nationally supported through the Office of the Official Languages Commissioner. French Immersion and Core French programs in every province and territory have enjoyed recognition, both at home and abroad, for their innovative language learning methodologies.
The Saskatchewan Legislative Context

1978 Since the promulgation of Saskatchewan’s Education Act (n.180), all children have had the right to education in the French language where numbers permit. Regulations established the process and procedures for exercising that right within the structure of local school divisions. While French second language programs existed prior to that time, the expansion of French Immersion and Core French programs occurred after the legislative changes.

1982 The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) identified and affirmed the rights of minority language parents to educate their children in their own language where numbers permit. French first language programs were developed in the years following the adoption of the Charter.

1994 A province-wide French school board began governance of the schools that serve the French minority during the 1994-1995 school year.

1995 The French second language program option, as well as French first language instruction, were enabled by Saskatchewan legislation (Education Act: 1995(180), Education Regulations (40-46)) and continue to be supported through the Official Minority Language Office (OMLO) of Saskatchewan Learning.

The Social and Cultural Context in Saskatchewan

Many of Saskatchewan’s earliest settlers and traders, as well as the Métis people, spoke French as their first language. Formal efforts were made by the government of the time to eliminate French and other languages in use from the daily lives of children and their families. Beginning in 1925 the Association culturelle franco-canadienne de la Saskatchewan offered a program that provided one hour of French instruction a day, the maximum allowed, to students in Fransaskois communities. It has been only during the past 40 years that we have seen support for French instruction in schools and the maintenance of heritage languages. An excellent history of the struggle of French people in Saskatchewan for the preservation of their language and culture is available on “Le site internet fransaskois” (http://collections.ic.gc.ca/fransaskois/english.html).

In Saskatchewan the first French Immersion program started in 1966 at l’École française de Saskatoon, a private elementary school. In 1968 this school, along with Collège Mathieu, became the first schools where French was the language of instruction. That same year saw the opening of a French Immersion program in a publicly funded school, St. Pius X School in Regina.

The Education Act was amended in 1978, permitting the Lieutenant Governor in Council to “designate” schools where French could be used as a language of instruction for a period of time. This meant that subjects other than the French language arts could be taught in French (for example, social studies, mathematics, science, art, and music).
The following decade saw significant growth in French Immersion programs across the province. By 1976-1977 numerous French Immersion programs were in place beginning in Kindergarten and continuing to the end of Grade 8. As these students advanced through school, expansion of the “designated” program to high school began, and an emphasis on curricula for the French Immersion program at this level became a priority for the Department of Education. The label “designated” has since been dropped from everyday usage, and “French Immersion” program is the accepted term.

The French Immersion program continues to be a sound and recognized educational option. In 2004, over 8500 students in 65 schools were enrolled in this program in Saskatchewan.

Federal funding for French language education, Francophone, French Immersion, Core French and Intensive French, has continued to supplement provincial financial resources for second language instruction.

**Future of French Second Language Education in Canada and in Saskatchewan**

*The Action Plan for Official Languages*, (Government of Canada, 2003), has a stated goal of doubling the number of bilingual students graduating from Canadian high schools based on the 2001 census data. Among the strategies for achieving the goal are:

- increasing the number of students studying French as a second language;
- improving instruction through teacher professional development;
- providing more opportunities for French Immersion experiences for teachers and students;
- increasing the opportunities for French language learning at the post-secondary level so that students and their teachers can maintain and improve their second language competency.

Saskatchewan has a challenge to meet with respect to French second language education. We currently have fewer 15- to 19- year olds with knowledge of both official languages than any other province in Canada. Saskatchewan’s place in the global economy requires a greater focus on second language skills than currently exists.

**The Personal Benefits of Fluency in Two Languages**

Research continues to identify quantifiable benefits to the learner from the acquisition of a second language (Wachowicz, 2002). During the past 20 years, the identified benefits include educational, social and economic results. Where sufficient time is spent learning languages in addition to the first language, five areas of measurable positive change in student achievement have been found:

- increased intellectual potential;
- higher overall academic achievement;
- higher achievement in first language competency;
- heightened sense of respect for and valuing of cultural diversity;
- improved career opportunities and greater economic potential.
More recent research has identified benefits of bilingualism for older persons in terms of retention of mental acuity. The research on brain development continues to affirm the cognitive advantages of a second language for learners of all ages.

**French Second Language Programs in Saskatchewan**

**French Immersion**

- A second language program in which French is the language of instruction for a significant part of the school day; several or all subjects, with the exception of English language arts, are taught in French.

- A program in which the desired outcomes for students are:
  - high proficiency in the English language;
  - functional fluency in French;
  - understanding and appreciation of Francophone cultures;
  - mastery of the skills and abilities identified in core and optional areas of study.

- A program with an entry point at either Kindergarten or Grade 1 and intended to continue through to Grade 12.

- A program with prescribed French Immersion curricula, set by Saskatchewan Learning, which are parallel to English language curricula.

**Core French**

- A second language program in which French is taught as a subject or course.

- A program in which the desired outcomes for students are:
  - a good foundation in French from which to pursue fluency;
  - insights into and an appreciation of Francophone cultures both in Canada and in the world;

- A program commonly offered as early as Grade 1 and supported by a provincial curriculum.

**Intensive French**

- An enrichment of the Core French program through a period of intensive exposure to French, up to four times the usual number of hours of instruction.

- A program where instruction is carried on in French from 65% to 80% of the school day for a five-month period in Grade 5 or 6.

Children and young people in French second language programs represent a cross-section of the children and families of the province. Their needs must be addressed in the same holistic manner as in the other educational programs.
Effective French Second Language Program Delivery

The purpose of this handbook for division and school administrators supervising FSL programs is to provide support for the implementation and maintenance of FSL programs in the province. The handbook contains basic information about the most effective instructional and operational practices for attaining excellence in program delivery and outcomes.

Effective school practices have unique requirements when implemented in FSL settings. The four areas of effective school practice identified in School PLUS that can have a positive impact on these programs will be highlighted in this handbook: adaptive leadership, responsive curriculum and instruction, assessment for learning, and authentic partnerships.

Adaptive Leadership: The development of leadership qualities in FSL administrators has unique requirements which this handbook will address.

Responsive Curriculum and Instruction: The extensive research on “best practices” in instruction, environment, and supports for successful learning for all students in French Immersion, Core French and Intensive French provides direction for those with administrative responsibilities as they fulfil their mandate for program and school improvement.

Assessment for Learning: Both the provincial and federal governments are putting increased emphasis on the development of accountability measures that will assist schools, teachers and children to measure student outcomes and to plan for program and instructional improvement.

Authentic Partnerships: Partnerships with parents and the community are essential to successful FSL programs. Partnerships with the French community, with other school divisions, and with employers in the province are also needed. Resources, community and organisational supports critical to effective second language programs will be highlighted in this document.

There are two other foundational components of effective practice that have critical importance for the achievement of learning excellence in French second language programs. The first is the nurturing of a learning community in the school and the school community. The second is the implementation and maintenance of an effective collaborative planning and monitoring process.

Learning Community: Teachers, students, staff, and administrators form a community of learners. Meaningful learning is not restricted to students, but involves the whole community. Designing optimal learning opportunities for FSL students and their teachers is challenging at times but is necessary to support and foster the desired outcomes of the programs.

Collaborative Planning and Monitoring Processes: Members of the learning community need to plan together and faithfully monitor their progress and accomplishments. Out of the monitoring process will come plans for improvement. Cyclical program evaluation and action research have proven to be essential in achieving educational excellence. Staff, parents, students and community members, as well as other interested groups, must be involved in the challenge of delivering excellent second language programs to improve educational opportunities for Saskatchewan FSL learners.
Section 2

French Immersion Education in Saskatchewan

The Learning Process in Immersion

The immersion approach is based on current understandings of how children learn their first language, that is, through interaction with meaningful content, and the desire to use language to communicate ideas. Thus, throughout a French Immersion program, students acquire French while they acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes prescribed by the curricula of the province.

In Saskatchewan, immersion begins in Kindergarten or Grade 1 and is generally described as Early Immersion. Early Immersion is based on the belief that young children learn languages more easily than older learners do. Because students enter immersion with little or no knowledge of French, the program begins with a concentration on oral language development to give students a sufficient understanding of the language to learn to read and write in French, and learn subject area content in French.

Formal instruction in the English language is recommended to begin no earlier than Grade 3. Parents frequently express concern that their children will experience a serious delay in their English reading and writing development. But by Grade 4 most children will have achieved the English language levels of their non-immersion peers, with the exception of spelling. By Grade 6 and beyond, English language achievement of most students exceeds the achievement of their unilingual peers.

The strong role of parents in establishing immersion programs and their increased support during their child’s schooling is also recognized as a key characteristic of the program. Parents do not need to have a knowledge of French in order to enrol their children in French Immersion.

Goals of the French Immersion Program

It is important for parents and students to have a clear understanding of the goals of the program, identified as follows:

- Students become functionally bilingual, in other words, after completing the twelve-year program, they are able to communicate easily in French and English.
- Students are capable of pursuing post-secondary education and training in French and English.
- Students are capable of undertaking employment in French and English.
- Students understand and appreciate attitudes and customs other than their own.
- Students have met or exceeded the expectations of the curricula of the province whether courses are taken in English or French.
French Immersion Student Profile

The design of Saskatchewan curricula, with the expectation that the Adaptive Dimension be integrated into instructional planning for all students who require such adaptations, makes the program suitable for almost any child.

- Parental support and encouragement are essential for success as they are for any educational program.
- Researchers have found that early immersion students with difficulties—learning disabilities, low intelligence, behavioural problems—will do as well academically in the French program as they would in a regular English program provided that they receive the same assistance as they would in the English program (Halsall, 1998).
- Gifted students can thrive in an immersion program, if they also receive the benefit of special programming (Halsall, 1998).
- Students from non-English speaking homes also succeed in immersion programs, learning English and French as their second and third, or even fourth languages.
- Socio-economic factors should not be a deterrent to choosing a French Immersion program (Halsall, 2001).
- Aboriginal students should be encouraged and supported when they access a French Immersion program.

French Language Listening and Speaking Skills

Children acquire listening and speaking skills in a second language in much the same way as their first, initially by observing and listening, then by association of sounds with gestures and objects, and finally by imitation and repetition. This approach is often called a “gentle” introduction to second language learning.

In the classroom, the teacher:
- uses French all the time, except if the students’ security is at risk (e.g. health or safety concerns).
- employs gestures, mime, objects and pictures to help students understand.
- includes songs, rhymes, stories and routines to help familiarize students with words and concepts, and to create a safe and predictable environment for using the language.
- constantly listens and observes to verify what information the students understand, adapting speech and activities as necessary to convey meaning.
- encourages the students to speak French, and corrects errors through repetition and role modelling.
- constantly seeks opportunities for language development and takes advantage of situations in which language development can occur naturally and effectively.
- seeks opportunities for students to use their French language skills outside the classroom and in real-life situations.
The students:
- learn to be very good listeners because they have to pay close attention in order to understand what is happening in the classroom.
- are encouraged to speak French all the time, but for the first couple of years may use English to express a complex thought for which they have not yet learned the necessary French words.
- may not speak French outside of the classroom in the early grades.
- may use French sounds and words at play and sing French songs learned during class.

Developing and enriching oral expression is very important in immersion and generally precedes the development of written communication skills.

Students require opportunities to:
- listen to French being spoken by the teacher, before they are expected to fully comprehend it;
- listen and understand before speaking; and
- speak French before reading and writing it.

The formal study of grammar may begin once the students have had sufficient experience in listening to, comprehending and speaking French. Active listening, spontaneous speaking and oral feedback underlie language development throughout an immersion program from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

French music, films, visitors and lots of interaction are very important in the French Immersion classroom. Concerts, plays, public speaking, field trips, and even exchange programs are used to help round out the students’ experiences with the language, as well as enhance cultural understanding.

“If you [repeatedly] go into an immersion classroom and there is silence, something is wrong.”

—Dr. Lucille Mandin

French Language Reading and Writing Skills

By the time formal instruction in reading and writing is introduced, students have a good basic knowledge of French. The teacher continues to use oral expression as the basis for reading activities by first introducing texts orally (with the help of cues, props and gestures), and by encouraging lots of discussion to ensure a high level of comprehension. Texts are chosen to suit the students’ interests and level of comprehension.

Because students need to develop prerequisite skills in French, the Grade 1 French Immersion teacher may introduce formal French reading instruction more gradually than the teacher in the English program. This delay means that immersion students may appear to be slightly behind their English program counterparts in learning to read.
Parents often raise concerns at this stage. Consequently, it is very important that parents receive clear explanations regarding language and literacy development in immersion and their role in the process. *French Immersion Kindergarten to Grade 5: A Parent Information Handbook*, (Saskatchewan Learning, 2000) is available online at [http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/omlo/infoparent/livrets/immersion/anglais/index.html#intro](http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/omlo/infoparent/livrets/immersion/anglais/index.html#intro).

Parents need reassurance that their child will soon be reading in two languages. Recent results of international reading assessments (Statistics Canada, 2001) of 15-year old French Immersion students indicate that Canadian French Immersion students are reading in English better than students educated in unilingual English programs.

Writing correctly in any language not only involves practice in handwriting, but also requires knowledge of grammar and syntax. Knowing oral grammar facilitates and simplifies rule learning because the students will be able to generalize from what they know. Therefore, in immersion, the formal study of the written language begins once the students have had sufficient experience in listening, speaking and reading.

The teacher integrates the teaching of grammatical concepts and writing skills into the context of academic learning (social studies, science, mathematics, etc.) to help students use these concepts and skills in meaningful situations.

**The Content Areas: Subjects Taught in French**

Language development, both oral and written, continues and broadens with the introduction of subject content. Early math and science concepts are very concrete and easily taught with the use of visual aids and hands-on activities. Arts education, especially music and drama, as well as physical education, provide an abundance of meaningful language learning opportunities.

Teaching techniques and materials are used to encourage teacher-student and student-student interaction. Activity-oriented learning continues throughout all grades to allow for daily use of the language by students, and thus continued oral development.

For effective use of instructional time, the practice of integrating subject areas is to be encouraged at all levels. Not only is time saved and repetition avoided, but research evidence also affirms this instructional practice as one of the most effective for student achievement.

At the secondary level, French language arts teachers and those teaching other subjects in French are encouraged to work collaboratively on their instructional units, since all teachers in a French Immersion program are responsible for language development. Integration of subject areas is to be encouraged and facilitated where possible, as this practice is a well-established means of increasing academic achievement.
English Language Arts for French Immersion Students

Once students have developed a good foundation in French, formal instruction of English is introduced. Most immersion students come from English home environments, and all are exposed to English in the community. Thus, in English language arts, the teacher helps students to build on what they already know through their experiences with English and the skills they have gained while learning to read and write in French. For example, because of the number of French words that are similar to English words (up to 40%), it is easy for students to make transfers from English to French and vice versa. The teacher helps students to sort out the differences between French and English that can cause confusion during the transition from French to English reading and writing.

At the middle and secondary levels, French language arts and English language arts teachers (where these subjects are taught by two different people) require time for collaborative planning and frequent communication to avoid overlap of content in the two language classes. Collaborative planning will maximize the opportunities to learn for immersion students.

Instructional time is at a premium in French Immersion, as students are learning the same content as those in the English program but are also continuing their French language instruction.

Outcomes of an Early French Immersion Program K to 12

Students who complete an early immersion program from Kindergarten or Grade 1 to Grade 12 will be “functionally bilingual”. These students can communicate effectively and completely in French, are capable of pursuing post-secondary studies in French and of being employed in a French-speaking environment. Students are encouraged to seize opportunities to live, work and study for even short periods of time in a French community to further advance their language skills. Many opportunities for post-secondary study are listed starting on page 99. Student exchanges are also available as described in the section on Federal Provincial Programs starting on page 55.

The achievement of “perfectly balanced bilingualism” is not the goal of a French Immersion program. In fact, very few individuals achieve a truly balanced bilingualism - an equal and high degree of proficiency in two languages - in a lifetime. However, research shows that French Immersion students attain very high levels of functional fluency, and that the program is a highly effective approach to second language learning.
Section 3

Ensuring Successful French Immersion Programs: the Role of the School Division Administrator

Applying for a New French Immersion Program

The legislation that facilitates the implementation of a new French Immersion program in a school division is found in the Appendix on page 77. The relevant *Education Act (1995)* articles, as well as the accompanying *Regulations*, are provided for the information of directors of education, school-based administrators, interested parents and others. *The Education Act (1995)* articles as well as the *Regulations* should be read in addition to the process outlined in the following steps.

1. The request for permission to implement a French Immersion program can come from any of the following three parties:

   - **A school board** may make a request to the Minister of Learning for a French Immersion program to be implemented in a particular school. The request must be made before February 15.
   - In rural school divisions, a local board, a **parent committee, or a local school advisory committee** may make a request for a French Immersion program where at least 15 pupils request enrolment. The request must be made to the school division before December 15.
   - In urban school divisions, a **committee of parents representing the parents or guardians of at least 15 pupils** may petition the school board for the implementation of a French Immersion program before December 15.

2. The discussions surrounding the implementation of the program are led by the school division in consultation with a parents’ committee (urban and rural), the local school board (rural), or with the local school advisory committee.

3. After discussion and study of the conditions outlined in the *Education Act* and the *Regulations*, a formal request, accompanied by detailed implementation plans, is submitted by the school division to the Minister of Learning before February 15. The conditions stipulated in the regulations include the following three requirements
   - At least 15 pupils will enrol in the program.
   - The program will be maintained for a minimum of three years.
   - There will be an educational program provided for the pupils who do not enrol in the program.

4. Consultations will be held between Saskatchewan Learning and officials from the division. If all the necessary conditions are met, an Order in Council will designate the school as the location for a French Immersion program.
5. Saskatchewan Learning will support the school division annually through targeted grants that are dependent on the percentage of instruction provided in the French Language. During the first year of implementation at each grade level, an additional implementation grant will be provided.

6. Where pupils from Kindergarten to Grade 8 (urban) and Kindergarten to Grade 12 (rural) attend a French Immersion program in a school that is outside their attendance area, the school division has access to transportation grants. Where school divisions wish to have students attend a French Immersion program in another school jurisdiction, the costs of transportation are the responsibility of the school division.

The Official Minority Language Office provides a broad range of supports for the successful completion of the process required for a new program or an extended program on their web site at http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/bmlo/. Curriculum documents, resource lists, consultants, professional development opportunities, including mentoring for teachers, are all available through the Official Minority Language Office. For more details, see pages 53 – 55.

Applying for an Extension of an Existing French Immersion Program

Where a French Immersion program currently exists and where there is intent to extend the program in the next school year by adding grade levels, the request must be submitted by the school division to the Minister of Learning by February 15. If the request is originating from the parent committee, or the local school advisory committee or the local school board (rural), then the request must go to the board of education by December 15 to allow for the required consultation.

Maintaining an Existing French Immersion Program

School divisions are asked in November each year to prepare a statement of the utilization of the grants provided in the previous budget year to support the French Immersion programs in their jurisdiction, and to report on needs identified for the upcoming year. This report is to be submitted to the Minister of Learning by February 15. More detailed information is provided on page 16.

School Division Support and Educational Leadership

While leadership for FSL programs must also come from the federal and provincial levels, the first level of commitment is at the school division level. The successful program is dependent upon strong leadership throughout the education system, beginning with the board of education and the division administrators. Decision-makers must value French language learning as part of a world-class education. Administrators need:

- To become informed about the benefits of second language learning (and specifically FSL learning) to their students’ overall education and future.
- To become informed about the goals of French Immersion, Core French and Intensive French programs, and the best means of delivering these programs to meet their respective goals.
• To identify potential issues and challenges related to the delivery of a French program in their locale, and to identify strategies to address them.
• To ensure that school division and school-level policies are developed to provide the necessary framework for the programs to succeed.
• To ensure that key stakeholders (which includes principals, school staff, students and parent councils) are well informed and supportive of FSL programs.
• To implement program evaluation and assessment processes to provide information for school and program improvement.
• To ensure that, when assigning administrators to schools with French Immersion programs, their values and beliefs are supportive of the program.
• To ensure that the community is informed of the French program options and their respective benefits.
• To ensure that the strategic plans of the school division support the interests of students in FSL programs and their families.
• To ensure support for French Immersion programs from other division staff, such as those responsible for space allocation, transportation, curriculum support, and staff and student recruitment.
• To recognize the unique professional development needs of FSL teaching staff and provide them with adequate support to pursue their professional growth plans.
• To ensure that there is appropriate access to FSL programs, including French Immersion, and that the access is equitable for the diverse populations their community serves.

**Unique Needs of French Immersion Programs**

French Immersion programs require student, teacher and family supports that are different from those needed for the regular English program. The students in an English program are surrounded by an environment that supports the learning of English. The conversation in their family, radio and television, the books and newspapers in their homes, the signs on the street all provide a language-rich environment for these children. Teachers of French Immersion programs in Saskatchewan must compensate for the lack of a French environment to provide support for development of speaking and listening skills in French.

French resources are more difficult to find, frequently more expensive, and far fewer in number. In many cases, teachers find themselves more isolated, with only a few teachers in their school division undertaking the same role of FSL teacher. There are very few French-speaking administrators or administrators with a background in second language learning. Supervisors of French programs in Saskatchewan need additional information and personal support to help them fulfil their responsibilities.

The French Immersion teacher has the further challenge of most often working in a dual track school where the daily school announcements and routines may be occurring exclusively in English.
Opportunities for the French Immersion student to communicate in French in these settings are more limited than in a single track school, and require collaborative planning on the part of all staff. French Immersion teachers are themselves frequently challenged in retaining their French language proficiency when they rarely have an opportunity to use the language except in a classroom. They, like their students, need communication in French at or above their level of competence to assist them in modelling appropriate language usage and sound formation.

Two effective school practices identified in the School PLUS literature - Responsive Curriculum and Instruction and Assessment for Learning - demand different considerations when applied to the French Immersion environment. Administrators at all levels must support teachers as they seek to create learning environments appropriate to quality FSL programs where students are given every opportunity to achieve success in the unique learning outcomes in immersion programs.

Teachers are able to create optimal conditions for learning when they use a broad range of instructional strategies, assessment and evaluation practices, and instructional resources to meet the diverse learning needs of all students in immersion classrooms. Administrators at both the division and school levels need to ensure that teachers are supported in the instructional design for their classroom. Access to quality and diverse resources is required, as is school-level and division support for teacher professional development in current second language instructional and assessment practices.

In French Immersion, an active, communicative and participative learning environment is essential to the success of the program. The total school environment must be responsive, as well, to the nature of the program. Success depends on many factors, some of which are outside the classroom but within school policies, procedures, activities and organization.

Program Funding and Accountability

Jurisdictions offering French Immersion programs have access to federal funding through the Official Languages in Education Program. These funds, based on a per-pupil allocation for implementation and maintenance, are intended to address some of the additional costs involved in offering a French Immersion program. (There are, as well, grants available for Core French programs that are intended to provide some support for the special needs of this program.)

School divisions must be prepared to show that funds they receive are used for the intended purpose. Planning and budgeting at all levels should attempt to provide:

- adequate, authentic and age-appropriate French resources from the entry grade through to Grade 12 that support the learning outcomes of all courses, as well as general classroom instruction and activities;

- high-quality French language, multimedia library collections;

- authentic French language experiences.
School divisions offering French Immersion programs are required to submit annually by February 15 two documents to Saskatchewan Learning:

1. a copy of the Board resolution requesting recognition of French Immersion programs in the division for the next school year;
2. an Expenditure Forecast of Maintenance and Implementation Grants for the next school year. The forecast must include:
   - Administration, Supervisory or Consultative services
   - Teaching Services
   - Instructional Resources and Program Development
   - Other Expenditures
   - Professional Development.

The maintenance grants for French Immersion are based on full time student equivalents. A student is considered full time French in K-6 if 75% or more of instruction is carried on in French. Divisions will receive the base amount multiplied by the number of students in K-6. Students in Grades 7-12 will be considered full-time when their courses in French comprise 50% of their educational program. These grants are reviewed annually in the Saskatchewan Learning budget process.

**School-Based Administrators of French Immersion Programs**

The role of the school-based administrator has been recognized in current research as critical to the effectiveness of a school and to the success of programs offered there. This is especially true for the administrator who is responsible for a French Immersion program.

The following is a summary to assist division administrators to identify effective practices of school-based administrators. Their role will be addressed more completely in Section 4.

Effective school administrators in French Immersion schools are able to:

- Create a learning community, involving teachers, parents, students and other staff members, that collaboratively plans and organizes the French Immersion program environment;
- Ensure that the educational needs of each program in the school are respected and addressed in planning processes and operational procedures;
- Structure monitoring processes that allow needs specific to the French Immersion program to be identified and solutions developed by the learning community;
- Make French Immersion program information readily accessible for all inquiries and for communication to the public;
- Initiate and support school-based professional development opportunities for all teachers, including program-specific opportunities for French Immersion teachers;
- Educate the community at large about the differences between educational programs and the different activities and measures taken by each to attain their goals;
- Supervise teachers and assist them in achieving their goals for professional growth by identifying and communicating professional development opportunities including French language, FSL methodology, and French subject specific opportunities locally, provincially and, on occasion, nationally;
• Be sufficiently aware of the indicators of good teaching in French Immersion and Core French classrooms to assist teachers in identifying professional growth targets when necessary;
• Be aware of and comfortable with handling the specific concerns of French Immersion parents;
• Plan timetables in such a manner as to accommodate the needs of French Immersion students for continuous language learning. At the secondary level, in particular, it is important to ensure that French language-rich courses are scheduled each semester, and that there is sufficient flexibility for students to choose core and optional subjects (taught in French);
• Support secondary students’ option to access e-learning courses or correspondence courses where there are insufficient options in French in the school.


**A Positive French Immersion Learning Environment**

The success of an immersion program requires a positive school environment that recognizes and values the learning of French, and incorporates and celebrates the use of French as a living language. This can happen through effective collaboration on the part of all school staff.

Policies and practices that reflect an understanding of and commitment to the needs of the French Immersion program are required. Administrators and teachers of other programs in the school can support the program, for example, by creating or seeking opportunities to allow for the use of French in the school environment. Actively encouraging students to speak French everywhere in the school can do much to enhance student and program outcomes.

**Dual Track School**

• A dual track school houses both a French Immersion program and an English program.
• The dual track school is the most common school setting for immersion programs in Saskatchewan and across Canada at the elementary, middle and secondary levels.
• A multi-track school houses more than two programs, for example, an English program, an early French Immersion program, and perhaps a Cree or Ukrainian program.

Administration in these settings is more complex as attention is required to meet the needs and goals of two or more programs, groups of teachers, parents, and student populations. On the other hand, this setting can more clearly replicate the Canadian reality of linguistic duality, and acceptance of and respect for diversity.

**Single Track School or Immersion Centre**

• The single-track school is one in which only French Immersion is housed, in any combination of grade levels.
• Administration in this setting can focus exclusively on the immersion program and the unique needs of teachers and students in the immersion environment.
The single-track school has been found to be the most effective setting for achieving the goals of the French Immersion program. It is recognized, however, that this form of French Immersion is not practicable in many locations.

**The Essential Place of Francophone Culture in French Immersion Programs**

While the numbers of hours of exposure to French is important for students’ second language development, it is equally important that the exposure be relevant, authentic and varied. Language is integral to the way of life of those who speak it - their behaviours, beliefs, history, and geography. The need for exposure to French in settings other than the classroom is critically important in French Immersion as the intended outcome is a “functionally bilingual” student, who can “live and work” confidently and comfortably in their second language and in a culture different from their own. The increasing globalization of our world has elevated the importance of the skill of working successfully with people from diverse cultures.

Exposure to culture in a French second language program should include some of the following:

- Exposing students to Canadian and international French cultures through a variety of domains and through a variety of language experiences, including music, art and literature;
- Exposing students to a variety of native French speakers, both in and outside the classroom, through such means as invited guests (e.g., artists, various trades people and professionals from a variety of fields), videos, field trips, and exchanges;
- Using resources and materials that reflect authentic, modern life in Francophone cultures;
- Encouraging students to explore the language and culture on their own outside school through such means as watching French TV, listening to French radio, reading in French, listening to French music, attending French theatre or Francophone community festivals (e.g., the annual *Cabane à sucre*), travel, student exchanges, and pen pals or e-pals.

These types of experiences will not happen without the active support of administrators at all levels. There are a variety of resources to assist teachers and school divisions in meeting these program needs. National and provincial historic sites, galleries and museums, exchange programs, Francophone community associations, French music and drama groups, community people who are bilingual, Radio Canada radio and television are just a few available in Saskatchewan and nationally. Lists of such possibilities are provided on pages 64 and 65 of this document.

**Administrative Support for French Immersion Classrooms**

A successful FSL program reflects current research and best practices both in the field of education generally and, more specifically, in French Immersion. Resources, time on task, instructional excellence, professional development of staff, and collaborative planning are all areas that require continuous attention and review by administrators to ensure that students are provided with the best possible opportunities to learn.
The following list will assist school division leaders, principals and other educational leaders in recognizing areas where French Immersion staff may need support in order to offer a quality program:

- Readily available curriculum documents that support effective FSL learning;
- Access to authentic print and multimedia resources appropriate to the age, interests and language proficiency of students;
- Access to authentic French linguistic and cultural experiences;
- Student access to a wide range of courses in French, both core and optional;
- Staff collaboration in continuous monitoring and evaluation of the program to identify and plan program improvements;
- Intentional and collaboratively-planned development of all French language skills - listening, speaking, reading, writing and appreciation of the French culture - at all grade levels and in all subject areas;
- Written expectations or benchmarks for the assessment of French language skills at regular points in the K-12 program;
- An appropriate allocation of instructional time in French to meet the program goals of functional bilingualism;
- Professional development and support materials developed or adapted for teachers in immersion;
- Integrated and interdisciplinary instructional units that maximize efficiency and provide an optimal opportunity for high student academic achievement.

### French Language Instructional Time Allocations

The instructional time allocations suggested to support the goals of French Immersion programs are indicated below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Time Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 1-2</td>
<td>90%-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 3-5</td>
<td>70%-80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 6-9</td>
<td>50%-70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 10-12</td>
<td>50%-60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are also suggested time allocations for subject area instruction. These allocations may require modification where school divisions have chosen a locally developed option. In Catholic school divisions, for example, time for the religious education component or Christian Ethics program must also be allotted within the 1500 minutes per week of instruction. This option requires modification of the subject area time allocation. When using the preferred practice of interdisciplinary instruction, tracking instructional time becomes increasingly important.
Sample Time Allocation in French Immersion Programs (K-Grade 9)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Elementary Level (Grades 1-5)</th>
<th>Middle Level (Grade 6)</th>
<th>Middle Level (Grades 7-9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>French Immersion</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>French Immersion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts Education</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

French Immersion Teacher Questionnaire Results, (Saskatchewan Learning, 2003), p. 7.

French Immersion at the Secondary Level

The French Immersion program’s objective at the high school level is to ensure that competence in French keeps pace with the student’s intellectual and general maturity. Research findings over the years have consistently shown that French Immersion is the most effective method for teaching French as a second language where functional bilingualism is the desired goal. By the end of high school, immersion students approach native-like levels in French listening comprehension and reading skills, although they are usually distinguishable from Francophones in speaking and writing. When students take advantage of the opportunity to use their French language skills with Francophones outside the classroom, even this distinction can disappear. One can see why opportunities to “live and work” in French and be exposed to the Francophone culture and community are so important to the attainment of the goal of the program.

In immersion programs, best results are obtained when students “live” all or a significant part of their total school experience in the second language. This is a more difficult task at the secondary level than at the elementary level due to the nature and organization of secondary schools at the present time. Opportunities for French drama activities, improvisation games, music and cultural opportunities need to become part of the extra-curricular activities of the school.

Secondary immersion students are taught a minimum of 50% of the regular curriculum in French using French resources. All assignments in the content areas taught in French, written and oral, are completed in French. Students will spend more time in the classroom refining their skills in French reading, writing, listening, speaking, and media literacy. For example, students may write folk tales in Grade 9, read French newspapers in Grade 10, prepare a French news broadcast video in Grade 11, and become familiar with French theatre in Grade 12.

At the end of secondary school, students should be able to:

- participate easily in conversation and discussion;
• understand films, radio and television programs;
• pursue post-secondary education in French or English;
• pursue employment in either French or English; and
• have some understanding of the culture and institutions of French Canada and some European countries.

Requirements for “Bilingual Mention” Secondary Transcript

To meet the requirements for “Bilingual Mention” on the transcript of Secondary Level Achievement, students are required to complete a minimum of twelve credits in French in Grades 10, 11 and 12. The courses necessary for “Bilingual Mention” include three French Language Arts courses (Français immersion 10, 20, 30). The other nine French credits can be for courses in the remaining areas of study or electives that are taught in French. Three English Language Arts courses are also compulsory (English Language Arts A10, 20, A30). Curricula for high school French Immersion courses in all core subject areas and in a broad range of optional subject areas can be found at the following address:  http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/bmlo/progvert/imm_progvert.shtml

Some schools may face a challenge in providing sufficient options or credits for the students to attain a “Bilingual Mention”. Distance education is becoming increasingly available to assist schools and school divisions in meeting this challenge. See http://www.bmlo.ca/ecole/ecole.htm for a list of courses available online. Practical and Applied Arts work placements in French speaking environments is another option for students. It is becoming increasingly possible for students to have many more than the required 12 credits for a “Bilingual Mention” on their transcript of Secondary Level Achievement.

A sample high school French Immersion program could appear as in the chart below. Through school division networking and teacher to teacher networking, other options may be available for consideration. The following program is based on some school division decisions as well as the time allocations required in order for the school division to receive the maximum supplementary grants available.

Sample High School French Immersion Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 10</th>
<th>Compulsory subjects</th>
<th>Français immersion 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Histoire 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mathématiques 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sciences 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional subjects</td>
<td>Mieux-être 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Études chrétiennes 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 11</th>
<th>Compulsory subjects</th>
<th>Français immersion 20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mathématiques 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Histoire 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Études chrétiennes 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Français intégré A20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Français intégré B20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Biologie 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A number of students, for a variety of reasons, choose not to complete French Immersion to the Grade 12 level. Some of these students may take Core French 10, 20 and 30 at an advanced rate, pursue an Advanced Placement French course at the Grade 12 level, or follow an International Baccalaureate French program where available.

Counselling and Post Secondary Options for French Studies

A challenge identified by French Immersion students is the lack of knowledge that guidance counsellors may have about career opportunities for bilingual students, exchange programs, special enrichment programs, bursaries as well as post-secondary study opportunities. Guidance counsellors in high schools also need to know the options available to French Immersion students to complete their “Bilingual Mention” when there are scheduling conflicts or insufficient options in the local school.

Canadian Parents for French has some information available on their web site at http://www.cpf.ca/English/Students/index.htm. A current list of post-secondary opportunities in Saskatchewan and Canada is available in the Appendix starting on page 99 of this document.

Staffing Challenges in French Immersion Programs

School division personnel continue to face challenges in finding sufficient numbers of well-qualified staff for FSL programs, and in particular, French Immersion. French Immersion teachers need the usual qualifications to teach at a specific grade level and in their assigned subject area. In addition, they require:

- native or native-like fluency in both oral and written French;
- training in and a good understanding of immersion methodology (pre-service and/or in-service);
- a personal understanding of Francophone culture; and
- the ability to communicate in English orally and in writing for non-instructional purposes.

Those responsible for the hiring and placement of teaching staff must be very aware of their French language proficiency. Availability may be a factor in teacher placement. Each grade level deserves the highest level of French proficiency possible. Content area competence, particularly in subjects such as mathematics and science, must also be taken into consideration.

Some suggestions for long-range planning for staffing needs are outlined below:

- When regular staff vacancies occur, consider hiring people with French language skills and positive attitudes towards second language learning who can later serve the French Immersion program.
- The quality of the program requires that French language proficiency be a primary consideration when hiring teaching staff. An understanding of immersion methodology as well as subject area expertise are high priorities when hiring staff.
• When staffing leadership positions, attitudes towards French Immersion and second language learning are key considerations.
• Hiring of all staff, whether directly involved in FSL programs or not, should take into consideration positive attitudes towards FSL learning. Look for acceptance and inclusiveness.
• If the central office personnel responsible for staffing are not able to assess the French language skills of candidates, consider involving a bilingual staff person for that particular skill assessment.

Saskatchewan has introduced an Additional Qualification Certificate (AQC) to encourage teachers to pursue studies in areas of teacher shortage. French Immersion is one area that has been identified. Further details, the application form and information on the approval process for the chosen program is available at [http://www.sasklearning.gov.sk.ca/branches/prov_exams/teacher_services/teachclass.shtml](http://www.sasklearning.gov.sk.ca/branches/prov_exams/teacher_services/teachclass.shtml).

In Section 4, there is further information on successful staffing practices that will be of help to those responsible for hiring and placing staff.

**Support Services for French Immersion Programs**

The success of a French Immersion program requires that school divisions and schools provide adequate support services from the program entry grade through to Grade 12, including:

• a pool of French-speaking substitute teachers qualified to teach immersion;
• French-speaking teacher assistants;
• access to appropriate testing and diagnostic services for French Immersion students experiencing learning difficulties;
• access to appropriate resource programs, learning assistance, and gifted programs for French Immersion students;
• guidance counsellors able to meet the needs of French Immersion students;
• technology resources for FSL programs (hardware and software), both for resource-based learning and for production and instructional purposes.

**Professional Development for French Immersion Teachers**

The teachers of French as a second language have unique challenges as they seek to improve their professional competencies. Peer coaching and networking are frequently unavailable because of the limited number of teachers in smaller communities. School-based administrators and central office professional staff also have to face this unique challenge. Recent human resource literature indicates that professional development availability is a critical factor in job satisfaction and in staff retention in FSL programs.
Some suggestions for long-range planning for professional development needs related to French Immersion are:

- Recognize that, in addition to their subject areas, French Immersion teachers have specific professional development needs, such as instructional and assessment strategies, and language and cultural development;
- Explore and take advantage of the services of the Official Minority Language Office of Saskatchewan Learning. A group of consultants able to assist teachers in most subject areas is available to serve the FSL educators of this province. (See the website at [http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/bmlo/unit/personnel.shtml](http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/bmlo/unit/personnel.shtml) for a complete listing of available personnel and supports.)
- Plan the school year calendar so that professional development days are scheduled to coincide with major conferences when held nearby, for example, the Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers (CAIT), the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT), and the Saskatchewan Association of Teachers of French (SATF);
- Subscribe to professional journals related to FSL education and ensure teacher access on a division basis;
- Inform educators about the availability of federal bursaries for professional development of FSL teachers (see Federal Provincial Programs starting on page 55 for more information);
- Recognize that central office and school administrators also have professional development needs relative to FSL programs. Conferences such as those offered by the Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers (CAIT), Canadian Parents for French (CPF), and special initiatives such as the Saskatchewan conference “Nurturing the Roots, Cultivating the Opportunities” series for French Immersion administrators can offer valuable insights, learning and networking opportunities;
- Divisional or regional structures, such as a French second language leadership group, provide opportunities for networking among central office and school-based administrators.

**English Achievement of French Immersion Students**

As well as gaining functional fluency in French, immersion students must acquire English language skills equivalent to those of their English program peers. This is one of the major concerns of many immersion parents and parents considering immersion for their young children.

Some key research articles are listed in the Appendix starting on page 81 of this document to assist administrators in answering questions about English language achievement.

- Quantitative and qualitative research findings on the English skills of immersion students are clear and consistent. Early immersion students experience an initial lag in the development of their English skills, lasting until a year or two after beginning English language arts, but they are on par with their English program peers by Grade 5 or 6.
- Many studies have found that, in later grades, immersion students out-perform their English program counterparts in some English skill areas (e.g., the figurative and metaphoric use of language).
Recent analysis of the PISA assessment of the reading skills of Canadian 15-year olds (Statistics Canada) indicated that French Immersion students performed above the level of students educated in a unilingual English program.

The performance of French Immersion students as a group is consistently strong over time on standardized tests such as the Canadian Achievement Tests and on the standardized tests given in two other provinces in Canada.

Typical Saskatchewan immersion students who attend the early French Immersion program from Kindergarten through to Grade 12 spend only about 11 percent of their waking hours immersed in the French language in the classroom. The rest of their time is spent surrounded by English, providing ample opportunity for the development of their English skills. Saskatchewan English language arts assessment results affirm their English language competency.

Loss of instructional time in English in favour of the second language has never been shown to have negative effects on the achievement of the first language…. One can confidently assume that cognitive abilities acquired in the learning of one language can be put to use in the acquisition and proficiency of the other language. In many studies first language skills were shown to be enhanced, even if instruction time in L1 was reduced in favour of L2 instruction.

— Bournot-Trites and Tallowitz, p. 3

In Saskatchewan, the introduction of English language arts in the French Immersion program is recommended at the Grade 3 level. Reading skills acquired in French are easily transferred by most children to the English reading process. Most children will be reading in English at the Grade 3 level or above at the end of the third grade.

**Program Evaluation for Learning and Quality in French Immersion**

Administrators at both the school and division level have a responsibility to seek out information that will assist them to assess the effectiveness of the immersion program and provide the basis for an improvement plan. The division should undertake regular program reviews using a variety of assessment tools to ensure that three elements are in place and working well:

- Curricula and supporting documents are available and being used effectively;
- Adequate resources are available to administrators, teachers and students, and are being used;
- Teachers are well supported.

Students in Saskatchewan schools deserve quality educational programs. To maintain the quality, plans for future improvement are an important tool for division and school-based administrators. Well-developed program review processes at the division level will provide the foundation for program excellence and high student achievement.
Some of the following strategies may help the school division and the school identify indicators of program excellence:

- Track enrolments from grade to grade and over time to monitor retention of students and student/parent interest.
- Conduct jurisdiction-wide surveys of teachers, parents and students.
- Canadian Parents for French has produced a self-assessment tool to help schools assess for themselves how their FSL programs (both French Immersion and Core French) are faring. The self-assessment tool and instructions on how to use it are available on the CPF website at [http://www.cpf.ca/english/Educators/SAT.htm](http://www.cpf.ca/english/Educators/SAT.htm).
- Performance assessment tools may be developed in collaboration with several other divisions. Tools such as oral assessments, reading benchmarks, and writing assessments administered over an extended period will provide the data for continuous improvement and assessment for learning.
- Track student achievement indicators such as the number of students on the honour roll, the number of credits per graduating student, scholarship data, and an after-graduation survey of students who completed French Immersion to Grade 12.
- Track French language experiences provided to students from Grade 4 to Grade 12 both in and out of school.
- Track teacher qualifications, professional development, and teacher retention.
- Review and compare the pertinent data in the Saskatchewan Learning Indicators reports.
- Participate in provincial learning assessment programs such as the mathematics assessment (Grades 5, 8 and 11) that will provide data on student achievement and data to use as a benchmark.
- Conduct exit interviews with students and/or families who switch to the English program, as well as those who graduate, to gather information about possible improvements to the program.
Section 4

School Leadership for French Immersion Programs

The role of the in-school administrator has been increasingly identified in the research literature as a critical factor in the effectiveness and success of schools and school programs. A school administrator’s attitudes, practices and decisions have a profound effect on the programs under his or her supervision. Administrators, whether they have a good knowledge of the French language or not, must be actively engaged in the development, support and planning for the second language program in their school. Development of a learning community, close monitoring of student progress, and collaborative planning underlie successful programs.

Checklist for French Immersion School Administrators

This section of the Handbook has been written to provide school level administrators with information on effective practice for their leadership role in the French Immersion programs in their school.

The general checklist below provides some areas for reflection:

- Do your planning processes and administrative procedures consider the views of all stakeholders? Do they recognize and respond to the common and program-specific needs of all programs offered in the school?

- Does the school community recognize that each program is different, requiring different activities and measures? (When programs are well defined and articulated, it is much easier to explain differences in approach and decisions. This is especially important for French Immersion programs in dual track schools.)

- Are French Immersion program-specific concerns identified and solutions found by staff, parents and perhaps students involved in the program?

- Is information about FSL programs readily available and offered to all those who inquire?

- Are all levels of leadership in the school supportive of FSL programs?

- Is targeted professional development encouraged and supported for French Immersion staff?

- Are you familiar with indicators of good teaching practices in French Immersion?

- Do you regularly visit French Immersion classrooms, observe students, find out what they can and cannot do, discuss their achievement and progress with teachers?

- Are you aware of the specific needs and sensitivities of French Immersion parents? Do parents feel comfortable bringing their concerns to you?
Reflection on these questions may help determine some areas for further investigation in the quest for program improvement. While administrators do not plan alone, but rather work in a collaborative and shared leadership manner with their staff, these questions may help in beginning the dialogue with their staff and parent community.

Creating a School Culture That Supports French Immersion Education

The school that houses a French Immersion program, whether it is dual track or a French Immersion Centre (single track), should have second language learning as a component of their mission, vision and belief statements. School plans should consider the needs of the French Immersion program, and lead to action plans that will render it highly effective and successful.

The outcomes of all subject areas, student activities, and daily routines should be assessed when developing a plan for improvement. French language outcomes as well as subject areas taught in French (mathematics, sciences, social sciences, physical education, and other subject areas) require review and evaluation, not just for results, but also for the methodologies used.

Administrators who shape the school culture to fully support the goals of the French Immersion program, and other school program areas, including Core French, will find they have enriched the education of all students in the school.

In a French Immersion school at any level from K-12, the following strategies can be used to help staff and students use their French in everyday situations, providing them with stronger motivation for studying the language. In a dual track situation, this might help other students to recognize and accept diversity and perhaps provide an incentive to learn French.

Strategies for Enhancing French Language Opportunities

- Deliver some announcements over the public address (P.A.) system in French. The administrator with few or no French language skills can delegate this task to other individuals in the school who have the appropriate skills: a teacher, a parent, a student, or a school aide, perhaps on a rotating basis.
- Encourage staff members to speak French among themselves, providing role models for students and allowing them the opportunity to practise their French.
- Make French visible throughout the school, for example, signs such as bibliothèque/library, displays of student work, and French background music or radio on occasion during the noon hour.
- Use French with pride during school assemblies and other activities, e.g., sing “O Canada” in French as well as English.
- Celebrate and promote cultural events that are important to Francophone people, especially if the local Francophone community is having a celebration. Encourage all students to participate, not just those who are studying French.
- Encourage attendance at and participation in French theatre and musical presentations, and invite artists and musicians to the school for all to see.
• Seek out and take advantage of all the community events in French available to students and teachers. Identify field trips where the presentation can be given in French. Ask volunteers to make the presentation in French if there is no French-speaking guide available.
• Find local community members who speak French and who can provide some time to help with a reading program.
• Create a partnership with a French radio or television station where students can participate on air.
• Seek out workplaces where French is commonly used for Practical and Applied Arts work placements or mentoring opportunities for high school students.

Strategies for Facilitating Good Working Relationships among Staff

Establishing and maintaining good working relationships among the staff members of the FSL programs and the staff assigned to other programs in the school is sometimes a challenge. Structuring activities where the French-speaking staff members can talk and network with their English colleagues will help demystify their programs and allow for a stronger base of support for that program. Open communication and collaborative practices will be helpful.

• Provide time for French language arts and English language arts teachers to plan together. By so doing, needless repetition is avoided and the transfer of skills common to both languages is encouraged.
• Encourage French teachers to work with teachers in other programs and other schools on such projects as school or division level curriculum development, budget committees, and so on.
• Facilitate opportunities for staff, parents and community members to better understand French Immersion programs, funding sources, and program needs and challenges in order to dispel myths.
• Ensure that all staff recognize that FSL programs are for all students, on a continuum from intellectually challenged to gifted, and that the extra supports for children requiring them are available both for regular program and immersion students. If the learning supports are not available for both regular and immersion students, the myth that immersion is only for the advantaged or gifted student will be perpetuated.
• Ensure that resources (e.g., software programs, library resources) are equally accessible to all programs.
Staffing French Second Language Programs

Staffing a program or a school is a critical responsibility of administrators whether it is done collaboratively with central office personnel or at the school level. Administrators must select, retain, and place staff members with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to support and advance the goals of FSL programs. All staff members - teachers, office staff, custodial staff, teacher librarians - should have a general understanding of, and a positive attitude towards all programs offered in the school.

Interviewing Prospective French Second Language Staff

1. One of the most important areas to consider when interviewing prospective French second language candidates is their philosophy of second language learning. Ask them to talk about the assumptions they make with respect to learning a second language in an immersion context or a Core French context. These assumptions should include the following:
   - Learners may have to hear and say a new word or structure many times (18-25 is suggested in research) before incorporating it into their repertoire.
   - Learners have to be given many opportunities to speak in class.
   - Learners should be exposed to different French speakers so that they get used to different voices, accents, sentence structures, and vocabulary.
   - Language learning occurs best when a variety of strategies are used in the classroom.
   - For French Immersion teachers, language teaching crosses all disciplines. For example, mathematics teachers are first and foremost teachers of language, then mathematics.

2. Ask candidates to describe their approach to second language teaching in a French Immersion setting.
   - The teaching must correspond to the assumptions made about language learning. For example, if the interviewee states that learners require several exposures to a word before incorporating it into his or her repertoire, then the planned learning environment must reflect this need.

3. What are their French language skills?
   - Since all French Immersion teachers are first and foremost teachers of the French language, it is important to know the candidate’s French language proficiency. French Immersion teachers must have excellent native or native-like French language skills to serve as models for students. (The assistance of a colleague fluent in French may be needed to assess language proficiency during the selection process.) A Core French teacher does not require the same level of French language proficiency nor the expertise to teach other subjects in the target language.

4. What is their understanding of, and training in, second language teaching methodology?
   - All immersion teachers must contribute to the students’ French language development while teaching content. Inquire about the interviewee’s understanding of the pedagogical approach used in French Immersion. Overt and planned language teaching must occur in all subject areas at all grade levels throughout the French Immersion program.
The Core French teacher has the challenge of achieving a degree of communicative competence in their students while adapting the thematic content to their interests and maturity level. Active learning strategies and student-to-student communication in the classroom is key to success.

5. What is their area of expertise or specialization?
   - In addition to having excellent French language skills and second language teaching methods, French Immersion teachers must be able to teach the knowledge, skills and attitudes prescribed for the required areas of study. Generally speaking, their subject-specific language proficiency will be enhanced if they developed their subject area expertise in French. A French-speaking chemist who has studied chemistry in English, for example, may not have the language required to teach it in French.

   French immersion involves a complex mixture of teaching both subject matter and skills in the language at the same time. Consequently, I would argue that French Immersion teachers need, in addition to teaching subject matter, to make a conscious effort to structure that teaching so as to provide students with opportunities to practice a full range of language skills — not merely with emphasis on understanding but also on speaking. In planning their lessons, Immersion teachers should always bear in mind the questions ‘what is it my students can say (in which case I need not)’ and ‘what is it I can make my students say?’

   — Ireland, n.d.

6. What additional skills do candidates possess?
   - Since successful French Immersion programs have a rich array of curricular and extracurricular offerings, it is helpful to select individuals who have additional skills in areas such as music, drama, a language other than French and English, sports, and so on. This may facilitate the scheduling of a quality French program in all areas of study for the students in a school.

7. What are their previous work experiences?
   - Candidates who have had successful teaching experiences where French was taught as a first language may not necessarily have the skills required to teach in the French Immersion or Core French Programs where French is taught as a second language. Successful second language teaching experience is the critical skill set.

8. What do the candidates understand to be the challenges of teaching in French Immersion and how do they intend to cope with these challenges?
   - Resources such as posters, films or videos, computer programs and audio recordings are not as readily available as in the English program.
   - Services in the French language (such as guided tours or field trips) are not always available.
   - Parent volunteers with French language proficiency are not always available.
   - Some school communication (newsletters, report cards, etc.) must be in English. That may pose a challenge for a candidate who may not be proficient in English. (A strategy here might be to have an English-speaking colleague attend parent-teacher interviews along with the immersion teacher.)
9. What is their understanding of the target clientele for a French Immersion program?
   • Attempt to ascertain the candidate’s understanding of the different needs of students registered in French first language programs, French Immersion programs, and Core French programs. There should be an awareness that FSL programs are for all students and that the clientele is as diverse as one encounters in English programs.

10. Explore the candidate’s potential contribution to the overall success of the school.
    • Managing an effective school requires that all staff members contribute to its overall program. In addition to sound classroom teaching, staff members may contribute in the following areas:
      o helping with the extra-curricular program
      o marketing the French Immersion program
      o representing the school at the division level
      o assuming leadership for a particular curricular area, e.g., mathematics, science, technology.

11. Ask interviewees how they intend to handle students who exhibit social problems in their classrooms and during other school activities, such as at recess and on field trips.
    • No school (including immersion schools) can afford to ignore the social and psychological needs of the socially marginalized student. We have begun to understand the societal costs associated with not intervening early in the case of a child who is at risk of or experiencing social marginalization.

12. Explore the candidate’s long term and short term career plans.
    • For many school jurisdictions, recruitment and retention of French Immersion teachers is a major concern. The shortage of FSL teachers across the country makes it easy for them to move around. To address this concern, the interviewer should provide an overview of the support systems available and the strategies in place for teachers.

13. Explore candidates’ goals for lifelong learning, and maintaining and/or improving their French language proficiency.
    • Since Saskatchewan is an English speaking province, French Immersion teachers may express a need to immerse themselves in a French language environment from time to time (e.g., Quebec, New Brunswick, France) in order to maintain a high level of French language proficiency. (Teacher bursaries are available to educators who teach French Immersion and/or Core French.) Administrators are encouraged to provide this information to newly recruited teachers. Other areas worth exploring include technology, leadership training, and personal development courses.

14. Assess the candidate’s written language competency (oral competency can be determined by conducting at least part of the interview in French).
    • A written interview question could be answered in French. Questions that might be of interest to the interview team are listed below. A member of the interview team, a consultant or a teacher may be asked to assist in the assessment of the written response if the administrator is not bilingual.
      « Que feriez-vous afin d’encourager l’apprenant en immersion française de continuer son développement langagier? »
      « Décrivez l’approche que vous utiliseriez pour enseigner la culture dans un programme d’immersion. »
Supporting Newly Recruited Staff

Problems encountered in the initial days and weeks of a newly recruited teacher’s assignment can often be easily and quickly resolved if administrators ensure the necessary supports are in place. These early days are sometimes a very critical period both in the personal life of the teacher who may be new to the community, and in their work assignment.

1. Ensure a welcoming and supportive climate so that newly recruited teachers see the community as a possible home in their future. Activities and strategies that may be helpful include the following:
   • planned social events to integrate the newly recruited teacher into the community;
   • professional support (such as support from division staff, a mentor or buddy system, or a professional development fund for inter-school visits);
   • assistance with finding appropriate housing;
   • information on the community’s values and attitudes. (Teachers from Eastern Canada particularly may need assistance and guidance to understand the values and mores in certain communities.)

2. Provide newly recruited teachers with the necessary operational information to make a good first impression with parents, students, and their colleagues. Vital information and documentation includes:
   • the school handbook;
   • key information with respect to certain students (e.g., is there a visually impaired student in the class? a physically challenged student?);
   • school routines.

3. Provide new teachers with all the documents and information (e.g., curricula, basic resources) required for preparing a set of long-range plans.
   • Administrative support or the support of central office, or an experienced teacher may be required for beginning teachers to assist in the preparation of long-range plans.
   • Teachers who have taken their teacher training outside the province of Saskatchewan will require additional information on the components and initiatives of Core Curriculum as well as other expectations unique to Saskatchewan’s education system.
   • Teachers new to the profession or to Saskatchewan may want documents and information earlier than other teachers. This should be accommodated if at all possible.

4. Provide or make available appropriate print and non-print resources to allow teachers to meet the foundational and specific learning objectives of the curricula and to use resource-based learning.

5. Ensure that adequate support systems are in place to enable the newly recruited teacher to integrate special needs students into the French Immersion classroom. Ensure that:
   • sufficient aide time has been assigned for children with disabilities.
   • appropriately adapted resources are available.
   • computer and other technologies are available if required for special needs students.
6. Plan to address the need of newly recruited Francophone teachers who need assistance with home-school communication in English. Ensure that:
   - arrangements have been made for assistance with written comments on report cards if required.

7. Take measures to protect teachers new to the profession or new to Saskatchewan to protect them from taking on too heavy an assignment.
   - New teachers may still be adapting to the rigours and expectations of the profession. Teachers new to Saskatchewan, especially from Quebec, will have to adapt to a significantly new milieu.

Retention of staff, after the long process of recruitment, is a critical task of the school principal and the central office administrator. Retaining teachers is one area of concern identified by senior administrators in Saskatchewan. The ideas above may be helpful to administrators when planning for support, and ultimately, retention of the teacher.

**Supervision of Program and Staff**

Administrators supervise the teacher for both formative and summative purposes. Given a sound knowledge of how the program works and what to watch for (see Sections 2 and 5), even the administrator who does not speak French can effectively supervise French Immersion teaching staff.

Sally Rehorick (1996), a professor in the Second Language Education Centre at the University of New Brunswick, advises that certain aspects of a French second-language class can be observed more easily when one does not understand the language of instruction. Some aspects of the class become much more noticeable when the content of the discourse is not understood. She goes on to explain that, in addition, a principal who wants to know more about the content of what is being taught should not hesitate to initiate discussions in English with either students or the teacher. Such discussions will in no way diminish the efforts of the class participants to learn their second language effectively.

**Staff Supervision**

The following areas should be considered when supervising FSL programs or teachers at any grade level.

- Has the teacher created an atmosphere that favours the social, emotional, physical, intellectual, cultural and linguistic development of the students?

- Does the teacher use the language teaching strategies required in the FSL classroom? Are activities structured in such a way as to permit students to see and hear language repeatedly in a meaningful context until they are able to produce it? Does the teacher use songs, games, and other activities to allow students to practice vocabulary and structures without realizing it?
Has the teacher made an attempt to become familiar with the learners’ interests? Is the learning environment age appropriate?

Does the teacher demonstrate an awareness of the students’ feelings about learning French or learning in French?

Does the teacher “build in” time for students to communicate, orally and in writing in French? Is there encouragement for spontaneous use of the language through teacher-student and student-student interaction?

Does the teacher praise and reward learners’ efforts to communicate in French?

Does the teacher use French (written and spoken) as much as possible? (English should only be used when the learners’ health or safety, either physical or psychological, is at risk.) Because of the need for students to use the language and teachers to model it, the French Immersion classroom may, in fact, be noisier than an English program classroom.

Are guest speakers, community members, and parents with proficiency in French invited into the classroom? These individuals will expose students to a different voice, a slightly different vocabulary, and different expressions than the teacher.

Is student work from French programs on display in the classroom and rotated regularly?

Has appropriate planning been done with clear evidence of subject integration and interdisciplinary units?

Is there a sound and varied student assessment and evaluation system in place? Are the results of formal and informal assessments used to plan instruction to improve student achievement? Will the teacher be adequately prepared to justify the contents of the report card (both comments and grades)?

Does the teacher contribute to the overall program offered at the school and willingly accommodate the FSL program component where possible and appropriate?

Does the teacher contribute to the co-curricular and extra-curricular program of the school, understanding their contribution to a child’s education?

Although the above require little or no proficiency in French, the areas of supervision on the following page do. The administrator with little or no French will want to seek the assistance of a colleague who has the necessary French language skills.
Does the teacher use appropriate and correct language both orally and in written form? Are student errors (both oral and written) identified and corrected in an affirming and appropriate manner?

Does the teacher demonstrate an awareness of the role that phonics play in French language teaching? Since students imitate what they hear, it is of utmost importance to pronounce the phonemes of the language correctly, and to use the correct intonation and rhythm.

Are gestures, mime and other body language cues used appropriately and regularly to enhance communication?

Is there an appropriate use of concrete materials and French multimedia aids such as prints, films, music, manipulatives, and computers?

Does the teacher present one difficulty or language problem at a time? It is much better to focus on one problem and address it thoroughly before moving on to the next, than to focus on all of a student’s language difficulties at once.

Does the teacher allow students the time necessary to express themselves freely and clearly in French?

Does the teacher structure group activities in such a way as to
• consider the needs of each individual?
• respect the learning rate of each member?
• encourage the active participation of each group member?
• facilitate language development?

Is there evidence of good teacher-student rapport? Is the atmosphere one in which students are happy, motivated, and willing to take risks?

There should also be evidence that the teacher is seeking professional growth. This is more critical in French Immersion as there are so few opportunities for professional development in French in the content areas.
Web Resources for Teachers

There are several websites that address the content area needs of French Immersion teachers for research, networking, professional development and resources. Encourage your teachers to find and explore these. To start, see some of the Appendix starting on page 97.

Encouraging teachers to network with other teachers, as well as performing web searches, will provide many more resources than were previously available for French Immersion content area instruction.

Student Recruitment and Retention

There are many factors that can affect whether or not students continue in FSL programs. A recent study done in New Brunswick provides insights for administrators and teachers as they seek to develop and maintain effective programs. The decision to continue with a French second language program once enrolled is made in the earlier years by the parents, and in later years, collaboratively with the student.

Factors Considered by Parents When Making Decisions About Their Child’s Education

- Future considerations: career options, availability of programs, access to post secondary language opportunities, scholarships and bursaries.
- Outside factors: community acceptance, family attitudes to FSL learning, transportation difficulties.
- Perceived quality of both the English and the French second language programs.
- Child’s achievement: parental satisfaction with and understanding of the child’s success in the program.
- Child’s progress: the availability of clear evidence that the child is progressing at a rate that is satisfactory or encouraging to the parent.
- Support systems: evidence and assurance that learning supports are adequate for their child’s needs as they progress through the grade levels and subject areas.
- School system: perception of the school division’s attitude to and support for the program (staffing, resources, facilities, etc.).
- System outside the school: provincial curricula, adequate funding, positive media attention, post-secondary program requirements.
- Perception and/or understanding of second language acquisition: parent and student understanding of the stages of language acquisition, the strategies employed, expectations and outcomes of programs as well as benchmarks in second language learning.
- Learning difficulties: understanding that learning challenges experienced by their child in French Immersion rarely disappear in the regular program.
- Understanding of bilingualism: knowing the research and understanding that interference can occur in the early stages.
- Knowledge of the FSL program: availability and quality of school/system communications, parent handbooks.
Homework: parental concern about their inability to help their child with home assignments, the child’s organizational and study skills.

Responsiveness of the system: parent’s ability to access information, answers to their questions, student supports when necessary, comfort with teacher and administrator.

Child’s behaviour: minimal negative behaviours in the school setting with positive feedback from the school on most occasions.

Child’s affective variables: child is generally positive about the experience, forms friendships, feels accepted and valued on most days.

Adapted from Noel, (2003).

Organizing for Instruction in French Immersion

There are two major considerations when organizing for instruction in French Immersion:

- The more exposure students have to French (through instruction and activities), the better their French language skills will be.
- Children tend to associate an individual with a language. Consideration should be given to limiting a French Immersion teacher’s teaching assignments to subjects or courses offered in French.

Teaching assignments must consider the number of different courses or subject areas teachers are required to teach. Teaching one subject five times requires less preparation time than preparing for five different courses or subjects. One of the factors that affects teacher retention is the preparation workload in French Immersion. It is not unusual for French Immersion teachers, even those who are fluently bilingual, to ask to be assigned to the English program as the workload may be less and resources are more plentiful.

In dual track schools, administrators may also want to ensure that there is a balance of age, experience, gender and formal teacher training between the two programs when staffing a school. Staffing the English program, for example, with teachers who are more experienced and more highly trained when compared to the French Immersion program may deter parents from choosing the latter.

When organizing for instruction at the elementary and/or high school, consider the following:

- French Immersion students are taught two language arts programs: English (ELA) and French (FLA). By considering the language arts experience as a whole and working together, teachers will understand that many of the learning outcomes are the same for both programs. If they take advantage of this understanding when preparing lessons, they can realize time savings that can be put to good use elsewhere in the students’ day. Administrators might encourage these teachers to work together to this end.
- When planning instructional supports, remember the need for French software and sheet music. Enrichment programs should also be available in French.
• At the secondary level, ensure that French is offered in each semester (that is, at all times throughout the year). For example, consider offering FLA and band as year-long courses to accommodate French Immersion students (like music, learning languages is most effective when practised daily) or integrating FLA and social studies into a two-credit block. When creating the timetable, try to consider immersion students’ needs and interests, for example, avoid scheduling the only FLA course at the same time as the only Band course.

• Accommodate student exchanges. If students are going to be involved in the Saskatchewan-Quebec exchange (intended for Grade 11 students), schedule the program to accommodate it, or find distance education options that can assist the students in meeting their course requirements.

• Alternative methods of delivery, such as online and distance learning are developing quickly in Saskatchewan. Look for ways to take advantage of these advances for the benefit of students in French Immersion programs.

• Partnerships with post-secondary institutions can add to and enhance opportunities. For example, consider offering a university level French course in Grade 12.

• Consider work placements in French speaking environments, and/or with French-speaking people who will provide the student with not only practical and applied arts educational opportunities and mentoring, but also a unique opportunity for language development.

Establishing and Maintaining a Library for French Immersion

A library designed to support French Immersion programs is critical for any French Immersion school. When planning for the library, consider the following areas:

- Is there a budget for developing and maintaining a French collection?

- When entering the library, is it evident that it serves the goals of the French Immersion program? For example, is the French language visible on wall and table displays and on signage?

- Can the children use the library in French? Can they do a computer search in French? Can they sign out a book in French? Are they encouraged to speak French in the library?

- In the reference section, is there an appropriate number of French dictionaries, periodicals and encyclopedias?

- In the collection, is there an appropriate number of French resources, and do they match the curriculum objectives? For example, for a unit on horses, are there equal resources in French and English? Are these materials age appropriate? Is fiction as well as non-fiction available in French?

- Do students have easy access to the library as required?

- Is reading at home encouraged by allowing parents to use the library with their children?
Is there a parent section with appropriate material, such as basic information on language learning, how immersion works, curriculum handbooks? Do parents have access to the collection? The parent association or local CPF chapter may be able to assist with support for this initiative.

Does the librarian have a working knowledge of French to facilitate working with the collection, the teacher and the students?

Does the school library subscribe to French book clubs, French magazines?

Are book exchanges and the donation of used French books from the community encouraged to vary the collection?

Are book lists prepared for French Immersion parents and advertised in the school newsletter?

**Responsibilities of Staff in French Immersion**

In addition to providing instruction or supervision, all teaching staff in a school that offers French Immersion are ambassadors for the program. As such, they should have a general understanding of how French Immersion works and be positive towards this program at all times in the school and the community.

Staff who support French Immersion teachers include school counsellors, administrative assistants and clerical staff, teacher librarians and technicians, classroom aides, and special needs teachers. All should have positive attitudes towards second language learning, and an understanding of how immersion works. Most important, they must understand its implications for their own area of expertise before they work with, do assessments on or make recommendations regarding French Immersion students. For example, diagnostic tests must be interpreted in light of what we know about French Immersion before any recommendation is made.

School counsellors, particularly at the secondary level, require a broad knowledge of FSL opportunities for students: careers, scholarships, exchange opportunities, bursaries, special opportunities offered nationally.

**Parent Advisory Council Responsibilities**

The parent council acts in the interests of all stakeholders in the school community to enhance student learning. This includes the French Immersion students and parents. The parent council of a dual or multi-track school may need a sub-committee to address French Immersion program concerns. Another option is a division advisory council for the French Immersion program as permitted by legislation.
Planning with stakeholders to address the needs of students at the school and at the school board level is always a positive approach. The purpose of planning is to enhance student achievement at all levels of the educational system. In the planning process, school boards are encouraged to involve central office and school staffs as well as parent councils. School level involvement ensures that the system is focused on the educational needs of students.

With the collaboration of all partners, this type of organization can provide an enriching experience for all participants. It also provides an excellent opportunity to communicate Canadian values, and to put into practice the dynamics of an officially bilingual and culturally diverse country.

In a dual track setting one cannot prevent parents from comparing what happens in one program to what happens in the other. Parent councils provide a forum to help parents from one program to understand the needs of the other, to accept that each program is different, and that different activities are required to address program needs. To be fair, one cannot endorse the idea that what is good for one program is also good for the other. In a French Immersion program, for instance, there is a need to provide field trips and experiences for French language development. In the English program, field trips are also beneficial, but for a different purpose. Parents should have the feeling that the school administration is fully using the resources available for the enhancement of each program, and that their child’s program objectives are being fully met.


A Good Learning Environment for All

Dual track schools with French Immersion programs in many ways reflect the reality of Canada. In them we find a culturally diverse community and the use of the two official languages. The flexibility, understanding, adaptability, accommodation, and trust required by the educational partners to make these schools work can provide a good learning environment for children.
Section 5

Core French Education in Saskatchewan

The federal government through *The Next Act: New Momentum for Canada’s Linguistic Duality, The Action Plan for Official Languages* (2003) has recommitted itself to the linguistic duality of Canada. French second language education will be improved through the new initiatives in the Action Plan. Core French instruction from Grade 1 to Grade 12 is a key part of that revitalization.

According to data in the federal government report of 2003, 82% of Anglophones in Canada believe their children should learn a second language, while 75% of those surveyed believed that language should be French. For many Canadian students, the only option for learning French is a Core French program. Thus, there is renewed emphasis on instructional approaches, teacher training and resources for this option.

Currently, approximately 40% of the Kindergarten to Grade 12 students in Saskatchewan study Core French. From Grade 3 to Grade 8 the percentage of students studying Core French ranges from 50% to 65%, with significantly fewer at the high school level.

A review of the literature, completed in 2002, on the effect of second language learning on first language skills states the following:

> The effect of learning a second language on first language skills has been virtually all positive. Although most studies on the effect of second language learning have been done in the area of French Immersion education, one can also apply the findings to Core French and Intensive French programs. The loss of instructional time has never been shown to have a detrimental effect on the achievement in first language skills.

Bournot-Trites and Tallowitz.(2002), p.7

The aim of the Core French program is not to produce bilingual students. It does, however, provide a solid introduction and base upon which students can build. The program also provides many of the cognitive and other benefits that result from second language learning.

- Learners of French as a second language:
- experience and appreciate the linguistic and cultural duality of Canada;
- develop creative and critical thinking and problem-solving skills;
- develop a broader world view and a respect for cultural differences;
- enhance their first language skills;
- enhance listening and memory skills;
- enhance organizational and independent learning skills;
- are able to experience literature, music, art and film in their original form;
- increase their post-secondary educational and employment opportunities.
Goals of the Core French Program

Saskatchewan Learning curricula assume that students begin studying Core French in Grade 1 and continue to the end of Grade 12.

The 12-year Core French program is expected to:
- provide a learning environment that will contribute to the global education of students, and allow them to enrich their personal experience through rich, significant and authentic communicative situations;
- facilitate the development of language skills that will enable students to communicate effectively and accurately in French;
- develop in students communication and social strategies and skills that will enable them to function effectively and with confidence in authentic language situations;
- promote a positive attitude towards the learning of French and, through an appreciation of Francophone cultures, develop openness towards cultural diversity, and a comprehension of the bilingual and multicultural reality of Canada today;
- foster in students a comprehension of the language learning process, and of the general nature of language, while helping them to become autonomous learners.

Instructional Approach in Core French

The Core French curriculum is structured in three documents; Elementary Level (Grades 1-5), Middle Level (Grades 6-9) and Secondary Level (Core French 10, 20, 30). Teachers are encouraged to communicate with each other in order to provide a smooth transition from one level to the next. Learning must be continuous and cyclical. Skills and abilities developed at one level need to be reinforced and further developed at the next level.

In alignment with research on the most effective language learning strategies, the Core French curriculum is founded on a needs-based experiential approach which is different from the language-driven curriculum that was in existence prior to the middle of the 1990’s. The latter approach is less motivational to students, and the transfer from learning about the language to using it in meaningful situations does not often occur.

In a needs-based experiential curriculum, the first step is to determine an experiential task or goal. Since the aim of the program is to engage students in authentic, communicative use of the language, the tasks chosen should enable them to build on and enrich previous knowledge and experience. Student-centered activities that are meaningful will help students to take responsibility for their own learning. Being aware of the purpose and objectives of the activities and how they support the goal of the unit also contribute. The French language is used as a tool of communication and not as an object of study.
Elementary Level (Grade 1-5)

During the elementary years, students:
- develop comprehension, production and negotiation skills through active involvement in thematic units that are of interest to them;
- are involved in small group experiences intended to stimulate communication and skill development;
- develop positive attitudes toward a new language and understanding other peoples;
- use the French language through songs and activities in small and large groups.

The teacher:
- provides a language model with French being the language of the classroom as much as possible;
- uses materials, activities and assessment techniques that encourage the involvement of learners in small group experiences that stimulate communication;
- utilizes a variety of instructional approaches, activities, resources, motivating thematic material and assessment activities chosen to actively engage the student in French language experiences.

Middle Level (Grade 6-9)

During the middle years, students:
- build on knowledge and experiences of French in the elementary years;
- use French while participating in experiences and activities that are relevant to their interests and needs;
- participate in authentic learning experiences that are project-based and in the context of a theme;
- are involved in small group experiences intended to stimulate communication and skill development;
- expand skills and strategies related to the French language, culture, and communication, and to language in general (multidimensional curriculum).

The teacher:
- develops teaching units that are relevant to the student and which explore all domains of middle level student experiences;
- selects language learning activities that encourage students to practice the language in authentic situations within the context of a theme;
- plans and regularly integrates assessment activities into instruction that addresses all the components of a multidimensional curriculum;
- teaches grammatical structures when students “need to know” them in order to communicate and work towards the experiential goal (project) for each unit;
- integrates civic, leisure, intellectual, physical and social dimensions with continued reinforcement of Common Essential Learnings and the other key components and initiatives of Core Curriculum;
- integrates culture and general language education so that students develop a conscious awareness of language, culture and language learning strategies.
Secondary Level (Core French 10, 20, 30)

The secondary level curriculum builds on the multidimensional curriculum components and continues to incorporate the interests and experiences of the learners. Articulation of the program components from elementary, to middle, to secondary levels must be assured.

During the secondary level, **students:**
- use French while participating in experiences and activities that are relevant to their interests and needs;
- participate in authentic learning experiences that are project-based and in the context of a theme;
- are involved in small group experiences intended to stimulate communication and skill development;
- expand skills and strategies related to the French language, culture, communication and to language in general;
- demonstrate linguistic and communicative competence.

The **teacher:**
- encourages authentic language use with an emphasis on communication of the message, gradually increasing the focus on grammatical accuracy;
- plans and regularly integrates assessment into instruction, addressing all the components of the multidimensional curriculum;
- integrates civic, leisure, intellectual, physical and social dimensions with continued reinforcement of the Common Essential Learnings and other key components of Core Curriculum;
- plans units using the methods outlined in the provincial curriculum guide for the secondary level, sequencing the activities in such a way as to lead students to the experiential goal;
- involves students in meaningful, student-centered tasks;
- teaches grammatical structures as students “need to know” them in order to facilitate communication and move towards the experiential goal (project) for each unit.

**Core French recommended time allocations are as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Time Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Level</td>
<td>120 minutes/week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Level</td>
<td>150 minutes/week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Level</td>
<td>100 hours per credit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Intensive French**

Intensive French is defined as an enrichment of the Core French program by the introduction of a period of intensive exposure to French which enables students to receive, in one school year, up to four times the number of hours of instruction normally devoted to Core French. In the Intensive French program students participate in a language development program, emphasizing many of the skills found in English language arts.
The Intensive French program is offered for a period of five months during the Grade 5 or 6 year. During this period, instruction is carried out in French from 65% to approximately 80% of the time. Subject area instruction in English makes up the remaining time. The decision about which subject areas to teach in English is made by the school or school division. The objectives of the Intensive French program are correlated with the English language curricula to ensure that the objectives of all subject areas are met by the end of the year.

At the end of the five-month period of intensive instruction, students return to a regular pattern of instruction, including an enhanced Core French program aimed at further developing their second language skills. In Intensive French as in French Immersion, an active communicative and participative learning environment is essential to the success of the program.

### Francophone Culture in the Core French Program

Core French students need not only to learn the language but also to experience a culture and attitudes that differ from their own. The Core French classroom should be an environment where the ambience supports the instructional goal of appreciating another culture.

The French language and culture should be visible and celebrated through French language print materials, bulletin boards, posters, audiovisual resources (along with the necessary equipment), and displays of student work. A dedicated space allows students and teachers alike to surround themselves with Francophone cultures, and also delivers the message that French language learning is valued. There is also a need in the Core French program to expose students to authentic Francophone media, artifacts, people and events.

Adequate exposure to culture in a French second language program includes:
- exposing students to French in a variety of domains and through a variety of language experiences, including music, art and literature;
- exposing students to a variety of native French speakers, both in and outside the classroom, through such means as classroom guests (e.g., artists and skilled workers and professionals from a variety of fields), videos, field trips and exchanges;
- using resources and materials that reflect authentic, modern Francophone life;
- encouraging students to explore the culture on their own outside school through such means as watching French TV, listening to French radio, reading in French, listening to French music, travel, pen pals or e-pals, attending French theatre or Francophone community festivals, for example, the annual Cabane à sucre (sugaring-off festival).

### Optimal Opportunities to Learn in Core French

The Core French program, while having very different goals from the French Immersion program, has the dual obligation of meeting the provincial curriculum requirements, but also has the greater obligation of supporting the Canadian identity as a nation that is striving to enhance its linguistic duality. A successful Core French program will continue from its initiation in Grade 1 to the Grade 12 year.
Teachers of Core French must strive to use best practices for second language instruction within the limited time allocation at their disposal (120 minutes per week in elementary, 150 minutes per week in the middle years and 100 hours/credit in high school).

The following are indicators of instructional excellence in Core French:

- The class is conducted as much as possible in French, including routine directions.
- Students are actively engaged in learning, asking questions, participating in discussions, learning about each other through role-play and dramatization, as well as many genuine communication opportunities.
- A variety of strategies are used to help students comprehend.
- The form of the language (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) is taught at an appropriate time, in other words, as a result of the students’ “need to know” the language element in order to complete the task (Grades 4-12).
- Resources are readily accessible in the classroom to support students in independent learning activities.
- Adaptation of the unit and the activities is evident as the teacher attempts to meet the needs of individual students.
- The instructional plan allows students to practise the French language both in individual and group settings.
- Students use global comprehension strategies as they listen for key words and the main message.
- A broad variety of student and program assessment strategies are used to assist in student and program evaluation. Structures and vocabulary are assessed as an integral part of communicative competence within a meaningful context. They are neither practised nor assessed in isolation.
- Classroom bulletin boards, posters and environment support French language instruction as well as the cultural component of the curriculum.
- Students are exposed to a broad variety of authentic documents, such as French newspapers, authentic French voices, different accents, radio conversations, menus, guides, and music, that allow them to feel part of a French milieu.
- Instructional planning provides for the integration of the four skill areas (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

**Organizing Instruction in Core French Programs**

- Second language programs have been found to be most effective when instruction is ongoing over the entire year. Teaching Core French for part of the year has not been as effective or as successful.
- At the secondary, middle, and elementary levels, increased time on task has been associated with better student outcomes.
- Assigning the instruction of Core French to teachers with a high level of both oral and written competence is important.
- A dedicated Core French classroom should be available to the teacher. This allows for the creation of a French environment, and also signals the importance of the subject matter to students.
At the secondary level, avoid scheduling French at the same time as university entrance classes or options perceived by students and their parents to be very important.

School counsellors need to be knowledgeable about career opportunities and program entrance requirements. Student counsellors in Saskatchewan are often unaware of the advantages and possibilities open to students of second languages. Career and business opportunities (both national and international) are increased with bilingualism. Personal enrichment and travel are more accessible with Canada’s two official languages.

In the Appendix of this document, starting on page 99, there is useful information for counsellors, students and their parents on post-secondary opportunities that are available to Core French students as well as French Immersion students. Information on bursaries, student exchanges, summer programs, scholarships and e-learning opportunities can be accessed through the Official Minority Language Office, Federal Provincial programs, Canadian Parents for French, SEVEC and other exchange, programs.

Core French Teachers Second Language Competency

Core French teacher competency requirements will vary from Grade 1 to Grade 12. While ideally the class will be conducted in French from the first years of the program, the shortage of skilled French language teachers will often make this difficult to implement.

From Grade 4 to Grade 8, teachers should be able to carry on instruction in the French language, and provide a fairly fluent model of the French language. The high school teacher should be fluent. All Core French teachers should demonstrate a love for, and an enjoyment and appreciation of the language, as well as a willingness to improve their French skills through professional development opportunities.

Distance Learning Opportunities

The shortage of Core French teachers in the province and the difficulty in offering Core French in smaller centres and schools has made distance education options attractive to many school divisions.

The Saskatchewan Government Correspondence School presently offers Core French 9 through 30 using an interactive television method and regular correspondence. There are also online instructional materials for Core French 10, 20, 30 on the OMLO web site at http://www.bmlo.ca/ecole/rbw.htm.

Professional Development for Core French Teachers

The Official Minority Language Office of Saskatchewan Learning plays a major role in the professional development of teachers who teach in a Core French program. Their professional development is a shared responsibility with school divisions.

Mentorship opportunities are available for Core French teachers. For more information, the school division representative or the school-based administrator should contact the consultant from OMLO. Other possibilities for professional development are provided through the support of professional associations and bursary opportunities. A summary of these opportunities is available in this document starting on page 54.
Parent Role

The role of parents in supporting their children’s learning is well documented in educational research. Parental attitudes to second language learning and to French in particular are very influential on their child’s success in the program. A Saskatchewan Learning resource, entitled *Core French: A Parent Informational Booklet*, provides many positive ideas for administrators to share with parents. It is available online at [http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/bmlo/infoparent/livrets/core_ins.html](http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/bmlo/infoparent/livrets/core_ins.html).

Additional information on establishing authentic partnerships with parents can be found in the next section, starting on page 57.
Section 6

Organizational and Community Supports for French Second Language Programs: Authentic Partnerships

This section of the handbook will initially focus on the support role of the Official Minority Language Office (OMLO) for French second language education. School divisions work collaboratively with OMLO staff to address program needs.

The second critical partnership in FSL education is with parents, especially in French Immersion where parents have taken a conscious and informed decision to choose this program for their children.

The success of FSL programs in Saskatchewan, where students live, work and play in English, will depend to some extent on developing authentic partnerships. Students will heighten their oral fluency in French by participating in real life situations in French where they experience what it is like “to live” in French. These opportunities may be found through a variety of partnerships where French language experiences are available or the partners will support the development of opportunities for students.

Therefore numerous groups and associations are listed as possible supports to be called upon for French second language research, experiences, and resources.

The Official Minority Language Office

OMLO’s role in supporting and improving French second language education in the province is critical to school divisions and schools in their pursuit of quality programs. OMLO is responsible for French language education in Saskatchewan. Its main function is the development, piloting, implementation and actualization of curricula for Core French, Intensive French and French Immersion programs, and Fransaskois schools.

The website for this office (http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/omlo/index.shtml) provides current information and relevant links for teachers, parents and administrators. Teachers and administrators can consult the professional development area, provincial curricula and bibliographies or educational services. Federal Provincial grants for exchanges, teacher and student bursaries for studies in French are also coordinated through this office.
OMLO Professional Development Opportunities

OMLO plays a major role in the professional development of teachers who teach in a French immersion or Core French program. Professional development is a shared responsibility with school divisions. OMLO supports professional development options in several categories, thus providing flexibility to school divisions when they are planning for professional development activities that will respond to their specific needs.

1. **School Division Initiated Workshops**
   Each school division is involved in the planning of professional development options for teachers according to a predetermined calendar set by the school division. OMLO consultants are available to give a workshop during these school division in-service days on a first-come first-served basis. The services of the OMLO consultants are provided at no cost to the school division.

   For more information and to book the services of a consultant, the school division representative or the school-based administrator should contact the consultant directly. A list of OMLO consultants is available on the website.

2. **OMLO Sponsored Workshops**
   OMLO offers workshops annually to support teachers in the actualization of the French language version of key curriculum documents, or curriculum renewal projects, as well as other workshops in instructional areas pertinent to second language instruction. Directors of education and school administrators are provided with the schedule of workshops, workshop outlines, and registration forms to be shared with staff.

3. **Mentorship**
   The mentorship program offered by OMLO provides a needs-based support to teachers who want to change and improve the teaching and learning environment they create in their French classroom. In this program, the provincial consultant for the subject area will act as the mentor and work with the teacher on an individual or small-group basis. The mentorship model is more appropriate for individual teacher needs in accelerating and facilitating the change process towards a more effective use of Saskatchewan Learning curricula.

   Mentorship opportunities are available for French Immersion teachers in a number of subject areas. Core French mentoring opportunities are also available. For more information, the school division representative or the school-based administrator should contact the consultant directly.

4. **Instructional Resources Evaluation**
   In order to support teachers in the identification, evaluation and use of instructional resources within FSL programs, OMLO invites groups of teachers annually to assist in the evaluation of instructional resources in print, non-print and electronic formats. The instructional resource evaluation sessions are offered for elementary, middle and secondary levels for subject areas or subject area groupings. Teachers have found this activity to be an invaluable professional collaboration and networking opportunity. On completion of this process, the resources and documents are used in the “evergreening” of the curriculum.
French Second Language Curriculum and Instructional Resources

The curriculum and resources documents for Core French and French Immersion are available on the French version of the Evergreen Curriculum web page at http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/francais/evergrn.html. These documents and others describing resources and new curriculum initiatives can be downloaded as required. The resource documents are updated annually while the curriculum documents are revised when curricula are renewed.

The web-based resources section found at http://www.bmlo.ca/ecole/rbw.htm contains French resources (learning objects) that can be downloaded and modified. The Rescol page showcases technology based resources developed by teachers through special grants.

- In partnership with Saskatchewan Learning, school divisions can apply to receive funding to develop web-based instructional resources that support Saskatchewan curricula. Proposals are submitted in the spring with development being carried out in the following academic year. For example, five French projects were selected for the 2003-2004 school year. Created by Saskatchewan educators, these resources are well adapted to our context and support Saskatchewan Learning curricula. Teachers are encouraged to download the resources and modify them to suit their own teaching situation. New ones are being added annually, for example:
  - Expérience en milieu de travail 20
  - Physique 30
  - Technologie des communications 20
  - Traitement de l’information 20
  - Transitions dans la vie 20
  - Modules de sciences à l’élémentaire

A virtual school, eCOLE aims to assist students in their learning by offering distance education courses in French through the Internet. Using FirstClass intranet software, parents, students and teachers in Saskatchewan are able to participate and grow within a virtual learning community. The web address is www.bmlo.ca/ecole/ecole.html. Courses currently available are Français en immersion 10, 20, 30, Mathématiques 10, 20, C30, Éducation chrétienne, Gestion des finances 10, Études sociales 30, Histoire 10, Tourisme 10.

The Education and Technology support teams are listed with the other OMLO staff on the web site at http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/bmlo/unit/personnel.shtml.

Federal Provincial Programs

There are a number of support programs for FSL programs funded by the federal government and administered through the province.

- **Professional Staff: Individual Teacher Bursary Program**

  The Individual Teacher Bursary Program is a bursary for professional training available to French language educators. Funding is available for courses offered in French in Canada. The amount of the bursary has been $1800.00 and is currently under review at the federal level. The complete bursary requirements are posted online annually at http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/omlo/bourses/enseig.shtml.
• **Official Language Monitor Program**

The monitor program funded by Canadian Heritage offers schools the opportunity to have a French speaking person to spend regularly scheduled time in immersion classrooms and thus provide another source of French language, cultural activities, and other enrichment opportunities. The monitors are of post-secondary age and are offered full-time or part-time positions. This program is administered by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), in cooperation with Saskatchewan Learning.

Schools apply for the services of a monitor through OMLO. Additional information and application forms are online at [http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/omlo/moniteur/moniteur.shtml](http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/omlo/moniteur/moniteur.shtml).

• **Summer Language Bursary Program**

Bursaries are granted to students across Canada to enable them to participate in five-week immersion courses in English or French during the summer at accredited institutions. This bursary program is for students who have completed at least Grade 11 and who have been enrolled as students on a full-time basis for at least one semester during the academic year preceding the application. Young Canadians are provided with the opportunity to learn their second official language or, in the case of Francophone minorities, to perfect their mother tongue. This program is administered by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), in conjunction with the department of education or the department responsible for post-secondary education in each province and territory.

The application deadline is February 15. The program in Saskatchewan is administered through CMEC in collaboration with the Official Minority Language Office. Information and application forms are available on the website at [http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/omlo/bourses/ete.shtml](http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/omlo/bourses/ete.shtml).

• **Post-Secondary Study Bursaries**

Bursaries are available for post-secondary studies in French Immersion or Francophone Education degree programs, French language studies, and after degree French Second Language Education programs. These programs are offered by Canadian Heritage in collaboration with Saskatchewan Learning. Further information is available on the Internet at [http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/omlo/bourses/post.shtml](http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/omlo/bourses/post.shtml).

• **Saskatchewan/Québec Student Exchange**

Saskatchewan Learning, in partnership with the province of Quebec, sponsors a language development exchange program for high school students. In September, Saskatchewan students host exchange partners from Quebec who spend three months here attending high school classes in English, and living in the homes of their Saskatchewan partners. In February, Saskatchewan students travel to Quebec for a similar three-month experience in French. While the focus is on developing language skills, being immersed in a culture and lifestyle different to the one they are used to also develops participants’ coping and interpersonal skills.
Saskatchewan students must apply before the end of January during their Grade 10 year. The exchange would take place the following year. For more information, go to the OMLO website at http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/omlo/echange/echange.shtml.

- **Summer Work / Student Exchange**
  This program was instituted to give youth the opportunity to work at a summer job in their second language and in another region of Canada. Young Canadians aged 16 and 17 years old can apply, and applications are accepted throughout the year. For more information e-mail: info@1617.ca or consult the website at www.emplois-ete.com.

- **SEVEC Youth Exchanges Canada**
  SEVEC Youth Exchanges offer young people from any province or territory the opportunity to be involved in an exchange with other youth elsewhere in the country. Exchanges can be designed around shared interests such as history, geography, the arts, environmental studies or second-language learning. Students from 11 to 18 years of age are eligible for this exchange. Applications are accepted up to four months prior to the exchange. For more information, go to http://www.sevec.ca/.

**Authentic Partnerships with Parents**

Parents are the first and most important group with whom the teacher and the school need to engage in a true partnership. Parent engagement in their child’s education is one of the critical factors in a child’s success in school. This is true regardless of the program a child is enrolled in.

Because French Immersion, as an alternative program, requires active choice on the part of the parent, most French Immersion parents are very interested in their children’s education and willing to be involved. The very nature of French Immersion makes parental involvement in their child’s education seem more difficult than for most English program parents. French Immersion parents who have little or no proficiency in French - and that is the great majority - often express the following worries:

- They will not be able to monitor their children’s academic progress.
- They will not be able to help their children with homework.
- They will not be welcome in the classroom, nor will they be able to volunteer at the school because they do not speak French.
- Their children will not learn to read or write well in English.

Yet one of the reasons often cited for the success of French Immersion programs is the strong role that parents have played in establishing and supporting the program. How, then, can French Immersion administrators ensure that parents have the support they need to feel comfortable with and be effectively involved in their children’s education? How can administrators work with parents to the benefit of the children, the program and the school?
Helping Parents Support Their Child in French Immersion Programs

Provide parents with either a handbook developed at your school or board office explicitly for French Immersion parents or a copy of the appropriate parent information handbook developed by OMLO and available on the web site at http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/omlo/infoparent/livrets/immersion/index.shtml. Encourage parents to use it as a resource at home. Include excerpts in your school newsletters, on your web page, and include several copies in the parent resource collection.

The following suggestions come from experienced French Immersion administrators:

- Offer information sessions for parents such as a panel presentation that includes an administrator, a teacher, a student and a parent. Hold parent discussion forums on topics of interest to parents with children attending French Immersion programs.

- In a dual track school, ensure that there are meetings for immersion parents during which issues specific to that program can be resolved in a timely and productive manner. A French Immersion Advisory Council is a positive addition in a dual track school or at the division level.

- Encourage experienced immersion parents to share their “immersion parenting” experiences, challenges and strategies with others. Invite them to come to French Immersion Kindergarten Orientation meetings or the first parent meetings of the year to talk about their experiences.

- Encourage parents to visit a French Immersion classroom to see, first-hand, how easily the students adapt to the immersion environment and learn the language. These visits are especially helpful prior to registration in the early immersion program.

- An organizational skills workshop for parents may also help them help their child. Children in immersion programs have more homework than the average child because of the additional academic workload. Teachers should ensure that students are prepared for homework (e.g., that they have the background knowledge and material). Finally, school homework policies should be explained in the school handbook and shared with parents.

- Encourage teachers to offer parent information sessions on the curricula and the teaching strategies that are used in second language programs. This needs to continue into high school. When high schools present curriculum nights at the beginning of each semester, there has been an excellent turnout of parents who follow their child’s schedule for 20 or 30-minute presentations on the instructional units, assessment and strategies of each subject.

- Encourage parents to volunteer in the school where they will observe first-hand some of the instructional processes in FSL programs.
• Assist parents in understanding any standardized achievement testing that may be used in the school division. Immersion parents will need assurance that the immersion students’ results compare favourably to students in the English program in all subject areas.

• Encourage parents who have some proficiency in French to assist FSL students with reading and other language activities, mathematics, social studies, art, and science projects, or be a guest speaker.

• Parents with little proficiency in French can be encouraged to help with classroom activities that require little oral communication, supervise on field trips (with the understanding that their role is an observer in French language situations), prepare materials or arrange for demonstrations.

• Encourage the Director of Education to set up a French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee as permitted under the Education Act, Regulations, n.39. See page 78 of this document.

Other Authentic Partnerships

Canadian Parents for French (CPF)

Canadian Parents for French was founded in 1977 by English-speaking parents attending a national conference on French language and exchange opportunities. It has been a driving force behind the popularity and growth of French Immersion, and has strongly supported the significant improvements that have been made to FSL instruction. CPF Saskatchewan is part of a national network of parents and other volunteers who value French as an integral part of Canada, and who are dedicated to the promotion and creation of FSL learning opportunities for young Canadians.

A school, jurisdiction or organization (such as a school council) can become an associate member of CPF to receive information. An associate member organization in Saskatchewan:
• receives multiple copies of all newsletters,
• has access to current research and information on the national web site,
• may send representatives to provincial and national meetings,
• has access to the Grade 6-9 grant program administered by the CPF Saskatchewan office.

Teachers and administrators can support CPF and address parent support needs by:
• encouraging parents to become members,
• taking out an associate membership on behalf of the school,
• coordinating parents’ efforts to provide French language experiences for their students with those of the local CPF chapter,
• sharing information with CPF about program successes and challenges, ideas and resources.
Some of the activities organized by CPF Saskatchewan are:

- Out-of-school French experiences include summer camps for children, summer play centres, parent French courses, rendez-vous weekends, or mini rendez-vous events.
- CPF provincially, and now nationally, sponsors a *Concours oratoire* annually. Students participate at the local, regional and provincial levels and, since 2003, nationally.
- CPF and the Embassy of France collaborate on a national competition which is open to Grade 11 and 12 students enrolled in French Immersion (16 years and older). Schools are encouraged to put together a team consisting of four students and one teacher. Each member of the winning team will win a trip to France.

E-mail: cpfsask@sasktel.net.  
Saskatchewan web site: www.cpfsask.com or www.cpf.ca.

**Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages/Commissariat aux langues officielles (OCOL/CLO)**

The Commissioner of Official Languages has a mandate to take all measures within his or her authority to ensure that the three main objectives of the Official Languages Act are met, namely:

- the equality of English and French in Parliament, within the Government of Canada, the federal administration, and the institutions subject to the Act;
- the preservation and development of official language communities in Canada;
- the equality of English and French in Canadian society.

The regional offices (of which there is one in Regina) are responsible for planning and directing all liaison, public relations and information activities in the region with a view to increasing understanding and support for Canada’s linguistic duality.

The Commissioner’s office produces several posters available in both official languages. Some feature paintings by famous Canadian artists, and encourage reflection with inspiring bilingual messages. The Commissioner’s office also produces books, games and resource kits that can be used in the classroom.


**Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers/Association canadienne des professeurs d’immersion (CAIT/ACPI)**

The Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers was established in 1977 to promote and improve French Immersion programs in Canada. Since its creation, CAIT has initiated numerous activities with the aim of enhancing immersion teaching:

- biennial national conferences for teachers and administrators, held mid-fall;
- alternate year thematic colloquia for teachers and administrators, held mid-fall;
- *Journal de l’IMMERSION Journal* published quarterly;
- an annual National Summer Institute for immersion teachers;
• promotion of dialogue and partnerships among national and provincial associations working in
the area of FSL learning and research;
• representing the interests of immersion programs to stakeholders;
• providing a forum for the exchange of ideas on immersion programs and teaching methods;
• identifying and developing teaching strategies to further the acquisition of a second language,
and to promote student learning in all subjects taught in the second language.

CAIT is an important source of professional development and resources for French Immersion
teachers.
• Encourage teachers to become members of CAIT. Members receive the *Journal de
l’IMMERSION* Journal containing informative articles and references to research.
• Review CAIT’s calendar of conferences, colloquia and the National Summer Institute when
planning professional development activities. Encourage teachers to take full advantage of the
many opportunities and resources CAIT has to offer, including a guide to French Immersion,
written especially for teachers and administrators new to French Immersion.
• A new document entitled *L’immersion en français au Canada – Guide pratique d’enseignement*
was published in 2004. It offers a gold mine of information, activities and strategies for
immersion teachers.

E-mail: acpi@sevec.ca
Web site: http://acpi.scedu.umontreal.ca/.

**Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers/Association canadienne des
professeurs de langue seconde (CASLT/ACPLS)**

The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers was established in 1970. CASLT promotes
second language teaching and learning throughout Canada through various initiatives:
• creating opportunities for professional development including «CASLT Chez Vous»
professional development days held in each province;
• encouraging research;
• facilitating the sharing of information and the exchange of ideas among second language
educators;
• publishing the Réflexions newsletter (3 times a year) and classroom support materials such as
Les projets éducatifs;
• collaborating with provincial, national and international second language associations.

The award-winning CASLT website includes:
• access to an excellent free monthly newsletter in French and English;
• numerous resources for classroom use that are updated regularly;
• on-line teaching activities that incorporate the use of technology in the second language
classroom;
• research articles on second language teaching and learning;
• a list of provincial, national, and international second language conferences;
• regularly updated links for second language teachers;
• copyright-free clipart organized by themes;
• an Intensive French Teacher Forum for the exchange of ideas and support.
Administrators should encourage Core French and Intensive French teachers to become members of CASLT. In addition, teachers can subscribe to the free digital newsletter, and access the many websites and digital resources on the website.

CASLT is recognized internationally for its leadership in second language teaching at both K-12 and university levels. This organization has a strong national profile and advocates for the education sector with OCOL and the federal department of Canadian Heritage. CASLT undertakes projects aimed at strengthening the profile of French in Canadian schools and motivating students to continue their study of French to high school graduation; it works toward the revitalization of Core FSL programs and the recruitment and retention of qualified FSL teachers.

Email: admin@caslt.org
Website: http://www.caslt.org

Saskatchewan Association of Teachers of French/Association des professeurs de français de la Saskatchewan (SATF/APFS)

The Saskatchewan Association of Teachers of French (SATF), a special subject council of the STF, promotes the advancement of French language teaching and learning in Saskatchewan through various initiatives:

- Creating opportunities for professional development including an annual provincial French teacher’s conference.
- Encouraging professional development for teachers by offering bursaries to its members.
- Facilitating the sharing of information and the exchange of ideas among second language educators.
- Publication of the Bulletin de Service newsletter (at least 3 times per year) which includes classroom support materials.
- Partnerships with national second language associations
- SATF website (http://www.apfs.ca/) which includes numerous links for French second language teachers.

Administrators should encourage French second language teachers to become members of the SATF.
Institut français, University of Regina

In 2002, the Language Institute was transformed into the Institut français and, like its predecessor, it recognizes Canada’s linguistic duality by promoting and enhancing post-secondary education in French. Its academic programs and research activities reflect its commitment to the Francophone and francophile community in Saskatchewan by contributing to its cultural renewal and the retention of the French language in the province.

The Institut français relies on a team of qualified and dynamic instructors who are committed to creating a nurturing and comfortable learning environment. It gives the Anglophone community the opportunity to enhance its own culture by gaining a better understanding of the language and the culture of the French speaking minority. Members of the English speaking community who use its services enjoy a competitive edge in the Canadian job market.

Website:  http://www.uregina.ca/institutfrancais/

Fransaskois Associations

Websites of Fransaskois associations, resources, resource centres, and print collections can be found on Le site internet Fransaskois http://www.fransaskois.sk.ca/. It provides an excellent resource in French for the history of Saskatchewan from a French-speaking person’s perspective. A complete list of Fransaskois associations is also available in the Appendix on page 97 of this document.

Website:  http://collections.ic.gc.ca/Fransaskois/

Canadian Heritage

Canadian Heritage is responsible for national policies and programs that promote Canadian content, foster cultural participation, active citizenship and participation in Canada’s civic life, and strengthen connections among Canadians. There are regional offices in both Saskatoon and Regina where bilingual employees can offer informative talks and activities in French on a number of Canadian historical and cultural topics.

Canadian Heritage
2201 11th Avenue, Suite 100
Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 0J8
Tel.: (306) 780-7287

Canadian Heritage
101 22nd Street East, Suite 310
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 0E1
Tel.: (306) 975-4146
Website:  http://www.pch.gc.ca/.
Le Lien

Le Lien is a resource centre that operates a lending library from its Gravelbourg location. A variety of print and audiovisual material is available in French. Consult the online catalogue.

Website: [http://www.infolien.sk.ca/](http://www.infolien.sk.ca/)

L’Eau vive

L’Eau vive is a provincial weekly French newspaper that can be used to provide students with the experience of reading the news in French. It plays a significant role in publicizing events occurring in the French community in Saskatchewan. These events offer opportunities for language experiences outside the regular classroom for students and their families.

Website: [http://journaux.apf.ca/eauvive/](http://journaux.apf.ca/eauvive/)

French Language Field Trips and Activities in Saskatchewan

Information about all national parks and historic sites can be found on the Parks Canada website at [http://parkscanada.pch.gc.ca](http://parkscanada.pch.gc.ca). Specific phone numbers are listed below. Please note that many are seasonal offices that do not open until May.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Park/ Historic Site</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prince Albert National Park</td>
<td>(306) 663-4522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Battleford National Park</td>
<td>(306) 937-2621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grasslands National Park</td>
<td>(306) 298-2257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Walsh National Historic Site</td>
<td>(306) 662-3590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motherwell Homestead National Historic Site</td>
<td>(306) 333-2116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batoche National Historic Site</td>
<td>(306) 423-6227</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Tourisme Fransaskois du Sud de la Saskatchewan website at [http://www.tourismesudsaskatchewan.com/](http://www.tourismesudsaskatchewan.com/) will assist teachers in southern Saskatchewan in finding French cultural and linguistic experiences. A few of the more popular ones are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Experience</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willow Bunch Museum</td>
<td>(306) 473-2806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravelbourg Museum</td>
<td>(306) 648-2332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre culturel Maillard in Gravelbourg</td>
<td>(306) 648-3103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Conseil culturel fransaskois offers a website at [http://www.culturel.sk.ca/repertoire/index_f.html](http://www.culturel.sk.ca/repertoire/index_f.html) which has information about Francophone artists in Saskatchewan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Francophone Artist</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>La Ribambelle</td>
<td>(306) 249-2669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Troupe du Jour</td>
<td>(306) 244-1040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Danseurs de la rivière la Vieille</td>
<td>(306) 648-3332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Franskataires</td>
<td>(306) 648-3105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Théâtre Oskana</td>
<td>(306) 566-6020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellevue Cultural Centre</td>
<td>(306) 423-5303</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Saskatchewan Provincial Institutions

The Royal Saskatchewan Museum of Natural Sciences in Regina has had its resources translated into French and may, if asked in advance, be able to provide tour guide services in French.

The Science Centre in Regina may be able to provide tours in French if arrangements are made in advance for this service.
Pedagogical Approaches in French Second Language Programs

The research in education is clear and unequivocal today. Having educators work collaboratively on planning, problem-solving, instructional improvement, mentoring, resource development and assessment activities has proven to be the foundational piece in achieving excellence in programs. Shared instructional leadership is a powerful tool for achieving the goals of any instructional program, and second language learning is no exception.

The challenge in French second language programs is that there may be only a small staff. For this reason, professional exchanges may need to be structured between schools, between divisions, through professional conferences such as the Saskatchewan Association of Teachers of French (SATF), the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT), and the Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers (CAIT). The web sites of these associations provide many resources to assist teachers in isolated instructional situations to be part of a professional community in at least some manner.

Establishing a Professional Learning Community Focused on Excellence

If administrators can fulfil the needs outlined below, they will provide a strong basis for a learning community and a good level of support to FSL teachers.

French second language teachers require:

- opportunities, which may include release time, to meet, network, plan activities and develop ideas with colleagues, both within and outside their programs, schools and jurisdictions;
- opportunities to attend workshops and conferences on FSL related topics, many of which may best be given in French;
- access to current research and developments in teaching practices;
- opportunities to maintain and improve their French language skills and cultural awareness;
- in-service opportunities suited to specific needs of immersion teachers;
- opportunities to be involved in school level planning for program and school improvement and other areas of decision-making.

Assessment is a critical part of the instructional process. However, this section will separate the two in order to emphasize the adaptations to instruction and assessment that are considered good practice in FSL education.
Instructional Excellence in French Second Language Programs

Teaching strategies in all grades should be based on the latest second language learning pedagogy, which includes:

- opportunities for and encouragement of spontaneous and frequent use of the language by students through teacher-student and student-student interaction;
- the use of task-based, authentic activities that are meaningful, contextualized, and involve the real transfer of information;
- the development of all language skills - listening, speaking, reading and writing;
- a concerted focus on students’ literacy skills;
- the integration of grammar with writing and content;
- the integration of culture and content;
- the identification of errors and a variety of appropriate approaches for error correction;
- the use of authentic multimedia resources;
- opportunities for interaction with native French speakers;
- the use of the French language in meaningful situations, both in and outside the classroom and school;
- continual assessment of the students’ language development and continuous adaptation to instruction to ensure increased language development;
- the integration of language and content (in French Immersion programs) for the students’ overall French language development.

Adaptations for Student Diversity in Second Language Classrooms

Children learn in different ways and at different rates. Students come to the classroom with significant differences in cultural backgrounds, aptitudes, interests, abilities, and achievement levels. It is the role of every teacher to accommodate these differences through adaptations to curriculum content, instructional strategies, and the learning environment if all are to benefit equitably from education programs. The design of Saskatchewan curricula, with the inclusion of the Adaptive Dimension, facilitates these accommodations.

There are many articles and texts written to assist teachers in modifying their practices in order to enrich, extend, reinforce, or teach differentially toward foundational objectives. The Saskatchewan Learning publication, *The Adaptive Dimension in Core Curriculum*, is one. There are many suggestions in Saskatchewan Learning curricula which will help teachers support students who require an adaptation.

The same programming alternatives expected in English classrooms are possible in the French Immersion classrooms. Learning assistance support may be required for the most severe challenges. However, teachers, with consultative support, are able to make many modifications in the regular classroom setting.
Some of the areas of modification that should be pursued by the classroom teacher fall under the following categories:

- general accommodations,
- visual perception difficulties,
- auditory perception difficulties,
- fine motor skill difficulties,
- organizational problems.

**Accountability for Program and Student Achievement in Second Language Programs**

Both provincially and nationally, there is a renewed emphasis on accountability for student achievement. Educators and others must be able to answer the question, “How are we doing?” Evidence needs to be collected and interpreted to respond to the question, but also to plan for improved outcomes and to address any weaknesses that are identified. There is much to be done at the school division, provincial and national levels to answer the question effectively.

A division offering FSL programs should undertake regular program reviews using well developed assessment tools to ensure that certain elements are in place and working well.

- Curricula and supporting documents are being used effectively.
- Adequate resources are available to administrators, teachers and students, and are being used.
- Teachers are well supported in their instruction and professional development needs.
- Student achievement is good and improving over time.

The 2004 Canadian Parents for French report The State of French Second Language Education in Canada contains a template for the evaluation of French second language programs on a national and provincial level. This template is of use for school level and division level program assessments.

**TEMPLATE FOR FRENCH SECOND LANGUAGE EVALUATION**

**ENROLMENT**

Accessibility

- By policy, there is no capping of numbers in FSL.
- Transportation to FSL programs is provided.
- By policy, no fees are charged for participation in FSL programs.
- Planning is ongoing to make programs more accessible to more

**Monitoring of Enrolment**

- Enrolment is monitored.
- Shifts and changes in enrolment in schools are studied and explained.
- Action is taken where changes in enrolment indicate that students are not getting the advantage of FSL programs.
Remedial Assistance
- Students with learning difficulties or gifted needs (or both) are served in FSL programs.

QUALITY

FSL Policies/Guidelines
- Provincial policies which are informed by research are followed.
- Provincial guidelines for FSL programs are followed.
- There are written goals for student language achievement in all FSL programs.

Full Integration of FSL in Main Curriculum
- French is part of the main curriculum.
- The number of hours of actual instruction in FSL programs are defined and monitored.
- Entry points to FSL programs are established and are consistent from year to year.
- There is school division and school level recognition for student achievement in FSL programs.
- FSL availability at the post-secondary level is encouraged for students to pursue and maintain French language competence.

Qualified Teachers
- Qualifications for FSL teachers in various programs are defined.
- Professional development opportunities are made available to FSL teachers.

Resources
- Adequate resources (both teacher and student) are available to support programs.

Innovation and Research
- Innovative approaches to FSL programs are encouraged and evaluated to see if they are effective in increasing achievement.
- Student attitudes and motivation are monitored.
- Research into FSL programs is encouraged.

Extracurricular Activities
- Activities where students use French outside the classroom are encouraged, funded and publicized.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Parental Involvement
- Information concerning provincial FSL guidelines, policies and programs is readily available to parents.
- Parents are involved in FSL decision-making.

Designated Funding
- Models regarding the real cost of providing FSL programs have been developed and are used in determining school and division budgets.
- Information regarding funding is readily available to educators and to the public.
- The amount of funding and the flow of funds are transparent.
- The flow of funds and their ultimate use are monitored.
Review

- Systems are in place to monitor the achievement of students in FSL programs.
- There is an annual system for reporting on the ways in which schools meet the guidelines and develop improvement plans where required.
- A process of monitoring and revising (as necessary) is in place with regard to transportation, charging of fees, enrolment trends, accessibility of programs, student achievement, supply of teachers, stability of programs and actual hours of instruction.


Assessment for Learning in French Second Language Programs

Effective assessment practices are a shared responsibility of teachers, administrators and the school division. Teachers and supervisors of FSL programs require the means to assess students’ initial proficiency and the development of their ability to communicate fluently in French. The development of the students’ understanding and appreciation of the culture, common attitudes, and values of French-speaking communities in Saskatchewan, Canada and around the world are also indicators of program achievement that require assessment.

The previous section of this handbook provides information for developing indicators to use in the assessment of FSL programs. Administrators at both the school and the division level have a responsibility to seek out information that will assist them to assess the effectiveness of Core French and French Immersion programs, and provide the basis for an improvement plan.

Assessment for Learning Unit, Saskatchewan Learning

Saskatchewan Learning has a curriculum renewal process that involves assessment of curriculum efficacy, followed by an action plan if renewal of the curriculum or other action is required.

- A provincial Mathematics Assessment Pilot Project was carried out in 2002 and again in 2003. A number of French Immersion schools were involved in these pilots and have been involved in preparing action plans in response to the results. Mathematics assessments in Grades 5, 8 and 11 occurred again in the spring of 2004. The results of French Immersion students as compared to English program students generally indicate better performance in most of the strands assessed. The strand of problem-solving continues to challenge Saskatchewan students and is a focus of improvement at the provincial level.

- The French language arts curriculum for French Immersion schools underwent a process of curriculum evaluation during the 2002-2003 school year beginning with an extensive teacher survey. The Official Minority Language Office developed an action plan in response to this initiative. This document can be found online at http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/branches/cap_building_acct/afl/docs/curriculum/eval/frenchteach_results.pdf.
Further information on these initiatives and other national and provincial assessments under development is available at http://www.sasklearning.gov.sk.ca/branches/cap_building_acct/afl/aflindex.shtml.

School Division Initiatives

The development of French reading, writing, listening and speaking benchmarks or other assessment tools such as grade level standards is a major undertaking that requires leadership, collaboration, teacher professional development and more. Some tools are intended for system information on student learning, while others are intended to support the learning of individual students. Some larger school divisions have developed French writing assessments, mathematics assessments, reading benchmarks, and problem-solving assessments. Smaller divisions may find it helpful to contact urban school divisions that have developed these assessments and request information.

There are a few school divisions that have been assessing student learning in their French Immersion programs at the system level for several years.

- Disaggregation and analysis of Canadian Achievement Test scores has been useful in some cases and at some grade levels. Note that these tests are not curriculum specific and thus the interpretation of results must be done carefully. They may, however, provide useful information to teachers to assist with instructional planning. Contacting a major urban school division in Regina and Saskatoon about the processes they have put in place for analysis and dissemination of the data may be helpful to smaller jurisdictions. Once again, the results of French Immersion students are generally better than those of their English program counterparts.

- French Immersion system-wide mathematics assessments are being administered annually to assess student and division progress in problem solving. Regina Public School Division has a system-wide assessment at the Grade 12 level, while Regina Catholic does a problem-solving assessment at the elementary and middle levels.

- Writing benchmarks for French Immersion students have been developed by Regina Public for the Grade 4, 7 and 11 levels. A Reading Benchmarks program for Grades 1-3 has been developed by Regina Catholic, as well as a writing assessment for the Grade 3 level. Regina Public has developed a “Running Record” process for their French Immersion primary classes.

- Broad-based mathematics assessments at the primary levels are in place in a number of urban school divisions in the province. In the area of mathematics, the provincial assessments will provide excellent data on achievement where school divisions choose to participate, and where the data is structured to give information on FSL student outcomes.

The value of these initiatives is not in the results for any one year, but in an analysis of results over time in response to instructional initiatives undertaken to improve student achievement in identified areas. These initiatives also provide school divisions, students and teachers with many reasons to celebrate.
Other Assessment Initiatives

Extensive research on student achievement in a variety of subject areas in French Immersion has been undertaken since its inception.

- Statistics Canada released a study in March 2004 that again confirms that French Immersion students in Canada perform better on English reading assessments than their unilingual counterparts even when the effects of socio-economic status are taken into account (Statistics Canada, 2004).

- The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada has developed and completed national assessments in a number of areas, some of which have disaggregated samples of French Immersion student results. Results of these assessments can be found on the web site at www.cmec.ca/.

- The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers has a project underway on Language Proficiency Testing. Part 1 and Part 2 of the project can be found online at www.caslt.org/.

- There are also initiatives in development or in use in other provinces of Canada. New Brunswick has a Second Language Oral Proficiency Scale with 9 levels that is administered to all French Immersion and Core French students at the Grade 12 level. This tool is on the New Brunswick Department of Education website at http://www.gnb.ca/0000/publications/eval/oralprofgr12.pdf.

- The province of Newfoundland and Labrador has developed some Core French rubrics that may be of use to teachers and school divisions as a basis for discussion and local development. The rubrics include Oral Production and Comprehension, a Holistic Writing Rubric, a Dictation Rubric, and a Reading Comprehension Rubric. These tools are available on the website of the Department of Education for Newfoundland Labrador at http://www.gov.nl.ca/edu/pub/crt/pdf/corefrench_rubrics.pdf.

School divisions and/or regional consortia may wish to collaborate in developing their own assessment instruments for monitoring student achievement in their French programs.

Classroom Assessment Practices

Teachers will plan student assessment as they plan for instruction, and use a broad variety of strategies to determine student achievement. The assessment information is used from day to day to direct and modify instruction as required. Learning for all students requires responsive instruction on the part of the teacher. Frequent use of informal assessment tools allows teachers to follow student progress and provide feedback to students and their parents. More importantly, ongoing assessment allows a teacher to focus more directly on student learning and student response to instruction. Assessment for learning is truly a key to program improvement and increased student achievement.
Classroom assessments are the most valuable form of student assessment. They can be the most varied and therefore the most accurate in determining student learning. Professional development on this topic is a very important part of teacher training since methods and tools have changed dramatically over the past few years. Assessment strategies that work and are effective in the English program are also effective in a second language.

Region 3 of Saskatchewan Learning has developed a comprehensive teacher training tool on student assessment. This tool could be of assistance to teachers looking for sources of information on student learning in order to more strategically plan their instruction to respond to student needs.
References


Appendix

Saskatchewan Legislation and Regulations

Education Act (1995)

180  (1) Subject to subsections (2) to (4), English is to be the language of instruction in schools.
(2) Subject to the regulations, a language other than English is to be used as a language of instruction in specified schools in its jurisdiction where a board of education passes a resolution to that effect.
(3) Subject to any conditions that may be prescribed in the regulations, the Lieutenant Governor in Council shall designate schools in which French is the principal language of instruction in a designated program.
(4) French is the language of instruction in fransaskois schools and in minority language instruction programs.
(5) Notwithstanding clause 85(1)(g), a pupil is entitled, at the request of the pupil’s parent or guardian, to attend a designated school mentioned in subsection (3) and to receive instruction in a designated program appropriate to the pupil’s grade.
(6) Where a language other than English is used as a language of instruction pursuant to subsection (2) or (3), a pupil whose parent or guardian has requested in writing that the pupil not be required to receive instruction in that language is not required to receive that instruction.
(7) A pupil to whom subsection (6) applies shall be provided with suitable alternative studies appropriate to the instructional program of that pupil’s grade.

1995, c.E-0.2, s.180.

Regulations

38(1) In this Part:
(a) “designated” means designated in accordance with subsection 180(3) of the Act;
(b) “designated program” means a Type A French Language Program or a Type B Immersion/Bilingual Program;
(c) “designated school” means a school that has been designated as a school in which a designated program is offered;
(d) “Type B Immersion/Bilingual Program” means a program of instruction in which:
   (i) French is the language of instruction for at least 50% of the instructional time or, subject to section 45, may be the sole language of instruction for all courses of study; and
   (ii) provision may be made for complementary francophone cultural activities;
(e) “Type A French Language Program” means a program of instruction:
   (i) in which:
      (A) French is the language of instruction for all courses of study except English and, subject to section 45, may be the sole language of instruction from kindergarten to year 2; and
      (B) provision is made for activities that emphasize French-Canadian culture; and
   (ii) provided in the whole or a portion of a facility which assures its self contained operation and administration;
(f) “full-time equivalent pupil” means one pupil from that number of pupils obtained by multiplying the number of pupils enrolled in a program by the percentage of instructional time devoted to instruction in a language other than English, to a maximum of:
   (i) 75% of the instructional time available in a school week in the case of pupils enrolled in kindergarten to year 6; and
   (ii) 60% of the instructional time available in a school week, in the case of pupils enrolled in year 7 to year 12;
(g) “non-resident pupil” means a person whose declared place of residence is outside the boundaries of the division in which that person is provided with educational services by a designated school;

(h) “parents’ council” mean a parents’ council formed in accordance with section 39.

(2) Where a Type A French Language Program has been designated, the administration and operation of the program shall be conducted in French but, if requested by parents, guardians, members of the teaching staff or administrative officials, the intent of administrative and operational procedures and directives shall be communicated in English.

(3) Where a Type B Immersion/Bilingual Program has been designated, the administration and operation of the program may be conducted in French but, where requested by parents, guardians, members of the teaching staff of administrative officials, the intent of administrative and operational procedures and directives shall be communicated in English.

(27 Mar 86 cE-0.1 Reg 1 s38.)

Parents’ council

39(1) In a school division, the parents and guardians of the pupils enrolled or to be enrolled in a designated program on the written application to the board of education form the parents’ council.

(2) The parents’ council shall act in an advisory capacity to:

(a) the board of education; and

(b) the local board of trustees in school divisions that are divided into school districts.

27 Mar 86 cE-0.1 Reg 1 s39; 24 Dec 86 SR 117/86 s8.

Designation of schools and programs

40(1) A board of education may, of its own initiative, request the minister to recommend to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that a school be designated and that a specific designated program established continued or expanded in that designated school. Education, 1986 E-0.1 Reg 1

(2) If a written request is submitted to a board of education before the December 15 preceding the school year in which a designated program is proposed to begin, continue or be expanded:

(a) by a board of trustees or a local school advisory committee established pursuant to section 138 of the Act;

(b) by the parents or guardians of 15 or more pupils eligible for enrolment in the program in the proposed school year; or

(c) by means of a petition from a parents’ council representing the parents or guardians of 15 or more pupils; asking that a school be designated and that a specific type of designated program be established, continued or expanded in that designated school, the board of education shall request the minister to recommend to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that the school be so designated and that a specific designated program be established, continued or expanded in that designated school.

(3) A board of education that is empowered or required pursuant to this section to make a request to the minister shall submit the request to the minister before the February 15 preceding the school year in which the designated program is to begin, continue or be expanded, together with a plan that outlines:

(a) the implementation, continuance or expansion of the designated program;

(b) the resources to be provided; and

(c) the administrative structure to be employed.

(4) The minister shall recommend to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that a school be designated if:

(a) a request for the designation of the school has been submitted to him before the February 15 preceding the school year in which the designated program is to begin, continue or be expanded by a board of education acting in accordance with subsection (3) or by the governing body of a private school;

(b) the school:

(i) will have at least 15 pupils enrolled in each instructional grouping or

(ii) will offer only a designated program; and

(c) the minister is satisfied that:
(i) a designated program of the specific type proposed can be operated for at least three consecutive years; and
(ii) if the school will offer only a designated program, adequate provision has been made for the education of pupils who do not wish to enroll in the designated program.

(5) If the minister makes a recommendation to the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the Lieutenant Governor in Council shall designate the school and shall specify:
   (a) the type of designated program;
   (b) the division and grade or year level; and
   (c) the school year or years during which the order is to be effective.

(6) The board of education shall provide for the additional needs of the designated program in its allocation of staff and resources.

27 Mar 86 cE-0.1 Reg 1 s40; 24 Dec 86 SR 117/86 s9.

Consultation required

41 A board of education shall develop the plan mentioned in subsection 40(3) in consultation with the parents’ council or, if applicable, with the board of trustees.

27 Mar 86 cE-0.1 Reg 1 s41.

Enrolment in designated school

42 (1) Subject to subsections (2) and (3), where:
   (a) there is no designated program appropriate to a pupil’s grade level available in his attendance area; or
   (b) the department confirms that the specific type of designated program established in a pupil’s attendance area is of a different type than the designated program in which the parents or guardian of the pupil wish the pupil to be enrolled, the parents or guardian of the pupil may enroll the pupil in a designated program in a designated school outside the pupil’s attendance area by applying to the board of education in the pupil’s attendance area.

(2) Where the entitlement described in subsection (1) is to be exercised with respect to the attendance of a pupil at a designated school located:
   (a) in the same school division in which the parents or guardian resides, the board of education shall make the necessary arrangements for the enrolment of the pupil;
   (b) outside the school division in which the parents or guardian resides, the board of education shall, on its own initiative or with the assistance of the department, arrange for the enrolment of the pupil; or
   (c) outside the attendance area in which the parents or guardian resides, the board of education in whose local attendance area the parents or guardian resides shall assume:
      (i) in non-city school divisions, full organizational and financial responsibility for the transportation of the pupil;
      (ii) in city school divisions, full organizational and financial responsibility for the transportation of the pupil where the pupil:
         (A) is in Kindergarten to Grade 8; and
         (B) travels a greater distance than the maximum distance traveled by pupils in non-designated schools in established attendance areas in the division; and
      (iii) where applicable, financial responsibility for the accommodation costs of the pupil in accordance with the provisions of clause 61(d).

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (2), where the department confirms that the requested type of designated program is available within the school division or attendance area in which the parents or guardian resides, the board of education may choose not to arrange for attendance of a pupil at a designated school outside the division.

(4) A board of education shall not charge a non-resident pupil a tuition fee to enroll in a designated program in a designated school under its jurisdiction.

(5) For the purposes of clause (2)(c):
   (a) “city school division” means a school division that includes a city wholly or substantially within its boundaries;
(b) “non-city school division” means a school division that does not include a city wholly or substantially within its boundaries.

27 Mar 86 cE-0.1 Reg 1 s42; 24 Dec 86 SR 117/86 s10.

Local school advisory committee

43 The parents or guardian of any pupil attending a designated school are eligible to serve on any local school advisory committee that may be formed with respect to that designated school.

27 Mar 86 cE-0.1 Reg 1 s43.

Language other than English

44 Notwithstanding sections 40 to 43, a board of education or the governing body of a private school may, by resolution, approve the use of a language other than English as a language of instruction in any specified school in its jurisdiction to a maximum of 100% of the instructional time at the kindergarten level and to maximum of 50% of the instructional time at other division levels.

27 Mar 86 cE-0.1 Reg 1 s44.

Provision of English courses of study

45 Where a language other than English has been authorized as a language of instruction pursuant to section 40 or 44, approved English language courses of study are to be provided at all division levels beginning no later than Division I, Year 3.

27 Mar 86 cE-0.1 Reg 1 s45.

Grants

46(1) In the calculation of the grant paid to any board of education or private school, the minister shall, subject to Table 9, recognize approved implementation and incremental costs associated with:

(a) any additional requirements in the program for which a language other than English has been authorized pursuant to section 45; and

(b) any additional requirements of a designated program.

(2) If a pupil is enrolled in a designated program in a designated school located outside the attendance area of the school he would otherwise be eligible to attend, the minister, in the calculation of grant payments, shall recognize the approved costs of travel and accommodation incurred by that pupil.

(3) The board of education shall prepare an annual accounting of the disposition of moneys included in the calculation of its grant as a result of the application of subsection (1).

(4) The annual accounting mentioned in subsection (3) is to be made available to the minister and, on request, to the board of trustees and to the parents’ council.

27 Mar 86 cE-0.1 Reg 1 s46; 24 Dec 86 SR 117/86 s11.
Suggested Reading


Questions continue to be asked about the effect of second language learning on cognitive development and first language learning. This paper discusses the results of current research on language skills and on non-language domains. An executive summary is available at www.caslt.org/research/executivesum.htm and the entire paper is on line at http://www.camet-camef.ca/images/pdf/eng/report.pdf.


This report which is produced annually gives a cross-country perspective of French second language programs (immersion, core French, and extended French), outlines both successes and challenges of programs in each province. Topics covered included teacher availability, new initiatives, new research and other material to assist educational institutions in improving French Second Language opportunities for students.


The results of this recent survey indicate widespread support for bilingualism and for the French language as the language of choice for Canadians who wish they were bilingual. The data is presented in graphic form and in a power point presentation with useful and clear charts and graphs. Available online at http://www.cric.ca/pwp_re/bilingual_poll/bilingual_poll_march2004.ppt.


This paper presents the Canadian attitude toward bilingualism today and will be useful in determining regional differences in attitudes toward the two official languages. The paper is an analysis of the data from the survey described above. Available online at http://www.cric.ca/pdf/cahiers/cricpapers_march2004.pdf.


The introduction of English to early immersion students is an area of parent concern. Journals are available on line at the CAIT/ACPI site (http://acpi.scedu.umontreal.ca/en/) and a number of articles on this topic can be found in these journals.


This paper provides insights into Intensive French programs, which have recently begun to grow in a number of provinces and school divisions. This program is offered at the grade 5 level for half a school year and provides an opportunity to focus on French language development through the teaching of some subjects. Evaluations of student achievement have been positive. Available online at http://www.unb.ca/slec/lelien/resources/lsb_kristma.html.

This is one of a number of background papers commissioned by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages in preparation for a national symposium on Official Languages in March 2004. It suggests possible strategies to achieve the goal of doubling the number of French-speaking young people in Canada by 2013. The paper tends to focus on the teaching of Core French, and has many constructive insights to offer in the search for improved opportunities for students. School divisions will find this a useful backgrounder to assist in reviewing and assessing their French language programs.


This article provides a perspective on the benefits of bilingualism written from an American perspective. For this reason, it may be more credible to parents who may suspect a political bias in Canadian research.


Through research and classroom observations undertaken while developing the Intensive French program in Canada, new perspectives on the teaching and learning of second languages in a school situation have been gained. Eight of these perspectives are presented in this article: the role of primary Core French, the amount of time necessary to develop spontaneous communication, the use of a transdisciplinary approach to FSL, the effect of intensive French on lower achievers, the importance of teaching strategies, the redefinition of accuracy and fluency, the role of the teaching of grammar, and the relationship between oral and written language in teaching communication. The first five are primarily practical in nature and have important implications for improved FSL programs, particularly Core French.


Educators need to be sensitive to the varied factors that cause parents to remove their child from a French Immersion program. Where appropriate, proactive steps can be taken to support the parent and child, and lessen attrition from the program. A summary of the paper is available at [http://www.unb.ca/slec/hot_topics/documents/summary.pdf](http://www.unb.ca/slec/hot_topics/documents/summary.pdf).


This well researched document is an excellent source of information for parents about Core French programs, expectations, teaching strategies, program outcomes and other areas of possible interest to parents. Copies are available through the Canadian Parents for French website at [http://www.cpf.ca/English/resources/Publications/index.htm](http://www.cpf.ca/English/resources/Publications/index.htm).

This paper provides a literature review focused on the positive and measurable impact of second language education on five areas of student development. This article is a readable one for parents and interested educators.
French Immersion: Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is the Kindergarten program compulsory?

   No, Kindergarten attendance is not compulsory, but school divisions are required to provide a Kindergarten program. Children who are within one year of being eligible for enrolment in Grade 1 are eligible for Kindergarten.

2. How much French is taught in Kindergarten?

   French is the language of instruction for the immersion Kindergarten program. The children will rarely hear French outside the classroom. It is therefore important that they hear French as much as possible in school. English can be used in situations of personal safety (fire drills, certain street or bus rules) or emotional upsets (frustration, fear, minor injury or illness), but in general French should be spoken whenever possible.

3. How is French taught to young children?

   French Immersion children learn to use French in the same way that toddlers learn to speak at home. They learn by speaking.

   Kindergarten teachers usually begin the year by welcoming children in English and establishing classroom routines in that language. Terms such as “Bonjour” and “Au revoir” will be used simultaneously with English. As the first term progresses, Kindergarten teachers will increase the amount of French used so that it becomes the main language of instruction early in the school year. By then, students understand most of the French used for classroom routines. Children quickly associate the sound of French phrases with regular parts of the Kindergarten routine. They also initially learn a lot through songs, rhymes and stories.

   Children learn French in the same stages that they learned English. At first they mostly listen, speaking little. Their initial attempts at speaking usually take the form of single words or broken phrases. Experience is that the first “threshold” of learning French is usually achieved by about Christmas. This is the comprehensive stage. It means that the 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. They will usually reply to the teachers and speak among themselves in English, but with some French “sprinkled” in.

   Early in the school year, French is used almost exclusively by the teacher; however, most children are still at the comprehension level. As the end of June draws closer, they are able to speak more French themselves, but most could not converse in that language.
4. Will the French Immersion Kindergarten program adequately prepare students for Grade 1?

Kindergarten is optional in our province; therefore, a child can enter Grade 1 without having gone to Kindergarten. However, the Kindergarten program is aimed at developing the whole child to her or his full potential so that she or he can become a proactive participant in a journey of lifelong learning.

5. How can parents/caregivers prepare their children for Kindergarten?

Parents/caregivers should model a positive attitude towards school. Research has offered evidence that the success of a student is largely dependent on the attitude of the parents/caregivers towards education.

It is extremely important that parents/caregivers read to children and recite traditional nursery rhymes and stories. Children need to hear the rhythm of language and they benefit from repeating the same stories and verses over and over again. If their parents/caregivers value literature, then children usually will too.

Parents/caregivers can provide writing tools and paper for their children and encourage them to “write” lists, thank you notes, etc.

Also, parents/caregivers can help children explore their environment by taking them to the library, to different stores, to a farm, to museums, to art galleries or for a walk in the park.

These are great opportunities to talk with children about what they see, hear, smell, and feel. These outings will expand their horizons and enhance further learning. For example, a story about a farm will mean much more to a child if she or he has visited one.

Parents/caregivers can provide suitable toys and manipulatives to enrich their children’s play experiences.

6. Is French Immersion for everyone?

Children should have a good language foundation in their first language before learning a second language. A Kindergarten child who has the vocabulary and syntax of a two- or three-year old may have difficulty. A child who has a serious speech impairment may also have problems in a French Immersion program.

The language of instruction bears little, if any, relation to academic performance, particularly in an early immersion program. The student who would excel in a regular English program will probably excel in an immersion program; the student who would have academic difficulties in an English program will likely experience those same difficulties in immersion. A consideration, therefore, is the availability of remedial help in the target language, if necessary, for students in immersion.
7. How can very bright children be challenged in French Immersion Kindergarten?

In a developmentally appropriate program there are unlimited opportunities for growth and learning for everyone. A balanced program, which considers the whole child, provides linguistic, socio-emotional and physical challenges in addition to intellectual ones. Individual activities are planned to help meet the needs and interests of each child.

8. How are French Immersion Kindergarten students assessed and evaluated?

Student assessment should encompass the whole child and utilize a variety of methods in which teachers observe students, record information and collect information in student files and assessment portfolios.

Systematic observation of children in the Kindergarten program is an essential first step in planning, and the most effective way of assessing students’ progress. Even a few minutes of focused observation and daily recording can be of great assistance in planning an appropriate program, which facilitates student learning.

There are numerous means of recording observations including videotapes, audiotapes and photographs. Three of the most common formats are anecdotal records, observation checklists and rating scales.

The assessment portfolio is a method of storing student-produced materials over an extended period of time. It allows teachers to assess student growth and overall learning progress during a period of time. Work samples such as drawing, emergent writing and printouts of computer work are major components of the assessment portfolio.

After assessment information has been gathered it is analyzed and shared with students and parents/caregivers. Indications of growth and development are communicated through a variety of methods including scheduled information sharing sessions, informal visits, assessment portfolios and through report cards.

9. Are there situations where a student would benefit by being retained in Kindergarten for an extra year?

The child-centred philosophy is generally not supportive of retaining children.

Reliable studies have indicated that the majority of children do not benefit from retention. A preferable alternative to retention is to promote the child to a Grade 1 program that will adapt to the needs of the child.

Decisions about student progress and placement should be based on the principle of providing the most appropriate learning environment for each child. This decision should be made by an educational team led by the classroom teacher and should include the parents/caregivers and student.
10. When do students start to learn reading and writing in English?

Many pre-reading skills which are taught in the home (such as familiarity with stories) encourage the development of literacy in any language. In addition, many reading skills taught in French transfer reading to English. Once some fluency in French is well established, students are ready to begin study of English Language Arts. In French Immersion in Saskatchewan, this occurs at the beginning of Grade 2 or Grade 3.

11. When will English language arts be taught?

English language arts is introduced in Grade 2 or Grade 3. The children will usually learn to read in French first and will transfer their skills to their first language. To begin with, less stress is put on the pupil and teacher since the child has the task of mastering reading skills in one language only.

12. How does a French Immersion program affect my child’s English skills?

Current research shows that children who do not start English language arts before Grade 3 are initially behind their unilingual peers in their reading and writing skills. The year following the introduction of English language arts (Grade 2 or 3 in Saskatchewan), the French Immersion student is able to reach at least the same skill level in reading and writing. This is possible because of the transfer of skills from one language to another. Current research indicates that the English language skills of French Immersion students equal and in some areas exceed the achievement of the student taught solely in English.

13. Do French Immersion students learn to read and write in English as well as students in the English program?

The statistical evidence would indicate that French Immersion students “catch up” to their English program counterparts by approximately Grade 5. Testing results are available to support this evidence in the areas of reading and spelling.

Students’ vocabulary development is, of course, larger because it is in two languages. It should not be forgotten that French Immersion students also develop the ability to read and write in two languages. In high school, the students follow the same courses of study as English students do, and are in fact mixed with them for subjects such as English Language Arts. National results of reading assessments of 15-year olds in Canada show that French Immersion students outperform their unilingual peers.

14. Won’t my child’s English spelling suffer?

Although there are certain lags in English language arts for the first few years of the program, these are almost all during the first year that the subject is introduced. By the end of the elementary grades, immersion students perform better than children in the regular program on several aspects of measured English skills.
15. Will the children’s English language development be affected?

Many parents fear that the price of concentration on French language development may be less than average accomplishment in English, science and mathematics. Extensive independent research by educators in many jurisdictions concludes otherwise. Most studies reveal that any short-term lags in the acquisition of these skills by total immersion students are made up by the second or third year. By then, immersion students perform as well as or better than non-immersion students, except in French, where the immersion students are well ahead.

16. Will my child learn the same things as students in English classes?

Yes, the curriculum must follow the guidelines of the provincial ministry of education. Materials in French cover the same basic program as in English. Students work toward the same academic goals regardless of the language of instruction.

17. Why is it necessary for students to continue in French Immersion through high school?

During the early years of an immersion program, students develop a basic competence in the French language. However, this skill will deteriorate if its use is greatly decreased. Continuing immersion is necessary to maintain the level of French language skills already achieved and to expand the student’s general competence in the language in keeping with his or her increasing maturity.

18. After several years in immersion, isn’t my son or daughter already “bilingual”?

To some parents, a young person who has been in an immersion program seems quite comfortable in French. As a student prepares for high school, it is important to remember the family’s original objective for enrolling their son or daughter in a French Immersion program. Formal and informal enquiries suggest the immersion program was usually chosen so that, regardless of the career selected, the student would eventually be able to compete in a bilingual workplace. While immersion students, even in Grade 10, achieve high scores on French reading and listening comprehension tests, their speaking and writing scores are less satisfactory and show weaknesses in grammar. Students’ self-evaluations support these views. If the objective is fluency in French for career or personal reasons, it is essential to work on French through high school. The goal of French Immersion is to achieve “functional bilingualism”.

19. How much French should a good continuing immersion program offer?

After nearly three decades of French Immersion experience in Canada, researchers generally agree that 50% of studies at the secondary level must be in French to further develop a student’s skills. Students must include some French studies in every year during high school so that proficiency does not diminish.
20. Is there anything else that can be done to improve French skills during high school years?

Any immersion program, and particularly a continuing one, should include extracurricular activities, for example, drama opportunities, exchanges, summer programs, field trips and French clubs.

21. How will colleges, universities and future employers know that students have completed part of their education in French?

Saskatchewan Learning clearly identifies courses taken in French on all student transcripts. Students are also given a bilingual certificate for completing 12 courses in French at the Grade 10-12 levels. The bilingual certificate has been identified as a strong motivating factor for students who remain in an immersion program.

22. What comes after continuing immersion?

According to tests such as the Foreign Service Exams, continuing immersion graduates are functionally bilingual, capable of functioning in most social, travel and work situations.

Bilingual graduates are more likely to qualify for jobs in government, tourism, retail, and travel services.

23. What about continuing French at the post-secondary level?

There are an increasing number of post-secondary opportunities for students to access courses taught in French in a variety of subject areas at English universities in every province in Canada. Students need to determine whether the post-secondary institutions they are considering offer courses taught in French and in their area of interest.

The learning process never really ends. Immersion graduates can continue to maintain their French language skills through higher education, travel, youth and work exchanges, continuing adult education and, of course, regular use of French in everyday situations.

24. Who teaches the French Immersion program?

A bilingual teacher whose first language is French or who has the required fluency in the French language. There are programs at many universities that train immersion teachers.

25. What type of accent will my child have?

Standard French vocabulary and structures are taught. A variety of accents exist in all languages; during a school career a child will be exposed to teachers from various parts of the world who are models of well-spoken French.
26. What if other children in the family are not in immersion?

The most common problems are with transportation or participation in after-school activities. Just as families must adapt to the fact that in many areas of their lives not all of the children do the same things, so this may be true in school programs. What may make a difference, however, is that children in different programs may attend different schools.

Often having one child in immersion stimulates an interest in French for all members of the family.

27. Are extracurricular activities in French necessary?

No, but desirable. Such activities provide other language models for the child to copy, demonstrate that French is a living language, and provide an opportunity for the child to practice and expand vocabulary in a non-structured setting.

28. What if we are transferred to another school division or province?

French Immersion is available in most urban centres in Canada and is spreading to many smaller school districts. Canadian Parents for French has lists of programs throughout the country, or you can contact Saskatchewan Learning. A child transferring out of immersion very early – before English Language Arts is introduced – may experience a brief lag in this subject. Consultation with the new teacher and some work at home overcomes this problem very quickly.

29. Will French Immersion affect my child’s social development?

Studies have proven that early immersion students suffer no intellectual, emotional, or social impairment. While they might tend to associate more with their classmates on the playground, this is typical of all children. They develop the same sense of Canadian identity, as do children in the regular English program. They attend Brownies, Cubs, swimming lessons, and birthday parties with the friends in their own neighbourhood as well as with their classmates.

30. Should parents be able to speak French if their child is in French Immersion?

The program was designed for children of non French-speaking families. Teachers are aware of this when they send home notices or assign homework. Reporting is in English.

Most parents of French Immersion children do not speak French. Some take adult education classes to learn more French, but people who do this should not expect to be able to converse freely in French with their child. This is not because adults learn more slowly, but rather because an adult can’t accomplish in 2-4 hours per week what a child can accomplish in 25 hours per week.
31. How do parents know how well their child is doing in French Immersion?

The teacher and the school keep parents informed. This may take the form of report cards, teacher-parent conferences, telephone conversations and notes. Teachers are encouraged to maintain close communication with parents and, in particular, to advise parents immediately should their child encounter difficulty.

32. If parents don’t speak French, how can they help their child?

Non French-speaking parents can support their children by providing a study area and regular routines for doing homework. Encouraging children through showing an active interest in their learning will help any child. Often it is most helpful to be prepared to hear what the children themselves wish to describe of their day’s learning. All schools appreciate the help that some parents are able to give in volunteering in various ways during or after the school day. Parent involvement with their children’s education in these ways assists in success at school.

For some parents, reading to children in English and having them write to friends and relatives may not be enough. Some parents wish to be directly involved in the content as well as the process of their children’s schooling. These parents will find that they can gauge their children’s progress in English language arts and other subjects taught in English. If a child has difficulty, however, it may be hard to assist in the French portion of the program.

These concerns are not an issue for most French Immersion parents. The fact is that most students do succeed in the program. The benefits of French Immersion are seen to outweigh the disadvantages. This issue must be the personal choice of parents, keeping in mind each child’s nature and capabilities.

33. Are there as many support services available to French Immersion students as there are to English students?

The same services are available to both programs. Learning Assistance teachers are available in both programs to assist certain students having difficulty. French Immersion schools all have libraries that contain a French collection. Audiovisual materials are available in French also.

34. If a child is doing poorly in French Immersion and transfers to the English program, will he or she likely do better?

The evidence would suggest that most students who make the change perform overall at about the same level as they were performing in French Immersion. However, the amount of help that parents can offer may be greater. In many cases, this is a comfort to parents and makes the move worthwhile.
Core French: Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the difference between Core French and French Immersion programs?

   There are two principal differences between Core and Immersion French programs: the kind of exposure to French, and the amount of French taught.

   In immersion, learners study subjects such as math, music and science in French. In Core French on the other hand, learners do not study subjects but concentrate on speaking, listening, reading and writing in French. It teaches these language skills through themes designed to spark student interest. Immersion and Core French teachers often use similar teaching strategies.

   The other difference between the programs is the time and intensity of exposure to French which is greater in immersion. As a result students in immersion programs achieve a higher level of fluency in French.

2. When does Core French instruction usually begin in schools?

   Core French instruction in Saskatchewan most frequently begins in Grade 1 or Grade 4 with some school divisions introducing it in Grade 7 or Grade 9. Over 40% of the students in Saskatchewan schools study Core French.

3. How much instructional time should be allocated to the Core French Program?

   In Core French, the second language is taught in periods that vary in length from school to school. The Saskatchewan Core French curriculum recommends a basic instructional time allocation. However, school boards also contribute to the shape of the program. The amount of French instruction in elementary schools often depends on teacher availability and qualifications. Core French is often an optional subject in high schools. Suggested time allocations are 120 minutes/week at the elementary level, 150 minutes/week at the middle years level and 100 hours/credit at the high school level.

4. What benefits are there to students to study Core French?

   Students may need at least some high school French to enter some post-secondary programs. Half of Canadian provinces require French second language credit for high school graduation. New legislation in Alberta is introducing a compulsory second language requirement over the next few years.

   Current research indicates that the study of a second language increases student achievement in English reading. As well, there is strong evidence of cognitive benefits in the areas of thinking skills, problem-solving, organizational skills and overall capacity for learning.
In an increasingly global society, the ability to be comfortable in other cultures and languages opens many doors to future careers as well as increased opportunities in business.

5. Why is French most often offered as a second language in Canadian schools?

For many reasons, it makes most sense for French to be the second language taught in most Canadian schools:
- French is one of our official languages, spoken by over 6.7 million Canadians and more than 300 million people worldwide.
- There are teacher training programs established for French teachers, but few for other languages.
- There is an infrastructure of French teacher organizations and a parent support group.
- Resources are readily available for Core French programs.
- Federal funding enhances the program's potential.
- Many jobs in Canada require French speaking skills.

The Canadian Parents for French Publication *The Value of French* has further information.

6. What can parents do to support their child in Core French programs?

Research findings indicate that students whose parents have positive attitudes to French tend to do better in Core French. Students whose parents are supportive of Core French also develop a more positive attitude toward French and Francophones. This means parents can play an active role in their child’s success with Core French. Even if a parent does not speak French they can help. Some suggestions are provided:
- Establish rapport with the Core French teacher. Make an effort to talk with him or her at parent teacher interviews.
- Ask your child what he or she enjoys about core French. Focus on the positive!
- Buy, rent, or borrow French books, magazines, videos, and software that interest your child.
- Watch French TV with your child. Remind yourself and your child that it’s not crucial to understand every word.
- Tune the radio to a local French station, and let it play in the background at breakfast or in the evening.
- Take a French course to refresh your old skills or to start from scratch – if your child can do it, you can too!
- Encourage participation in French extracurricular activities: school clubs, public speaking, summer camps, and high school exchange programs.
- Talk to adolescents about the careers opened up by knowing French.
- When Core French becomes optional, encourage your child to keep a positive attitude toward French class.

Adapted from Turnbull (2000)
Tips for Parents With Children In French Immersion Programs

Do not tell your 5-year-old she or he is going “to immersion” in September. After a big build-up, some children are surprised to arrive at an ordinary school.

Do not ask your child to translate. She/he will not understand this concept in the very early grades.

Do not attempt to correct your child if you are uncertain of the exact pronunciation or expression.

Do not give in to the temptation to say, “Now dear, say something in French to Grandma.” If your child is eager to speak French at home, encourage it, but do not make it a chore.

Do not compare your child’s progress with that of neighbours’ children. Two teachers do not teach a concept or skill in the same manner, nor do two students work at the same pace and learn in the same manner.

Do not expect your child to provide you with an account of each day’s activities. Children take the routines of school for granted and often want a change of subject when they reach home at the end of the day.

Do read stories to your child in English. English stories will not be heard at school for a time and you can continue to assist language development in both languages by reading daily to your child.

Do encourage your child to watch French television. Parents of young children control their television watching.

Do take your child to French cultural events; take advantage of opportunities to expose him or her to the French language and culture.

Do volunteer to help at the school, either in the classroom or with concerts, fairs, sports days, or other opportunities. Your child will know that you believe school is important enough for you to spend time assisting.

Do let your child know that you are pleased with his or her progress. Encourage your child by recognising his or her achievements, communicating regularly in a positive way with the teacher about what you might do to further support your child.

Do speak positively about the program, the teacher, and the school. Express any questions or concerns you might have to the teacher or principal, not to your child.
Digital Resources for Research and Instruction

There are an increasing number of “online” resources for administrators and teachers of French as a second language. The following websites are of particular use to teachers and administrators as they contain current research on second language teaching (French Immersion and/or Core French) and, in most cases, instructional resources for teachers.

Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers (CAIT)
http://acpi.scedu.umontreal.ca/

Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT)
http://www.casl.org

Canadian Parents for French (CPF)
http://www.cpf.ca

CPF French Internet Address and Popular Software Lists
http://members.shaw.ca/cpf99/.

CPF French Resource Portal
http://members.shaw.ca/cpf99/CPF-Res-Fr-Collections-de-sites.html

Centre canadien des resources sur l’enseignement des langues (CCREL), Simon Fraser University
http://www.sfu.ca/ccrel/

Centre for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA)
http://www.carla.umn.edu/.

Collections numérisées du Canada The Government of Canada has established an extensive collection of French digital resources. Teachers of all subjects will find useful material in this collection. http://collections.ic.gc.ca/F/Ressources.asp

Distance education, Official Minority Language Office (OMLO)
http://www.bmlo.ca/.

Enigmatic Problems in French (logical thinking)
http://www.pedagonet.com/other/enigme.html

Exchanges Canada
http://www.exchanges.gc.ca/

Index de sites éducatifs francophones (ISEF)
http://isef.ntic.org/

Institut français
http://www.prometheus.cc.uregina.ca:6666/institutfrancais/home/htm
Official Languages Support Programs
http://www.patrimoinecanadien.gc.ca/offlangoff/

Language Immersion Education and Research
http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion/

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE)
http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/

Radio Canada Archives
http://archives.radio-canada.ca//url.asp

Regina Board of Education
http://web.rbe.sk.ca/french/

Resources for Students and Teachers of French as a Second Language, University of Ottawa
http://aix1.uottawa.ca/~weinberg/french.html

Saskatchewan Association of Teachers of French (SATF)
http://www.apfs.ca/

Second Language Education Centre, University of New Brunswick
http://www.unb.ca/slec/

Tennessee Bob’s Famous French Links
http://www.utm.edu/departments/french/french.html

University of Regina - Baccalauréat en education (Bac Program)
http://education.uregina.ca/
Opportunities for Post-secondary Study in French

Students benefit from staying in French until graduation from high school. One reason is the increasing number of opportunities to study in French at the post-secondary level. The following cross-country snapshot highlights some of these possibilities.

SASKATCHEWAN

- **The University of Regina** offers a Baccalauréat en éducation taught entirely in French. The second year of this program is spent at the Université de Laval in Quebec City. This program is geared to those wishing to be French Immersion or French first language teachers. A Bachelor of Arts in French-Canadian Studies, a Bachelor of Arts with a Bilingual Mention are also offered at the university.

- **L’Institut français at the University of Regina** each year offers at least three courses in French at the introductory level. In the past these have included geology, sociology, political science, history, civilization and physical education. L’Institut is developing a number of new initiatives to support French Second Language education.

- **The University of Saskatchewan** offers a Bachelor of Arts French Honours program as well as a French second language teaching option in their Bachelor of Education program. The B.A. French Honours program has a required French “home stay” component.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

- **Simon Fraser University** has a French Language Cohort Program in Public Administration and Community Services. This new program is designed for French Immersion and Francophone students who wish to develop their facility in French during their university studies. A substantial portion of the instruction will be in French, both in the Departments of Political Science and French. The program starts in 2004.

  The Faculty of Education offers a «Programme de formation professionnelle» (PFP). The PFP program is a year-long French module that prepares student teachers for a career in French education.

- **The University of British Columbia** has French language education programs.

- **Okanagan University College** has two teacher education programs. The Elementary Teacher Education Program (ETEP) features a compulsory FSL course that introduces pre-service elementary teachers to the curriculum and resources for teaching French as a second language.

  The Secondary Teacher Education Program (STEP) features an FSL/French Immersion specialization. This 12-month program is designed to grant a certificate upon completion of the program.
ALBERTA

- **La Faculté Saint-Jean** is a department of the University of Alberta which offers the opportunity to study in a unique bilingual environment. Programs include:
  - *Bachelor of Arts with specialization* program offers the opportunity to focus on Canadian Studies, Social-Political Sciences, French Language and Literature, or Interdisciplinary Studies.
  - *Bachelor of Commerce (Bilingual)* degree is a collaborative effort between the University of Alberta School of Business and Faculté Saint-Jean.
  - *Since September 2000 a partnership with the Faculty of Engineering has allowed engineering students to complete their first year in French at Faculté Saint-Jean.*
  - *Bilingual Bachelor of Science in Nursing*
  - *Plans are underway to offer a Bilingual Bachelor of Science in Environmental and Conservation Sciences.*

Note: Third and fourth year students registered in the arts, commerce, or education programs can choose to study for one semester in France

MANITOBA

- **The Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface (CUSB)** is affiliated with the University of Manitoba. St. Boniface has a wide variety of courses available in French. French language instruction is available in Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Education, and Bachelor of Science programs, Master of Arts in Canadian Studies, and Masters of Education.

- **L’École technique et professionnelle** is the province’s French-language community college. It is run by the same administrative structure as CUSB but is considered to be a separate entity. The focus is on undergraduate education.

- **The University of Winnipeg** has a large Department of French Studies that offers many opportunities to bilingual students, including studies in areas such as language, literature and civilization, philosophy, history and aesthetics. Students have opportunities to study abroad, for example, taking their third year of a French major program at the Université de Perpignan in the south of France.

ONTARIO

- **University of Ottawa** is known as “Canada’s University” because of its mandate to promote bilingualism and French culture in Ontario. Students can choose to attend undergraduate classes and write exams in either French or English.

- **Collège Boréal** is a French-language community college with six satellite campuses located across northern Ontario. The largest of these campuses is situated in Sudbury. Using state-of-the-art multimedia communications technology, Collège Boréal has created one of the largest private telecommunications networks in Canada.
• **Glendon College** York University’s bilingual arts faculty, offers liberal arts programs in French. Glendon College pursues a distinct mandate to prepare students for leadership in public affairs.

• **Laurentian University** and the **University of Sudbury** both offer complete degree programs in French. Students can work towards their degree in both official languages. The University of Sudbury is a liberal arts college that is dedicated to bilingualism. The university has a Bachelor of Arts in Folklore program that is available only in French.

NEW BRUNSWICK

• At **Mount Allison University**, students who can demonstrate a high level of competence in both of Canada’s official languages may qualify for a Certificate of Bilingualism. The Certificate attests to the student’s ability to speak, understand, and write English and French with ease and proficiency. Mount Allison offers an extensive French Studies program with a variety of language and literature courses.

• The **Université de Moncton** is the major French language degree-granting institution in Atlantic Canada. It has the only common law program in the world that is offered entirely in the French language.

NEWFOUNDLAND

• **Memorial University** offers degree programs for students pursuing a major, minor, or honours in French and a joint honours in French and Arts. The Department of French also offers opportunities to study outside the province, including two programs in Saint-Pierre, and an exchange program with the Lycée d’État. The university participates in two exchange programs with France for graduates in French.

NOVA SCOTIA

• At the **Université Sainte-Anne** students can study in French and earn degrees in business, arts, sciences, and education. There are also extensive programs in immersion studies. The University welcomes French Immersion graduates for full-time study or as visiting scholars. Extensive exchange programs are available with universities in France and in Quebec.

QUEBEC

• Students at any university in Québec may take up to one credit per semester at another Québec university, making it particularly easy for McGill and Concordia students to study at the Université du Québec à Montréal, the École des hautes études commerciales, the École polytechnique or the Université de Montréal.
• The collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel (CEGEP) in Quebec offer all their programs in French, thus making technical and vocational programs readily available in most areas of Quebec.

Find out more at http://www.cpf.ca/english/Students/Index.htm by clicking on WHERE TO GO AND WHAT TO DO: A Guide for Bilingual Youth.
Fransaskois Associations

Exposure to the French language outside the classroom has been found to be critical to becoming proficient. Cultural and language experiences are important for French Immersion, Core French, and Intensive French students. There are many Francophone groups in Saskatchewan that have resources and activities that can support this need for French second language students.

Association jeunesse fransaskoise (AJF)
Non-profit provincial NGO (non-governmental organization) which aims to create awareness among Saskatchewan youth of the Fransaskois culture through a variety of cultural, sporting and educational activities and events.

#201 - 302 Pacific Avenue
Saskatoon, SK  S7K 1P1
Telephone: 1.800.AJF.1424

Association des parents fransaskois (APF)
Non-profit provincial NGO which works towards the development and education of Fransaskois youth from ages 0-22 and their families. They have several projects to assist families and youth such as the Centre de ressources et d'éducation à la petite enfance (CRÉPE). Once a membership purchased, CRÉPE is a free centre of educational resources and toys for young families. Parents can choose from a selection of resources and have them sent via mail from a central provincial office. It is a long-distance library in essence.

#103 - 308 4th Avenue North
Saskatoon, SK  S7K 2L7
Telephone: 306.931.2663
Website: www.parentsfransaskois.ca/

Fédération des aînés fransaskois (FAF)
Non-profit provincial NGO which has a mandate to contribute to the vitality of the Fransaskois community by favouring the development of Francophone and Francophile seniors 50 years of age and over. Their volunteers often help with school activities, make presentations or assist in youth projects. They see themselves as having a large role in passing on their Francophone heritage to the youth in their community. There are 13 clubs throughout the province, each with local initiatives and contacts.

#103 - 308 4th Avenue North
Saskatoon, SK  S7K 2L7
Telephone: 306.653.7442
**Service francaskois de formation aux adultes (SEFFA)**
Non-profit provincial NGO, which works towards the development of educational structures for Francophone adults to help them to further their professional and personal lives. They are involved in a number of projects and offer a variety of classes in French. A recent project of particular significance is literacy development in French.

Bag 20
Gravelbourg, SK S0H 1X0
Telephone: 306.6483129
Website: [www.collegemathieu.sk.ca/seffa/](http://www.collegemathieu.sk.ca/seffa/).

**Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise (ACF)**
This non-profit provincial NGO is the governing Fransaskois community organization. Its mission is to defend the rights and aspirations of the Fransaskois and the French language, ensure the global development of the community, and provide support to its various sectors. The ACF is the official voice of the Fransaskois community. It has member organizations in most Francophone communities in Saskatchewan, which are themselves independent local non-profit NGOs working towards the development of their community. Visit the website to find out about their projects, services, volunteers, as well as the local Fransaskois member organizations and community centres.

#220 - 3850 Hillsdale Street
Regina, SK S4S 7J5
Telephone: 1.800.991.1912
Website: [http://www.fransaskois.sk.ca/](http://www.fransaskois.sk.ca/).

**Conseil culturel fransaskois (CCS)**
Non-profit provincial NGO that works towards the cultural development of Saskatchewan Francophones and Francophiles. They offer several community and youth programs.

#210 - 3850 Hillsdale Street
Regina, SK S4S 7J5
Telephone: 1.877.INFO.CCS

**Conseil de la coopération de la Saskatchewan (CCS)**
A non-profit provincial NGO, whose mandate is to develop and expand economically the cooperatives of the Fransaskois community. They also provide various programs (including youth programs) and support to ensure better Fransaskois leadership in the economic sector.

#230 - 3850 Hillsdale Street
Regina, SK S4S 7J5

#10 - 510, 45th Street West
Saskatoon, SK S7L 6H2

Téléphone : 1.800.670.0879
Association des juristes d'expression française de la Saskatchewan (AJEFS)
Non-profit provincial NGO whose goal is to inform the Fransaskois community of its legal rights, laws and services in French. Their website contains a variety of documents in French pertaining to law.

Website:  http://www.ajefs.ca/.

Société historique de la Saskatchewan (SHS)
This non-profit provincial NGO studies, in all its forms, the presence of the French in Saskatchewan since their arrival on the Prairies up until today.

Telephone:  306.565.8916

Coopérative des publications fransaskoise (CPF)
Publishes Saskatchewan’s only Francophone weekly newspaper, L’Eau vive, manages a commercial publishing service, and coordinates a Francophone electronic bulletin board, le Réseau Mercure.

Website:  http://www.leauvive.net

Le Lien
A centre for cultural and pedagogical resources in French. Its mandate is to collect and make these resources accessible to the Francophone and Francophile population and to educational institutions in Saskatchewan.

Telephone:  1.800.663.5436
Website:  http://www.infolien.sk.ca/

Réseau fransaskois d'éducation et de communication à distance (RFECID)
This network is dedicated to the use of telecommunications and distance education for the promotion and development of the Fransaskois community. The Réseau is run by a partnership of four member institutions and is also linked to a national network of Francophone universities, which offer support services for education through teleconferencing.

Website:  www.dsf.sk.ca/rfecd/

Les Éditions de la nouvelle plume
Publisher of French books by Saskatchewan authors and information pertaining to Saskatchewan.

#130 - 3850, Hillsdale Street
Regina, SK  S4S 7J5
Telephone:  306.352.7435
Website:  http://www.livres-disques.ca/nouvelle_plume/home/index.cfm.
La Troupe du Jour
Second largest theatre group in Saskatchewan which has a mandate to develop Francophone community and professional theatre by creating, shaping, producing and performing several Francophone plays per year.

#444A - 2nd Avenue North
PO Box 339
Saskatoon, SK  S7K 3L3
Telephone:  306.244.1040

L’Office de coordination des affaires francophones (OCAF)
Provides information in French about the programs and services offered by the provincial government. It also serves as a liaison between francophones and the provincial government.

1855, avenue Victoria
Bureau 220
Regina, SK  S4P 3V7
Telephone : 306.787-1776
Email : ocaf@graa.gov.sk.ca