

EARLY FRENCH IMMERSION

In Nova Scotia, Anglophone school boards may offer an Early Immersion program that starts in Grade Primary and ends in Grade 12. The provincial Department of Education has outlined what is expected in such a program. The recommended percentage of instruction in the French language is:

Primary - Grade 2	85% - 100%
Grade 3 - Grade 6	70% - 80%
Grade 7 - Grade 9	70% - 75%
Grade 10 - Grade 12	Minimum of 9 courses taught in French

The percentage of instruction in French varies in grades primary to 6 due to the availability of specialists, e.g. music teachers, physical education teachers, or other specialists who do not speak French.

Formal English instruction is introduced in grade 3, hence the reduction in the percentage of instruction in French from grades 3 to 6.

BACKGROUND

French Immersion in Canada has over 30 years of growth and success. Early French Immersion had its beginnings in Canada in the mid 1960's, in Nova Scotia in 1977 and in the South Shore Regional Centre for Education in 2017.

Canada continues to be regarded in the global community as a leader and pioneer in developing various models of French Immersion. French Immersion programs have enabled young Canadians to acquire the linguistic tools to communicate effectively in our country's two official languages, French and English.

GOALS

- To enable students to become functionally bilingual: To be able and willing to communicate fluently in French and English, and to be able to take further education as appropriate to their ability and interest with French as the language of instruction.).
- To enable students to achieve equivalent levels of learning in the content of all subjects, whether they are instructed in French or English.
- To provide all students with the opportunity to gain an understanding and appreciation of common attitudes and values of the French speaking community.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- Q. *Will my child learn the same things as students in English classes?***
- A. Yes, the curriculum must follow the guidelines set out by the Nova Scotia Department of Education.
- Q. *Will total French Immersion delay my child's development of English Language skills?***
- A. In Grade 3, the first year of formal exposure to English instruction, when French Immersion students are tested against their peers in the English-stream, there appears to be some delay. Research shows, however, that students quickly catch up.
- Q. *What about achievement in Math and other subjects?***
- A. Research indicates that the performance of French Immersion students in other subjects is equal to the performance of students who are in regular English programs.
- Q. *How can I help my child with homework when I can't speak French?***
- A. It is not necessary for parents to be able to speak the language. Communication between the home and the school is the best means of resolving difficulties that may arise in learning French. Immersion teachers are accustomed to working with parents on language related issues.

Schools Currently Offering Early Immersion Programs at Primary Level

- Blunose Academy
Steven McGill, Principal
902-634-2200
- Bridgewater Elementary School
Lindsay Willow, Principal
902-541-8240

A Regional Information Session will take place virtually, April 13th:

Tuesday, April 13th · 6:00 – 7:00pm

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/odg-obgf-kzy>

CONTACTS

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