

Elementary French Immersion

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Registration

Are there important dates to remember for the registration process?

Yes, please visit the *Timeline* section on the [French Immersion program page](#) for key dates and details.

How can I apply for French Immersion?

- **Children Currently Attending a Richmond School District School** – For children already registered and attending a Richmond School District school who wish to enter for the first time into Early French Immersion Grade 1 or Late French Immersion Grade 6, please follow the instructions in the *How to Apply* section on the [French Immersion program page](#).
- **Children Currently Attending a Private/Independent School in Richmond** – Students currently attending a private school who wish to apply for French Immersion must first register at Central Registration with the required documents as outlined on the [Registration Information page](#).
- **Children Currently Attending School Outside the City of Richmond** – Non-Richmond residents need to apply to register, please follow the directions as outlined on [this page](#). If approved to register, non-Richmond residents can email programoptions@sd38.bc.ca to apply and will be added to the end of the waitlist.

Are there priorities for placing students in the French Immersion program?

Please see the information listed below:

- **Priority 1** – Students with an older sibling who will be attending French Immersion within the same school in the same year. Siblings must register following the usual procedures by the stated deadline to be eligible for Priority 1 status. Students enrolled after the deadline will go on a wait list.
- **Priority 2** – Students who reside within the French Immersion catchment boundaries.
- **Priority 3** – Students who reside outside the French Immersion catchment boundaries.
- **Priority 4** – Students who reside outside the Richmond School District.

How does the catchment placement process work if I have twins?

If you have twins, one ballot will be entered into the draw for both children. If drawn, both children will be offered places in the program at the same school. Parents/legal guardians will be contacted in the event there is insufficient space for both children.

What happens if I register after the deadline?

The application will be accepted and placed at the end of the wait list for your French Immersion catchment school.

How do the wait lists function?

- Wait lists for Early French Immersion Grade 1 and Late French Immersion will be dissolved on the third Friday of September at 4:00pm.
- Wait lists for Early French Immersion Kindergarten will be dissolved on the third Friday of December at 4:00pm.
- We do not provide specific information as to location on the wait list or size of the wait list. Families will be contacted if a placement becomes available before that time. Students are not placed into the program after this date.

Can I re-apply for Early French Immersion?

If you do not receive placement in Kindergarten at your French Immersion catchment school and are not placed at your second-choice school, you can re-apply for the draw the following school year for Grade 1.

What if you decide to withdraw your child from the French Immersion Program after accepting placement?

- Families who accept French Immersion placement for their child are no longer registered at their local catchment school.
- Parents/legal guardians must re-register their child at Central Registration for their English catchment school.
- There is no guarantee there will be space at your local catchment school.
- It is the parent/legal guardian's responsibility to contact the District Program Options office by email at ProgramOptions@sd38.bc.ca.
- For information about registration timelines please visit the [Registration Information page](#).

General Questions

How do I know if French Immersion is right for my child?

While most children adapt, and do well in the Immersion program, remember that each child is unique. We encourage students and families who accept a space in French Immersion to commit to at least one year. Ultimately, parents must make their decision based on what they feel is in their child's best interest.

Is it necessary for my child to know some French before enrolling?

No, students are not required to have any background in French prior to entering either the Early or Late French Immersion program.

What can I do to help my child if I don't speak French?

The majority of French Immersion parents don't speak French. But you can still do a lot to support your child in French Immersion! Here's how:

- Demonstrate an ongoing interest, participation, and commitment to your child's education. This provides a child with the necessary guidance and support.
- Concentrate on enriching your child's first language. Read aloud and talk with your child daily in your home language.
- Contact the local chapter of Canadian Parents for French (CPF) for ideas on how to seek out ways of reinforcing your child's learning of French outside of school at 604-524-0134 or visit www.cpf.bc.ca

Does my child receive any instruction in English?

Instruction in English varies according to grade and program:

- Instruction up to the end of Grade 2 occurs in the French language. Beginning in Grade 3, English Language Arts is introduced as a subject area in Early French Immersion.
- In Late French Immersion, all learning is done in French in Grade 6. In Grade 7, students begin taking English Language Arts again.
- At the high school level, instruction continues in French with increasing amounts of English instruction in order for students to achieve a bilingual graduation certificate.

Will my child learn similar things as students in the English program?

Yes, all programs, regardless of the language of instruction, must follow the same curriculum laid out by BC Ministry of Education. The BC curriculum framework is available in both English and French at www.curriculum.gov.bc.ca.

What will happen to my child's English language skills if instruction is only in French during the first three years of school?

Research has shown that there is no negative impact on students' English language skills. In fact, most studies have shown that learning an additional language enhances the development of first-language skills.

Are Learning Resource and ELL services available to French Immersion students?

Yes, Learning Resource and ELL services are available for French Immersion students.

What happens if my child has learning difficulties in French Immersion?

A child may experience difficulty learning at school, and in French Immersion, for any number of reasons. Initially, the classroom teacher provides additional assistance for students. If this does not address the challenge, a consultation is arranged with the school and family. From there, based on the individual situation, supports will be provided.

Transportation and Transfers

Is transportation provided for students in French Immersion – District Program Options?

Parents are responsible to provide transportation for their children enrolled in District Program Options, which includes Early French Immersion, Late French Immersion and Secondary French Immersion programs.

Can I transfer my child who is currently enrolled in a Richmond School District French Immersion school to another French Immersion school in the district?

Transfer applications to another District Program Options (French Immersion) school are NOT accepted for French Immersion in the following grade levels.

- Early French Immersion Kindergarten and Grade 1
- Late French Immersion Grade 6

Can I transfer my child who is currently enrolled in the English Program in a Richmond School District school to attend with their sibling who will be attending Late French Immersion at a new school?

Transfers are considered for students who will be attending the same requested school and same Program Option for the same school year.

Communication

How do I ensure that I receive e-mails from the Program Options Office?

All correspondence, such as information concerning your child's placement, is done via e-mail. Set your computer's anti-spam filter (if applicable) to accept emails from ProgramOptions@sd38.bc.ca and add this e-mail address to your email contact list or address book. This will ensure that your email provider and computer do not reject emails coming from this e-mail address.