



LEARNING TOGETHER

DIVISION SCOLAIRE

LOUIS RIEL

SCHOOL DIVISION



THE MIDDLE FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM

*Speaking a second language is an important “21st century asset,” and “an invaluable added strength in life.”
– John Ralston Saul*

It expands opportunities to experience original literature, films and music from many francophone countries. Learning a second language also presents an intellectual challenge and the opportunity to learn about other cultures. It enhances students’ self-esteem, responsibility for learning and independence.

Although the Louis Riel School Division offers Early French Immersion in Kindergarten or Grade 1, the Middle French Immersion Program in Grade 4 is an added option for students who wish to learn a second language.

Students who study a second language develop heightened skills to assess human behaviour and separate it from language-based and cultural stereotyping.

Several studies indicate that individuals who learn second languages are more creative and solve complex problems with greater ease.

Learning a second language provides intellectual exercise for the brain and the ability to discover new ideas, think new thoughts and view the world from a new perspective.

“Learning French was the best decision I ever made. It gives you more opportunities in life.

Noah Reilly
Grade 9 Student

Choosing the middle immersion program was the best decision of my life. It has opened a whole other world for me. I have had so many opportunities that I wouldn't have been given if I had stayed in English. I never felt out of place in this class because we were all the “new kids.” This program takes a lot of hard work, but it does pay off!

Emily Egan
Grade 10 Student

The French Immersion Program

French Immersion is an officially recognized program of studies in the Manitoba public school system. Developed by the Bureau de l'éducation française, a Division of Manitoba Education, the goal of French Immersion is to develop functional bilingualism in children whose first language is not French.

- It has the same essential graduation requirements as the English program.
- French Immersion curricula are congruent in content and learning outcomes with English curricula.
- In keeping with peers in the English program, children in the French Immersion program acquire “academic, social, and career skills; and the life management skills that future citizens will need to develop their individual potential.”

French Immersion Programs Recognized in Manitoba

- **Early Immersion** begins in Kindergarten or Grade 1 and is characterized by full-day French instruction until Grade 2, when French Immersion Schools introduce English Language Arts.
- **Middle Immersion** is a second entry point for French Immersion in Grade 4. This program offers full-day French instruction in the classroom for Grade 4 and English is re-introduced in Grade 5. After Grade 6, Middle Immersion students unite with Early Immersion students to continue their studies to the end of secondary school. In Grade 7, students may choose to continue their studies at the Middle Immersion School or attend the French Immersion school in their catchment.
- **Late Immersion** provides an entry point for Grade 7 students.

NOTE: This program is not offered in Louis Riel School Division.



The Middle French Immersion Program

What is the Middle French Immersion Program?

Middle French Immersion begins in Grade 4 after a student has had several years of primarily English language instruction. Grade 4 students receive intensive French instruction for the full day. Students learn all subjects in French, except for English Language Arts.

Who may enroll in the Middle French Immersion Program?

Students who transition to Grade 4, and who are not already in French Immersion, are eligible for enrolment in the Middle French Immersion Program.

What effect does the Middle French Immersion Program have on children's basic skills in English Language Arts?

Decades of research confirm that French Immersion has no negative effect on the development of English language skills as measured by standardized tests. In fact, studies have proven that French Immersion education enhances students' English language skills.

What about achievement in other subjects?

On various system-wide tests, the overall tendency has been for French Immersion students to perform as well as, or better than, students of comparable potential in the English Program.

What skills can a student demonstrate, after successfully completing the Middle French Immersion Program?

A student who successfully completes the Middle French Immersion Program should communicate with ease in either language community, and be well-equipped for employment, training or further education in either language.

How does participation in a French Immersion program affect general intellectual or cognitive growth?

A number of well-controlled studies suggest that becoming bilingual enhances cognitive and linguistic growth.

How many Canadian students are enrolled in French Immersion Programs?

Currently over 342,000 students are enrolled in more than 2,100 schools in all Canadian provinces and the territories.

Manitoba Education

edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/fr_imm_pr.html

Canadian Parents for French

cpf.ca
cpfmb.com

The State of FSL Education in Canada

cpf.ca/en/research-advocacy/research/the-state-of-fsl-education-in-canada

The Middle Immersion program is phenomenal! Our daughter has gone from limited French to full conversations. She loves teaching us French words and is excited to learn. There are excellent teachers who engage the students and make learning fun!

Lori and Dave Willson
Parents

Parents Frequently Ask the Following Questions about Learning French

Do parents of students in the French Immersion Program have to know or speak French?

No, it is not necessary for you to know French...but be prepared to enjoy learning it from your child.

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

You can support your child by listening to him or her read in French or by watching French programs on television together. You can also encourage your child to learn in French by talking about its value—an important message.

Will my child have homework?

Yes, although much of the activity in the classroom is oral, homework generally consists of completing written work already begun in class, reading books, listening to appropriate TV or radio programs, and organizing or collecting materials for projects.

Will the teacher speak French all the time?

Yes. The teacher will use English for a very brief time, at the beginning of the Middle Immersion Program, but will speak French for the majority of the time.

What happens if my child cannot keep up with French language instruction?

All students learn and develop skills differently. The teacher will use many learning strategies to ensure that all students are supported as they learn French.

Will my child receive school bus transportation to the Middle Immersion Program?

Transportation is provided to students who must walk more than 1.6 kilometres to attend the Middle Immersion School.

I am honoured to be one of the teachers in this program. By the end of April, my students develop into Grade 5 Immersion students, comparable to other Grade 5 students who joined the Immersion program in Kindergarten. This is not an easy feat. It is the collaboration of parents, students and teaching staff who help them to succeed. Every year, I am proud of my students in their efforts towards this program. Bilingualism is important for the future!

Sarah Melo
Grade 5 Teacher, Middle Immersion

