



# One *Learning* Community



# Greater Victoria School District French Immersion

One *Learning* Community



## ***A Brief History***

French Immersion started in Victoria in the 70's at 2 schools with 2 Kindergarten classes per year

French Immersion takes place in a dual track school setting

Victoria has 18 dual track schools

- 9 out of 27 elementary schools
- 5 out of 10 middle schools
- 4 out of 7 secondary schools

Approximately 20% of students in SD61 are enrolled in an immersion program as compared to a 6 – 8% Provincial average.

## ***Program Goals and Objectives*** ***(as communicated by the Ministry of Education)***

The ***French Immersion Program*** enables students to:

- achieve levels of learning in all subject areas equivalent to the English Program;
- Reach, by the end of Grade 4, a level in English Language Arts equivalent to students in the regular program;
- become functionally bilingual, that is
  - to participate comfortably in French and English conversations;
  - to be able to pursue further education appropriate to their abilities and interests, with French as the language of instruction;
  - to be qualified for employment where the working language is French;
  - gain insight into the common attitudes and values of French-speaking communities.

# ***French Immersion Entry Points***

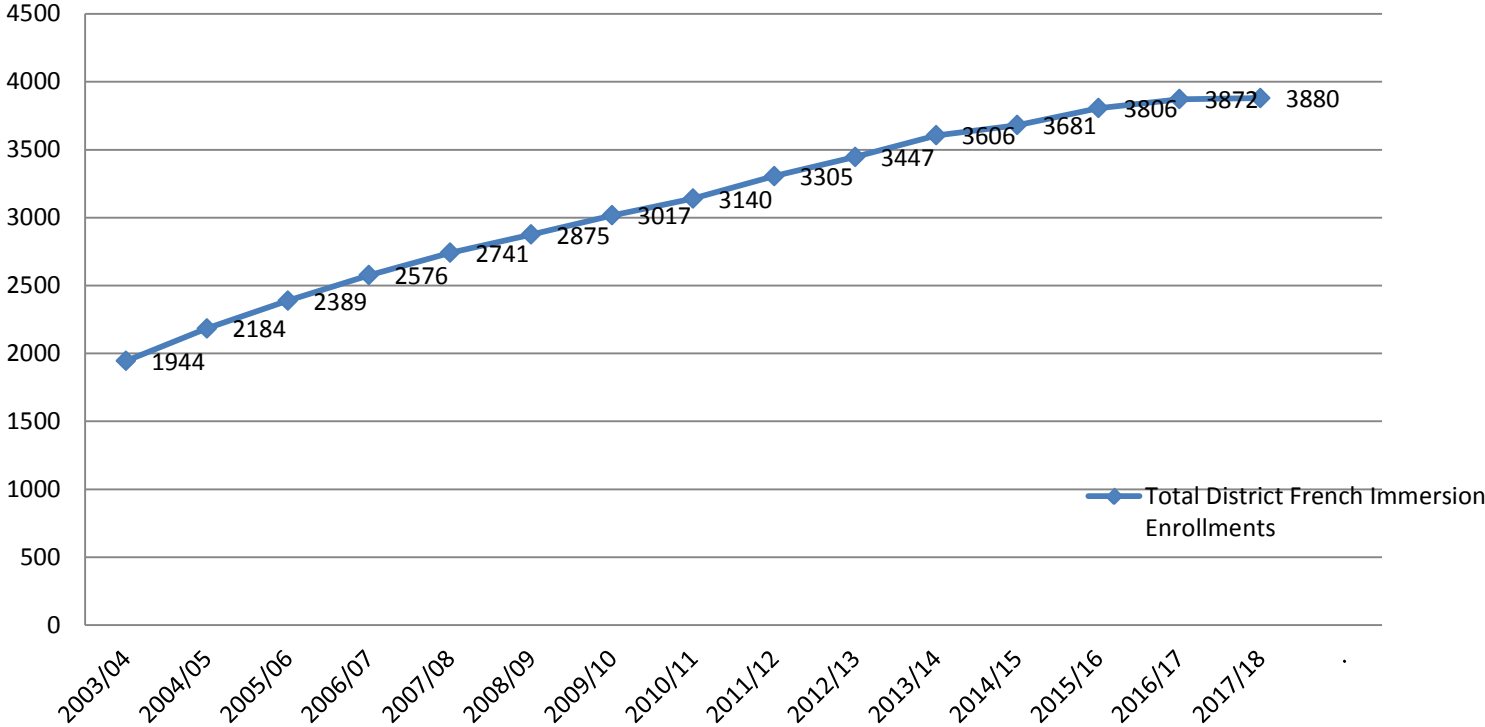
Kindergarten

Grade 1

Grade 6 (Late Immersion)

*Note: Entry points into immersion are determined by the Ministry of Education*

# Total SD 61 French Immersion Enrollments





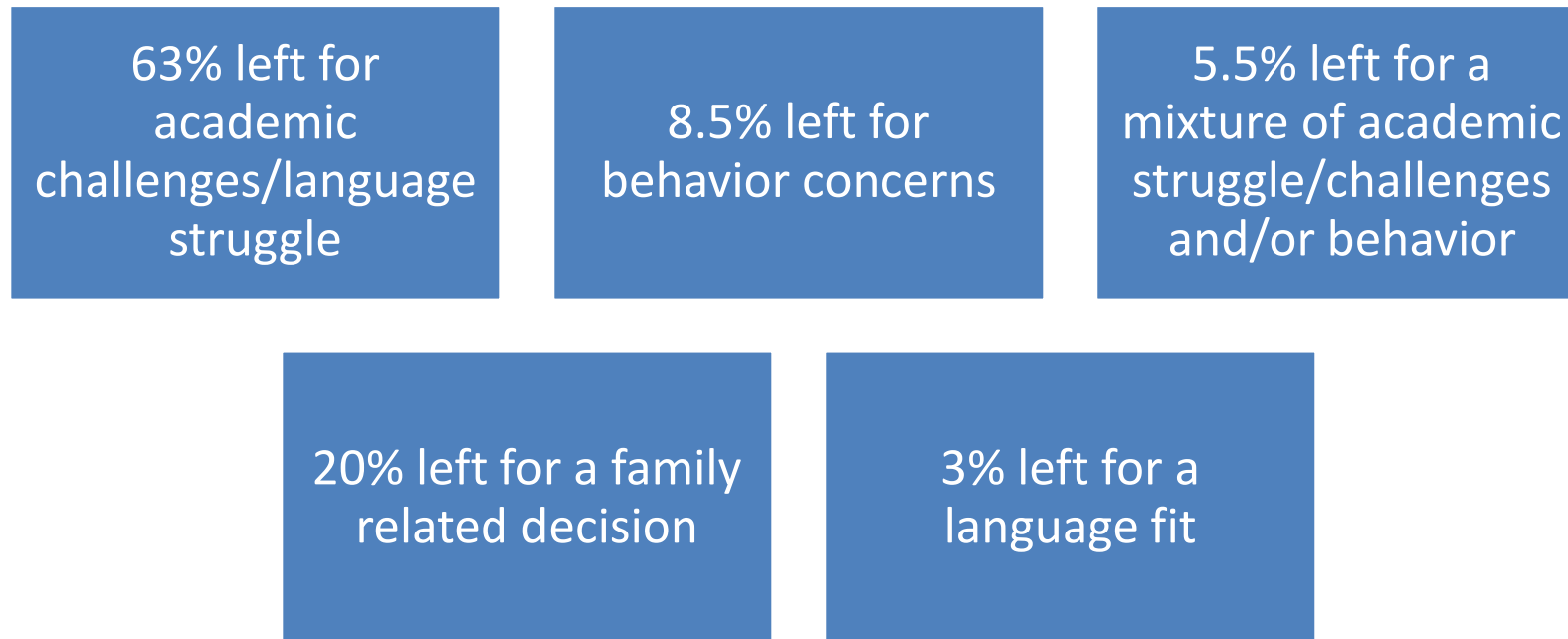
## Retention Rates

French Immersion retention rates from September 2013 to September 2014 by grade. The calculated percentages does not factor into account students leaving SD 61 or entering SD 61 for the first time.

| <b>2013</b> | <b>to</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>% retention</b>                |
|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| K           | to        | 1           | 99%                               |
| 1           | to        | 2           | 90%                               |
| 2           | to        | 3           | 93%                               |
| 3           | to        | 4           | 92%                               |
| 4           | to        | 5           | 96%                               |
| 5           | to        | 6           | 91% (transition to middle school) |
| 6           | to        | 7           | 94%                               |
| 7           | to        | 8           | 95%                               |
| 8           | to        | 9           | 83% (transition to high school)   |
| 9           | to        | 10          | 97%                               |
| 10          | to        | 11          | 92%                               |
| 11          | to        | 12          | 98%                               |

The anecdotal data from four elementary schools over the past 3 years shows that 35 students have exited the French Immersion program.

The schools stated the following reasons for the exit.





## ***Late French Immersion***

SD 61 currently offers a Late FI program at all 5 dual track middle schools

Grade 6 is the entry point to Late FI

Late FI students join the Early FI cohort in grade 8

By the end of the grade 8 year, Late FI students' language ability is on par with the Early Immersion students

SD 61 averages between 90 and 125 Late FI entries every year

The District total of Late FI students averages between 180 and 250 students every year

## ***How Much French Immersion will my child speak in the classroom?***

*(the percentages below are approximations and are in accordance to Ministry guidelines)*

| <b>Grades</b>                | <b>French Instruction vs. English Instruction</b> |
|------------------------------|---|
| Kindergarten through Grade 2 | 100% French                                       |
| Grade 3 to Grade 5           | 80% French, 20% English                           |
| Grade 6 to Grade 8           | 70-80% French, 20-30% English                     |
| Grade 9 to Grade 10          | 34-50% French, 50-66% English                     |
| Grade 11 to Grade 12         | Up to 25% French, 75% or more English             |

## *Early French Immersion Pathways and Availability*

| Elementary School                         | Designated Middle School                  | Designated Secondary School |
|---|---|-----------------------------|
| <u>Marigold</u><br><u>Macaulay</u>        | Shoreline                                 | Esquimalt High              |
| Willows<br>Margaret Jenkins               | <u>Lansdowne</u><br><u>Central</u>        | Oak Bay                     |
| Campus View<br>Doncaster<br><u>Quadra</u> | Arbutus<br>Cedar Hill<br><u>Lansdowne</u> | Reynolds Secondary          |
| Sir James Douglas<br>George Jay           | <u>Central</u>                            | Victoria High               |

## **Kindergarten French Immersion Registration 2016-2018**

| 2016                   |             |            | 2017        |            | 2018        |            |
|------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| Schools                | Total Seats | Demand     | Total Seats | Demand     | Total Seats | Demand     |
| Campus View            | 44          | 53         | 40          | 72         | 40          | 60         |
| Doncaster              | 50          | 52         | 40          | 53         | 39          | 57         |
| George Jay             | 22          | 22         | 40          | 32         | 40          | 38         |
| Macaulay               | 44          | 46         | 40          | 53         | 40          | 40         |
| Margaret Jenkins       | 44          | 47         | 40          | 43         | 40          | 29         |
| Marigold               | 44          | 78         | 20          | 54         | 32          | 61         |
| Quadra                 | 44          | 42         | 40          | 34         | 40          | 36         |
| Sir James Douglas      | 44          | 44         | 60          | 52         | 40          | 34         |
| Willows                | 44          | 72         | 40          | 77         | 39          | 59         |
| <b>District Totals</b> | <b>380</b>  | <b>456</b> | <b>360</b>  | <b>470</b> | <b>350</b>  | <b>414</b> |

## ***Considerations of French Immersion program offerings in regard to availability, accessibility and equity.***

- The French Immersion program in the Greater Victoria School District continues to expand.
- The numbers of students who exit FI and return to English track are generally low.
- Many students in our schools are enrolled in a French Immersion program outside of their catchment area or neighbourhood.
- We are currently able to find a placement for every child in FI however, many of those families must travel to attend their FI school placement.
- Given that some families cannot access FI in their catchment school they choose to attend the English program, in their catchment school, rather than their preferred FI program.
- Our French Immersion school programs are not geographically balanced across our city.
- We no longer have available space in several of our buildings.
- Some of our secondary FI cohorts are below optimum size and have an effect on the FI program, course offerings and staffing in those schools.

## ***Considerations in regard to French Immersion availability, accessibility and program balance within our city.***

### **What are some options?**

- Adding in one or two more dual track elementary schools to balance the availability and accessibility geographically across our city.
- No longer maintaining a balanced dual track cohort in our elementary schools. Responding to the high demand of French immersion in some schools and allowing more classes in French Immersion than English.
- Creating single track French Immersion schools for K-5.
- Offering one less French Immersion secondary school program to increase the cohort size for optimal program delivery.



## ***Adding new dual track school opportunities.***

### **Advantages of additional dual track schools:**

- Would provide opportunities on the west side of our city closer to current catchments.
- Would alleviate some space pressures in current dual track schools.
- Would create greater balance in opportunities and equity across Greater Victoria.
- It is a familiar model in our school district that is successful.

## **Obstacles of additional dual track schools:**

- Would not fully respond to the demand for French Immersion at our in-catchment schools on the east side of our city.
- Would remain a district-based organizational structure as a program of choice.
- Would require adjustments to school catchments and student pathways as they move from elementary to middle to secondary.
- Staffing.
- Resource funding for new French Immersion schools.

## **No longer a balanced dual track French Immersion School.**

### **Advantages to imbalanced cohorts in elementary French immersion:**

- Parents are able to have their child in a French Immersion program in their catchment school.
- Catchments are easier to create and maintain.
- School catchment/pathways are predictable for both numbers and available space.

## **Obstacles to imbalanced cohorts in elementary French Immersion:**

- Several schools would quickly become exceedingly high percentages of French Immersion divisions and low numbers of English divisions.
- Additional French Immersion classes would create some difficulties with staffing.
- Availability/accessibility of programs in certain schools.
- Attrition could create imbalanced classes.
- Could restrict access for regular English cohort students.

## French Immersion single track elementary schools.

### Advantages to single track:

- Would provide a fully immersed program for students in K-5.
- Staffing, resourcing and supports would be more effective and efficient.
- New catchments would be created to support students attending their catchment school.
- Language acquisition results are higher in single track schools.

## **Obstacles to single track:**

- Public perception.
- Difficult to find support staffing for some of the positions.
- The transition from their elementary school to their middle school may be with a different cohort of students.



# Secondary French Immersion

## Advantages of one less French Immersion school in secondary:

- More course offerings.
- Broader interaction with teachers and students.
- Less competition for students.
- Easier to staff.
- Resourcing.

# Secondary French Immersion

## Obstacles of one less French Immersion School in Secondary:

- **Travel time/distance.**
- **Sensitivity to the loss of access to French Immersion programming in current secondary schools.**

## What do we believe and value about how we provide French Immersion in our schools?

- **Balanced dual track within cohorts our schools and the schools that offer the program balanced across or city?**
- **Full choice of French Immersion in our dual track schools that may create an imbalance between French Immersion classes and English classes in those schools?**
- **Single track French Immersion schools in elementary?**
- **One less secondary school offering a French Immersion program?**

## **dual track-balanced-new offerings balanced across the city.**

- **Research possible options on the west side of the city.**
- **Boundary review and pathway review will be created with these options in mind.**
- **Return to the board with options, rationalizations and recommendations.**

## **dual track-allows for imbalance within the school-in catchment.**

- **Research students who have moved to out of catchment schools for French Immersion.**
- **Research catchments and families who desire French Immersion in those catchments-may have to alter catchments.**
- **Research how the change would effect English programs within high demand schools.**
- **Return to the board with the research and provide rationalizations and recommendations.**

## Single track elementary schools.

- Research the schools that could become single track.
- Research the catchments of those single track schools.
- Research the effect this would have on catchments/pathways for middle and secondary.
- Research the effect this would have on space on our schools.
- Return to the board with rationalizations and recommendations.

## One less secondary school French Immersion program.

- Research each secondary school to understand the data of the student cohorts entering each school.
- Create a detailed analysis of size of cohorts and optimal student learning available.
- Provide a recommendation and rationalization to the board on the schools that should host the French Immersion program.
- Provide a plan to the board on how to phase in the recommendation.