



**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 67 (OKANAGAN SKAHA)**

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Office of the Director of Instruction

Ref: 10100-20

OPR:ED

January 16, 2012

To: Parents of all Grade Five Students:

Re: Registration for Late French Immersion for September 2012

Since its inception in 1983, the District has had a successful late French Immersion program. One or more new classes of grade six students are expected to be created in Penticton in September, 2012. In addition, provided there is sufficient enrolment, one grade 6 French immersion class will be created at Summerland Middle School. It is hoped that this letter will help to answer some questions that you may have about the program and provide you with information about registering for the grade six program.

➔ Who may enrol?

The program is available to all students residing within the geographic boundaries of School District No. 67 who will be entering grade six in September of 2012. It should be noted that there is no academic requirement or qualification that could exclude a student from enrolling in French Immersion. ANY student who resides WITHIN our geographic boundaries, regardless of previous achievement levels in elementary school, is eligible. Enrolment will be determined in accordance with the following priorities as per Section I.4 of School District Policy #305:

- a) a catchment area child whose sibling is a continuing student at the school in the French Immersion program;
- b) a catchment area child;
- c) a non-catchment area child whose sibling is a continuing student at the school in the French Immersion program;
- d) a non-catchment area child;
- e) a non-school district child.

Students residing outside the district are also permitted to apply on a space-available basis (i.e., after School District No. 67 students have been accommodated). Such applications will be considered pursuant to School District Policy 305.

In addition, the Ministry of Education's policy on French Immersion emphasizes that: *"The major goal of French Immersion is to provide the opportunity for non-francophone students to become bilingual in English and French."* Visit the Ministry of Education website:

http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/french_immersion.htm

➔ Is Late French Immersion a completely different program?

The program is very similar to the one taught in the English classes with the same content areas in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, physical education, music and art, except that all subjects are taught in French in grade six except for elective courses. Language Arts in English is re-introduced in grade seven.

➔ Is this just a one year introductory program?

No. The commitment to the program is for three years (grades 6, 7 and 8) and it is expected that successful students would continue to take the French Immersion courses offered at the secondary level through to graduation.

➔ **Do the students need to understand French to follow the material?**

No. When they enter the class, students are assumed to have a little or no French. For the first two or three weeks, some English will be used.

➔ **Will students' English language skills suffer?**

There is no evidence that students' ability to read, write and spell in English is impacted by the program over the long term.

➔ **How much French will they acquire in a year?**

Most students will be able to converse in French reasonably well by the end of grade six. The students' written skills will need further development in grade seven. By the end of grade seven they should read and write French at their grade level while still maintaining their English skills.

➔ **Where will the program be located?**

One or more class(es) will be located at KVR Middle School in Penticton and one class will be located at Summerland Middle School in Summerland, provided sufficient enrolment is achieved. The program continues at both KVR and Summerland Middle Schools for grades 7 and 8.

Students residing in the Summerland zone will receive first consideration for the Summerland Late French Immersion program and students residing in the Penticton zone (including Kaleden and Naramata) will receive first consideration for the Penticton Late French Immersion program.

French Immersion classes at the secondary level are currently located at Penticton Secondary School and Summerland Secondary School.

➔ **What if there are insufficient numbers to accommodate a Summerland Late French Immersion program?**

If this were the case, **all applicants** residing within the geographic boundaries of School District No. 67 will receive equal consideration for the Penticton Late French Immersion program.

➔ **Transportation**

School bus service is not assured for students attending schools outside their catchment area. However, if space is available on existing bus runs, such students will be permitted to ride. At present, there are no busses running between Summerland and Penticton, so parents will be responsible for transportation.

➔ **How do I indicate my interest in French Immersion?**

Complete the **Application** form attached to this letter and return the completed form to the **School Board Office**, 425 Jermyn Ave., Penticton, by 4:00 p.m. Friday, February 3rd, 2012.

➔ **SELECTION PROCESS**

ALL applications received prior to 4:00 p.m., Friday, February 3rd, 2012, will be considered for the late immersion program in accordance with District Policy 305.

Should we receive more applications than there is space available, a random draw or lottery will be held to select the students permitted to enroll.

All applicants' names will be placed in a draw. Names will be drawn to fill:

- 1) All of the available seats, and
- 2) A wait list reflecting the order of the names drawn.

If seats remain available after the draw, applications will be accepted on a first come, first served basis.

ALL applications received after 4:00 p.m., Friday, February 3rd, 2012, will be placed on a wait list on a first come, first served basis.

➡ **Confirmation of enrolment**

Parents/Guardians of all applicants will be notified in writing of the draw results and/or status of their application.

➡ **Still have questions?**

If you still have questions regarding the **application process**, please contact **LINDA WALTERS** at the School Board Office at 770-7700 (ext. 6643).

If you still have questions regarding the **selection/lottery process, the potential wait list, and/or the program itself**, please contact **DON MACINTYRE** (Director of Instruction) at the School Board Office at 770-7700 (ext. 6025).

If you wish to speak to a parent of a student already in the French Immersion program, please call:

Lisa Milligan, President of Okanagan Skaha Parents for French, 250-493-3345
Email: millizoo@telus.net

Chris Foley, Secretary of Okanagan Skaha Parents for French, 250-494-4140,
Email: cjfoley@shaw.ca

Don MacIntyre

Don MacIntyre
Director of Instruction

DM/lw

Attach

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