

EIPS Background Information

FRENCH IMMERSION PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT: FALL 2022

LAST UPDATED: October 2022



BACKGROUND INFORMATION: FRENCH IMMERSION

INTRODUCTION

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) has begun a three-year public engagement initiative to enhance programming offered throughout the Division. One of the programs EIPS is looking at is French Immersion and how to improve French Immersion retention at the junior high and senior high levels. Before EIPS makes any decisions about French Immersion programming, it plans to engage the public—school families, students and community stakeholders—to ensure a decision that’s in the best interest of students. The following document provides background information on EIPS; French Immersion programming; and Division courses, supports and services to ensure everyone is as familiar as possible when the public engagement efforts begin.

General

PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOCUS

As part of the Division’s reporting requirements to Alberta Education, EIPS reviews programs, enrolment transitions and boundaries regularly. When areas of concern are identified, the Division works to determine how best to resolve the issue. In the case of French Immersion, EIPS wants to improve program retention at the junior high and senior high levels. Before deciding how best to improve program retention, EIPS is seeking feedback from the French Immersion school community to determine possible solutions.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

There are four ways to register to attend an EIPS school.

1. [Returning student registration process](#) – All returning students complete the online Returning Student Registration Form. During this time, students indicate the school they plan to attend, select required programming, request Student Transportation services and apply to attend a non-designated school, if applicable. Acceptance to a non-designated school is based on available space. Runs February 1-28, 2023
2. [New student registration process](#) – All new students, grades 1-12, complete the online New Student Registration Form. During this time, students indicate the school they plan to attend, select required programming, request Student Transportation services, and apply to attend a non-designated school, if applicable. Acceptance to a non-designated school is based on available space. Runs February 2023 to school startup
3. [Kindergarten registration process](#) – Children starting kindergarten complete the online Kindergarten Registration Form. During this time, students indicate the school they plan to attend, select required programming, and request Student Transportation services, if applicable. Runs February 2023 to school startup
4. [PALS registration process](#) – Play and Learn at School (PALS) is an early intervention program for pre-kindergarten children assessed with severe developmental delays. To register, contact [EIPS Supports for Students](#).

For French Immersion programming, families use the form to request admission into a French Immersion program at the school their child wants to attend for the upcoming school year. Once the registration process closes, schools then start planning and budgeting for the upcoming school year. To register in Kindergarten or Grade 1, no previous knowledge of French is required. Students entering the program after Grade 1 are considered on an individual basis.

ATTENDING A NON-DESIGNATED SCHOOL

Families that want their child to attend a non-designated school, or school of choice, must make the request during the returning student registration process. The only exception: students who move into the Division from outside the geographic area, or another community within the Division, after the returning student registration closes. The Division contacts all families who apply to a non-designated school to advise if they can attend the school in the upcoming school year. Acceptance is based on available space.

GRANDFATHERING

Grandfathering is a term used when a current student attending a school is allowed to continue attending that same school after an attendance boundary change or a family moves to a different attendance area. Once granted permission to attend the school, or grandfathered, the school becomes the student's non-designated school, or school of choice. If the student requires Division transportation services, they register with Student Transportation as an ineligible student—transportation fees apply.

Grandfathering decisions are made by the Board of Trustees—typically at the same time as decisions about changes to attendance boundaries, programming or grade reconfiguration. EIPS communicates any grandfathering decisions to all affected families in a timely manner.

SIBLING CLAUSE

EIPS' sibling clause is outlined in [AP 305: School Attendance Areas and Requests to Attend Non-designated Schools](#) (see, "Section 13"). It applies to siblings of students currently attending a non-designated school, including a school with a closed boundary. Students are permitted to register at the same school as their sibling if the individual attends the school at the same time as the currently registered sibling. Typically, the sibling clause also applies after an attendance boundary change.

Registration takes place during the returning student registration process in February. Simply fill out the online form and request to attend the school. The only way the sibling clause wouldn't apply is if the Board decides to limit grandfathering after an attendance boundary change.

Programming and Site Locations

FRENCH IMMERSION ENROLMENT NUMBERS: SEPT. 29, 2022

School	Grade												Total		
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		12	
Ardrossan Elementary	27	26	22	33	26	27	34								195
École Campbelltown	50	42	60	54	57	54	47								364
École Parc Élémentaire	48	40	50	35	40	29	33								275
Heritage Hills Elementary	21	23	25	22	19	16	15								141
Sherwood Heights Junior High									49	49	39				137
Ardrossan Junior Senior High									38	45	46	57	33	37	256
TOTAL	146	131	157	144	142	126	129	87	94	85	57	33	37		1,368
Elementary subtotal	146	131	157	144	142	126	129								975
Junior High subtotal								87	94	85					266
Senior High subtotal											57	33	37		127

FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM LOCATIONS

French Immersion is offered at various schools throughout EIPS. Each school follows the Alberta curriculum and provides a range of educational courses and extracurricular classes to enhance the growth and success of all students. The French Immersion program itself aims to prepare functionally bilingual students—with English skills and an ability to speak and write in French. For a complete list of programs, course options, athletics and extracurricular activities offered at each school visit:

Elementary

- [École Parc Élémentaire](#) (K to 6)
- [Ardrossan Elementary](#) (K to 6)
- [École Campbelltown](#) (K to 6)
- [Heritage Hills Elementary](#) (K to 6)

Junior High

- [Ardrossan Junior Senior High](#) (7 to 9)
- [Sherwood Heights Junior High](#) (7 to 9)

Senior High

- [Ardrossan Junior Senior High](#) (10 to 12)

SITE LOCATION OPTIONS

Two frequently asked question during the 2017-18 French Immersion engagement efforts was if EIPS could move the senior high French Immersion programs to a Sherwood Park-based school site? And, if the Division can offer junior high and senior high French Immersion programming in Fort Saskatchewan. At this point, it's too premature to speak about changing French Immersion site locations.

Supports for Families

FRENCH IMMERSION RESOURCES

Finding ways to support a child enrolled in the French Immersion program is sometimes challenging. It's important to remember, though, EIPS has no requirement or expectation for families to speak or understand French to support their child enrolled in French Immersion. Instead, teachers and staff at all EIPS schools work together to assist students with any questions they may have. That allows families to support their child at home the same way they would in the English program—by asking questions, engaging in learning activities, and establishing regular routines for completing homework and reading.

That said, there are many resources available for families. To access these, simply contact your child's school and tell them you're looking for French Immersion support resources. Most resources are available online and focus on literacy, numeracy and career planning.

Busing

EIPS STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

EIPS provides an enhanced transportation service for both eligible and ineligible riders. So, anyone who wants to access existing Student Transportation can do so by requesting busing services during the new or returning student registration process in February. Families simply indicate on the online form busing is required for their child. Before the end of the school year, the family will receive their child's tentative busing information, including any associated fees.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION FEES

EIPS offers enhanced transportation services for students, using the below fee structure.

Eligible Fee: Riders who attend their designated French Immersion school and live more than 2.39 kilometres from that school. For 2022-23, the eligible fee is \$121 per year.

Ineligible Fee: Students who attend a non-designated French Immersion school or live less than 2.4 kilometres from their French Immersion designated school. For 2022-23, the ineligible fee is \$346 per year.

Next Steps

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

In total, three public consultations phases are planned.

Phase 1: Public consultations to gather feedback on what's most important to school families about EIPS French Immersion programming.
Fall 2022.

Phase 2: Public consultations on possible solutions to improve junior high and senior high French Immersion program retention.
Winter 2023

Phase 3: Public consultations to gather feedback on a fine-tune solution to improve junior high and senior high French Immersion program retention.
Spring 2023

FINAL DECISION

The Board will make a decision in June 2023. Any changes made will take effect at the start of the 2024-25 school year. Before that time, the Board will review all relevant data and the feedback gathered throughout the public consultations. EIPS is committed to keeping the community informed about the process and will provide information as it becomes available.