



Adopted: 2000-04-04

Policy IHBE

FRENCH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

The New Frontiers School Board is committed to ensuring the right of each and every student to receive French Language instruction appropriate to their needs and capabilities. We recognize the essential need for every student who graduates from secondary school to acquire a sufficient level of French language competency to be able to function in Quebec society. It is also understood that none of the programs defined in this policy provides for a level of proficiency which could be equated with a student being “fully bilingual”. The purpose of this policy is to outline three levels of proficiency and the corresponding time allocations for the acquisition of competencies related to each level of proficiency.

The identification of the three levels of proficiency assumes the provision of choice which may be provided to students, or groups of students, by the Governing Board of each school.

It should be noted that the provision of more than one program in any one school is dependent on having a sufficient number of students who qualify for these services and the ability of each school to organize its services and resources to meet these needs.

Elementary School Requirements (Cycles 1,2 & 3)

At the Elementary Level, the Elementary Intermediate Level of Proficiency, better known as the Bilingual Program should be the standard allocation of time. This program requires 50% of instruction to be provided in each language.

One exception to this standard is to provide an Elementary Advanced Proficiency program for students who have already achieved better than average proficiencies in the French language. The offering of such programs must have prior approval of the school board.

The second exception is to provide a Basic Level of Proficiency, consisting of the minimum of a French Second Language Course, for those students who do not develop sufficient proficiency to cope with the bilingual program, or for whom instruction in a second language interferes with their ability to acquire the competencies of other disciplines. This need would be established through the development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for the student.

Secondary School Requirements

Cycle 4 (Grades 7,8,9)

At Cycle 4, students should be provided with the choice of two levels of proficiency; the Secondary Intermediate Level, consisting of 30% instruction in the French Language, or the Secondary Advanced Level, consisting of 50% instruction in the French Language.

These options are provided for those students who have successfully completed the Intermediate Level of proficiency at the Elementary level.

Cycle 5 (Grades 10 & 11)

At Cycle 5, students will be instructed at the Secondary Intermediate Level, consisting of 30% instruction in the French Language.

An Advanced Level French Second Language Course may be provided for students who have already achieved better than expected proficiencies in the French language. The offering of such programs must have prior approval of the school board.

In either cycle, a Basic Level program, consisting only of a French Second Language course, may be offered to those students who have not been successful in the elementary bilingual program, or for whom instruction in a second language interferes with their ability to acquire the competencies of other disciplines.

General Provisions

- French Second Language instruction should occur on a regularly scheduled basis at the Elementary level.
- Remedial and resource help should be provided for those students who are at risk of not meeting the minimum competencies of the French Second Language course of study.
- Classes in which French language instruction has been established should be conducted in the French language only with the exception of remediation in subjects other than French Second Language.
- In collaboration with the Educational Services Department, each school will be required to submit an annual report on their progress in the implementation and evaluation of student competence within the proficiency levels offered.
- Schools who require a period of transition to implement the proficiency levels which are new to their setting, should make this request to the Director of Educational Services no later than June 30, 2000. This request should include a time line over which the implementation will take place and be completed

Proficiency Levels

Basic Level of Proficiency

Students are able to satisfy routine travel needs and minimum courtesy requirements.

Examples: Can ask and answer questions on topics very familiar to him; within the scope of his language experience, can understand simple questions and statements, allowing for slowed speech, repetition or paraphrase; speaking vocabulary adequate to express elementary needs; errors in pronunciation and grammar may be frequent, but can be understood by a native speaker. While language needs vary considerably from one individual to another, any person at the basic level should be able to manage in everyday situations, including ordering a meal, asking for shelter or lodging, understanding simple directions, and making purchases. They should also be able to respond to basic needs (on the job) in dealing with the public.

Time allocation - Elementary

It is expected that students will reach a basic proficiency level by the end of Cycle 3 (Grade 6) if they follow a program based on 30% of classes conducted in French from Cycles 1 through 3 (K-6).

Time allocation: (Secondary)

To maintain a basic level of proficiency after Cycle 3, students should follow a program consisting of a French Second Language course within a time frame of up to of 30% of classes conducted in French.

Intermediate Level of Proficiency

Students are able to satisfy routine social demands and work requirements.

Examples: Can handle with confidence (if not with facility) most social situations, including introductions and casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information; can handle work requirements, needing help in handling any complications or difficulties. Can get the gist of most conversations on non-technical subjects (ie: topics which require no specialized knowledge), and has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to express himself simply. Pronunciation - though possibly faulty - is intelligible; can usually handle elementary constructions quite accurately, but may not have thorough or confident control of the grammar.

Time allocation - Elementary

It is expected that the majority of students in a bilingual program will meet this standard by the end of Cycle 3 (Grade 6), based on 50% of classes (approximately 3000 hours) conducted in French from Cycles 1 to 3 (K-6).

Time allocation - Secondary

To maintain a basic level of proficiency after Cycle 3, students should follow a program of 30% of classes conducted in French (based on one subject in French in addition to French as a second language).

Advanced Level of Proficiency

Students are able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics.

Examples: Can discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease; comprehension is quite complete for a normal rate of speech; vocabulary is broad enough that he rarely has to grope for a word; accent may be apparent; control of grammar good; errors never interfere with understanding.

Time allocation

It is expected that the majority of students will reach an advanced level of proficiency in French if they follow a bilingual program from K to 11, based on 5000 hours or 50% of classes conducted in French.