

## French Immersion Locations

### **A.M. Cunningham School**

(Gr. K-5)

100 Wexford Avenue South, Hamilton  
Phone: 905.544.7771

### **Dalewood Middle School**

(Gr. 6-8)

1150 Main Street West, Hamilton  
Phone: 905.528.8631

### **Dundana School**

(Gr. K-5)

23 Dundana Avenue, Dundas  
Phone: 905.628.2622

### **Earl Kitchener School**

(Gr. K-5)

300 Dundurn Street South, Hamilton  
Phone: 905.528.0223

### **Fessenden School**

(Gr. K-6)

68 Huron Avenue, Ancaster  
Phone: 905.648.4115

### **George R. Allan School**

(Gr. K-5)

900 King Street West, Hamilton  
Phone: 905.522.0601

### **Glen Brae School**

(Gr. 6-8)

50 Secord Drive, Stoney Creek  
Phone: 905.560.6732

### **Glen Echo School**

(Gr. K-5)

140 Glen Echo Drive, Stoney Creek  
Phone: 905.560.6630

### **Guy Brown School**

(Gr. K-6)

55 Braeheid Avenue, Waterdown  
Phone: 905.689.8254

### **Lawfield School**

(Gr. K-8)

45 Berko Avenue, Hamilton  
Phone: 905.387.0062

### **Norwood Park School**

(Gr. K-8)

165 Terrace Drive, Hamilton  
Phone: 905.575.9808

### **Ryerson Middle School**

(Gr. 6-8)

222 Ryerson Street, Hamilton  
Phone: 905.528.7975

### **Westdale Secondary School**

(Gr. 9-12)

700 Main Street West, Hamilton  
Phone: 905.522.1387

For further information please contact the principals of these schools or the Program Effectiveness Consultant at 905.304.8722 x 272

## French Immersion in the *Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board*



**HAMILTON-  
WENTWORTH**  
DISTRICT  
SCHOOL  
BOARD

## *Early French Immersion Programme d'immersion précoce*

January 2009

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This booklet has been prepared to provide parents with information regarding the Early French Immersion program of the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

It is intended to assist parents in making informed decisions regarding the educational program and development of their child.

### 7. Since I do not understand much French myself, how can I assist my child?

If your child has homework, provide the encouragement and the resources necessary, just as you would if your child were working in English. Parents can play an important role in ensuring their child's success by:

- showing an interest in the program and in their child's progress;
- encouraging and supporting their child's efforts;
- participating wherever possible in the total life of the school;
- providing additional opportunities for exposure to French language and culture beyond the classroom, such as choosing 1 or 2 television programs with which their child is familiar and watching them on the French channel;
- reading stories to their child in English and listening to them read aloud in French and in English;
- having their child explain what they have read. This often helps consolidate their own French comprehension;
- encouraging their child to extract the global meaning of a passage rather than dwelling on the fact that they don't understand one small word. Obviously, if that one small word keeps re-appearing in every sentence and is key to understanding, they may need to consult a dictionary, but this shouldn't occur too often. It is normal not to understand every word;
- purchasing a basic dictionary for their child to use at home by late elementary school;
- assisting with several editing principles, such as neatness, paragraphing, spelling of words that are the same in English and French.

## 5. Is transportation provided?

French Immersion is an optional program. Subject to availability of funding, French Immersion transportation (grades 1-8) will be provided on a limited basis. Please remember that transportation is the responsibility of the parent and that the "Out-of-Catchment Process" applies for attendance at "out-of-catchment" French Immersion Schools.

## 6. What are the parents' responsibilities?

Parents' responsibilities are similar to the responsibilities that any parent has when enrolling their child in school. By enrolling their child in the French Immersion Program, parents might face certain additional responsibilities, e.g. the transportation of the child to and from school.

Parents are cautioned not to exert pressure on the child to 'perform in French' at home. Children accept that their classroom experience is in French, and that the rest of their life at home with their family or with their friends is in English or, possibly, another language. As well, we encourage parents to not ask their child for a word-by-word translation of texts, but to ask about the global meaning. Translations are very difficult to do, even for adults who are fluently bilingual.

## HAMILTON-WENTWORTH'S EARLY FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board offers an Early French Immersion program beginning in senior kindergarten. It is designed to provide English-speaking children with opportunities to become highly proficient in French as well as in English. Classroom instruction in senior kindergarten and grade 1 is given in French. In grade 2 English Language instruction is introduced and in subsequent grades the amount of English instruction is increased. Upon graduation from secondary school, the student is expected to be functionally bilingual. The curriculum for subjects taught in French is the same as in the regular English program.

An Immersion program means that French is not only the medium in which subjects are taught, but it is also the means of communication between pupils and teacher in the classroom and, as much as possible, beyond the classroom.

Research and experience show that early Immersion leads to highest fluency in French while maintaining levels of competency in English and Math.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM

- In 1975 the Hamilton Board of Education was approached by a number of parents interested in having an Early French Immersion program established. Existing programs were studied and public meetings held to determine the number of parents committed to the program.
- In September 1975, the program started at Earl Kitchener School with 2 senior kindergarten classes (a total of 50 students).
- Today there are approximately 2100 French Immersion students accommodated in 12 elementary schools and 1 secondary school.
- Students have been graduating from secondary school and receiving the Certificate of French Immersion since June 1988.
- In 1998, the former Hamilton and Wentworth Boards were amalgamated into the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. French Immersion, which was originally offered only in the former Hamilton Board, was now available to county students without the payment of fees.

#### 1. Who may enroll?

The program is available to children entering senior kindergarten.

#### 2. Should my child be in French Immersion?

The French Immersion program is designed for the children of parents who do not speak French, but wish their children to speak both official languages. Children who possess good first-language skills, are good listeners, and are self-confident, will likely do well in Immersion.

#### 3. Will my child's English language skills suffer in an Immersion Program?

Your child already understands English and communicates in English outside the classroom. English vocabulary and speech patterns will continue to develop at a normal pace.

Most skills and knowledge acquired in the French classroom transfer readily to English. However, English spelling is not part of the Immersion program until grade 2. There is a natural 'lag' in the development of this skill for many students. Research indicates that most students catch up by Middle School.

#### 4. How will I communicate with the school?

All communication with parents is in English. Teachers will communicate a child's progress to parents through report cards, interviews, curriculum nights, informal written notes, student planners, phone calls, etc. Parents are encouraged to discuss their child's progress at any time with the teacher.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

Enrichment and remedial assistance may be provided in English or in French by any of the following:

- classroom teacher;
- English-speaking Learning Resource Teacher;
- bilingual Learning Resource Teacher (where available).

Students whose needs require special assistance beyond the Learning Resource Teacher have access to:

- the special education services of the school as determined by School and System meetings;
- Psychological services as provided by the staff of the Department of Psychological Services;
- special education programs as recommended by an Identification Placement and Review Committee. If the recommendation is for a self-contained class, ie. gifted, then the program is in English.

### French Immersion Advisory Committee

The **French Immersion Advisory Committee** provides advice to the Board regarding French Immersion program and accommodation issues. The committee consists of:

- 1 Superintendent responsible for French Immersion
- 1 Elementary principal/vice-principal of a French Immersion school
- 1 Secondary principal/vice-principal of a French Immersion school
- 1 Elementary teacher representative
- 1 Secondary teacher representative
- 2 Elementary parents - School Council or Home and School representatives
- 2 Secondary parents - School Council or Home and School representatives
- 1 Secondary French Immersion student
- 1 FSL Consultant

## AIM OF FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM

The Ontario Ministry of Education states that "the longer exposure to French instruction provided by the Immersion Programs allow students to acquire a greater knowledge of the language and greater effectiveness in its use."

The aim of the French Immersion program is to:

- provide a quality educational program that meets the expectations of the Ontario Curriculum both elementary and secondary;
- develop and refine students' ability to communicate in French;
- help students understand and appreciate Canada's francophone heritage ;
- expand students' knowledge of the language through the study of francophone literature (secondary).

By the end of the four-year program in secondary school, students will:

- participate easily in conversations and discussions;
- be able to take courses at the college or university level in which French is the language of instruction;
- be able to accept employment in which French is the working language.

## EARLY FRENCH IMMERSION MODEL

- SK- Gr. 1** All classroom instruction is in French. \*
- Gr. 2-3** French Language, Math, The Arts, Social Studies, Science, Health \* (English introduced in grade 2- an average of 45 minutes a day)
- Gr. 4-5** French Language, Math, The Arts, Science, Social Studies, Health \* (English an average of 60 minutes a day)
- Gr. 6-8** 50% French Language in combination with other subjects taught in French, such as:  
Mathematics, Social Studies, History,  
Geography, Science, Computers, etc.

**\*Approximately 30 minutes daily of instruction in subjects such as Music, Physical Education, Computers or Library may occur in English.**

**Secondary School** Courses currently offered include:

- Gr. 9-12** French Language  
Mathematics  
History  
Science  
Geography  
French for Business  
Society: Challenge & Change  
Co-op (French Language placement)  
Physical Education  
Dramatic Arts  
Creative Writing/Media

## CERTIFICATE OF FRENCH IMMERSION

The certificate of French Immersion is awarded by the Board of Education as an adjunct to the student transcript. It provides evidence of a student's degree of involvement in the French Immersion program at the secondary level. This certificate is important for students applying to study at a French or bilingual post-secondary institute as well as for students intending to enter the workforce in a French or bilingual capacity.

The Certificate of French Immersion is awarded to students who satisfy the following two requirements:

- successful completion of Hamilton-Wentworth's Early French Immersion program at the elementary level or its equivalent (minimum of 3800 hours of French instruction);
- successful completion of the sequence of four courses in French Immersion and a minimum of six courses in other subjects taught in French, at the secondary school level.