

Section 11: Program Initiatives**French Immersion**

HWDSB has been committed to providing a quality French Immersion (FI) program since it began in 1975 in the Hamilton Board of Education. Today, the FI program continues to offer an excellent opportunity for students to develop and refine their ability to communicate in French and to understand and appreciate Canada's francophone heritage, language and literature.

French Immersion (FI) begins in grade 1 and is offered through to grade 12. Junior kindergarten (JK) and Senior Kindergarten (SK) students interested in FI attend their home school for kindergarten and move to their assigned FI School in grade 1 (if it is not offered in their home school).

The LTFMP plays a significant part in the placement of FI programming and HWDSB's efforts to continue with a healthy FI program enrolment across the system. The following guiding principles inform HWDSB's practice and help to address the accommodation and fiscal considerations for FI programming:

- *Providing an engaging program for all students*
- *Long term reduced reliance on portable classrooms*
- *For single track schools – a healthy enrolment in the program*
- *For dual track schools – a balanced and healthy enrolment in both FI and English programs*
- *Long term preferred K-8 model for elementary schools*
- *Pathway to an FI program in secondary school*
- *Equity of access (transportation, facilities)*
- *Equity of opportunity*
- *Equitable distribution of programs*

(From French Immersion Review Report – Received by Board on December 12, 2011.)

As of September 2016, there are 15 elementary schools and 2 secondary school providing French Immersion programming. A second secondary program opened at Sherwood Secondary in September 2015 commencing with grade 9 programming only. The grade structure has expanded each year in September 2018 will offer a full grade 9-12 complement of programming. In 2015, elementary programming expanded to Ancaster Senior where graduates of the Fessenden Elementary grades 1-6 program now continue their FI education for grades 7 and 8.

In September 2017, a new FI program at Mary Hopkins will open to expand access to FI programming in Waterdown and provide accommodation relief to Guy Brown. Flamborough Centre was approved to accommodate the grade 5 graduates from Mary Hopkins. Additional French Immersion programming in Ancaster and Lower City are being addressed through the accommodation review process which will conclude in June 2017. Through the Lower Stoney Creek accommodation review in the 2015/16 school year a new FI program was approved. Location of the program has yet to be finalized.

Elementary French Immersion enrolment since 2011 has increased from 2,584 students to 3,269 in October 2016. Over the past 3 years the enrolment at the program entry point has been approximately 530 students. With steady enrolment at the entry level grade, the FI program enrolment will remain consistent at the primary level. In turn, continued growth will occur in the junior, intermediate and secondary levels as students progress from grade to grade. To ensure equal access and an engaging FI program, HWDSB will be reviewing the placement and potential expansion of the FI program as part of the elementary program strategy.

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The tables below indicate the locations and grade structures of the schools offering French Immersion. The table is divided by associated secondary schools and elementary clusters of schools. This also includes junior elementary schools graduating into middle schools. Italicized schools indicated a single track French Immersion school.

School Name	2016 Grade Structure	2017 Grade Structure	2018 Grade Structure	2019 Grade Structure	2020 Grade Structure
Sherwood	9-10	9-11	9-12	9-12	9-12

A.M. Cunningham	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5
Glen Echo	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5
Glen Brae	6-8	6-8	6-8	6-8	6-8

Lawfield	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-8
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<i>École Élémentaire Michaëlle Jean</i>	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-8
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<i>Norwood Park</i>	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-8
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Fessenden	1-6	1-6	1-6	1-6	1-6
Ancaster Senior	7-8	7-8	7-8	7-8	7-8

School Name	2016 Grade Structure	2017 Grade Structure	2018 Grade Structure	2019 Grade Structure	2020 Grade Structure
Westdale	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12

Cootes Paradise	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5
Dalewood	6-8	6-8	6-8	6-8	6-8

Guy B. Brown	1-7	1-8	1-8	1-8	1-8
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Mary Hopkins	-	1-3	1-4	1-5	1-5
Flamborough Centre	-	-	-	-	6

Dundana	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5
Sir William Osler	6-8	6-8	6-8	6-8	6-8

Earl Kitchener	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5
Ryerson	6-8	6-8	6-8	6-8	6-8

Section 11: Program Initiatives**Special Education**

HWDSB provides a spectrum of special education supports and services in order to meet the individual and diverse needs of our students. This spectrum includes in-school support as well as itinerant support, short-term intervention services, and placements in regular class, special class and Glenwood Special Day School. The Board endeavours to meet the needs of all students accessing Special Education/Student Services supports in the most enabling environment, in accordance with parental preference. The Board's practice, consistent with the Ministry direction is that, wherever possible, special learning needs are addressed within the home school. This aligns with our Program Strategy, where we envision a school system in which students can find what they need at any one of our schools. Thus, there will be an increased emphasis, in alignment with accessibility legislation, on providing school environments in which students with various disabilities can participate alongside their peers.

Special Education programs are based on a tiered approach. Most students can and should have their needs met within the regular class, or tier 1, environment. However, some students require short-term, tier 2 interventions which can occur in the home school or in school locations within the district. These time-definite interventions require specialized settings to permit the transition in and out of these types of intensive, small group interventions, and will need to be considered in addition to general classroom requirements. In addition, a few students require more specialized, or tier 3 settings. As part of the Secondary Program Strategy, Special Education classes are being reviewed to ensure that students receive programming that will enable them to reach their potential through appropriate life skills training and be reflective of the types of personal care requirements that the students may have. This may result in additional facility requirements (e.g., washroom renovations, therapy areas, lifts, ceiling tracks, electrical outlets, etc.).

Many professionals, including itinerant teachers, educational assistants, special education consultants, speech-language pathologists, kinesiologists, psychoeducational consultants, social workers, and system special education teams provide services to assist schools to meet the needs of all students, and in particular those with special education needs. In addition, the Board works collaboratively with many community partners, including medical professionals, in the provision of specialized services. The need for specific spaces within schools to allow for the involvement of these services needs to be considered in the LTFMP.

Alternative Education

While our goal is to provide program for students in their catchment school, there may be times when students, for a period of time, may find it difficult to attend school in a traditional school environment. Where this is the case, students may access System Alternative Education Programs. Where a student attends will be based upon the student's strengths and needed supports. Programs will be located in:

- Community locations where there is value-added for the students and where the location supports their next steps/pathway (i.e. Mohawk College);
- HWDSB sites that are not secondary schools when a student is unable to be in a secondary school setting;
- Secondary schools where students are able to be in secondary school but need an alternative structure within the school or as a support in transitioning to a secondary school timetable.