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Northwest and North Central French Immersion Programs Engagement – Frequently Asked Questions – Dec. 6, 2018

Transportation

What is the current bell time and transportation service model being offered for French Immersion at F.E. Osborne School?

The current bell time for F.E. Osborne School is 7:55 a.m. and dismissal is at 2:38 p.m.

Most students attending the regular program at F.E. Osborne School are assigned to Calgary Transit. The exception is the community of Sage Hill. These students have yellow school bus service because the Calgary Transit service level from this community does not meet the CBE service guidelines for junior high school students.

Are students in Grade 6 too young to take Calgary Transit?

We believe that Calgary Transit is a safe mode of transportation for students. Many CBE students in Grades 6 to 9 have already successfully made the transition to Calgary Transit. They often find it easier to get to a bus stop that is closer to home than a yellow school bus stop and enjoy a more flexible schedule because there is more than one bus available throughout the day. They also join students from other school boards also using Calgary Transit.

How are students supported in their transition to Calgary Transit?

The CBE has developed a safety and orientation transit program called My Transit Ride to support students through the transition. My Transit Ride is held over the summer months with more information in the spring. Schools can also support students by connecting families from similar communities so students can travel together. Through the additional supports, students are empowered to use Calgary Transit safely, confidently, and efficiently.

How is ride time calculated for students using Calgary Transit?

Similar to yellow school bus, the ride time is calculated from the time the student steps on the Calgary Transit bus or train and ends with their arrival time at school. Travel time to the bus stop is not factored into the calculation. In the afternoon, the ride time is calculated from the time the student steps on the Calgary Transit bus or train and ends with their departure from the last bus or train.



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What is the allowable ride time and number of transfers for students using Calgary Transit?

A majority of students in the regular program have a ride time of less than an hour with no more than one transfer. Because alternative programs require further distances to be travelled, the same ride time and number of transfers are not always possible. Calgary Transit reviews their routes every three months and makes adjustments based on actual ridership and available resources, so ride times are subject to change throughout the school year. Once students start to use the service, improvements are possible based on ridership from a given community.

Why do some middle school students take Calgary Transit and not yellow school buses?

The factors considered for a move to Calgary Transit include grade configurations, ride times, communities with existing Calgary Transit service, number of bus/train transfers, number of students and Calgary Transit capacity.

There are an increased number of students moving to Calgary Transit as part of the CBE's long-term transportation strategy. The move of more middle and junior high students onto Calgary Transit means that those dollars previously used to subsidize transportation for yellow school buses for this age of students is reinvested to support student learning. The CBE offers a transit orientation for students transitioning to Calgary Transit called My Transit Ride over the summer.

More than 3,300 students at 24 middle/junior high schools currently use Calgary Transit as their mode of transportation to get to and from school.

How is it decided who gets a rebate for Calgary Transit?

Provincial regulations provide direction on the students who qualify for a transit pass rebate. The Grade 6-12 students who qualify for a rebate are those who attend their designated community school for a regular program, reside more than 2.4 km from the school and are assigned to Calgary Transit. The rebate is also extended to any student attending an alternative program that is located in the same school as their designated regular program.

Will F.E. Osborne School have Calgary Transit Express Routes?

The CBE works collaboratively with Calgary Transit to share bell times and numbers of middle/junior high and senior high students from a specific



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community who attend their designated school for a regular program. As school express routes are an additional level of service provided for students attending their designated school for a regular program, they are only provided when Calgary Transit has the resources and ridership levels to provide that service.

Bell Times

Is it possible to adjust bell times at any schools if this plan is implemented?

We are undergoing an analysis of bell times and we have identified possibilities to adjust bell times at the three junior high/middle schools identified in this engagement process to address feedback on the proposed plan. More information will be available in 2019.

Staffing

How will the CBE address the need for more French Immersion teachers to open two new sites?

The CBE has an extensive and successful history of offering alternative language learning at our schools, with the largest of our language programs being French Immersion. We have recruitment strategies in place to meet the needs of our French Immersion programs. Principal recruitment consultants, with support of French Immersion administration, actively seek out outstanding candidates through attendance at career events across Canada and ongoing recruitment of French Immersion teachers throughout the year. Teachers are encouraged to look to the CBE for their teaching career for a number of reasons. The CBE enjoys a well-earned reputation for being a progressive world-class educational system. In addition, teachers recognize initiatives within the CBE that support the professional development of new teaching staff now and throughout their careers. In addition, we offer a competitive salary structure, strong compensation package and favourable employment contract offerings such as the full-year temporary contract, which can provide opportunities for teachers to teach immediately in classrooms. As the demand for quality French Immersion teachers continues to grow within Canada, it is through ongoing improvement and strategic planning that CBE continues to be a system teachers want to be a part of for their careers and to better serve the students and parents of our learning community.



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How will new teachers be hired to teach at Tuscany and F.E. Osborne schools?

Teachers on continuous contract with the CBE who have taught for two or more years in their current location have the opportunity to apply for position vacancies each year. For these continuous contract teachers, decisions about whether to remain at a school or apply to a new school are individual decisions, just as some teachers can decide each year to retire or take a leave of absence. School principals work with teacher staffing recruiters each spring to determine teacher needs based on the enrolment projections for the following school year. This same process occurs when new programs are offered at a school for the first time.

In addition to the usual staffing process, we have program moves and expansion funding that will allow us to provide dedicated resources (human and physical) to support the start-up of French Immersion Programs at these two new sites. We will also draw on experienced French Immersion educators to provide strong programs at these locations.

Do French Immersion schools require administrators who speak French?

[The Framework for Alternative Programs](#) within the CBE refers to the need for appropriately trained and philosophically aligned school leadership as a requirement for a successful alternative program. The goal would be that either the principal or assistant principal have the appropriate skill set. At minimum, there must be a learning leader in place with this capability. New or expanded programs must start up with staff who are familiar with the students and/or program. Leaders of specific programs meet on an ongoing basis and come together across system programs for common work. Teachers in the same alternative program will have access to common professional development opportunities.

Child Care

What about before and after school care at CBE schools?

Child care in CBE schools is provided by private groups who wish to lease space and run a child care or before and after school care program. These programs are only available in schools where there is space that is not required for current K-12 student programming. Each child care provider must adhere to provincially legislated criteria with respect to the program they offer and the number of students they are able to accept into their



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program. School principals work with their school communities when there is interest in providing before and after school care.

Learning/Programming

How will student learning be addressed in a dual-track school to ensure French Immersion students receive quality French experiences?

In a dual-track or multi-track school, the success and integrity of each program is determined by high quality teachers with strong communicative capacity in the target language, deep knowledge of the curriculum, high-impact instructional practices, a strong commitment to the achievement of each and every student, collegiality of staff, a culture of inclusion that welcomes and supports all students, parental involvement, and strong instructional and administrative leadership. However, to ensure a cohesive school culture and sense of collective efficacy and well-being, opportunities to integrate programs are considered as much as possible and carried out in ways that deepen and enrich learning for students in all programs in the school community.

What does the CBE intend to do to ensure a smooth transition for students from their existing school to their new school?

Area directors will meet with the administration of affected schools to collaboratively plan gatherings and opportunities for students and their families. These events will offer students and families processes and support for a smooth transition as they leave their current school and embrace their new learning environment.

Area directors, with the administration of affected schools, are responsible in cooperation with CBE service units for the orderly transition of programs including students, staffing, materials and resources within the designated timeframe.

How does a Grade 6-9 setting work?

Middle years learning refers to education offered to students between the ages of 10-15. These years are critical in keeping our students on the path to high school completion and their career futures. All middle years teachers and principals understand the complex and unique learning needs of this age group. Students in a middle school setting:

- will gradually make the transition from one teacher to multiple teachers



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- may be mentored by student leaders in the higher grades (buddy programs)
- can make course selections in the areas of second languages and the fine and performing arts
- can participate in intramural, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities
- will be supported as they transition from elementary to middle school and then from middle school to high school

See the [Middle Years information at cbe.ab.ca](http://cbe.ab.ca) for more information.

How will students who have been in multi-aged classrooms (i.e. Grades 5/6) receive curriculum if they are receiving some Grade 6 curriculum this year? What is the plan?

In personalized learning contexts, prior learning serves as a guide for planning next steps. Through teacher collaboration across affected schools and programs, Grade 5 students from multi-aged classrooms who have studied Grade 6 content in subjects such as Social Studies and Science will have opportunities to explore Grade 5 content in these subjects during their Grade 6 year. Flexible learning opportunities are an integral part of all CBE classrooms.

Will the new school offer the same extracurricular activities as our current one? (i.e., sailing trip, outdoor school, Quebec Trip)

Each school makes responsive decisions regarding extracurricular activities based on the interests and needs of their school community. Many schools provide similar opportunities. In addition, principals at the schools involved in this engagement process will be working closely together to ensure this transition is as smooth as possible. Where possible, extracurricular activities may continue or other solutions developed in collaboration with families.

Will Grade 6 students get recess?

Teachers and administrators will make decisions regarding the scheduling of recess for Grade 6 students. Many middle schools offer a movement break in lieu of recess.

Why can't the regular program at Tuscany School be K-5 as well as the French K-5?

There may be an opportunity to do this depending on the extent of the interest from families at the school. There will be further discussions with students and parents in 2019 to determine appropriate next steps.



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What will be the impacts on the regular program and students in this program?

Programming for students in the regular program will remain unchanged for schools that become dual-track schools. The same learning opportunities will be provided and the quality of programming will not be impacted by these changes.

If my child attended kindergarten in the regular program, can they join the French Immersion Program in Grade 1 or do they need to repeat kindergarten in the French Immersion Program?

Both kindergarten and Grade 1 are entry points into the French Immersion Program. If a child attended a regular designated program for kindergarten, they are eligible to enter French Immersion in Grade 1.

Why don't we just create Late French immersion Program by itself in a school?

The purpose of the Late French Immersion Program is to offer CBE students an immersive context for learning French language and culture, beginning in Grade 7. It is housed in an Early (Continuing) French Immersion setting to provide beginning language learners with a rich language-learning experience. In Grade 9, following an intensive two-year period, Late French Immersion students join their Early French Immersion peers to achieve a level of competency that allows them to pursue their studies in French in senior high school. As a result, a Late French Immersion Program cannot be established on its own.

Resources

How will the new programs be resourced?

Budget allocations have been secured for all program moves and expansions within the CBE. The money is allocated based on projected enrolment and is assigned to the purchase of student resources, instructional resources and technology resources. Additionally, funding has been allocated to provide dedicated human resource support (i.e. an administrator with background in the language) to ensure all programming requirements are in place in advance of the opening of the program.

Will resources at existing schools be moved to create the new programs?

Some resources specific to grades no longer offered at the schools (i.e. Grade 6 materials) will be redistributed and re-allocated to the schools



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where Grade 6 French Immersion programming will be offered. Principals, in collaboration with area directors, work to allocate extra resources accordingly to new program schools based on projected enrolment in those schools.

What will happen to school council fundraising when students leave the school to create a new program at another site?

When schools or programs move or close, the CBE has an established process in place to support such changes. The Area director will develop guiding principles that will help in decision making regarding disbursement of assets (i.e. casino funds, resources purchased by parent group, special collections, etc). The assets will be dispensed equitably based on the movement of students to the new designated CBE school(s). In the event that students will be moving to multiple schools, decisions regarding disbursements of such equipment and supplies shall be made by the principal in consultation with the Area director and school council.

Grandfathering / Out-of-Attendance Area

Can an Early French Immersion Program student remain at their current school as an out-of-attendance student?

When a new program opens, it is expected that students who live within the re-designated communities will attend the program at its new location. This move is to support one of the planning principles of having students attend school closer to home. The move of students is also required in order to establish a large enough cohort of students at the new site.

Students who have been re-designated to a new school would be considered out-of-attendance-area students at their current school unless they have been grandfathered as noted in the [decision overview](#). AR 6090, Student Registration indicates that the decision to accept out-of-attendance-area students is based on available school space and resources, in consultation with the Area director. While a school may appear to have space to accommodate out-of-attendance-area students, there may be insufficient resources to do so.

How come the CBE won't allow current students to remain at Varsity Acres School or Banff Trail School for one more year?

Entry in to Early French Immersion Programs is limited to kindergarten and Grade 1. This can pose challenges when opening a new program as students cannot enter at higher grades to add to the student population at a



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new location. In order to have the student population necessary to open a new location at Tuscany School, some students are designated to the new location and will no longer attend Banff Trail or Varsity Acres schools. Allowing students to remain at their existing schools will compromise the ability to open these new locations and expand spaces available for French Immersion programming in northwest and north central Calgary.

The purpose of this engagement was to respond to growing interest and provide opportunities for more students to access high-quality French Immersion Programs in northwest and north central Calgary.

Why is the CBE only allowing current students at Branton to remain and not siblings of current students who may be there in the future?

The new French Immersion Program at F.E. Osborne School will be for Early French Immersion students in Grades 6 to 9. Grade 6 is not an entry grade for the program which means new students can only join the program if they have the necessary language background. This can pose challenges when opening a new program. In order to have the student population necessary to open a new location at F.E. Osborne School, some students currently attending Varsity Acres School will be designated to the new location in the future. Allowing students to attend Branton rather than their newly designated school will compromise the ability to open this new location and expand spaces available for French Immersion programming in northwest and north central Calgary.

Why can't the CBE leave current students where they are and simply start new programs with new students coming in to those grades?

Entry in to early French Immersion Programs is limited to kindergarten and Grade 1. This can pose challenges when opening a new program as students cannot enter at higher grades to add to the student population at a new location. In order to have the student population necessary to open a new locations at Tuscany School and F.E. Osborne School, some students are designated to the new locations and will no longer attend previously designated schools. Allowing students to remain in their existing schools will compromise the ability to open these new locations and expand spaces available for French Immersion programming in northwest and north central Calgary.



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Communities

How do community designations work (i.e., how do communities get added or removed/moved)? And why?

Typically, CBE designates students to schools based on City of Calgary community boundaries. The designation of communities to schools for both regular and alternative programs is a balance between the space available and the number of students anticipated from a given community. When determining potential community designations for northwest and north central French Immersion Programs, for the scenarios, proposed plan and final decision, analysis of French Immersion Programs enrolment patterns for affected communities were analyzed. The results of this analysis were one factor considered when finalizing community designations. Other factors such as transportation and regular program student designations were also considered. For example, the communities of Silver Springs and Montgomery are designated to the new French Immersion Program at F.E. Osborne School, which is the same school those communities are designated to for the regular program. Additionally, when considering new student designations or changes to current designations, decisions are made taking into account CBE's Planning Principles:

- Minimize disruptions for students
- Provide program continuity from kindergarten to Grade 12
- Keep cohort groups of students together
- Allow students to attend school as close to home as possible
- Provide long-term sustainability
- Use space and resources effectively
- Provide equitable access for all students to quality learning environments

These principles are not a checklist and they are not mutually exclusive. They are principles that are used to guide our work. The CBE planning department monitors enrolment for all schools/programs as well as demographic trends in both new and established communities. CBE prepares a Three-Year System Student Accommodation Plan annually that identifies student accommodation challenges that are anticipated for the next three years. The number of projects identified on the plan typically ranges between 25 and 35. This plan is available on the CBE website (<https://www.cbe.ab.ca/FormsManuals/Three-Year-System-Student-Accommodation-Plan.pdf>).



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Why did the CBE consider changes to Capitol Hill and Hillhurst community designations for the French Immersion Programs?

Based on feedback heard from some participants through this engagement as well as questions posed to the planning team in various other engagements, there were questions about why the communities of Capitol Hill and Hillhurst had been divided using 14th Street as the dividing line instead of considering the communities as a whole for school designations. In the proposed plan, the CBE recommended eliminating that divide and re-designating students based on the entirety of the community. Feedback from the open house and the online survey indicated a majority of those families affected by the proposed changes felt that the initial designations were satisfactory, so those initial designations have been maintained in the final decision.

How was the decision made regarding which communities would attend F.E. Osborne School and which communities would attend Branton School? (i.e., Bowness, Montgomery, Scenic Acres, Silver Springs)

Feedback received in the first two phases of the engagement indicated concern with the small population that would attend a new program if it were opened at Twelve Mile Coulee School. Feedback indicated the CBE should open new programs with a cohort of students large enough to provide effective programming. F.E. Osbourne School has more space available for a new French Immersion Program and therefore more than three communities could be designated to the new program. One factor in determining which communities would be designated to F.E. Osbourne School was the projected space available taking into consideration the expected population from the designated communities. A second factor taken into consideration was the proximity of communities to the new location. With respect to Montgomery and Silver Springs, these communities are both adjacent to the Varsity community where F.E. Osbourne School is located and are also communities that are designated to attend F.E. Osbourne School for the regular program.

Community designations are unclear. For example,

a) Why can't the students in the communities of Sunnyside and Rosedale go to Branton?

Students in Sunnyside and Rosedale are designated to King George for the elementary French Immersion Program. Students who attend King George School move to G.P. Vanier School to continue their French



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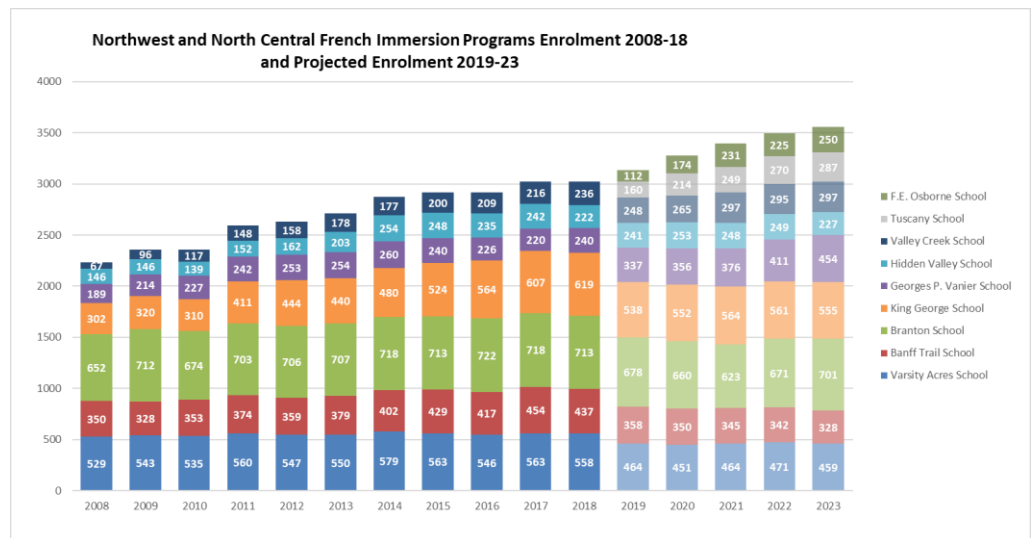
Immersion education. Community designations are based on the number of projected students in a given community and the available space at surrounding schools. The designations for these communities were the closest elementary school, in this case King George School, which then feeds into G.P. Vanier School, keeping the school cohort of students together.

b) Why can't students in the community of Evanston go to Valley Creek?

There is a limited amount of space available for additional students at both Valley Creek and Hidden Valley schools. Sherwood and the Hamptons are small communities with a combined population of approximately 14,000 residents. Projected future student populations can be accommodated in the space available at Hidden Valley and Valley Creek schools. Evanston is a large community with a population at full build-out of approximately 19,000 residents. Projections for French Immersion students from the community of Evanston exceed the amount available space at Hidden Valley and Valley Creek schools.

Plan

Please provide information about enrolment growth to demonstrate that the French Immersion Programs in northwest and north central Calgary have grown and additional spaces will be created.



Note 1 | Chart relates to Early and Late French Immersion Programs enrolment at the northwest and north central French Immersion Programs schools only. Regular program enrolment is not included in this chart.



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Note 2 | Chart does not show enrolment growth between 2017 and 2018, which was a result of capping the Early French Immersion Program at Banff Trail and King George schools and Late French Immersion Program at Branton School during the 2017-18 school year.

- Total K-9 enrolment at the northwest and north central Early French Immersion Program schools has grown an average of 3 per cent per year since 2008 from 2,235 students in 2008 to 3,025 in 2018.
- Early and Late French Immersion Program enrolment is projected to continue growing approximately 3 per cent per year from 2019-3 to 3,558 students by 2023.

Why did the CBE conduct the open house on the same night as the Olympic plebiscite?

Planning for the engagement process for French Immersion Programs in northwest and north central Calgary began approximately a year ago. In order to secure dates and venues and communicate these dates early to all affected schools and communities via community newsletters and other means, the date for the open house was set this past spring. The Olympic plebiscite date was announced after we had already communicated our dates and plans.

Why didn't the CBE just put modular classrooms on sites to address increased enrolment?

Modular classrooms are intended to be a short-term solution to accommodation planning. The addition of modular classrooms is dependent upon provincial approvals and the availability of capital funds. In the case of French Immersion Programs, options such as community re-designations and space to open new programs was a more viable, long-term solution to the growing interest for French Immersion programming.

Why can't you address all the points raised by stakeholders in this process?

When developing plans for programming in a large area of the city (northwest and north central Calgary), it is very challenging to satisfy every request and preference. We must put the learning needs of students first and consider what is best for students overall. It is also important to ensure that any plan we develop will be sustainable into the future. All of this, and more, is considered along with all the input and feedback gathered in the process to arrive at a decision.

Engagement Plan and Communications

I do not think there was effective communications about this engagement process. I want to know more about what was done.

The CBE first informed communities about the need to develop a longer-term plan for French Immersion Programs for northwest and north central Calgary in October 2017. There were repeated and ongoing communications about opportunities for people to share their thoughts and



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perspectives on the longer-term plan after that. There were three phases in the engagement process; in each phase there were in-person sessions and online opportunities to provide input and feedback. Regular conversations also took place with staff and school councils for schools involved in the engagement process. You can view a more detailed communications and engagement timeline on [the CBE website](#).

There was a comprehensive engagement process with multiple opportunities for affected stakeholders to share their thoughts and perspectives. More information is available at cbe.ab.ca/dialogue.

Why were there multiple phases in the engagement process?

In this engagement process, there were three distinct phases. The first phase was focused on four options to provide opportunities for growth of French Immersion Programs in northwest and north central Calgary: changes to grade configurations, changes to boundaries, expand program/locations and enrolment cap. The second phase included the opportunity to provide feedback on four potential scenarios. And the third phase invited participants to share their thoughts on the proposed plan. The feedback gathered in phase one informed the scenarios that were developed in phase two, and the perspectives shared on the scenarios then informed the proposed plan that was developed. The November open house and online survey were the final opportunities for feedback before the decision was announced Dec. 6, 2018.

The input and feedback gathered at each step in the process informed what came next. We started out broadly in phase one and became more specific and focused in phases two and three.