

Q: Does my child need to know some French before enrolling in the French Immersion program?

A: No. Prior to entering the French Immersion program, students are not required to have any knowledge of the French language.

Q: As a parent/guardian, do I need to speak French?

A: No. The French Immersion program is an additional language program designed for students whose first language is NOT French. Parents and guardians do not need to speak French in order for their child to be successful in the program.

Q: What will happen to my child's English language skills if instruction is only in French during the first three years of school?

A: Research has shown that there is no negative impact on students' English language skills. In fact, most studies have shown that learning an additional language enhances the development of first-language skills. Many literacy competencies transfer between different languages. These competencies can include phonemic awareness, comprehension and communication strategies, as well as critical thinking skills. This is the reason why children who are literate in one language are likely to be successful in learning an additional language.

Q: Will my child learn the same things as students in the English program?

A: Yes. All programs, regardless of the language of instruction, must follow the same curriculum laid out by Alberta Education. The Alberta curriculum is available in both English and French through <https://curriculum.learnalberta.ca/home/en>.

Q: WILL IMMERSION GRADUATES HAVE TROUBLE IN UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T TAKE HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS IN ENGLISH?

A: Survey of Canadian university students found that the majority of French immersion graduates surveyed reported no difficulty in adjusting to university courses offered in English. In fact, French immersion graduates have more options than other students because in Canada they may choose to take some or all post-secondary courses in their second language. The majority of survey respondents reported no difficulty in making the transition from high school to university courses in French.

Q: WHAT ARE THE EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS OF COMPLETING AN IMMERSION PROGRAM?

A: Bilinguals have access to a wider range of national and international jobs. Highlighting French and English language skills provides jobseekers with a greater competitive advantage, particularly in areas such as admin/ finance, human resources/recruiting, training/education, technical support/customer service and marketing. A 2010 study at Guelph University found that bilinguals earned on average between 3.8% (males) and 6.6% (females) more than their unilingual counterparts.² Thousands of industries and organizations operate in more than one language, such as travel, hospitality, import/export, as well as the public service sector. All of these areas require and value linguistic and intercultural skills afforded by having learned other languages. Those who have fluency in other languages have access to more opportunities, face less competition for roles, and earn higher wages.

Q: Where can I go for support as my child explores the world of French Immersion?

A: You can go to this website: <https://cpf.ca/en/> which is a national network of parents, volunteers, and advocates dedicated to the promotion and creation of French-second-language learning opportunities for young Canadians.