



PROCEDURE

PR-008

REQUEST FOR CORE FRENCH EXEMPTION/SUBSTITUTION

Superintendent Responsible: Superintendent of Program K-12 (Teaching & Learning)	Initial Effective Date: 2020/01/27
Last Updated: 2023/06/16	Next Review Date: 2027/04/20

Purpose

To outline the process to be followed when an exemption from the Core French program is being considered for a student in Grades 4 to 9.

Guiding Principles

The vision for French as a Second Language (FSL) is “Students will communicate and interact with growing confidence in French, one of Canada’s official languages, while developing the knowledge, skills and perspectives they need to participate fully as citizens in Canada and the world.” (Ontario Curriculum, French as a Second Language, 2013).

FSL programming in the Grand Erie District School Board (Grand Erie) is dedicated to the inclusion of all students. Learning a second language is linked to many benefits such as strengthening first-language skills, enhancing cognitive development, reasoning, creative-thinking skills, confidence and academic achievement.

As their strengths develop, French language learners become more flexible and adaptable in new and unforeseen situations. For example, second language learners tend to be more divergent thinkers, with improved memory and attention span.

Core French is taught in English-language schools of Ontario to provide students with the opportunity to become bilingual in the two official languages of Canada. The study of French as a second language is compulsory in elementary school from Grade 4 to Grade 8, and secondary school students are required to earn at least one credit in French as a second language to graduate.

French as a Second Language educators strive to meet the diverse needs of all students through differentiated instruction and by providing accommodations and/or modifying expectations if necessary. French as a Second Language programs should reflect the diversity of the student population, including students with special education needs and Multi-lingual Language Learners.

If students have the opportunity to take Native languages in place of French as a second language in elementary school, they may use a Level 1 or 2 Native language course to meet the compulsory credit requirement for French as a second language in a secondary school.

1.0 Elementary Requirements

The *Ontario Curriculum, French as a Second Language: Core French 4 - 8*, (Extended French (4–8), French Immersion (1 – 8), page 15 indicates “Core French is mandatory from Grades 4 to 8 for all students in English-language elementary schools.” However, in some very rare cases administrators may recommend that exemptions be granted and therefore, need to be aware of the criteria, process and documentation required for such exemptions.

1.1 Process and Documentation

Accommodations and/or modifications to the FSL program must be attempted, monitored and documented through an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for French. The development, implementation, and monitoring of an IEP is a collaborative effort that involves the student, parent(s)/caregiver(s), and school employees. Student progress will be reviewed, and program and instruction will be adjusted accordingly. The following will be considered when determining if an exemption is required:

- The needs and strengths of the student must be considered considering the benefits of continuing instruction in French. In very rare circumstances, after considering all the relevant information, the parent(s)/caregiver(s) and the school team may feel that a student should be exempted. An exemption would normally be considered only for students in Grades 6, 7 and 8 where accommodations and/or modifications during Grade 4 and 5 have proved unsuccessful
- A collaborative team effort is required to reach a decision to request an exemption from French. The parent(s)/caregiver(s) must be made aware and consent to their child being discussed at School Team. The administrator will consult with employee who work with the student including the Core French teacher, the classroom teacher, the Learning Resource teacher, and, if applicable, the Multi-Lingual Language (MLL) Itinerant teacher. Consultation with the Special Education Teacher Consultant, the FSL Teacher Consultant, the Indigenous Education Lead Teacher Consultant and, the MLL Teacher Consultant can support the school’s decision-making to ensure that all reasonable avenues for accommodations and modifications have been exhausted
- Once the team believes that the student cannot benefit from FSL instruction, the administrator arranges a meeting with the parent(s)/caregiver(s). The reasons for exemption are discussed and the short and long-term implications of exemption are explained using the following Ministry materials as reference:
 - Excerpts from *Ontario Schools K-12 Policy and Program Requirements 2016*, Section 6.1 The requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma; Section 6.2 Substitution for Compulsory Credit Requirements
 - Excerpts from *The Ontario Curriculum, French as a Second Language: Core French 4-8: The Purpose of the Ontario Curriculum, French as a Second Language: Core French 4-8*, page 2; *The Role of Parents*, page 12; *Core French for Exceptional Students*, page 5, and *Planning French as a Second Language Programs for Students with Special Education Needs* pages 35-37
 - Elementary administrators should make students and parent(s)/caregiver(s) aware of the process for substitution in secondary schools (see below) and ensure that appropriate discussions take place for the Grade 8 to 9 transitions
 - If the parent(s)/caregiver(s) supports the request, the Request for Elementary Core French Exemption form (Appendix A) is completed and a copy of the proposed individual learning plan; (i.e., Alternative

learning Program Plan; or ESL/ELD Support Plan for MLLs)/ including details of supervision, is attached. In all cases of exemption, a written individual learning plan must be in place for the exempted student

- The request is forwarded to the Family of Schools Superintendent of Education for review and approval
- The form and individual learning plan are returned to the school and filed in the O.S.R. A copy will be retained by the office of the Family of Schools Superintendent of Education
- On the student's "Hours of Instruction in French" card a zero (or prorated number of hours) will be entered in the appropriate section
- The exemption form must be renewed every year and signed by the parent(s)/caregiver(s); Administrator; and forwarded to the Family of Schools Superintendent of Education for review and approval The review for the IEP or individual learning plan and the signature required for that document could take place at the same time

Once approved by the Family of Schools Superintendent of Education, the following shall be completed in PowerSchool to accurately report Grade 4-8 French requirements:

- *Recording Elementary Grades 4-8 Mandatory French Hours:*
For each school, the school would select "create/edit Language Program Minutes" where the number of instruction minutes as set by the Ministry can be defined. By default, all students (Grade 4 – 8) when assigned their homeroom are enrolled in a French class. The French class is linked to Language Program Minutes.
- *Recording Superintendent Approved Exemptions:*
Students can be un-enrolled in a French class by assigning the student to a special program called French Exempt which does not report in OnSIS.

2.0 Secondary Requirements

Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements, 2016 indicates that "Students must earn 1 credit in French as a second language in order to obtain the Ontario Secondary School Diploma." Administrators may grant substitutions in some limited cases based on the procedures set out in Section 6.2 of *Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12, Policy and Program Requirements, 2016*.

2.1 Substitution

Under certain rare circumstances, usually involving Exceptional students, a substitution may be granted. The determining factor will be the inability of the student to benefit from instruction in a second language.

2.1.1 Substitutions for Compulsory Courses

There is no policy or program requirement suggesting that such substitutions should be made for French as a Second Language in particular. If a substitution for a compulsory credit is deemed necessary or in the best interests of an individual student, there are a variety of options. (p. 23 of *Including Students with Special Needs in FSL Programs (2015)*).

2.2.1 Process for a Substitution

Substitutions may be made for a limited number of compulsory credit courses from the remaining courses offered by the school that meet the requirements for compulsory credits. Administrators may replace up to three of these courses with courses from the remainder of those that meet the compulsory credit requirements. If a parent(s)/caregiver(s) or students wish to consider this option, they shall contact the secondary school Administrator or designate to

consult and discuss the process. *Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements, 2016*

2.2 **Consultation Required**

Teachers and administrators should consult the FSL Consultant, the MLL Consultant, Indigenous Education Lead or the Special Education Consultant regarding the criteria or process for exempting students from Core French classes or for the substitution of the compulsory secondary French credit, as required.

Reference(s):

- *A Framework for French as A Second Language in Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12; (2013)*
- *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools (First Edition), Grades 1 to 12;(2010)*
- *Including Students with Special Education Needs in French as a Second Language Programs: A Guide for Ontario Schools; (2015)*
- *Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12; (2013)*
- *Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12 Policy and Program Requirements; (2016)*
- *Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan (2017)*
- *The Ontario Curriculum, French as a Second Language: Core French 4 - 8, (Extended French (4 – 8), French Immersion (1 – 8); (2013)*
- *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12, French as a Second Language: Core French, (Extended French; French Immersion); (2013)*
- *Welcoming English Language Learners into French as a Second Language Programs; (2016)*



APPENDIX A

REQUEST FOR ELEMENTARY CORE FRENCH EXEMPTION

School Name	
Student's Name	

Exemption Reason	Exceptional <input type="checkbox"/>	MLL <input type="checkbox"/>	N.S.L. <input type="checkbox"/>
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NOTE: "If a student requires accommodations and/or modified or alternative expectations in FSL, it is important to include the FSL teacher as part of the team creating and implementing that student's IEP." page24 *Including Students with Special Education Needs in French as a Second Language (2015)*.

Date of Birth	MM/DD/YY	Present Level	Grade	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
Address								
Phone Number	(XXX) XXX-XXXX							
Reason for Exemption								

Attached is a copy of the IEP, and individual learning plan (Alternative Learning Program Plan, or, ESL/ELD Support Plan for MLLs) which outlines the proposed instructional plan for French time, including supervision details, for this Request for Exemption.

I, _____ Parent's/Caregiver's Name _____ am aware of the implications of this exemption.

Dated _____ day of _____, 20 _____

Parent Signature

Administrator

Date

Family of Schools Superintendent of Education

Date