

January 23, 2018

French first language schools; the best option for perfect bilingualism

Are you hesitating between enrolling your child in an immersion school or a French First Language School? Do you wonder if your child is eligible for admission and if École Émilie-Tremblay is the right choice?

On the eve of the Kindergarten registration for four-year-olds, which will take place from February 8 to 23, the Yukon Francophone School Board (CSFY) wishes to shed light on all admission categories and processes for admission permissions for non-right holders.

Studies show that minority language schools offer the best option for perfect bilingualism. Our students take French and English first languages courses to enable them to master both official languages.

The right to admission and rights holders

In order to protect the rights of minorities, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* has a section on the linguistic rights of official language minority communities. Article 23 of the *Charter* defines three categories of right holders which can be summarized as follows:

1. First language: a Canadian parent whose first language learned and still understood is French.
2. Primary School Instruction: A Canadian parent who received part of his or her primary school instruction in Canada in French as a first language.
3. Family Continuity: A parent whose child is receiving or has received his or her primary or secondary school instruction in French as a first language in Canada.

All children who have a parent who belongs to these categories are accepted into CSFY schools, regardless of the language spoken at home.

Admission permissions

The CSFY also accepts students from 4 other categories called "admission permissions". Here is an overview:

4. French-speaking Immigrant: A parent who is not a Canadian citizen but, if he or she were a Canadian citizen, would be a right holder.
5. Francophone Ancestry: A Canadian parent of French-Canadian ancestry. This means that the child's grandparent would have qualified as right holders under section 23. The purpose is to reclaim the generations of Francophones lost to assimilation because in the past, French teaching was forbidden or not accessible in many parts of the country.

6. Anglophone: A Canadian parent who speaks French fluently but does not qualify under any other category and who has chosen to integrate into, and establish authentic ties with, the French-speaking community. The child must be able to function in French before being admitted.

7. Non-French- nor English-speaking Immigrant: A parent who is not a Canadian citizen and speaks neither French nor English. This category recognizes that an immigrant parent who speaks neither English nor French should have the choice to educate their children in either official language.

Exceptional admission permissions

The Board of Trustees, taking into account the admissions committee's recommendation that meet with the family, will approve or dismiss admission permission applications. The committee evaluates the child's and parents' abilities to communicate in French, the parents' commitment towards the learning of French and the French-speaking community and the ties between the family and the French-speaking community. Every decision must be made considering what is best for the child's development in order to enable him or her to succeed and reach his or her full potential. Parents and children must commit to becoming part of the Francophone community and to spend time in French at home and outside of school hours.

The Board of trustees must make sure that the admission is consistent with the CSFY's mission and its French-language instruction programs, taking into account, among other things, the educational, cultural and linguistic impact on the classroom and school, including available francization and cultural integration resources. In cases where the application is refused, the parents can appeal this decision by providing new evidence to the Board of Trustees. The admission policy with full details is available in English and French at <http://eet.csfy.ca/admission/>.

Managing admission permissions

Students admitted under exceptional admission permission will be granted temporary admission permission for the first year of school. Students who are admitted to Kindergarten for four-year-olds must complete Kindergarten (K5) before being granted a permanent admission permission.

Meetings with the family and the admissions committee help to assess the child's progress and to see if it is in his or her best interest to recommend permanent admission to the Board of Trustees. If the committee would like to re-evaluate the language progress and the student's integration into the community, then the committee will recommend that the Trustees extend the temporary admission permission. The Board of Trustees announces their decision at a public meeting.

Note that the number of students the CSFY may admit under categories "Anglophone" and "Non-French nor English-speaking Immigrant" cannot exceed 5% of the total school population unless otherwise agreed to by the Minister of Education on a case-by-case basis at the request of the CSFY.

For questions about admissions, you can contact École Émilie-Tremblay at 667-8150.