



Proposed Westside Elementary Second Language Programs

Questions and Answers for Parents

January 2016

French Immersion

Due to the increase in popularity of French Immersion in the city, and the population growth which has occurred in West Lethbridge, the Board of Trustees determined that the timing is right to establish a second French Immersion program on the westside. The administrative teams at Agnes Davidson and Nicholas Sheran will be working closely with Education Centre staff to create a second high-quality French Immersion program at Nicholas Sheran. The school will house both an English program and a French Immersion program

Below you will find a series of questions and answers that have been developed to provide you with timely information.

Why was Nicholas Sheran chosen for the program?

It is anticipated that, with the opening of the new elementary school in Copperwood, there will be a reduction in the number of students attending Nicholas Sheran. That would leave space for additional students. It is expected that there will be approximately 200 Westside French Immersion students attending Nicholas Sheran. In addition, the population of the Westside continues to grow and providing a variety of program choices will be needed.

When will this happen?

The program would open for the 2017 – 2018 school year.

What will the population of Nicholas Sheran be? How many will be French Immersion students?

With the opening of the Copperwood elementary school, and the addition of the French Immersion program, it is anticipated that the population of Nicholas Sheran will be similar to its current population. Currently, there are approximately 200 Westside French Immersion students attending Agnes Davidson. It is anticipated that a similar number of students will be enrolled in the Nicholas Sheran program upon opening.

What grades of French Immersion will there be?

The program will offer the full elementary program from kindergarten to grade 5.

Once the Nicholas Sheran French Immersion program opens, will there be transportation offered for French Immersion students who live on the Westside, but who would like to go to Agnes Davidson?

As is the case with all District schools, if a parent would like their child to attend a school outside of their attendance boundary, District Policy 501.3.1 is followed.

January 2016

(Excerpt from Policy 501.3.1)

1. *Choice of schools shall normally be permitted only between school years or semesters (high school).*
 - 1.1 *Admission to Early Childhood Services programs shall be in accordance with District policy 501.2.*
2. *Authority for approving admission of students from outside the school attendance areas shall rest with the principal.*
 - 2.1 ***Decisions shall be based on established criteria, including availability of physical space, personnel and appropriate educational programming for that student.***
 - 2.2 *After consultation with the Director of Student Services, students with complex learning needs may be directed to a school other than the school in their attendance area.*
 - 2.3 *Decisions by the principal may be appealed to the Superintendent whose decision shall be final.*
3. *Once admitted into a school, students in kindergarten through grade twelve from outside a school's attendance area shall have the same right to continued enrollment as a student from within the school's attendance area.*
4. *The District shall not be responsible for transportation or any costs associated with parents/guardians choosing to enroll their child(ren) in a school outside of their attendance area.*

What will happen with staff at Nicholas Sheran?

A staffing process will be developed in the fall of 2016 and will take into account the need to provide staff to the new elementary school in the Copperwood area. The plan will strive to create a balance of both English and French Immersion staff to accommodate school needs.

Is there a long-term plan to move the French Immersion program from Agnes Davidson?

The French Immersion program at Agnes Davidson is a successful program and it is expected that the program will continue to be viable in its present location.

Was consideration given to making Davidson a single track French Immersion school?

With the growth of population expected in South Lethbridge, there is a need for both the French Immersion and English stream at the school.

Where will the Westside French Immersion students attend middle school and high school?

A French Immersion program for students in grades 6 to 8 will be offered at Gilbert Paterson Middle School and at Lethbridge Collegiate Institute (LCI) for students in grades 9 to 12.