

Staffing for Specialized Second Language Teaching Positions

Guidelines, Questions and Rubrics

- ◆ French Immersion
- ◆ Spanish Bilingual Programs
- ◆ French, Spanish, Chinese, German, Japanese
Second Language Programs
- ◆ ESL Programs



**INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION**



Footnotes

1. **Handbook for Administrator's French Second Language Programs**
French Education and Languages Branch, Saskatchewan Learning 2005
2. **Support for Administrators of French Immersion Programs**—Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia, Alberta Teachers Association, le Conseil français (Specialist Council of the ATA) Participant Handout developed and shared by Lise May
3. **Standards for the Language Competence of French Immersion Teachers: Is There a Danger of Erosion?** Ingrid Veilleux & Monique Bournot—Trites

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Administrative Procedure: *

Staffing for Specialized Teaching Positions

All hiring for teaching positions is coordinated and approved by the Associate Superintendent- Human Resources in consultation with principals.

Some staffing decisions also require the involvement of other individuals who can lend insight and expertise to the selection process.

Student Services:

Assignment of teachers to the following positions requires consultation between the school principal, the Assistant Superintendent – Student Services, and the Associate Superintendent – Human Resources:

- ◆ Learning Assistance Teacher
- ◆ Counselor
- ◆ Congregated Program Teacher
- ◆ Pre-kindergarten Teacher

International Education

International Services personnel will assist in an advisory capacity when hiring teachers for immersion or bilingual programs. An assessment of candidates' linguistic capability, comprehension, and skill in oral and written expression will occur by means of a skills test administered as part of the interview process, or through observations made by International Services personnel in attendance at the interview. An assessment will also be made of candidates' preparation & philosophy regarding language instruction.

Evidence of language competency, as demonstrated by the *Diploma of Advanced French Language Studies (DALF/DELF)* or the *Common European Framework of Reference for Language (or equivalent)*, will be identified as a desirable attribute in job postings for French Immersion and Spanish Bilingual, and other second language teaching positions.

*** The above statement appears in the administrators handbook for Red Deer Public Schools**

Interviewing Prospective French Immersion & French Second Language Staff

NOTE: These points may be adapted for other second language and bilingual programs in the district.

1. One of the most important areas to consider when interviewing prospective French second language candidates is their philosophy of second language learning. Ask them to talk about the assumptions they make with respect to learning a second language in an immersion context or a Core French context.

These assumptions should include the following:

- ◆ Learners may have to hear and say a new word or structure many times (18-25 is suggested in research) before incorporating it into their repertoire.
- ◆ Learners have to be given many opportunities to speak in class.
- ◆ Learners should be exposed to different French speakers so that they get used to different voices, accents, sentence structures, and vocabulary.
- ◆ Language learning occurs best when a variety of strategies are used in the classroom.
- ◆ For French Immersion teachers, language teaching crosses all disciplines. For example, mathematics teachers are first and foremost teachers of language, then mathematics.

2. Ask candidates to describe their approach to second language teaching in a French Immersion setting.

- ◆ The teaching must correspond to the assumptions made about language learning. For example, if the interviewee states that learners require several exposures to a word before incorporating it into his or her repertoire, then the planned learning environment must reflect this need.

3. What are their French language skills?

- ◆ Since all French Immersion teachers are first and foremost teachers of the French language, it is important to know the candidate's French language proficiency. French Immersion teachers must have excellent native or native-like French language skills to serve as models for students. (The assistance of a colleague fluent in French may be needed to assess language proficiency during the selection process.) A Core French teacher does not require the same level of French language proficiency nor the expertise to teach other subjects in the target language.

4. What is their understanding of, and training in, second language teaching methodology?

- ◆ All immersion teachers must contribute to the students' French language development while teaching content. Inquire about the interviewee's understanding of the pedagogical approach used in French Immersion. Overt and planned language teaching must occur in all subject areas at all grade levels throughout the French Immersion program.

- ◆ The Core French teacher has the challenge of achieving a degree of communicative competence in their students while adapting the thematic content to their interests and maturity level. Active learning strategies and student-to-student communication in the classroom is key to success.

5. What is their area of expertise or specialization?

- ◆ In addition to having excellent French language skills and second language teaching methods, French Immersion teachers must be able to teach the knowledge, skills and attitudes prescribed for the required areas of study. Generally speaking, their subject-specific language proficiency will be enhanced if they developed their subject area expertise in French. A French-speaking chemist who has studied chemistry in English, for example, may not have the language required to teach it in French.

6. What additional skills do candidates possess?

- ◆ Since successful bilingual and second language programs have a rich array of curricular and extracurricular offerings, it is helpful to select individuals who have additional skills in areas such as music, drama, a language other than French and English, sports, and so on. This may facilitate the scheduling of a quality French program in all areas of study for the students in a school.

7. What are their previous work experiences?

- ◆ Candidates who have had successful teaching experiences where French was taught as a first language may not necessarily have the skills required to teach in the French Immersion or Core French Programs where French is taught as a second language. Successful second language teaching experience is the critical skill set.

8. What do the candidates understand to be the challenges of teaching in French Immersion and how do they intend to cope with these challenges?

- ◆ Resources such as posters, films or videos, computer programs and audio recordings are not as readily available as in the English program.
- ◆ Services in the French language (such as guided tours or field trips) are not always available.
- ◆ Parent volunteers with French language proficiency are not always available.
- ◆ Some school communication (newsletters, report cards, etc.) must be in English. On rare occasions that may pose a challenge for a candidate who may not be proficient in English. (A strategy here might be to have an English-speaking colleague attend parent-teacher interviews along with the immersion teacher.)

French immersion involves a complex mixture of teaching both subject matter and skills in the language at the same time. Consequently, I would argue that French Immersion teachers need, in addition to teaching subject matter, to make a conscious effort to structure that teaching so as to provide students with opportunities to practice a full range of language skills — not merely with emphasis on understanding but also on speaking. In planning their lessons, Immersion teachers should always bear in mind the questions ‘what is it my students can say (in which case I need not)’ and ‘what is it I can make my students say?’

— Ireland, n.d.

9. What is their understanding of the target clientele for a French Immersion program or other second language program?

- ◆ Attempt to ascertain the candidate’s understanding of the different needs of students registered in French first language programs, French Immersion programs, and Core French programs. There should be an awareness that FSL programs are for all students and that the clientele is as diverse as one encounters in English programs.

10. Explore the candidate’s potential contribution to the overall success of the school.

- ◆ Managing an effective school requires that all staff members contribute to its overall program. In addition to sound classroom teaching, staff members may contribute in the following areas:
 - ◇ helping with the extra-curricular program
 - ◇ marketing the French Immersion program
 - ◇ representing the school at the division level
 - ◇ assuming leadership for a particular curricular area, e.g., mathematics, science, technology.

11. Ask interviewees how they intend to handle students who exhibit social problems in their classrooms and during other school activities, such as at recess and on field trips.

- ◆ No school (including immersion schools) can afford to ignore the social and psychological needs of the socially marginalized student. We have begun to understand the societal costs associated with not intervening early in the case of a child who is at risk of or experiencing social marginalization.

12. Explore the candidate’s long term and short term career plans.

- ◆ For many school jurisdictions, recruitment and retention of French Immersion and second language teachers is a major concern. The shortage of FSL teachers across the country makes it easy for them to move around. To address this concern, the interviewer should provide an overview of the support systems available and the strategies in place for teachers.

13. Explore candidates' goals for lifelong learning, and maintaining and/or improving their French language proficiency.

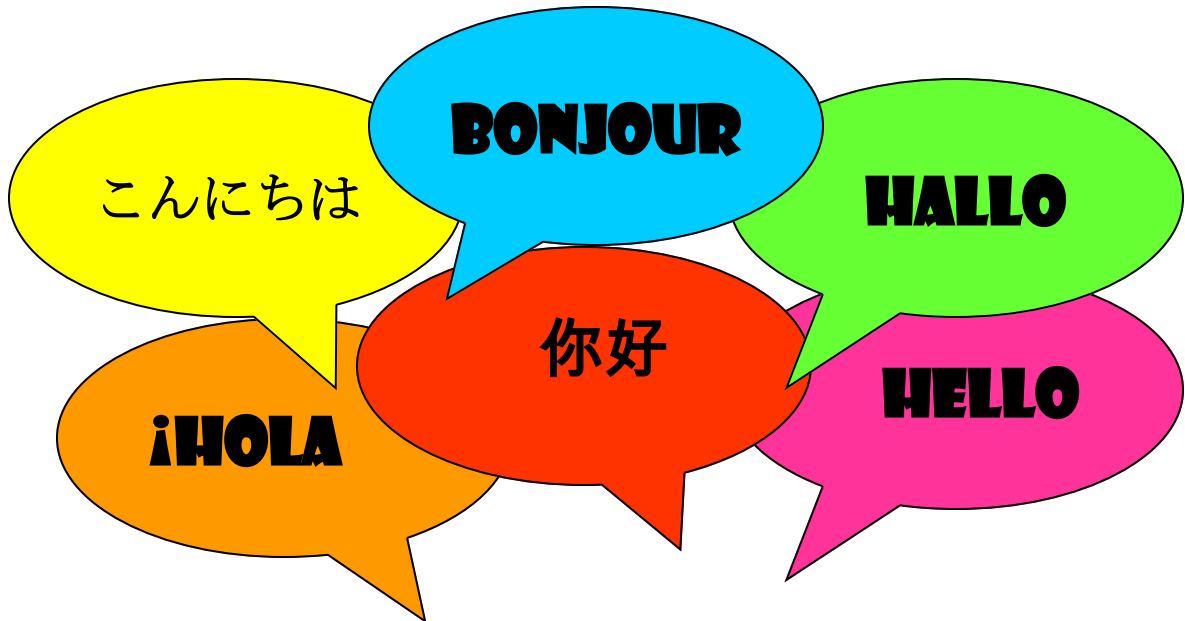
- ◆ Since Alberta is an English speaking province, French Immersion teachers may express a need to immerse themselves in a French language environment from time to time (e.g., Quebec, New Brunswick, France) in order to maintain a high level of French language proficiency. (Teacher bursaries are available to educators who teach French Immersion and/or Core French.) Administrators are encouraged to provide this information to newly recruited teachers. Other areas worth exploring include technology, leadership training, and personal development courses.

14. Assess the candidate's written language competency (oral competency can be determined by conducting at least part of the interview in French).

- ◆ A written interview question could be answered in French. Questions that might be of interest to the interview team are listed below. A member of the interview team, a consultant or a teacher may be asked to assist in the assessment of the written response if the administrator is not bilingual.

« Que feriez-vous afin d'encourager l'apprenant en immersion française de continuer son développement langagier? »

« Décrivez l'approche que vous utiliseriez pour enseigner la culture dans un programme d'immersion. »



Candidate Check List

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Fluency Rating: _____

Language Acquisition Process

- First language: _____
- Grew up bilingually Yes No Other _____
- Second Language courses
 - ◇ High School Courses: _____
 - ◇ Post secondary: _____
- Immersion Studies
 - ◇ K-12 School _____ years
 - ◇ Post Secondary _____ years
- Study or work abroad : Where: _____ How Long: _____

Second Language Methodology and or Theory Course Work

Yes No

Courses: _____

DELF: Yes No

Level: A1 A2 B1 B2 C1 C2

Other Language Credentials

Five Levels

Name of Candidate _____

Level Description Program

Level 1 **Failure**

- ◆ Speech is halting.
- ◆ Vocabulary is basic, repetitive and error laden.
- ◆ Makes many grammatical errors although.
- ◆ Some simple sentences are correct.
- ◆ Accent, pronunciation and intonation are poor.

Level 2 **Core French Elementary only**

- ◆ Speech is generally hesitant.
- ◆ Able to get message across with repetition and rephrasing.
- ◆ Grammar is generally correct but makes some errors.
- ◆ Is able to hold basic conversations but cannot discuss topics requiring specialized vocabulary.
- ◆ Errors in pronunciation and accent do not interfere with comprehension.

Level 3 **Core French Secondary or lower**

- ◆ Able to discuss some topics fluently but is often left searching for words.
- ◆ Cannot use complex sentence construction and level of vocabulary limits the amount of precise information conveyed.
- ◆ Pronunciation is clear though not native like.
- ◆ Although many topics can be discussed, the level of language is not always appropriate to the audience or situation.

Level 4 **French Immersion Elementary or lower**

- ◆ Speech is generally fluent with occasional hesitations.
- ◆ Makes few written and spoken errors.
- ◆ Makes few pronunciation errors.
- ◆ Vocabulary is sufficient to discuss most topics.
- ◆ The level of language is usually appropriate to the audience.

Level 5 **French Immersion Secondary or lower**

- ◆ Speech and writing are fluent, free of grammatical errors and equivalent to that of a native speaker.
- ◆ Vocabulary is broad and level of language is always appropriate to the audience.

Potential hires should be required to:

- demonstrate oral proficiency (part or all of the interview to take place in French)
- demonstrate written proficiency (ask candidates to respond to a question on paper)
- have some training in the linguistic acquisition process
- May have a Delf certificate (B2, Our goal would be to hire teachers at C1 or higher.)

Interview Questions for Immersion or World Language Teacher

*Note these questions are a guide & may need to be selected and/or modified depending on the position being hired.

Name of Candidate _____

1. How did you learn French? Spanish? Chinese etc?

Comment avez-vous appris le français? L'espagnol? Le Chinois....etc?

2. What are your knowledge of the pedagogy and the methodology of teaching French as a second language?

Quelles connaissances avez-vous sur la pédagogie et la méthodologie de l'enseignement du français en tant que langue seconde. Pouvez-vous les expliquer ?

3. What do you do to reflect a positive attitude towards FSL programs (or the language program)?

Comment présentez/ démontrez-vous une attitude positive dans l'enseignement de FLE (français langue étrangère) ou d'une autre langue?

4. What do you know about the goals of the French Immersion program? What is your philosophy with respect to learning a second language in an immersion context?

Que savez-vous sur les buts/objectifs du programme d'immersion? Quelle est votre philosophie sur l'apprentissage d'une langue seconde /du français en immersion?

5. How do you deal with a student who constantly speaks English in your class? Is it possible to only speak French in French Immersion?

Que feriez-vous si vous aviez un élève qui parlait constamment en anglais dans votre classe? Est-il possible de parler uniquement français en classe d'immersion française?

Interview Questions for Immersion or World Language Teacher—Page 2

6. Do you think that a special need student should be allowed to be in French Immersion? If so, how would you make that happen?

Pensez-vous qu'un élève avec des difficultés d'apprentissage (éducation spécialisée) devrait être en immersion française? Si c'était le cas, que feriez-vous pour permettre son intégration?

7. How do you see your role with your parents? How can they help your students if they don't speak French?

Comment percevez-vous votre rôle vis-à-vis des parents. Comment pouvez-vous aider vos élèves s'ils ne parlent pas français?

8. What do you do to professionally develop yourself in learning more about teaching strategies in French Immersion?

Que faites-vous professionnellement pour apprendre de nouvelles stratégies d'enseignement en immersion?

9. Do you believe in working collaboratively with your peers? If so, how would you do it?

Êtes-vous pour le travail en collaboration (avec vos collègues)? Que feriez-vous pour y contribuer?

10. Can you give me a few indicators of a successful and an unsuccessful student in French Immersion?

Pouvez-vous me donner quelques critères d'un élève qui réussit en immersion? Qui ne réussit pas (a de la difficulté)?

11. Do you believe that it is important to teach the French language in other subjects than French Language Arts? How?

Pensez-vous qu'il est important/primordial d'enseigner la langue dans les sujets autres que les arts langagiers? Comment le feriez-vous?

Interview Questions for Immersion or World Language Teacher—Page 3

12. How would you teach the French culture in your classroom? Examples?

Comment enseigneriez-vous la culture francophone/française dans vos cours? Pouvez-vous donner des exemples?

13. What role do you think the administration should have in providing a good quality French Immersion program?

Quel est selon vous le rôle de l'administration afin de promouvoir un programme de qualité en immersion?

14. How do you assess your students with their oral French? With their written French?

Comment évaluez-vous les compétences orales de vos élèves? Écrivez de vos élèves?

15. What are your French language skills (French question)

Quelles sont vos compétences en français? Quelles sont vos expériences linguistiques?

16. Do you think that French immersion is for everyone? Why?

Pensez-vous que l'immersion française est pour tout le monde? Pourquoi?

17. Can you give me a few indicators of a good French immersion teacher?

Quelles sont les qualités d'un bon enseignant en immersion française?
