

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2021

Public Session: 5:30 p.m. (Virtual Meeting)

AGENDA

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

C. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

D. NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. Fort Erie French Immersion Program Change - Garrison Road Public School**
[S. Veld & D. Van Hooydonk](#)
- 2. Diplôme D'études en Langue Française (DELF) Assessment**
[H. McGregor](#)

E. OTHER BUSINESS

F. ADJOURNMENT

G. NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

Fort Erie French Immersion Program Change - Garrison Road Public School

Tuesday, November 30, 2021

BACKGROUND

In December 2011, the Board of Trustees approved the introduction of a Grade 1 French Immersion entry at five sites and in March 2012, Trustees approved the addition of Princess Elizabeth in Welland as a Grade 1 entry site. Staff was requested to revisit the expansion of French Immersion in Fort Erie to Grade 1 using an interest survey. In March 2013, a report was presented to Program and Planning Committee which finalized the Grade 1 entry for French Immersion at all existing sites and the following motion was approved:

“That, if there is enough interest, a Grade 1 French Immersion program be offered at Garrison Road Public school in Fort Erie effective September 2013.”

At that time, it was communicated to Trustees that a viable Grade 1 French Immersion program should have between 18 to 20 students. There were 22 Grade 1 French Immersion students at Garrison Road PS for the 2013-14 school year. All Fort Erie students opting for French Immersion begin at Garrison Road PS for Grades 1 to 3 and then transition to McKay PS to complete Grades 4 to 8.

Over the year, enrolment at the DSBN's French Immersion schools has been increasing, with significant growth in Grade 1, except at the Garrison Road PS site. Garrison Road PS French Immersion Grade 1 enrolment peaked at 23 in 2016 and has been declining since.

CURRENT SITUATION

Grade 1 French Immersion enrolment at Garrison Road PS has been declining with 18 students in 2018, 16 students in 2019, 11 students in 2020, and 9 students currently. Total Grades 1 to 3 French Immersion enrolment has declined over those same years from 57 students in 2018 to a current enrolment of 29 students.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted enrolment across the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) for the 2020-21 school year. This year, DSBN enrolment rebounded and is higher than pre-COVID-19 (2019) figures, and consistent with what was projected for 2021-22 pre-COVID-19. The French Immersion enrolment at Garrison Road did not rebound from 2020 to 2021 and did not reach pre-COVID-19 projections for the 2021-22 school year.

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PROPOSED FRENCH IMMERSION BOUNDARY CHANGE

Active engagement in the French language and culture, in a variety of settings and contexts, allows French Immersion students to develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills effectively. The goals of the French Immersion program include: developing fluency in the French language; learning about Francophone cultures around the world; and gaining an understanding of Canada's bilingual heritage and the value of being multi-lingual. This can only be established when there are several staff and many students focused on these goals.

Schools with large populations of FI learners can provide greater French-language learning opportunities (e.g., announcements/assemblies in French, hallway/recess conversations in French, enhanced French resources in libraries and classrooms; increased collective efficacy of staff). The ideal immersion program, detailed above, is difficult to achieve with few students and staff involved in the program. Similarly, the opportunities for collaboration among French Immersion staff and focused professional development are limited when there are fewer teachers at a school. A French Immersion program with only two classes is not ideal for students wanting to learn the language.

Longer term enrolment is not expected to change significantly from current levels. French Immersion students at Garrison Road PS will eventually attend McKay PS to complete grades 4 to 8 of the program. Transferring Grades 1 to 3 French Immersion from Garrison Road PS to McKay PS would consolidate and strengthen the French Immersion program for Fort Erie students.

The increase in enrolment would provide students with the benefits of stronger programming, having a larger group of peers in the same program, and the elimination of a transition point in their elementary years. The program/boundary change is proposed to take effect in September 2022 as follows:

- All new French Immersion students registering for Grade 1 in the 2022-23 school year will attend McKay PS;
- Existing Grade 1 and 2 Garrison Road PS French Immersion students that are entering grades 2 and 3 in the 2022-23 school year will have the option to either remain at Garrison Road PS or attend McKay PS;
- Beginning the 2023-24 school year all French Immersion students in the Fort Erie area will attend McKay PS.

TRANSPORTATION

NSTS has reviewed the proposal and is supportive of the program and boundary change. Grades 4 to 8 French Immersion students in Fort Erie are currently accommodated on buses to McKay PS. There would be no additional cost with the proposal to transfer French Immersion students to McKay PS.

TIMELINE

The proposed French Immersion boundary change would take effect the day after the Board of Trustees approval to support the operational transitional processes.

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APPENDED DATA

Appendix A: Proposed Elementary French Immersion Grade & Boundary Organization in Port Colborne and Fort Erie

RECOMMENDED MOTION

"That the Board of Trustees approve the boundary shown on Appendix A to transfer the Garrison Road PS Grade 1 to Grade 3 French Immersion program to McKay PS, as follows:

- All new French Immersion students registering for Grade 1 for the 2022-23 school year will attend McKay PS, with transportation; and,
- Grade 1 and Grade 2 French Immersion students currently enrolled at Garrison Road PS for the 2021-22 school year can choose to attend either Garrison Road PS or McKay PS for the 2022-23 school year, with transportation; and,

That the French Immersion program will no longer be offered at Garrison Road PS effective the last day of June 2023 and all students will be directed to McKay PS."

Respectfully submitted by:

Stacy Veld, Superintendent of Business Services
Darren Vanhooydonk, Superintendent of Education – Area 1

November 30, 2021

For further information, please contact Stacy Veld, Superintendent of Business Services.

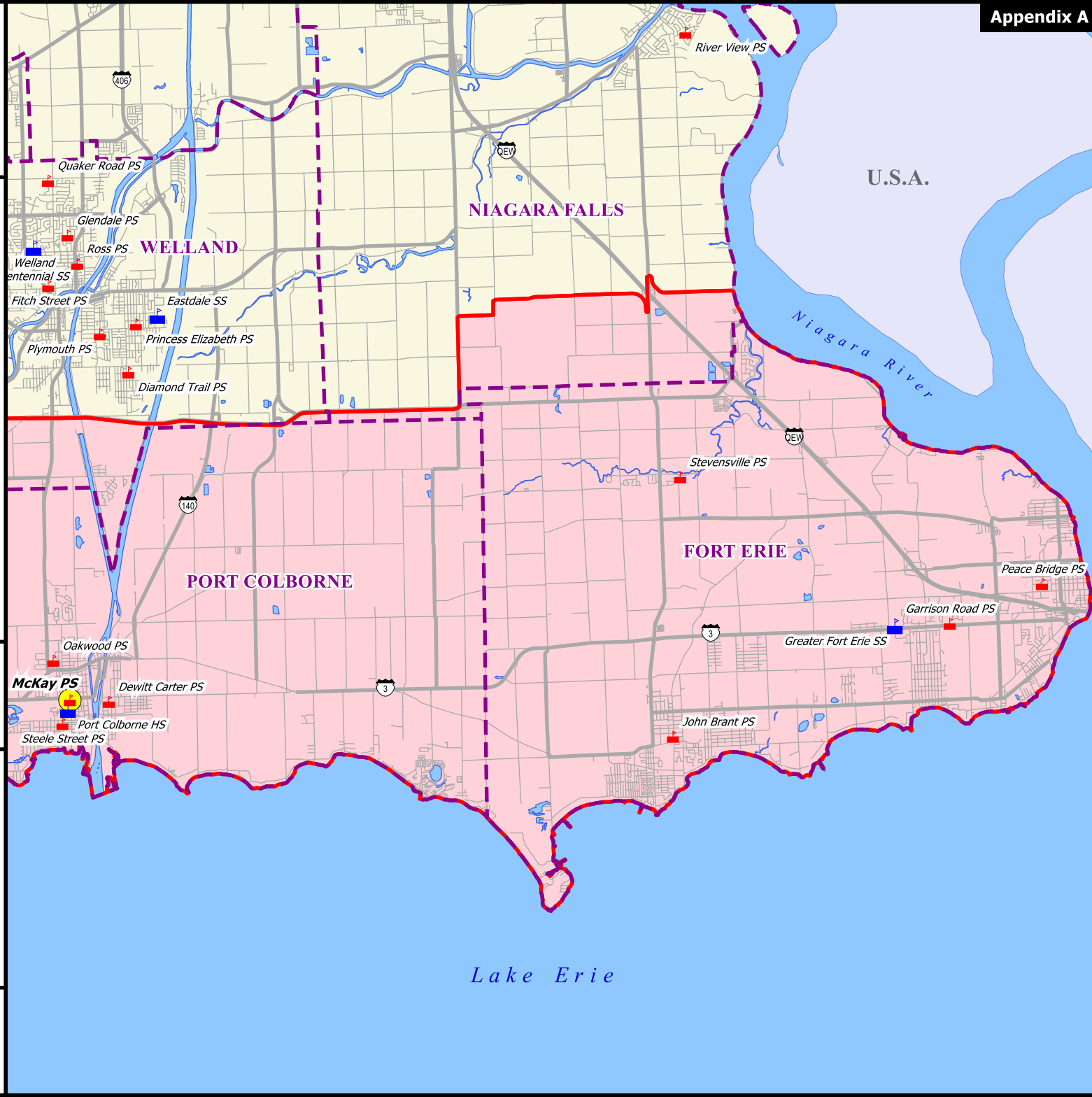
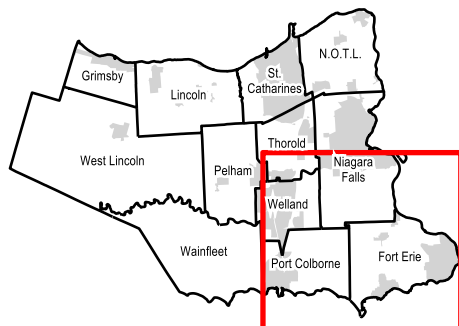
Proposed Elementary French Immersion Grade & Boundary Organization in Port Colborne and Fort Erie

Legend

-  Elementary School
-  Secondary School
-  Dual-Track French Immersion Site
(McKay JK-8 RT/1-8 FI)
-  McKay Gr. 1-8 FI Boundary District



0 5 km



• Map prepared by: DSBN Planning Services, October 2021
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DIPLÔME D'ÉTUDES EN LANGUE FRANÇAISE (DELF) REPORT

BACKGROUND

The Diplôme D'études en Langue Française (DELF) is a diploma issued by France's Ministry of National Education that officially certifies the French language abilities of non-native speakers. The diploma is earned by successfully challenging one of the four DELF levels. The diploma is valid for life and is recognized internationally. The DELF evaluations are opportunities for students to demonstrate their proficiency in the same four components as our Ontario FSL Curriculum: Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. Certification at the B1 level and higher exempts students from post-secondary language requirements and qualifies students to be eligible to apply for careers within the Canadian government and abroad.

HISTORY OF DELF AT THE DSBN

At the DSBN grade 12 students, at no cost, are given the opportunity to challenge the DELF. Evaluations occur in the fall and spring of each year. We offer this opportunity to students in the semester of their grade 12 year when they are completing either their grade 12 French or French immersion course.

The first time we offered testing at DSBN was in the spring of 2019. In the first year 49 grade 12 students challenged the DELF. In Fall 2019 98 students participated. Due to the Pandemic, we were unable to offer the opportunity in spring 2020 or during the 2020-21 school year. This year interest has grown to 107 students in semester 1. This represents 55% of students enrolled in grade 12 French Immersion or Core French. The student success rate for DELF testing remains consistent around 98% per testing session.

Students who participate in DSBN French Immersion and Core French programs until graduation naturally prepare themselves to challenge the DELF at a higher level. Students in DSBN are able to challenge DELF A2, B1 and B2 levels. Success in DSBN French programming and a DELF certification are both valued accomplishments that are useful to students' academic, cultural and professional goals.

INSTRUCTIONAL IMPACT

DSBN has provided training for 61 elementary and secondary teachers to become certified with both a DELF proficiency level and the ability to evaluate students challenging the DELF. This has led to an increase in teacher confidence and retention within our Board. This year we have been able to have one of our staff certified as a qualified instructor to be able to provide in-house training for future staff.

The DELF levels are based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Ontario's French as a Second Language Curriculum aligns with the expectations in this framework. For students in classrooms, this means that assessment and evaluation practices across classes and schools

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are more consistent because DELF certified teachers are following a highly structured framework that requires teacher collaboration and harmonization. Due to professional development offered to teachers based in CEFR, students also experience more authentic and relevant real-world tasks that align with the four strands in the curriculum based on the CEFR.

Submitted by

Helen McGregor, Superintendent of Curriculum and Student Achievement (9-12)