

# **Basic French Guidelines**

A Handbook for  
School Divisions/Districts

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# **BASIC FRENCH GUIDELINES**

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School Divisions/Districts*

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Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth

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This print resource will also be available on the Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth website: <[http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/docs/support/b\\_french/index.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/docs/support/b_french/index.html)>.

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## **PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT**

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Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth is committed to the improvement of the quality of Basic French programming in Manitoba schools.

The purpose of this document is to set out the guidelines and conditions, which enable schools to offer consistent, continuous and effective programming in Basic French.

The guidelines included in this document are intended to assist school divisions/districts, schools and provincial educational authorities to provide for classroom instruction, which will result in the attainment of well-defined and realistic goals through the use of appropriate teaching strategies and suitable instructional material.

## **INTRODUCTION**

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Basic French is an optional subject area within the English program in Manitoba. However, given research in children's cognitive development, the role of French in Canada yesterday and today and its place in the global environment, Basic French should be included as part of effective programming in the schools of Manitoba.

The latest research has revealed that not only do students who have studied a second language possess more cognitive flexibility and abstract thinking capabilities, but that "knowing a second language can help students in reading, writing, and math as well as in helping them accept other cultures<sup>1</sup>", thereby reducing racism and intolerance for others.

Knowledge of a second language is now recognized as a necessity in all countries where there is a need to understand the language of one's neighbours, whether to become acquainted with their culture or to facilitate various kinds of trade which require increasing mobility. This is particularly true of French, which is used daily in numerous countries around the world.

Cultural and economic exchanges within and beyond Canada are enriched by the knowledge of French. French is a major avenue of communication in Canada. By learning a second language, students develop a new network of references through which they can better understand the world around them. On another level, the study of a second language helps students get a better understanding of the underlying principles of language as a medium of communication.

The classroom is an ideal place to acquire proficiency in the basics of French as a second language. The learning acquired there serves to support students' interest and confidence, while providing the groundwork for advanced study in later years.

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<sup>1</sup> *Foreign Languages, Learning to Communicate in the Real World, Curriculum Update*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Winter 1996.

# **ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL BASIC FRENCH CURRICULUM**

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Several key factors that encourage the successful teaching and learning of Basic French have been identified. They are:

- an early entry point;
- clear and attainable goals;
- sufficient time on a regular basis;
- appropriate learning resources;
- student centred learning activities based on the principles of second language acquisition, multiple intelligences theory and what we currently know about learning and the brain;
- teaching professionals who are able to communicate proficiently in French and are knowledgeable of second language methodology.

## **1. Entry Point**

In order to implement an effective program for French learning across the province, a continuous, consistent course of studies for all grade levels is recommended, thus encouraging students to pursue the study of French.

To ensure a coherent approach to the teaching of Basic French, one entry point at Grade 4 has been established.

A student with more contact hours of French generally acquires a better grasp of the language. A student who has completed nine years of study (or approximately 940 hours) and achieved the learning outcomes of the Basic French curriculum, will be able to communicate in a variety of situations and with a basic degree of precision.

## **2. Curriculum**

### **Basic French – Grade 4 to Senior 4**

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth has provided foundation for implementation documents which define general and specific learning outcomes for Grades 4 to 6, 7 and 8 and S1 to S4. Teaching and assessment strategies as well as suggested learning resources for teachers and students are also set out in these documents developed by the Bureau de l'éducation française Division (BEF).

### **Early Start French – Kindergarten to Grade 3**

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth has also made provisions for those schools and school divisions/districts that wish to offer Basic French at an earlier level. The main role of Early Start French is to expose students to the French language and culture as well as to foster a positive attitude toward French at an earlier age.

Opportunity for optional K to Grade 3 French instruction is supported by incorporating French into the school day using the learning resources “*Au Manitoba, on s’amuse en français, Maternelle et 1<sup>re</sup> année,*” and “*2<sup>e</sup> et 3<sup>e</sup> années*” as well as other learning resources developed by the BEF.

### **3. Recommended Time Allotments**

The Basic French curriculum should provide minimum daily instruction as set out in the table below.

<b>Grades</b>	<b>Recommended Instruction Time</b>	<b>Percentage of instruction time in French</b>
<b>4 to 6</b>	30 minutes	10.0%
<b>7 and 8</b>	35 minutes	10.6%
<b>S1 to S4</b>	110 hours of instruction per credit	11%

**The number of contact hours constitutes one of the most important factors in attaining the Basic French learning outcomes.**

A recommendation for schools offering Basic French is to re-allocate a small portion of English Language Arts time for this purpose. This recognizes that some language concepts are transferable and should assist schools to accommodate the Basic French grant requirement.

In order for students to achieve the Basic French learning outcomes, it is preferable that daily instruction be provided. Daily contact with the French language reinforces material learned previously. Furthermore, an instructional period of not less than 30 minutes will enable the teacher to engage students in meaningful activities.

At the senior years level, a student may earn a Basic French credit by undertaking and successfully completing a course of study designed for a minimum of 110 hours of instruction.

#### **4. Teacher Knowledge of Language and Methodology**

The attainment of the learning outcomes hinges upon well-prepared teachers who are working in a supportive environment. It is important for teachers to communicate effectively in French and possess a rich knowledge base related to the subject matter. At the same time, teachers need to incorporate a repertoire of strategies and approaches that assist in selecting, sequencing, presenting, and evaluating instructional content.

#### **5. Appropriate Learning Resources**

The use of BEF recommended material is necessary in order to attain the Basic French learning outcomes as well as to implement an effective methodology.

#### **6. Classroom or Locale**

To enable students to participate fully in a variety of activities, schools should set aside a classroom or locale where the teacher can create a French atmosphere that is textually, visually, aurally and culturally rich and have ready access to necessary materials.

#### **7. Professional Learning Opportunities for Basic French Teachers**

Provision should be made for teachers to attend in-services provided by the BEF and to participate in other related professional development activities in order to upgrade their skills and to be informed of developments in second language learning and teaching.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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The success of Basic French is a shared responsibility between the province and local levels of administration. Each partner will have specific roles and responsibilities in ensuring the delivery of high quality Basic French courses, as outlined below.

For those schools wishing to offer Basic French:

**1. Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth will:**

- develop foundation for implementation documents;
- develop support material for teachers and students;
- develop distance learning courses;
- provide enrolment data and funding for Basic French instruction;
- assist school divisions/districts, schools and teachers in implementing curricula and making effective use of learning resources;
- provide professional learning opportunities for teachers;
- model and promote best practices in FSL teaching and learning;
- provide support for integrating information and communication technologies;
- identify appropriate learning resources;
- maintain contact with appropriate organizations at local, provincial and national levels;
- liaise with post-secondary institutions regarding pre-service and in-service teacher training;
- provide assistance in the promotion of Basic French;
- respond to requests from school divisions/districts, schools, teachers and the community at large for information and assistance.

**2. School divisions/districts will:**

- begin the teaching of French either at Kindergarten or Grade 1, or later in Grade 4;
- offer a continuous series of courses through to S4;
- use the provincial curriculum documents;
- allocate sufficient time and learning resources to attain learning outcomes as stated in the curricula;
- ensure that teachers possess a rich language base with respect to Basic French as well as a repertoire of current strategies and approaches related to instructional content;
- ensure that schools provide an appropriate location for teaching French;
- encourage teachers to take advantage of professional learning opportunities in Basic French;

- provide transparent reporting procedures of the funds allocated and spent for Basic French instruction;
- promote the advantages and importance of learning a second language, French in particular.

## **APPENDIX A**

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### **School Self-Assessment Tool: An Aid for Evaluating Support of French Second Language Education**

#### **Using this tool for discussion and action**

The following checklist is intended to help schools assess for themselves how their Basic French courses are faring.

The suggested way to use this tool is to engage in a discussion between the teacher(s) and administrators.

#### **1. Are the following present for the Basic French courses at our school:**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
• a Basic French classroom or other locale or space dedicated to its teaching;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• the most recent curriculum documents from BEF;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• a policy for the hiring of teachers with the linguistic and methodological capabilities;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• a policy for encouraging more professional learning opportunities for teachers;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• appropriate learning resources as recommended by BEF;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• discussion between the Basic French teachers at the various levels, especially in the transition years, for example, 6 to 7, 8 to S1?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### **2. Are the following present in the classroom where Basic French is taught:**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
• the most recent curriculum documents from BEF;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• appropriate learning resources as recommended by BEF;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• posters of common classroom expressions and thematic vocabulary;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• display of student work in French;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• variety of thematic reading material in French;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• cassette or CD player;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• audio-visual equipment readily available to support skill development in oral and written comprehension as well as to bring authentic culture elements into the classroom?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**3. Are students involved in the following activities:**

	Seldom	Sometimes	Regularly
• listening to recordings in French;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• presenting;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• reading individually;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• reading in groups;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• writing authentic texts;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• working cooperatively;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• portfolio work or formative evaluation activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**4. Does communication take place at the school:**

	Yes	No
• to make staff aware of Basic French programming (goals, themes, activities);	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• to help students and staff make the connection between subject areas, school events and activities and the community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## APPENDIX B

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### FUNDING GUIDELINES for Grants for Basic French

#### 1. Introduction

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, through the Bureau de l'éducation française, has a financial support system in place by which grants are distributed to school divisions/districts offering the aforementioned Basic French curricula in one or more of their schools. **These grants are to be used to cover only additional costs related to Basic French curricula.** The following are examples of how the monies received may be allocated to cover either totally or in part:

- the purchase of materials for these curricula (books, cassettes, flashcards, software, etc);
- the presentation of cultural activities in French;
- the organization of professional development activities for teachers of French;
- the hiring of teacher assistants in certain contexts, etc.

#### 2. Funding

The grant consists of \$90 (2003-04) per full-time equivalency (F.T.E.) for a properly implemented Basic French curriculum. A full-time equivalency is simply the product of the percentage of instruction time in French and the number of students in a given grade.

The number of students per class is the enrolment reported as of September 30<sup>th</sup> of each school year. The percentage of instruction time in French is the ratio of minutes taught in French to the total number of minutes of instruction time.

The full-time equivalent grant of \$90 per year is earned when the Basic French class adheres to the recommended time allotment at its grade level. Where the Basic French time allotment should drop below the recommended amount at the specified grade range, the full-time equivalent grant is halved dropping to \$45 per year.

The following is a sample calculation for a typical Grade 4 to Grade 6 Basic French class of 20 students adhering to the daily time allotment of 30 minutes per day or 10% of the school cycle:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{F.T.E.} &= \text{number of students} \times \% \text{ of instruction time in French} \\ &= 20 \times .10 = 2.0 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Annual Basic French Grant} &= \text{F.T.E.} \times \$90 \\ &= 2.0 \times \$90 = \$180 \end{aligned}$$

If a school was to offer up to 40 minutes (13.3% of the school cycle) of Basic French, the total grant amount would be calculated according to the above-mentioned formula.

For more detailed information, please refer to the document entitled *Grants for French Language Education (Français, French Immersion and Basic French)*, which is updated every year. This document is available on the Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth website at:  
[<http://www.edu.mb.ca/ks4/finance/schfund/frgrants.html>](http://www.edu.mb.ca/ks4/finance/schfund/frgrants.html)

### **3. Early Start French**

For the Early Start French from Kindergarten to Grade 3, the grant consists of \$45 (2003-2004) per full-time equivalency (F.T.E.) where a full-time equivalency is the product of the percentage of instruction time in French and the number of students in a given grade.

The students' enrolment reported as of September 30<sup>th</sup> of each school year and the percentage of instruction time in French are the ratio of minutes taught in French to the total number of minutes of instruction time.

The recommended time allotment in French at these grade levels is 20 minutes per day.

The following is a sample calculation for a typical Kindergarten to Grade 3 class of 20 students having a daily time allotment of 20 minutes of French per day or 6.7% of the school cycle:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{F.T.E.} &= \text{number of students} \times \% \text{ of instruction time in French} \\ &= 20 \times .067 = 1.34 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Annual French Grant} &= \text{F.T.E.} \times \$45 \\ &= 1.34 \times \$45 = \$60.30 \end{aligned}$$

If a school was to offer up to 40 minutes (13.3% of the school cycle) of Early Start French, the total grant amount would be calculated according to the above-mentioned formula.

For more detailed information, please refer to the document entitled *Grants for French Language Education (Français, French Immersion and Basic French)* available at:  
[<http://www.edu.mb.ca/ks4/finance/schfund/French\\_Language\\_Grants.pdf>](http://www.edu.mb.ca/ks4/finance/schfund/French_Language_Grants.pdf), which is updated every year.

#### **4. Summary and Other Details**

As shown in each case, the calculation of grants for Basic French is based on the number of pupils enrolled and their corresponding percentage of instruction time in French. This data is gathered for each school involved, by the type of course of studies and grade as of September 30 (or the last working day of September) of each year. The form used to do so is entitled ***“Manitoba - French Second Language Curriculum (Other Than French Immersion) September 30, 20\_\_”*** and is available through E.I.S. Collection.

The data is verified and compiled by the Bureau de l'éducation française Division. Grants are thus calculated for each school. This information is forwarded to school division/district offices to apprise them of the grant amount and to enable them to verify the results. These grants are then included as part of the operating advances paid monthly to the school divisions/districts by the Schools' Finance Branch.

Each school year, the BEF also forwards to school divisions/districts proposed budget forms on which they indicate their projected expenditures for the Kindergarten to Senior 4 Basic French curricula only. This budget form must be completed as instructed and returned to the BEF by a specified date as per statutory regulations.

Once again, it should be noted that the grants received are intended to cover **only** some of the **additional costs** and not the total costs of these Basic French courses.

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