

# Provincial Report

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## French Immersion Program

# French Language Education Review

2016-2017

MANITOBA EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING

BUREAU DE L'ÉDUCATION  
FRANÇAISE

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## Executive Summary – French Immersion Program

In 2016-2017, the French Immersion Program was offered throughout the province in twenty-two school divisions. Over 24,000 students in 113 public schools were enrolled in the program, about 13% of students in the K-12 public system. This includes over 12,000 students in K-3, 7,000 in Grades 4-8, and 4,500 in Grades 9-12.

The goal of the French Language Education Review (Review) is to ascertain to what extent schools fully implement a French Immersion Program that allows all students to develop their language proficiency, academic success, and plurilingual identity. The Review aims to aid school divisions and schools as they aspire to fully implement the Program.

To determine the level of success in full implementation, data is collected by surveying French Immersion schools in four key areas and on perceptions of student experience. The four key areas are: *Creating a French Immersion Setting*, *Validation of Students' Linguistic and Educational Experience*, *Education Staff and Professional Learning*, and *Student Enrolment Trends*.

This report provides a compilation of data from 2016-2017 and some comparative figures from the three surveys conducted over the five-year cycle (2013-2014, 2015-2016, 2016-2017). It includes data from the Educational Information System as well as self-reporting from schools.

The reporting process itself has helped inform schools and school divisions as to the nature of initiatives taking place with respect to French Immersion. Several specific areas have shown improvement over the reporting period.

- In line with previous recommendations, many initiatives were mainly focused on improving the French Immersion setting in schools. The setting is supported by relatively high levels of bilingual staff in support, leadership, and teaching speciality roles, despite ongoing recruitment difficulties.
- In line with the vision of French Immersion, schools are achieving moderate levels of success in exploring language acquisition in diverse subject areas. Developing language proficiency, along with motivation, engagement and confidence, must be addressed consciously and consistently so language learning becomes part of daily practice in all subject areas. Professional learning to support the development of language through content was equally a priority across all grade groupings.
- The report shows that the French Immersion Program is growing at a faster rate than the K to 12 public school population. This positive news should be tempered by the observation that the Program is losing nearly half of its Kindergarten students by the time they reach Grade 12.

Going forward, it is recommended that collaboration and dialogue between schools, school divisions, and the Bureau de l'éducation française (BEF) continue as we collectively work to respond to the evolving needs of the French Immersion Program and improve the degree to which all schools implement it.

Overall program success will be achieved by successfully targeting key initiatives where challenges have been identified in order to support students in the continual development of their French language proficiency, academic success and plurilingual identity.

## Preamble

In September 2014, the Bureau de l'éducation française (BEF) introduced the **French Language Education Review** (Review) to further support the full implementation of the French Immersion Program within Manitoba schools.

The French Language Education Review is based on the vision of the French Immersion Program in Manitoba, which is **to ensure that students become proud, engaged, confident, plurilingual global citizens**. The Review provides a way of measuring the success of the Program by collecting data and tracking progress over time. Using this data schools can target initiatives where challenges have been identified in supporting students in the continual development of their French language proficiency, academic success and plurilingual identity.

The objectives of the Review are:

- to provide clear expectations to schools and school divisions with respect to roles and responsibilities in delivering French Immersion programming as well as terms of reporting obligations
- to have a standardized process for reporting on French Immersion programming
- to build collaboration and dialogue between schools, school divisions, and the BEF regarding the full implementation of the French Immersion Program
- to enable schools and school divisions to gather data for the purpose of enhancing the French Immersion Program
- to schools and school divisions reflect on successes and existing challenges, and develop initiatives that build on their successes and address the needs of their French Immersion Program
- to collect provincial data that will be used to develop a comprehensive annual provincial report on the state of French Second Language Education in Manitoba

To determine how successfully students have achieved the outcomes of the Program, schools were asked to consider the following:

- Does the Immersion program allow students, including students with special needs, to achieve an appropriate level of linguistic competency in both French and English?
- Are students proud of their linguistic competencies and do they have confidence in their ability to speak French in various public settings small and or large group discussions, or presentations inside or outside the classroom or the school?
- Are students aware of their own cultural identity and are they open to other languages and cultures?
- Do students have the confidence and the interest to participate in activities in the Francophone community, here and elsewhere?
- Do students value the learning of languages as a key to global citizenship? Do they see themselves as lifelong language learners?

The summary table, entitled "Full Implementation of the French Immersion Program in Manitoba" and found on page 6 in the Introduction, summarizes the underlying philosophy of the Review, outlines the expected outcomes for students, and presents the four key areas that support the full implementation of the French Immersion Program.

## Introduction

This document, the third Provincial Report under the **French Language Education Review - French Immersion Program** prepared by the Bureau de l'éducation française (BEF), provides a “snapshot” of the French Immersion Program in Manitoba for the 2016-2017 school year.

In 2016-2017, 22- out of 37 school divisions offered the French Immersion Program to a total of 24,105 students. This represents approximately 13% of the total K-12 public school enrolment in Manitoba. The French Immersion enrolment can be broken down by grade grouping and region as follows:

- Grade groupings<sup>1</sup>:
  - 12,464 (or 52%) students in Early Years (Kindergarten to Grade 4)
  - 7,052 (or 29%) students in Middle Years (Grades 5-8)
  - 4,589 (or 19%) students in Senior Years (Grades 9-12)
- Regions:
  - 19,028 (or 79%) in urban schools
  - 4,427 (or 18%) in rural schools
  - 650 (or 3%) in northern schools<sup>2</sup>

Data found in this report represents the third round of data collection since 2013-2014 from an abridged version of the original questionnaire and includes various disaggregations. This report presents a compilation of the responses from 103 of 113 French Immersion schools and some comparative results of the data collected during the five-year period. As per the summary table, the data is grouped into the four key areas that support the full implementation of the French Immersion Program and is followed by data on perceptions of student success in relation to the Program outcomes.

A provincial portrait of student enrolment data and trends has also been provided for the 2016-2017 school year, as well as an overview of an 11-year period from 2006-2007 to 2016-2017. The report also presents the initiatives schools pursued in 2016-2017 to build on successes and address challenges in moving towards the full implementation of the French Immersion Program.

The concluding pages of the report offer an analysis of the data that provides insight regarding how well students are doing, what factors influence student success, and what should be prioritized going forward.

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<sup>1</sup> Special Elementary (SE) and Special Secondary (SS) students were excluded from the grade groupings data. SE and SS students are enrolled and taught in special ungraded classes, and are, respectively, under and over the age of fourteen.

<sup>2</sup> Urban schools are defined as located within the geographic areas of the Winnipeg, Seven Oaks, Pembina Trails, St. James-Assiniboia, Louis Riel, River East Transcona and Brandon school divisions. Northern schools are those physically located in the geographic areas of Flin Flon, Kelsey, Mystery Lake and Frontier school divisions, while all other schools are considered to be rural.

Table 1

FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM IN MANITOBA													
A LINGUISTICALLY RICH EXPERIENCE													
STUDENTS AS PROUD, ENGAGED, CONFIDENT, PLURILINGUAL GLOBAL CITIZENS													
PROGRAM EXPECTED OUTCOMES - STUDENT PATHWAY													
Develop language proficiency			Develop confidence and pride in French language skills		Engage in learning and using French		Participate in the francophone community		Develop self identity as a plurilingual and lifelong language learner		Discover and experience different aspects of la Francophonie		Develop intercultural awareness (theirs/others)
Key Area			Key Area				Key Area			Key Area			
CREATING A FRENCH IMMERSION SETTING				VALIDATION OF STUDENTS' LINGUISTIC AND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE				EDUCATIONAL STAFF AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING			STUDENT ENROLMENT TRENDS		
Exposure to the French Language	Educational Staff and Personnel	A Linguistically Rich Environment	Inclusion and Appropriate Support for All Students	Focus on Language Acquisition	Enriched School Environment	Impact on Student Learning	Valuing and Encouraging the Learning of Languages	Recruitment and Retention of Staff	Professional Learning	Visibility & Communication	Entry Points & Transition	Retention	
Sufficient % of instruction time in French K-12	Bilingual teaching personnel	Signage & visibility of the FI Program	EAL students	Second language methodology (integrating language and content in all subject areas)	Classroom based activities to enrich academic learning in content areas	Incorporate program outcomes in the classroom	Develop student engagement & responsibility for language learning	Hiring practices verify appropriate qualifications of teachers	All staff have an understanding of French Immersion philosophy and methodology	Public visibility of School Board support of the FI Program	Policy with regards to entry points	Procedure in place when students wish to leave the program	
Sufficient number of FI credits at the SY level	Bilingual administration	French spoken by students & staff during non instructional time	Special needs students	Encourage ongoing language development & intercultural competencies	Classroom, school & community based opportunities to authentically use French in the following areas o Cultural o Social o Citizenship o Transition	Incorporate program outcomes in school & extracurricular activities	Develop students' bilingual identity as lifelong learners and speakers	Support for new and experienced teachers	Professional learning opportunities are provided in French for all subject areas	Public access to FI Program information (websites, brochures, etc.)	School visits and information sessions for students and parents at transition points	Appropriate supports are in place when students struggle academically	
Phys. Ed., music, arts, library offered in French	Bilingual support staff	Presence of French language in various activities and throughout the school	First nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) students	Provide opportunities for students to reflect on their language proficiency (metacognition)			Guide parents to support and validate their child's bilingual experience	Hiring practices verify appropriate qualifications of administrators	Professional learning opportunities relating to topics pertinent to the FI Program are offered to FI personnel	Communicate pertinent information related to FI Program and beyond to K-12 parents	Student reflection & conversations about their FI experience	Address parental concerns/myths relating to student success in French	
		Discussion of the FI Program at meetings					Highlight student achievement and abilities in French	Support for new and experienced administrators in the FI Program		The FI Program is discussed at various divisional meetings	Interactions with FI students from feeder schools	SY timetable accommodates accessibility to a variety of courses	
		Appropriate French resources for classrooms, libraries, etc.								Pre-school connections		Address student engagement and motivation to learn French	
												FI diploma graduates	



## Section 1

### Creating a French Immersion Setting

Section 1 of the 2016-2017 abridged questionnaire asked schools to provide data on the creation of a French Immersion setting in relation to the following factors:

- qualified educational staff and personnel
- exposure to the French language
- inclusion and appropriate support for all students
- a linguistically rich and inclusive environment

#### Qualified Educational Staff and Personnel

1. For 2016-2017, indicate the bilingual (English/French) staff in your school by position.

**Figure 1: Number of Bilingual (English/French) School Staff, by Position**

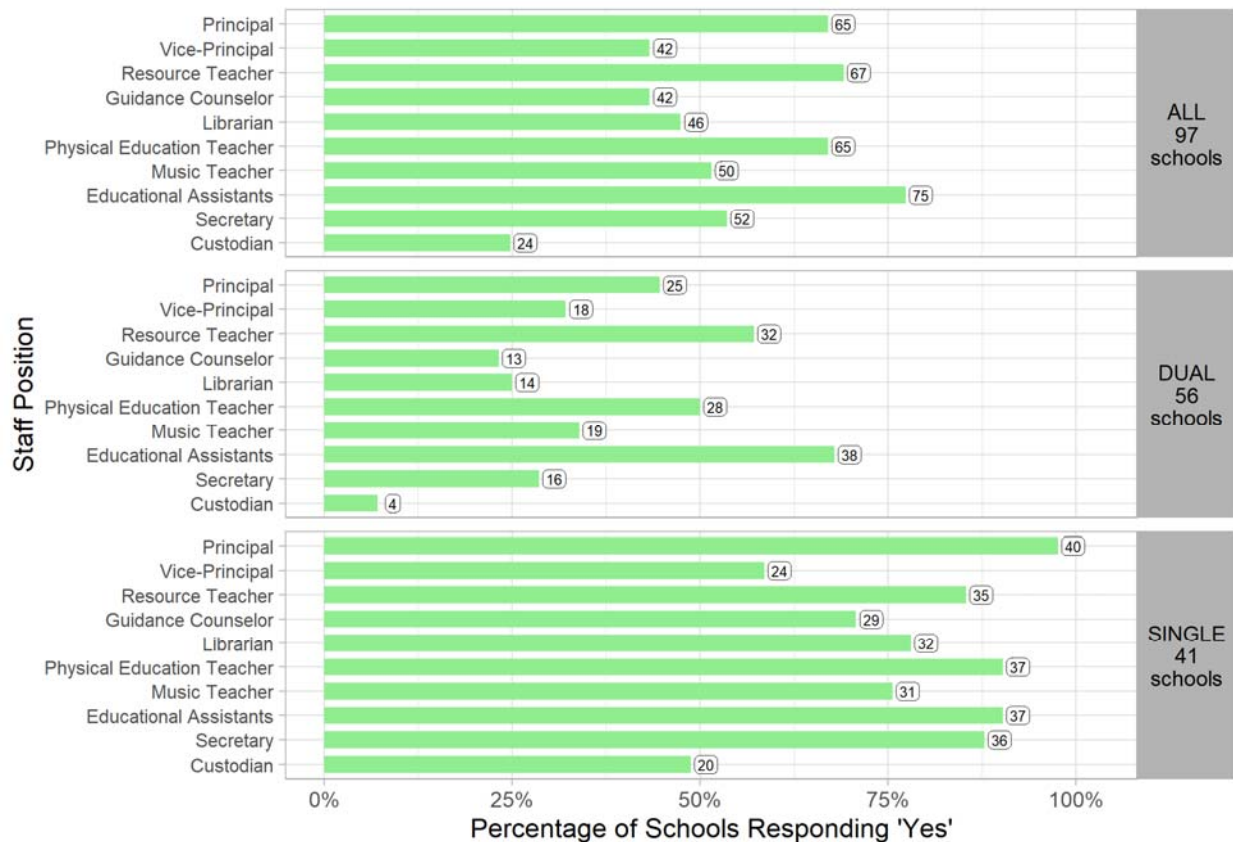


Figure 1 shows the number of schools responding to the survey that have identified a French-speaking staff person in the listed employment categories. Nearly all of the single-track schools report more French-speaking staff in nearly all the categories.

Note: This figure assumes one staff person per position for all positions except Educational Assistant where a school may have more than one. Also, it is important to note that not all schools have a Vice-Principal.

**Figure 2: Percentage of Bilingual (English/French) School Staff, by Position; 2013, 2015, and 2016 Compared**



Over the past five years, there has been no significant change in the proportion of position categories in which schools reported at least one bilingual staff member. The survey respondents consistently report that less than half of the schools have French-speaking music teachers, guidance counsellors, custodians or librarians. Roughly two-thirds of schools have French-speaking resource teachers.

For 2013, 2015, and 2016, 81, 80, and 79 schools respectively reported having at least one bilingual principal or vice-principal. This corresponds to 78%, 76%, and 77% of French immersion schools in those years.

## Exposure to the French Language

- How many students from your school graduated with a Province of Manitoba High School Diploma (French Immersion Program) in June 2017?

**Figure 3: Cohort-Based Student-Tracked Graduate Counts and Unadjusted Graduation Rates**

First-time Grade 9 cohorts		First-time Grade 9 French Immersion cohort size	Graduated on-time (i.e., within four years of Grade 9 entry) with <u>any</u> diploma	Received a <i>Français</i> course credit each year from G09 to G12	Had the correct distribution of 14 French credits from G09 to G12 to obtain a French Immersion diploma
<i>Grade 9 entry year</i>	<i>Set A*</i>	<i>Set B = subset of A</i>	<i>Set C = subset of B</i>	<i>Set D = subset of C</i>	<i>Set E = subset of D</i>
<b>September 2009</b>	15,316	<b>September 2009</b> MB: 1,177 Urban: 948 Rural: 206 North: 23	<b>June 2013</b> MB: 1,047 (89% of B) Urban: 842 (89% of B) Rural: 186 (90% of B) North: 19 (83% of B)	-- MB: 808 (69% of B) Urban: 668 (70% of B) Rural: 132 (64% of B) North: 8 (35% of B)	-- MB: 687 (58% of B) Urban: 587 (62% of B) Rural: 97 (47% of B) North: 3 (13% of B)
<b>September 2010</b>	15,022	<b>September 2010</b> MB: 1,127 Urban: 927 Rural: 165 North: 35	<b>June 2014</b> MB: 998 (89% of B) Urban: 834 (90% of B) Rural: 138 (84% of B) North: 26 (74% of B)	-- MB: 756 (67% of B) Urban: 658 (71% of B) Rural: 83 (50% of B) North: 15 (43% of B)	-- MB: 642 (57% of B) Urban: 584 (63% of B) Rural: 56 (34% of B) North: 2 (6% of B)
<b>September 2011</b>	14,449	<b>September 2011</b> MB: 1,169 Urban: 962 Rural: 178 North: 29	<b>June 2015</b> MB: 1,060 (91% of B) Urban: 875 (91% of B) Rural: 158 (89% of B) North: 27 (93% of B)	-- MB: 815 (70% of B) Urban: 701 (73% of B) Rural: 98 (55% of B) North: 16 (55% of B)	-- MB: 689 (59% of B) Urban: 626 (65% of B) Rural: 61 (34% of B) North: 2 (7% of B)
<b>September 2012</b>	14,514	<b>September 2012</b> MB: 1,169 Urban: 960 Rural: 170 North: 39	<b>June 2016</b> MB: 1,047 (90% of B) Urban: 864 (90% of B) Rural: 150 (88% of B) North: 33 (85% of B)	-- MB: 754 (64% of B) Urban: 650 (68% of B) Rural: 87 (51% of B) North: 17 (44% of B)	-- MB: 636 (54% of B) Urban: 579 (60% of B) Rural: 57 (34% of B) North: 0 (0% of B)
<b>September 2013</b>	14,455	<b>September 2013</b> MB: 1,259 Urban: 1,007 Rural: 206 North: 46	<b>June 2017</b> MB: 1,128 (90% of B) Urban: 908 (90% of B) Rural: 183 (89% of B) North: 37 (80% of B)	-- MB: 813 (65% of B) Urban: 666 (66% of B) Rural: 125 (61% of B) North: 22 (48% of B)	-- MB: 665 (53% of B) Urban: 596 (59% of B) Rural: 54 (26% of B) North: 15 (33% of B)

\* Total cohort size, all programs combined

To determine Manitoba's student-tracked high school graduation rate, Manitoba Education follows individual students in public and funded independent schools from Grade 9 and calculates the percentage of students who graduate within four years of entering Grade 9 (i.e., on-time graduates). The former proxy cohort high school graduation rate was discontinued by Manitoba Education in 2016.<sup>3</sup> This report uses the provincial definition of graduation rather than the reported graduate numbers provided by schools in the survey.

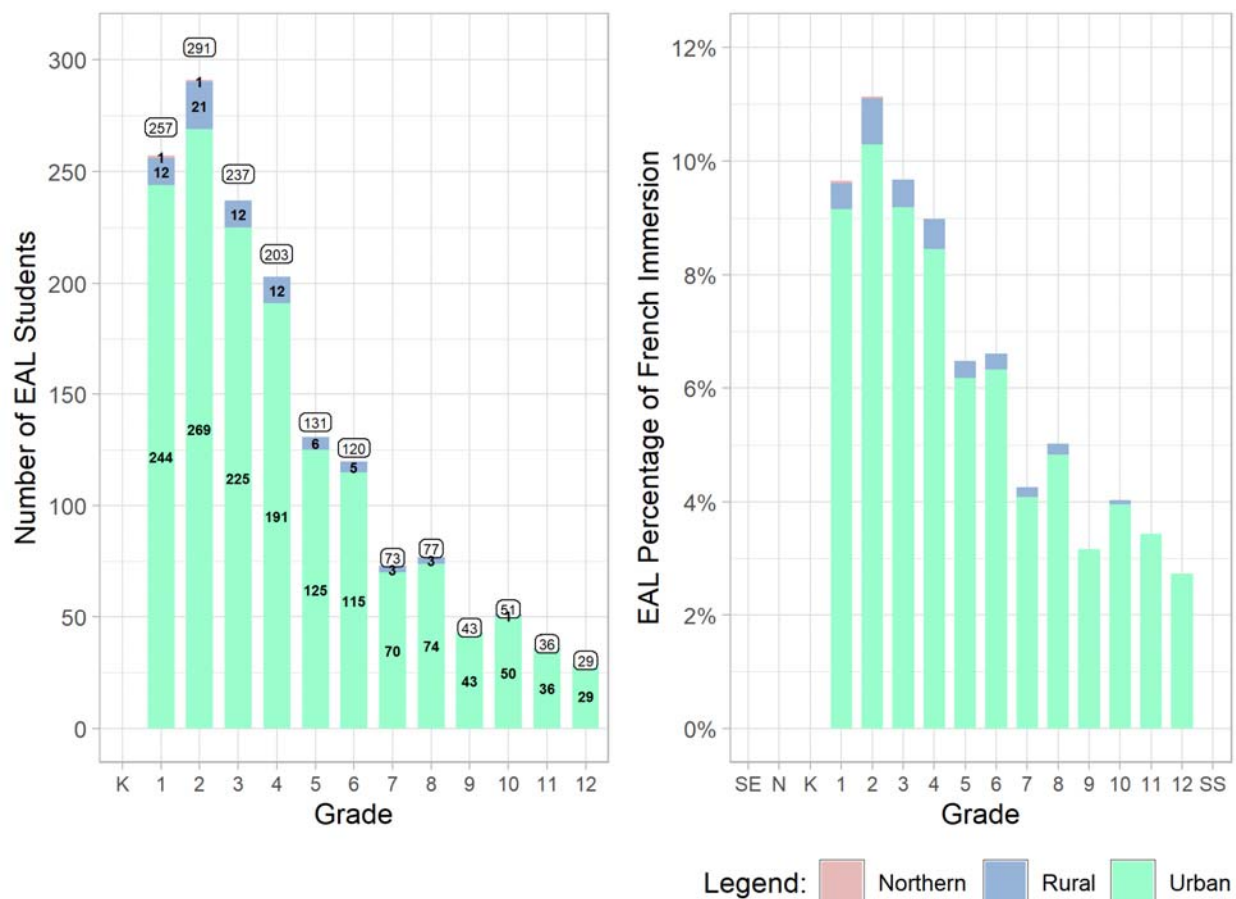
<sup>3</sup> The graduation rates in this table do not make adjustments for students moving out of the province, deaths, the proportion of school age children not enrolled in public and funded independent schools and do not account for students who have transferred out of public and funded independent schools to enroll in First Nations schools, non-funded independent schools, and adult learning centres, and students who have withdrawn from school.

To estimate the number of French Immersion graduates, the department follows the same method of calculating for the overall provincial rate but applies additional filters based on the requirements for obtaining a French Immersion diploma. The two filters used are: 1) receiving a *Français* credit each year from Grade 9 to Grade 12, and 2) having the correct distribution of 14 credits in French from Grade 9 to Grade 12 to obtain a French Immersion diploma. For more information on the student-tracked rate, see "High School Graduation Rates and Student Achievement Statistics", [https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/grad\\_rates/index.html](https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/grad_rates/index.html).

## Inclusion and Appropriate Support for All Students

- Did you have EAL (English as an Additional Language) students in the French Immersion Program in the 2016-2017 school year?

**Figure 4:** Number and Percentage of English as an Additional Language (EAL) Students in the French Immersion Program, by Grade Level and Region

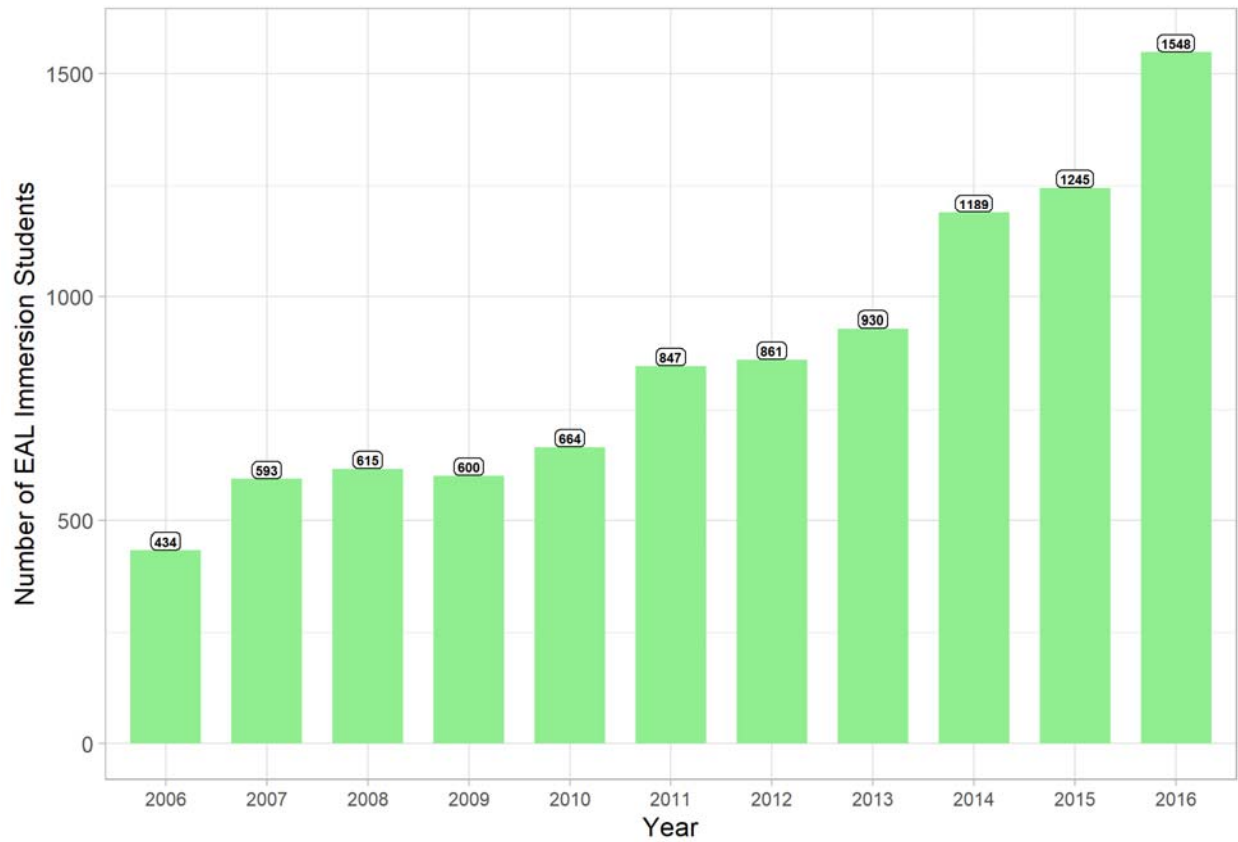


According to departmental Education Information System (EIS) data, 1,458 EAL students were enrolled in the French Immersion Program. This represents 6% of the total French Immersion population in Manitoba.

Like overall enrolment, the bulk of the EAL students enrolled in French Immersion, are in Early Years. EAL students are disproportionately located in urban areas. This seems consistent with the distribution of EAL students in the province overall.

Note: The data is from Manitoba Education's EIS database, and generally speaking, it reflects the most recent version of the data from 2016. There may be slight differences in relation to earlier reports, as adjustments have been made retroactively to correct errors.

**Figure 5: Number of English as an Additional Language (EAL) Students in the French Immersion Program, by Year**



The total number of students identified as both immersion students and EAL students (within the four-year funding window) has increased dramatically between 2006 and 2016, from 434 students to 1458. The overwhelming majority of EAL students in immersion are located in the Winnipeg School Division (over half of the 1548), with substantial numbers in Pembina Trails School Division and Louis Riel School Division.

**Figure 6:** Number of **Schools** with English as an Additional Language (EAL) Students in the French Immersion Program, by Grade Level and Region

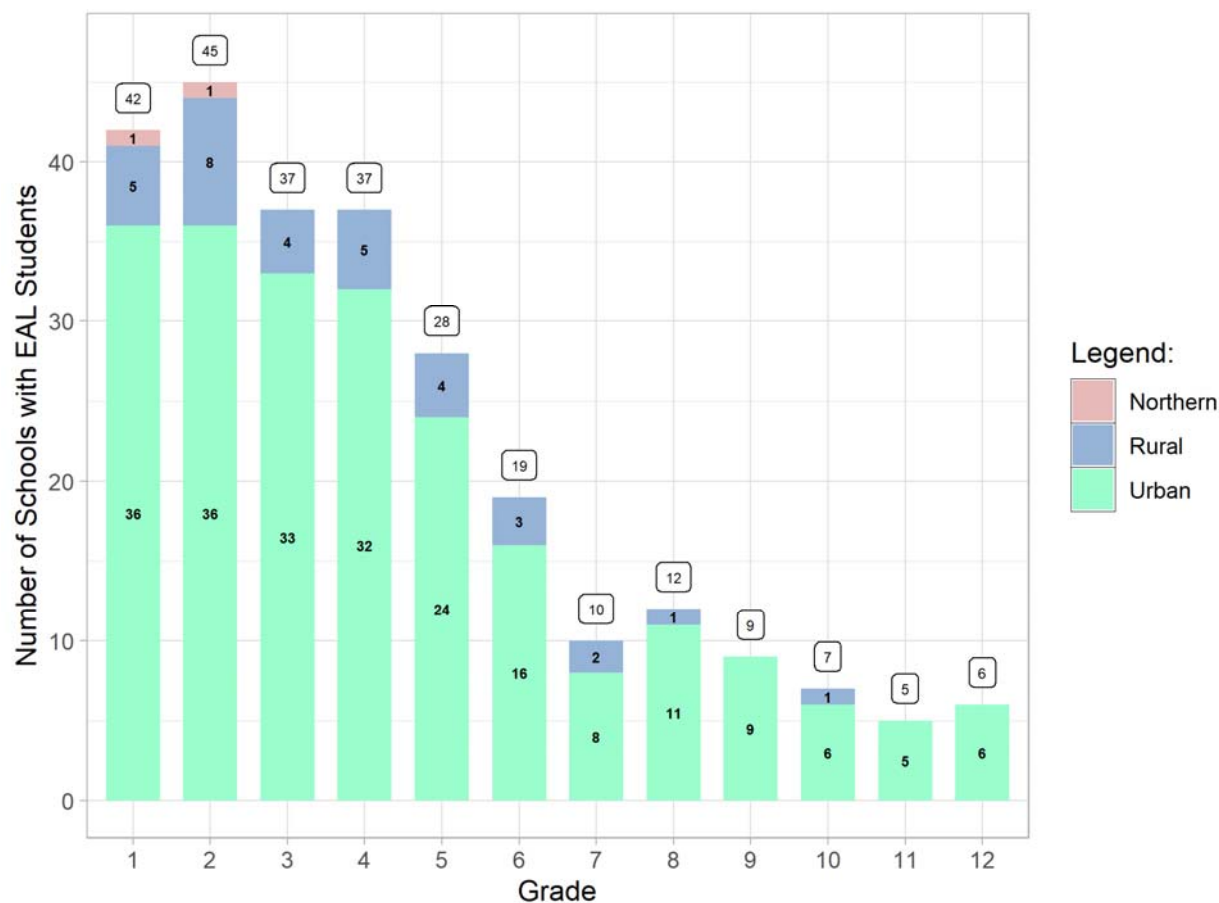
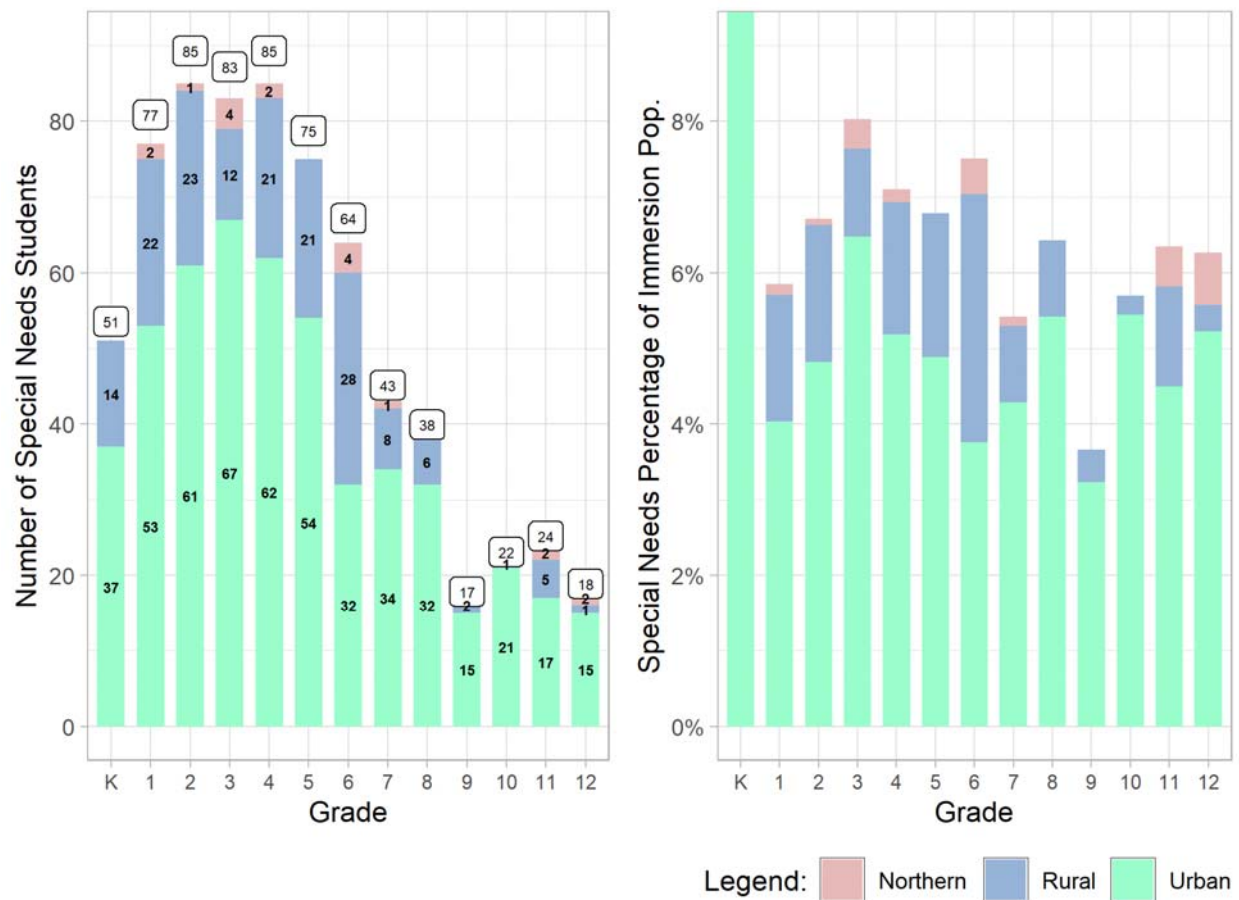


Figure 6 shows the distribution of EAL students in the schools. The geographic pattern is similar to that illustrated in Figure 4, and the distribution by grade level reflects the temporary nature of the EAL designation. Northern and rural students are fewer and fewer in the higher grades. This likely relates to the limited numbers of EAL students who enter the Manitoba education system (for that four-year window) in northern and rural areas. New arrivals eligible for the code are much more likely to land in Winnipeg or Brandon. The smaller number of schools in upper years is also reflective of the smaller number of secondary schools overall. Note: Any given school represented in this graph might have many students or few.

4. Did you have students with special needs (funded or non-funded but diagnosed) in the French Immersion Program in the 2016-2017 school year?

**Figure 7: Number and Percentage of Special Needs Students** (funded or non-funded, but diagnosed) in the French Immersion Program, by Grade Level and Region



Seventy-two survey respondents returned values for this question. The graph on the left shows the number of students (in those 72 schools) identified as special needs, by grade level. The graph on the right shows those students as a proportion of the immersion students in those 72 schools. As many schools did not answer this question, it would be unreasonable to consider this ratio as applying to the entire province.

The proportion of students with identified special needs remains generally constant from one grade level to the next, with a dip in Grade 9 followed by a climb back up. This suggests that there may be limited differential program change with respect to special needs status.

Note: The increase in the percentage of special needs students from Grade 9 to Grade 11 may have to do with students being identified as special needs at the time of high school transition, all the more so as the question refers to both funded and non-funded but diagnosed. Information with respect to non-funded but diagnosed students may not be transferred between schools, so it might take a year or two for that information to make its way to the survey respondent in the administrator’s office. Certain students with special needs are assigned grades of SE or SS (according to age).<sup>4</sup> It is unclear how respondents might have categorized such students in per grade responses.

<sup>4</sup> SE refers to pupils aged 4 to 13 years taught in special ungraded classes, and SS refers to pupils age 14 or older taught in special ungraded classes.



**Figure 8:** Number of **Schools** with Special Needs Students (funded or non-funded, but diagnosed) in the French Immersion Program, by Grade Level and Region

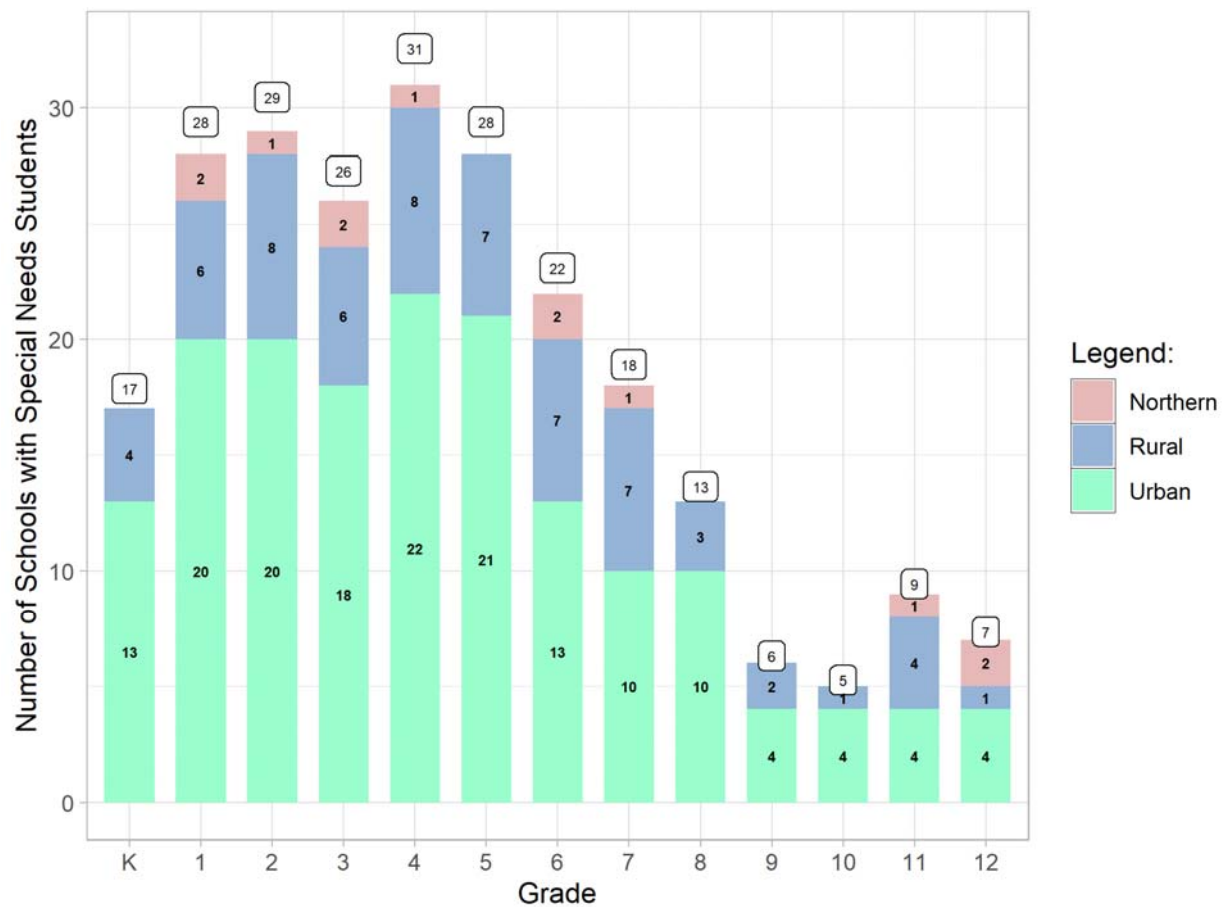
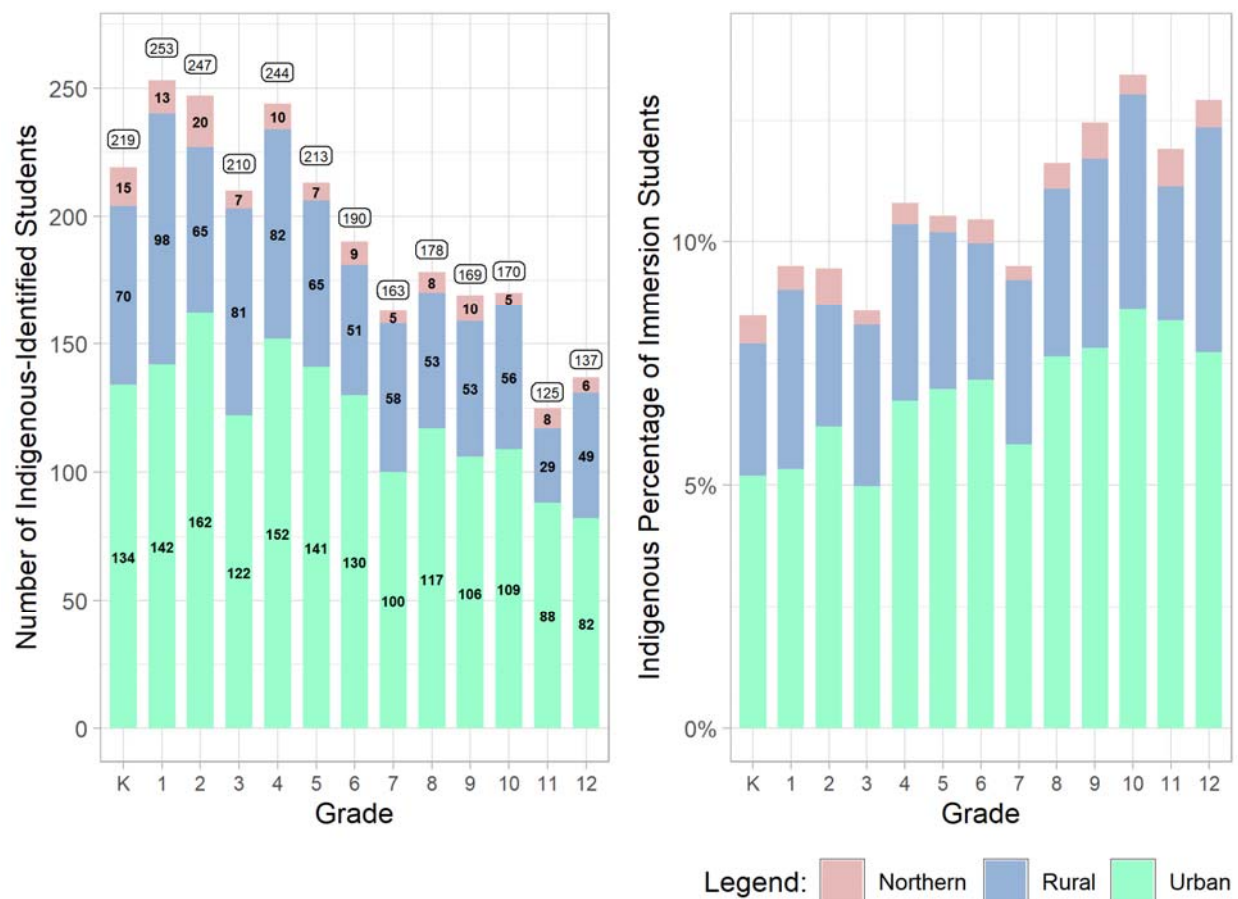


Figure 8 shows the distribution of special needs students in the respondent schools by grade level. A school may be counted for several grade levels. The geographical pattern is similar to that illustrated in Figure 7, and the distribution by grade level likely reflects the consolidation of students in fewer schools at higher grades. Northern and rural students are less and less frequent in higher grades. Note: Any given school represented in this graph might have many students or few.



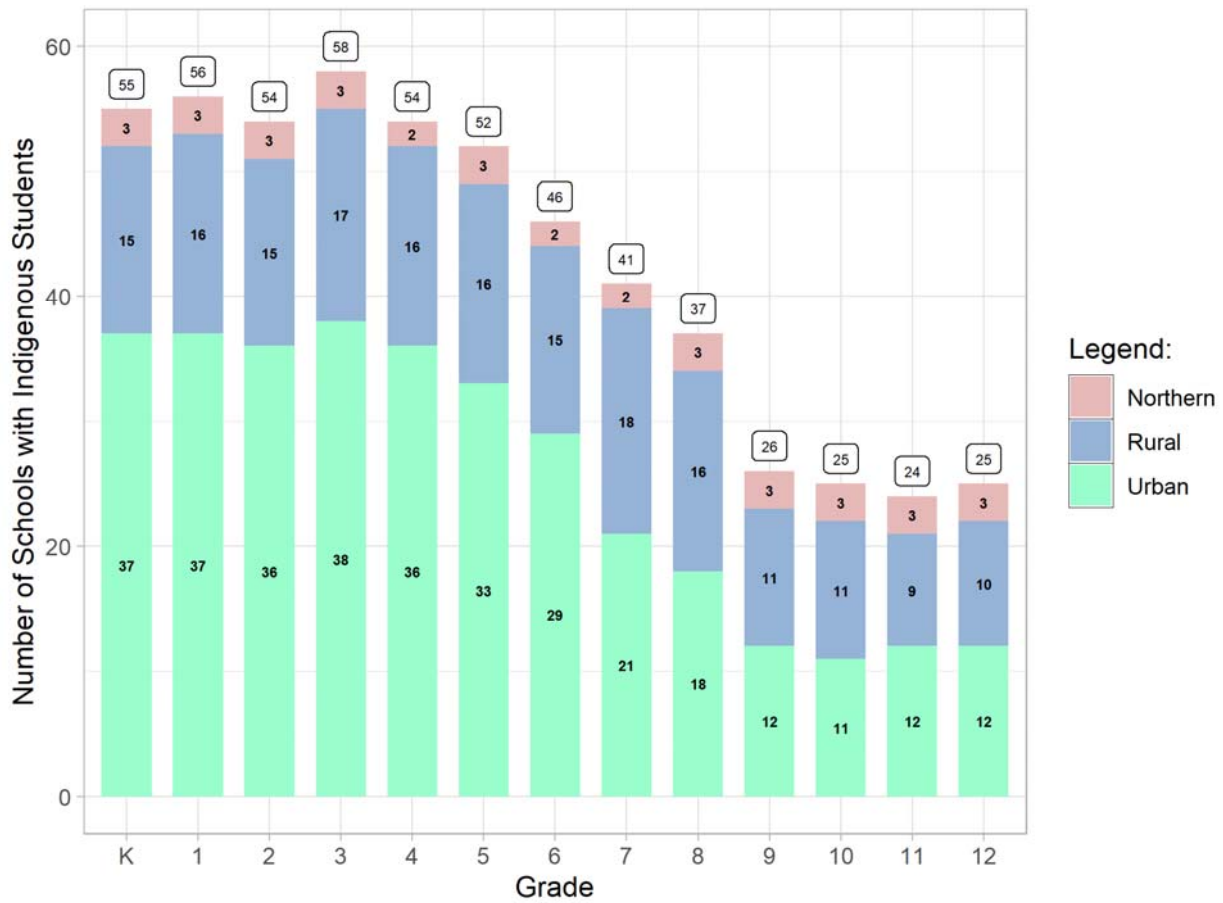
**Figure 9:** Number and Percentage of Indigenous Students in the French Immersion Program, by Grade Level and Region



Indigenous identity declaration is a voluntary method for students or their parents to identify themselves as Indigenous (First Peoples within the boundaries of present-day Canada, including the Métis).<sup>5</sup> As this identification is voluntary, these figures likely understate the actual proportions. The key observation in this pair of graphs is the increasing proportion of Indigenous students in the higher grades. This might reflect a positive differential in retention with respect to non-identified students. Note: As the opportunity to produce a declaration often presents itself upon transition to high school, it may be that older students who were not previously identified as Indigenous chose to make their declaration at that time.

<sup>5</sup> For more on the indigenous identity declaration, see “Indigenous Identity Declaration”, <https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/aed/abidentity.html>.

**Figure 10:** Number of **Schools** with Indigenous Students in the French Immersion Program, by Grade Level and Region

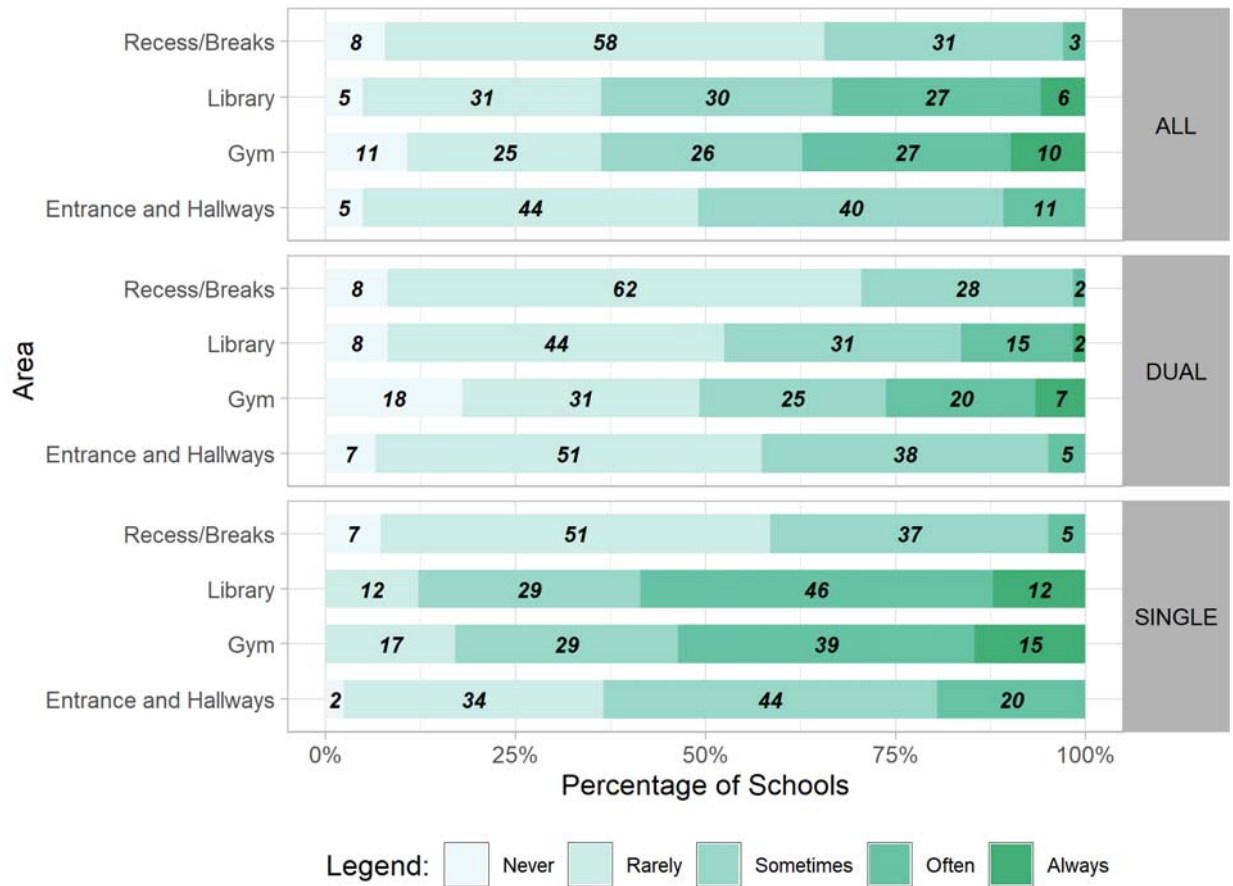


The declining number of schools in urban areas likely reflects the concentration of students in schools that specialize in Senior Years education, while in rural and northern areas, schools are more likely to cover the full K-12 range, or to combine Middle and Senior Years. Nearly all immersion schools (108) have at least one student identified as Indigenous according to EIS.

## A Linguistically Rich Environment

5. How often do students speak French in the following areas during non-instructional time?

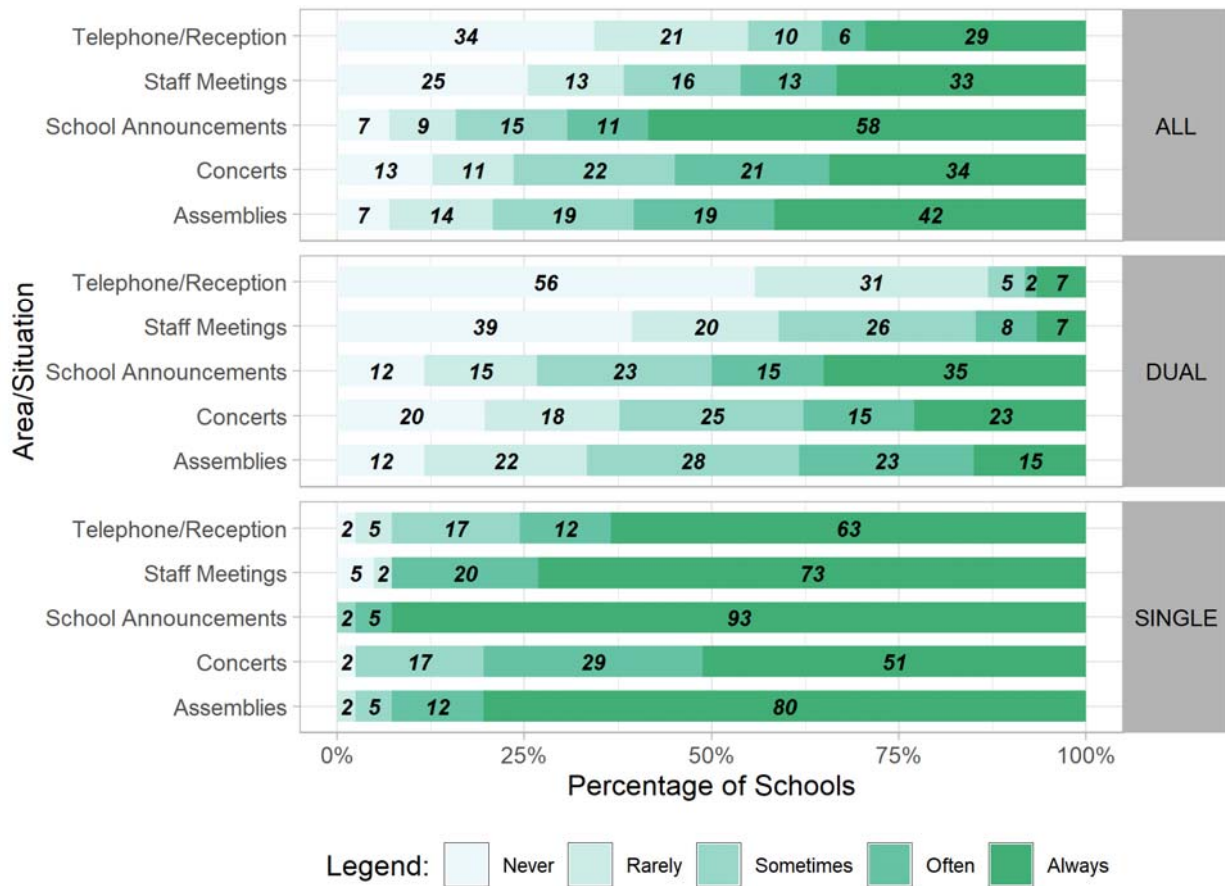
**Figure 11:** French Usage during Non-Instructional Time, by School Area



Respondents indicate that students' usage of French during non-instructional time was greater in single-track schools, especially so in the library, gym, and entrances and hallways. For example, students' use of French in libraries was noted to be "often" or "always" by 59% of respondents in single-track schools, compared to 18% in dual-track schools. No significant change was observed over the three surveys of the five-year period.

6. How often is the French language present in the following activities?

**Figure 12:** Presence of French in Certain School Areas or Situations



Although dual-track schools present challenges in implementation of French-language environments, it is encouraging to see half of dual-track schools “often” or “always” making school announcements in French. Overall, single-track schools show much greater use of French in all areas. No significant change was observed over the three surveys of the five-year period.

## Section 2

### Validation of Students' Linguistic and Educational Experience

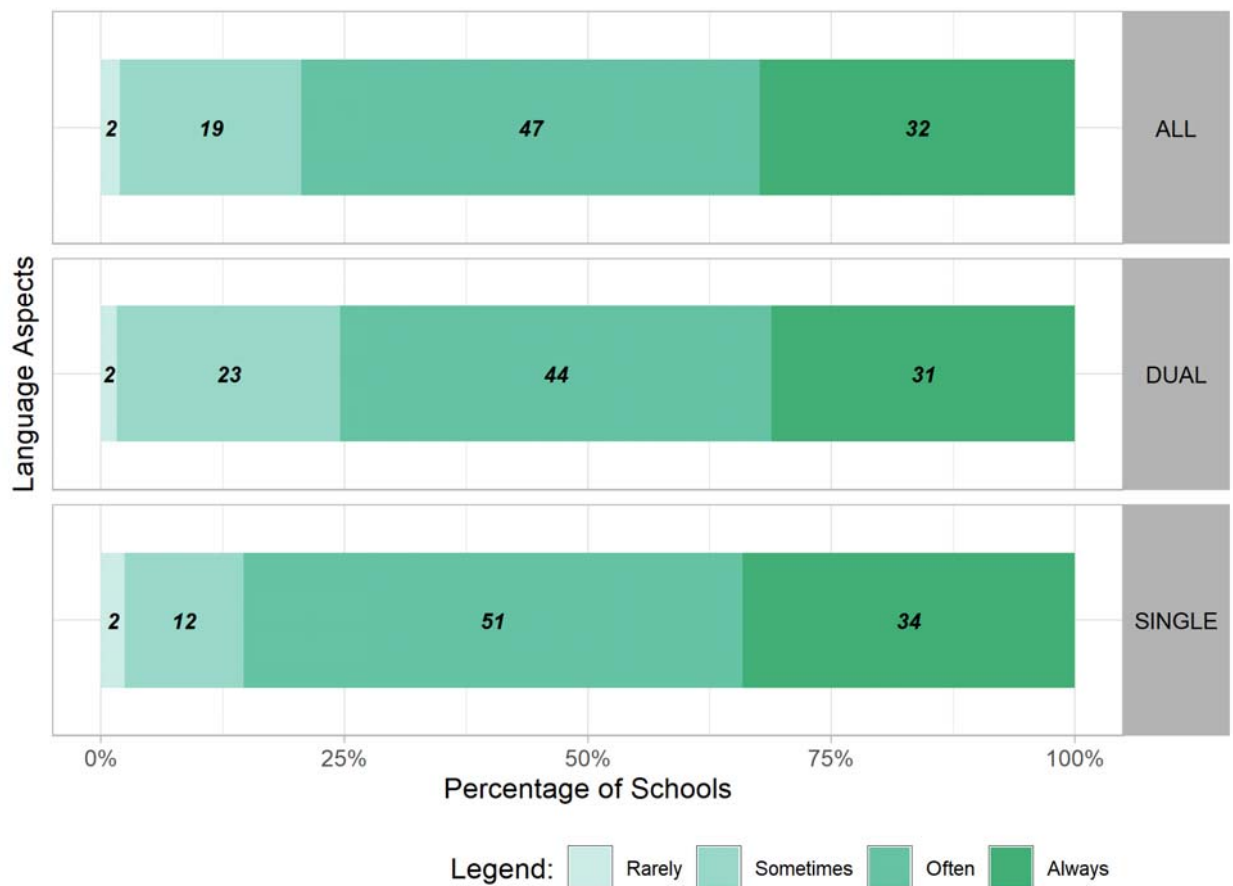
Section 2 of the 2016-2017 abridged questionnaire asked schools to provide data on the validation of students' linguistic and educational experiences in relation to the following factors:

- focus on language acquisition
- impact on student learning

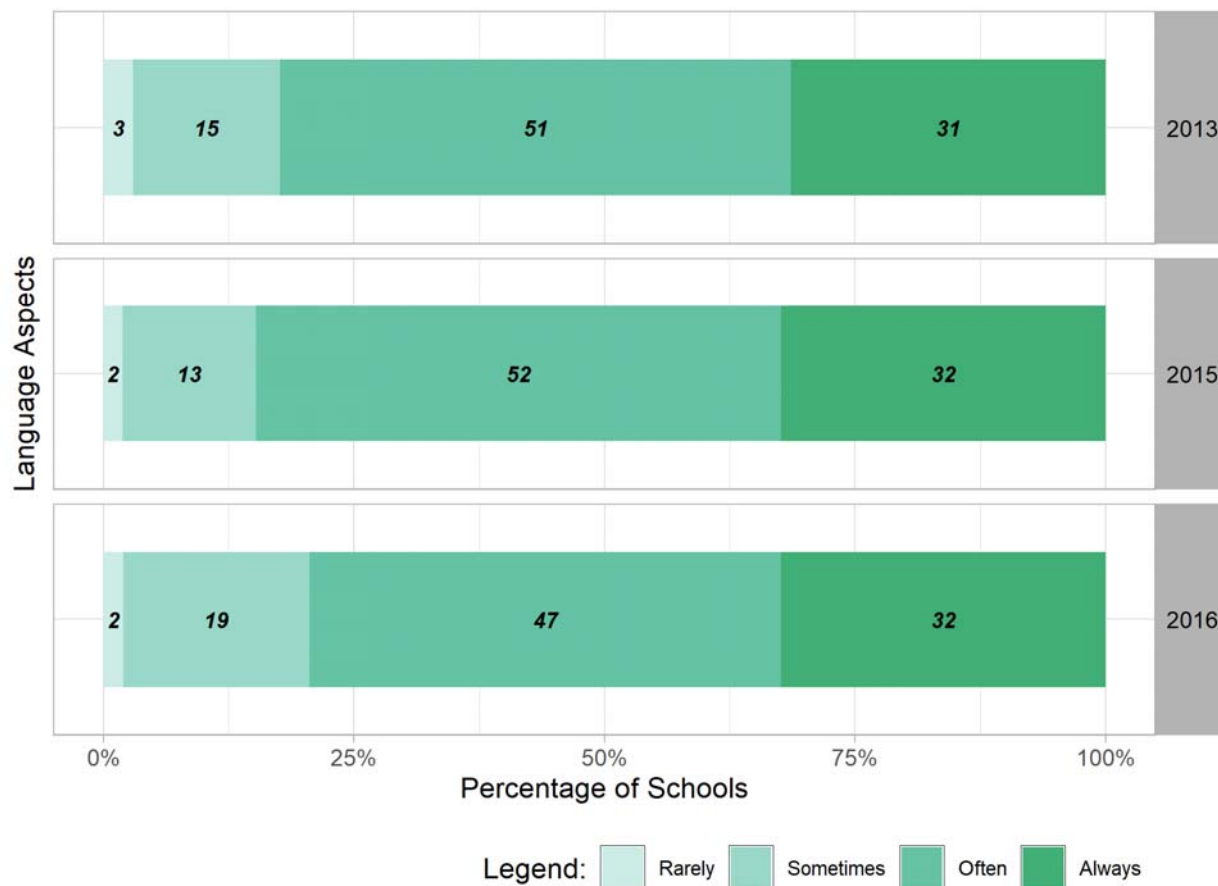
#### Focus on Language Acquisition

7. Indicate how often French Immersion teachers in your school specifically teach aspects of language while teaching content.

**Figure 13:** Extent to which Aspects of Language are Specifically Taught while Teaching Course Content



**Figure 14:** Extent to which Aspects of Language are Specifically Taught while Teaching Course Content; 2013, 2015, 2016 Compared



There has been little change in the response to this question over the five-year cycle. The teaching of aspects of language via course content has been a focus over this period. It is possible that increased awareness of this pedagogical practice has made survey respondents less likely to answer positively, while increased use of the practice has made other survey respondents more likely to do so, leading to a potentially misleading appearance of stasis.

## Impact on Student Learning

8. Please indicate the extent that the following outcomes have been addressed in each subject area.

The following seven outcomes validate students' linguistic and educational experience:

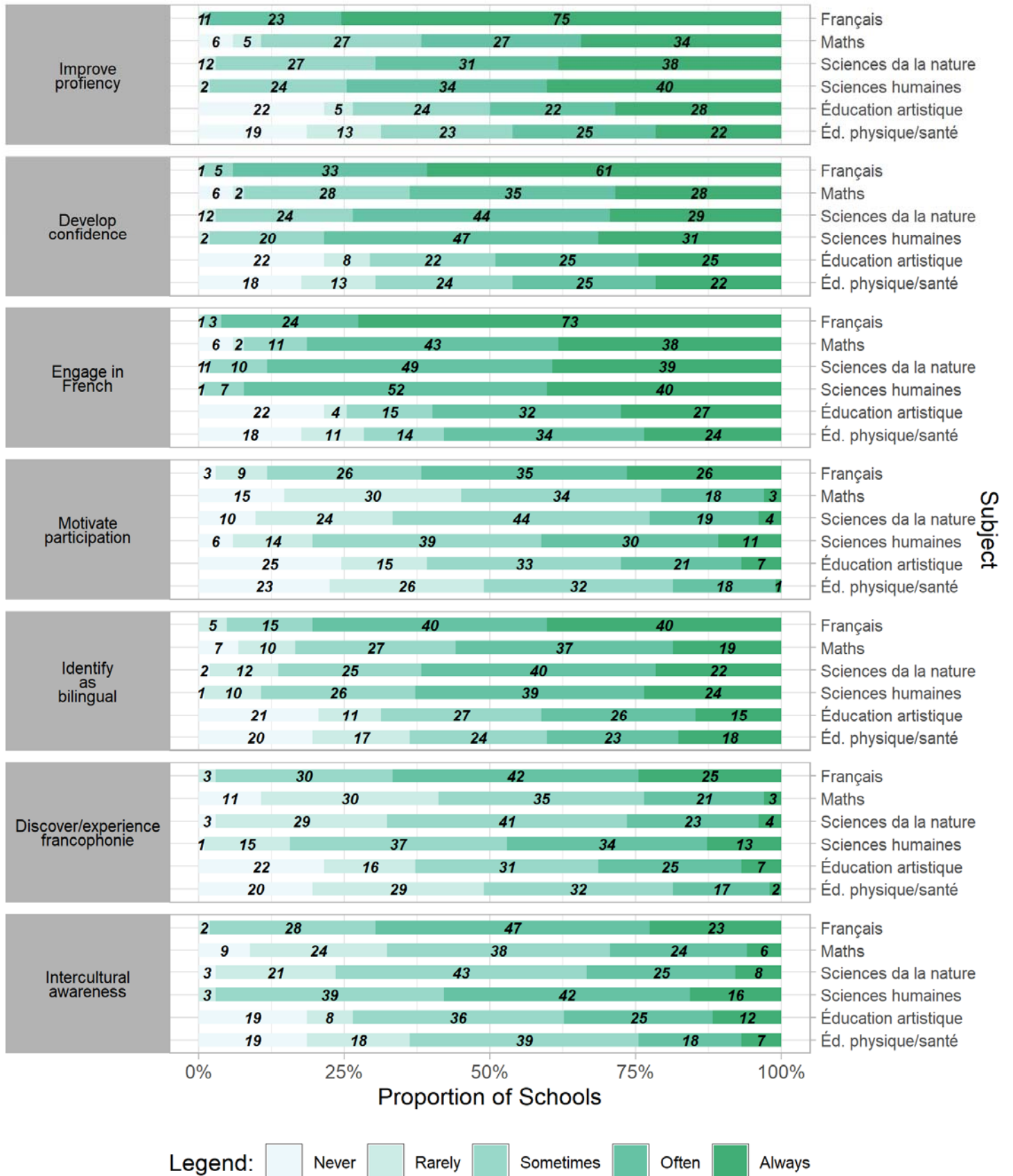
- improve language proficiency
- develop confidence in French language skills
- engage in learning and using French
- motivate participation in the Francophone community
- identify themselves as bilingual learners and speakers
- discover and experience different aspects of La Francophonie
- develop intercultural awareness

(See Figures 15 and 16 on the following two pages.)

In all the subject areas listed, *Improve Language Proficiency*, *Develop Confidence in French Language Skills* and *Engage in Learning and Using French* had the highest proportion of “often” or “always” responses.

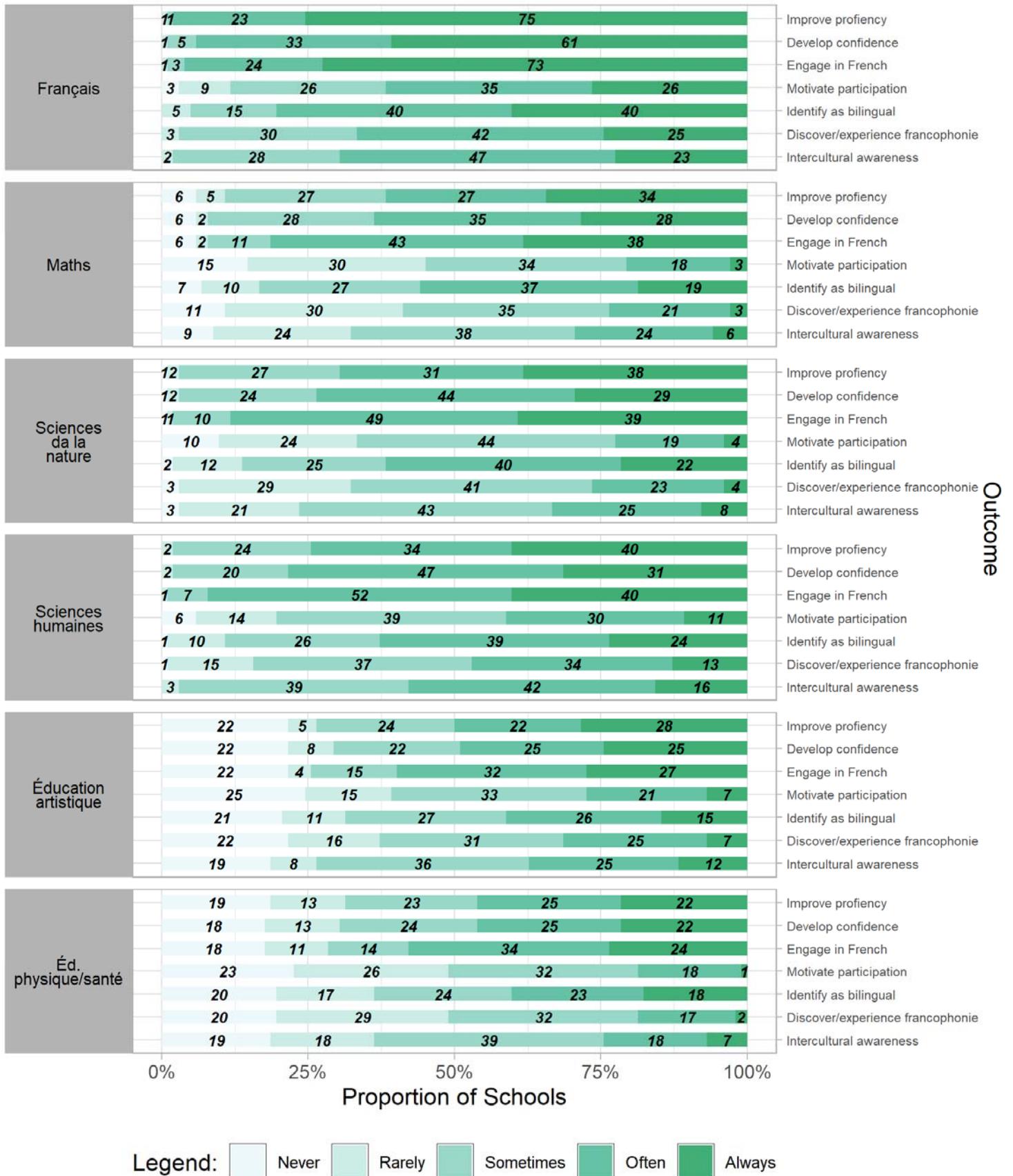
It is not surprising that respondents indicated that language competencies were most frequently addressed in the *Français* course. They are also addressed in *Sciences humaines*, *Sciences de la nature* and *Éducation artistique*, albeit to a lesser degree. It appears that a greater focus on these competencies could be brought to bear in *Mathématiques* and *Éducation physique et Éducation à la santé*. These latest results may be explained by the limited offering of courses in French in certain schools, and the problem appears to be more acute in dual-track schools.

**Figure 15:** Extent to Which Validation Outcomes are Addressed in Subject Areas, by Outcome





**Figure 16: Extent to Which Validation Outcomes are Addressed, by Subject Area**



## Section 3

### Educational Staff and Professional Learning

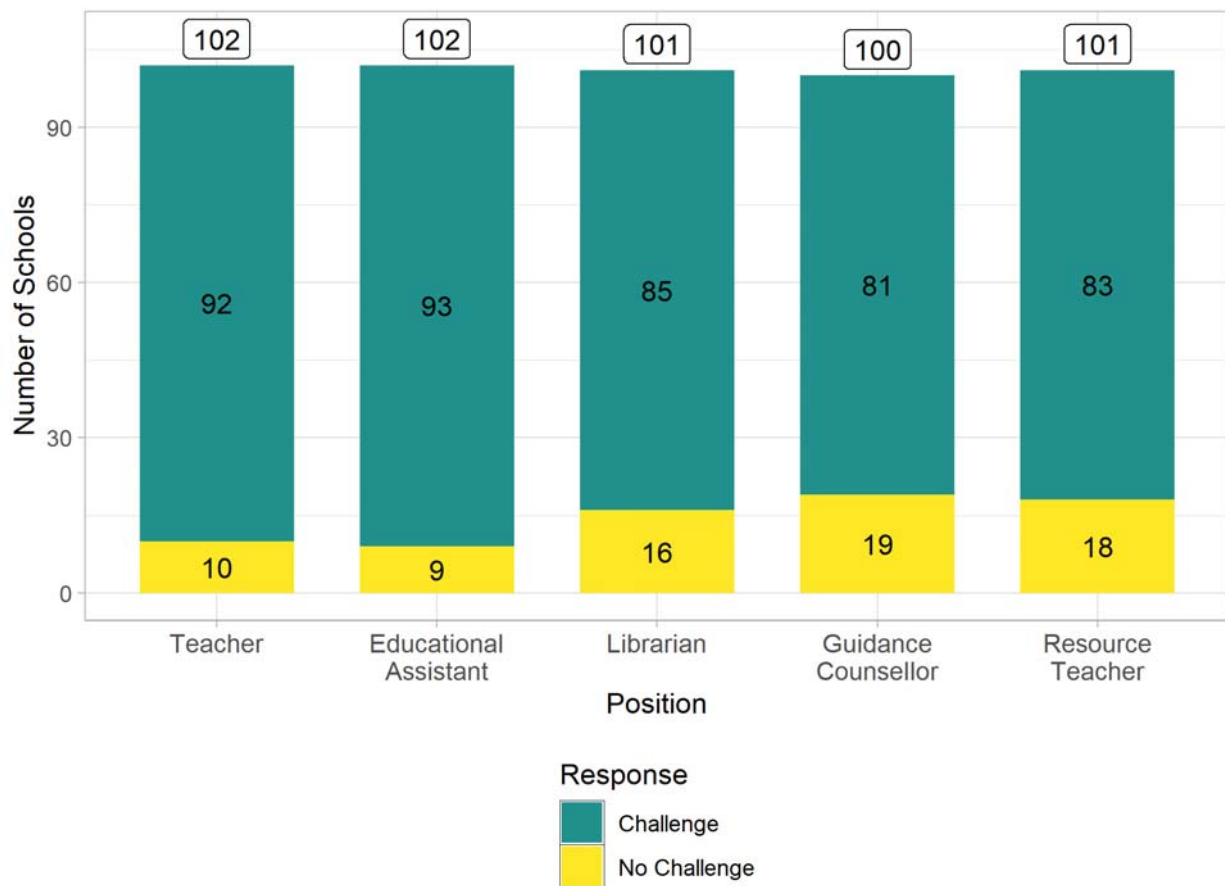
Section 3 of the 2016-2017 abridged questionnaire asked schools to provide data on educational staff and professional learning in relation to the following factors:

- recruitment and retention of staff
- professional learning

#### Recruitment and Retention of Staff

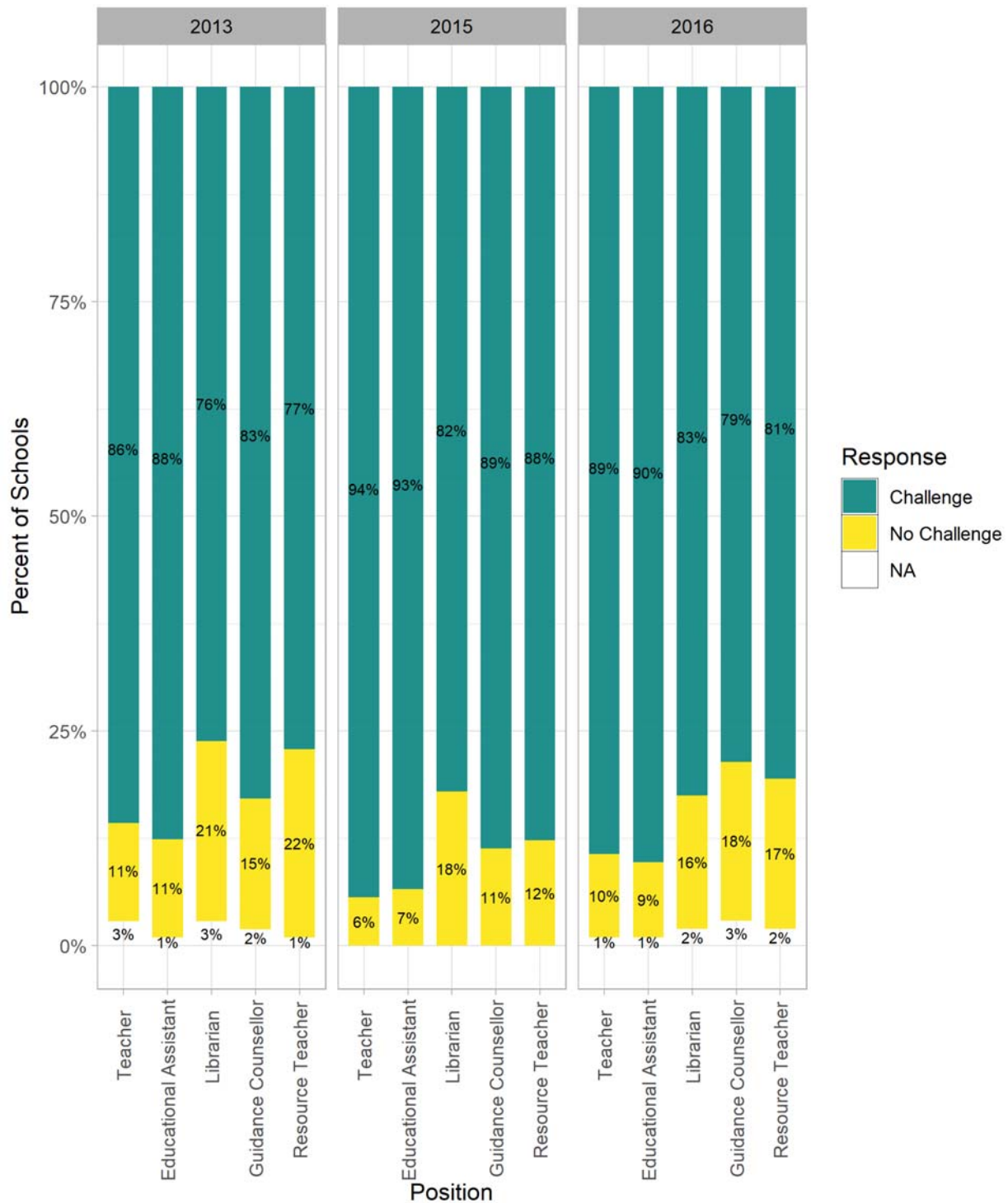
9. Does the hiring of qualified French Immersion personnel pose a challenge in your school for the following positions?

**Figure 17:** Number of French Immersion Schools Indicating Challenges Hiring Qualified French Immersion Personnel, by Type of Position



It is clear that hiring French-speaking personnel is a difficulty frequently encountered by schools.

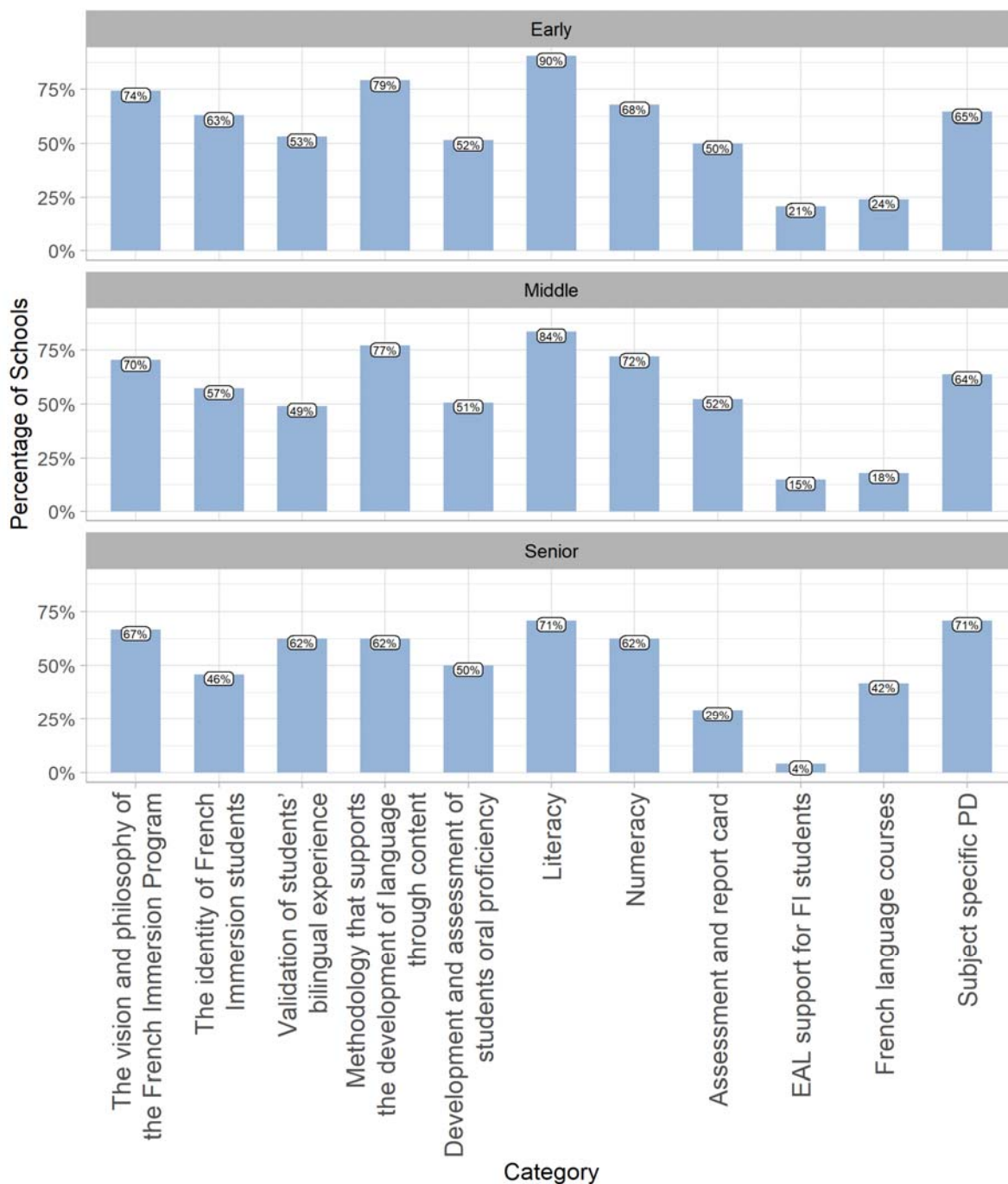
**Figure 18:** Number of French Immersion Schools Indicating Challenges Hiring Qualified French Immersion Personnel, by Type of Position; 2013, 2015, 2016 Compared



## Professional Learning

10. French Immersion teachers have specific professional learning needs. Please indicate which of the following topics were addressed in 2016-2017 through various professional learning opportunities offered to teachers.

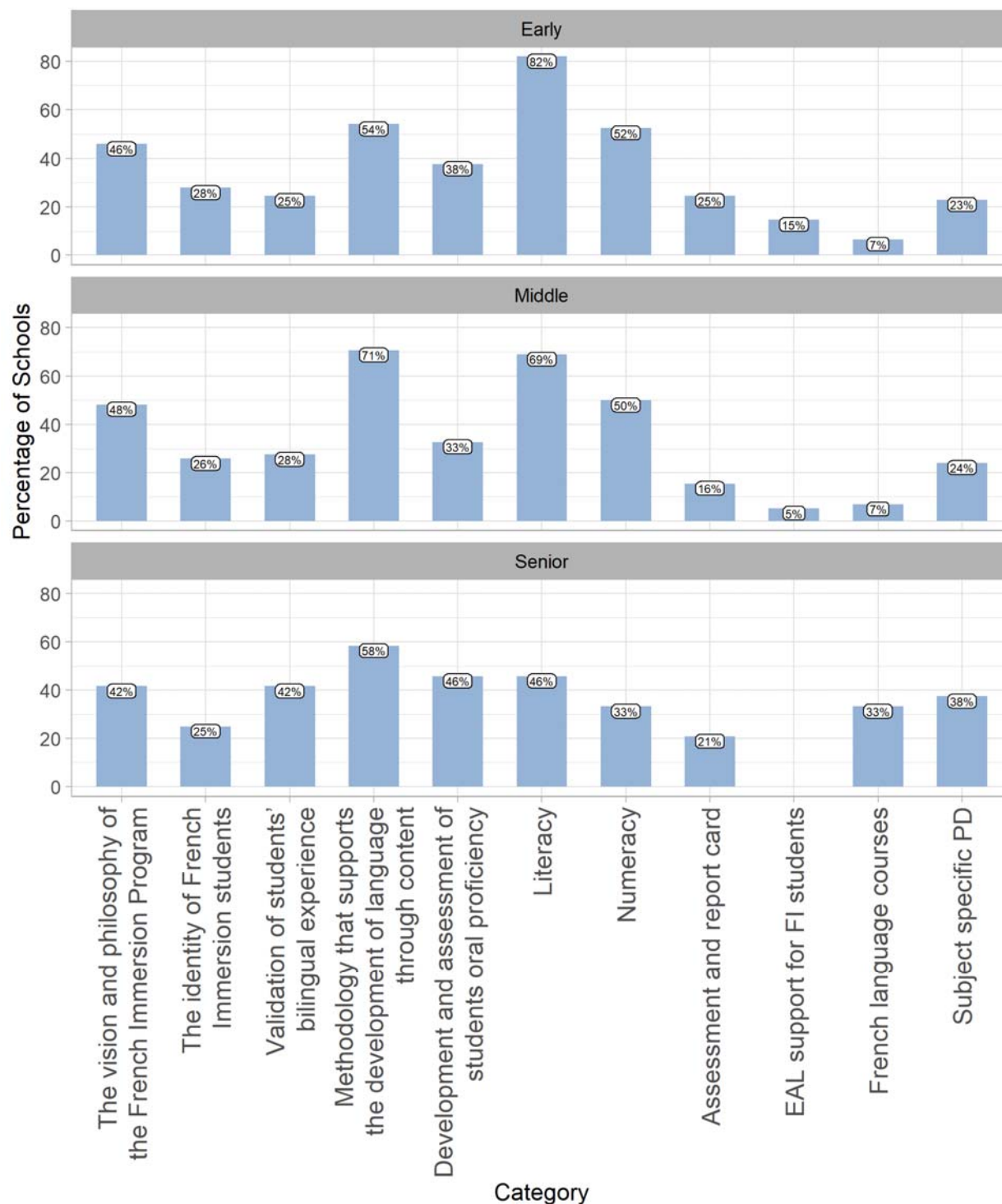
**Figure 19:** Topics Addressed by Professional Learning Opportunities to Teachers in 2016-2017



According to respondents, the main topic of professional learning, across the grade groupings, was *Literacy*. In the Early and Middle Years, *Methodology that supports the development of language through content* was the second most commonly addressed topic, while in the Senior Years, it was *Subject specific PD*. The responses from dual-track schools may reflect school-wide priorities (for both the French Immersion and English Programs), rather than priorities for French Immersion alone.

11. Currently, what are the French Immersion professional learning priorities in your school?  
 (A maximum of three priorities per grade groupings)

**Figure 20:** French Immersion Professional Learning Priorities of Schools, by Grade Grouping



Although *Literacy* is a strong priority in schools, it is superseded by *Methodology that supports the development of language through content* in Middle and Senior Years.

## Section 4

### Student Enrolment Trends

To provide a more comprehensive profile of the implementation of the French Immersion Program across Manitoba, this section starts by presenting the enrolment statistics for the 2016-2017 school year, as well as the enrolment trends over an 11-year period.

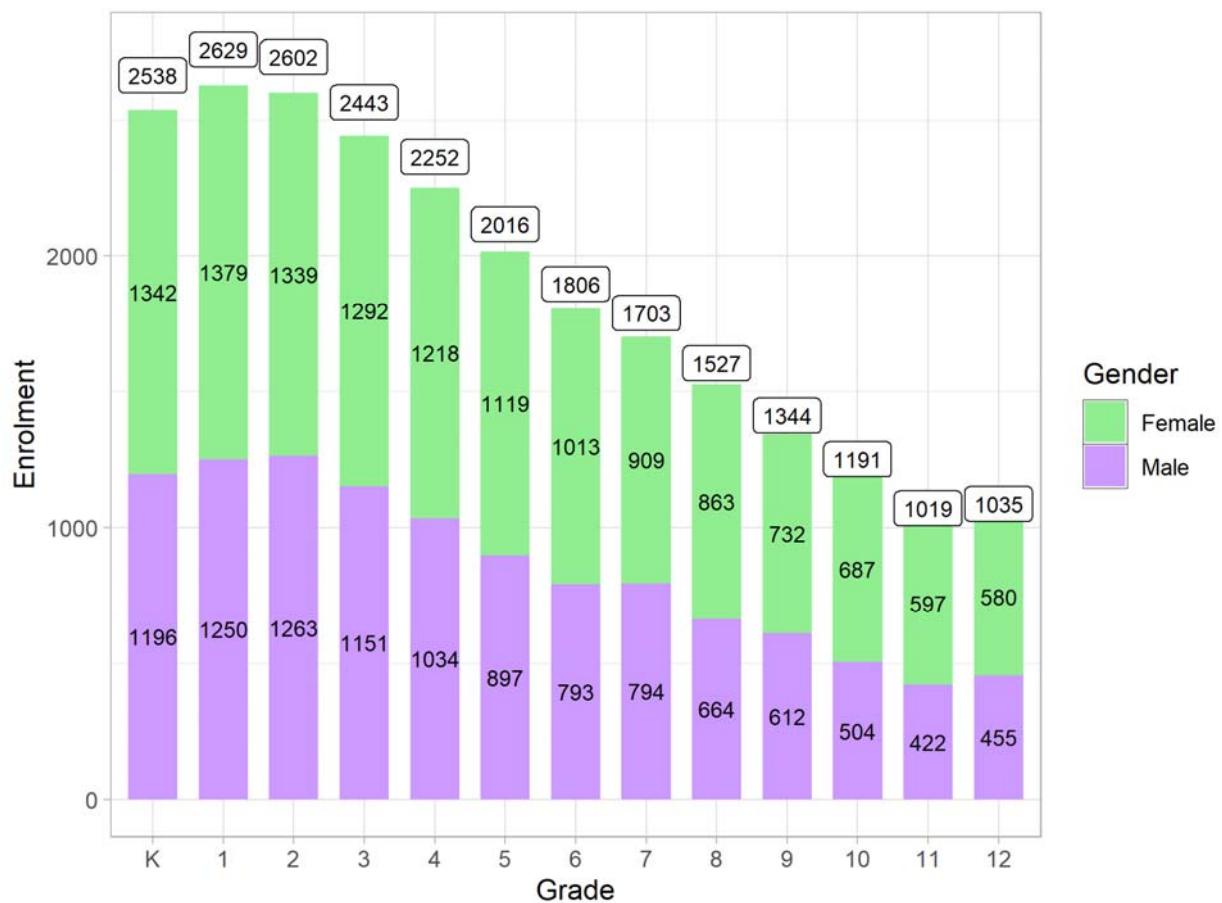
Note: The data is from Manitoba Education's EIS database, and generally speaking, it reflects the most recent data from 2016. There may be slight differences in relation to earlier reports, as adjustments have been made retroactively to correct errors.

#### Provincial Enrolment Statistics

The following provincial statistics provide a portrait of enrolment in the French Immersion Program for the 2016-2017 school year, as well as an overview of the trend in the 11-year period from 2006-2007 to 2016-2017. Total French Immersion enrolment in 2016-2017 came in at 24,105, up from 23,363 students in 2015-2016.

#### Current Year Observations:

**Figure 21:** French Immersion 2016-2017 Enrolment (Public Schools Only), by Gender



Apart from the steps from Kindergarten to Grade 1 and from Grade 11 to 12, Figure 21 shows that the number of students enrolled declines as the grade level goes up. This is very different from the distribution of Manitoba’s total public school enrolment, where there is a relatively equal number of students at each **grade level**.

Furthermore, Figure 21 demonstrates that the distribution of French Immersion enrolments by grade and gender shows the predominance of females over males at each grade level. Again, this is very different from total public school enrolment in Manitoba, where there are more males than females at each grade level.

### Other Key Current Year Observations:

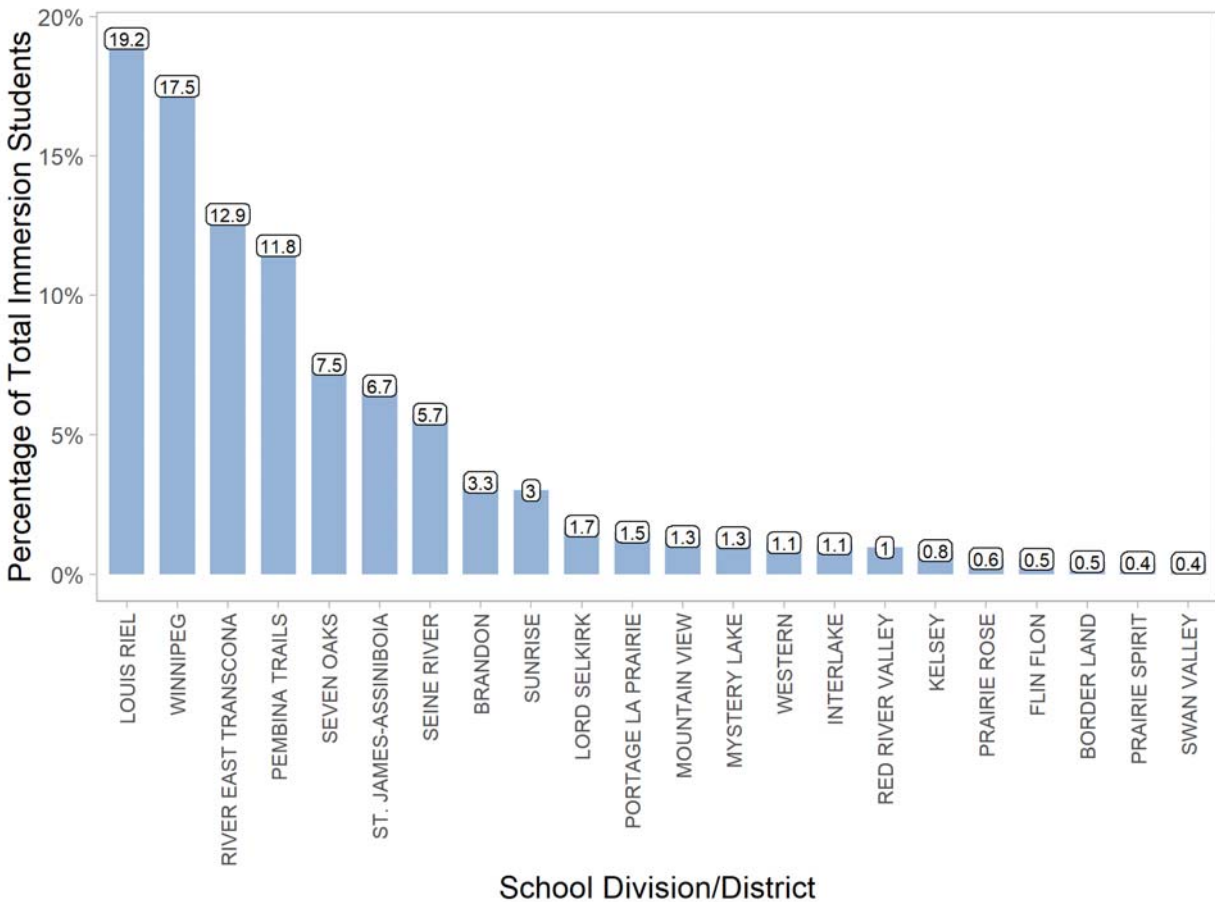
- Not including Pre-Kindergarten and Special Education, Manitoba’s total public school enrolment in 2016-2017 was 183,016 students. Thus, the French Immersion Program represented 13.2% of this enrolment, up from 12.4% in 2013-2014.
- In 2016-2017, of the 24,105 students in 113 schools, 12,525 (or 52%) were enrolled in 43 single-track French Immersion schools, while 11,580 (or 48%) were enrolled in 68 dual-track French Immersion schools. Although there are fewer single-track French Immersion schools, they have greater enrolment than the dual-track schools.
- Of the 24,105 French Immersion students referred to above, the vast majority—20,544, or 85%—entered the program in Kindergarten, 1930 or 8% entered the program in Grade 1, while 284 (1.2%) and 275 (1.1%) of students entered in Grades 4 and 7 respectively. (These percentages do not add up to 100%, as some students entered in non-standard entry years.)
- The table below clearly shows that the French Immersion Program in Manitoba is mainly an urban phenomenon, with over three-quarters of immersion students in urban schools, compared to roughly 59% of all students in urban schools.

<b>Student Population<sup>6</sup> (Manitoba Public Schools)</b>	<b>Urban Schools</b>	<b>Rural Schools</b>	<b>Northern Schools</b>
183,015 students	107,592 students (58.8%)	63,563 students (34.7%)	11,860 students (6.5%)
24,105 <b>French Immersion</b> students	19,028 students (78.9%)	4,427 students (18.4%)	650 students (2.7%)
153,301 <b>English Program</b> students	85,732 students (55.9%)	56,439 students (36.8%)	11,130 students (7.3%)
5,609 <b>Français Program</b> students	2832 students (50.5%)	2697 students (48.1%)	80 students (1.4%)

<sup>6</sup> These counts are of students with eligible enrolment in public schools, in all grade levels except nursery. For the definition of urban, rural and northern schools, see footnote on page 4.



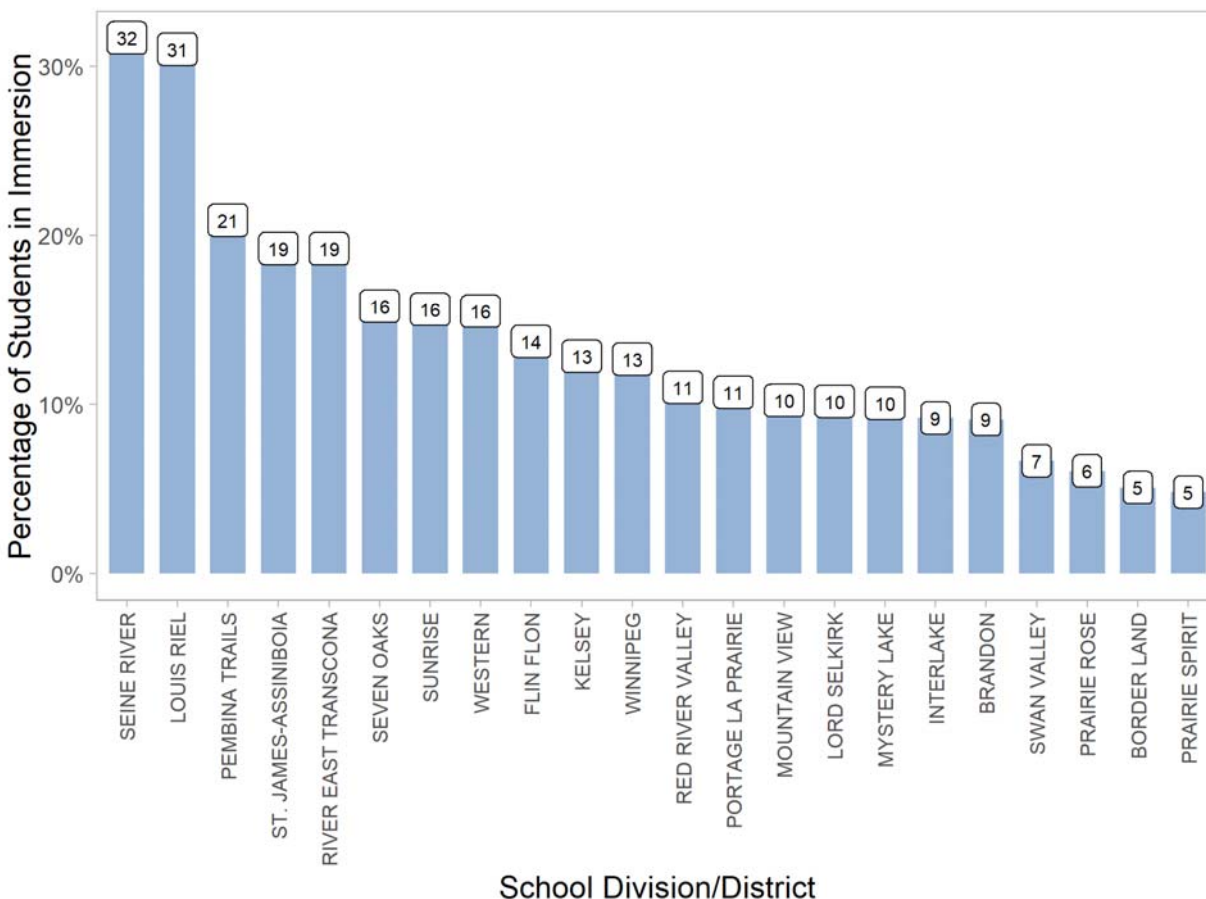
**Figure 22:** French Immersion Program Enrolment by School Division, as a Percentage of Total French Immersion Enrolment



Providing further information on the regional breakdown of enrolment in French Immersion, Figure 22 shows the distribution of French Immersion enrolments by school division in school year 2016-2017. The six urban school divisions have the largest share of enrolment, from 19.2% for the Louis Riel School Division to 6.7% for the St. James-Assiniboia School Division. The next four school divisions—Seine River (5.7%), Brandon (3.3%), Sunrise (3%), and Lord Selkirk (1.7%)—are either close to Winnipeg, or in an urban centre outside of Winnipeg. The remaining school divisions are either “rural” or “northern”.



**Figure 23:** Concentration of French Immersion Enrolment within Each School Division



Another interesting statistic is the concentration of French Immersion enrolment within each school division; that is, the proportion of French Immersion enrolment as a percentage of each school division’s total public school enrolment in Kindergarten to Grade 12 (i.e., not including Nursery and Pre-Kindergarten, nor Special Education). Figure 23 presents the “concentration” data for each school division offering the French Immersion Program. Seine River (32%) and Louis Riel (31%) have the largest concentrations of French Immersion students within their boundaries. It is interesting to note that the Winnipeg School Division, which had the second-largest number of French Immersion students in the province (4,218 students or 17.5% of the total) had the eleventh highest concentration, of French Immersion students within its boundaries at 13%.

**Figure 24:** Number of French Immersion Students (Not including Special Education), by Grade Grouping, 2006-2016

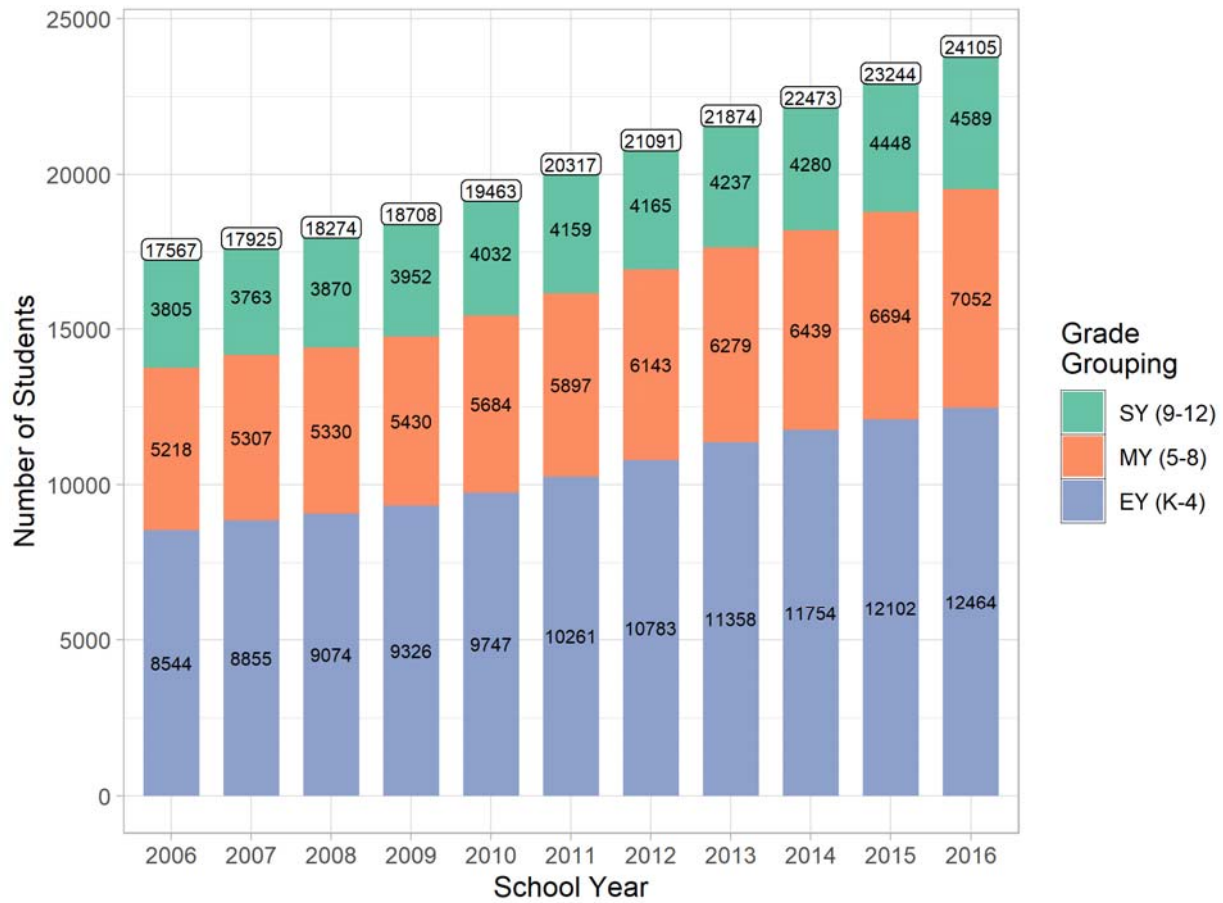


Figure 24 presents the distribution of French Immersion enrolment by grade grouping (Early Years, Middle Years, and Senior Years) for the school years 2006-2007 to 2016-2017. The graph clearly shows that, as enrolment has risen over the period, the distribution among the three grade groupings has remained relatively stable.

**Figure 25:** Number of French Immersion Students, by Grade Level, 2006-2016

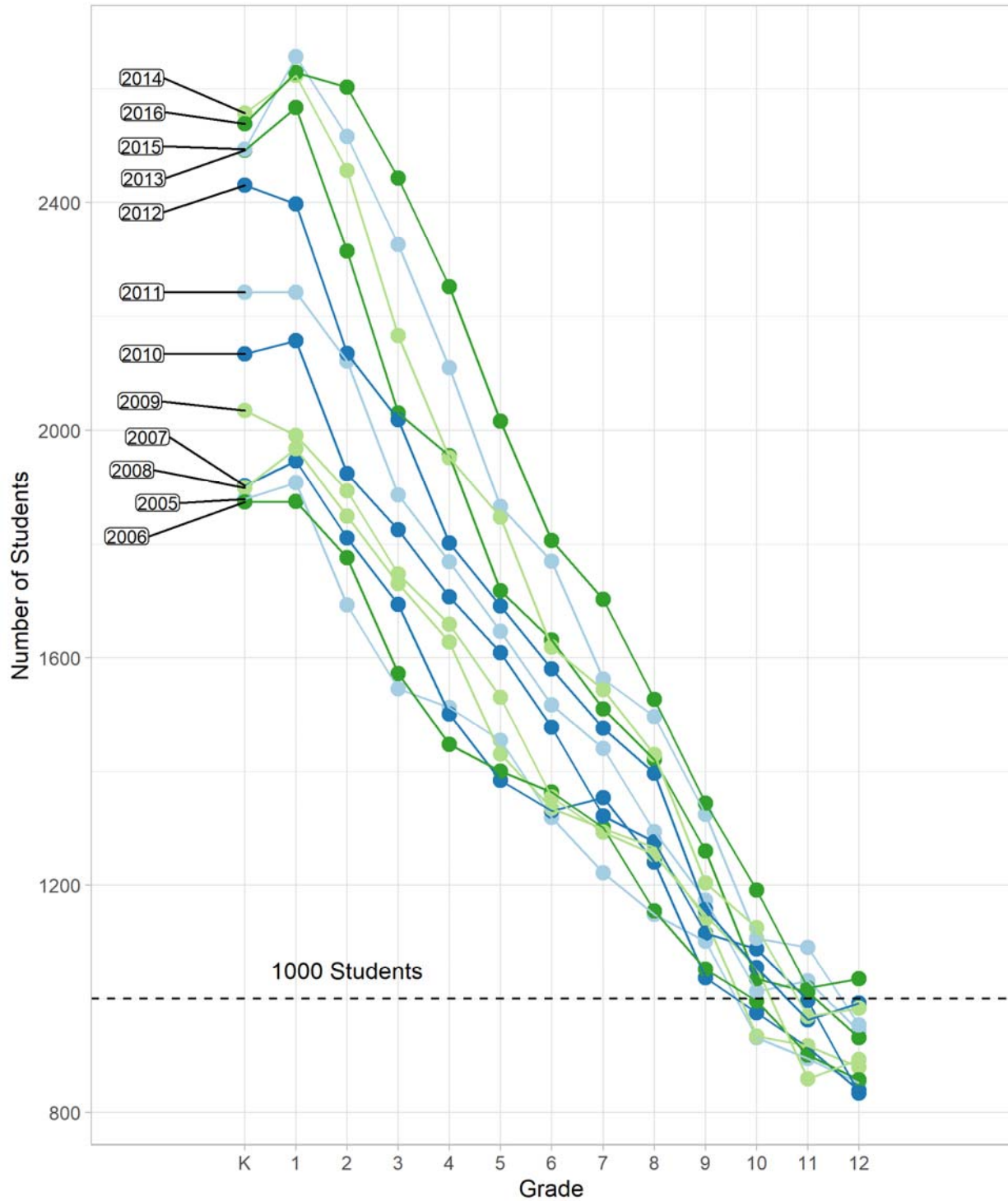
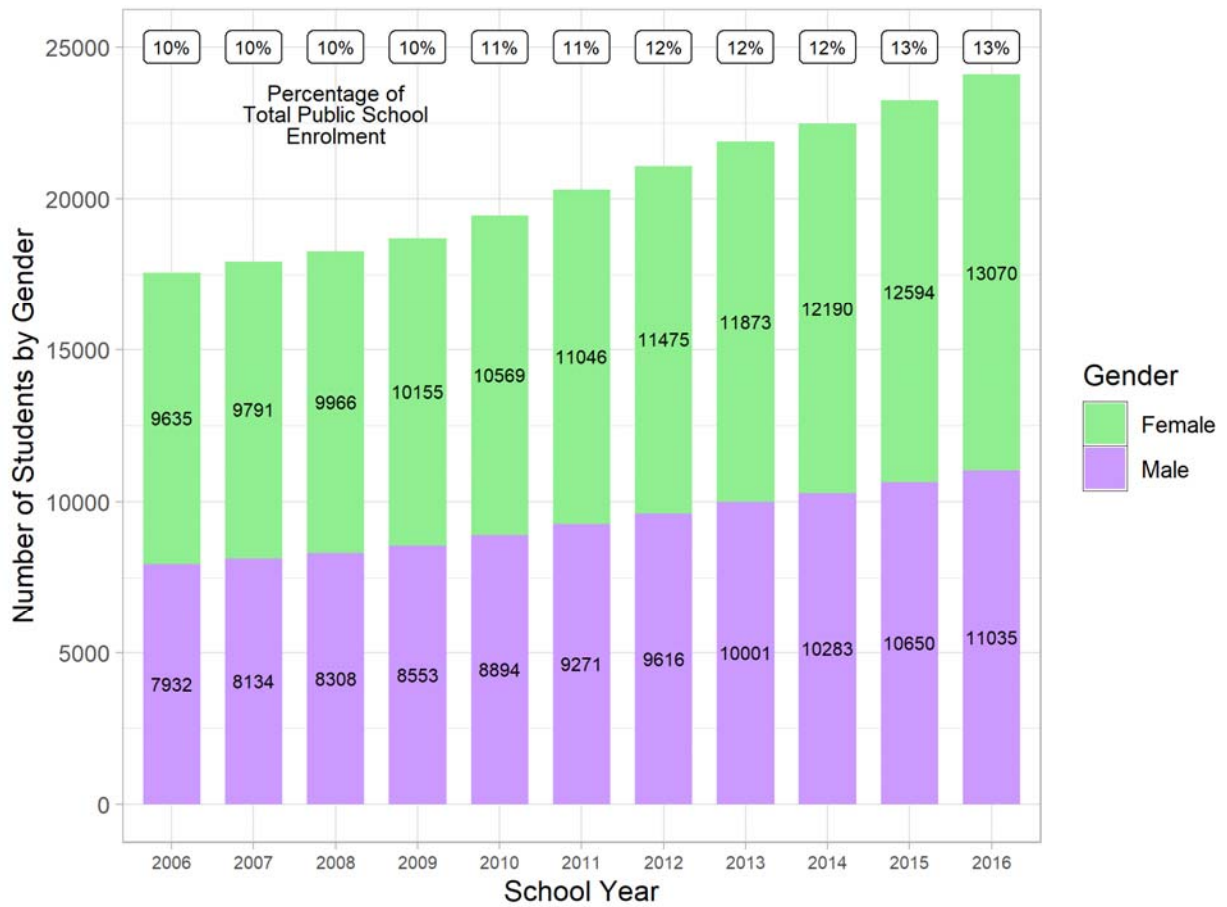


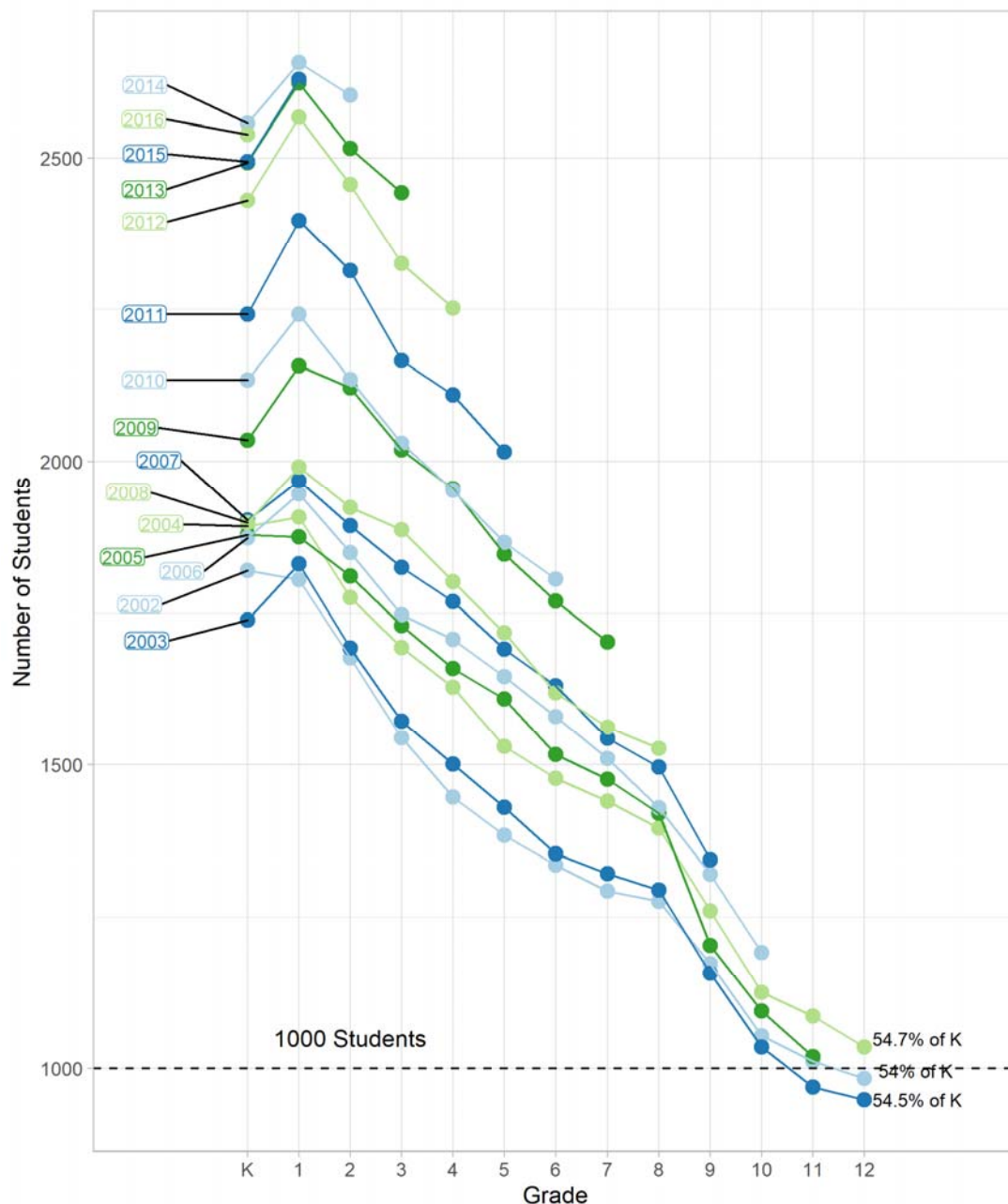
Figure 25 shows the number of students in immersion per grade (follow the year's line across the graph to see the number of students in each grade). It shows the sharp decline in enrolment across the grade levels. While the total number of students in immersion is increasing, as is shown by the lines generally moving up the graph over time, the drop-off pattern remains similar which is to say that, on the whole, the proportion of students leaving the program is the same.

**Figure 26:** Number of French Immersion Students by Gender, and as a Percentage of Total Provincial Enrolment, 2006-2016



- Figure 26 presents essentially the same data as Figure 24, except that it is broken down by gender, rather than grade grouping.
- Figure 26 also shows the change over time in the percentage of French Immersion students as compared to the total provincial public school K-12 population. We clearly see that there was a marked increase from 10% to 13% during this period.
- Female enrolment has also been greater than male in each school year over this 11-year period, representing approximately 54% of all enrolment in French Immersion.

**Figure 27:** Retention of French Immersion Students, by Cohort and Grade Level



- Figure 27 illustrates the annual enrolment of various cohorts as they advance through the French Immersion Program. For example, the 2003 cohort is tracked through to Grade 12, while the 2011 cohort ends in Grade 6 (2016-2017). Note: These synthetic cohorts represent student population only and do not trace outgoing or incoming students.
- There were 1820 and 1739 French Immersion students in Kindergarten in 2002 and 2003, respectively. When those cohorts reached Grade 12 in 2014 and 2015, they numbered 983 and 948, or 54-55% of their numbers in Kindergarten (despite some students only starting in Grades 4 or 7).
- Despite an overall increase in enrolment in French Immersion, figures 25 (enrolment) and 27 (retention) show a decline over the course of the Program.

Enrolment in the French Immersion Program is growing at a faster rate than the K to 12 public school population in general. However, the French Immersion Program is losing nearly half of its Kindergarten students by the time they reach Grade 12. This phenomenon requires further investigation.

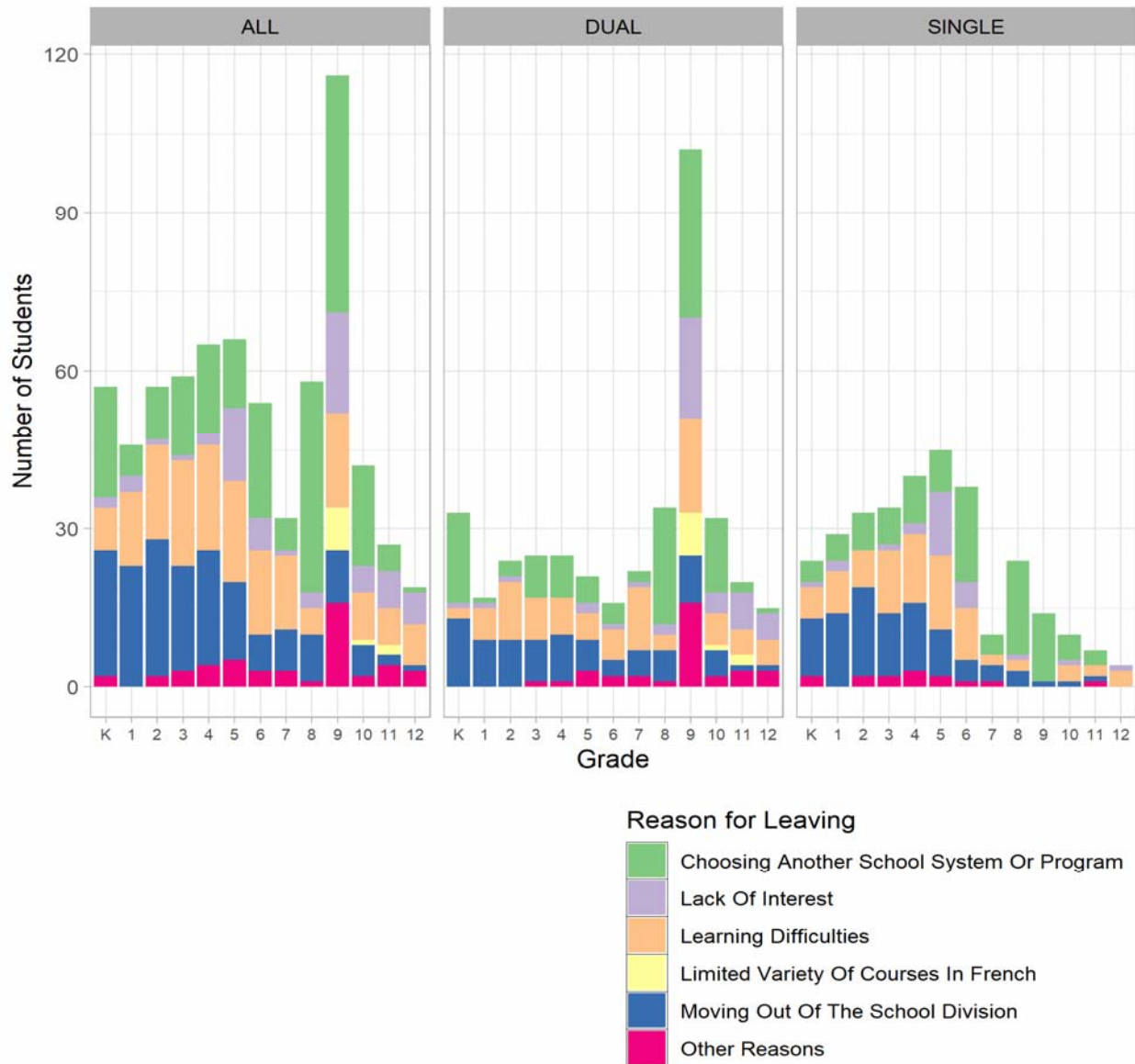
Section 4 of the 2016-2017 abridged questionnaire asked schools to provide data on student enrolment trends in relation to the following factors:

- retention
- visibility and communication

## Retention (Attrition)

12 & 13. Please indicate the number of students per grade level that left the French Immersion Program in your school last year. Under each main reason provided below, please indicate the number of students per grade level that left the French Immersion Program in your school last year.

**Figure 28:** Number of Students Leaving the French Immersion Program



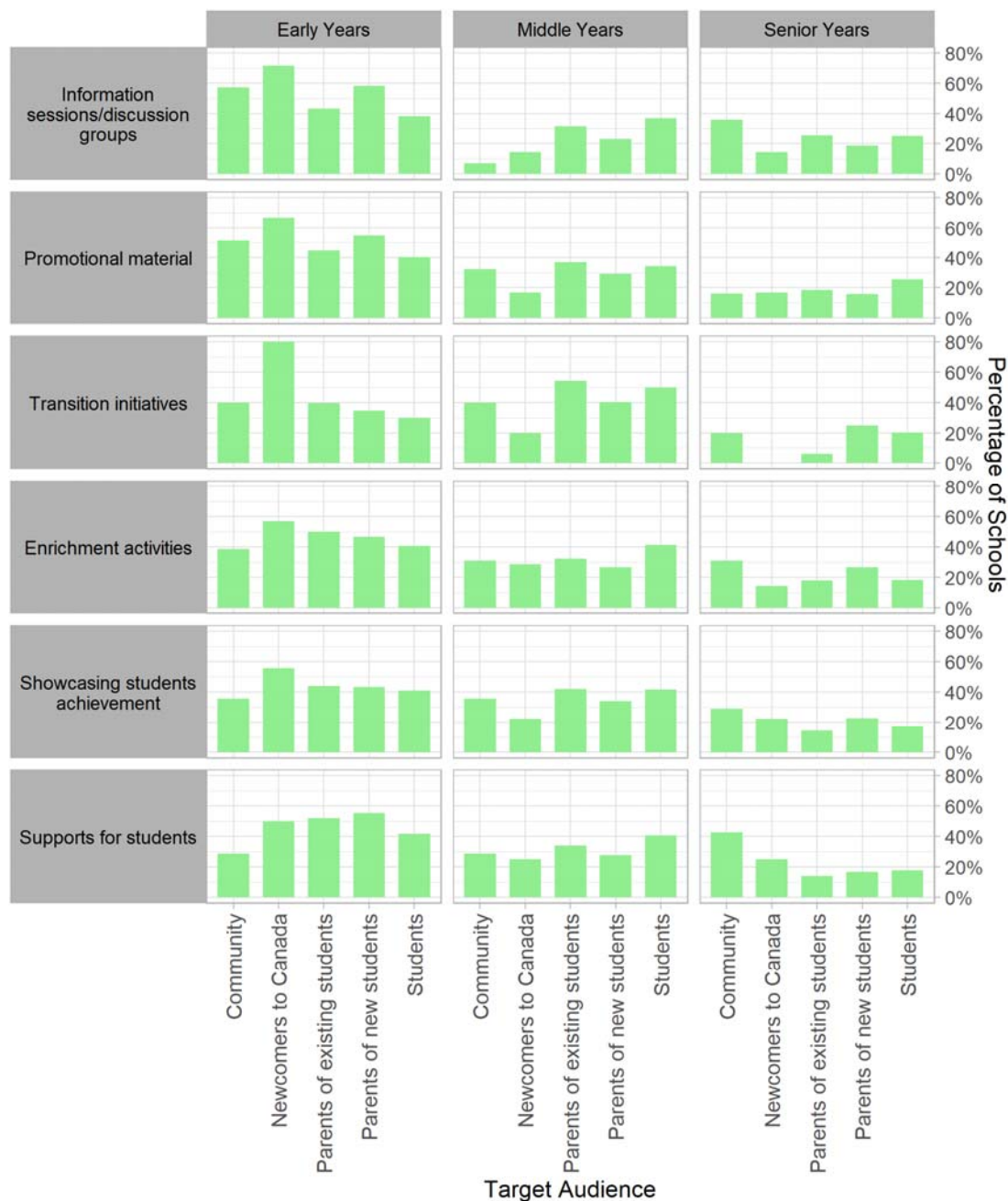
Dual-track schools have significant student losses at the Grade 9 transition point, a trend not observed in single-track schools.

## Visibility and Communication



14. The following types of activities value thus promote the French Immersion Program in school communities. For each type of activity organized in your school in 2016-2017, please indicate which audiences were targeted.

**Figure 29: Percentage of Schools Offering Activities to Promote the French Immersion Program**



Schools report much more communication and promotion emphasis in Early Years than they do in Middle or Senior Years. It is likely that this relates to recruitment and Early Years retention initiatives. As this report shows, there are significant retention issues in Middle and Senior years as well. It may be the case that schools are focused more on recruitment and less on retention. Retention may be impacted by a range of implicit and explicit retention activities and a holistic approach may be required to improve retention of students in the Program.

## Schools' Perceptions of the Student Experience

Schools were asked to answer the following five questions to establish the degree of student success in the French Immersion Program:

- How many students, including students with special needs, **achieve an appropriate level of linguistic competency in French** (determined by grade level taught in your school)?
- Are students **proud of their linguistic competencies**? How many are **confident in their ability to speak French** in various public settings: small and large group discussions/presentations in the classroom, outside the classroom, outside of school?
- How many students are **aware of their own cultural identity and are open to other languages and cultures**?
- How many students **have the confidence and interest to participate in activities in the Francophone community**, here and elsewhere?
- How many students **value the learning of languages as a key to global citizenship**? Do they **see themselves as lifelong language learners**?

**Figure 30:** Schools' Perception of Student Success in the French Immersion Program, by Outcome

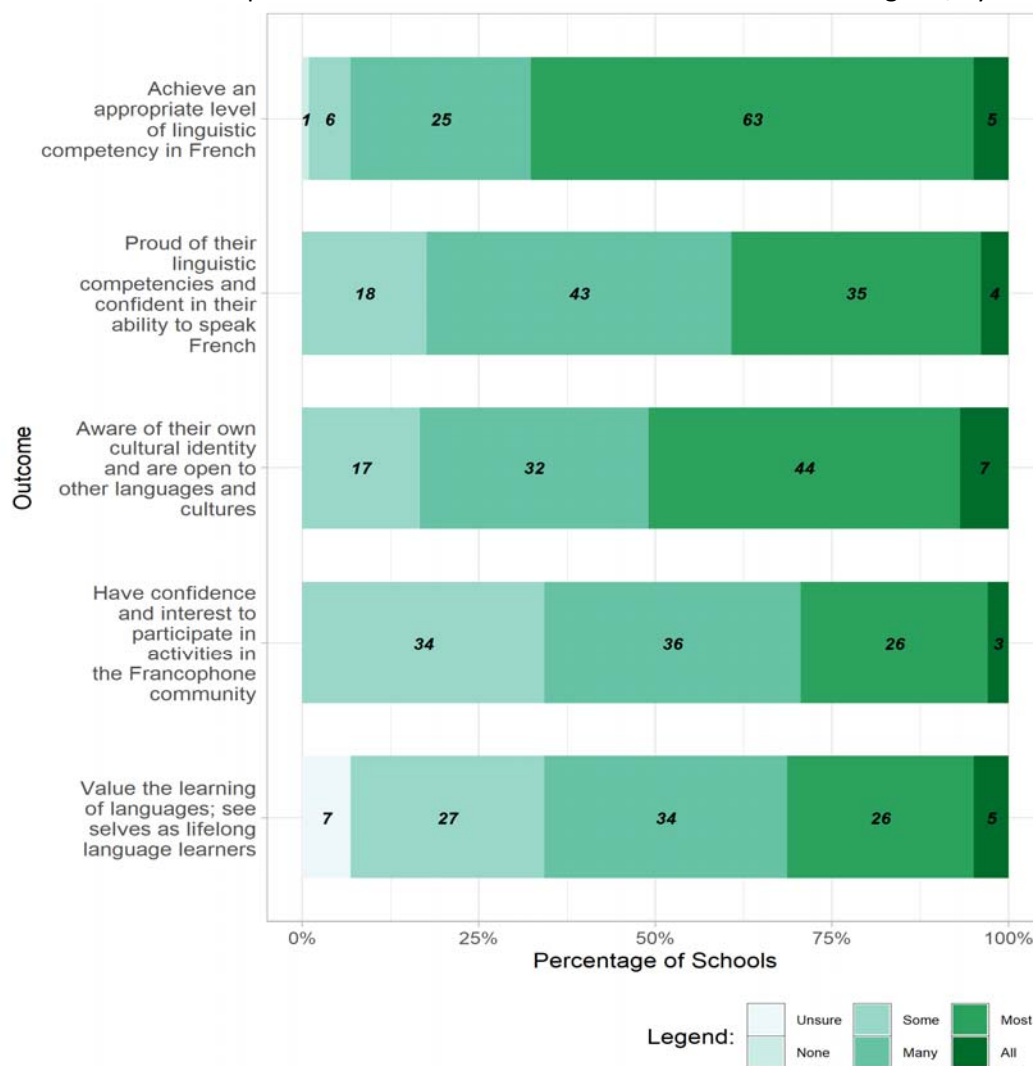
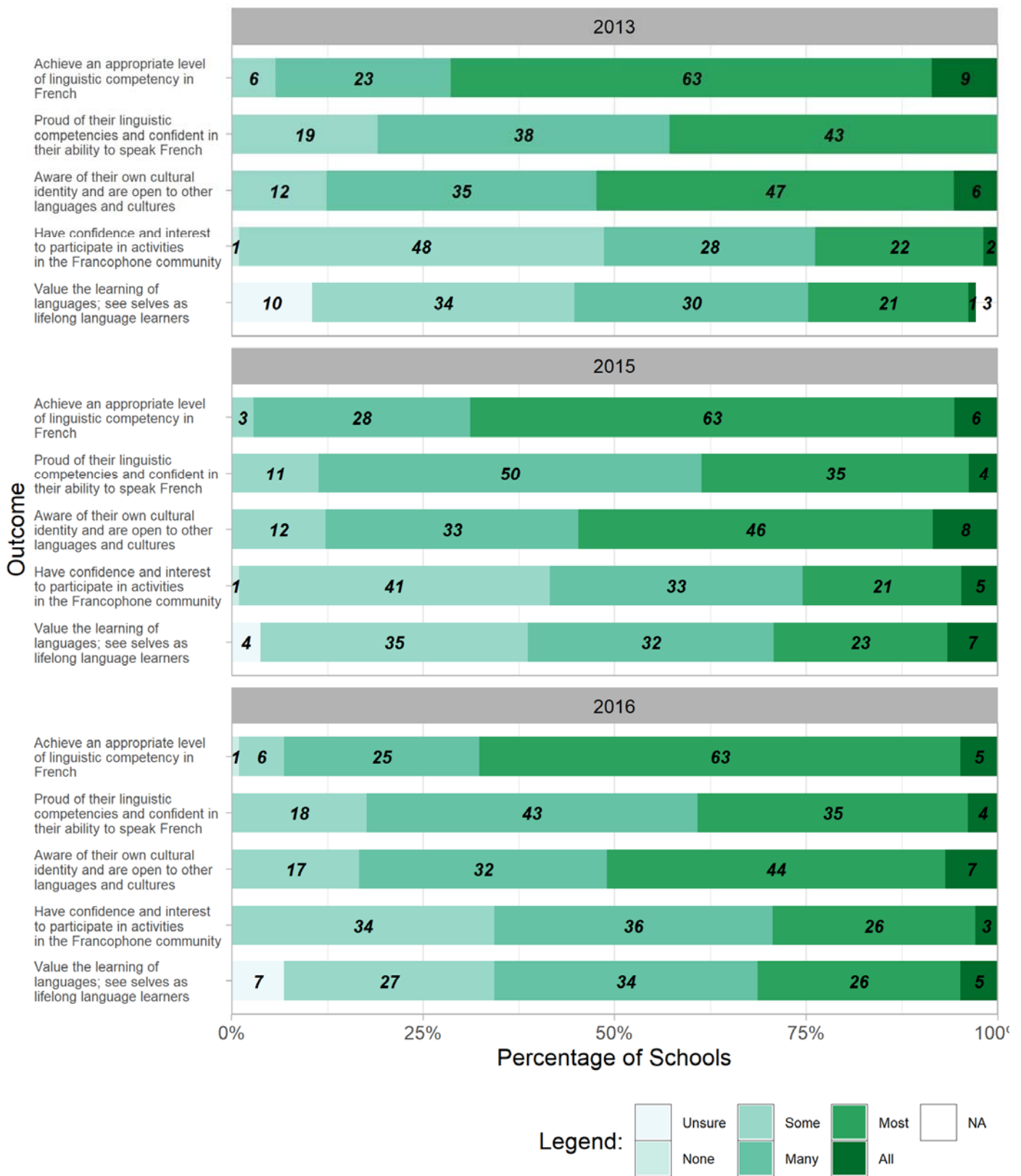


Figure 30 shows that, overall, schools perceive a high level of success in certain aspects of the French Immersion Program, and less in others. Sixty-eight percent of schools report that “most” or “all” (combined) students achieve an appropriate level of linguistic competency in French. Achievement of other outcomes was scored much lower, with half respondents or less reporting success on the part of “most” or “all.”

Note: “Unsure” was only provided as an option for the last outcome listed.



**Figure 31: Schools' Perception of Student Success in the French Immersion Program, by Outcome; 2013, 2015, 2016 Compared**



There have been no significant changes in response to the survey question over the past five years.

## School Initiatives to Further Develop the French Immersion Program in 2016-2017

The table below summarizes the key initiatives (maximum of 5) implemented by schools in 2016-2017. The initiatives are organized according to the four key areas of the questionnaire.

<b>Section 1 – Creating a French Immersion Setting (54)</b>
<p><b>Exposure to the French Language (8)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the percentage of French Language instruction time (2)</li> <li>• Increase the number of French Immersion credits offered at SY levels (1)</li> <li>• Survey students’ interest to determine optional courses to be offered (2)</li> <li>• Increase cultural exposure (2)</li> <li>• Full-time Kindergarten (1)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Educational Staff (3)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase bilingual staff in all positions (3)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Linguistically Rich Environment (42)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase visibility of French language in schools (assemblies in French, articles in French in school newspapers, make all announcements bilingual, display student work, bilingual bulletin boards, etc.) (10)</li> <li>• Increase French signage around schools (9)</li> <li>• Encourage staff members to speak French at all times (3)</li> <li>• Encourage students to speak French during non-instructional time (12)</li> <li>• Create a French Immersion area within a dual-track school (6)</li> <li>• Increase the amount of French heard by students inside and outside the school during non-instructional time (1)</li> <li>• Purchase subject-specific French resources appropriate for all learners (1)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inclusion and Appropriate Support for All (1)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create inclusive classrooms for all learners (1)</li> </ul>
<b>Section 2 - Validation of Students Linguistic and Educational Experience (66)</b>
<p><b>Focus on French Language Acquisition (17)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve students’ French oral language in all subject areas (11) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Create significant, relevant learning situations in which students can practice, develop and improve their French language skills through interactions with subject area content</li> <li>○ Increase usage of French during instructional time</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Develop and incorporate second language methodology in classrooms (the Integrated Approach integrating language and content) (6) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide ongoing corrective feedback that enables students to develop their language repertoire, better understand subject matter content and express themselves correctly</li> <li>○ Create a climate of risk-taking in which making mistakes is viewed positively as a learning tool</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use assessment tools that authentically and specifically assess language competencies</li> <li>• Engage students in discussion around French language acquisition (metacognition) to improve proficiency</li> </ul>
<p><b>Enriched School Environment (17)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrich academic learning through innovative and meaningful activities (8) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Invited guests, workshops, presentation, field trips, projects, use of media</li> <li>○ Expose students to a variety of French language models and accents</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Provide a variety of cultural and social and citizenship experiences to complement students' language learning and extend their intercultural knowledge through classroom, school and community-based activities (9)
- Expose students to French language opportunities available (Explore program, post-secondary education, exchanges, etc.)

### **Impact on Student Learning (15)**

- Support the development of student confidence and engagement in learning and speaking French (9)
  - Create various school and extracurricular activities that support language development and nurture their intrinsic motivation to speak French
  - Provide opportunities to interact with French speakers (students, seniors, members of the Francophone community, members of virtual spaces etc.)
  - Enable student participation in a variety of activities in the Francophone community
  - Guide students to use French outside of school for academic and personal use
  - Introduce students to the various aspects of the Francophone world they can integrate into their lives
- Improve students' numeracy skills and their ability to communicate in French their understanding of math concepts (1)
  - Use a variety of tools to assess students' mathematical skills
  - Encourage the use of different strategies and tools to engage students
  - Encourage students to communicate their mathematical thinking
  - Use data to drive teaching and set goals in developing number sense skills for students
- Improve students' reading and writing skills in French (5)
  - Ensure accessibility to a wide variety of French texts at each level
  - Use a wide variety of tools to assess student reading and writing
  - Use a variety of strategies to support students in their reading and writing abilities (Reading Apprenticeship, Daily 5, *Club de lecture*, cross-grade buddy reading, journal writing, writing corrector)
  - Implement a cross-curricular reading and writing continuum
  - Offer parent literacy sessions to provide strategies and supports for families to support their learners

### **Valuing and Encouraging the Learning of Languages (18)**

- Encourage students to take responsibility for their language learning and the development of their proficiency in French (6)
  - Develop students' intrinsic motivation to speak French
  - Have students set personal goals for language use (student self-assessment, goal setting, reflective portfolio)
- Develop students' plurilingual identity as lifelong learners and speakers (12)
  - Students' identity is constructed by exploring through curriculum different perspectives and ways to view the world
  - Provide opportunities for students to reflect on their experience in French Immersion
  - Discuss the relevance of French in their lives today and in the future
  - Discuss how their identity has been shaped and has evolved as a result of being in French Immersion
- Guide parents as to how to play an active role in supporting and validating their child's French Immersion experience

## Section 3 – Educational Staff and Professional Learning (48)

### Recruitment of Staff (3)

- Hiring practices ensure teachers have the appropriate qualifications
- Hiring practices ensure administrators have the appropriate qualifications to lead a French Immersion school (1)
- Employ a range of strategies to recruit qualified personnel through recruitment fairs, universities and various advertising tools (2)

### Retention of Staff

- Support for new teachers (mentorship, new teacher workshops, observations, French language courses)
- Support for new and experienced administrators (French Immersion administrator meetings, mentorship)

### Professional Learning - Building Teacher Capacity (45)

- Educators meet regularly to discuss topics and research specific to French Immersion (5)
  - vision, *French Immersion in Manitoba: A Handbook for School Leaders*, pd opportunities, availability of cultural experiences, etc.
- Establish networking and planning opportunities for teachers to enhance their professional practice (17)
- Provide opportunities for teachers to attend professional learning sessions pertaining to French Immersion and to various subject areas (18)
  - literacy, numeracy, methodology, assessment practices, language acquisition
- Encourage and support ongoing development of language skills (5)

## Section 4 – Student Enrolment Trends (15)

### Visibility and Communication (2)

- Promote the French Immersion Program through open house, parent information sessions, divisional and school websites, newsletters, partnership with CPF-MB, etc. (1)
- Ongoing communication with parents from K to 12 on various topics to support student success and retention
  - Discuss with students and parents the value of developing one's linguistic and intercultural competencies and that being plurilingual is a viable option in today's society
- Invite parents to participate in organized French cultural school events (1)

### Entry Points and Transition (6)

- Offer parents school visits and information sessions at transition points (3)
- Offer students school visits and information sessions at transition points (1)
- Offer students opportunities to reflect and discuss with others the importance of learning French and remaining in the French Immersion Program (2)
- Expand the French Immersion Program by adding middle or late immersion in the school

### Retention of Students (7)

- Monitor students' enrolment and attrition in French Immersion Program (4)
- Monitor the number of French Immersion graduates
- Ensure appropriate supports are in place when students struggle academically (1)
- Review timetabling at the high school to provide more flexibility for French Immersion Program students (2)
- Establish a procedure for students considering leaving the Program

# Schools' Self-Assessment

## School Initiatives in 2016-2017

Schools were asked to indicate their initiatives (up to a maximum of 5) that built on the successes and/or addressed challenges in the French Immersion Program in the school. They were also asked to assess the level of success of each initiative in meeting the goal of the selected category or key area.

**Figure 32:** Level of Success of School Initiatives, by Key Area

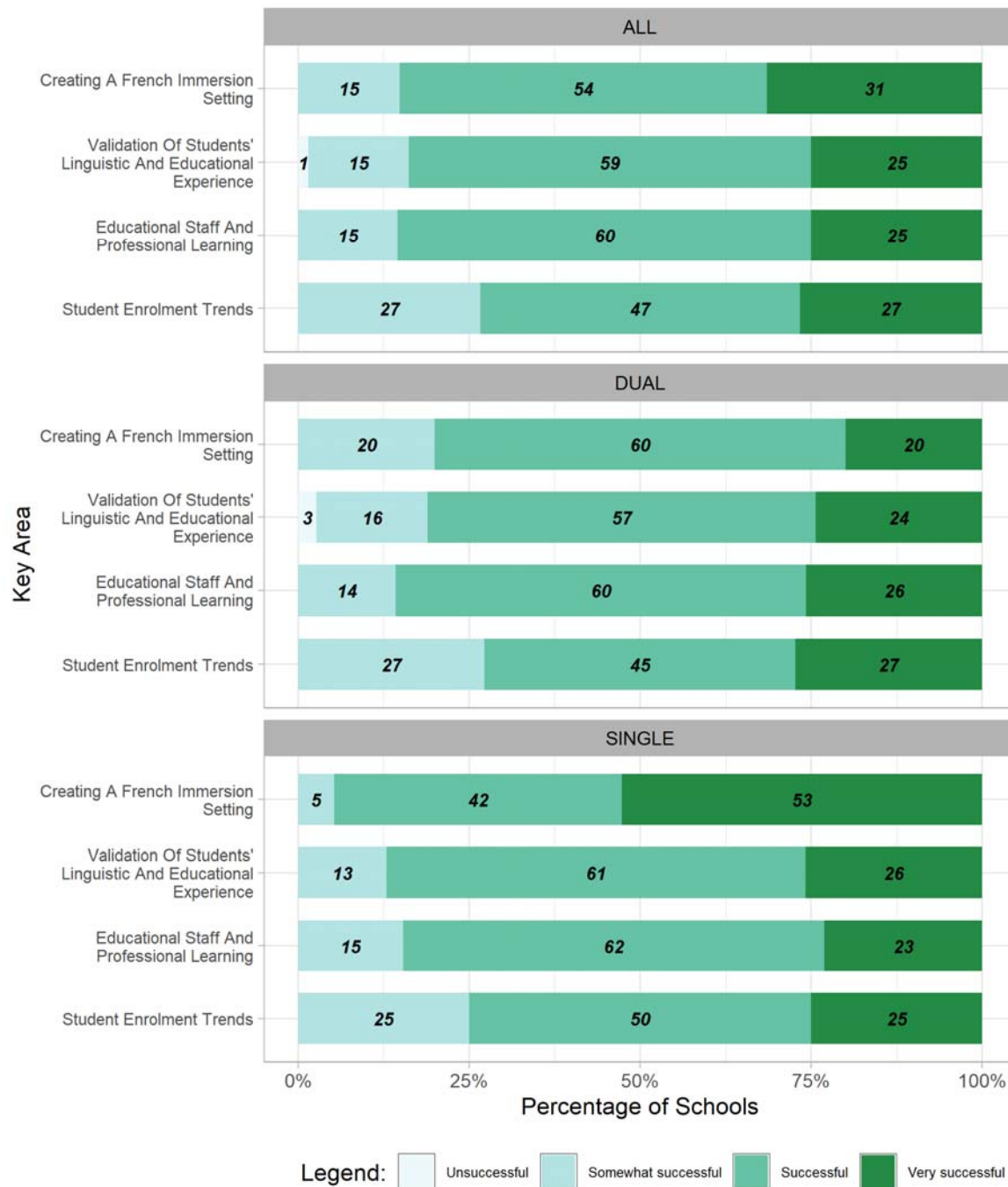


Figure 32 shows schools' assessment of their success in meeting the goal of each key area by implementing initiatives that built on the successes and/or addressed challenges in the 2016-2017 school year. Schools reported their initiatives to be "successful" or "very successful" the vast majority of the time. The main difference between dual- and single-track schools was a greater perception of success by single-track schools in creating a French Immersion setting.

### Overall School Self-Assessment in the Four Key Areas

Schools were asked to assess their level of success in supporting students in the development of their language proficiency, academic success and plurilingual identity in the four key areas:

- Creating a French Immersion Setting
- Validation of Students' Linguistic and Educational Experience
- Educational Staff and Professional Learning
- Student Enrolment Trends

**Figure 33:** Schools' Level of Success, by Key Area and Track

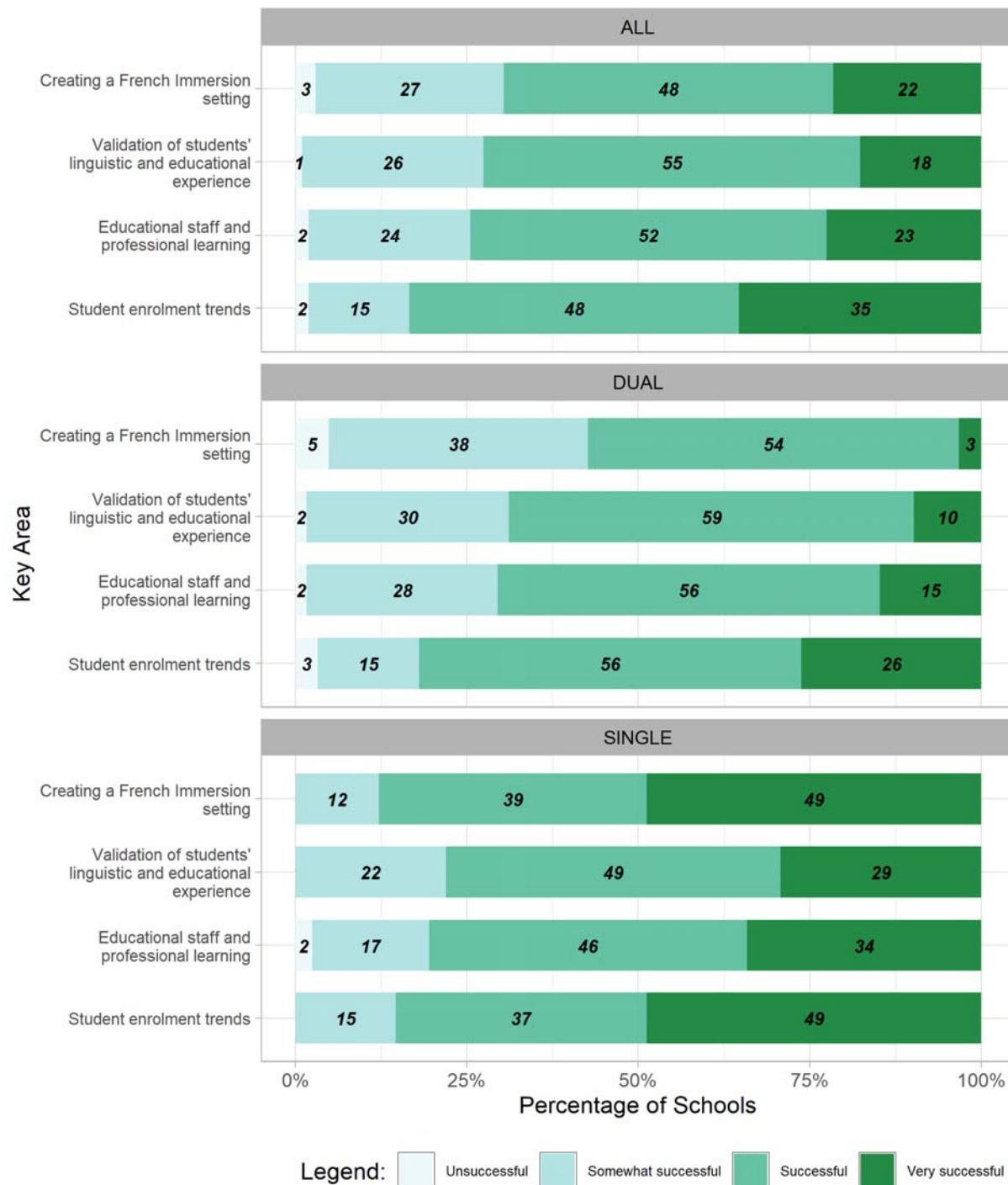


Figure 33 shows the schools' overall assessment of their success in achieving the outcomes in the four key areas to support students in the continual development of their language proficiency, academic success and plurilingual identity.

## Final Observations

Since the 2013-2014 school year, the French Language Education Review has provided a means of measuring the degree of the full implementation of the French Immersion Program by collecting data and tracking progress. During the five-year period, French Immersion schools responded to three surveys pertaining to their Program for the 2013-2014, 2015-2016, 2016-2017 school years.

Survey questions were categorized in the four key areas that support the full implementation of the French Immersion Program:

- Creating a French Immersion Setting
- Validation of Students' Linguistic and Education Experience
- Educational Staff and Professional Learning
- Student Enrolment Trends

In addition, schools responded to questions regarding student experience and also identified initiatives undertaken to build on their successes and address challenges.

The common thread linking these initiatives is the commitment to move towards full implementation of the French Immersion Program in order to create the conditions for students to succeed. This third provincial report shares some comparative results of the data collected during this period, summarizes what has been learned, and presents the areas on which to focus going forward.

### How well are students doing?

French Immersion schools reported their perceptions of student experience in response to questions related to program-expected outcomes reflecting the vision of the French Immersion Program. Of survey respondents for the 2016-2017 report,

- 68% observed that “most” or “all” of the students in their school achieved an **appropriate level of linguistic competency in French**
- 39% observed that “most” or “all” of the students in their school were **proud of their linguistic competencies and confident in their ability to speak French**
- 51% observed that “most” or “all” of the students in their school were **aware of their cultural identity and open to other languages and cultures**
- 29% observed that “most” or “all” of the students in their school had the **confidence and interest to participate in activities in the Francophone community**
- 31% observed that “most” or “all” of the students in their school **valued the learning of languages and saw themselves as lifelong language learners**

Perceptions of student success regarding the program-expected outcomes have remained constant over the five-year period. Given that these questions help to gauge the degree of success in fully implementing the French Immersion Program, further exploration as to why there has been no significant change is needed.

### What factors influence student success?

The factors influencing student success are explained through the analysis of the four key areas of the survey. The schools' overall self-assessment in these areas in the 2016-2017 school year revealed that

- schools perceived their greatest successes (“successful” or “very successful”) in the areas of *Student Enrolment Trends* (83%) and *Educational Staff and Professional Learning* (75%)
- schools felt that they were relatively successful in the areas of *Validating Students' Linguistic and Educational Experience* (73%) and *Creating a French Immersion Setting* (70%), which represents a marked improvement in these two key areas since 2013-2014



To examine the progress over the five-year cycle, it is crucial to analyze the choices that schools have made in order to improve outcomes for French Immersion students.

- What progress have schools made over the past five years in each of the key areas?
- What initiatives have they selected to make that progress?
- To what extent have they focused on the department’s recommendations?

To better understand the progress made, the analysis below examines the successes and challenges in the four key areas and their corresponding subcategories (listed in tables below the key area section headings).

### Creating a French Immersion Setting

Exposure to the French Language	Educational Staff and Personnel	A Linguistically Rich Environment	Inclusion and Appropriate Support for all Students
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Given that the school setting is the foundation necessary to ensuring success for all students, the 2013-2014 report recommended that a more concerted effort be made to improve the French Immersion setting in all schools, particularly in dual-track schools. The department suggested that the subcategory *Linguistically Rich Environment* should be an area of specific focus.

The vast majority (42 of 54) of initiatives reported under *Creating a French Immersion Setting* in 2016-2017 were categorized in *Linguistically Rich Environment*. A smaller proportion, but still a majority of the 2015-2016 report’s *Creating a French Immersion Setting* initiatives fell into this subcategory.<sup>7</sup> The initiatives that schools took in order to create a linguistically rich environment included greater use of French in school activities like assemblies or announcements, French-language signage, and encouraging staff and student use of French during non-instructional time. School divisions have consistently selected initiatives focused on improving the linguistic environment of schools, as they recognize that this area requires continuous attention.

A French Immersion setting is one in which all students, regardless of background or academic inclination, feel welcome and included in a French learning environment. In recent years, a greater proportion of French Immersion students have been identified as English Additional Language learners, with over 1500 immersion students in the four-year EAL funding eligibility window in the 2016-2017 academic year. Large numbers of immersion students, between 9 and 12% (by grade), have declared Indigenous, and roughly 6% of students in schools reporting special needs students (funded or non-funded, but diagnosed) were enrolled in the French Immersion Program. In short, the French Immersion classroom is increasingly diverse. An inclusive setting with appropriate support is therefore required.

In order to support all students in a French Immersion setting, it is key to have the appropriate staff in place. Despite ongoing difficulties with recruitment of bilingual staff, especially in positions requiring teaching certification, immersion schools have maintained commendable proportions of bilingual staff in support, leadership, and teaching speciality roles. Roughly two-thirds of schools have bilingual resource teachers and roughly three-quarters have at least one bilingual educational assistant. Over three-quarters of schools report at least one bilingual principal or vice-principal. However, less than half of schools had French-speaking music teachers, guidance counsellors, custodians or librarians. For schools to successfully create a French Immersion setting, higher proportions of bilingual staff are needed, especially in support, leadership and teaching specialty roles, in order to normalize the use of French as an everyday language.

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<sup>7</sup> In 2015-2016 report, schools reported on any number of initiatives, while in 2016-2017 report the number of initiatives reported on was limited. This limits the comparison that may be made between the years.

A key aspect in the creation of a French Immersion setting is the richness of the linguistic environment in which students and staff spend their days. The usage of French during non-instructional time makes it clear to students that French is not restricted to the classroom and provides opportunities to apply the French language in different context thus giving meaning to their linguistic experience. Although a *Linguistically Rich Environment* was a priority area for school initiatives, there has been no significant change over the five-year period in the use of French during non-instructional time and various school activities. Despite this, the department anticipates future improvement given the priority accorded to the creation of a linguistically rich environment by schools and the long-term change of school culture required to see results.

### Validation of Students’ Linguistic and Educational Experience

Focus on Language Acquisition	Enriched School Environment	Impact on Student Learning	Valuing and Encouraging the Learning of Languages
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The French Immersion Program is based on the philosophy of learning language through content in authentic and meaningful academic, cultural and social situations. In order for students to become effective and confident speakers of French, their experience in the language needs to be reinforced and validated. In the key area of *Validation of Students’ Linguistic and Educational Experience*, the 2013-2014 report recommended that the subcategories of *Focusing on Language Acquisition* and *Impact on Student Learning* should be areas of special focus. This systematic focus on language acquisition is necessary to improve students’ language accuracy and proficiency, building and strengthening confidence and engagement. Likewise, it is necessary to examine program-expected outcomes for students as key measures of student success in the French Immersion Program.

*Validation of Students’ Linguistic and Educational Experience* was the most popular category of initiatives reported by schools, with 66 initiatives in 2016-2017. The initiatives in the four subcategories appeared in roughly equal numbers. Initiatives included the development of relevant learning situations for students to improve their French-language skills while interacting with subject-area content and application of the integrated approach to language learning with its emphasis on corrective feedback in a comfortable risk-taking enabled environment. Other initiatives focused on having students take responsibility for their own learning and the development of plurilingual identities as lifelong language learners. The relatively even balance of initiatives between the four subcategories was not the case in the 2015-2016 report; it had significantly more initiatives in *Focusing on Language Acquisition* and *Impact on Student Learning*. This may be an indication that schools have taken all four subcategories of *Validation of Students’ Linguistic and Educational Experience* into consideration as they worked on developing well-rounded, confident French-speaking students.

The questionnaire surveyed schools regarding the program-expected outcomes that validate students’ linguistic experience. The outcomes each identify an aspect of pedagogical practice that can be used to bring a greater awareness of the French language and its context to students. Although data regarding the program-expected outcomes remain somewhat constant over the five-year reporting period, the following has been observed:

- In both 2016-2017 and 2015-2016, the most frequently addressed outcomes—“always” or “often”—were *Engage in Learning and Using French*, *Improve Language Proficiency* and *Develop Confidence in French Language Skills*.
- There has been a slight improvement (“always” or “often”) in the categories of *Discover and Experience Different Aspects of la Francophonie* and *Engage in Learning and Using French*.
- There has been a slight decrease in all subject matters in the following categories *Motivate Participation in the Francophone Community* and *Identify Themselves as Bilingual Learners*.

- Outcomes were most frequently addressed in the *Français* course, to a lesser degree in *Sciences humaines* and *Science de la nature*, and to some degree in *Éducation artistique* and *Mathématiques*.
- There has been a significant increase in the category *Discover and Experience Different Aspects of la Francophonie* in *Éducation artistique*, *Éducation physique et Éducation à la santé*, and *Mathématiques*.

There remains work to be done to ensure that all program-expected outcomes are addressed more consistently and become part of daily practice in all subject areas, by making language acquisition an integral part of the academic program. Improved focus on these learning outcomes will support students towards achieving academic success, improving engagement and motivation, and nurturing their identities as plurilingual learners and speakers.

### Educational Staff and Professional Learning

Recruitment and Retention of Staff	Professional Learning
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To provide a quality French education for students, the sustainability and growth of the French Immersion Program rely on the recruitment and retention of educators (teachers and school leaders) with the necessary competencies: language skills, cultural knowledge and second language methodology that supports student learning and decision-making. Throughout the five-year period, the data shows that the hiring of educators continues to prove challenging. The 2013-2014 report recommended that, to retain existing personnel, all staff be supported throughout their careers via professional learning. Particular attention should be paid to school administrators to ensure they are well equipped to provide leadership in the school community.

Almost all initiatives in this key area focused on building teacher capacity through professional learning: 45 of 48 in the 2016-2017 report and 43 of 51 in 2015-2016. Activities included networking and planning opportunities, subject-specific sessions and discussions related to the vision of French Immersion Program. As many schools concentrated their initiatives on professional learning, they report that the most frequently addressed professional learning topics in Early, Middle and Senior Years in 2016-2017 included

- *Literacy*
- *Methodology that Supports the Development of Language through Content*
- *The Vision and Philosophy of the French Immersion Program*
- *Numeracy*
- *Subject Specific PD*

Schools also reported on their professional learning priorities, these being distinct from, but related to, the professional learning topics actually addressed. There has been a shift in priorities since the beginning of the five-year reporting cycle. The top priorities identified for all three grade groupings were

- *Literacy*
- *Methodology that Supports the Development of Language through Content*

The focus on literacy and language development through content is most likely due to the rollout of the vision of the French Immersion Program and the government's focus on literacy as a strategic priority.

The recruitment of educators remains a significant challenge to the successful implementation of the French Immersion Program. This highlights the need for retention strategies and succession planning. These could include support for new and experienced administrators and continued professional learning opportunities for educators.

## Student Enrolment Trends

Visibility and Communication	Entry Points and Transition	Retention
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School divisions are experiencing success as French Immersion enrolment is increasing across the province. This increased enrolment often masks the challenges of student retention as approximately half of the French Immersion students leave the Program as they move through the school system. Since attrition poses a challenge to Program stability, it was recommended in the 2013-2014 report that a concerted effort be made to improve K-12 student retention.

For the 2016-2017 report, schools listed few initiatives in this key area, as was the case for the 2015-2016 report. Initiatives under this key area included program promotion and transition-related information sessions, as well as ongoing monitoring of attendance and attrition information.

Activities related to promotion are frequently offered in the Early Years, with far fewer in Middle and Senior Years. It may be the case that schools focus more on recruitment than retention. There needs to be a common understanding that visibility and communication as part of day-to-day school practice explicitly and implicitly create an environment that validates students and engages parents, thereby supporting retention. In addition, there needs to be renewed focus on strategies to support struggling students, to guide students during transition points, and to increase the French Immersion diploma graduation rates.

## Conclusion

Since the 2013-2014 school year, Manitoba's French Immersion schools have been participating in the French Language Education Review. Schools have continued to work to fully implement the French Immersion Program by developing initiatives that build on their successes and address the challenges. As the five-year cycle of data collection has come to an end, it is appropriate to examine the extent to which schools have created a French Immersion Program that values students' experience and encourages them to become proud, engaged, confident, plurilingual global citizens. The analysis of the data over the five-year period reveals the successes and challenges that provide a current portrait of French Immersion in Manitoba today.

This report identifies certain areas of success:

- The French Immersion setting is characterized by an increasingly diverse student population and supported by significant levels of bilingual staff. Many initiatives have been implemented over the past five years to create a linguistically rich environment.
- *Validating students' linguistic and educational experience* is the key area of greatest focus with the largest number of initiatives implemented. An impressive amount of work over the five-year period has focused on pedagogical methods conducive to the acquisition of French for the purpose of improving students' language proficiency.
- Much professional learning is occurring across the province to support building teacher capacity in the French Immersion Program.
- Enrolment in French Immersion has increased steadily across the province during this five-year period.

These areas of success are essential, but insufficient to achieve full implementation of the French Immersion Program in all schools across Manitoba. Challenges still remain.

- It is still difficult to create and maintain a truly immersive environment, especially in the dual-track schools, due to the difficulty in recruiting qualified bilingual staff, particularly in the speciality areas, and the lack of visibility of French and opportunity to use it throughout the school.
- Program-expected outcomes, especially language acquisition, are not addressed consciously and consistently in all subject areas and school activities.
- Recruitment and retention of qualified personnel (teachers and school leaders) remain a challenge and affect the quality and accessibility of the Program.
- Student attrition continues at a significant rate from Kindergarten to Grade 12, posing a challenge to Program stability, especially at transition points, and impacting French Immersion diploma graduation rates.

These challenges impact the degree of full implementation of the Program, which consequently impact the quality of the students' French Immersion experience.

Going forward, it is recommended that collaboration and dialogue between schools, school divisions, and the Bureau de l'éducation française (BEF) continue as we collectively work to respond to the evolving needs of the French Immersion Program and improve the degree to which all schools implement the Program. **We must continually reflect on the question: How do we sufficiently engage students in learning and using French so that they acquire the linguistic competencies necessary to communicate effectively, become confident in their linguistic abilities, and see the relevance of French in their lives as they live as plurilingual members of society?**

Overall program success will be achieved by successfully targeting key initiatives where challenges have been identified in order to support students in the continual development of their French language proficiency, academic success and plurilingual identity.