

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.

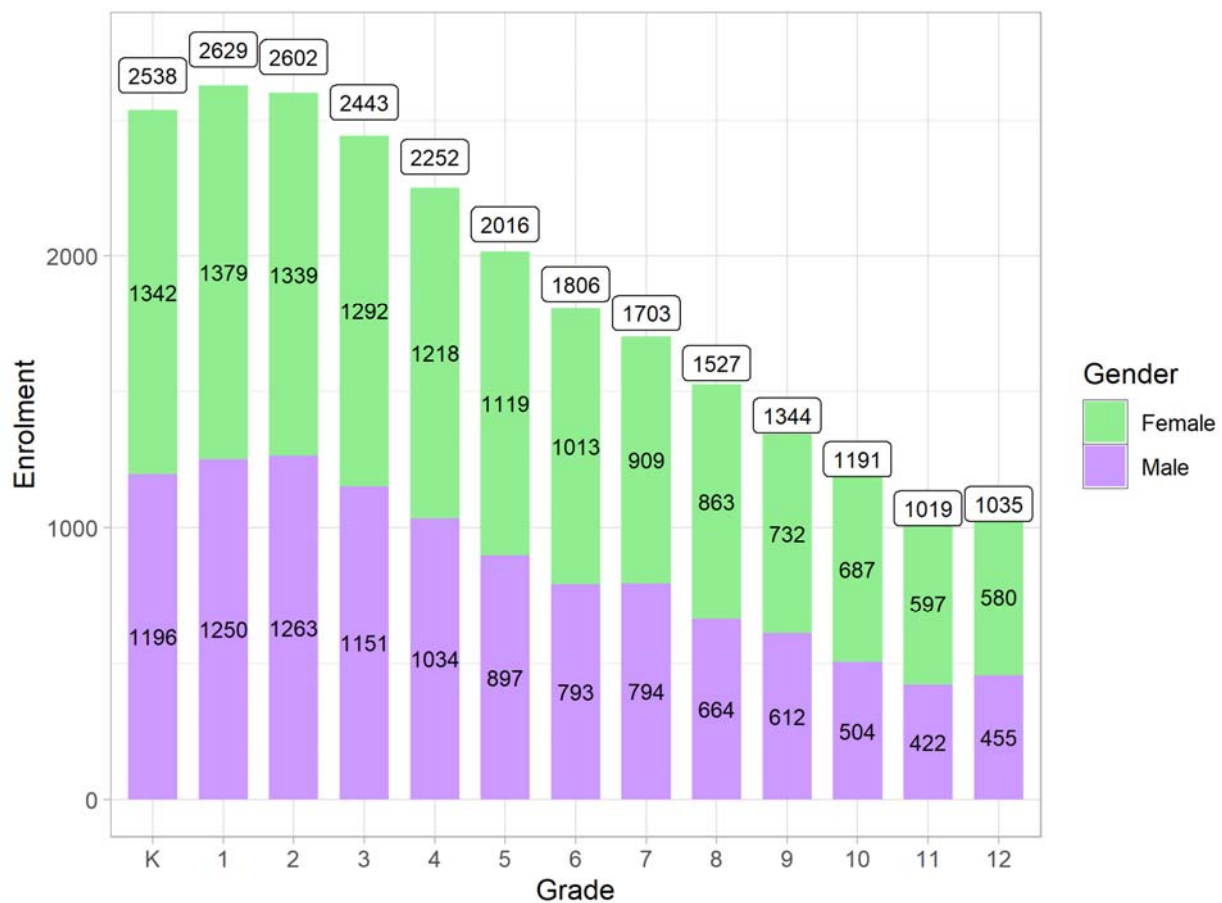
Note: The data is from Manitoba Education's EIS database, and generally speaking, it reflects the most recent data from 2016. There may be slight differences in relation to earlier reports, as adjustments have been made retroactively to correct errors.

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.

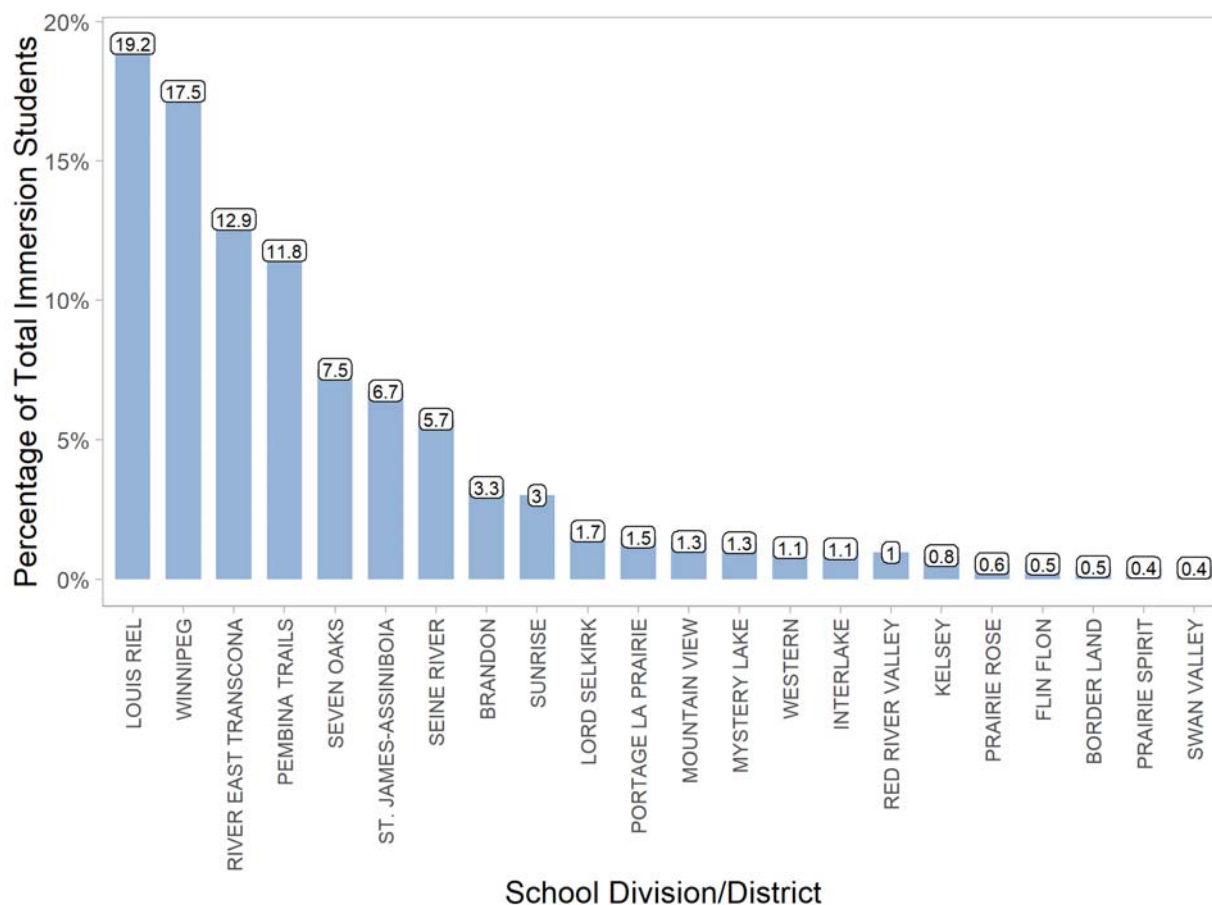
Other Key Current Year Observations:

- 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.

Student Population⁶ (Manitoba Public Schools)	Urban Schools	Rural Schools	Northern Schools
183,015 students	107,592 students (58.8%)	63,563 students (34.7%)	11,860 students (6.5%)
24,105 French Immersion students	19,028 students (78.9%)	4,427 students (18.4%)	650 students (2.7%)
153,301 English Program students	85,732 students (55.9%)	56,439 students (36.8%)	11,130 students (7.3%)
5,609 Français Program students	2832 students (50.5%)	2697 students (48.1%)	80 students (1.4%)

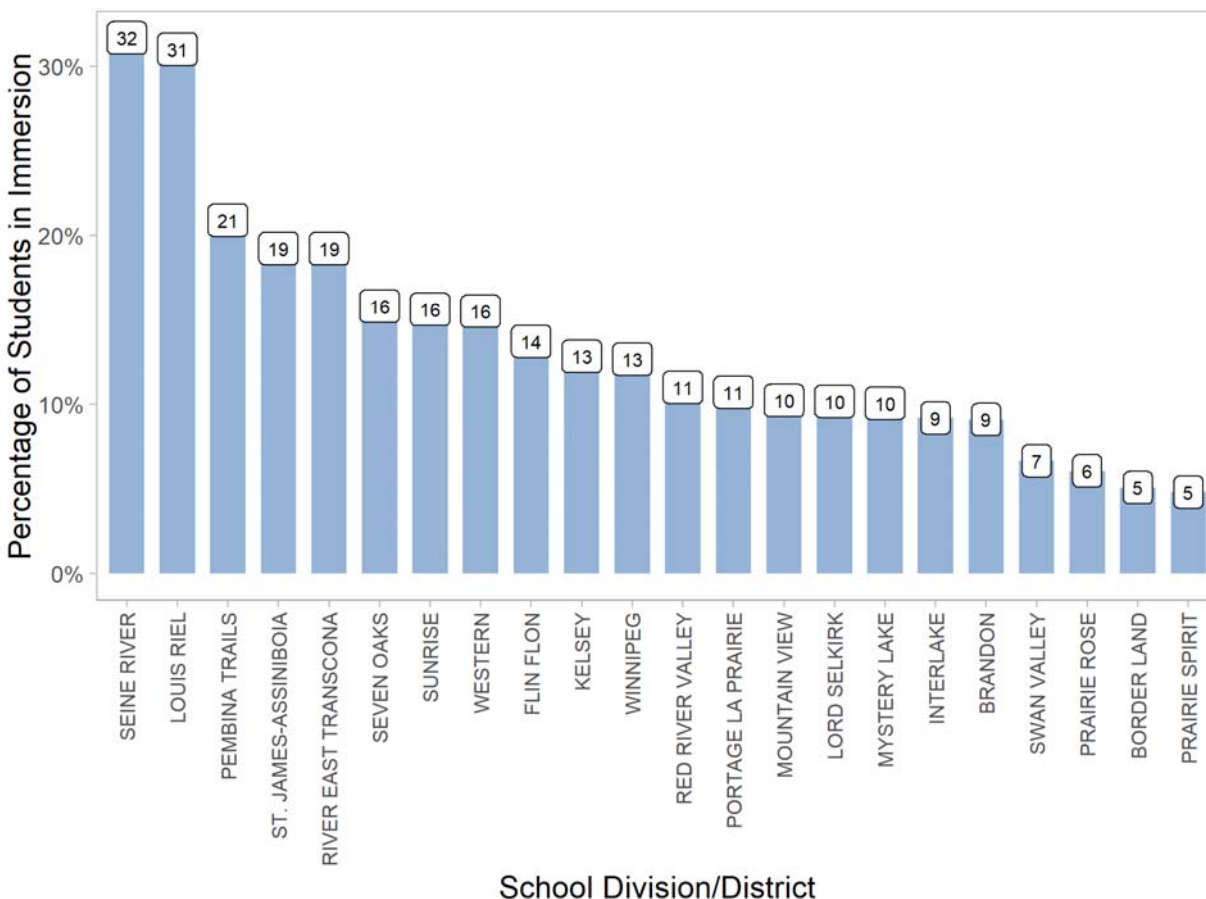
⁶ These counts are of students with eligible enrolment in public schools, in all grade levels except nursery. For the definition of urban, rural and northern schools, see footnote on page 4.

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

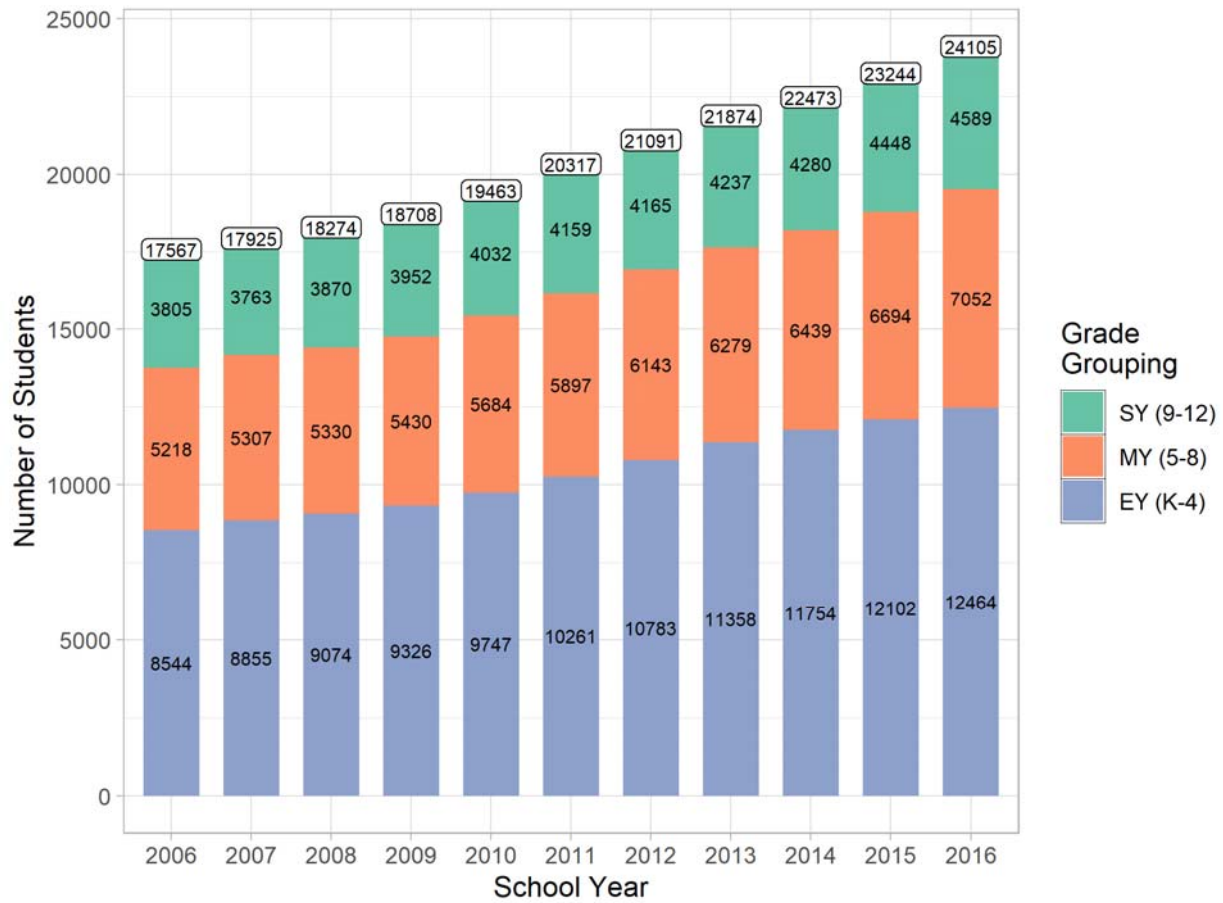


Figure 24 presents the distribution of French Immersion enrolment by grade grouping (Early Years, Middle Years, and Senior Years) for the school years 2006-2007 to 2016-2017. The graph clearly shows that, as enrolment has risen over the period, the distribution among the three grade groupings has remained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

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

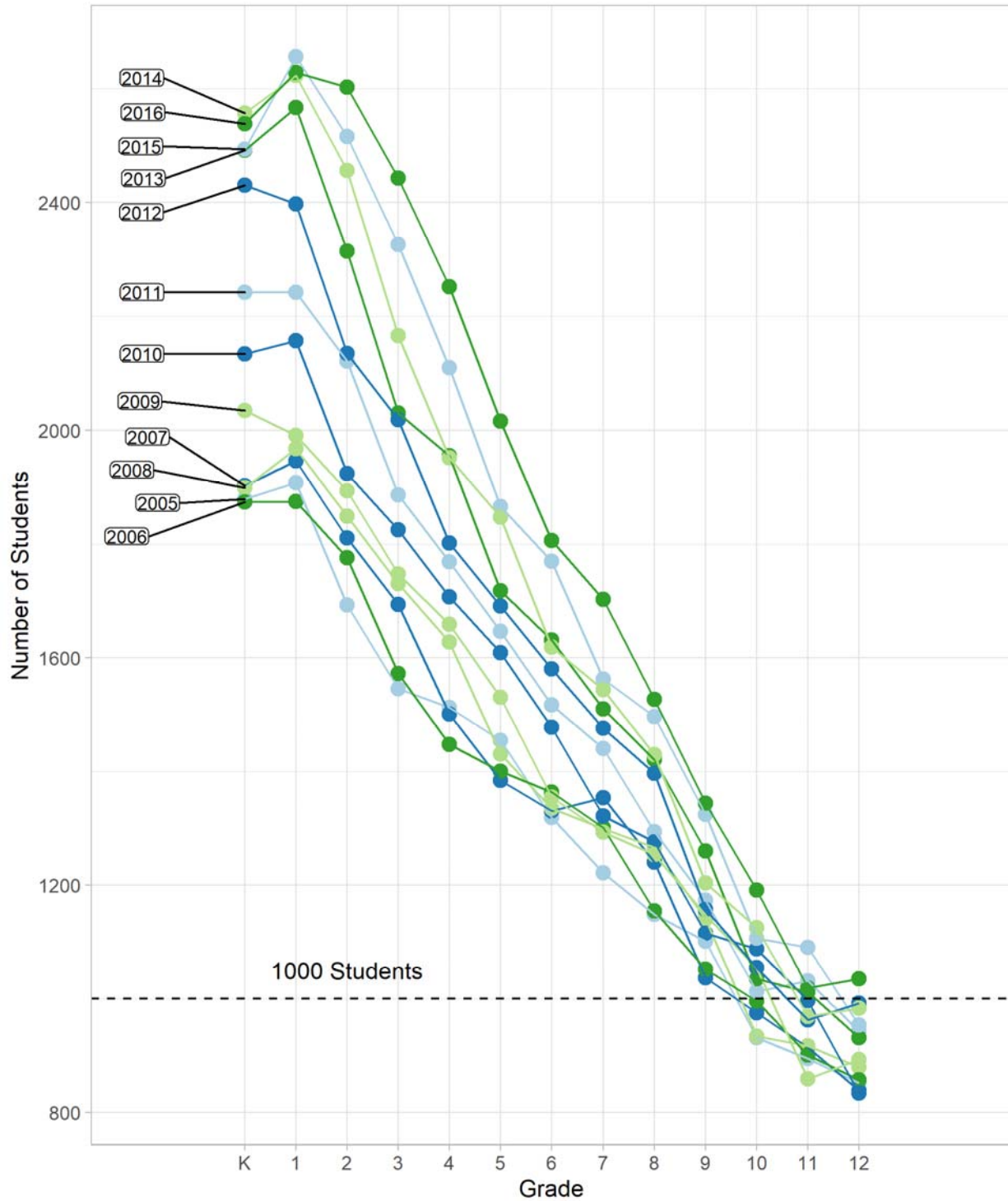
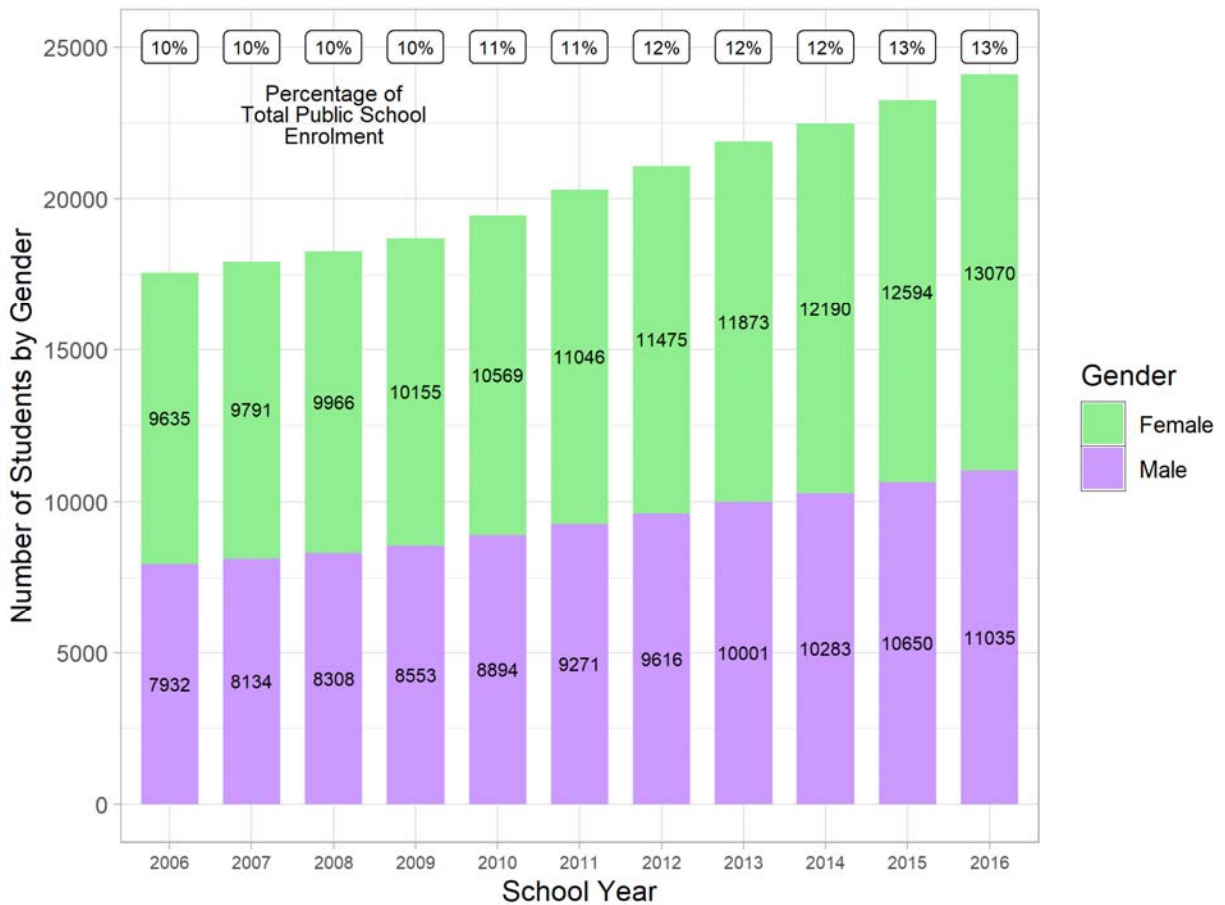


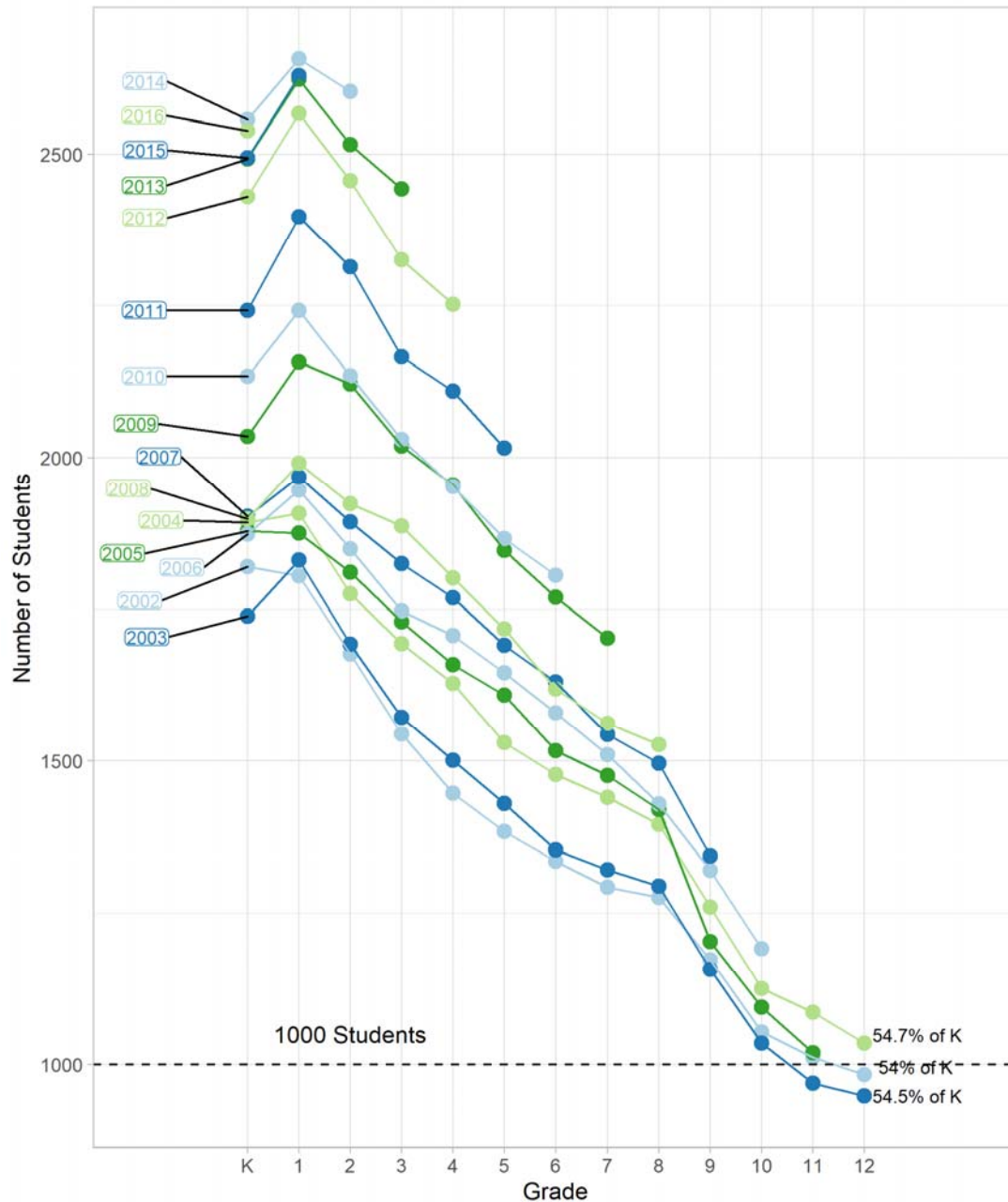
Figure 25 shows the number of students in immersion per grade (follow the year's line across the graph to see the number of students in each grade). It shows the sharp decline in enrolment across the grade levels. While the total number of students in immersion is increasing, as is shown by the lines 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.

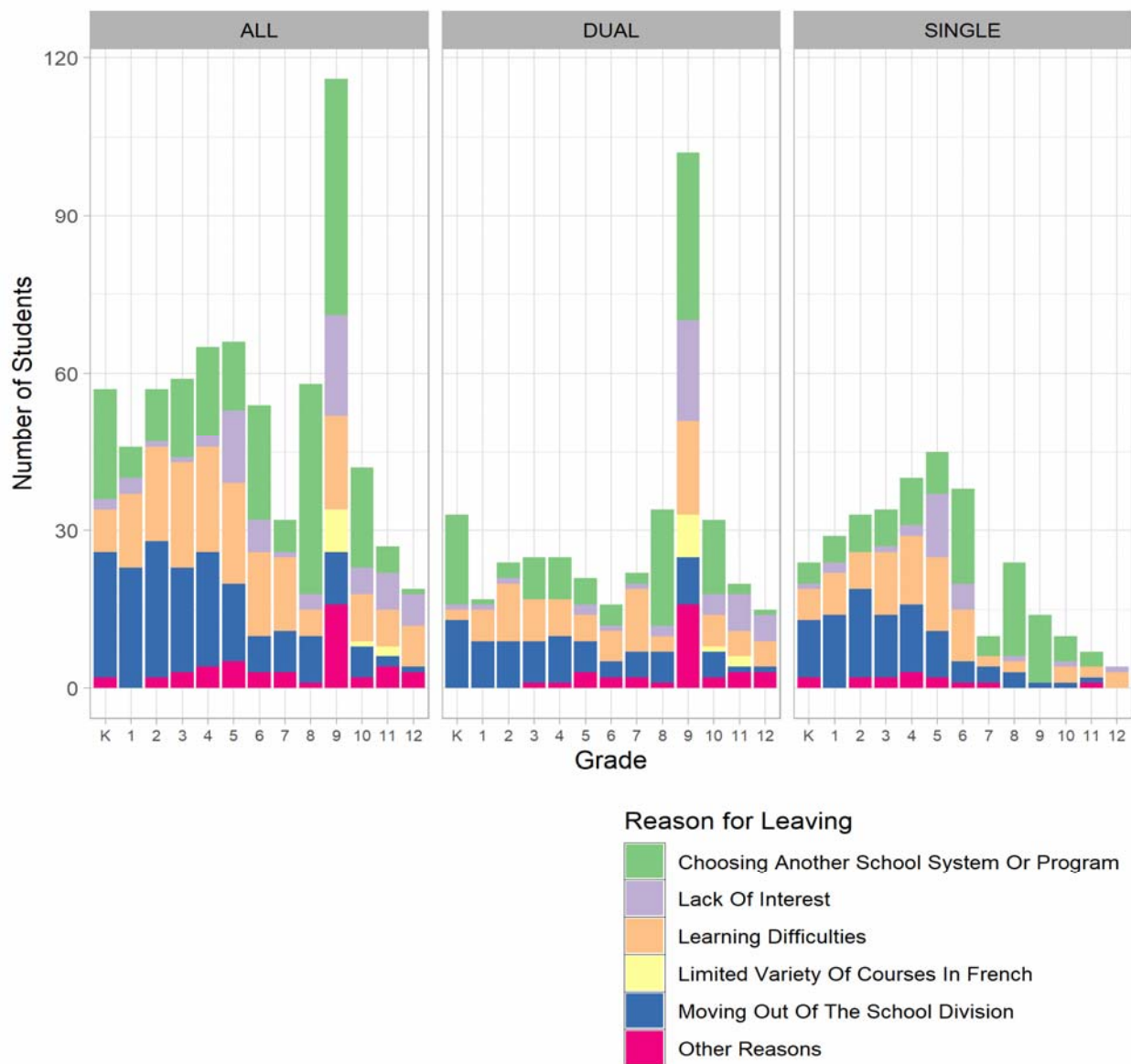
Section 4 of the 2016-2017 abridged questionnaire asked schools to provide data on student enrolment trends in relation to the following factors:

- 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

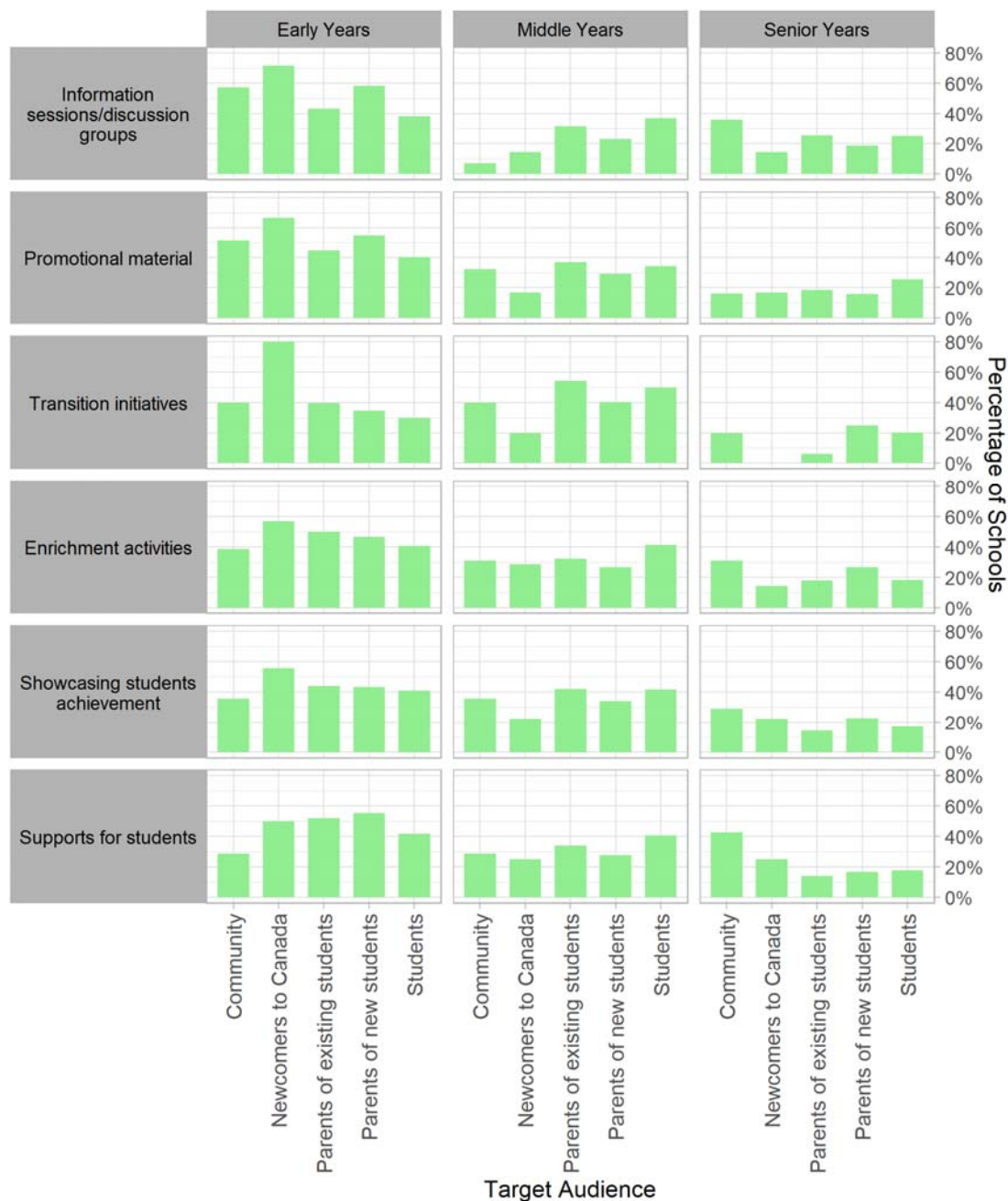


Dual-track schools have significant student losses at the Grade 9 transition point, a trend not observed in single-track schools.

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.