




OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



NAVIGATING THE FUTURE

2024 OCDSB ELEMENTARY
PROGRAM REVIEW



The OCDSB strives to provide the best education possible for all of our students. Improving program quality and accessibility is a strategic priority. This document provides an overview of our current elementary program offerings, school configurations, enrolment data, and achievement analysis. Understanding this information and how it affects student learning, resource allocation, and system operations is a first step in addressing our strategic priority of improving program quality and accessibility.



Table of Contents

Why?4

OCDSB Elementary Programs6

French Language Instruction7

Supporting Special Education Needs8

Schools and Grade Configurations10

A Balanced School Day12

Enrolment Data13

Elementary Program Enrolment Trends15

Program Streaming & Achievement Analysis18

Additional Considerations

- **Transportation**19
- **Other Delivery Models**19

Opportunity for Change20

Resource Materials21

Why?

Need for Action

Between November 2022 and March 2023, the OCDSB undertook extensive community consultation to better understand the issues that students, parents, and staff think would most improve student learning and well-being. The insight was tremendous, and the [OCDSB Consultation Report 2023-2027](#) identifies six emergent themes: Learning; Well-being and Belonging; Teaching; School and Classroom Environment; Curriculum and Programs; and Board and Administration. In all of these areas, there was a clear call to action on the need to address program quality, accessibility, awareness, and equity of access and opportunity. The Board responded to this call to action with a clear commitment in its 2023-2027 Strategic Plan to improve program quality and accessibility for all students.

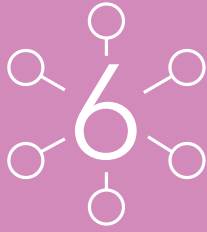
Policy Framework

The District currently works with a designated community school model which seeks to provide programming options for students in their designated school, as close as possible to their home community. This model is defined by policy for both elementary and secondary schools.

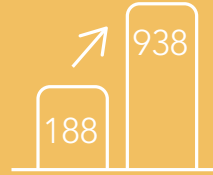
- [POLICY P.139.CUR](#) - Changes To Programs And Program Delivery Structures At Elementary Schools
- [POLICY P.105.CUR](#) - Changes To Programs And Program Delivery Structures At Secondary Schools

Every elementary school has a defined geographic attendance boundary that the school serves. The geographic boundaries may differ by program. This is where the community school model becomes more complex.

Operational Realities



We offer 6 different programs at the elementary level



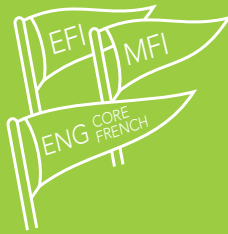
Elementary schools range in size from 188 to 938 pupil places



We are currently operating schools with 8 different elementary grade structures



The majority of schools offer dual track programming (usually ENG and EFI)



Some schools offer triple track programming (ENG - Core French, EFI, MFI)



We have equal numbers of Single Track ENG and EFI schools



We operate 5 Alternative schools which serve the entire geographic boundary



We have two special education schools (Crystal Bay and Clifford Bowey)

143
PROGRAM
CLASSES
66 SITES

We currently operate 143 elementary specialized program classes in 66 sites



We offer elementary remote learning (OCV)

OCDSB Elementary Programs

OCDSB elementary students have access to a wealth of program options, all of which include some French as a Second Language Instruction. Starting with a two-year full-day Kindergarten program, students then move to one of our English language elementary programs which are described below.

Program	Description of Program and Language of Instruction
Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 for students age 4 by Dec 31 • Year 2 for students age 5 by Dec 31 • 50% instruction in English • 50% instruction in French
English (with Core French)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins in any grade, starting in Grade 1, although students can be welcomed at any grade • All subjects are taught in English with the exception of Core French learning • 40 minutes of Core French instruction per day
Early French Immersion (EFI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins in Grade 1, although students can be welcomed up to Grade 3 • In Grade 1, 80% of instruction is in French; 20% of instruction in English (Math) • In Grades 2-6, 60% of instruction in French with 40% of instruction in English (Math and English Language) • In Grades 7-8, 50% of instruction in French with 50% of instruction in English (Math and English Language)
Middle French Immersion (MFI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins in Grade 4, although students can be welcomed up to Grade 6 • In Grades 4-6, 66% of instruction in French with 34% of instruction in English (Math and English Language) • In Grades 7-8, 50% of instruction in French with 50% of instruction in English (Math and English Language)
Alternative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offered at 4 schools in Grades 1-6 (Churchill, Lady Evelyn, Regina, Riverview) • Offered at 1 school in Grades 7-8 (Summit Alternative) • Pedagogy aligned with student-centered learning, guided by the following tenants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperation and teamwork - Innovative approaches - Balanced student-directed and teacher-directed learning - Multi-age groupings - Integrated curriculum - Family and community-centered school environment - Ongoing assessment and evaluation
Ottawa-Carleton Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students across the district are welcome at all grade entry points, K-8 • Students can learn in an English program with 40 minutes of core French or in a French Immersion program with 50% of their learning in English and 50% of their learning in French • Learning is structured and scheduled in alignment with in-person schools entirely synchronous and virtual

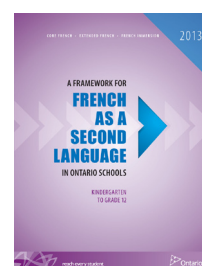
Elementary French Language Instruction

French as a Second Language (FSL) instruction is built on the Ministry curriculum requirements. Regardless of the amount of French instruction, the common goal is to maximize opportunities for students to reach their full potential in terms of confidence, proficiency and achievement in FSL, as well as the federal objective to promote linguistic duality. All programs are child-centered and focus on the concurrent development of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Whether the language of instruction is English or French, students study the same curriculum content by grade.

“Knowledge of an additional language strengthens first-language skills. The ability to speak two or more languages generally enhances cognitive development, as well as reasoning and creative-thinking skills. It also enhances the student’s confidence as a learner, facilitates the learning of additional languages, and contributes to academic achievement.”

[The Ontario Curriculum 2013 French as a Second Language](#)

[A Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools, 2013](#)



Vision and Goals for French as a Second Language - Core, Extended, and Immersion Grades 1 to 12

Vision

Students will communicate and interact with growing confidence in French, one of Canada’s official languages, while developing the knowledge, skills, and perspectives they need to participate fully as citizens in Canada and in the world.

Goals

In all French as a second language programs, students realize the vision of the FSL curriculum as they strive to:

- use French to communicate and interact effectively in a variety of social settings;
- learn about Canada, its two official languages, and other cultures;
- appreciate and acknowledge the interconnectedness and interdependence of the global community;
- be responsible for their own learning, as they work independently and in groups;
- use effective language learning strategies;
- become lifelong language learners for personal growth and for active participation as world citizens.



Most Recent Changes to OCDSB French as a Second Language Programming

In 2016, after an extensive review, the OCDSB introduced a two-year bilingual kindergarten program where students receive 50% of their instruction in English and 50% in French. As a part of this decision, changes were also made to the number of minutes of French Language instruction in the English with Core French, MFI, and EFI programs, and changes to the language of instruction in certain subject areas. The goal was to improve program quality, improve program access, support learning needs, enhance learning opportunities, support numeracy development, and better support parental decision-making.

Hours of Instruction Matter

Any changes to French as a Second Language programming must consider the number of hours of French instruction relative to established Ministry requirements. The total number of hours of instruction in French influences student pathways at the secondary level, as well as entitlement to certificates of accomplishment.

Supporting Special Education Needs

Special Education Support in the Community School

The majority of OCDSB students with special education needs are served through programming at their community school in the regular classroom. All elementary schools have an in-school special education team which includes Learning Support Teachers (LSTs), Learning Resource Teachers (LRTs) and Educational Assistants (EAs). Schools are also supported by a robust multidisciplinary team which is also critical to supporting a revised inclusion model (i.e., they will be doing different work, not less, focused on supporting students in their classrooms in their community schools).

Students Served in Reg Classrooms	6,221
Students Served in Specialized Program Classes	1,246
TOTAL	7,467

*2023-2024 data subject to change

Specialized Program Classes

The District also offers Specialized Program Classes (SPCs) which accommodate approximately 2000 students across the District. There are 11 types of elementary SPCs that support students with specific exceptionalities and/or learning profiles. While SPCs can be partially integrated, the majority are fully self-contained.

A total of 143 elementary SPCs are currently offered and are distributed across 66 elementary school sites. The OCDSB currently serves almost 1 in 5 (17%) elementary students with special education needs in a SPC. The vast majority are fully self-contained classes with little to no opportunity for integration for students.

Move to Inclusive Education Practices

Provincially, nationally and internationally, school districts are shifting systems to embed inclusive education practices. The current elementary program framework is not designed on the principles of inclusion. More specifically,

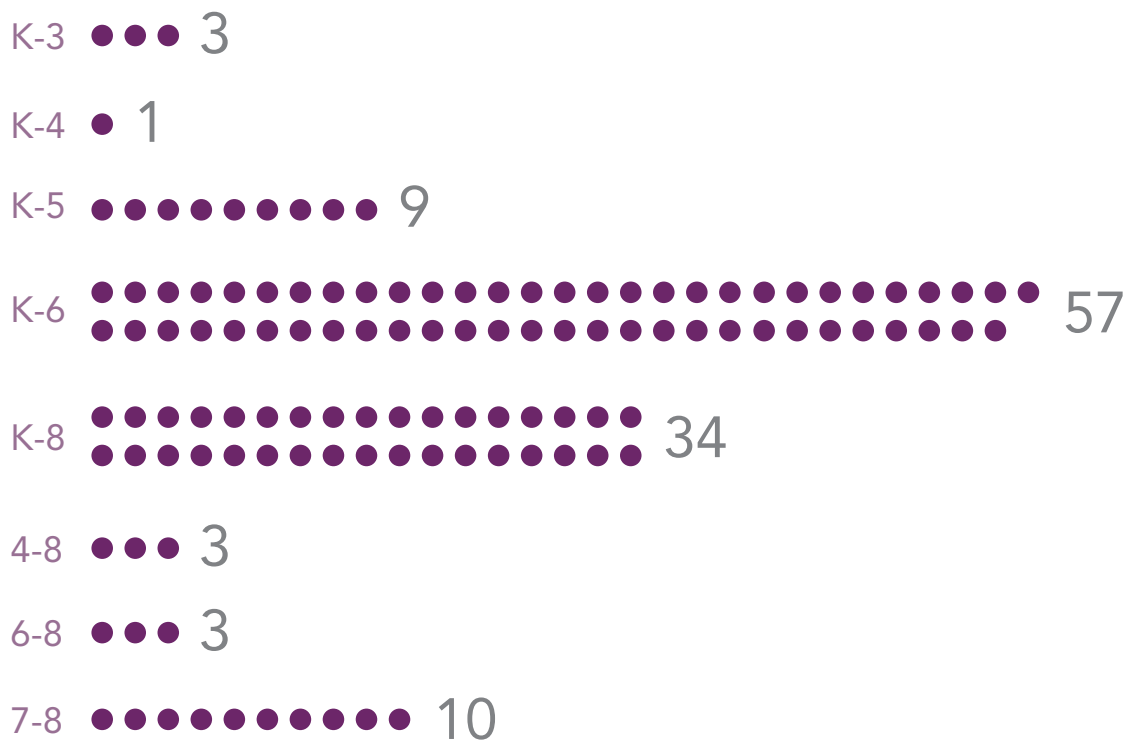
- the majority of students with special needs are supported in the English program;
- there is a disproportionate distribution of specialized program classes (SPCs) to schools with English programs;
- specialized Program Classes are adversely impacted by pupil accommodation limitations affecting where these classes can be located; and
- students with special education needs are more likely to experience a higher number of school transitions to access programming.

The Elementary Program Review is an opportunity to build equitable structures to advance inclusive education practices that support students while making better use of District resources.

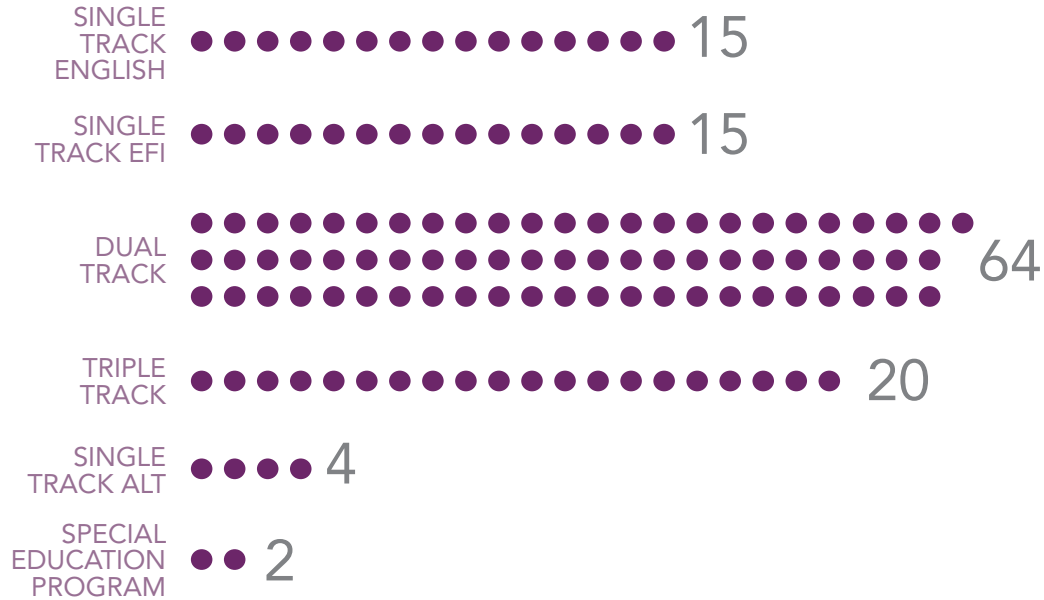
Schools and Grade Configurations

The OCDSB has 8 different elementary school configurations. In 2016, the Board approved changes to the elementary program framework encouraging elementary school configurations to be K-6 or K-8. Of our 90 elementary school sites (plus OCV), over 70 schools are either K-6 or K-8; 10 are intermediate sites (5 of which are in 7-12 schools); and 10 schools have unique configurations. The number of school configurations affects both program offerings and access to programs.

Number of Schools by Grade Structure



Number of Schools by Grade Structure



Dual Track Breakdowns



The District runs 6 different program tracks in elementary schools - single track, dual track, triple track, and special education schools. These are offered in a number of different configurations. The majority of elementary schools (64) offer dual track programming, most commonly English with Core French and Early French Immersion. There are 20 sites with triple track programming. The number and combination of program offerings per school, combined with the grade configuration can impact the number of transitions required by students or groups of students.

A Balanced School Day

The elementary school day was traditionally designed with morning recess, lunch, and afternoon recess. Today, a balanced school day is more common. The day is divided into three instructional blocks, separated by two 40-50 minute nutrition breaks.

A balanced school day operates during the same school start and finish times, but the blocks of learning time are reworked to better support student learning. The number of teaching minutes and the number of recess minutes per day remain the same. The number of transitions is reduced and the learning time increased.

Example	
Instructional Period	8:30 am to 10:30 am
Nutrition Break	10:30 am to 11:15 pm
Instructional Period	11:15 am to 1:15 pm
Nutrition Break	1:15 pm to 2:00 pm
Instructional Period	2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Some advantages to the Balanced School Day schedule, include:

- more uninterrupted instructional time;
- improved student concentration and energy levels;
- greater task completion for both students and educators;
- positive influence on student achievement and well-being; and
- more time for daily physical activity and play.

Enrolment Data

The OCDSB has slightly more than 75,000 students; approximately 50,000 elementary and 25,000 secondary students. Generally speaking, this translates to approximately 5,000 students per grade annually. The following tables provide an overview of enrollment data and trends.

Total Enrolment Statistics					
Panel	P	Cap	Oct 22	Oct 21	+/-
Total Elementary	219	55,901	51,229	50,012	1,217.00
Total Secondary	160	31,836	25,575	24,822	753.00
GRAND TOTAL	379	87,737	76,804	74,834	1,970.00

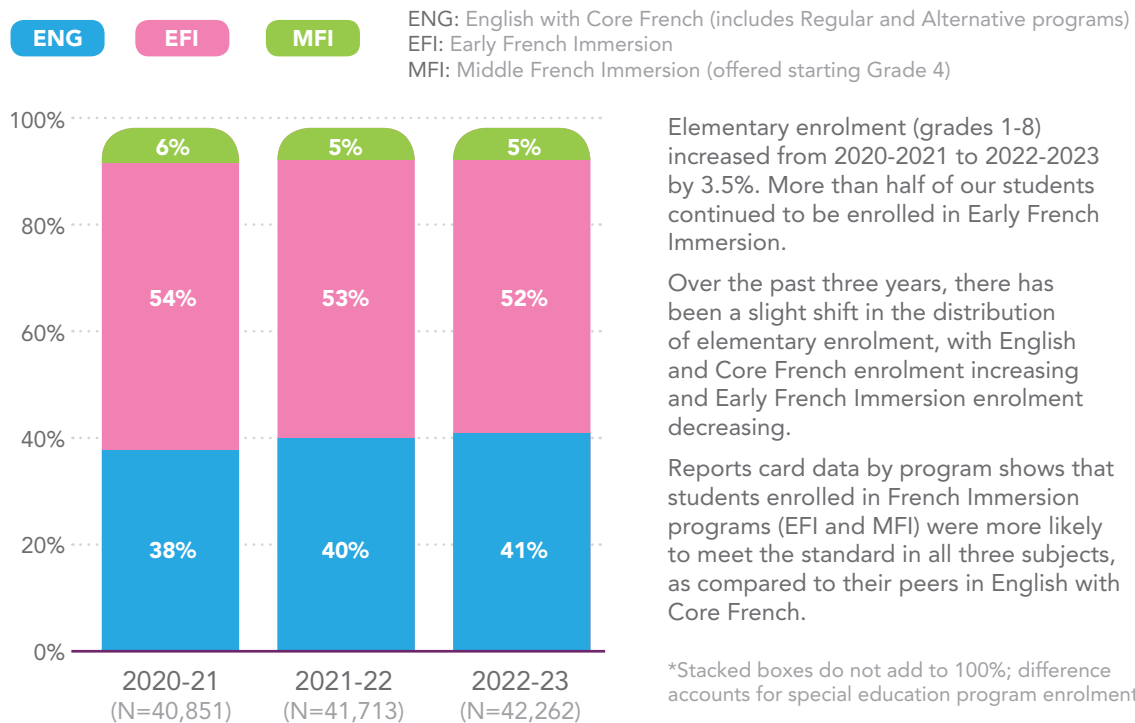
	PROGRAM								VIRTUAL SCHOOL				TOTAL ELEMENTARY
	KGTN	ENG	EFI	MFI	SPC ENG	SPC EFI	Alternative	Sub-Total	KGTN	ENG	EFI	Sub-Total	
Yr 1	4,332							4,332	25			25	4,357
Yr 2	4,813							4,813	50			50	4,863
1		1,471	3,303		3		92	4,869		16	25	41	4,910
2		1,655	3,140		3		88	4,886		46	28	74	4,960
3		1,942	2,988		0		99	5,029		51	28	79	5,108
4		1,757	2,766	386	1		115	5,025		59	31	90	5,115
5		1,922	2,646	408	10	20	97	5,103		53	32	85	5,188
Subtotal	9,145	8,747	14,843	794	17	20	491	34,057	75	225	144	444	34,501
6		2,125	2,527	392	15	29	96	5,184		76	31	107	5,291
Subtotal	9,145	10,872	17,370	1,186	32	49	587	39,241	75	301	175	551	39,792
7		2,295	2,260	389	16	37	68	5,065		73	28	101	5,166
8		2,343	2,197	420	32	32	59	5,083		85	39	124	5,207
SE		755					28	783				0	783
DD		281						281				0	281
Oct 22 Total	9,145	16,546	21,827	1,995	80	118	742	50,453	75	459	242	776	51,229
Oct 21 Total	8,489	14,631	21,189	2,139	107	106	669	47,330	329	1,366	987	2,682	50,012
+/-	656	1915	638	-144	-27	12	73	3123	-254	-907	-745	-1,906	1,217

SECONDARY TOTALS

Program	Pre Grade 9	9	10	11	12	21 & Older	Other	Oct 22 Total	Oct 21 Total	+/-
Regular	92	5,518	5,484	5,475	5,848	10	217	22,644	20,997	1,647
Adaptive	0	83	102	95	167	1	235	683	665	18
Alternate	0	4	24	115	596	38	0	777	814	-37
Adult High School	0	0	0	0	209	588	0	797	831	-34
Launch Program	0	0	0	0	27	4	0	31	17	14
Sub-Total	92	5,605	5,610	5,685	6,847	641	452	24,932	23,324	1,608
Virtual School	Pre Grade 9	9	10	11	12	21 & Older	Other	Oct 22 Total	Oct 21 Total	+/-
	0	95	129	151	268	0	0	643	1,498	-855
Total Secondary	92	5,700	5,739	5,836	7,115	641	452	25,575	24,822	753

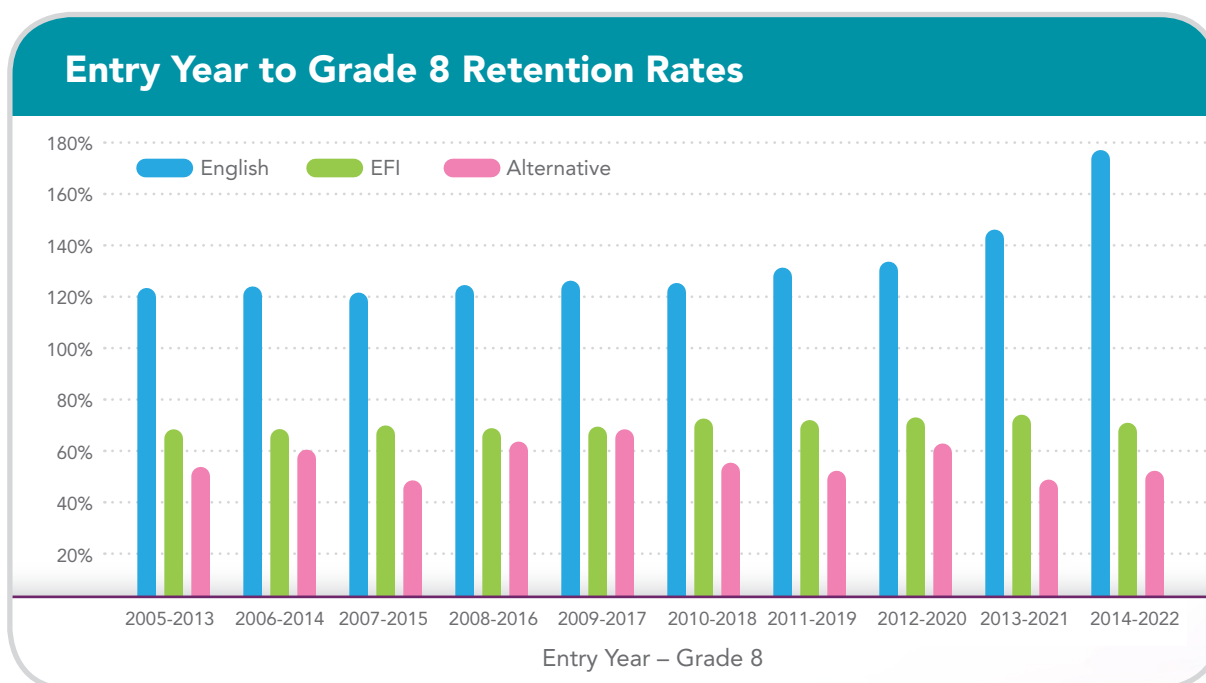
Over the course of the grades in the elementary programs, there are shifts in the enrolment from program to program. There are a number of factors for consideration in planning discussions related to these shifts, including 'entry points' for some programs and not others, for instance.

Elementary Program Enrolment (Grades 1-8)



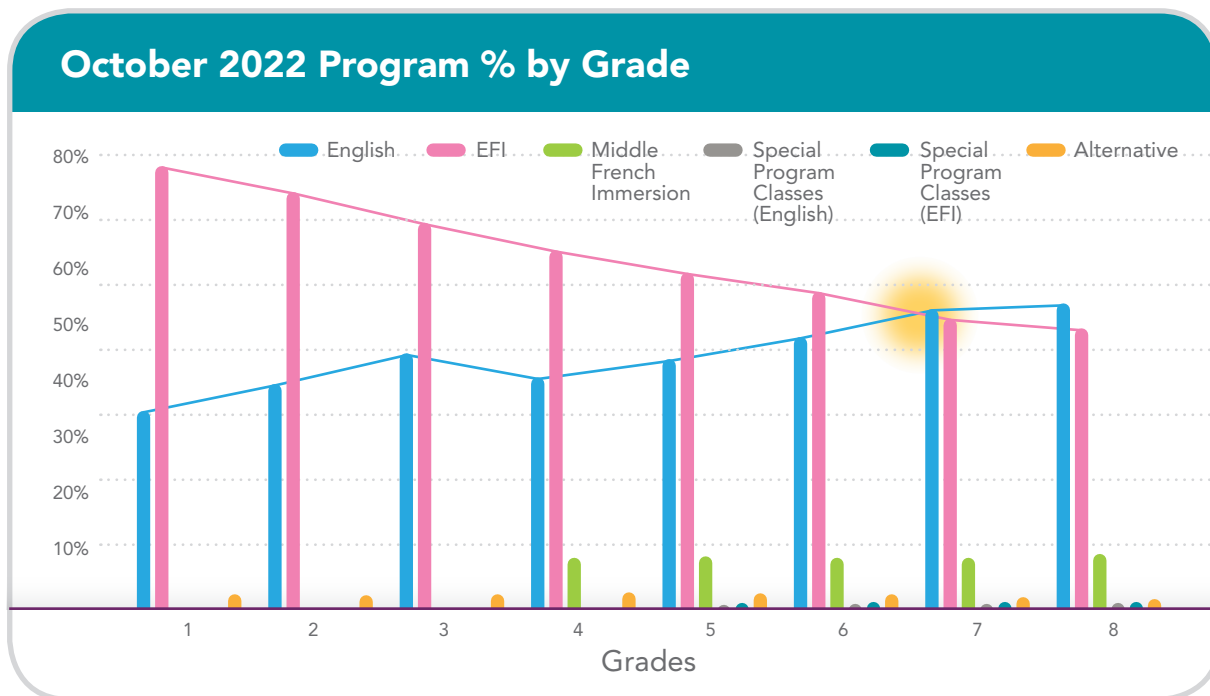
Elementary Program Enrolment Trends

There are a number of programs available to students in Grade 1. The EFI intake at the Grade 1 level is strong, with almost 65% of students opting for EFI in Grade 1. However, by Grade 8, the percentage drops to 43%. The ENG Core French intake in Grade 1 is almost a third (30%) of our students, and the ENG Program grows slightly by the end of Grade 8, in part, as a result of 'entry points' established for some programs and not others, as previously noted.



Note: prior to the implementation of the 50/50 Kindergarten program in 2016 students entered Early French Immersion or English in Year 2 Kindergarten.

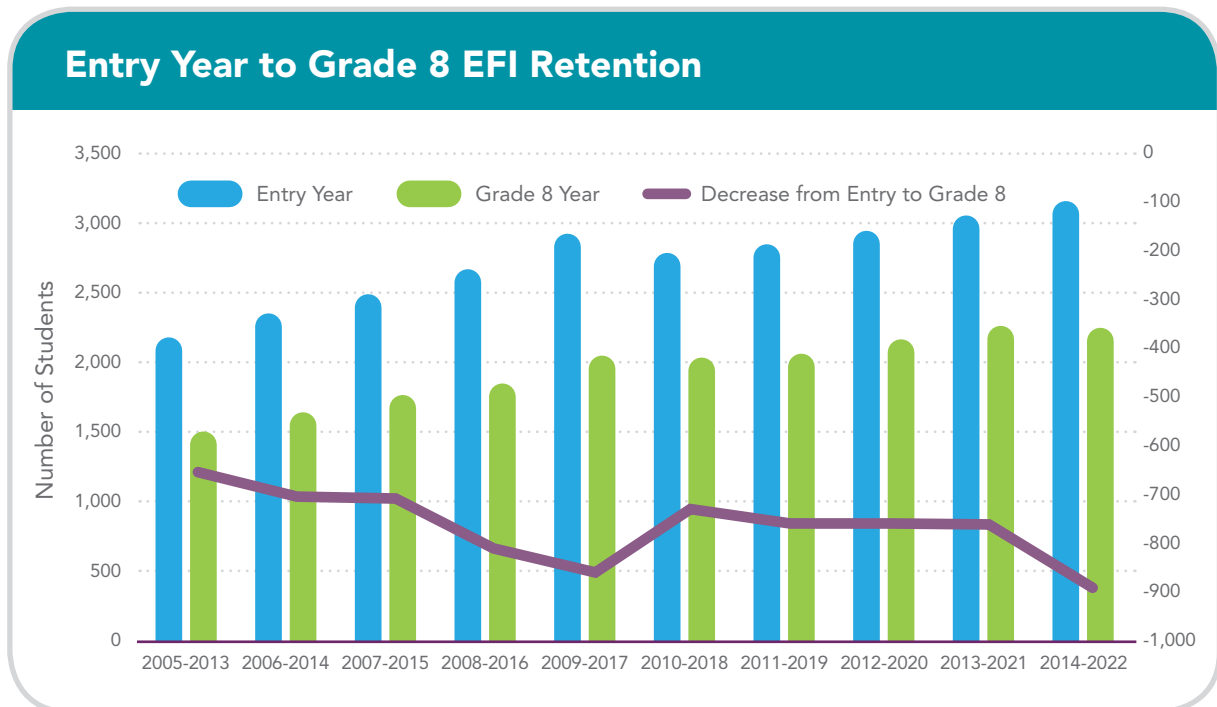
Elementary Program Enrolment Trends



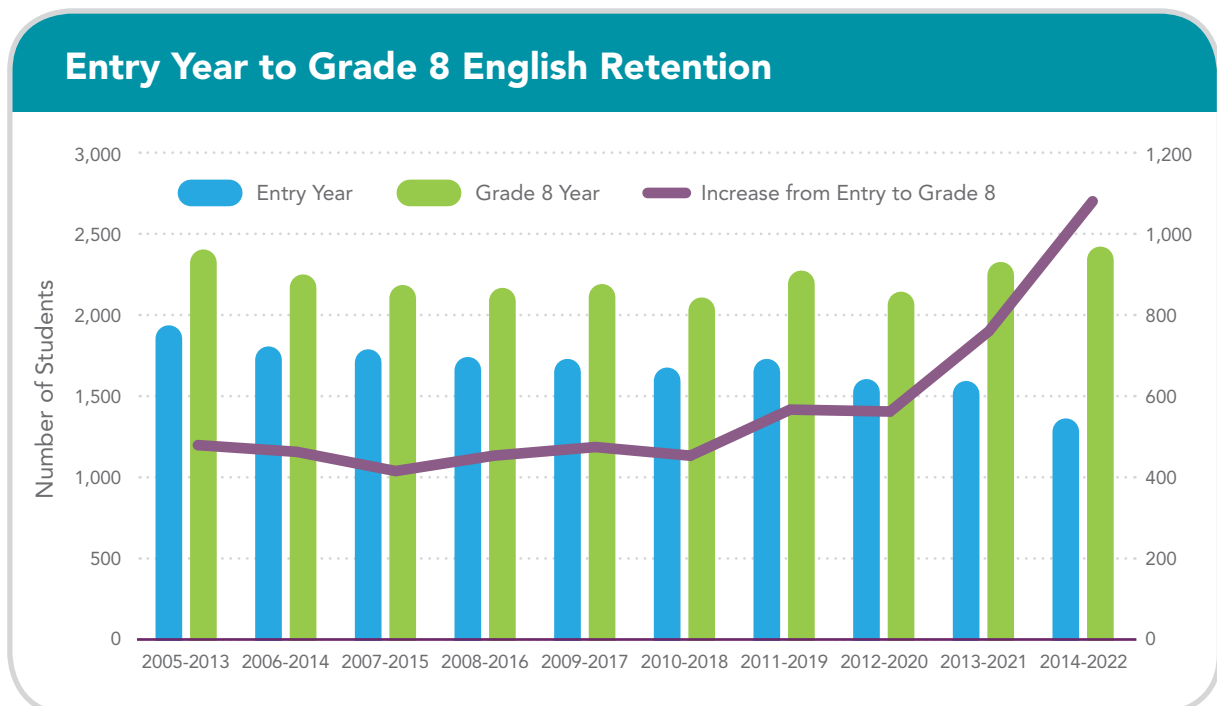
- Middle French Immersion represents about 5% of our students, and by Grade 7, many MFI children, although still identified in separate programs, are co-instructed with EFI classes.
- Alternative instruction is about 2% of our population with Gifted instruction (both ENG and EFI)
- The rest of the students are in Kindergarten.

Elementary Program Enrolment Trends

The gap in retention between EFI and ENG Core French is growing slightly over time.



Note: prior to the implementation of the 50/50 Kindergarten program in 2016 students entered Early French Immersion or English in Year 2 Kindergarten.



Note: prior to the implementation of the 50/50 Kindergarten program in 2016 students entered Early French Immersion or English in Year 2 Kindergarten.

Program Streaming & Achievement Analysis

In 2021, the District undertook an in-depth analysis of elementary program enrolment. [Report 21-046 Elementary Enrolment](#) and the appendix [Elementary and Secondary Program Streaming and Achievement Outcomes](#) were the first District enrolment analysis, informed by student demographic data which considered both program streaming and student achievement.

The 2022-2023 Student Learning Update: Part 2 reports the following:

ELEMENTARY PROGRAM ENROLMENT (GR.1-8)

Most identified groups of students continue to be disproportionately overrepresented in the English program compared to French Immersion programs.

Disproportionalities are highest for multilingual learners (MLLs), students residing in lower income neighbourhoods, students who identify as Indigenous, and students with special education needs (excluding gifted); with these students being 1.37-1.83x more likely to be enrolled in the English program compared to all students.

Additional analysis using our most recent Valuing Voices survey data shows disproportionalities in the English program, most notably for students who identify as Indigenous, Black, Middle Eastern, and having a disability.

ENROLMENT RATES IN ENGLISH WITH CORE FRENCH IN 2022-2023	N	% Enrol.	Change since 2021-22	Disprop. index
ALL STUDENTS (GR.1-8)	42,262	41%	+ 2%	1.00
MLL	7,429	75%	+2%	1.83
LOW-SES	14,693	55%	-1%	1.35
FEMALE	20,278	39%	+ 2%	0.94
MALE	21,811	43%	- 1%	1.05
TRANSGENDER, NON-BINARY, GENDER DIVERSE	151	45%	- 1%	1.10
GENDER NOT DISCLOSED	22	64%	+ 14%	1.55
INDIGENOUS	781	61%	+1%	1.48
SPED (EXCL GIFTED)	7,351	56%	+ 1%	1.37

Color Legend:
■ Overrepresented
■ Underrepresented
■ Equal representation

Additional Considerations

Transportation

The District provides transportation for students who reside within the designated attendance and/or program boundary of the school they are attending with minimum transportation eligibility distances:

- Junior and/or Senior Kindergarten 0.8 km or more
- Grades 1 to 8 1.6 km or more
- Grades 9-12 3.2 km or more

The multiplicity of program offerings and school configurations means that a student’s designated community school is not necessarily the school closest to their residence, but rather the program closest to their residence. This increases the number of students eligible for transportation, and increases the number of transportation routes. This issue is even more complex for students in Specialized Program Classes. The majority of these students are transported away from their community school - in some cases long distances.

These issues combined, increase the need for small vehicle transportation (i.e., vans) which is a costlier service model. In the 2022-2023 school year this cost was approximately \$18,850,000. As provincial policy and funding for transportation tightens, the cost to the District will continue to increase. In order to maintain the current transportation model in the 2023-2024 school year, the District allocated approximately \$2M annually from the GSN to cover costs. This is funding that could otherwise be allocated to supporting the educational programs available in community schools.

Other Delivery Models

There are many different program delivery models across the province, which may be examined in more detail in a review process. However, we felt it was important to share the delivery model for our coterminous school board for information purposes.





Opportunity for Change

What are the Opportunities?

- A program model grounded in an approach that centers human rights, inclusive design, and equitable access and opportunity;
- A student-focused model that supports:
 - Students going to school in their communities;
 - Fewer transitions;
 - Less travel time to and from school
- A program model that makes better use of resources and facilitates our ability to support student learning and well-being;
- A program model that facilitates staffing, professional learning and other structures supportive of staff well-being;
- Better use of resources allowing us to address the gaps (ie., EAs, BCBAs, OTs)

Conclusion

Our current elementary program model was formulated during an era that prioritized program choice and in many ways focused on the needs of our highest-achieving students. While we have much to be proud of, there are concerns that the current model has inadvertently led to a system that does not fully address the needs of all learners. The multiplicity of program offerings, school configurations, and many combinations of program delivery is complex and presents a number of operational challenges. Without question, this complexity adds financial cost, but more importantly, we must ask about the cost to student learning and well-being.

These issues require thoughtful review in order to address the Board's strategic priority of improving program quality and accessibility.



Resource Materials

Planning

- [Enrolment Statistics Summary, 31 October 2022](#)
- [Program and Track Breakdowns](#)
- [Program Delivery Structure Map](#)
- [Ministry Of Education Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline March 2015](#)

Policy Considerations

- [POLICY P.139.CUR](#) - Changes To Programs And Program Delivery Structures At Elementary Schools
- [POLICY P.105.CUR](#) - Changes To Programs And Program Delivery Structures At Secondary Schools
- [POLICY P.096.SES](#) - Special Education Programs and Services
- [POLICY P.118.PLG](#) Pupil Accommodation Reviews

Curriculum and Learning

- [Report 21-046 Examination of Elementary and Secondary Program Pathways and Achievement Outcomes](#)
- Appendix A to Report 21-046 [Elementary and Secondary Program Streaming and Achievement Outcomes](#)
- [The Ontario Curriculum 2013 French as a Second Language](#)

Strategic Plan

- [OCDSB Strategic Plan Consultation Report 2023-2027](#)
- [Environmental Scan, OCDSB Strategic Plan 2023-2027](#)
- [OCDSB Strategic Plan 2023-2027](#)
- [Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap](#)

Sample Review Materials and Reports

- [Western Area Accommodation Review Final Report 27 January 2017](#)
- [Student Learning/Pupil Accommodation Review Western & Eastern Secondary Area Review](#) Presentation to PIC- October 12, 2016



Notes



Notes



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

