# **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q#1: What does Core French look like at the TDSB?**

**A:** Please refer to the information below for Core French for Elementary and Secondary.

**Elementary Core French Grades 4-8**

* The TDSB offers 120 hours per year to a minimum of 600 hours from Grades 4 to 8 as per the mandate from the Ontario Ministry of Education FSL curriculum.
* Students must receive a minimum of 200 minutes of Core French instruction per week (i.e. usually delivered at 40 minutes per day).

**Secondary Core French Grades 9-12**

* The TDSB offers Academic, Applied and Open courses for Grades 9 and 10. Many schools will begin offering French at the Academic level only, to reflect the transition towards [Academic Pathways](https://www.tdsb.on.ca/High-School/Guidance/Academic-Pathways).
* University Preparation and Open courses are offered for Grades 11 and 12.
* An Open course (FSF1O) for beginners is also available as an option for students with fewer than 600 hours by the end of Grade 8 or to students who have recently arrived without prior experience or exposure to French.

**Q#2: What are the benefits of learning Core French?**

**A:** Learning an additional language is an advantage for students and studies show it is a key factor in academic success. An additional language enhances overall skills in learning, expands career opportunities, promotes understanding among cultures, and creates multilingual world citizens. Students’ skills in the dominant language (English in this case) are often enhanced through the study of other languages.

**Q#3: Why does my child need to take Core French?**

**A:** Core French is mandatory in Ontario from Grades 4 to 8 for all students in English-language elementary schools. Students entering Grade 4 must receive French instruction in every year from Grade 4 to Grade 8 and must have accumulated a minimum of 600 hours of French instruction by the end of Grade 8. Once an instructional sequence has begun, the program must continue uninterrupted to Grade 8. Students must obtain at least one credit in French at the secondary level. That credit is usually taken in Grade 9.

**Q#4: My child just moved here from another country. Do they need to take Core**

**French?**

**A:** At the elementary level, Core French is mandatory for all students from Grades 4-8 and students must obtain at least one credit in French at the secondary level. That credit is usually taken in Grade 9.

Depending on the time of arrival, accommodations will be made in order to integrate the child into the program.

An Open course (FSF1O) for beginners is also available as an option for students with fewer than 600 hours by the end of Grade 8 or to students who have recently arrived without prior experience or exposure to French.

**Q#5: My child has identified/non-identified Special Education needs and an Individual Education Plan (IEP). How can the Core French teacher support my child?**

**A:** Please note the following indicators below:

* All students can succeed.
* Each student has his or her own unique patterns of learning.
* Universal design and differentiated instruction are an effective and interconnected means of meeting the learning or productivity needs of any group of students.
* Classroom teachers need the support of the larger community to create a learning environment that supports students with special education needs.
* The classroom accommodations and curriculum modifications that are possible in the English program can also be implemented in French programs as well.
* In many schools, additional support for learners on a modified program is available in French.
* Support offered in the target language transfers to literacy skills in the dominant language.
* Learning experiences may be differentiated by:
* Content
* Process
* Product
* Environment
* Language Complexity

based on the strengths and needs of the students.

**Q#6: What happens if my child is struggling in Core French?**

**A:** Please note the following:

* Communication with your child’s teacher is essential.
* When children are not meeting expectations within a program, in English or in French Language programs, the parents/guardians/caregivers will be contacted.
* The Core French teacher will make necessary accommodations and use strategies to support the child.
* Assessments may be reviewed and requested, which may lead to referrals to the following:
  + In-school support team to develop strategies to support the child
  + Out-of-school support team for more strategies
  + Develop an Individual Learning Plan (ILP)
  + Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC)

**Q#7: What is the teaching approach used in Core French?**

**A:** Core French language programs aim to use a teaching approach that enables a student’s ability to communicate in French in authentic relevant situations.

***“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 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.”*

*The Ontario Curriculum: French as a Second Language – Core French Grades 4-8, Extended French Grades 4-8, French Immersion Grades 1-8; 2013, ( p.6)*

**Q#8: Will the communication from the school be in French? I don’t speak French. A:** All communication that comes home from the school will be in English. Please note that there is an option to request translations for communications as required at the local school level.

**Q#9: I would like my child to be exempted from Core French. What can I do?**

**A:** The Ministry of Education policy document entitled The Ontario Curriculum French As a Second Language: Core, Extended and Immersion Grades 1-8, 2013, states that “Core French is mandatory from Grades 4 to 8 for all students in English-language elementary schools” (pg.15). The document entitled Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12, states that students must earn “one compulsory credit in FSL (pg. 55)” to obtain their OSSD.

Core French is part of every Ontario student’s program, including students who are identified as requiring special education programming as well as students who are new to French (e.g., English Language Learners).

The authority to exempt (elementary) or to substitute (secondary) is within the Principal’s discretion. These decisions must be made only after very careful consideration.

Decisions for exemptions or substitutions from Core French should be considered on a case-by-case basis and only after all attempts at supporting the students have been made.

As expected in all subjects, accommodations and modifications should be put in place to support all students, as required and as noted in the IEP. The student who requires accommodations and modifications should be supported through the In-School Team/School Support Team process at the school.

[*Including Students with Special Education Needs in French as a Second Language Programs: A Guide for Ontario Schools (2015)*](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/amenagement/includingFLS2015.pdf)serves as a companion document to the Framework for French. It provides research, data and examples of inclusive practices focusing on ways to make all French programs more available to students with special education needs and on the support these students need to succeed.

**Q#10: My child is not enjoying learning French. What can I do?**

**A:** Communication with your child’s teacher is essential.

**Q#11: What resources will be used in Core French to support language learning?**

**A:** When selecting resources for the Core French program, it is the school’s responsibility to select and purchase resources.

* + The purchase of resource materials is controlled and tied to the parameters outlined by both the Ministry of Education ([Guidelines for Approval of Textbooks](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/trilliumlist/guide.pdf)) and the school board ([PR531](http://tdsbweb.tdsb.on.ca/ppf/uploads/files/live/91/435.pdf)) procedures.
  + The Ministry of Education has indicated that all class sets must be on the [Trillium List](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/trilliumlist/). Please note that this list is updated only when resources have been reviewed by the Ministry.
  + Resources should represent current pedagogy, Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP) principles and the needs of 21st century learners.

**Q#12: How can I help my child with homework in Core French?**

**A:** Please refer to the items below.

* Please refer to the TDSBs Homework Policy.
* Homework should have a clear purpose. It may be work completion, practice/consolidation of concepts mastered at school, preparation work for upcoming activities/teaching at school or extension.
* CPF Ontario has created a series of [tip sheets](http://on.cpf.ca/resources/for-parents/homework-help-tip-sheets-2-2/) on how to support families in the various FSL programs.
* The Ministry of Ontario has also created a [Homework Toolbox](http://www.fslhomeworktoolbox.ca/index.php) specifically for French as A Second Language.

**Q#13: Our family is Francophone. My child is in the English program. Does my child still need to take Core French?**

**A:** By virtue of enrolling in an English Language School Board and in the English stream, you are accepting that your child will be part of the Core French program, which is mandatory for all students in Ontario from Grades 4-8 as well as one credit at the secondary level. This credit is usually taken in Grade 9.

**Q#14: How can I maintain contact with my child’s Core French teacher?**

**A:** Please refer to the protocols set up by the school where your child is enrolled.

**Q#15: How can you help at home? A:** Students in the TDSB have free access to a variety of digital tools to support their learning in French and in English through the [TDSB Virtual Library](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/library). Students can access all of these tools anywhere there is an internet connection by using their TDSB account. A learnmark with login information for staff and students is available digitally and via the school librarian.

**Q#16: How does the** [TDSB Virtual Library](https://www.tdsb.on.ca/library) **support learning?**

**A:**

* Extends and expands school library collections.
* Provides online access to a collection of curriculum relevant, digital tools and resources that support literacy, research and inquiry for K-12 learners.
* Available to all members of TDSB community 24/7 at home and at school.
* Google Apps for Education: All students from Grades 1-12 in the TDSB have G-Suite accounts. Students can change the language to French within each app.

