

Opportunities and Challenges
Feedback
Middle French Immersion at Tuscany Middle School
January 27, 2011

What opportunities and challenges do you see if a Middle French Immersion Program were to be offered at Tuscany Middle School?

Opportunities

- Great opportunity to have a trial for grade 5 Immersion.
- Grade 5 is a great age to learn a new language because students already have a literacy base in English and are not being taught 2 “new” languages at once like in Kindergarten.
- The obvious opportunity to learn a second language.
- Possibly the interest would trickle down to the elementary level so then there wouldn't have to be so many kids bussed to Varsity Acres or Marion Carson.
- Perhaps there would be the opportunity at a later date to allow early entry students at Varsity Acres to attend as well, especially depending on enrolment in either school.
- This is a predominantly middle class community with a lot of young families looking for positive educational experiences for their children and FI seems a good fit.
- Move the Tuscany Varsity Acres kids back to their community.
- Starting a 5/6 then can accommodate more Tuscany elementary students.
- If you introduce split 5/6 classes to begin the Immersion process, you could double the number of potential French students from the community. If people have to start one sibling in English they might choose not to put the other in French.
- Allow for late entry into Immersion during the 2 year transition period.
- Introduce children to more cultures and languages! Once you know a secondary language, easier later in life to learn other languages!
- Children get to learn another language.
- Students in our local area have an excellent opportunity to learn in French that they aren't offered at the beginning of Tuscany school.
- Both English and French students can learn and play together.
- For those who find the French not working may be able to transition to English without moving schools.
- French Immersion is a good opportunity for kids to learn another language.
- I think it's a great idea for the area.

Challenges

- I think for the first two years, there needs to be a grade 7 entry point for students who have or will leave Tuscany (last year/this year) and go to Marion Carson. After two years there would be no need. I think this will be essential to allow all Tuscany students the opportunity to do French Immersion.

- I am concerned about:
 - Decisions/processes for allocation of resources so that teachers are allocated fairly between the two programs i.e. class sizes should be similar to those in the regular program.
 - Segregation of students within our community. Creation of two classes of students within our community – is one group better?
- Should have a 1-2 year transition period for grade 7 students who have to attend Branton!!
- Division within a fairly cohesive community--with French Immersion students and parents perceiving themselves as superior to the regular programmed students.
- Potential that the regular program would be less vigorous academically. Only option for smart students being French.
- Regular (non-French) classrooms filled with all for the IPP kids less attention to science and math creates cliques in the school.
- With the population of the city the way it is, the schools that are built don't meet the needs of the communities any more. There's Marion Carson, Jerry Potts, Varsity Acres, Silver Springs, Scenic Acres, Tuscany and Royal Oak. People are rarely happy – could there possibly be a way to REALLY shake things up using the French Immersion as a starting point?
- Large population of children combined with success/popularity of program may lead to a very crowded school.
- I have no interest in a French Immersion program at Tuscany middle school. My oldest child struggles with early literacy already and it would not be a good fit for her.
- Parents with children already in French Immersion who live in Tuscany absolutely will take exception to the fact their children will not be able to attend a school in their own community designed to address their specific choices in education.
- Accommodating all regular students in Tuscany.
- It would be nice to bring Tuscany students from Varsity and Branton back to the community. Could they potentially start in grade 7, giving the English students a couple of years to learn French?
- Great as long as all students in Tuscany can be accommodated.
- Concerned that students will not be at same level as peers in other schools because of middle entry. They may fall behind in school.
- Also a concern that we don't have a knowledge base of French at home, so we could not help our children a lot! Who gets priority? French Immersion or English language? Do French students get priority and English students bussed to other school outside Tuscany?
- Homework – no one at home speaks French.
- If we have to go to a different school we shouldn't have to pay for bussing, because we are being forced to go somewhere else.
- Kids from Tuscany that are going to a French Immersion school now will they be able to transfer to this new middle school/and possibly taking away space.
- We need some sort of assurance that there will be room in the middle school for all the English program kids.

- Too narrow an entry point. The students who started in Tuscany School when it first opened will miss this great opportunity because they are one grade ahead. It's unfortunate that our children who were in Kindergarten the first year of Tuscany school will not only have to change schools in both grade 5 and 6, but they will also miss out on the French opportunity if the entry point remains at grade 5.
- That grade sixes would be denied the opportunity.
- That Tuscany children may have to be bussed out.
- The segregation of English versus French. It will be an us versus them mentality (it happens now with other groups).
- To persuade my child it is a good idea if it is optional, because she would have to work hard.