



French Immersion Programs

Analysis and Recommendations



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Background

The Board of Education of School District No. 91 (Nechako Lakes) is committed to its mission to *achieve educational excellence in an environment that honours diversity through engaging, personalized and passionate learning*. The challenges of declining and low enrolment have an impact on program offerings, and in this context, the Board undertook a review of French Immersion (FI) programs in the district. The scope of the review includes examination of:

- *historical enrolment patterns*
- *current enrolments*
- *community demographics*
- *class size and composition*
- *staffing levels and recruitment challenges*
- *revenue considerations*

..... with an Interim Report provided January 20, 2020 (content included in the Appendix of this report)

- *projected enrolments*
- *budget considerations*
- *perceptions and expectations*
- *program sustainability*
- *recommendations to the Board of Education*

..... Final Report.

The Interim Report provided at the January 20, 2020 Board Meeting was intended to ensure that the background and contextual information being considered was widely available prior to consultations within the communities; also, that the information would precede further analysis and the provision of recommendations. Content from that Interim Report is provided in the Appendix to this report.

This Final Report supplements the early materials with: projected enrolments; perceptions and expectations of educational participants and stakeholders; budget considerations; and program sustainability. The recommendations contained herein have been informed by all of the information gathered.

Projected Enrolments

William Konkin Elementary School

Currently, William Konkin Elementary (WKE) serves approximately 187 students from Kindergarten to Grade 7 in a dual-track setting, meaning it offers programming in both FI and English. FI is currently offered in Grades 1-7, for 51 students.

The overall school enrolment projection for the 2020/21 school year is relatively stable, save for an increase in the number of designated students with unique needs (up from 36 in the current year):

20/21		
Grade	FTE	Desig.
K	17	1
1	16	1
2	24	1
3	19	5
4	17	6
5	29	11
6	30	6
7	29	11
Total	181	42

French Immersion program enrolment, however, is projected to again decline in 2020/2021:

20/21		
Grade	FTE	Desig.
K	2	
1	2	
2	6	
3	7	
4	3	
5	8	
6	13	
7	6	1
Total	47	1

This projected Kindergarten enrolment is consistent with the downward trend in K enrolment over the past four years, from the 2016/17 school year when a Kindergarten program was deemed not sustainable.

The historical information is summarized as follows:

French Immersion Kindergarten Registration - WKE	
Sept 2019	2 students were registered to attend the FI program in K
Sept 2018	3 students were registered to attend the FI program in K
Sept 2017	4 students were registered to attend the FI program in K
Sept 2016	3 students were registered to attend the FI program in K

In two years, the FI enrolment is projected to be in the low 30s, since 19 students will be leaving the program, replaced by approximately four to six students. Projecting K enrolments at two or three students in subsequent years, based on the previous trends since 2016, will impact enrolment significantly. For the 2023/24 school year the FI enrollment will be in the 20s.

21/22	
Grade	FTE
K	3
1	2
2	2
3	6
4	7
5	3
6	8
7	13
Total	44

22/23	
Grade	FTE
K	2
1	3
2	2
3	2
4	6
5	7
6	3
7	8
Total	33

23/24	
Grade	FTE
K	3
1	2
2	3
3	2
4	2
5	6
6	7
7	3
Total	28

WL McLeod Elementary School

Currently, WL McLeod Elementary School (WLM) serves 276 students in Kindergarten to Grade 6, also in a dual-track setting. Projected school enrolment for 2020/21 is stable:

20/21		
Grade	FTE	Desig.
K	40	
1	44	2
2	29	1
3	37	4
4	45	7
5	47	12
6	35	16
Total	277	42

French Immersion program enrolments are projected to increase slightly compared to enrolment over the past five years, ranging from 109-137:

20/21		
Grade	FTE	Desig.
K	20	
1	25	1
2	19	
3	14	
4	24	
5	24	1
6	17	7
Total	143	9

Beyond 2020/21, the enrolment appears to remain reasonably stable, and any school organizations that allow for more than 20 Kindergarten students to be enrolled will contribute to the strength of FI enrolment in future years.

21/22	
Grade	FTE
K	20
1	20
2	25
3	19
4	14
5	24
6	24
Total	146

22/23	
Grade	FTE
K	20
1	20
2	20
3	25
4	19
5	14
6	24
Total	142

23/24	
Grade	FTE
K	20
1	20
2	20
3	20
4	25
5	19
6	14
Total	138

Nechako Valley Secondary School

Eleven FI students will be moving to Nechako Valley Secondary School (NVSS) for the 2020/21 school year, based on an historical attrition of 20 percent from the cohort of 14. Twelve current Grade 7 students are not participating in FI this school year; and, it is anticipated that a number of those students may not wish a FI placement in a combined 7/8 class. For projection purposes the typical attrition rate was applied to that upcoming Grade 8 cohort, for a total of 9.

The challenges of organizing for the FI program are discussed in the School Organization section of this report.

20/21			
Grade	Total	FI	Desig.
7	103	11	19
8	117	9	29
9	84		10
10	96		19
11	97		23
12	100		18
Total	597	20	118

School Organization

William Konkin Elementary School

William Konkin Elementary School (WKE) currently organizes program delivery around three FI teachers, based on enrolment. Upcoming enrolment projections would call for reduced staffing in FI by one teacher.

Assuming current school budget processes, the projected FI enrolment would generate two full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers and potential organizations as outlined below.

These organizations are intended to show possible options, based on enrolment only, irrespective of other significant educational considerations regarding combined classes.

20/21	Grade									
Division	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total	Desig.
Grade K/1/2/3	2	2	6	7					17	
Grade 4/5/6/7					3	8	13	6	30	1
Total	2	2	6	7	3	8	13	6	47	1
Designated	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		

Should K not be offered, then an alternative organization could be considered:

20/21	Grade									
Division	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total	Desig.
Grade 1/2/3/4		2	6	7	3				18	
Grade 5/6/7						8	13	6	27	1
Total	0	2	6	7	3	8	13	6	45	1
Designated	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		

If we project one year further to the 2021/22 school year, the enrolments represent the same challenge to school organization:

21/22	Grade									
Division	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total	
Grade K/1/2/3/4	3	2	2	6	4				17	
Grade 5/6/7					3	3	8	13	27	
Total	2	2	2	6	7	3	8	13	44	

By the 2022/23 school year, the FI enrolment falls below 40, with class sizes well below district averages:

22/23	Grade								
Division	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Grade K/1/2/3/4	2	3	2	2	6				15
Grade 5/6/7						7	3	8	18
Total	2	2	2	2	6	7	3	8	33

WL McLeod Elementary School

WL McLeod Elementary School (WLM) currently organizes program delivery around six FI teachers. Based on enrolment, this would likely be the same organization for 2020/21. It would generate a potential organization of:

20/21	Grade								
Division	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Desig.
French K	20							20	
French 1		22						22	1
French 1/2		3	19					22	
French 3/4				14	10			24	
French 4/5					14	16		30	1
French 5/6						8	17	25	7
Total	20	25	19	14	24	24	17	143	9
Designated	0	1	0	0	0	1	7		

If we project one year further to the 2021/22 school year, the school would have a number of organizations to consider. Assuming some attrition, all FI students could be accommodated within the current six-division organization. The red designations below indicate that anticipated attrition would be necessary to honour the collective agreement. Additional staffing with alternate organizations would need to be considered in the event of: increased Kindergarten enrolment of more than 20 in 2020/21; any additional students entering the program from other schools; or no attrition in upper elementary.

21/22	Grade								
Division	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	
French K	20							20	
French 1		20						20	
French 2			22					22	
French 2/3			3	19				22	
French 4/5					14	17		31	
French 5/6						7	24	31	
Total	20	20	25	19	14	24	24	146	

Nechako Valley Secondary

Nechako Valley Secondary School (NVSS) offers a middle-years program at the Grade 7 and 8 level. The impact of French Immersion on class organization creates two combined classes in each track and adds one division to the school at those grade levels.

English 20/21			
Class Name	7	8	Total
7-1	25		25
7-2	25		25
7-3	25		25
7/8	17	8	25
8-1		25	25
8-2		25	26
8-3		25	25
8-4		25	25
Total	92	108	200
French Immersion 20/21			
Class Name	7	8	Total
7/8 FI	11	9	20
Total	11	9	20

English Only 20/21			
Class Name	7	8	Total
7-1	26		26
7-2	26		26
7-3	26		26
7-4	25		25
8-1		29	29
8-2		29	29
8-3		29	29
8-4		30	30
Total	103	117	200



Budget Considerations

The workplan included an analysis of the costs of the program. The majority of additional costs for resources and for learning support are borne by federal French funding, as outlined in the Appendix. One key budget consideration is whether a school could be organized more efficiently in terms of enrolling teachers.

Notwithstanding the impact of Classroom Enhancement Funding, current enrolments at William Konkin, without French Immersion, could be addressed with one less FTE enrolling teacher.

WKE Dual Track Teacher Allocation				
Dual Track				
French Immersion			3.00	FTE
English			7.00	FTE
Revised Teacher Allocation for Single Track				
Single Track				
English			9.00	FTE
Additional cost to organize - related to FI only				
		1.000	FTE	\$ 96,528

At WL McLeod, 143 projected students in French Immersion, with six divisions, represents optimum staffing, with an average of 23.3 pupils/teacher. No budgetary efficiencies are to be gained in a single-track program.

WLM Dual Track Teacher Allocation				
Dual Track				
French Immersion			6.00	FTE
English			7.00	FTE
Revised Teacher Allocation for Single Track				
Single Track				
English			13.00	FTE
Additional cost to organize - related to FI only				
		Nil	FTE	None

With regard to NVSS, the issue is both an organizational one as well as a budget one. Notwithstanding the impact of Classroom Enhancement Funding, there would be one FTE additional teacher required to provide a combined class of Grade 7/8 French Immersion.

NVSS Dual Track 7/8 Teacher Allocation				
Dual Track				
French Immersion			1.00	FTE
English			8.00	FTE
Revised Teacher Allocation for Single Track				
Single Track				
English			8.00	FTE
Additional cost to organize - related to FI only				
		1.000	FTE	\$ 96,528

Observations

During the week of February 20, 2020, onsite interviews were conducted with: administrators; teachers of both French Immersion and the English track; union leadership; support staff; secondary students; Parent Advisory Council members; and trustee representatives from each region. These semi-structured interviews provided insights into the program while also garnering perceptions and expectations. The interviews were used to initiate and organize the discussions, and to provide a scheme for data collection and reporting.

Parents were also provided with the opportunity to complete an online survey, with those results included within the observations for each school.

The consultation areas for discussion were provided in advance. It was obvious that participants had given the review thoughtful consideration. Many came with detailed notes.

For all but the student interviews, the following questions focused the discussions:

- Can you please share your perceptions regarding French Immersion within the school/community?
- What are your expectations regarding English and French Immersion programming? Are your expectations being met?
- What suggestions/recommendations might you have for the Board?
- Any other related thoughts that you may wish to share.

With respect to the student conversation, the discussion included responses to these questions:

- What do you like most about the French Immersion Program?
- Is your current second language program meeting your needs? Why or why not?

Or:

- What is your level of satisfaction with your learning experiences?
- How would you rate your ability in French? Oral and written?
- How do you think your programs have equipped you for the future?

All comments were noted, and recurring themes identified. The topical areas below were established subsequent to the conversations being considered, i.e., the areas were not predetermined. The areas below are arranged in no order of importance. All observations are from the participants, and it cannot be stressed enough that this review is **not** a program evaluation. Any statements regarding program quality are the perceptions of those participating in the interviews.

William Konkin Elementary School

Program Value

The French Immersion program is considered to be an exceptional opportunity to acquire a second language, especially in a small, rural community. The program is highly valued by the majority of those interviewed. Parents are particularly supportive of the program and the opportunity it provides to their children.



Ten online surveys were completed. Parents indicated that the top three reasons for selecting the program were: one, to acquire a second language; two, for a more challenging experience for their child; and three, because it was recommended by friends. Of those completing surveys, there is a solid level of satisfaction with the program, with 90 percent of respondents indicating they agree or strongly agree that their children are well supported by teachers in the school.

Despite the fact that the program has not commenced in Kindergarten for a number of years, and has never been offered to Grade 12, there is little parental concern that it is not operating in accordance within Ministry of Education Policy expectations of a K-12 program.

Program Enrolment

Some participants clearly recollect that when the program was established in 2000 with a K/1 class of 20, FI enrolment was anticipated to experience growth. This has not been the case.

There was unambiguous feedback that the program has been a challenge to sustain for a number of years due to enrolment decline. There is also the view of a number of participants that enrolment has created a structural problem within the school that has not been addressed since enrolments have waned.

To highlight the enrolment fluctuations in FI, the chart below is provided from the Interim Report:

Language	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
English	111	106	183	160	142	144	136	138	134	140	132
French	47	33	68	78	61	32	69	65	59	59	51

Indigenous students are largely not enrolled in the program, making for isolation of Indigenous students within English-track classes.

Program Organization

Enrolling a Kindergarten cohort each year is seen as extremely important for program sustainability; and, as mentioned, this has not occurred since the 2015/16 school year. The absence of the Kindergarten cohort is considered to be a significant weakness in the program, substantially affecting French literacy levels.

The combined Grade 1-3 class organization at the primary level is a challenge in and of itself. The added challenge of children with no French language entering at Grade 1 is seen to exacerbate literacy success for the whole program.

Due to enrolments, the school consistently offers a multi-grade organization. Consecutive years with the same teacher can be an asset – and can also present challenges. Feedback suggested that this multi-grade organization does not support transition to high school, where students face a variety of teachers each school year.

Program Delivery

WKE FI teachers noted that there are no district program delivery standards, including: resources, instructional methods, and expected literacy levels. Stated differently, FI teachers are somewhat aligned within the school, but not aligned within the district.

Further, WKE FI teachers commented that there is no teacher orientation, mentorship, or local professional development, with limited district professional development opportunities available. Previously, some district coordination through a committee and a teacher leader provided some support.

There are very limited opportunities outside of the classroom to practice conversational French, with essentially no French spoken outside of classroom during the school day. The fact the school is dual track is not visible within the school in general. Cultural activities are very limited, and former students indicated they would have preferred to learn more about French culture.

A number of participants indicated that the percentage of instruction in French at all grade levels likely does not meet Ministry requirements.

FI students indicated that oral language and reading are the two main strengths of the program they experienced at elementary. There is much less confidence in their written French. As well, students remarked that in the area of writing (in English), they experience less success and confidence.

WKE FI immersion teachers indicate that French resources are adequate; however, there is a generalized perception among others that FI resources seem newer and more engaging than English resources.

Student Support

Although FI class sizes are favourable, learning support for students who are struggling is minimal. An assignment of 10 hours weekly supports all three FI classes. While FI staff recognize that students in FI require less support than students within the English track, they are not satisfied with the level of support that exists. They feel this especially in the area of literacy and considering the absence of support when staffing necessitates the reassignment of the Learning Support Worker (LSW).

Parent survey data indicates the satisfaction with student support by specialists, with 50 percent very satisfied. 70 percent of parent respondents indicate satisfaction with the levels of LSW support.

Staffing

Staffing is considered a challenge by almost all respondents. Difficulties in teacher recruitment have left classes without French-speaking teachers for large portions of time in some school years. On a regular basis during the school year, with the two French-speaking Teachers Teaching On Call (TTOC) assigned to other classes or schools, teachers organize an “English Day” to occur during their absence.

Furthermore, when the Learning Support Worker is used as a TTOC, there is no French-speaking LSW replacement, which undermines student support within the FI classroom for those periods of time.

Assignments for Learning Support Workers in the English track are described as very challenging.

Program Impact on the School

The impact of the program creates combined classes in both tracks, with little flexibility for student placement in English classes, and almost no options in FI. This lack of flexibility severely limits the ability to address teacher conflicts or classmate placement considerations in both tracks.

The class composition in English is very challenging, and cause for significant concern. Thirty-four students with designations require support in Grades 4-7 in the 2020/21 projections. This compares to one such student in FI. Additional referrals to the school-based team are underway, and the numbers of designated students will increase based on the outcome of those referrals. Staff indicate clearly that these circumstances represent significant learning challenges for students in the English track; they question the impact of the program on the whole school.

FI teachers and parents indicate that students are extremely well-behaved. Consequently, students with behavioural concerns tend to populate the English track. Behaviour logs in English for five months consist of 328 events for 130 students (2.5 per student). In FI, it is 32 events for 52 students (.6 per student). The unintended consequence of the program creates a lack of positive social and academic role models in English classes, further exacerbating the learning conditions.

Summary

Many of those interviewed indicated that historically there was the clear perception that the program streamed students. While improvement has been made regarding this perception, participants shared that the program continues to create a social barrier within the school. The lack of diversity in the program is very noticeable.

Many participants indicated that they were reluctant to express concerns so as not to appear to be unsupportive of French Immersion. They indicated that they know the program is valued, but the impacts at the school are of a real concern. Some participants indicated that it is their belief that FI within the school is widening the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and creating an untenable learning environment for non-FI students.

Some participants offered the observation that while students in FI are receiving an enriched program, there is no opportunity for investment in other enrichment areas for all students, for example, core French, music, band, drama, etc.

During the interviews, a number of participants expressed the opinion that currently neither the FI nor the English-track program is optimal.

WL McLeod Elementary School

Program Value

There was agreement from participants that this is an outstanding program and highly valued as an opportunity for students to learn a second language. Students clearly appreciated their experience in the elementary program.

Eighteen online surveys were completed, with parents indicating that the top three reasons for selecting the program were: one, to acquire a second language; two, for a more challenging experience for their child; and three, because of the reputation of the program. Of those completing surveys, there is a very high level of satisfaction with the program. Eighty-three percent of respondents indicated they agree or strongly agree that their children are well supported by teachers in the school.



During the interviews, parents also indicated they were extremely satisfied with the program. They commented that there is a real sense of community associated with the FI program.

Despite the fact that the program has never been offered to Grade 12, there is little parental concern that the program is not operating in accordance within Ministry Policy expectations of a K-12 program within the community.

Program Enrolment

The enrolment is viewed as healthy, and the fact the FI enrolls approximately half of the school is considered to be a positive feature of the program.

Participants believe that the overall satisfaction with the program has resulted in a very stable enrolment since the program's inception. To highlight the enrolment stability in FI, the chart below is provided from the Interim Report:

Language	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
English	136	130	115	110	125	119	141	148	160	162	138
French	112	134	139	140	160	127	141	131	127	134	137

Program Organization

A K/1 organization is viewed as very difficult, acknowledging that Kindergarten students have no language upon entry yet are entering a class where Grade 1 students have significant oral language abilities. It is felt that, wherever possible, K/1 classes should be avoided.

The organizational plans often call for students to have the same teacher for more than one year and that can pose a challenge at times.

The class sizes and combined classes are similar for English and French, and therefore no concerns beyond class composition were expressed.

Program Delivery

Resources for FI are very good, including technology. There was some feedback that the resources are richer in FI, especially technology; and, also, some feedback that the district could take a different approach to resourcing to address equity.

There are few opportunities outside of the school to engage in conversational French, and minimal French spoken outside of classroom during the school day. There is a desire to build more confidence in conversational French, especially in non-instructional times. Many participants indicated that an increase in conversational French would enhance the program and shared ideas and strategies.

An increase in the opportunities to engage in more French cultural activities was mentioned by students, parents and staff alike.

Student Support

Parent survey data indicates the least satisfaction with student support by specialists, with just under 40 percent of the parents surveyed indicating their satisfaction. Fifty-five percent of respondents indicated satisfaction with the levels of Learning Support Worker support.

In general, there was a desire to see more supports for learning issues within French Immersion.

Staffing

The program enjoys a number of extremely experienced FI teachers. Parents commented on the administration and teachers' passion for the program.

From time to time, challenges in teacher recruitment have created issues. On a regular basis during the school year, with no French speaking TTOC staff, teachers organize an "English Day." With regard to general recruitment concerns, WLM teachers indicated that the Board/Province could consider inducements for small rural communities.

There is a perceived deficiency of Learning Support Worker support in FI, particularly to support literacy. In addition, when the Learning Support Workers are absent, there are no French-speaking replacements. This undermines student support within the FI classroom for those periods of time.

In terms of new teacher support, there was some indication that a district mentorship program would benefit both FI and English program teachers.

There was feedback that the district should consider enriching staffing to support: students with learning disabilities; behaviour support; other learning challenges; and higher levels of literacy intervention at the Grade 2 and 3 level.

Program Impact on the School

Overall, there are no generalized concerns regarding class sizes. Considering the higher numbers of students with designations, supporting the English track is a challenge, especially regarding class composition.

The FI classes have very few behaviour-designated students or students who exhibit regular challenges with their behaviour. This does make for a preponderance of students in need of behavioural supports in the English track.

Summary

There is widespread feedback that there has been very positive development of the program over these past 20 years. When the program was initiated, staff recall that there were concerns that the program was “elitist.” This is no longer the view, due to successful integration of the student body and a focus on school-wide initiatives. There has been, and continues to be, a constant effort, with success, to build a positive school culture. Efforts to integrate the PAC, staff and students, operating as one entity, have enhanced the culture of the school.

Nechako Valley Secondary

Program Value

French Immersion has never been offered in the community beyond Grade 8. For the balance of their secondary programming, students are accommodated within English classes. Participants questioned the program organization in light of the program not continuing beyond Grade 8. There was mixed response regarding the value of the secondary program, particularly in light of the middle-school model recently put in place.



A number of comments were made that impact of the FI organization had significant unintended consequences.

Program Enrolment

Enrolment is considered to be a very large issue, and to some insurmountable. Historically, 20 percent of students leaving elementary school transitioned into the English program at NVSS. Retention of FI students through this transition has a significant impact on the program.

Program Organization

The current FI program commenced in September 2014, at the Grade 7/8 level. The change was made at the time the school transitioned to a middle-school model, with Grade 7 students leaving the elementary feeder schools. As FI was offered within the community to Grade 7, the Grade 7 program

was transitioned to NVSS. Enrolments at that grade level necessitated adding a Grade 8 cohort to support one FI division.

Participants indicated that there were unintended consequences from establishing a single 7/8 FI class organization while implementing the middle years initiative. These included curriculum challenges and significant social isolation in FI students' first years at NVSS.

Program Delivery

A Grade 7/8 combined class presents its own unique challenges and is not usually a preferred organization within a secondary school. The Grade 8 students indicated they did not feel part of either secondary or middle school.

As would be expected, there were significant language gaps between the strongest Grade 8 students and weakest Grade 7 students.

For French Immersion students, there was consensus that Math and English have been difficult.

As is the case at the elementary level, conversational French opportunities outside of class were non-existent in the setting established. Limited cultural opportunities both within the community and within the school were also cited as limitations.

Staffing

While current recruitment of a teacher was a challenge, others seem to think the program organization itself creates the major issues. The combined Grade 7/8 organization is viewed as difficult.

Program Impact on the School

For FI students, the lack of relationships with other students at their grade level was a significant concern, and one of the unintended consequences of the organization and allocation of classroom spaces.

Summary

With the challenges to organize a single combined Grade 7/8 FI cohort, there is a perception that the program never hit the "sweet spot." There are obvious challenges to organize a stand-alone, one-division FI program at the same time as incorporating a middle-school component within an existing secondary school. Participants felt that the implementation met with many competing agendas and priorities.

The FI programming, in hindsight, is viewed as impacting students socially and not optimum for acquiring the French language effectually.

Program Sustainability

With regard to the manner in which BC schools are funded, program sustainability often is determined by enrolment. Bearing in mind that the current funding allocation system places an emphasis on student enrolment, it is important to consider that as enrolments decrease, the cost of running a dual-track program increases.

Another important issue is to determine when program quality becomes compromised in the dominant English-track program because of low enrolments in the French Immersion program. This becomes especially acute in low-enrolled schools, given the inherent challenges of class organization.

In the case of WL McLeod, the FI program is operating very efficiently at healthy enrolment levels, with class-size averages above the English track. Community demographic data suggest that the population in Vanderhoof is relatively stable, decreasing only slightly in 2016 to 4,439 from a population of 4,480 in 2011. The Vanderhoof population, however, has increased by 10 percent in the last decade from 4,064 in 2006. Provided the enrolments continue at 20 or more for Kindergarten, the program at WL McLeod is quite sustainable.

The enrolment at William Konkin is at a level where there is a both a monetary cost and a program quality cost to sustaining the program. The program is not operating efficiently with healthy enrolments, generating educationally challenges with class organizations in both tracks. The population of Burns Lake, based on the most current census data in 2016 indicated that the population decreased 13 percent from 2011, from a population of 2,222 to a population of 1,932. This downward trend was consistent with the 14 percent decline from 2006, with a population of 2,778. In the latest 2016 census, there was a very significant change in children under the age of 5, with a 32 percent reduction. This demographic trend, the low enrolment within the program, and the weak demand for FI at Kindergarten makes for a highly unsustainable program at WKE.

The enrolments at Nechako Valley Secondary School are such that there is a monetary cost to sustaining the program, as one additional teacher is required to staff the program at the grade 7/8 level. In addition, the program delivery challenges create additional sustainability issues, particularly when French Immersion is not offered beyond grade 8.

Recommendations

It is important to reiterate that this was not a program evaluation, and **no** assessment was done regarding program quality.

The recommendations contained herein have been informed by all of the information gathered.



Recommendation One

Given the historical, current and projected enrolments at WL McLeod Elementary, and the considerable strengths of the existing program, it is recommended that French Immersion programming be maintained. Should either the school or French Immersion enrolment within the school decline significantly, then the Board should consider programming options at that time.

Recommendation Two

At William Konkin Elementary, given consideration of recent and projected French Immersion enrolment, and the impacts that French Immersion has throughout the school, it is recommended that French Immersion programming within the school be eliminated. Due to the significant overall school impacts, and French Immersion enrolments and class organization for the 2020/2021 school year, it is further recommended this be undertaken for September 2020.

Recommendation Three

With respect to Nechako Valley Secondary School, it is recommended that French Immersion not be re-introduced. This recommendation takes into consideration: French Immersion enrolments in Grade 7 and 8; the integration of French Immersion students into the English stream for the majority of their high school programming; and the establishment of separate Middle Years programming within the school.

Appendix: Interim Report Reference Materials

Ministry of Education Policy

The Ministry of Education Policy for French Immersion is provided below.

Ministry Policy Statement

The Ministry of Education supports French Immersion programming in BC schools, consistent with the goal of providing the opportunity for non-francophone students to become bilingual in English and French.

Rationale or Purpose of Policy

French Immersion programming benefits the cognitive and social development of students, as well as their opportunities for career advancement. Research demonstrates that students who successfully complete a French Immersion program attain functional bilingualism while doing as well as, or better than, their unilingual peers in the content areas of curriculum, including English Language Arts.

Policy in Full

The major goal of French Immersion is to provide the opportunity for non-francophone students to become bilingual in English and French. Bilingualism is achieved by providing instruction of the basic curriculum entirely in French during the first years. Once a firm base in French has been established, instruction in English Language Arts is added, and instruction in the English language gradually increases. Students continue to receive instruction in certain subjects in French so that proficiency is achieved in both languages by the end of Grade 12.

French Immersion and Programme Francophone, which is a program for first-language learners, are distinct programs with different purposes. French Immersion is a separate program where instruction is offered in the French language for second language learners. French Immersion programs must consist of instruction in English and French.

French Immersion may be offered in two models: Early French Immersion, beginning in Kindergarten; and Late French Immersion, beginning at the Grade 6 level. Once a French Immersion program has been established, districts should develop policy that will serve to maintain and strengthen the program. In order to ensure the delivery of effective French Immersion programs, school districts should make sure their policies are consistent with Ministry policy.

French Immersion Program Content

French Immersion programs must parallel the regular English program in structure and content. The content of French Immersion programs must parallel that of the regular curriculum, as set out in the [Required Areas of Study in an Educational Program Order](#).

Pupil Eligibility

Kindergarten to Grade 12 students in the British Columbia school system are eligible to enter an immersion program at the appropriate entry points, if the program has been made available and if there is space at the appropriate grade, subject to the registration policies of the school district in which the student resides.

Having established a program, school districts should promote the program and recruit students. Should the enrolment become insufficient, school districts should consult parents to find solutions. If there is no resolution to the problem, the district should give at least one year's notice to parents of any changes contemplated to permit full discussion and to allow parents time to consider alternatives for their children.

Financial Support

French Immersion programs are eligible to receive federal funding to support French language learning as defined in the [Federal French Funding Guide](#). Federal funding is subject to approval of Protocol of Agreements for Minority-Language Education and Second-Language Instruction.

Procedures Related to Policy

In order to qualify for French Immersion funding, boards of education must follow the Ministry's policies and also the procedures set out in this section.

The Ministry of Education provides curriculum for French Immersion: Early French Immersion (Kindergarten to Grade 12) and Late French Immersion (Grades 6-12) programs. These programs are differentiated according to point of entry and are as follows:

Program	Entry Point	Grades
Early French Immersion	Kindergarten (and Grade 1)	K – 12
Late French Immersion	Grade 6	6 – 12

Therefore, if a school district offers Early French Immersion, it must be available at the Kindergarten level. Ideally, students enter in Kindergarten, but they may enter in Grade 1 if space is available.

Entry to the immersion program at other than the normal entry points should be considered only if there is adequate space and if the student is adequately proficient in French. "Adequate proficiency" is defined as sufficient language skill to permit the student to be able to comprehend instruction in the subjects taught in French, assuming a period of four to eight weeks of adjustment to the program.

Early French Immersion

The Early French Immersion program provides students with an education equivalent to that which is available in the English language program, while providing students with the opportunity to acquire a high level of proficiency in French. Students normally enter Early French Immersion in Kindergarten (and occasionally in Grade 1). Upon graduation from the program in Grade 12, they should be able to participate easily in conversations in French, take postsecondary courses with French as the language of instruction, and accept employment with French as the language of the workplace.

In Early French Immersion programs, Kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 2 should be taught totally in French. Beginning in Grade 4 and continuing to Grade 12, English Language Arts shall be provided for all French Immersion students. Other courses may be offered in English. The following chart shows the recommended time allocations:

Grade	% of French Instruction	% of English Instruction
K-(2 or 3)	100	0
(3 or) 4-7	80	20
8-10	50 - 75	25 - 50
11-12	no less than 25	no more than 75

To receive federal funding, a minimum of 25 percent of instruction must be in French to be funded as French Immersion. A less-than-25-percent time allocation is considered Core French and will be funded accordingly. Whenever possible, the courses that are conducted in English should be taught by someone other than the regular French Immersion teacher and preferably by a teacher with excellent English skills.

Secondary French Immersion

To achieve the goals of this program, students should continue in French Immersion through Grade 12. Where possible, districts should provide some choice of subjects offered in French at the secondary level. In order to receive a *diploma de fin d'études secondaire en Colombie-Britannique*, French Immersion students must meet the requirements as stated in [Graduation Program Order](#).

Transportation

For students who wish to enrol in a French Immersion program, provincial transportation funding is based on the distance between a student's residence and the closest school in which there are appropriate grades, whether or not that school offers French Immersion.

School districts are free to develop their own transportation policies. If a district chooses to offer additional transportation services to French Immersion students, additional costs will be funded through the district's annual provincial funding or by levying fees to parents of French Immersion students.

Learning Resources and Pupil Services

Having implemented an immersion program, school districts should provide equitable learning resources, library books and student services in the same manner they are provided for in regular English programs.

Teachers of French Immersion

In addition to regular certification requirements, teachers teaching the French portion of immersion programs should have a high degree of oral and written proficiency in the French language. Teachers should have a sound knowledge of the culture of French-speaking peoples and should also have completed at least one course in immersion methodology.

For the purposes of communication in English within the school and with parents, teachers in these programs are expected to also have a good working knowledge of English.

Post-secondary training in a particular subject is a minimum criterion for teaching that subject at a secondary level, whether the subject is taught in English or in French.

Principals of French Immersion Schools

The principals of French Immersion schools should be functionally bilingual. This should be a consideration when school districts are seeking new principals. At a minimum, they should be knowledgeable about, and supportive of, the immersion program.

Historical Overview of Programs by Community

School District No. 91 (SD91) offers French Immersion programs in the communities of Burns Lake and Vanderhoof.

Burns Lake

French Immersion was established in Burns Lake at Muriel Mould Primary School (MMPS) in September of 2000, with a class of 20 students, consisting of 14 Kindergarten students and six Grade 1 students. The program expanded by one grade level at a time in those initial stages of implementation, with the oldest cohort moving to William Konkin Elementary School (WKE) for intermediate French Immersion programming in Grade 4.

In September 2010, Muriel Mould Primary School was closed due to enrolment decline, and the student bodies of MMPS and WKE were combined.

Vanderhoof

WL McLeod Elementary School

French Immersion commenced in September of 1999 at Vanderhoof's WL McLeod Elementary School with the conversion of Programme cadre to immersion. The program expanded by one grade level as each cohort advanced, to include Kindergarten to Grade 7 opportunities.

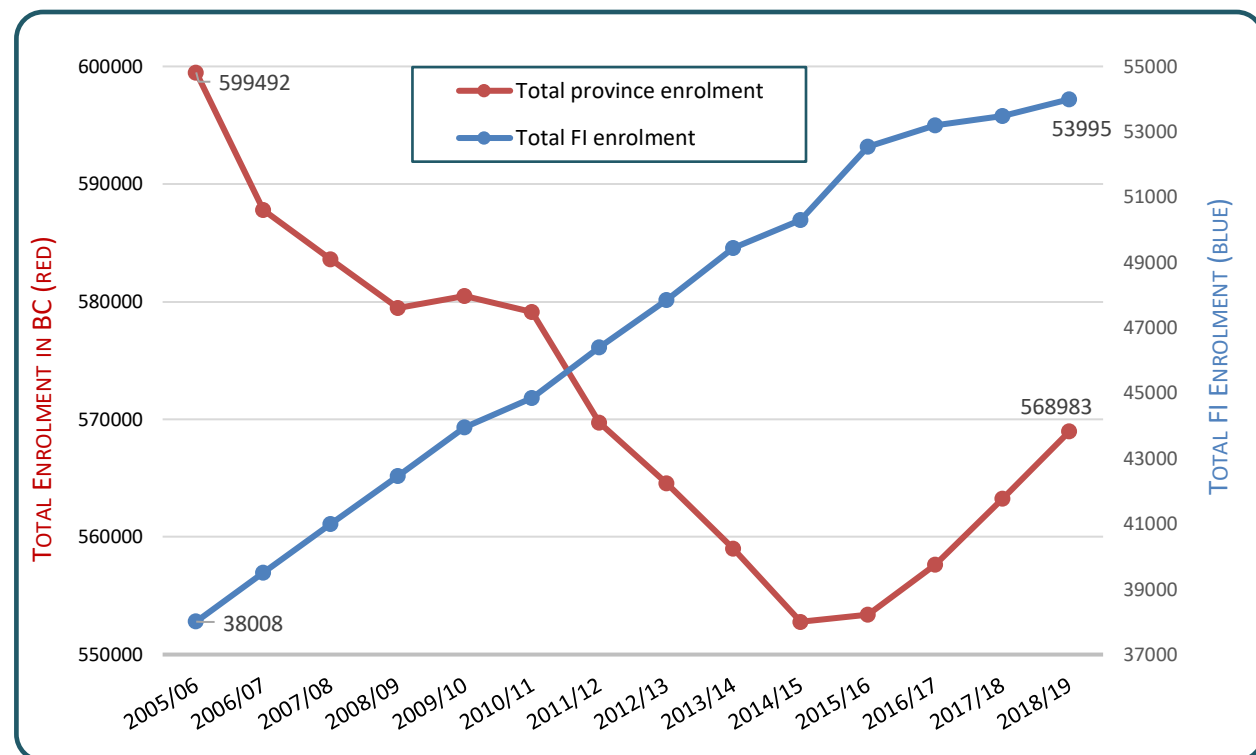
Nechako Valley Secondary

In September 2014, Nechako Valley Secondary School enrolled its first cohort of French Immersion students in Grade 7/8. Since then, NVSS has had between 25-29 students in immersion at that grade level each year until the current school year, when teacher recruitment challenges did not permit offering French Immersion.

French Immersion has never been offered in the community beyond Grade 8, and students are accommodated within English classes for the balance of their secondary programming.

Provincial Enrolment Patterns

Overall, French Immersion enrolment has been growing in the province, despite a decade of total enrolment decline. The chart below summarizes provincial trends in overall student enrolment versus French Immersion student enrolment between 2005-2019¹.

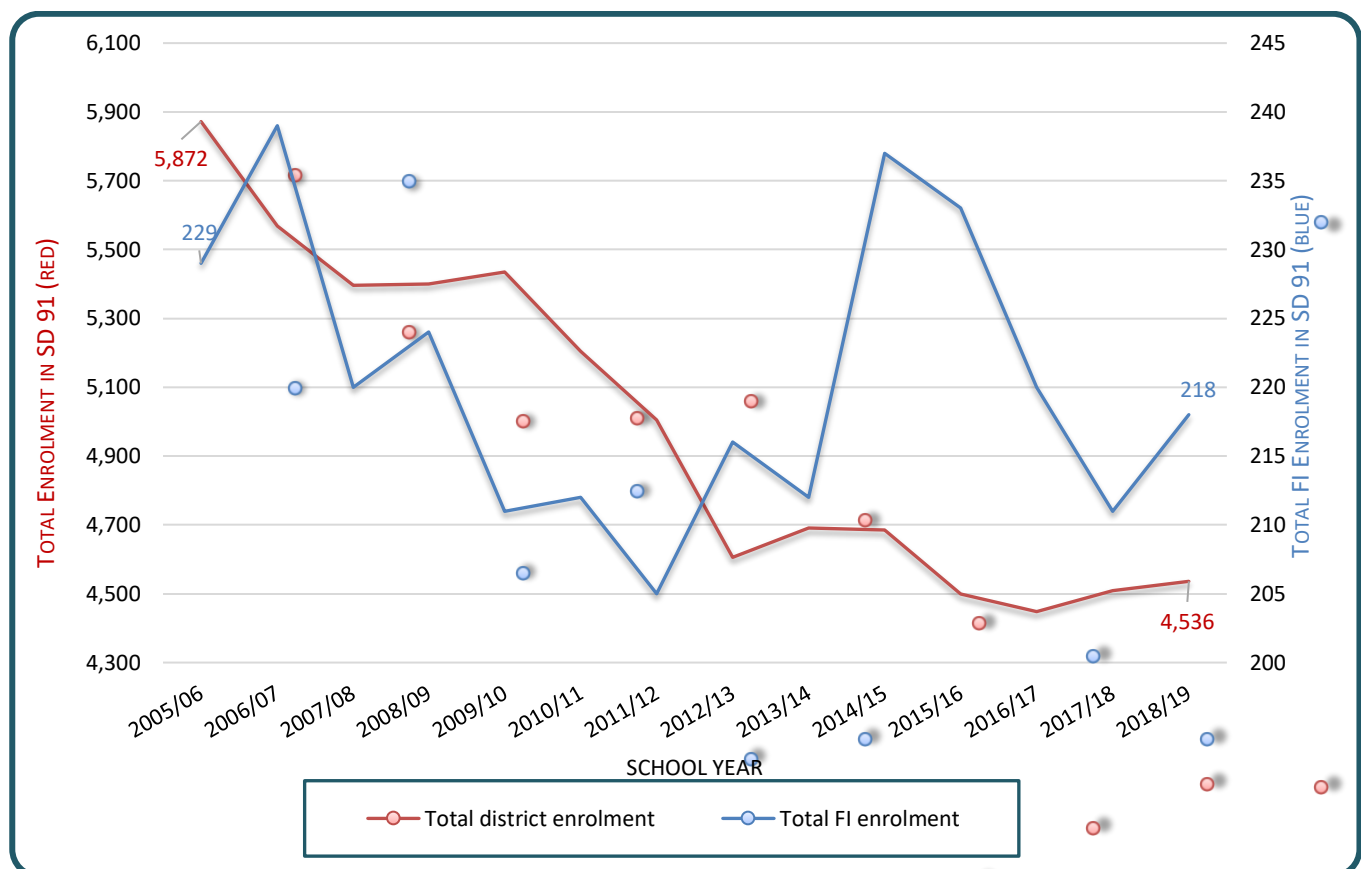


¹ Retrieved from <https://bc-yk.cpf.ca/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/BC-Graphs-of-French-Immersion-Enrolment-2004-2019.pdf>

Like the province, SD91 has experienced a significant enrolment decline since 2005, with 1,400 FTE fewer students enrolled. Enrolment in French immersion has remained relatively stable, at around 220 students.

District Enrolment

In the same period of time, enrolment in SD91 mirrored that of the province, with a significant decline in overall enrolment to 2013. French Immersion enrolment has remained stable at between 211 and 239 students in the same period of time.²



District Historical Enrolment by Grade

Programs such as Early French Immersion, where students can exit the program over several years, but additional students cannot enrol along the way because they don't have the prerequisite skills, are prone to the pressures of small numbers, particularly at the upper elementary and secondary level.

² Retrieved from <https://bc-yk.cpf.ca/research-advocacy/enrolment-statistics/>

Intermediate and secondary enrolments show the largest declines. This is typical of many programs across the province.

SD 91 (Nechako Lakes) French Immersion Enrolment by Grade (2004 – 2019)																
Grade	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
K	44	29	41	38	17	23	25	36	32	36	26	39	43	23	17	19
1	35	41	34	39	40	32	23	31	32	36	34	33	38	42	28	26
2	39	32	40	30	32	39	31	23	30	30	32	34	23	35	42	28
3	22	35	32	35	29	27	37	27	19	29	27	32	29	22	30	36
4	18	19	34	30	33	28	24	33	23	19	26	28	28	27	21	31
5	17	16	20	33	22	28	24	18	32	20	18	23	24	26	23	21
6		13	15	21	31	21	26	22	17	31	19	14	23	20	21	26
7			13	13	16	26	21	22	20	15	30	19	13	15	18	21
8												15	12	10	11	10
Total	175	185	229	239	220	224	211	212	205	216	212	237	233	220	211	218

The two elementary programs have distinctive enrolment patterns, not identifiable within the district data, and therefore are disaggregated below.

William Konkin Elementary School French Immersion Enrolment by Grade (2015 – 2019)										
	15 - 16		16 - 17		17 - 18		18 - 19		19 - 20	
Grade	English	French	English	French	English	French	English	French	English	French
K	16	13	12	0	18	0	24	0	14	0
1	11	16	17	13	13	4	10	8	16	5
2	15	8	10	16	20	12	12	4	10	7
3	19	11	19	7	13	14	21	10	12	3
4	7	11	19	10	19	7	14	14	21	10
5	15	8	12	11	21	8	21	7	18	13
6	30	4	20	6	13	9	19	8	21	6
7	19	3	29	4	22	5	14	9	19	7
	132	74	138	67	139	59	135	60	131	51

There have been significant shifts of enrolment at WKE in the past five years, particularly at primary, with French Immersion enrolments shifting from 48 students in Kindergarten to Grade 3, to 15 students in the current year.

WL McLeod Elementary School French Immersion Enrolment by Grade (2015 –2019)										
	15 - 16		16 - 17		17 - 18		18 - 19		19 - 20	
Grade	English	French	English	French	English	French	English	French	English	French
<u>K</u>	15	31	13	23	25	17	12	19	17	25
<u>1</u>	16	22	14	29	15	25	23	18	10	19
<u>2</u>	22	15	16	19	22	30	18	24	23	14
<u>3</u>	24	19	22	15	13	16	24	26	20	24
<u>4</u>	13	17	30	17	28	14	18	17	22	24
<u>5</u>	29	16	16	15	36	15	29	14	18	17
<u>6</u>	11	19	31	14	17	12	39	18	29	14
	130	139	129	109	156	129	163	136	139	137

WLM mirrors the district data, and has experienced relatively stable enrolment, including enrolling 82 students in primary in the current school year, which represents no significant loss of enrolment in the past five years.

Population Demographics

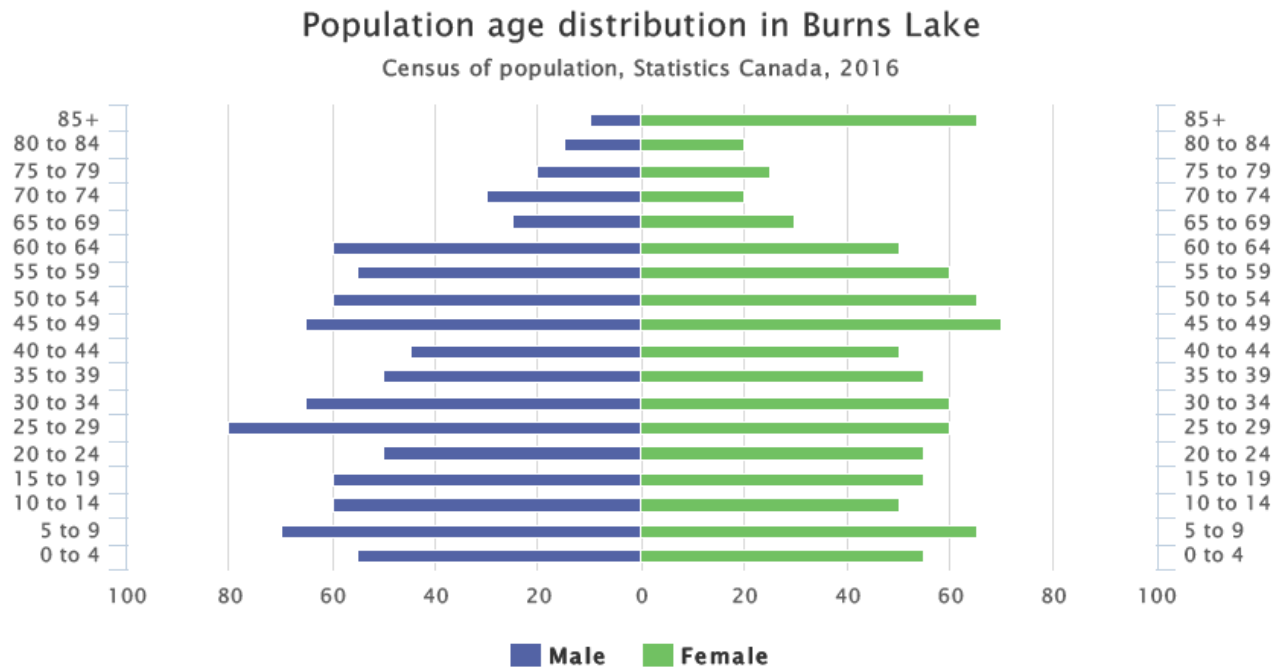
School enrolments change in response to various social and economic factors. In rural areas, changing demographic and economic factors have a strong impact on the number of schools and programs the school district can support. This is evidenced over the past two decades, with five school closures in SD91.

The best source of information is the census data collected every five years by Statistics Canada. Stats Canada develops a community profile, and it is the basis of the data presented here³. When reflecting on this data, it is important to consider the Global Non-Response Rates for each community and the impact on actual populations.

Burns Lake

In 2016, the latest census data, the population of Burns Lake decreased 13 percent from 2011, from a population of 2,222 to a population of 1,932. This downward trend was consistent with the 14 percent decline from 2006, with a population of 2,778. This trend was unlike that of the province, which had an increase of five percent in that same period of time.

³ Retrieved from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=POPC&Code1=0110&Geo2=PR&Code2=59&SearchText=Burns%20Lake&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=0110&TABID=1&type=0>



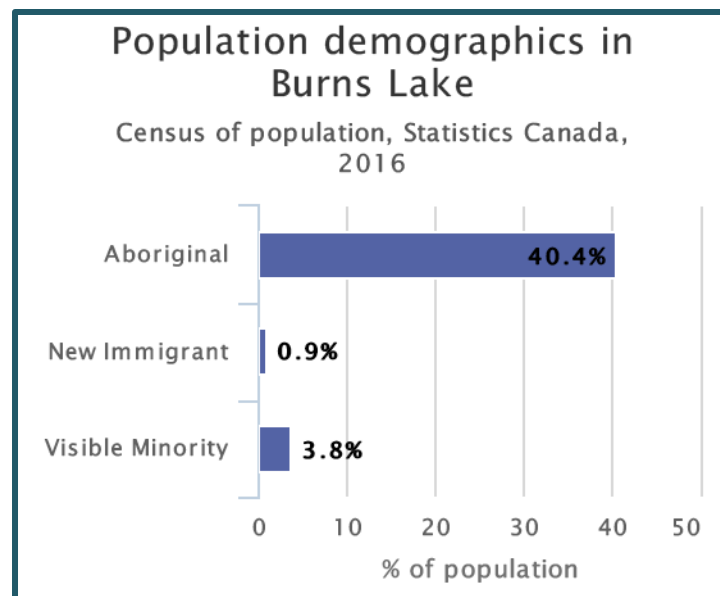
In the latest 2016 census, there were a total of 390 children aged from birth to 14 years, roughly evenly split between male and female, 200 and 190 respectively. In the birth-to-four-year range, which includes students either having just entered the primary grades or about to enter Kindergarten, the population was 125, or approximately 25 children per age level.

The data exposes a very significant change between the 2011 census and that of 2016. The chart below describes the significant changes in demographics for children either about to enter or in the school system.

Children and Youth Age Groups			
	2011	2016	% change
0 to 4	185	125	32
5 to 9	170	145	15
10 to 14	175	110	38
15 to 17	120	80	33

In 2016, there were 530 family households, with 205 couple households and 145 single-parent families, for a total of 350 households with children.

The population demographics are summarized in the chart below.

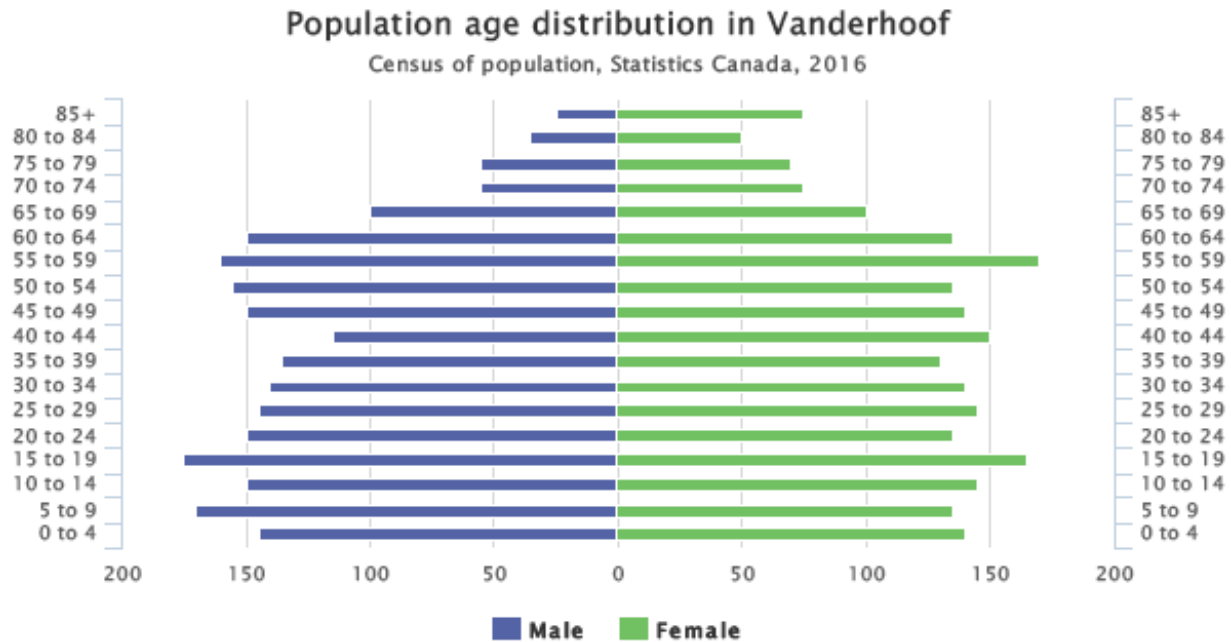


In terms of census language data, the first official language spoken is English in 99 percent of households, with 10 households reporting French as the first official language spoken. Additional highlights of the language most often spoken at home include 170 households with an Aboriginal language, primarily Carrier, and 75 households with an Indo-European language spoken within the home.

Vanderhoof

In 2016, the latest census data, the population of Vanderhoof decreased only slightly from a population of 4,480 in 2011, to a population of 4,439. This population is also dissimilar to that of the province, which had an increase of five percent in the same period of time. The Vanderhoof population, however, has increased by 10 percent in the last decade, from 4,064 in 2006.

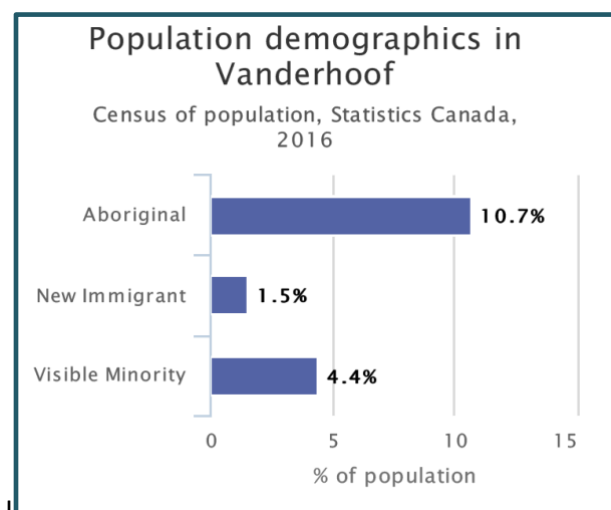
In the latest 2016 census, there were a total of 890 children from birth to 14 years, with 52 percent male and 47 percent female, 470 and 420 respectively. In the birth-to-four-year range, which includes students either having just entered the primary grades, or about to enter Kindergarten in this current year, the population was 290, with between 50 and 64 children at each age level. The data also exhibits a change between the 2011 census and that of 2016. The following chart describes the change in demographics for children either about to enter or in the school system.



Children and Youth Age Groups			
	2011	2016	% change
0 to 4	330	285	14
5 to 9	305	310	Increase of 2
10 to 14	385	290	25
15 to 17	205	200	2

In 2016, there were 1,225 family households, with 515 couple households and 165 single-parent families, for a total of 680 households with children.

The population demographics are summarized in the chart below.



In terms of census language data, the first official language spoken is English in 99 percent of households, with 35 households reporting French as the first official language spoken; 340 households report an Indo-European language spoken within the home.

Class Sizes

Class sizes for each of the two elementary schools are summarized here for William Konkin Elementary School (WKE) and WL McLeod Elementary School (WLM) for school years 2008/2009 to 2019/2020.

School	Classroom	Language	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
WLM	1	E	24	22	22	17	17	14	30	27	30	20	23
WLM	2	E	16	27	23	23	20	13	28	24	27	22	24
WLM	3	E	25	29	30	29	22	24	24	26	25	23	20
WLM	4	E	24	30	19	20	21	22	19	24	22	21	17
WLM	5	E	26	22	21	21	21	24	20	24	21	23	19
WLM	6	E	21				24	22	20	23	17	17	18
WLM	7	E									18	17	17
WLM	8	E										19	
WLM	1	F	23	18	21	19	24	21	24	21	19	21	27
WLM	2	F	24	20	20	22	23	22	21	21	21	22	21
WLM	3	F	26	17	19	23	22	18	22	22	18	19	22
WLM	4	F	22	21	21	21	33	20	22	22	16	19	20
WLM	5	F	17	30	29	29	29	23	25	23	24	23	19
WLM	6	F		28	29	26	29	23	27	22	29	30	28
WKE	1	E	22	23	19	17	22	19	18	14	17	15	18
WKE	2	E	21	15	21	20	20	16	21	20	17	15	19
WKE	3	E	23	23	24	18	21	24	22	21	20	18	20
WKE	4	E	22	23	23	18	19	20	25	24	18	22	19
WKE	5	E	23	22	24	18	20	24	27	16	20	24	21
WKE	6	E			27	20	20	22	23	20	20	24	19
WKE	7	E			23	24	20	19		23	22	22	16
WKE	8	E			22	25							
WKE													
WKE	1	F	22	15	13	17	24	20	12	21	16	17	15
WKE	2	F	25	18	19	25	17	12	23	23	21	19	15
WKE	3	F			21	16	20		20	21	22	23	21
WKE	4	F			15	20			14				
Enrolment by School/Language													
WLM		E	136	130	115	110	125	119	141	148	160	162	138
		F	112	134	139	140	160	127	141	131	127	134	137
WKE		E	111	106	183	160	142	144	136	138	134	140	132
		F	47	33	68	78	61	32	69	65	59	59	51
Total		E	247	236	298	270	267	263	277	286	294	302	270
		F	159	167	207	218	221	159	210	196	186	193	188
Total			406	403	505	488	488	422	487	482	480	495	458

Class Configuration

Class configurations are summarized below, detailing the size of each class and the number of designated students with unique needs at the beginning of the 2019/20 school year.

William Konkin Elementary School

English										
Class Name	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total	Desig.
K1W	15								15	1
12		15	3						18	2
23			7	12					19	5
45					8	11			19	8
45					13	7			20	7
6							21		21	6
7								19	19	5
Total	15	15	10	12	21	18	21	19	131	34
French Immersion										
Class Name	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total	Desig.
123		5	7	3					15	0
45					10	5			15	0
567						8	6	7	21	2
Total	0	5	7	3	10	13	6	7	51	2

At WKE, there are 34 designated students in the English Language program and two in the French Immersion program.

WL McLeod Elementary School

English									
Class Name	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Desig.
K	17							17	1
123		10	7	1				18	3
23			16	3				19	4
34				9	11			20	5
34				7	11			18	5
56						11	12	23	7
56						7	17	24	9
Total	17	10	23	20	22	18	29	139	34
French Immersion									
FTE	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Desig.
K	19							19	
K1	6	14						20	
123		5	14	2				21	
3				22				22	
45					24	4		28	3
56						13	14	27	7
Total	25	19	14	24	24	17	14	137	10

At WLM, there are 34 designated students in the English Language program and 10 in the French Immersion program.

Nechako Valley Secondary

Class configurations are summarized for NVSS, detailing the size of each class and the number of designated students with unique needs for the last year French Immersion was offered, the 2018/19 school year.

Class Configuration October 2018				
English				
Class Name	7	8	Total	Desig.
7-1	24		24	3
7-2	23		23	3
7-3	26		26	3
8-1		26	26	5
8-2		26	26	3
8-3		27	27	2
Total	78	87	165	27
French Immersion				
Class Name	7	8	Total	Desig.
7-4	12	10	22	5
Total	12	10	22	5

Staffing

William Konkin Elementary School

William Konkin Elementary School organizes program delivery around three French Immersion teachers, currently all staffed. As SD91 has no bargained composition language, Learning Improvement Fund and Classroom Enhancement Funding provide WKE with 10 divisions, three of these dedicated to supporting the FI track.

French Immersion Teachers Teaching On Call (TTOC) are not generally available, save for an opportunity to book a qualified TTOC in advance who lives a distance from the community. The majority of on call services are provided by Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Learning Support staff.

WL McLeod Elementary School

Currently, WLM has one uncertified teacher with a Letter of Permission instructing a primary class. The remaining five positions are fully staffed. There are challenges securing French Immersion TTOC.

Nechako Valley Secondary School

This school year, the district was unable to recruit a French Immersion teacher, and the Grade 7/8 French Immersion program did not proceed. Students were then accommodated within the English program.

Recruitment Challenges

In October 2018, the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) published a comprehensive report on the growing demand for French Immersion within the province, and the teacher shortages then existing.⁴

Highlights from the report include:

- *The demand for French Immersion cannot be met without French education teachers. It is widely accepted that there is a shortage of teachers in French education programs, including French Immersion.*
- *Two weeks after the start of the 2018/19 school year, there were still 80 job postings for French Immersion teachers. Many districts report that French Immersion is one of the most challenging positions to recruit.*

In September 2019, the district was unable to recruit a French Immersion teacher for Nechako Valley Secondary School and one primary class at WL McLeod Elementary School.

⁴ Retrieved from <https://www.bctf.ca/publications/ResearchReports.aspx?id=52015>

The BC Association of Teachers of Modern Languages (BCATML) recently shared a roadmap published by the Canadian Parents for French, BC and Yukon, to address the French Immersion teacher shortage in British Columbia. In their letter to the Minister of Education, BCATML described the teacher shortage as acute, persistent and widespread. “Flying under the radar are many more school districts with few, if any, French teachers on their teacher-on-call lists. All in all, we believe British Columbia is short anywhere from 100 to 150 French teachers. Given the lack of good data or labour market assessments, this is our best guess based on public reporting. It is unfortunate that no government or regulatory agency seems to have a good handle on the actual French teacher supply, demand, or the shortage.”⁵

The Government of Canada recently announced a national strategy geared towards teacher recruitment and retention. With \$62.6 million in funding over four years, this strategy will fund projects aimed at alleviating the teacher shortage and will lead to the creation of a national roundtable on French as a second language⁶.

Revenues

The Ministry of Education administers federal funding intended to support incremental costs resulting from offering French as a second official language in British Columbia. French Immersion programs are eligible to receive federal funding to support French language learning as defined in the [French Funding Guide](#). School district funding is allocated based on initiatives identified in the [BC Action Plan](#).

Funding categories include the amounts described below, and the district is free to allocate within the total based on district needs and priorities:

Learning Assistance Grant \$11,500

Learning Assistance funding represents seven percent of the total school district funding envelope under the current BC Action Plan. The main purpose of this grant is to support French Immersion programs’ capacity in working with students who demonstrate delayed language, delayed perceptual-motor functioning and delayed social skills in conjunction with below-average academic achievement. All district expenses in direct support of this initiative are eligible. School districts offering French Immersion programs with less than 300 FTE will receive \$11,500 per year in support of this initiative.

E-Learning Technologies Grant \$15,692

E-Learning Technology funding represents nine percent of the total school district funding envelope under the current BC Action Plan. The purpose of this grant is to assist French Immersion programs in providing students with a learning environment where technology is an integral part of their educational program and facilitating students’ language acquisition or expanding their language skills. Except for capital assets, salary and e-books, under the guidelines of this guide, all districts’ expenses in

⁵ Retrieved from <https://www.bcatml.org/news/cpf-makes-16-recommendations-to-the-ministry-to-address-the-french-teacher-shortage-in-bc>

⁶ Retrieved from <https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/b-c-parents-hope-new-funding-will-solve-french-teacher-shortage>

direct support of this initiative are eligible. School districts offering French Immersion will receive \$8.50 per FTE plus additional revitalization funding as follows:

Revitalization Funding Rates	
1-299 FTE	\$14,000
300-400 FTE	\$12,000
401-500 FTE	\$10,000
501-700 FTE	\$ 8,000
701 FTE and more	\$ 5,000

Learning Resources Grant \$6,689

Learning Resources funding represents eight percent of the total school district funding envelope under the current BC Action Plan. The purpose of this grant is to assist districts with the higher cost of buying education resources in French, for the library as well as the classroom. Expenditures under this category are limited to resources destined to French Immersion classes and include electronic versions of such resources. School districts offering French Immersion will receive: \$11 per FTE for Kindergarten to Grade 7; \$90 per FTE for Grade 8 to Grade 12; plus a library grant of \$2,250 for districts with one immersion school or \$4,500 for districts with two immersion schools or more.

French Immersion Grant \$36,280

The French Immersion funding represents 53 percent of the total school district funding envelope under the current BC Action Plan. The purpose of this grant is to provide the supplemental funding needed to deliver French Immersion programs in participating school districts. Except for items otherwise covered under the guidelines of this grant, all districts' expenses in direct support of this initiative, including any allowable salary expense under this guide, are eligible. School districts offering French Immersion will receive: \$50 per FTE for Kindergarten to Grade 3; \$70 per FTE for Grade 4 to Grade 7; \$95 per FTE for Grade 8 to Grade 12; plus an additional amount equal to their base funding times their Immersion Funding protection factor (IF); plus an additional amount equal to their base funding times their Rural Factor (RF). They will also receive additional funding adjusted for the Rural Factor as follows:

Additional Immersion Funding	
1-200 FTE	\$40 per FTE x (1+Rf)
201-400 FTE	\$30 per FTE x (1+Rf)
401-800 FTE	\$20 per FTE x (1+Rf)
801 FTE and more	\$10 per FTE x (1+Rf)

Teacher Professional Development Grant \$4,500

The Teacher Professional Development funding represents five percent of the total school district funding envelope. The purpose of this grant is to support teachers' participation in activities such as in-service/program implementation for Core French and French Immersion programs that may be offered to individual or groups of teachers, and may include workshops, online learning, conference

attendance and post-secondary courses. School districts with more than 10 students will receive \$4,500 for the first 2,570 students and an additional \$1.50 per student beyond that threshold.

Cultural Activities Grant \$1,800

This grant represents two percent of the total school district funding envelope under the current BC Action Plan. The purpose of this grant is to assist districts in providing opportunities for students to be exposed to francophone culture by sponsoring various French cultural activities that could include: visiting musicians/authors or children's theatre groups; field trips; or "special days." Neighbouring school districts are encouraged to cooperate to "make the money go further."

French Immersion	
All districts	\$900