

From: [Karen Matthews](#)
To: [Karen Matthews](#)
Subject: D Boulton late entry French Immersion, critical!
Date: December 17, 2024 2:15:43 PM

From: Darcy Boulton <>

Sent: Monday, December 16, 2024 2:34 PM

To: Trustees BoardChair <TrusteesBoardChair@sd68.bc.ca>; Naomi Bailey <Naomi.Bailey@sd68.bc.ca>; Greg Keller <Greg.Keller@sd68.bc.ca>; Tania Brzovic <Tania.Brzovic@sd68.bc.ca>; Leanne Lee <leanne.lee@sd68.bc.ca>; Chantelle Morvay <Chantelle.Morvay@sd68.bc.ca>; Leana Pellegrin <Leana.Pellegrin@sd68.bc.ca>; Mark Robinson <Mark.Robinson@sd68.bc.ca>; Tom Rokeby <Tom.Rokeby@sd68.bc.ca>; Tim Harris <Tim.Harris@sd68.bc.ca>; katiecapadouca@gmail.com <katiecapadouca@gmail.com>

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Dear All,

I have two children in SD 68, one of whom has completed elementary school late entry French Immersion at Quaterway School, and the other currently in the program in her first of two years. I also have a partner who works in the school district. I have friends who have children who have completed the program. We have friends who work in various capacities within the district. Sometimes I talk to people who know nothing of the late entry French Immersion program who want to know more. Whether familiar or unfamiliar with late entry French Immersion program, when you talk to any of these people, they all speak in high regard for this unique opportunity within our district. No one disparages a program like this. To recently hear that this program is scheduled for discontinuation has me aghast with wonder as to what our school district leaders could be thinking.

As many educators know, learning a second language is one of the most beneficial and constructive applications of a well rounded education that a school system can offer. Educators also know that not all students are ready to learn or have the opportunity to learn at the same rate or at the same time. Delaying the intake for some students into a later starting French program seems to make a lot of sense, providing a learning flexibility that is not just for practical reasons. Educators also know that lowering any barriers to learning opportunities will see benefits in the long run. For example, less social injustice, more inclusion, and more acceptance of diversity are all signs of a healthy community and country. In a day and age when more than ever an

opportunity such as late entry French Immersion should be held up in high regard and strongly encouraged, it is a very short sighted approach that would have our educational leaders consider its demise.

I had a very unique opportunity growing up in a working class household. Our family hosted over 50 international students from many, many different countries and cultures from around the world when they were on school breaks from Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific, located near Sooke, BC. The students would come one, two or perhaps three at a time for reading breaks, Christmas holidays, Easter, or even over the summer if they couldn't go home. While I did not know it at the time, I received a glimpse of the broader world, while progressing through elementary and high school. I often spent times with these students, aged 16 and 17, helping them to improve their English. Some of the brightest minds of their respective countries..... Russia, Bhutan, Uruguay, to name a few. I don't speak a second language, but I often wished that I could. I could see what it means to work at a second language but I also came to realize what the benefits (and deficits) of languages and indeed, internationalism can be. Language draws centrally into this role. In Canada, French language is in part what we have, that makes us up, whether you or I speak it or not. It is worth having, for so many reasons. I name but a few. We should be encouraging it and educators above all should know this.

The late entry French Immersion Program is a jewel in our crown of education. Perhaps there is a little tarnish that could be polished. That is the job of the SD 68 administration. The program should be encouraged, promoted and likely even expanded. It is time for this SD 68 administration to hold the bar high for our students and to hold the bar a little higher for themselves to make this happen. Today, cancel culture makes it too easy to pull the plug.....and it is very, very hard to bring it back once removed! As our world continues to get smaller, and we are expected to be accepting of a global culture, don't you think a well rounded, inclusive, diverse, and supportive education would allow our students to be better prepared? Not only should we save the Late Entry French Immersion Program, it should be promoted so that we don't have to advocate for it's existence ever again. For those who educate, or lead the educators, I think it is time for you to do a bit more homework.

Today is tomorrow!

D'Arcy Boulton
