

Grade One Assignment Plan

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**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2012**

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Presentation of Data

The Superintendent of Schools has made presentations to the School Committee relative to the English and French Immersion Programs on:

- Student demographic data
- Historical enrollment figures and class sizes
- Impact of recent enrollment trends
- Student achievement data (presented by Laura O'Dwyer, Ph.D.)

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Impact of Enrollment Trends

The Superintendent identified the following issues from recent Elementary Program enrollment trends:

- Decreased enrollment in the English program has:
 - Created “single strands” in schools
 - Limited options for inclusion programs
 - Limited the pool of role models for co-taught programs
 - Limited the flexibility of classroom assignment
- Fluctuation in program enrollments has resulted in an imbalance of student demographic representation in both programs
- Fluctuation in program enrollments has resulted in organizational instability

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Problem Defined

The impact of the recent enrollment trends has limited the district's ability to provide an optimal learning environment for all students.

Recommendation to Resolve the Problem

The Superintendent recommends that the district implement a “Lottery/Capping” model for the French Immersion program.

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School Committee Request

After receiving input from the school leadership team, parents/guardians and the public through citizen speak, emails, phone calls, and individual meetings the Milton School Committee has requested a more detailed plan of implementation for a “Lottery/Capping” of the French Immersion program prior to taking action on the Superintendent’s recommendation.

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Superintendent's Recommendation with Detail

The recommendation of the Superintendent is to implement a “Lottery/Capping” plan for French Immersion starting with the 2013-14 school year with the following steps:

1. Each year determine the level of interest in the grade 1 English and French programs
2. Accommodate and assign all students to grade 1 English who select English
3. Hold school based lotteries for French Immersion seats
4. Determine the number of grade one English and French Immersion sections and class sizes at each school
5. Assign students to French Immersion classes via a school based lottery system

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1. Determine the Level of Interest

- In February of each year the Superintendent will host a grade one information night for families
- In February of each year the schools will host grade one classroom visits for families
- In March of each year the current Milton Public Schools Kindergarten families will select either the English program or the French Immersion program

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2. Assign Students Who Select English to English Classes

- The Central Office will assign all students who select English to English in their home school

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3. Hold School Based Lotteries for French Immersion

- All current Milton Public Schools Kindergarteners who select French Immersion will enter a school based lottery
- All students will receive an assignment order number from the lottery for assignment in French Immersion seats

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4. Determine the Number of Grade One Sections/Seats

The Superintendent's recommendation for the number of grade one English and French Immersion sections is based on the school classroom configurations throughout the district.

Standard Elementary School Building Configurations

- Collicot School – 4 strands per grade
 - 2 English; 2 French
- Cunningham School – 3 strands per grade
 - 2 English; 1 French
- Glover School – 4 strands per grade
 - 2 English; 2 French
- Tucker School – 3 strands per grade
 - 2 English; 1 French

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- Each school will have a minimum of two sections of English to promote an optimal learning environment for all students
- If more than 14 sections of grade one are necessary the Superintendent will create any additional sections based on the needs of the district
- The Superintendent will determine class size for English (up to 22) and French Immersion (up to 26) each year based on enrollment

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5. Assign Students to French Immersion Via School Based Lottery

- All students who select French will enter the lottery and siblings will not receive preference for placement in French Immersion
- Students will be assigned to the open seats in their school based on their assignment order determined by the school based lottery until the seats are filled
- Students who are not placed in the French Immersion program will be placed in the English program at their home school if class size allows
- Students who are not placed in the French Immersion program will also be placed on a waitlist in the event that seats open up in the French Immersion program at their school

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Outcomes of the Plan

The plan for a “Lottery/Capping” of the French Immersion program recommended by the Superintendent will drive the enrollment numbers towards optimal learning environments for all students.

- The plan will increase enrollment numbers in the English program and will:
 - Eliminate single strands in English
 - Increase options for inclusion programs
 - Increase the pool of role models for co-taught programs
 - Increase the flexibility of classroom assignment
- The plan will contribute to more balanced student demographics between the English and French Immersion programs
- The plan will result in increased organizational stability

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Additional Items of Note

- In its first year of implementation (2013-14) the Cunningham School will have four sections of grade one to account for the four sections of Kindergarten in 2012-13
- In the 2013-14 school year the Superintendent will determine if the fourth section of grade one is English or French Immersion based on the needs of the district

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Additional Items of Note

- MPS Kindergarten Students on the French Immersion waitlist will be kept on school-based waitlists
- If a seat in French Immersion opens up, the next student on the school-based waitlist will be offered the seat

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Additional Items of Note

- Non-MPS Kindergarten students who are registering to enter the French Immersion program in grade one will enter a separate lottery and be on a waitlist for seats in the district until the start of the school year
- Non-MPS Kindergarten students will receive a seat in French Immersion if there is an open seat and all current MPS students have been accommodated in the program of their choice
- At the start of school all waitlists for the French Immersion program are eliminated

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Superintendent's Recommendation

The recommendation of the Superintendent is to implement the “Lottery/Capping” plan presented for French Immersion starting with the 2013-14 school year in order to promote a quality educational environment for all children.