

# **Middle French Immersion at Century Public School: The Clear Choice**

**Delegation on behalf of the Parent Council at  
Century Public School**

**Made to the  
Ottawa-Carleton District School Board  
November 23, 2009**

## **Board members, please consider:**

The Planning Department's recommendations included the placement of a Middle French Immersion Program in the Merivale South of Baseline area.

Century Public School's Parent Council respectfully requests that you consider locating Middle French Immersion at Century Public School, and NOT at Carleton Heights Public School as was recommended by the Planning Department.

A number of different factors can ensure a successful Middle French Immersion (MFI) program.

1. The right location
2. A faculty with a proven track record built on improving programming
3. Sustained community interest
4. A strong English program to balance the popularity of French immersion
5. A large cohort for multiple activities
6. An established school environment with the existing space for a new program

Based on all of these factors, Century Public School is clearly preferable as the site to offer Middle French Immersion.

## 1. The Right Location

- Century Public School is centrally located in the catchment area.
- Carleton Heights Public School is located at the edge of the catchment area.
- For some students, Carleton Heights Public School will be even farther than the current MFI site at Knoxdale Public School.
- Century Public School is located on a quiet tree-lined residential street away from traffic concerns but still easily accessible. Its playground is bordered by City of Ottawa parkland!
- Carleton Heights Public School playground is along Prince of Wales Drive, a highly congested, major city thoroughfare. It is separated only from Highway 16 by a chain link fence.

Century Public School's location is clearly superior. Visit the two schools and see for yourself!

## 2. An Award Winning Faculty

- Century Public School has been named a “School On The Move” by the Ontario Ministry of Education’s Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat. It recognizes the excellence of Century Public School staff with “Lighthouse Program” recognition.
- To quote the Ministry of Education’s website: “Student Achievement Officers from the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat work collaboratively with school boards. Together, they select schools that have used data and evidence to significantly improve student achievement over three years.” Century Public School is one of the **chosen** schools.
- A profile of Century Public School has been drafted by the Secretariat and is being distributed throughout the province to all other schools.

Century Public School is being used as a model to be emulated by other schools in the province. Century is a model for success -- THIS is the ideal environment to grow MFI.

## 3. History of Strong Community Demand

- Century Public School indicated its interest in offering MFI per OCDSB procedure back in the Spring of 2008, within the Board’s established deadline.
- Carleton Heights Public School and McGregor Easson Public School EXPRESSED NO INTEREST in offering MFI.
- In April 2009, the Parent Council Chair from Century Public School reiterated the interest in MFI by the Century Public School Community in a letter to Alex Getty.
- As a representative of Century Public School’s Parent Council, I am asking you once again to consider offering MFI at Century Public School.
- Century Public School has been asking for MFI for years but a decision has been on hold pending the outcome of this ARC.

Sustained community interest has clearly been **demonstrated by Century Public School alone.**

## 4. A strong English program

- **Century Public School’s** enrollment per Board statistics for March 2009 shows an average enrollment of **40** children per grade. This is a strong, award-winning English program.
- The **Carleton Heights Public School** Projected Enrollment is **15** students in grade 7 and **14** students in grade 8 within 5 years. This is a very small student body. English students at Carleton Heights Public School will drop out of the English program to join Middle French Immersion. **It will decimate Carleton Heights Public School’s already fragile English cohort.**

CENTURY PUBLIC SCHOOL has the STRONGER, AWARD-WINNING ENGLISH PROGRAM.

5. A large cohort

- Following Grade 6, Century MFI students going into Grade 7 and 8 could stay with the Century Public School English cohort, moving to a TRUE FRENCH IMMERSION CENTRE and joining a strong French-speaking population at Sir Winston Churchill.
- Sir Winston Churchill is also centrally located. It would have the existing capacity (empty space) and outstanding facilities for the grade 7 and 8 division.
- The size of the Sir Winston Churchill grade 7 and 8 cohort would allow for the maximum choice of extra activities in the catchment (music, sports, academics, etc...) all in a setting specializing in French Immersion.
- **These children would be denied a diverse learning environment if placed at Carleton Heights**, whose grade 7 and 8 enrollment is projected an abysmal 14 to 15 students. What variety of activities can be offered with such a small cohort and the resulting limited staff?
- When Planning Staff presented its recommendations, many Board members raised concern about the very small cohort in grades 7 and 8 at Carleton Heights Public School.
- The ARC's report to the Board in June recommended that grades 7 and 8 from Carleton Heights/McGreggor Easson move to school with a larger cohort. The Carleton Heights/McGreggor Easson communities were part of that consensus!

Students deserve the widest range of activities as part of their education! It requires a strong cohort. That strong cohort is NOT present at Carleton Heights Public School.

6. Existing Empty Space

- Carleton Heights Public School must undergo considerable renovation as it is designated Prohibitive to Repair. Swing space may be required causing further considerable upheaval. This is NOT an ideal environment to grow a new program.

**Century Public School**

- Planning Staff projections to the ARC show 2013-14 utilization for Century Public School at 58%, allowing plenty of empty space for MFI students, even with the introduction of All-Day Learning.

**Carleton Heights Public School**

- OCDSB planning staff in its Recommendation Report chose Carleton Height Public School for MFI in anticipation of adding more space: "The design of the Carleton Heights Public School building lends itself more easily to an addition".
- Will still more space be needed at Carleton Heights Public School to accommodate All-Day Learning?

Century Public School HAS ROOM FOR MFI.  
Carleton Heights Public School does not!

## **WHY ARE WE BUILDING MORE SPACE AT CARLETON HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOL WHEN EMPTY SPACE EXISTS AT CENTURY PUBLIC SCHOOL?!**

From page 52 of the OCDSB Recommendation Report regarding placing MFI at Carleton Heights Public School:

*“For 2014-2015 when it is expected that the MFI program will be at its complement of grades, preliminary estimates indicate that approximately 4-6 classrooms would be required to accommodate the enrolment at the school.”*

**WHY** are we considering building more space at Carleton Heights Public School when we already have the empty space waiting at Century Public School?!

**NO CONSTRUCTION AND NO EXTRA FUNDING IS REQUIRED IF MFI IS PLACED AT CENTURY!**

EARLY French Immersion at Carleton Heights Public School makes much more sense

- Many EFI students from the Carleton Heights/McGregor Easson catchment area attend Agincourt Road Public School. Agincourt Road Public School will be **OVER CAPACITY** with the introduction of All-Day Learning.
- Still other EFI students from the Carleton Heights/McGregor Easson catchment area attend Bayview Public School. Bayview Public School is **ALREADY OVER CAPACITY**, even before the introduction of All-Day Learning.
- According to Board documentation, there are 98 EFI students leaving the Carleton Heights/McGregor Easson area – and however many countless others who chose coterminous schools rather than leave the area.
- An EFI and English program at Carleton Heights which already has onsite daycare would allow area students to stay at Carleton Heights for **EARLY French Immersion!!** It would attract children to Carleton Heights Public School and away from other Boards. Soon there won't be room for these children at Agincourt and Bayview! Or will the Board build additions to Agincourt and Bayview as well??
- It makes much more sense to build an addition at Carleton Heights for **EFI!**

MFI at Century: The Clear Choice!

- Century Public School is the best location for Middle French Immersion.
- Century Public School has the location, the space, the staff and the strong English programming necessary to make MFI a **SUCCESS!**
- Century Public School's community has been asking for MFI -- **NO ONE ELSE HAS!**

***MFI at Century is the clear choice!  
It just makes sense.***

Submitted by Wendy Scott-Raymond, parent council representative for Century Public School