

To: Wayne.Gersen  
From: French Club Advocacy  
Subject: Comments on immersion proposal  
Date: November 7, 2005

Wayne,

The French Club Advocacy Committee met on Sunday to discuss your proposal, and we would like to offer some comments.

1. We support the choice of French as the immersion program language; this would be our first choice. However, we would support such a program in Spanish if that became necessary.
2. We are concerned that a significant proportion of otherwise inclined Hanover parents would refuse to send their children to an immersion language program at the Marion Cross School only. This refusal would be due to issues such as:
  - A. Separation of the children from their age cohort in Hanover.
  - B. Logistical burden, and
  - C. Recent and potential cutbacks in programs at the Marion Cross School (e.g., music, ESL).This concern will likely be shared by other parents, and we therefore suggest that the program be offered in both Norwich and Hanover. However, should a program be available in Norwich only, we will support it.
3. We feel that a program in Norwich is important, in that it might attract those children who would otherwise go to local private schools. We further suggest that Norwich consider a tuition option for this new program. This might increase enrollment and ease budgetary constraints.
4. We feel that the program should not be limited to a single class, provided there is enough interest. With a larger number of classes, the program will have a greater chance of long-term success. With a single class, even slight attrition might cause the program to end by Grade 3 or 4. We offer the French Club forum to provide a fast and inexpensive gauge of public interest. This might help determine the appropriate number of classes to offer.
5. We would like you to consider a Grade 3 immersion program. There is a group of 12 Grade 2 students doing the [Rassias French program](#) at the Ray school 3 mornings a week. They, and their families, have demonstrated a serious commitment to a second language program, and could provide a solid foundation for an immersion group next fall. The addition of this class, plus the Grade 1 class(es), would provide a support network of teachers, parents, and students. This support would help the program through its trial time period.

Immersion is a very effective way to learn another language, and studies have highlighted the benefits of an immersion program to a student's total academic development. We support your efforts to establish this program, and offer our endorsement.

French Club 2nd Language Advocacy Committee:

Christina Cook  
Steve Grant  
Melissa Herman  
Michael Herron  
Melina Hill Walker  
Allegra Lubrano  
Kristine McDevitt  
Helene Miles  
Bill Mlacak  
Roberta Stewart  
Andrea Tarnowski  
Joanna Whitcomb