



French Immersion: A Guide for Creating a Successful Program

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FOREWORD

French is our heritage in Louisiana and it is the French language that is the lifeblood of the unique traditions and culture that make us who we are. Without French, Louisiana could never be Louisiana. With programs such as French immersion, our schools are making sure that our state will always be Louisiana.

For the past several decades, the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL) and our partners have been working ceaselessly to nurture and grow this most effective concept of dual language learning for the benefit of thousands of young Louisianians. Early on, Louisiana's French immersion program was the absolute best means of reversing the tide of language erosion. And it worked! We succeeded in solidifying our often challenged Louisiana French - and by all accounts, it was well worth the effort. Reclaiming French in Louisiana was for many a noble and especially necessary undertaking. That was then. Today we turn our attention to more job-related matters: practical applications of valuable linguistic skills to empower Louisiana youth to finally live, work, and raise families in French ... in Louisiana.

Although Louisiana has the most French immersion programs in the country, the dual language concept is spreading like wildfire across the U.S. thanks to the amazing benefits of this model. And in a world that is more and more interconnected, French has increasingly become a turnkey advantage translatable to any number of careers in a multicultural and global future. But more importantly, the very organic nature of French in Louisiana offers incredible opportunities that no other state could ever dream of having.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to all whose expertise and dedication have contributed to this very important guide. It is not a "one-size-fits-all" manual, but it is a solid foundation upon which successful programs can be built. And to all those who will take these best practices into serious consideration and eventually choose to commit to such an innovative program, we at CODOFIL pledge our support to assist you in building your bridges to an incredible future for your communities and ours.

Sincerely,

Charles Larroque
Directeur exécutif, CODOFIL

This guide is intended for use by superintendents, board members, principals, supervisors, parents, and other stakeholders who are interested in creating French immersion pathways in a school or district.

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What is French Immersion?

Immersion is a second language learning program whose goal is to develop linguistic competency in a foreign language as well as mastery of the English language, giving individuals the ability to communicate in both languages for both personal and professional needs. Immersion also fosters an awareness and an appreciation of an array of diverse people and cultures. Furthermore, immersion develops the skills necessary for individuals to become responsible future citizens, contributing to the economic, social, and cultural life in Louisiana. At CODOFIL, we feel that it is crucial to develop a bridge linking French immersion graduates to employment opportunities within the State of Louisiana.

It is recommended that individuals begin an immersion program in kindergarten and continue through the end of 8th grade. Many of the students begin the program with little or no knowledge of French, and instructional strategies are designed with this in mind. Immersion offers a rich bilingual experience for young learners when their minds are developmentally best able to acquire a second language. Instruction is divided between two high quality, creative classrooms: one English and one French.

Students enjoy the advantage of two teachers. The English teacher uses part of the instructional day to teach English language arts (reading, writing, and spelling). The French teacher uses his time to teach French literacy, math, social studies, and science.

In class, the French teacher speaks exclusively in French and communicates using a range of engaging strategies including pictures, songs, games, body language, expressions, pantomime, drama, etc. Children at this age are adept at picking up language in meaningful contexts. After a brief period at the beginning of the year, students will speak only in French during French time.

Successful French immersion programs tend to have an immersion parent group that supports the immersion students and the immersion program and actively participates in immersion activities.

At the end of 8th grade, French immersion students will take an exit exam which will determine their level of French and the number of Carnegie units they have obtained prior to entering high school.

Why offer French Immersion?

Immersion education offers many benefits, including the following:

- Advanced second language skills
- Enhanced cognitive skills
- Improved ability to be globally connected
- Significant cultural awareness
- Higher scores on standardized tests
- Increased employment opportunities

How do Local School Systems staff French Immersion?

Louisiana Teachers

Louisiana school systems may employ either Louisiana teachers or foreign associate teachers (FATs) to staff immersion. BESE policy requires that a local school system employ any and all qualified Louisiana immersion teachers before employing foreign associate teachers for positions. These Louisiana teachers must possess Louisiana certification in the immersion areas in which they teach. In other words, a teacher certified to teach a subject in English is certified to teach the same subject in French.

Louisiana teachers must also possess near-native fluency in French. As a minimum, immersion language teachers must score at Advanced-Low on the ACTFL OPI scale or at Level B2 as measured by the European Common Framework of Reference (ECFR).

Escadrille Teachers

In 2010, the Escadrille program was created in an effort to place more Louisiana teachers in our state's French immersion schools. Prior to becoming an Escadrille teacher, the individual spends one academic year at the *Université de Bretagne* in Rennes, France while pursuing a Masters of Arts in Teaching (MAT) from Centenary College. Upon completion of the Escadrille program, the individual becomes certified to teach at the elementary level.

Foreign Associate Teachers

Foreign Associate Teachers (FATs) are recruited by the Louisiana Department of Education's (LDOE) world languages staff in cooperation with the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL) and international governments. Prior to being admitted to the Louisiana FAT program, these individuals undergo background checks by their respective governments. FATs are certified teachers in their own countries. Once recruited, the FAT is eligible for a Louisiana teaching certificate; however, he/she must apply for it.

This certificate is valid for five years and is renewable for individuals who successfully meet the standards of effectiveness for at least three years during the five-year initial or renewal period pursuant to Bulletin 130 and mandated by Act 54.

To be employed in Louisiana, FATs are required to have a J-1 visa. The issuance of these visas is initiated through CODOFIL. According to federal regulations, the J-1 visa is granted for a maximum three-year period. The foreign associate teacher's contract is renewable on a yearly basis within this three-year period.

The LDOE requests staffing needs from local districts, charter, and private schools on or before March 15. If you would like to hire a Foreign Associate Teacher, please contact the World Language Consultant at the LDOE or CODOFIL and know that a written request is considered a commitment to employ a recruit.

How is French Immersion funded?

Salaries

All teachers staffing the mandate are paid directly by the employing local school districts. Louisiana teachers are paid according to the regular district schedule for teachers. The salaries of FATs are set annually by BESE. The salary schedule for FATs may be obtained by contacting the World Language Consultant at the LDOE.

The Minimum Foundation Program includes an “Enhancement Category” for the employment of FATs and Escadrille graduates. Local school systems employing FATs and Escadrille graduates shall receive a supplemental allocation of \$20,000 per teacher.

Purchase of instructional materials

Textbooks and instructional materials for immersion pathways are to be purchased with state and/or local funds. The local school systems are responsible for providing these materials in the same way they provide materials for all other subject areas.

Additional instructional materials are available on the LDOE’s website www.louisianabelieves.com. Click on Academics, then Academic Standards, then Academic Standards Library and finally click on World Languages + Immersion.

Immersion Non-Negotiables

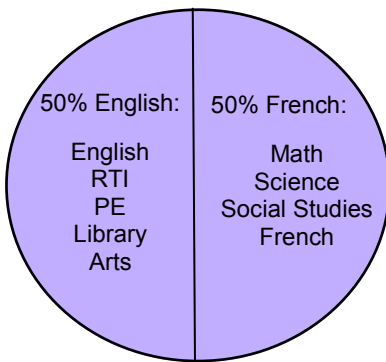
In order to be successful, immersion education must adhere to some principles, that we call “non-negotiables”.

- The target language is the exclusive language of oral and written communication.
- Wall postings are in the target language.
- The instruction and practice of the target language is included in the lesson plans.
- The instruction and practice of the target language is built in the classroom activities.
- Students speak more than their teacher.
- The teacher never forgets that the target language IS NOT the students' first language.
- Any child can learn a second language in an immersion setting. No child should be identified as « not belonging in immersion ». There are, however, two exceptions:
 - * lack of motivation from the parents AND the student; and
 - * in the absence of special needs services in the target language.

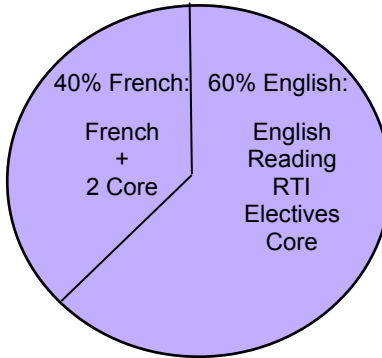
I. Basic Model

Daily Language Instruction

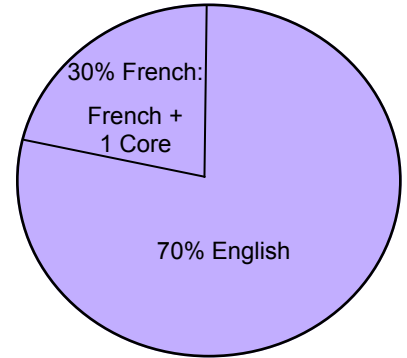
K-5th grades
50/50 instructional day



6th-8th grades
60/40 instructional day





















High School
70/30 instructional day



I. Basic Model

Teachers Needed

Year	Number of English and French teachers needed
Year 1 2 classes of kindergarten	English:  French: 
Year 2 2 classes each K-1	English:  French: 
Year 3 2 classes each K, 1, 2	English:  French: 
Year 4 2 classes each K, 1, 2, 3	English:  French: 
Year 5 2 classes each K, 1, 2, 3, 4	English:  French: 
Year 6 2 classes each K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	English:  French: 
Year 7 2 classes each (except 6) K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	English:  French: 
Year 8 2 classes each (except 6-7) K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	English:  French: 
Year 9 2 classes each (except 6-8) K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	English:  French: 

I. Basic Model

Costs Associated with Immersion Teachers

Year	Grades + (# of immersion classes at each grade level)	# of total teachers (# of English + # of French)	*State funding received by LEA from MFP for FATs or Escadrille teachers	**Cost
Year 1 K	K(2)	2 (1 EN + 1 FR)	\$20,000	None
Year 2 K-1	K(2), 1 st (2)	4 (2 EN + 2 FR)	\$40,000	None
Year 3 K-2	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2)	6 (3 EN + 3 FR)	\$60,000	None
Year 4 K-3	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2)	8 (4 EN + 4 FR)	\$80,000	None
Year 5 K-4	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (2)	10 (5 EN + 5 FR)	\$100,000	None
Year 6 K-5	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (2), 5 th (2)	12 (6 EN + 6 FR)	\$120,000	None
Year 7 K-6	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (2), 5 th (2), 6 th (1)	13 (6 EN + 7 FR)	\$140,000	1 teacher
Year 8 K-7	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (2), 5 th (2), 6 th (1), 7 th (1)	14 (6 EN + 8 FR)	\$160,000	2 teachers
Year 9 K-8	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (2), 5 th (2), 6 th (1), 7 th and 8 th (1)	14 (6 EN + 8 FR)	\$160,000	2 teachers

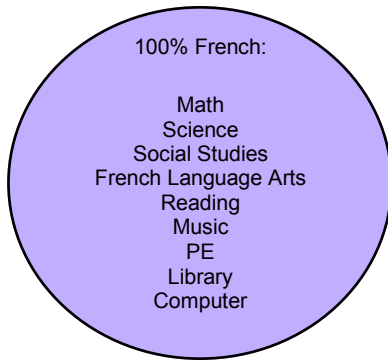
*State funding is available for Foreign Associate Teachers (J-1 or H-1B visa teachers) and Escadrille teachers at \$20,000 per Foreign Associate Teacher/Escadrille teacher through the MFP formula.

**Cost is measured by the number of additional teachers needed for immersion. The exact figures are not provided here, as teachers' salaries vary by district.

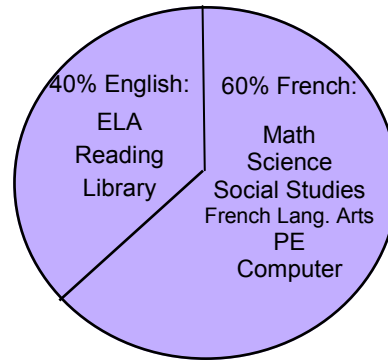
II. Basic Plus Model

Daily Language Instruction

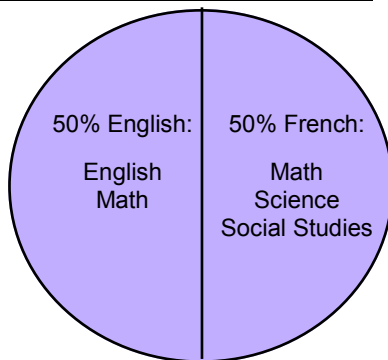
K-1st grades
100% instructional day



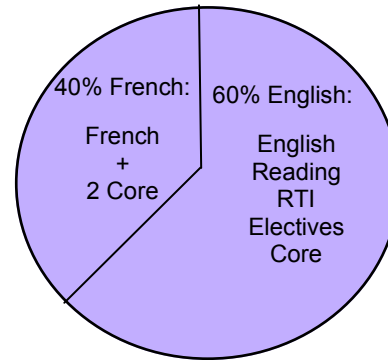
2nd-3rd grades
60/40 instructional day



4th-5th grades
50/50 instructional day if
**previous years were
implemented with fidelity**



















6th-8th grades
60/40 instructional day



II. Basic Plus Model

Teachers Needed

Year	Number of English and French teachers needed
Year 1 2 classes of kindergarten	English: French: 
Year 2 2 classes each K-1	English: French: 
Year 3 2 classes each K, 1, 2	English:  French: 
Year 4 2 classes each K, 1, 2, 3	English:  French: 
Year 5 2 classes each K, 1, 2, 3, 4	English:  French: 
Year 6 2 classes each K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	English:  French: 
Year 7 2 classes each (except 6) K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	English:  French: 
Year 8 2 classes each (except 6-7) K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	English:  French: 
Year 9 2 classes each (except 6-8) K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	English:  French: 

II. Basic Plus Model

Costs Associated with Immersion Teachers

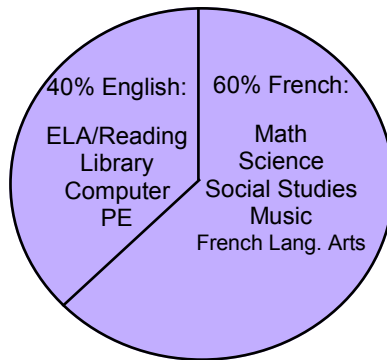
Year	Grades + (# of immersion classes at each grade level)	# of total teachers (# of English + # of French)	*State funding received by LEA from MFP for FATs or Escadrille teachers	**Cost
Year 1 K	K(2)	2 (0 EN + 2 FR)	\$40,000	None
Year 2 K-1	K(2), 1 st (2)	4 (0 EN + 4 FR)	\$80,000	None
Year 3 K-2	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2)	7 (1 EN + 6 FR)	\$120,000	1 teacher
Year 4 K-3	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2)	10 (2 EN + 8 FR)	\$160,000	2 teachers
Year 5 K-4	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (2)	12 (3 EN + 9 FR)	\$180,000	2 teachers
Year 6 K-5	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (2), 5 th (2)	14 (4 EN + 10 FR)	\$200,000	2 teachers
Year 7 K-6	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (2), 5 th (2), 6 th (1)	15 (4 EN + 11 FR)	\$220,000	2 teachers
Year 8 K-7	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (2), 5 th (2), 6 th (1), 7 th (1)	16 (4 EN + 12 FR)	\$240,000	2 teachers
Year 9 K-8	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (2), 5 th (2), 6 th (1), 7 th (1), 8 th (1)	17 (4 EN + 13 FR)	\$260,000	2 teachers

*State funding is available for Foreign Associate Teachers (J-1 or H-1B visa teachers) and Escadrille teachers at \$20,000 per Foreign Associate Teacher/Escadrille teacher through the MFP formula.

**Cost is measured by the number of additional teachers needed for immersion. The exact figures are not provided here, as teachers' salaries vary by district.






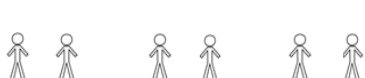
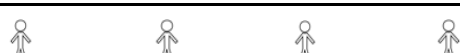

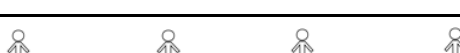






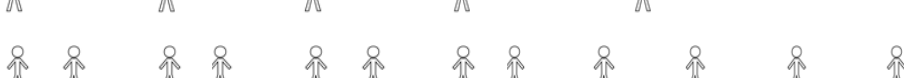
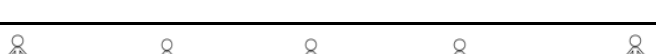
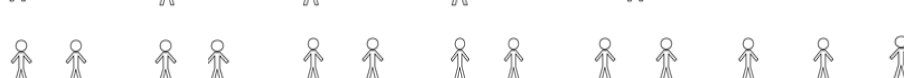
III. 60/40 Model

Daily Language Instruction



III. 60/40 Model

Teachers Needed

Year	Number of English and French teachers needed
Year 1 2 classes of kindergarten	English:  French: 
Year 2 2 classes each K-1	English:  French: 
Year 3 2 classes each K, 1, 2	English:  French: 
Year 4 2 classes each K, 1, 2, 3	English:  French: 
Year 5 2 classes each (except 4) K, 1, 2, 3, 4	English:  French: 
Year 6 2 classes each (except 4-5) K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	English:  French: 
Year 7 2 classes each (except 4-6) K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	English:  French: 
Year 8 2 classes each (except 4-7) K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	English:  French: 
Year 9 2 classes each (except 4-8) K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	English:  French: 

III. 60/40 Model

Costs Associated with Immersion Teachers

Year	Grades + (# of immersion classes at each grade level)	# of total teachers (# of English + # of French)	*State funding received by LEA from MFP for FATs or Escadrille teachers	**Cost
Year 1 K	K(2)	3 (1 EN + 2 FR)	\$40,000	1 teacher
Year 2 K-1	K(2), 1 st (2)	6 (2 EN + 4 FR)	\$80,000	2 teachers
Year 3 K-2	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2)	9 (3 EN + 6 FR)	\$120,000	3 teachers
Year 4 K-3	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2)	12 (4 EN + 8 FR)	\$160,000	4 teachers
Year 5 K-4	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (1)	13 (4 EN + 9 FR)	\$180,000	4 teachers
Year 6 K-5	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (1), 5 th (1)	15 (5 EN + 10 FR)	\$200,000	5 teachers
Year 7 K-6	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (1), 5 th (1), 6 th (1)	16 (5 EN + 11 FR)	\$220,000	5 teachers
Year 8 K-7	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (1), 5 th (1), 6 th (1), 7 th (1)	17 (5 EN + 12 FR)	\$240,000	5 teachers
Year 9 K-8	K(2), 1 st (2), 2 nd (2), 3 rd (2), 4 th (1), 5 th (1), 6 th (1), 7 th (1), 8 th (1)	18 (5 EN + 13 FR)	\$260,000	5 teachers

*State funding is available for Foreign Associate Teachers (J-1 or H-1B visa teachers) and Escadrille teachers at \$20,000 per Foreign Associate Teacher/Escadrille teacher through the MFP formula.

**Cost is measured by the number of additional teachers needed for immersion. The exact figures are not provided here, as teachers' salaries vary by district.

Sample Budget for one (1) Teacher

2014-2015 school year
One parish in Louisiana

	Traditional Teacher	Escadrille Teacher	FAT (J-1 visa) Teacher	FAT (H1-B visa) Teacher
Visa net cost	0	0	0	\$1,000 (one time)
Salary	\$41,305.00	\$41,305.00	\$41,305.00	\$42,305.00
Benefits	\$13,217.60	\$13,217.60	\$13,217.60	\$13,217.60
Materials	0	0	0	0
Transportation	0	0	0	0
Subtotal	\$54,522.60	\$54,522.60	\$54,522.60	\$55,522.60
MFP supplement	0	-\$20,000.00	-\$20,000.00	-\$20,000.00
Total	\$54,522.60	\$34,522.60	\$34,522.60	\$35,522.60

Steps for Implementing a French Immersion Program

Prior Planning

- 1) Interested parties - parents, administrators, community, etc. - from a prospective school system should make a preliminary visit to a “successful” immersion program.
- 2) Interested parents and community members should be invited to a presentation made by people with experience in immersion in a school setting. This presentation should include immersion education research and successes.
- 3) A second visit should be made to an existing program by the parents, administrators and teachers, including the skeptical as well as the enthusiastic. A Parent Support Committee should be formed.
- 4) A survey of parents and community should be conducted to determine the degree of interest and support within the prospective school district.
- 5) Permission should be obtained from the School Board and the administration of the interested school system to begin building the foundation of a successful program.

Implementation

- 6) The teachers selected to teach in the program should be deemed effective. Ideally, they will be native speakers from varied backgrounds including native Louisianians.
- 7) A curriculum should be selected, adhering as closely as possible to the school system’s regular curriculum. This may necessitate translation of existing materials.

School Year 1

- 8) The idea of immersion should be introduced and explained IN DETAIL to the existing faculty of the prospective school prior to the beginning of the school year program. They should be made to understand the benefits of the program both to the students and to themselves: increased test scores, smaller class loads, more time to devote to remediation, etc.
- 9) Once the program has begun, at least one Open House should be held during the first school year where parents, community members and school administrators can witness the success of the students.
- 10) A public relations program should be initiated and maintained during the entire school year to increase awareness and to emphasize the positive impact to the public school system among both faculty and community. Some ideas could be the following:
 - i) Programs for such holidays as Christmas, Mardi Gras and Easter should be held by immersion classes so that the community and parents can see the progress of immersion students in the language.
 - ii) The press and media should be kept informed continually of any special programs held by immersion students as well as their progress in English and the target language.
 - iii) Test scores should be published proudly.
- 11) Immersion teachers should have the same responsibilities as other faculty members. They should be invited to all regular faculty meetings, included on duty rosters, etc. Periodic meetings should also be held to promote dialogue between immersion and non-immersion teachers.
- 12) The team of immersion teachers, including English Language Arts and those who teach the other subjects in the target language, should be encouraged to meet regularly to plan lessons and prepare materials.

Program and Student Evaluation

- **State Certified Immersion Programs**

BESE recognizes immersion schools that consistently meet certain criteria as Certified Foreign Language Immersion Programs.

- **Standardized Test Scores**

Standardized test scores in English, Math, and other core subjects are typically higher for immersion students than their non-immersion peers, even though standardized tests are taken in English..

- **College and Career Readiness**

According to Act 99 (2014), “a State Seal of Biliteracy will be affixed to the diplomas or transcripts of students who meet certain academic eligibility criteria relative to language proficiency”.

- **Evaluation of Student Proficiency**

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) offers an ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL). It assesses interpersonal listening/speaking, presentational writing, and interpretive reading and listening skills.

The *Diplôme d'Etudes en Langue Française* (DELF) is an official diploma awarded by the French Ministry of Education to certify foreign candidates' proficiency in French. A person who tests at the DELF B2 level (there are 6 levels total) has access to all French universities and does not need to take other pre-admission French-language tests.

If you have any question about this guide, please contact us.
We will be happy to help you create a successful
French Immersion program.

The CODOFIL team
www.codofil.org