

Title: Elementary Timetable Guidelines

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Amended/Reviewed: September 15, 2026

This procedure must be interpreted, applied, and implemented in ways that uphold Indigenous and human rights and responsibilities, promote accessibility, and prevent and address (and do not reinforce) discrimination/discriminatory barriers.

1.0 RATIONALE

This procedure establishes consistent requirements for the development of elementary school timetables to support compliance with legislative and Ministry requirements, protect required instructional time, provide access to the full Ontario curriculum, and support inclusive and responsive learning environments.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1** Core French: The regular English-language elementary program in which French as a Second Language is taught as a subject in Grades 4 to 8.
- 2.2** Cross-Curricular Learning: The intentional design of learning that addresses expectations from more than one curriculum area within a shared learning experience, while maintaining the integrity of each curriculum and any protected instructional-time requirements.
- 2.3** Flow of the Day: A flexible and fluid plan that provides varied contexts for learning, minimizes transitions, and supports an integrated and connected day responsive to children's strengths, needs, interests and engagement.
- 2.4** French Immersion Program: An optional French as a Second Language program in which French is taught as a subject and is also the language of instruction in other subjects. At least 50% of total instruction is provided in French at the elementary level, with a minimum of 3,800 accumulated hours of French instruction by the end of Grade 8.
- 2.5** Instructional Time: Time within the instructional program used for teaching and learning, not including recess, lunch and other scheduled intervals.
- 2.6** Protected Instructional Block: A dedicated period of instructional time that is scheduled to minimize interruptions and preserve the intended focus of instruction. Recess, lunch, transitions, or other scheduled breaks shall not interrupt or divide the block.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The DDSB Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of procedures developed to support Board policies.

Superintendents of Education are responsible for supporting consistent implementation of this procedure, providing direction to schools, and reviewing any proposed variations from DDSB timetable expectations.

Principals are responsible for developing and implementing school and classroom timetables that comply with this procedure.

4.0 APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This procedure applies to all DDSB elementary schools, Kindergarten to Grade 8, including English-track and French Immersion programs, and to staff responsible for developing, implementing, or supporting school and classroom timetables. It establishes expectations for the organization of instructional time, access to the full Ontario curriculum, protected instructional blocks, cross-curricular integration, inclusive programming, and the planning allocations identified in the appendices.

5.0 GENERAL TIMETABLE REQUIREMENTS (GRADE 1-8)

Timetables must¹ provide a minimum of 300 minutes of instructional time each school day, excluding recess, lunch, and other scheduled intervals.

- 5.1** The weekly allocations in Appendices B and C are instructional planning guidelines. Minutes identified as integrated may address expectations from more than one curriculum area and are therefore not additive. Integration shall² not reduce or replace the required protected instruction block.
- 5.2** Timetables shall provide students with access to the full breadth of the Ontario curriculum and protect instructional time, minimize unnecessary transitions, and interruptions and support predictable, responsive and inclusive learning environments.
- 5.3** Cross-curricular learning should³ be included where it strengthens learning and supports authentic connections across subject areas and maintains protected instructional blocks. Where curriculum expectations are integrated, expectations shall be intentionally planned, taught and assessed.
- 5.4** Snack time, where provided, should be embedded within instructional blocks as

¹ Must - identifies a requirement mandated by legislation, regulation, or Ministry direction.

² Shall - identifies a mandatory Board requirement established through this Procedure.

³ Should - identifies a recommended practice that is expected where appropriate but allows for professional judgement and local circumstances.

part of classroom routines and should not be scheduled as a separate break from instruction. Instruction should continue during snack time, except where an individual student's identified needs, accommodations, medical requirements or specialized program circumstances require an alternative arrangement.

- 5.5** Timetables shall support meaningful inclusion and equitable access to learning for students in specialized programs, including Student Support Programs (SSP) and Practical Learning Programs (PLP). Scheduling decisions shall be designed to avoid unnecessarily limiting students' access to curriculum, learning alongside peers, specialized programming, and required supports or accommodations.
- 5.6** Where operationally feasible and consistent with collective agreements, schools should align common Language and/or Mathematics blocks and educator preparation time to support collaboration, co-planning, and responsive student support.

6.0 KINDERGARTEN FLOW OF THE DAY

- 6.1** The Flow of the Day must provide intentional opportunities for evidence-based, systematic and explicit instruction in foundational language, literacy and mathematics, and for learning through play, inquiry, problem solving and indoor and outdoor experiences.
- 6.2** Learning across the four kindergarten strands be integrated throughout the day. The daily schedule shall include large, uninterrupted blocks for play- and inquiry-based learning in both indoor and outdoor settings. Within these blocks, children and educators negotiate and co-construct learning through self-directed, guided and educator-directed play.
- 6.3** Whole-group learning shall be purposeful and responsive to the developmental readiness of students.
- 6.4** Transitions shall be minimized, and the daily flow shall remain responsive to children's learning, participation and self-regulation.
- 6.5** When other educators provide coverage in kindergarten, the established flow of the day should be maintained through coordination with the Teacher/Designated Early Childhood Educator team to support continuity of learning, routines, self-regulation and belonging.
- 6.6** Appendix A provides a sample Flow of the Day.

7.0 LANGUAGE, GRADES 1 TO 8

- 7.1** Timetables shall provide a daily protected instructional Language block of 90 minutes in Grades 4 to 8.
- 7.2** In Grades 1 to 3, timetables must provide a daily protected instructional Language block of 120 minutes. 30 minutes each day (150 minutes over a five-day cycle) must be dedicated to systematic and explicit foundational reading instruction. In

accordance with PPM 168.

- 7.3** Language and literacy knowledge and skills shall also be developed and applied across the curriculum. Cross-curricular integration complements but does not replace the protected instructional Language allocation.

8.0 MATHEMATICS, GRADES 1 TO 8

- 8.1** Timetables must provide a minimum of 300 minutes of protected mathematics instruction per 5-day cycle, in accordance with PPM 160. DDSB timetables shall schedule this as a daily protected instruction block of at least 60 minutes.
- 8.2** In Grades 1 to 3, an additional 30 minutes per five-day cycle shall be provided for intentional mathematics fluency practice. This may be scheduled flexibly throughout the week.
- 4.4.3** Mathematical learning should take place across other curriculum areas but does not replace the protected instructional mathematics block allocation.

9.0 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, SOCIAL STUDIES, HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

- 9.1** Timetables must provide sufficient instructional opportunities to address the applicable curriculum expectations. Appendices B and C provide recommended planning allocations.
- 9.2** These subjects should be scheduled to support cross-curricular integration, consistent with the Language Curriculum's emphasis on authentic, meaningful connections across disciplines where the relevant expectations are intentionally planned, taught, and assessed.
- 9.3** In Grades 7 and 8, Science and Technology, History and Geography may⁴ be organized in extended, alternating or interdisciplinary learning blocks. Each subject does not need to be taught every week, provided that long-range plans ensure all applicable curriculum expectations are addressed and that sufficient evidence is collected to meet provincial assessment, evaluation and reporting requirements.

10.0 THE ARTS

- 10.1** Timetables must provide sufficient instructional opportunities to address the curriculum expectations in Dance, Drama, Music and Visual Arts. Appendices B and C provide recommended planning allocations.
- 10.2** Where specialist educators are available, timetables should provide 90 minutes per five-day cycle for Music and 60 minutes per five-day cycle for Visual Arts.
- 10.3** Dance and Drama may be taught as discrete learning or purposefully integrated

⁴ May- identifies a permitted or discretionary practice.

with Language and other curriculum areas where the relevant expectations are intentionally planned, taught and assessed.

11.0 HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION; DAILY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

11.1 Timetables must provide sufficient instructional opportunities to address Health and Physical Education curriculum expectations. Appendices B and C provide recommended planning allocations.

11.2 Students in Grades 1 to 8 must receive at least 20 minutes of sustained moderate-to-vigorous daily physical activity (DPA) during instructional time each school day. DPA may be provided within Health and Physical Education or embedded within other appropriate learning experiences where the daily requirement is met.

11.3 Social-emotional learning skills should be embedded throughout the school day and across curriculum learning to support student well-being, belonging, agency and self-regulation.

12.0 CORE FRENCH, GRADES 4 TO 8

12.1 Core French is mandatory in Grades 4 to 8 in English-language elementary schools. Students must accumulate a minimum of 600 hours of French instruction by the end of Grade 8. Timetables must provide a minimum of 200 minutes of Core French instruction per five-day cycle to support achievement of this requirement.

13.0 FRENCH IMMERSION

13.1 In accordance with French as a Second Language curriculum, French Immersion programming must provide at least 50% of total instruction in French at each elementary grade level and a minimum of 3,800 accumulated hours of French instruction by the end of Grade 8. This must include French as a subject and receive instruction in at least two other curriculum subjects in French.

13.2 In accordance with the DDSB French Immersion delivery model, timetables shall reflect the following:

- In grades 1–3, instruction shall be delivered in French.
- In grade 4, 70% of instruction shall be delivered in French and 30% shall be delivered in English.
- In grades 5 and 6, 50% of instruction shall be provided in French and 50% of instruction shall be delivered in English instruction.
- In grades 7 and 8, 50% of instruction shall be delivered in French and 50% of instruction shall be delivered in English

13.3 The DDSB French Immersion Timetable Guidelines (Appendix C) outlines the

subject and language-of-instruction allocations that shall be used when developing French Immersion timetables.

14.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A – Kindergarten Flow of the Day

Appendix B – English Elementary Timetable Considerations

Appendix C – Elementary French Immersion Timetable Considerations

15.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- [Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2](#)
- [The Ontario Curriculum, Kindergarten, 2026](#)
- [Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12: Policy and Program Requirements](#)
- [Policy/Program Memorandum 138: Daily Physical Activity in Elementary Schools, Grades 1-8](#)
- [Policy/Program Memorandum 160: Protected Time for Daily Mathematics Instruction, Grades 1 to 8](#)
- [Policy/Program Memorandum 168: Reading Instruction and Early Reading Screening](#)
- [Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools](#)
- [French as a Second Language Curriculum and Program Requirements](#)
- [French Immersion Programs](#)
- [French Immersion Framework](#)

Kindergarten Sample Flow of the Day

The examples below illustrate possible ways to organize the day. They are planning guidelines, not prescribed schedules. Educator roles may rotate and should be coordinated to maintain continuity of learning and responsive instruction.

Part of the Day	Sample Flow - Idea 1	Sample Flow - Idea 2	Educator Focus
Opening	Outdoor exploration	Play and soft entrance	Relationship building/connection Inquiry and play; responsive teaching; individual check-ins or progress monitoring, small group instruction, documentation
Focused Gathering	Purposeful whole-group learning	Purposeful whole-group learning	Focused instruction connected to identified learning (foundational skills – literacy, math, and social-emotional learning).
Extended Learning Block 1 -snack embedded	Indoor play (Student-directed, guided and educator-directed)	Indoor play (Student-directed, guided and educator-directed)	Inquiry and play; responsive teaching; small-group instruction; documentation
Focused Gathering	Purposeful whole-group learning	Purposeful whole-group learning	Focused instruction connected to identified learning (foundational skills – literacy, math, etc.)
Community Eating	Community eating	Community eating	Literacy (oral language development) routines, belonging and social emotional learning
Extended Learning Block 2 – snack embedded	Indoor play (Student-directed, guided and educator-directed)	Outdoor exploration	Inquiry and play; responsive teaching; individual check-ins or progress monitoring, small group instruction, documentation
Focused Gathering	Purposeful whole-group learning	Purposeful whole-group learning	Focused instruction connected to identified learning (foundational skills – literacy, math and SEL).
Extended Learning Block 2 – snack embedded	Outdoor exploration	Indoor play (Student-directed, guided and educator-directed)	Inquiry and play; responsive teaching; small-group instruction; documentation
Focused Gathering		Purposeful whole group	Focused instruction connected to identified learning (foundational skills – literacy, math and social-emotional learning)
Closing	End of day routines	End of day routines	Reflection, consolidation and routines.

English-Track – Weekly Instructional Minutes Guidelines

Subject	Grades 1–3	Grades 4–6	Grades 7–8
Language	600 mins.	450 mins.	450 mins.
Mathematics	300 mins. + 30 minutes (Fluency)	300 mins.	300 mins.
Science & Technology	150 mins.	150 mins. (integrated with literacy)	150 mins. (integrated with literacy)
Social Studies / History / Geography (integrated with literacy)	120 mins.	120 mins. (integrated with literacy)	120 mins. (integrated with literacy)
Music & Visual Arts	150 mins.	150 mins.	150 mins.
Dance & Drama	Embedded	Embedded	Embedded
Physical Education & Health	150	150 mins.	150 mins.
Core French (Grades 4– 8)	—	200 mins.	200 mins.
Daily Physical Activity (DPA)	Embedded	Embedded	Embedded
Total Instructional Time	~300 mins./day	~300 mins./day	~300 mins./day

***Minutes may exceed 300 instructional minutes daily as some will be integrated. This is indicated in the chart above.**

French Immersion: Weekly Instructional Minutes Guidelines

Subject	Grades 1–3	Grade 4	Grades 5–6	Grades 7–8
French Language & Literacy	600 mins. (all subjects in French)	360 mins.	300 mins.	360 mins.
English Language & Literacy	—	330 mins.	300 mins.	210 mins.
Mathematics	300 mins. (French)	300 mins. (English)	300 mins. (English)	300 mins. (English)
Science & Technology	150 mins. (French)	120 mins. (French)	150 mins. (French)	150 mins. (English)
Social Studies / History / Geography	120 mins. (French)	120 mins. (French)	120 mins. (French)	120 mins. (French)
Visual Art	60 mins. (French)	60 mins. (English)	60 mins. (English)	90 mins. (French)
Music	90 mins. (French)	60 mins. (English)	90 mins. (English)	90 mins. (English)
Drama/Dance	30 mins. (French)	30 mins. (French)	30 mins. (French)	30 mins. (French)
Physical Education & Health	150 mins. (French)	120 mins. (French)	150 mins. (French)	150 mins. (French)
Total Instructional Time	~300 mins./day	~300 mins./day	~300 mins./day	~300 mins./day