



German Programming in RETSD

Virtual Information Meeting
February 26, 2025

creating student success

Land Acknowledgment

River East Transcona School Division is located on the original lands of the Anishinaabeg, Ininiwak, Anishininiwak, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Red River Métis.

We recognize our part of the Treaty relationship and, as acknowledgement of the harms done, we commit to collaborating with Indigenous communities in the shared spirit of Truth and Reconciliation for the healing and inclusion of all who share this Land.

Agenda: Overview

- Welcome & Introductions
- German Programming in RETSD
- Question & Answer

Question & Answer

- Use the question (Q&A) feature on live stream.
- Please identify yourself and your school (we will not answer anonymous questions).
- Questions will be read aloud.
- Duplicate questions will be answered once.
- The slide deck from the meeting will be posted on the RETSD website.

Welcome & Introductions



Provision of Provincial Diploma Programs

- In Manitoba, four diploma programs are available for students to choose from, with each having specific compulsory and optional course requirements:
 - English Program
 - Français Program
 - French Immersion Program
 - Technology Education

Provision of Heritage Language Programs

- In 1979, the Public Schools Act was amended to allow school divisions to offer instruction in languages other than English or French.
- Specific conditions were set out for this:
 - Instruction in a language other than English or French is not a right and is subject to the discretion of the school division or school, **as it must be authorized by the school board.**
 - Instruction in languages other than English or French may be used **for not more than 50% of the regular school hours.**
- In RETSD, German programming had its beginning in 1981.

German Programming in RETSD

- A review of German programming in RETSD has recently been completed.
- The review process is the same one used with all programming in the school division. Programming reviews occur across the school division on a regular, cyclical basis.
- Reviews are conducted by the RETSD Senior Administration Team, as it's an operational function.
- The Board of Trustees is involved if any major changes are recommended.

German Programming in RETSD

- As a result of the review, no major changes are being made to German programming in RETSD—it is viable and healthy.
- This meeting is being held for clarification purposes, because of misinformation that has emerged in the RETSD community related to German programming in the division.

English-German Bilingual Program in Grades K–5

- Offered at Princess Margaret School and Donwood School.
- Students in a classroom with a German-speaking teacher.
- Instruction in German for 50% of the day.
- English-German Bilingual Program enrolment (Grades K–5) for the 2024–25 school year is 262 students.
- Currently, in Grades K–5, the English-German Bilingual Program is viable and robust.
- After Grade 5, the English-German Bilingual Program tends to lose some students to independent and private school education.

English-German Bilingual Program in Grades 6–8

- Offered at Chief Peguis Middle School.
- Instruction in German for German Language Arts and Social Studies.
- English-German Bilingual Program enrolment (Grades 6–8) for the 2024–25 school year is 111 students.
- Currently, the English-German Bilingual Program in Grades 6–8 is viable and robust.

School-Based Courses Offered in German in Grades 9–12

- Starting in Grade 9, students can register for up to seven different school-based courses taught in German across Grades 9–12 at River East Collegiate.
- An enhanced registration process has been designed to support German programming in senior years and allow courses to flourish.

School-Based Courses Offered in German in Grades 9–12

- Senior years programming will continue to be school-based courses taught in German.
- Students wanting to attend River East Collegiate who aren't in-catchment, but in-division, will continue to register as in-division Schools of Choice.
- Families of students who aren't in the River East Collegiate catchment area, but are still in the division, will complete a letter of intent that states their reason for registering as being the opportunity to take school-based courses taught in German across all four years.

School-Based Courses Offered in German in Grades 9–12

- The letter of intent will clarify that students who don't take all the school-based courses taught in German and offered in their current grade will be returned to their home school at the next reasonable break (end of the semester or end of the school year).
- This practice is also in place for other programming (e.g. French Immersion, technical vocational).
- Enrolment will be monitored for course viability, which is done for all school-based courses in senior years across the division.

School Division Growth

- River East Transcona is experiencing unprecedented growth across the division. **Over the last two years, we have increased by over 1,000 students annually.**
- This number equals the student population of two schools around the size of River East Collegiate.
- It has recently been announced that a new school will be built in the Devonshire Area. This K-8 school will be at capacity before it opens.
- RETSD continues to advocate for additional new schools to address our growing student population.

School Division Growth

- To address growth in the division, two separate boundary reconfigurations are taking place effective September 2025:
 - French Immersion North of the Perimeter Reconfiguration
 - Devonshire Reconfiguration
- The Devonshire Reconfiguration will impact Chief Peguis Middle School in September 2026, when they begin receiving additional students from Maple Leaf School.
- We must be mindful of student pathways. Decisions at Donwood and Princess Margaret, have impacts as students move to Chief Peguis and then to River East Collegiate, both which are at or nearing capacity.

School Division Growth

- We need flexibility in our planning that allows us to move students to address enrolment pressures.
- Boundary reconfigurations are happening because we need every seat, in every classroom, in every school, to address enrolment growth in RETSD.

Out-of-Division Applicants in RETSD

- As a result of the unprecedented growth that the school division is facing, RETSD will continue the current practice of not accepting out-of-division Schools of Choice applications.
- This is a divisional issue, not one connected to German programming.
- This applies to Grades K–12 and to all other divisional programs.

Misconceptions of German Programming in RETSD

Misconception: Students who live in the division have been turned away from the English-German Bilingual Program in early and middle years.

Fact: All in-division requests for students to participate in German programming in RETSD have been accommodated.

Misconception: The Board of Trustees and the Senior Administration Team don't support German programming in RETSD.

Fact: The school division provided approval for the establishment of the program and provides the necessary resources to support its implementation. German programming continues to be viable in RETSD due to ongoing divisional commitment.

Misconceptions of German Programming in RETSD

Misconception: The Board of Trustees does not meet with parents or community members that make a request to meet.

Fact: The Board of Trustees and Senior Administration follow policies and procedures to ensure that we engage and respond to **individuals who live within our community**. Over the past year the Board of Trustees, the Board Chair, the Superintendent, and other members of the senior administration team have responded to requests for communication regarding German Programming.

More Questions?

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Thank you!

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