



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT 70

45 Lyme Road, Suite #207 • Hanover, New Hampshire 03755-1222
Phone (603) 643-6050 • Fax (603) 643-3073 • sau70.org • Email SAU.70@valley.net
SAU 70 – Hanover, NH, Norwich, VT, and Dresden Interstate School Districts

To: SAU 70 Board and Administrators
Fr: Wayne Gersen
Dt: October 31, 2005
Re: ***Background information on French Immersion***

Ten days ago I sent an email describing a French immersion program that might be introduced in the 1st grade beginning in 2006-07. After receiving no negative responses and several expressions of interest in learning more, I met with three of the Ray School parents who spearheaded the initiative to introduce foreign language in the early grade-levels to hear their response to this proposal and to gain some insights based on their experience. Following the meeting last week, Bill Mlacek and Kristine McDevitt forwarded me several links that provided some helpful background information. Attached please find several articles I downloaded from their links:

- ▶ *Foreign Language Immersion Programs*, an document written by a Montgomery County, MD staff member in 1993 which provides a good overall explanation of the immersion approach to foreign language instruction
- ▶ *Transition to Middle School*, which is excerpted from a lengthy description of the immersion programs in Fairfax County, VA. This section describes how Fairfax County Public Schools deals with “graduates” of their elementary immersion schools.
- ▶ *What Parents Want to Know About Foreign Language Immersion Programs*, an ERIC monograph written by two University of Minnesota teachers in 2003 in FAQ format.
- ▶ *Characteristics of Successful French Language Programs*, written for the Edmunton, Alberta Public School District by a consultant.
- ▶ *French: The Most Practical Foreign Language*, written by Richard Shryrock of VPI advances an argument for French being the most appropriate language to teach in high schools. While some of his points are stretches (*i.e. the ocean liner Queen Mary II was built in France*) there are many compelling points.

I am sending this packet in advance of our November 14 SAU meeting where I am tentatively planning to include a proposal to introduce an elementary foreign language program in 2006-07. I have a meeting this week with a representative from the Rassias Foundation to discuss the availability of qualified immersion teachers and plan to spend time in the coming weeks to address practical and budgetary questions associated with making such a proposal. ASSUMING these logistical issues can be resolved, I will be sending out a detailed proposal in the SAU packet. Please call or email with any feedback. THANKS!