

# The Downtown / Midtown French-English Dual-Language Program Parent Groups

in association with

**La Petite Ecole, EFNY & the French Embassy**

present

## The Road Map to Creating a French-English Dual-Language Program in New York City



SOURCE: NYC Department of Education, NYC Map, DOITT, Department of City Planning.

## **French Dual Language Program - Road Map**

**1 - creating the family base: outreach & data committees**

**2 - finding the school: location committee**

**3 - building the program: curriculum committee**

### **Phase 1 - Creating the family base**

#### **Outreach & Data committees:**

DATA: finding children, and gather family data:

**Objectives: 30 families\*: 15 French-speaking / 15 non-French-speaking**

\*entering Kindergarten the same year located in district 1 & 2:

- I. Determine the number of children by school zone considered **francophone**/ English Language Learners, mother tongue is French.
- II. Determine the number of children by school zone considered **Bilingual** French/English who can be counted as Ls\* even if they understand English.
- III. Determine the number of children by school zone considered **Anglophone** whose family are committed to French dual language education.

Minimum classes to be viable to starts: 18 students

Minimum for a principal to start a K class and take the project seriously: 30 students

\*English Language Learners also called ELL or "Ls"

#### **FAMILY OUTREACH:**

**Find & inform incoming K families throughout downtown**

#### **Email Parent Form of, Post flyers at, and attend:**

- a. Head-start program
- b. Private Preschools and Daycares
- c. Listed Day Care program at the New York department of health and mental hygiene
- d. Public Schools families with siblings
- e. Parents Associations
- f. Religious institutions
- g. Newspaper and blogs
- h. Parents greater community
- i. Engage in conversation with parents at local playgrounds
- j. Post at and inform owners of "French-like" local businesses.
- k. More sources/ downtown directories..
- l. Create a web page for the online sign up form, knowledge base and external links.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH:**

**Creating a support base in the community**

Meet, attend community meeting and inform the public about the DLP initiative.

Key players to contact and meet:

- a. Dept of Education, ELLs office. Meeting with them is not a prerequisite to meeting with principals. It however can be informative and useful and we should try to book an appointment ASAP.
- b. Principals/ parent coordinators
- c. Parent advocate (districts 1 & 2),
- d. Superintendent (superintendents, district 1 & 2 = the boss of all principals).
- e. Community education council (CEC 2 &1)
- f. Community boards
- g. City Council members - (Source: [nycitycouncil.gov](http://nycitycouncil.gov))

**Location committee:**

- a. Organize small gathering at local coffee shop and bakeries to understand each school paradigm, potential and needs using the first wave of parents' interests.
- b. Identify motivated incoming parent families with siblings already in the school who have connection to the school principal and parent coordinator.

**Curriculum committee:**

- a. Create and share a "knowledge base" to compile the benefits of dual language education.
- b. Organizing parent information meetings with parents in the area.
- c. Visit existing dual language program in NYC to learn best practices and share their findings at DLP meetings.
- d. Meet and invite Parents and Teachers from existing dual language program in NYC to share their experiences

## **Phase 2 - Create a local rationale for the Creation of French Dual Language Program & finding the school**

### **Outreach & Data committees & Location committee, Curriculum committee:**

Mission: Organize a small gathering with one parent from each committee and a zoned parent to meet the Principal in the public school where we have identify a large number of incoming K families or a strong interest from the school administration:

### **Built a local strategy to convincing a Principal and the community:**

It is indeed very difficult to sell a French DLP to very successful, oversubscribed schools (which is the case of most Downtown public schools...)

Hence the need to expend a list of arguments and key points (in construction, suggestions welcome):

### **Principal's own motivation based argument:**

- For a new principal seeking recognition, a French DLP would be a way to leave one's mark, by adopting a cultural hedge, the distinctiveness of bilingualism.
- French DLPs have been running successfully in a number of schools, shaped by a body of seasoned professionals.  
The principal and the school would benefit from this existing and successful track-record. PS 58 and PS 84's principals agreed on talking to incoming principal to share their insights. They are both very enthusiastic about DLPs. It has changed their school for the best.

### **Education argument:**

- Create a lifelong gift of a second language to all children of the community.
- A critical number of francophone "Ls" need dual language instruction in order to learn to speak English.
- Overcrowding is not a curriculum!/  
Once you have entered an overcrowded school what is your children going to learn?
- Increase education choice and quality in downtown public school.
- Francophone culture is spread out.

- Safeguard francophone families their language & cultural heritage, share & benefit the all community.

### **Community based arguments:**

- 400 francophone children south of 23<sup>rd</sup> street entering K in the next 3 years according to the French Embassy.
- Safeguard francophone families their language heritage, share & benefit the all community.
- It would benefit the whole school community (by gaining some very motivated parents, by adding their fund-raising capabilities to the school's, by taking advantage of the French take on healthy everyday food / leveraging on the French community help to build better cafeteria, food workshop etc).
- 3 New elementary public schools have being incubated in the past 3 years (Ps276, Spruce & PS 343), it is time for parents to turn their energy and attention towards instructions and curriculum.
- Dual Language can give a new school or an under-utilized school a new identity or a new departure.
- Having more education choices in district 2 public school will help relieve overcrowding.
- No French Dual language program below 92nd street in Manhattan
- Since March 5<sup>th</sup> our grassroots initiative has mobilized more than 80 families to create a French Dual Language program downtown.

### **Budget based arguments:**

- Each new seat = additional \$ from the DOE. \$200,000/year for a class of 24 students.
- A DLP comes with a DOE grant (\$20,000 to \$25,000) and additional financial and logistical help from the French Government.
- French Embassy can provide resources and finance about 10% of the DLP schoolbooks.
- Incoming families interested in a French DLP have a high fundraising potential.

### **Present the data to a principal and a school community:**

- a. contact school principal to present the data and the project.
- b. Detailed list and repartition by year and school zone of Incoming families
- c. Explain the modalities of securing a Dual language grant from the DOE\*
- d. Explain the modalities of securing a grant from the French Embassy and other francophone countries agencies.
- e. Explain Benefits to the Children and the Community

\* Department of Education

After having met with a responsive principal, ask new players such as Embassy and consulate officials, elected officials, to attend and bring you support during your second meeting with the school.

### **Phase 3 - Building and planning a successful Dual Language program on day 1**

**Once the principal is on board, we must:**

- Start the teacher & teacher assistant hiring process (Teacher and TA committee)
- Obtain accreditation from the DOE (Space committee)
- Secure families: organize tours of the school and enroll families (outreach & data committee)
- Start fundraising and source donations to build a French library (Library Committee)
- Obtain French education materials (Curriculum & Library Committee)
- Help chosen public school write grant to obtain Dual language grant from the DOE (Space & Library committee)
- Hire a dual language specialist to train teacher and teacher assistant.
- Build curriculum with school and Office of ELL from the DOE (Curriculum & Library Committee)