

I am a parent of three french immersion children who have attended the BCCFC French camp program from pre-kindergarten thru grade 9 so far. This is an amazing opportunity for our kids to be immersed with all day, intensive french language and culture in an (extremely) energetic and dynamic setting, and meet more kids from western Canada in french immersion.

The BCCFC is a 30 year old, not-for-profit parent run society that exists to support french language through organizing camps (for kids aged 4-16) at three BC locations. When our family first started going 7 years ago there was only a one hour window that you hoped to get signed up for because registration filled up so rapidly. Now those families are moving on and there is open space at all the camps for the first time in many years.

The moniteurs they bring in from Quebec each year are what makes the program so successful - you can see more information on their website or on YouTube. There are activities from pre-kindergarten (making bannock, small hikes) all the way through the challenging Courier de Bois (overnight camping, biking trips, horseback riding, mountain climbing, canoeing...).

The moniteurs are the same at each camp, but the locations offer widely different opportunities - at Gwillam Lake in northern BC there is no cell phone coverage but bug dope required, there is an onsite climbing wall and a pristine lake the kids canoe and kayak on. At Nanaimo the groups go into town for the climbing wall there, they bike over on a ferry to access another island, the smaller childrens hikes go along the shore and look at sealife. In the Okanagan sunscreen is mandatory, and the lake is a huge part of the program, being so warm and safe.

Families have fun here too - the parents can be as involved with each other as they like, or can treat it as a bit of a time away. It is hard not to be involved when your kids are having so much fun though. Everyone pitches in a small amount to help the camp function, and signs up to feed different moniteurs different meals at your campsite (since all their time is spent with the kids, they have no time to cook). This is another great way to see your kids in their french language setting.

All the work and activities the moniteurs do with the kids is in french, so it is also a great way to help keep french fun and focused over the summertime.

As the lead for french in your school I would ask that you please let your school families know about this opportunity - we don't offer anything like this in Alberta, and it is fantastic time for the families that want to try something new.

If anyone has questions they can contact the registrar listed in the email below, and I also would be very happy to answer questions since I have had the perspective of being both a new family to the program, and an experienced one since we have been to all three of these camp locations, and through all the age categories.

Merci -
Linda Keyes

(parent of students at Ecole Leo Nickerson, Ecole Sir George Simpson and Ecole Paul Kane)
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