

*Revised  
Edition*



**PRE-ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL  
PARENTS' GUIDE**



SAN DIEGO FRENCH ★ AMERICAN SCHOOL

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# BIENVENUE

Dear Parents,

In the next few weeks, your child will enter our pre-elementary school: he/she will discover a new world, the world of school, and new friends.

Whether your child is entering PKO or Kindergarten, this guide will help you understand the structure, the teaching, and the organization of our pre-elementary school.

From your first visit to our school through enrollment and a day in the life at school, this guide provides the basic information to introduce you to our pre-elementary school.

SDFAS Pre- Elementary and Kindergarten  
Administration



# MISSION, CURRICULUM

## Mission statement

**San Diego French-American School ( SDFAS) provides a rigorous dual-language immersion curriculum and unique multicultural experience that forges open-minded citizens.**

SDFAS: "Education with a global perspective"

## Curriculum

The school offers a French immersion program starting in pre-elementary school and going through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Guidelines are followed that are specific to the French "Maternelle" (pre-elementary school) and that play an important role in the early years of education.

Our pre-elementary school PKO through Kindergarten has an enrollment of students aged 2 to 6 years old. The pre-elementary team is composed of French teachers, English teachers and assistant teachers.

The curriculum is based on the French system of education and presents a unique educational opportunity in San Diego. The pre-elementary immersion program is academic in nature and concentrates on pre-reading, pre-writing, and pre-math skills and art.

San Diego French-American school is a California non-profit organization and is a licensed California Day Care facility (License # 376700274).

San Diego French-American school is accredited by the French Ministry of Education, WASC and CAIS, and is affiliated with Mission Laïque Française, AEFÉ and AFSA.



# ADMISSION REGISTRATION

**San Diego French-American School (SDFAS) seek to enroll students from diverse backgrounds who will benefit from a challenging bilingual academic curriculum and diverse international environment.**

## **Admissions**

Children who will be entering PKO, PK1, PK2, and Kindergarten (ages 2 – 5 years) will need to be observed /evaluated . An observation session will be scheduled for each applicant, so the school can get a sense of each applicant’s physical, social, behavioral, and language development.

**Age requirements:** For the PKO class, children must be two years of age prior to December 31st of the school year and are accepted in class when they turn 2 years old. For the PK1, PK2 and Grande Section/Kindergarten classes, children must be three, four and five years of age, respectively, prior to December 31st of the school year.

## **Tours and Visits**

Interested families need to make an appointment with the Admissions Office to visit the campus or attend an Open House. Tours are by appointment only.

SDFAS admits students of any race, color, and national origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. SDFAS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, financial aid, loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. Qualified applicants are admitted at all grade levels. Contact the Admissions Office prior to applying.



# ADMISSION REGISTRATION FINANCIAL AID

## Admission and Registration

SDFAS does not require standardized tests for admission. However, parents are expected to submit the results of any tests the applicant has undergone, as well as current grades and academic records.

SDFAS is currently not equipped to accept students with special needs, except for standard ADA requirements. Because a bilingual education is challenging, the child must be able to focus and work well in both languages. SDFAS may not be able to accommodate children with learning disabilities or who require specialized education.

New students arriving from a non-French-government-accredited school have to be tested.

After acceptance, registration must be completed with both the Admissions Office and the Financial Office. In order to be admitted to class, all the required documents need to be signed, student evaluations completed, and payments need to be up to date. Complete

enrollment instructions are available from the Admissions Office.

## Financial Aid

The French government accords student grants to French nationals, three years and older, who demonstrate financial need. The *bourse* application forms are made available to registered students of SDFAS. More information on these grants is available from the French Consulate in Los Angeles: phone: 310-235-3220

<http://consulfrance-losangeles.org/>

Further SDFAS financial aid may be available. In order to qualify, families must submit an application to Students Scholarship Services (SSS), an independent company that determines the level of financial assistance. The SDFAS Financial Aid Committee will make all final decisions. For further information and to obtain an financial help and tuition details, contact the Admissions Office.



# SCHOOL EVENTS



*Halloween*



*Winter Show*



*Winter Show*



*Gardening*



*Exhibit Recup' Art*



*Chinese New Year*



*Jogathon*



*Science and Art Fair*



*Public Library Exhibit*

# FACULTY

**The faculty is a team of Pre-Elementary French teachers** who have the same training as elementary school teachers and have extensive experience in early childhood education. They begin preparing the youngest children for the work they will be asked to do later in elementary school. All our pre-elementary teachers are native French speakers.

**Our pre-elementary American teachers** have a California teaching credential.

Teachers attend weekly and monthly meetings to discuss school and class organization, educational projects, and the progress of their students. They may attend workshops set up by French organizations such as the AEFÉ (Agence pour l'Enseignement du Français à l'Étranger), MLF (Mission Laïque Française) or local organizations such as CAEYC, (California Association for the Education of Young Children).



## Assistant teachers

Our assistant teachers have a minimum of twelve Early Childhood Education (ECE) units. All members of our staff are certified in first aid and CPR. Some of our assistant teachers may speak French. The assistants work closely with the teachers, help in welcoming the children and ensure their well being. They supervise during recess, assist children when they use the bathroom and during snacks and meals. In the classroom, they prepare, organize and clean the classroom materials.

- Most faculty members have the equivalent of a master's degree in education
- Small class size
- Low ratio



Our assistants also are part of our pre-elementary day care team.

For pre-elementary school, SDFAS follows California Daycare Licensing standards.

Acceptance of students into the class is based on the appropriate academic, demographic, and social match of the student and family in relation to the school.



# THE FRENCH PROGRAM

**The time allotted for the instructional school year is fixed by the French Ministry of Education and corresponds to the time required by the California Department of Education.**

These required hours are the same for pre-elementary and elementary school. It is the responsibility of the headmaster or department director to distribute these teaching hours throughout the school year in order to respect the academic rhythm of the students and the curriculum. Effective differentiation is applied as it motivates students of all learning styles and ability levels to meet and exceed basic standards.

## **Curricula**

The curricula at SDFAS are based on the core requirements of the French Ministry of Education and incorporate the educational framework of the California State Department of Education. Depending on the subject, instruction is in French or English. The academic programs at SDFAS are enriched with a variety of physical, musical, artistic, and cultural activities.

## **Learning to work together, cooperation, becoming autonomous**

We facilitate the discovery of the norms of social interaction. Children assume responsibilities according to their capabilities, account for their actions, and listen

to others. They develop language skills that enable them to better exchange ideas and feelings.

## **Oral Language**

Students engage in a variety of spontaneous verbal exchanges and express themselves in a variety of situations, such as dialogue, stories, or explanations. They learn to enunciate well, use vocabulary appropriate to purpose, and progressively learn a complex syntax structure through language games and repetition.

## **Exploration of Writing**

While becoming acquainted with the written language, children gain access to the world of books. We prepare the children to learn to read.

## **Physical Education**

Physical activities enable children to develop motor skills and to grow intellectually and emotionally. Action and language are key components in children's development as they explore the space around them.

## **Discovery of the World: science, math, history, geography**

Children discover the world immediately around them. They construct knowledge through observation, manipulation, and verbalization. They learn to offer

critical judgment based on their experiences.

## **Sensitivity, Imagination, Creativity, Arts**

Through varied exposure to works of art, children expand their imagination and learn to express their feelings. Children take pleasure in building, inventing, and participating in the exchange of ideas and feelings.

## **The system of cycles**

The French program for pre-elementary and elementary school is organized in a system of cycles, which provides the flexibility necessary to accommodate children's diversity, and rate of development. Cycles with set objectives help keep an overall continuity and smooth progression in the learning process. Kindergarten is the last year of cycle 1.

## **Use of technology: I pad**

Pre-elementary students use ipads in small groups on a weekly basis. Each student has usage of his or her own Ipad.

# THE ENGLISH and MANDARIN PROGRAM

## The English Program

### PK0-PK2 classroom schedule

In PK0 through PK2, English is taught as follows: PK0 - twice a week, 20 minutes each; PK1 - twice a week, 30 minutes each; PK2 - 3 times a week, 30 minutes each.



### In Kindergarten, English is taught 6 hours per week

Lessons are often cross-curricular and integrated with the French themes. At SDFAS, your child is receiving an education aligned with the California State Standards. Each child is required to meet or exceed all standards. In addition, San Diego French-American School has its own Expected School Wide Learning Results (ESLRs).

Because every child learns at his or her own pace and may use a different learning style, the classroom focus is on the individual needs of each child,

ensuring that each student understands the concepts presented. The classroom curriculum is designed to be supportive for those who need reinforcement and enriching for those who need to be challenged. Effective differentiation motivates students of all learning styles and ability levels to meet and exceed basic standards.

### Methods used in the classroom to allow for the success of every child:

- Introducing new ideas using a variety of classroom, small group and individual activities.
- Using a variety of visual and hands-on-learning activities as well as projects that allow choice while meeting important core standards.
- Using Alternate Assessment activities to evaluate students using a variety of modalities.
- Taking into consideration maturity, readiness levels, individual interests, and learning styles.

## The Mandarin Program

In the pre-elementary school program, a choice is given to Pk1, Pk2 and Kindergarten students to follow an optional introduction to the Mandarin language.

Starting in first grade, Mandarin is offered as an extracurricular activity.

# THE CAHIER DE VIE



**The *Cahier de vie* tells about class life.**

The *Cahier de vie* includes poems, rhymes, cooking recipes and class events. Pictures, taken at school during activities, may illustrate the events of the week.

Each child has his/her own *Cahier de vie*, and takes it back home on a regular basis to share with his parents, and to work on it with the family. Activities done during the weekend can illustrate the Cahier.

Coming back to school, your child will share his/her *Cahier de vie*, with peers and teachers and

will explain what he/she has added in the Cahier during the weekend. ( events pictures, show tickets, drawings...etc).

The *Cahier de vie* is a wonderful tool for language activities.



Bonjour, bonjour

Ça va, ça vient  
Ça va bien, ça va très bien.



Le canard et le chien  
Ça va, ça va bien



La maison et le jardin.  
Ça va ça va bien.



*Le cahier de vie,  
Le cahier de chansons et de comptines,  
Le cahier de graphisme.*



# LEARNING CENTER

## The Learning Center

The purpose of the Learning Center is to ensure that all children have the support they need for academic success and to enrich them. The Learning Center can be conducted in either French or English for all pre-elementary students.

**The pre-elementary director** is responsible for the Learning Center, works with the teachers, works with children with behavior and/or academic difficulties in class and provides remediation plans, and also customizes plans for students who will need more academic challenges.

**The learning center team** includes a group of pre-elementary teachers who intervene to help children whenever necessary. That team meets regularly with all main class teachers to discuss goals regarding a specific child, they work in class on one-on-one or with two or three children as a support group.

Parents receive a Learning Center Report at the same time they receive the report card.

The learning center is conducted during regular school hours.

*Apprendre  
Comprendre*



# FACILITIES

## Library

The primary mission of the SDFAS library is to encourage reading for pleasure, because reading is known to be one of the most important factors in academic success. The library is also a tool to be used to teach research and information literacy. Resource materials are available in both French and English. Parents may borrow books for their children from the library.

## Auditorium

The auditorium is used for physical education as well as presentations, shows, and the "mini-forum." These events allow students to express themselves in front of parents and to gain self confidence.

## Field

The field is used during school hours for gross motor skills, extracurricular activities, and sport events.

## Preschool Playground

PK0 through PK2 students enjoy their own playground with various structures. Recess times are staggered, allowing each grade level to enjoy the playground by class level. The children are under constant supervision by the teachers and assistants on duty.

## Kindergarten Playground

Kindergarten students have their own playground and time for recess. They may use the blacktop during morning recess, recess with the elementary students.

No personal toys are allowed at school, including electronic games or music and/or communication devices.

## Blacktop

The blacktop is used for gross motor skills activities and bicycling when it is not used by the elementary school.

## Kindergarten Garden

The Kindergarten students have a garden that they care for and where they can grow their own plants.



# A DAY AT SCHOOL IN KINDERGARTEN

## Daily Kindergarten School Schedule

7:30-8:00 Day care  
8:00-8:30: Drop off time  
8:30 Class begins  
8:45 Circle time  
9:00 Workshop activities  
10:15 Snack and recess  
10:30 Workshop activities  
11:45 Lunch time  
12:30 Quiet time  
1:00 Workshop activities  
2:45 End of the day  
2:45 Optional Mandarin class  
( included in program)  
3:00 Day care and ASA  
6:00 pm School closes

In Kindergarten Children may arrive for **day care**, ( fee applies) from 7:30 to 8:00 am every day.They are greeted by the assistants.

### **8: 30 am**

**Class begins** with welcome time. The welcome time in Kindergarten is a transition time to prepare students for a day of learning.

### **Circle Time**

This a collective time when children have rituals and activities (writing the date, taking attendance, pre-reading activities, presentation of the activities by the teacher, etc...)

### **Daily Activities**

The day's tasks alternate between group work, during which children transition from one activity to another, and individual work time when the teacher evaluates students' work.

### **Snack Time and Recess**

The Kindergarten classes have their own recess area separate from elementary.The children sit outside and eat their snack .

**Snack is provided by parents.**

### **Lunch time**

Children may bring a lunch box or take the hot lunch. During rainy days children will eat their lunch in class.

### **Quiet time**

**Kindergarten** students have a quiet time after lunch.

**2:45 p.m. End of the school day and pick up time or Mandarin Option ( twice a week)**

**3:15 p.m.-6:00p.m. Day care**  
Students remaining on campus may go to extracurricular activities.



# A DAY AT SCHOOL IN PK0, PK1, PK2

## **In PK0, PK1 and PK2**

Right before 8:45 am, the bell rings, teachers gather the children on the play ground, and the children go to class.

**8:45 a.m.**

**Class begins** with welcome time.

The welcome time in pre-elementary school is a delicate moment for the child and his/her family. This will be the time of first separation for some children. It is an important moment where teacher and assistant reassure the child and help him/her to settle in the class through individual or group games, discussion and interaction with peers or the adults of the class.

## **Circle Time**

This a collective time when children have rituals and activities (date, taking attendance, songs and poems).

## **Daily Activities**

The day's tasks alternate between group work during which children transition from one activity to another, and individual work time when the teacher evaluates students' work.

## **Snack Time and Recess**

The children sit outside and eat their snack.

**(Snacks are provided by the school for PK0-Pk2 only)**

## **Lunch time**

Children may bring a lunch box or take the hot lunch. During rainy days children will eat their lunch in class.

## **Nap time - Quiet time**

In order to rest, the **PK0** students take a nap during the afternoon. **PK1 and PK2 children** take a nap followed by activities.

## **3:15 p.m-6p.m Day care**

Students remaining on campus may go to extracurricular activities.

## **Daily PK0, PK1, PK2 School Schedule**

7:30-8:00 Day care  
8:00-8:45: Drop off time  
8:45 Class begins  
8:45-9:00 Warm up time  
9:00 Workshop activities  
Snack and recess ( upon levels)  
Workshop activities  
11:45 Lunch time  
12:30 Rest time  
Workshop activities  
Option Mandarin program  
3:00 End of the day and Pick up time  
3:15 Day care and ASA  
6:00 p.m. School closes

# SCHOOL MEALS

## Snacks

Snacks and beverages will be provided by the school for pre-elementary children only (PK0-PK2)

Pre-elementary school children are asked to bring a reusable water bottle container in a lunch box (even if they are participating in the hot lunch program) for use during lunch time. The school offers healthy snacks, such as crackers, milk, and fresh fruits.

## Kindergarten snack

Snack time is immediately before recess.

**Kindergarten snack is provided by parents.**

## Lunch time

Lunch and snack time will take place under supervision and in an orderly fashion that allows for social interaction. Children will be encouraged to finish their meals, but they will not be forced to do so. They will not be permitted to exchange food or beverages. There is no microwave oven available for students' use. Children may bring their own **lunch box** with a nutritious, well-balanced meal or hot lunch may be purchased from the **school's hot lunch** catering service, under a separate contract. Sodas and candy should be avoided.

Glass-bottled drinks are strictly prohibited.

At the beginning of the year, parents provide the school with a health record including food allergies, medication or other allergies.

Children are encouraged to eat by themselves in order to gradually increase their autonomy.

## Birthdays

Arrangements for celebrating birthdays are made with the teacher of the class.



What to put in the Lunch box?

- a drink
- a vegetable
- a meat
- a piece of bread
- a fruit or a yogurt



# TARDINESS AND ABSENCES

**PK0, PK1 and PK2 begin at 8:45 am and pre-elementary school gates closes at 9:00 am.**

**Kindergarten begins at 8:30 and school gates close at 8:35 a.m.**

Faculty and staff are prohibited from opening the gates as mandated by the administration.

For security reasons, school gates remain closed from 9:00 am to 3:00 p.m.

## **TARDINESS**

When late and after the gates are closed, students need to pass through the administration building to pick up a tardiness form.

## **ABSENCES**

It is the parents' responsibility to inform the office of their child absence by email or phone as soon as possible.

Being on time and present every day at school contributes to the academic success of students.

## **PICK UP in between regular hours and half day pick up**

Parents picking up their child at lunch time need to be on time.

Parents need to use the administrative entrance and be escorted to the pre-elementary gate.

Additional fees will be incurred for late pick up.



# THE PRE-ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## CLASS COMPOSITION CRITERIA

Class composition is based on specific criteria to ensure an overall balance in the learning environment, such as balance between boys and girls, French and non-French speaking, affinities or discordance between certain students, and children experiencing difficulties in learning or adapting to school.

Children stay with the same teacher, assistant teacher and the group of children throughout the calendar school year.



Class size average is 12-18 students.

Small ratio adults to children in all classrooms.

# MISCELLANEOUS

## **Nap Time (PK0, PK1, and PK2)**

Children take naps in the classroom. The length varies depending on the age and the needs of each child. For rest/nap time parents are asked to provide:

- PK0, PK1, PK2: Sleeping bag (ideal size 52 x 20 inches)  
We recommend: All in one Blanket/pillow by **Rollee Pollee:**  
[www.rolleepollee.com](http://www.rolleepollee.com)

- a complete change of clothes, appropriate for the season, stored in a large Ziploc bag with the child's name clearly marked on the bag.

Bedding items are to be laundered weekly by the parents. Please refrain from providing large and bulky objects like sleeping bags, adult-size blankets, etc., as they pose a storage problem.

## **Quiet Time (Kindergarten)**

Children rest on mats after lunch; A short quiet time is necessary before the student go back to activities.

## **Preschool Parking Lot**

Parents of pre-elementary students can park in the pre-elementary parking lot, located on the south end of the school property.

Parents of Kindergarten children may use the drop off or park in the front.

When the parking lot gate is closed, parents must bring children through the main administration building main entrance to get to the preschool.

## **Security**

There are nine security cameras located throughout the campus.

