



ROCHAMBEAU

THE FRENCH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

MON ENFANT ENTRE EN CP



My Child Is Starting 1st Grade

ÉTABLISSEMENT
CONVENTIONNÉ



aefe

Agence pour
l'enseignement français
à l'étranger

WELCOME TO FIRST GRADE

The entire team is happy to welcome your child to first grade or CP as the French would say (*say-pay*) and is dedicated to the success of your child.

First grade is an important step in your child's education. He or she is going to the "big kids' school," and first grade is an important year for learning how to read and write. It is also the first class in elementary school, which continues until CM2 or fifth grade. The following table provides you with a way to visualize how this grade fits into your child's educational program:

CYCLE 2 Cycle des apprentissages fondamentaux			CYCLE 3 Cycle de consolidation		
CP	CE1	CE2	CM1	CM2	6
1 ST	2 ND	3 RD	4 TH	5 TH	6 TH
PRIMAIRE					COLLEGE

As you can see, elementary school is organized in cycles. This organization of multi-year cycles takes into account each student's own rhythm and allows for each student to develop at his or her own pace.

THE DAILY SCHEDULE

Rollingwood campus welcomes all Rochembeau Elementary students from first to fourth grade. First grade classrooms are all in the same hallway.

In elementary school, the school day is slightly different from that of the preschool. The major elements of the day are:

The class

An individual desk is assigned to each student with a space for books, notebooks and supplies. There are group activities for discovering ideas and individual activities for practice. On the walls, instructional posters serve as reference points for students in reading and math. As in preschool, posters with aesthetic value are present as well. Each CP class has a restroom in the classroom.

Morning arrival

Regular class starts at 8:30 a.m. For parents who request it, the institution offers bus service from the Forest Road campus or from a point near the home to the Forest Road campus¹.

Recess

In CP, there are two recess periods during the day: one at 9:50 a.m. and one at 1:50p.m. Families are strongly encouraged to provide an easy-to-eat snack for morning recess.

Lunch

CP students eat lunch between 12 p.m. Parents must provide lunch for their child in a lunch box. Because of concerns for allergies, students may not bring products containing nuts to school. After lunch, there is a 30 minutes recess before going back to class.

Afternoon departure

Children who take the bus to the Forest Road campus leave at **3 p.m.** All others leave at **3:10 p.m** and **3:20 p.m.**

INSTRUCTION

The team that will take care of your child is composed of a French and an English teachers , along with a physical education and music teachers. There is also a nurse and a secretary in charge of relation with families and various staff responsible for lunch and morning carpool.

Continuity between preschool and the start of elementary school

In CP, instruction takes place over thirty-one 50-minute periods per week, from Monday morning through Friday afternoon. Students begin class at 8:30 a.m. and finish at **3:10 p.m** and **3:20 p.m.**

As in kindergarten, the instructor gives students problems they are capable of solving, targeting specific situations, and asks open-ended questions for which students may not have easy answers.

Subjects studied

In CP, children study the following subjects based on the schedule in the chart below. Eighty percent of instruction is conducted in French and 20% in English.

¹ The Transportation Department is at your service and can answer all questions related to buses: <http://www.rochambeau.org/page.cfm?p=574>

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF WEEKLY CLASS MEETINGS	LANGUAGE USED FOR INSTRUCTION
FRENCH	10	French
ENGLISH	4	English
MATHEMATICS	6	French
PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS	3	French
MUSIC	1	French and English
ART	1	French
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	2	French
HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY	2	French
US HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY	1	English
TOTAL	30	

French

Learning to read begins in kindergarten and concludes in CE2. Each child learns at his or her own pace. At Rochambeau, students learn to read in French and English simultaneously beginning in CP, with a few weeks' gap.

The areas of study for French are:

- ***The spoken language*** Small-group oral interaction, and preparation for speaking in front of an audience.
- ***Reading and comprehension*** Systematic study of sounds, syllables and words, comprehension of written or heard texts, reading of different types of texts.
- ***Writing*** Mastery of cursive writing, creation of short texts associated with reading and activities in class.
- ***Study of the French language*** The emphasis is placed on the word and its variations. Verb forms are manipulated orally. Vocabulary is built systematically.

English

Students learn to read and write in English. The components of the language studied are:

- ***Speaking and listening*** Oral comprehension, expression through continuous speaking and taking part in conversation
- ***Reading*** Studying rules and combinations (sounds and syllables). Comprehension of written or heard texts, reading of different types of texts.
- ***Writing*** Writing skills will be introduced through modeling texts and shared writing experiences.

- **English language conventions** The emphasis is placed on the word and its variations. Verb forms are manipulated orally. Vocabulary is built systematically.

English instructors make connections between their subject matter and the French program to assist students in relating the two languages.

Art

Students work on individual or group projects that may lead to an exhibit of their work. These projects help students develop their potential in creativity, initiative and art appreciation. Projects explore various media such as drawing, painting, photography, etc. Research on these projects is enhanced by observation, comparing artwork, and discovery of the artistic process.

Music

A French-speaking and an English-speaking instructor conduct music education. Students develop their skills of perception and performance. Music education provides cultural and technical knowledge. Students principally use their voices to make music, either as a group or individually. Musical shows are organized during the year to provide a showcase for student productions, including their interpretation of the classical or contemporary French or American vocal repertory.

Physical education

A certified PE instructor teaches physical education. Students work on different skills in a variety of complementary areas in order to develop a broad range of abilities. Activities are adapted to various environments and may include dance and movement activities, group games with or without using balls, etc.

Questioning the world (science, technology, and social studies)

Students observe the world around them, and ask questions using a thoughtful scientific process. Instruction is conducted in French and in English. The following questions are explored using investigative methods:

- What is matter?
- How do we understand the world of living organisms?
- What is a technical object? What needs does it meet? How does it work?

Students learn to locate themselves better in time and space and move from the short term to the long term, and from a familiar place to a less familiar one. They learn to:

- Locate themselves in space and represent that space
- Locate themselves on a map or on a globe
- Locate themselves in time and measure time
- Place events in time
- Compare different lifestyles, landscapes, and places

A one-hour lesson, taught in English by the English teacher, is devoted to the American history and geography.

Mathematics

Problem solving is at the center of mathematical activities. Students learn to research, reason and communicate. The written component of mathematics is essential, including the introduction of the use of mathematical symbols. Students work in the following areas:

- **Counting and calculating** Numbers up to 100, using addition, problem solving using addition and subtraction
- **Size and measurements** Length, duration, prices
- **Space and geometry** Representation of places and tracking movement, recognizing, sorting, and classifying solids and various geometric forms.

Student assessment

Each instructor is responsible for assessing student learning regularly, based on work completed in class. The instructor performs several evaluations over the year and communicates each child's results to the parent. A report card is sent by email three times a year. In this report card, children are evaluated based on their level of mastery of the skills being taught.

Textbooks

In CP, children will use textbooks. Textbooks provide a learning approach and a set of instructional principles and tools that may be used by the teacher to teach reading, mathematics and science to their students. The textbook is an indispensable tool in the student's education but is not in itself a method. The instructor brings other tools and all his or her knowledge and know-how to help the child succeed. As for supplies, the school provides notebooks. Parents must provide a complete set of supplies based on the teacher's requirements.

New technologies and iPads

The mastery of common information and communication techniques is part of the elementary school program. These tools are used by the teachers based on instructional need.

HELPING CHILDREN LEARN

Will my child learn to read?

The start of CP can be stressful and many parents wonder if their child will succeed at learning to read. There is no pre-set calendar for learning to read. Each child is different and develops at his or her own pace. If you are worried, don't hesitate to contact the classroom instructor. Have confidence in his or her experience.

For students who already know how to read, parents must make an appointment with the Director and the instructor at the beginning of the year to develop strategies to let the child continue to grow based on his or her level.

Help at home

The school rhythm in CP is a change from what children experience in kindergarten. It is important to allow the child to rest and sleep well to be ready to learn the next day. Allowing time for play is also important. Below are some ways you can contribute to your child's academic success at home:

- Help your child to master spoken language.
- Stay calm. Reading is an adventure that takes time.
- Let your child develop at his or her own pace.
- Reassure and encourage your child.
- Have confidence in the teacher.
- Continue reading bedtime stories to your child.
- Respect his or her choice of reading material.
- Make a game out of reading.
- Make sure your child gets enough sleep.
- If you think there is a problem, see the teacher.

Managing homework

Each day in CP, there will be a text to read, words to look for based on the sound being studied, and sometimes a poem to read. Homework is communicated to parents via the homework notebook.

Helping your child when you don't speak French

It is important to spend time everyday checking your child's homework and asking him or her about what they learned. If you do not speak French, this can still be done using your language. The most important thing is being interested in your child's work. For non-French speaking parents, it is important to:

- Keep the French language in a positive light at home
- Build a family library (books /videos) in French
- Allow your child to spend time with French-speaking friends outside of school
- Assist with the learning of reading and writing in English. It is important to remember that children learn to read only once. The more at ease a child is in his or her own language, the greater the chance of learning a second language well.

Help at school

If your child is experiencing difficulties, Rochambeau offers specific assistance:

- Teachers can adapt their instruction, providing the child with different work within the class, sometimes with the aid of another instructor, either specialized or not.
- For children who are having trouble mastering French, a *French as a Second Language* teacher works with students in or outside the classroom in small groups to provide individualized assistance.
- If the child's academic difficulties are significant, a specialized instructor can provide additional personalized aid to your child.

SCHOOL LIFE

Attendance

Students must be present and on time at school. Some absences are authorized under certain circumstances:

- Illness, especially if contagious
- Significant family occasion (wedding, death, etc.)
- A transportation problem with getting to school (weather conditions, accident, etc.)
- Temporary absence of guardians when their children accompany them.

In all cases, it is necessary to inform the school secretary as soon as possible, specifying the length and reason for the absence. If an absence lasts several days, the director may request justification from the parents, such as a doctor's note.

Rules²

The elementary school has a set of internal rules voted on by the School Council (*Conseil d'École*) and presented to the Institutional Council (*Conseil d'Établissement*). These rules are posted at the entrance to the school and are available at:

Health and required vaccinations

The school provides a school nurse and a Guidance Counselor. These staff members are here to ensure students' well-being and to follow students' progress. They represent the institution's health center.

Vision and hearing tests are strongly encouraged at the start of CP. In the case of contagious illness or lice, children are not allowed to come to school. It is important to inform the school secretary and nurse at the start of the school year if your child has a chronic illness or allergies.

To be admitted to elementary school, children must be vaccinated in accordance with Maryland law³. When your child is enrolled, you will be required to fill, online, your child's health page and provide a copy of all medical certificates proving that these vaccinations have been performed. If your child has not been vaccinated, you will be asked to provide a medical certificate of contra-indications. **Children whose health records are not in compliance with the law cannot be admitted to school.**

²

[http://www.rochambeau.org/uploaded/PORTALS/RESOURCES_ADMIN/REGLEMENTS_INTERIEURS/Reglement_interieur%20elementaire_re_2015-16_FR_\(de%CC%81finitif\).pdf](http://www.rochambeau.org/uploaded/PORTALS/RESOURCES_ADMIN/REGLEMENTS_INTERIEURS/Reglement_interieur%20elementaire_re_2015-16_FR_(de%CC%81finitif).pdf)

³ http://phpa.dhmm.maryland.gov/OIDEOR/IMMUN/Shared%20Documents/2016_CCA_Vacc_Req_Final.pdf.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

Informational meetings

The director of the school organizes parent-teacher meetings three times per year and per class:

- *Informational meeting at the start of the school year* At this meeting of all class parents, the teacher presents the program for the school year.
- *Individual parent-teacher meetings in November and March* A report card is sent to you each trimester. These meetings provide an opportunity for individual assessment of a student's progress twice yearly.

Electronic communication

When your child is enrolled, codes will be provided to you to access:

- *The parents portal on the Lycée's website* This includes information and administrative resources, announcements about cultural events, the elementary school calendar, etc.
- *Seesaw (app)* The teacher posts resources, homework assignments and lessons online. Class highlights are also shared here.

If you have a concern...

If you perceive there is a problem, the best approach is to make an appointment with the teacher to discuss it. The instructor responsible for your child's class is your first point of contact. You may also contact:

- The Director of the Elementary School
- The Academic Director
- The Proviseur

Participate in the life of the school⁴

There are many ways to take part in the life of the school:

- **Join the Parent Association (PAR)** The association of parents of Rochambeau students (PAR) works in partnership with the Lycée to implement many activities within the school that benefit our entire community.
- **Represent families on the Institutional Council (Conseil d'Établissement)** Parent representatives are elected in October at the same time as Parent Association (PAR) elections.
- **Become a Contact Parent (Parent delegate)** Contact Parents are volunteers who connect the school and class parents. They disseminate information, help organize school trips, help organize snacks, etc. *Parent Delegates* meet on a monthly basis with the head of elementary to discuss school life and being informed on school news and changes.
- **Participate in the life of the school through annual or one-time events**, such as open houses for prospective families, the annual gala, welcome days, etc. Volunteering is encouraged!

⁴ <http://www.rochambeau.org/page.cfm?p=535>