We are Chicago’s preeminent educational and French cultural institution, educating students pre-K through grade 12.
The Lycée Français de Chicago provides its students with a rigorous bilingual education in a dynamic and welcoming multicultural community. The Lycée draws on the best of the French, American and international educational systems preparing students to thrive at top universities throughout the world. French at its core, the Lycée’s education transforms students into global ambassadors, inspiring them to lead lives of purpose, responsibility and respect.
First founded in 1995 by a small group of French and American families, the Lycée began as an international school of fewer than 150 students.

Twenty years later, our community has grown dramatically, attracting families from around the world who share the value of an academically challenging and culturally diverse education.

Families find a second home at the Lycée because of our commitment to a world-class education and fluency in respect, responsibility, and the joy of learning.

Today, the Lycée is Chicago’s premier international education community, consisting of nearly 500 families and more than 700 students.

“The French educational rigor combined with the American culture is a big plus. There are leadership-enhancing activities at the Lycée that you don’t find in a typical French school, but you do find in a typical American school. It’s a great blend of both.”

– Jonathan Pilault, Class of 2008
Where everything we do centers on our students

- Average student/teacher ratio: 9:1
- Two adult staff members for every pre-k, junior kindergarten, and kindergarten class
- One-on-one or small-group welcoming classes for non-native French speakers to help new students acclimate to French language instruction in elementary school; the same is provided in English for non-native English speakers in elementary, middle, and high school
- Reading, learning, and language specialists provide additional support as needed
- Built-in counseling courses to provide social and emotional support for students from kindergarten through high school

Where learning comes to life

- Educators work as teams to connect curricula across classrooms and subjects
- Differentiated instruction techniques center on optimizing student potential
- Annual extracurricular activities take learning beyond the classroom: science fair, art performances, exhibits, and field trips to art, science, and nature museums

Where parents are welcome in day-to-day learning and encouraged to be a part of the community

- Parents are invited to witness learning happen through volunteer opportunities, student projects, and performances throughout the school year
- The French Market, an annual community event filled with local vendors, family fun, and great food
- The annual Soirée, a gala and fundraising event with dinner, silent and live auctions
- Parent Association events throughout the year to socialize with fellow parents and explore Chicago

6 annual study trips to US and international destinations

12 Parent Association committees for multifaceted parent involvement

1-on-1 support for new students in French language and literacy
“Oui” are multilingual members of a global world.

The Lycée education offers students a global perspective through language. As early as age 2.5, children are immersed in authentic dual-language learning, expanding to a third and sometimes even fourth or fifth language starting in middle school and continuing through high school. Our program provides students with a passport to a competitive future by putting them on track to becoming multilingual prior to applying to college or university.

Research shows that bilingual and multilingual learners benefit from:

- Better mental multitasking ability
- Detail-oriented focus
- Improved problem-solving skills across all subjects
- Strengthened memory
- Heightened social skills and awareness

Foreign languages offered:

- German
- Latin*
- Mandarin
- Spanish
- French as a foreign language for IB students

*Offered beginning in Grade 7

“Everyone who has spent a little bit of time at the Lycée knows that learning a new language is not just adding new vocabulary to one’s dictionary. To learn a new language is to transform oneself and create new identities. It is difficult, sometimes even painful, and yet invaluable.”

– Gabriel Guillaud, Class of 2008
“Oui” are lifelong learners.

Academics at the Lycée

Cultural diversity and foreign language immersion are cornerstones of the Lycée education. Children from all walks of life and corners of the world come together to explore learning through language.

Cognitive skills are strengthened, capacity for creativity expands, and abilities to adapt and analyze are awakened as children apply their minds through multiple linguistic lenses. Doors instantly open to a world of learning and wonder. Through our community and classrooms, children cross international borders without ever leaving Chicago.

This is the unique and lifelong gift of a Lycée education.

At least 2 languages spoken by graduation

100% of graduating seniors pass the Baccalaureate exam, more than 80% with honors

“The teachers were always there for us, and challenged us in ways that helped me become a more independent person and appreciate different points of view…. Sometimes teachers help change your life, and you don’t forget it.”

– Gaëtan de la Vauvre, Class of 2003
Lycée students begin pre-elementary school at age 2.5 with socialization activities and interactive lessons that grow their natural abilities and ignite their desire to explore the world.

Pre-elementary students learn in pairs, in small groups, and in large-group activities during which they:

- Strengthen language skills and discover the writing process
- Exercise self-expression through movement
- Learn math basics (counting and problem-solving)
- Learn the relationship between sounds and letters
- Explore their curiosity about the world around them
- Develop an understanding of feelings, imagination, and creativity

The pre-elementary curriculum centers on cultivating language skills and character development to prepare Lycée students to reach their fullest potential in elementary school and beyond. Learning activities organized for pre-elementary students include two shows (one winter and one end-of-year performance), an annual science fair, and field trips to local museums, exhibits, and performances. In addition, the Lycée invites an Artist-in-Residence every other year to lead Lycée students in designing an art exhibit tied to a common theme.

Twice a month, kindergarten students also engage in learning exercises with a school counselor to foster character building and self-management skills. For example, students will interview each other to build empathy skills by learning to understand emotions experienced from another person's perspective.

Pre-K and junior kindergarten students are taught in French with one hour of weekly English instruction. Beginning in kindergarten, students receive four hours of weekly English instruction to expand on bilingual comprehension and language development.
Grades 1–5

“I feel so lucky to have grown up in such a multicultural environment—it totally opened me up to the rest of the world in ways that a traditional American school environment would not have.”

– Willa Frej, Class of 2009

In grades 1 and 2, Lycée students build a solid foundation in English language arts, French, and mathematics while exploring their creativity in art, making harmonic melodies and movements in music, constructing cultural and historical awareness in art history, developing fundamental technology skills in computer science, and developing healthy habits through sports and exercise in physical education.

In grades 3 through 5, Lycée students continue to strengthen, develop, and expand their academic skills in literature, history, geography, mathematics, experimental science, and technology. Information and communication technologies become useful tools incorporated in both instruction and assignments throughout these grades. Students use iPads and laptops for productivity, research, and multi-media creation.

Class Representatives
All elementary school grade levels nominate class representatives. Elections for elementary class representatives engage children in active learning about civic duty. Class representatives are responsible for voicing the interests of their classmates in regular meetings with the primary school director, further engaging students in a firsthand understanding of social responsibility.

Social and Emotional Health
Elementary students participate in a monthly research-based character-building course. Two monthly lessons are designed to build on the self-awareness activities incorporated in the early-learning program. Students expand their abilities to exercise healthy social skills, facilitate conflict resolution, and manage stress.

Elementary courses are taught in French with the exception of English language arts, American history, and mathematics (depending on grade level).
During middle school, Lycée students begin an in-depth learning exploration through courses taught by a team of teachers, each specialized in one or more subjects. Our expert teachers collaborate across classrooms and subjects to coordinate their lessons in creative ways. Students are challenged to demonstrate knowledge and encouraged to explore new ideas, solve problems, and analyze information. Time management skills and self-sufficient study habits are instilled throughout these grades to prepare students for greater autonomy and more challenging courses in high school.

In grade 6, students begin to study a foreign language of their choice. They can choose among Spanish, German, or Mandarin. Middle school students may also study Latin as an elective beginning in grade 7. Foreign languages are taught by native speakers through authentic immersion.

Social and Emotional Education and Counseling
Research-based character-building courses continue in grades 6-8. These monthly courses help students manage both academic and social change during the middle school years. Courses cover subjects including: various learning styles, effective time management, healthy lifestyle behavior, anti-bullying, and digital awareness.

Arts Program
Middle school students complete four art courses in grades 6–8. Art offerings can include dance, music, theater, and visual arts. Courses offered vary by grade level. The Lycée has established an annual partnership with the Ruth Page Dance Company and project-based partnerships with Chicago theater companies such as the Lookingglass and Court Theater. In addition, the Lycée invites an Artist-in-Residence every other year to lead Lycée students in designing an art exhibit tied to a common theme.

Middle school courses are taught in French with the exception of English language arts, foreign languages, arts, social studies, and dance.

“My education at the Lycée caught interviewers’ attention, as it showed that I had been exposed to different cultures. That kind of experience really opens your eyes.”

– Marion Duquesnoy, Class of 2007
The Lycée provides high school students with a passport to the world’s most competitive colleges and universities. At the Lycée, high school students have the opportunity to pursue one of two world-renowned secondary education programs in a truly international environment: the French Baccalauréat (Bac), in which the students can opt for the “SA” (“Section Américaine” formerly “OIB”), or the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB). Each Baccalauréate program is highly regarded and desired by colleges and universities in the US and worldwide. Many education experts recommend the French Bac and IB over other high school honors programs for students planning to compete and contribute in the global arena.

As reputable secondary honors programs, the French Bac and IB share commonalities. All grade 9 and 10 students attend the same arts, English, and physical education courses, which follow the curricula required by the French Ministry of Education. Starting in grades 11 and 12, Lycée high school students begin separate French Bac and IB courses in order to complete program-specific requirements. Through student performance on the French Bac, IB exams, and AP exams, students gain the opportunity to earn credit in advance of their college careers, depending on college or university transfer requirements. Every Lycée student is encouraged to choose the program best suited for his or her academic interests, strengths, and goals. Prospective Lycée high school students can participate in a “shadow day” to directly observe and learn more about the French Bac or IB classes. The Lycée further encourages families to make informed decisions through additional guidance from college admissions officers at desired higher education institutions.

Research-based character-building courses continue in grades 9–12. As high school students pursue more demanding academic courses and explore more social opportunities, monthly character-building courses help students balance both academic demands and social interests. Courses explore lessons on time management, self-esteem, and exercising healthy behavior inside and outside the classroom.

French Bac courses are taught in French with the exception of English language arts, foreign languages, and history for the “Section Américaine” students. All IB courses are taught in English except for foreign languages courses which are taught in the target language.
Beyond the Lycée
College and University Counseling

At the Lycée, our collective mission is to support our students in securing placement at one of their top college or university choices. We prepare students to be globally competitive applicants and to thrive at the world's best universities. Throughout the school year, all high school students and parents are invited to attend informational meetings on college entrance and credit exams. The college & university advisor meets with students to support test preparation and all aspects of the college search and application process for the US, Canada, UK, and France. The French Baccalauréat, IB exams and AP exams are held at the Lycée. Official college entrance and credit exams (e.g., ACT and SAT) are coordinated at an off-campus location. Over 50 North American colleges host informational sessions on campus every year, including specific schools requested by students. Additional one-on-one college counseling support is provided to all high school students, with additional support offered to students interested in visiting or learning more about universities and colleges abroad.

The Lycée is proud to provide a strong academic foundation and to serve as a passport to competitive colleges, universities, and professions for our many impressive graduates.

Recent Lycée graduates were accepted to some of the top-ranking colleges and universities in North America and abroad.

**UNITED STATES**
- Beloit College (WI)
- Boston University (MA)
- Brandeis University (MA)
- Columbia University (NY)
- Sciences Po Reims (FR)
- Cornell University (NY)
- Georgia Institute of Technology (GA)
- George Washington University (DC)
- Georgetown University (DC)
- Harvard University (MA)
- Johns Hopkins University (MD)
- Lafayette College (PA)
- Loyola Marymount University (CA)
- New York University (NY)
- Oberlin College (OH)
- Parsons School of Design (NY)
- Santa Clara University (CA)
- Skidmore College (NY)
- Stanford University (CA)
- Syracuse University (NY)
- Tufts University (MA)
- University of California, Berkeley (CA)
- University of California, Los Angeles (CA)
- University of Connecticut (CT)
- University of Denver (CO)
- University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (IL)
- University of Chicago (IL)
- University of Miami (FL)
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Wisconsin Madison (WI)
- Wake Forest University (NC)
- Williams College (MA)

**FRANCE**
- Atelier de Sèvres, Paris
- Aix-Marseille Université - Site de Marseille
- Conservatoire de musique de Paris
- EDHEC Business, Lille
- L’Institut Supérieur des Arts Appliqués
- La Sorbonne
- Lycée Condorcet
- Sciences Po, Reims
- Université Catholique, Lille
- Université de Rennes 2, Rennes

**CANADA**
- Concordia University
- École Polytechnique de Montréal
- HEC Montréal
- McGill University
- Université de Montréal
- University of Toronto

**UNITED KINGDOM**
- Imperial College London
- St. Andrews, Scotland
- Sussex University
- University College London
- University of Exeter
Elementary school
All elementary school grades participate in the annual Lycée science fair as well as field trips to art museums, science museums, theater performances, and nature exhibits.

CLASS TRIPS
Grade 2 students spend three days in Michigan, where they learn about nature and explore the outdoors. Grade 5 students participate in an annual exchange trip to a French-speaking country where they can strengthen their French comprehension and speaking abilities in an authentic environment, as well as gain more autonomy.

Middle school
Babysitting club, board game club, relaxation club, and student council are offered as fun and engaging outlets for students to further explore their interests.

CLASS TRIPS
All students in grades 7–8 can participate in an annual class trip. Grade 7 students spend a weekend exploring outdoor activities in the Great Lakes region. Every year, all grade 8 students have the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C., where they learn up close about American history and government through visits to local monuments, museums, and political organizations.
High school
During grade 10, students are invited to participate in a language immersion trip to China, France, Germany, or Spain, depending on their language of study. These trips last for about a week and are independent from the exchange program offered to the students in the same year. Additionally, in grade 12, students have the opportunity to spend a few days in New York City with their class before Christmas break, as a way to close their academic career at the Lycée.

EXCHANGE PROGRAM
The Lycée hosts a grade 10 trimester exchange program with a Lycée located in Barcelona (Spain). For three months, families host a Spanish Lycée student while their child lives with the exchange student’s family and attends their Lycée abroad to experience student life in a foreign culture. Students can also take part in a trimester-long study abroad program in China or Germany.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES
Lycée high school students have access to an array of annual extracurricular opportunities including choir, community service club, internships with a local business or organization (three-day requirement in grade 9), Model UN, prom, science fair, student government (select grade 11–12 students are chosen to represent the high school classes as members of the school advisory committee), and talent show.

Artist-in-Residence
The Lycée invites an Artist-in-Residence every other year to lead Lycée students in designing an art exhibit tied to a common theme. In 2014-15, the Lycée hosted the ensemble ICE (International Contemporary Ensemble), which led a project designed to broaden the students’ perception of making and experiencing music.
“Oui” are explorers of our talents and interests

Extracurricular Opportunities at the Lycée

As education experts and enthusiasts, Lycée administrators and teachers know that learning never stops. That is why the Lycée is proud to offer extensive options for students to explore their talents and interests outside the classroom.

Extended day school programs and athletics are offered throughout the school year in addition to a spectacular schedule of summer camps organized annually from June through August.

Before and After School Programs

Various programs are available immediately after dismissal until 6:00 pm. Instruction and assistance are provided in both English and French. You can register on our website for these programs.

Homework Help and Childcare

When the school day ends, an after-school program is available for students in pre-k through grade 8. Childcare is held for students in pre-k through kindergarten, during which students participate in arts and crafts, games, free time, and enjoy an after-school snack. Personalized homework help is available for students in grades 1–5. A Lycée educator works with up to 10 students per classroom. Additional supervisors are scheduled to ensure that there is one adult to support every five students.

Workshops

Les Ateliers, our workshop program, includes sports, language courses, music, performing arts, visual arts, and other popular activities such as mad science, robotics, cooking or chess wizards. Music lessons are private 30-minute sessions taught by music professionals selected for their ability to communicate their passion. Lessons offered include cello, flute, guitar, piano, violin, and voice. Most Ateliers run from 3:35 to 4:35 pm. Students registered for a workshop class are placed under the supervision of the after-school program staff until the start of their workshop. A snack is served. Language lessons include Arabic, Mandarin, and Spanish.

A wide variety of camps are also offered during school-year breaks.
### Lycée Athletics

#### Mini-Flames Sports
(Grades 3–5)
- Basketball (Boys and Girls)
- Golf
- Gymnastics
- Soccer

#### Middle School Flames Sports
(Grades 6–8)
- Basketball (Boys and Girls)
- Cross Country
- Golf
- Gymnastics
- Rock Climbing
- Soccer (Boys and Girls Outdoor)
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Track and Field
- Volleyball (Girls)
- Zumba

#### High School Flames Sports
(Grades 9–12)
- Basketball (Boys and Girls)
- Cross Country
- Golf
- Gymnastics
- Rock Climbing
- Soccer (Boys and Girls Outdoor)
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Track and Field
- Volleyball (Girls)
- Zumba

### Elite Sports Program
Gifted athletes identified by Lycée coaches in middle school and high school are given the opportunity to work one-on-one with trainers and coaches to develop their skills and pursue advanced athletic opportunities.
The Lycée Français de Chicago is an idea 20 years ahead of its time. What was once a dream among a small group of parents is now Chicago's premier international school and world-class education institution.

The nearly $35 million project spans 3.8 acres with a private drive and college-preparatory facility, featuring:

- space for 800 students
- 41 classrooms
- four science labs
- art and technology studios
- a full-size gymnasium
- a library
- a green roof
- administrative offices
- an outdoor basketball court
- a soccer field
- two playgrounds
- ample green space for outdoor activities
The modern architectural design reflects the Lycée’s desire for an **inspiring space** to encourage **educational discovery**.

The interior features a majestic four-story atrium that physically and visually **connects academic levels** progressing from pre-elementary classrooms on the first floor to high school classrooms on the fourth floor.

The atrium signifies a shared sense of **social** and **global responsibility** intrinsic to the Lycée curriculum and community, and also reflects an environment of interconnectivity among students, faculty, and administrators.
What you need to know to apply

- The Lycée education begins at age 2.5 to 3 years old* in accordance with early childhood development of language, socialization, and overall learning (a standard in the French education system). *All pre-k applicants must be 3 years old by December 31 of their pre-k year.
- Non French-speaking students are eligible to enroll in pre-k to kindergarten, and in grades 1–5 (depending on availability). Our high school IB program is taught in English and also welcomes non-French-speaking students from grades 9–12.
- Pre-K to kindergarten applicants must participate in an individual and group observation.
- Grades 1-5 applicants must participate in an individual observation.
- Additional materials for applicant review include recommendation forms and previous evaluations (for students entering pre-k to grade 1) and report cards for the previous three years (for students entering grades 2–12).
- Student “shadow days” are available for students in grades 1–12.
- Need-based financial aid is available through a separate application (see our website for details).

Application deadlines

- December 31 for pre-k to grade 5; applications received after the deadline will be considered based on space availability.
- Rolling enrollment for grades 6–12 (based on availability)
- Application review begins in February.
- March 15 for financial aid applicants and all relevant documents. French citizens should also apply via the Consulat Général de France.

To apply, visit: lyceechicago.org/admissions

Questions?
Contact: admissions@lyceechicago.org

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