



## Community Advisory Committees

**Name of Committee:** French As A Second Language Community Advisory Committee

**Meeting Date:** 11 February 2019

A meeting of the French As A Second Language Community Advisory Committee convened on 11 February 2019 from 7:06 to 9:06 pm in Committee Room A at 5050 Yonge Street with Parent Co-chair Mandy Moore presiding.

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**Attendance:** Parent Members: Mandy Moore (Parent Co-Chair W7), Sharon Beason (Parent Vice-Co-Chair W16), Zeynab Kazi (Parent Vice-Co-Chair W22), Lisa McAvoy (W2), Rob Janes (W2 Alt), Deloris Williamson-Braham (W5), Lynne LeBlanc (W8), Matt Forrest (W9), Charles Zhu (W11), Wilmar Kortleeve (W11 Alt), Elaine Sun (W11 Alt), Sharon Beason (W16), Zeynab Kazi (W22)

Also present were: Trustee Robin Pilkey (Trustee Co-Chair), Trustee Michelle Aarts, Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin, Trustee Dan MacLean, Beth Butcher (Executive Superintendent), Angela Caccamo (Centrally Assigned Principal), Kirsten Johnston (Program Co-ordinator, FSL), Mary Cruden (Canadian Parents for French), Manon Gardner (Associate Director of Education), Lisa Smecca (Parent, John Fisher PS W11)

The following participated by electronic means: Lisa McAvoy (W2), Betty Gormley (Executive Director, Canadian Parents for French)

**Regrets:** Christie Dunbar (Parent Vice-Co-Chair W16 Alt), Rosemary Sutherland (Parent Vice-Co-Chair W9/10 Alt), Nalini Singh (W2 Alt), Laura Steele Gunter (W7), Nadya Phelan (W8 Alt), Polina Osmerkina (W10), Sarah Ramkissoon (W12); Randy Samuel (W14), Sarah Smith (W15), Nancy White (W16 Alt), Gail Miller (W22)

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### Part A: Recommendations

#### 1. Additional French Second Language (FSL) Central Staff Needed

(NB: FSL Programs refers to core, extended and immersion French)

Whereas the French as a Second Language Advisory Committee (FSLAC) recognizes the success of TDSB French Second Language (FSL) programs as listed in Appendix A of our June 2018 minutes ([https://tdsb.on.ca/portals/0/Community/Community%20Advisory%20committees/FSLAC/FINAL\\_Minutes\\_FSLACJune122018.pdf?1](https://tdsb.on.ca/portals/0/Community/Community%20Advisory%20committees/FSLAC/FINAL_Minutes_FSLACJune122018.pdf?1) )

Whereas the FSLAC recognizes and thanks staff for their work and commitment to our children and to insuring equity, inclusion and student achievement in FSL by placing every applicant to SK French immersion and Jr Extended French, by providing transportation and by offering 3 entry points and immersion/extended and local/alternative French programs to meet varying needs and aspirations of students;

Whereas the 2018 French Review has amplified and documented unmet needs of students and teachers that have long been discussed at the FSLAC table, such as, equity, inclusion of students with special needs, program distribution, core French, secondary course selection, student engagement and professional learning and also raised expectations of positive change in the near future;

Whereas the 2019-20 budget process is underway;

Whereas, the TDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP 2018) states that “We will allocate resources, renew schools, improve services and remove barriers and biases to support student achievement and accommodate the different needs of students, staff and the community”;

Whereas in response to similar findings in the 2006 French Review when extended/immersion enrolment was approximately 18 000 at 100 schools, central FSL staff was increased from 4 instructional leaders and 1 program coordinator to a peak of 6 instructional leaders, 6 new teacher coaches, 1 program coordinator and 1 system superintendent (2018 French Review, p 22; June 2011 FSL Annual Report to Trustees, TDSB Minutes March 22, 2006);

Whereas current central FSL staff is 2 coaches, 1 program coordinator (FSL, Classical & International Languages) and 1 centrally assigned principal (FSL, Classical & International Languages, English as a Second Language/English Language Development, Social World Studies & the Humanities, Library Learning Resources, Global Education & Interdisciplinary Studies) supporting approximately 28 000 extended/immersion students at 147 schools, 90 000 Core French students and 2 500 FSL teachers;

Whereas enrolment in extended/immersion is now approximately 28 000 which is more students than each of 37 Ontario English school boards and all 12 French language school boards;

Whereas the TDSB receives approximately \$30 million annually under the FSL per student supplement to the Pupil Foundation Grant and that FSL funding “support the additional costs of providing core French, extended French, and French immersion programs” (Technical Paper 2018-19, p 48, CPF ON State of FSL Education, Tab 7 2015-16 EDU FSL Allocations);

**The FSLAC recommends that in 2019-20:**

- (a) That central FSL staff positions continue supporting FSL students, teachers and programs as they are currently,**
- (b) That all central FSL staff positions be full-time on FSL starting in 2019-20, and**
- (c) That 7 full-time positions be added in 2019-20 to increase capacity to address the challenges students, parents, and staff identified in the French Review and be funded from the FSL Allocation as follows:**
  - i. Six additional FSL central coaches (making 8 in total, i.e., 2 to work with coaches at each Learning Centre) to increase student engagement, improve inclusion of students with special education needs in elementary, and to increase provision of FSL specific professional development and coaching for FSL teachers**
  - ii. One FSL system superintendent to analyze and report on data and information about internal challenges and conditions in FSL prior to making recommendations to trustees that will address concerns raised in the 2018 French Review with a focus on taking action to achieve the policy objectives in PO 80 FSL and the FSL Framework and companion documents.**

**Background:**

The most important person in the school system for our children and their achievement in core, extended and immersion French is the teacher.

The 2018 French Review includes significant feedback that our teachers and principals need more and better professional learning support in order to improve student engagement and inclusion in FSL and that there are many challenges in FSL that will require the collection of further data and sharing of information to support positive change.

From 2013-16, Canada-Ontario Official Languages Education (OLE) dedicated (sweatered) funding of \$322 000 under 'Support for Educational Staff' was used to fund release time for FSL specific PD to implement the FSL Framework, Including Students with Special Education Needs in FSL, Welcoming English Language Learners in FSL, new elementary and secondary curriculum to modernize the delivery of FSL, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and salaries for the centrally assigned principal, program coordinator and centrally assigned principal were funded from general TDSB revenues with includes the FSL Allocation of about \$30 million.

In 2016, the change to Learning Centre coaches resulted in a reduction of 4 FSL central instructional leaders and the 2 remaining, now as FSL central coaches, continue to provide professional learning centrally and also support generalist coaches (who may or may not have an FSL pedagogy background

or speak French) in the Learning Centres who are tasked with supporting core, extended, immersion teachers.

From 2016-to the present, the 2 FSL central coach salaries are funded from the \$322 000 in dedicated funding which means there is a corresponding reduction in the amount of funded release time for FSL teacher professional development.

At recent FSLAC meetings, staff has shared that on scheduled PD Days this school year, there is only 1 secondary PD session on FSL and no elementary PD sessions on FSL. And that, of approximately 2 500 FSL teachers in our children's classrooms, only 192 attended FSL staff organized workshops. Opportunities for professional learning for principals specific to supporting immersion/extended programs in single, dual and triple track schools and supporting Core French teachers seems very limited to non-existent.

In the 2018 French Review, French teachers characterized the opportunities for professional learning as 'limited' but also indicated a strong desire for collaboration. It takes staff to organize and deliver effective and useful professional learning on a larger scale. A benchmark to consider is the Institute for Innovation in Second Language Education (IISLE) which is part of the Edmonton Public School Board (EPSB). The IISLE has 5 FSL consultants who provide services and expertise to support FSL teaching and learning for the teachers and principals of about 4 000 French immersion students and about 37 000 Core French students. They are a DELF/DALF Testing Centre and their annual list of workshops and professional development day offerings throughout the school year and for summer institutes is extensive: <https://sites.google.com/a/epsb.ca/iisle-second-languages-epsb/Home>

Digging into the specifics of change needed to address the many challenges noted in the 2018 French Review will require dedicated senior FSL staff. The current FSL central staff is stretched too thin already and without reinforcements the expectations raised during the 2018 French Review that improvement is on its way will not be met.

## **2. Examining Internal Challenges and Conditions**

Whereas the 2018 French Review, initiated by staff and welcomed by parents and the French as a Second Language Advisory Committee (FSLAC), has provided an in-depth look at challenges in French Second Language (FSL) programs from the student, parent and staff perspective that amplify and document on-going, long term conversations around the FSLAC table;

Whereas the TDSB is committed to ensuring that "every student receives a great education" and states that "real change happens in the classroom" (TDSB Multi Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) 2018) webpage, Feb 2019) and the 2018 French Review identified challenges in our FSL classrooms, such as, inclusion of students with special education needs, resources for FSL, professional learning and support for FSL Teachers and their Principals and supply, recruitment and retention of French Teachers;

Whereas “To move forward, the board must examine the internal challenges and conditions within the system that align with stakeholder challenges before moving forward with recommendations” (2018 French Review, p 22);

Whereas the TDSB is a data-rich organization that values accountability, a partnership of students, staff, family and community and the commitment and skills of our staff (MYSP 2018);

Whereas the FSLAC is aware of many ongoing efforts to address challenges in FSL from staff that have not been formally and publicly reported for extended/immersion French since the 2006 Review follow-up briefing notes and the 2011 FSL Annual Report and never for Core French;

Whereas data and information on challenges and ongoing efforts in FSL from our in-house experts, the central FSL staff, is needed to establish new system-wide baselines to support the mission of the TDSB and the MYSP 2018 to “enable all students to reach high levels of achievement” including in FSL and to “provide equity of access to learning opportunities for all students” and to “allocate human and financial resources strategically to support student needs”, to assess achievement of the goals of TDSB PO 80 on FSL and the Framework for FSL in Ontario and to take action to better meet those goals;

**the FSLAC recommends:**

**That the Board ask staff for further data and information through the next year to support informed, data-driven collaborative decision making to improve FSL programs including the following:**

**Updates:**

- **Updates of 2011 FSL Annual Report: Appendix D Headcount Enrolment and Retention Rates table entitled ‘Tracking the Oct 2009 FI Student Cohort for a recent cohort’, Appendix E Teachers of FSL Qualifications, Appendix F Recruitment Initiatives, Appendix H Professional Learning and FI Qualifications, Appendix I Funding for FSL,**
- **Updates of briefing notes: 2006 Review of French Language Resources, 2007 Supports for Students with Special Needs in French Immersion/Extended French Programs, 2011 Hiring and Retention of Teachers in Elementary French Teaching Assignments;**

**Release of Existing Information:**

- **3 Year FSL Framework Plans and reporting (2013-18) submitted to Ministry of Education,**
- **Official Languages in Education funding and expenditures (2013-18) submitted to Ministry of Education;**

**New Briefing Notes (see Background for details):**

- **TDSB DELF Capacity Building and Cohort Results (2013-18),**
- **Core French,**
- **Secondary Extended/Immersion French Courses.**

### **Background:**

The 2018 French Review captured important data on student, parent and staff perceptions, but it did not capture key data and information about current FSL programs, initiatives taken since the 2006 French Review, nor the effectiveness of these initiatives.

### **FSL Briefing Notes:**

As a follow-up to the 2006 Review, Trustees asked for and received briefing notes on:

French Language Resources (2006)

<https://tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/Community/Community%20Advisory%20committees/FSLAC/support%20staff/2006-2007/memolangresources0906 .pdf>

Supporting Special Needs in French (2007)

<https://tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/Community/Community%20Advisory%20committees/FSLAC/support%20staff/2007-2008/70911 Spec Ed Fr.pdf>

Hiring French teachers (2011)

<https://tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/Community/Community%20Advisory%20committees/FSLAC/support%20staff/110427 French Hiring 1734.pdf>

No formal updates have been provided since.

### **FSL 'Annual' Report:**

Since 2005, Trustees and the public have received the Enrolment Report for French Programs every spring. This report provides school by school data on applications and placements for the September following and is a very valuable resource in understanding FSL programs and student enrolment over the short and long term.

In November 2007, the Board adopted a resolution to have an Annual Report on FSL in addition to the Enrolment Report. The 'Annual' Report on FSL was done in May 2009 and June 2011.

<https://tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/Community/Community%20Advisory%20committees/FSLAC/support%20staff/FSL%20report.pdf>

In 2017, in anticipation of the 2018 French Review, the Enrolment Report was expanded to include some elements of the previously available 'Annual' Report on FSL and renamed 'Annual Report: Enrolment and Successes/Challenges in FSL'. However, the following data and information which gave trustees, staff and parents deeper insight into FSL at the TDSB was not included and has not been reported on formally since 2011:

- Appendix D Headcount Enrolment and Retention Rates table entitled 'Tracking the Oct 2009 FI Student Cohort for a recent cohort'
- Appendix E Teachers of FSL Qualifications
- Appendix F Recruitment Initiatives
- Appendix H Professional Learning and FI Qualifications

- Appendix I Funding for FSL

In 2018, the report became the Enrolment Report again with some additional data on Core French enrolment and transportation for extended/immersion French students.

### **Sharing Reports and Sweatered FSL Funding Expenditures:**

In 2013, at the request of the Ministry, Boards created, submitted and started to report on 3 Year FSL Framework Plans. The TDSB Plans and reporting have not been shared with Trustees nor the public.

From 2013-2018, the TDSB has received and likely reported on expenditures of annual Official Languages funding of about \$459 000 to the Ministry but no information on this has been shared with Trustees nor the public.

### **DELF:**

In 2013-14, the TDSB began annual Ministry funded DELF (Diplôme d'études en langue française) French proficiency testing of a limited number of Grade 12 core, extended and immersion French student volunteers. At least two Ontario Boards now top up Ministry project funds to fund all Grade 12 FSL students to take the DELF. Staff has reported at the FSLAC that examiner capacity has been increased recently. Trustees and the public have not received a briefing note on this important initiative and student achievement in French proficiency, the primary goal of taking French.

### **Core French:**

No Core French specific reporting has been done since amalgamation in 1999. The feedback in the 2018 French Review identifies significant issues in Core French. To begin to address them, we need a common understanding of the current situation and of on-going efforts by central FSL staff to support Core French in the classroom (or on a cart) in order to inform an action plan including:

- information and data on system-wide and school-based initiatives that are having a positive impact on student engagement, retention to Grade 12 and proficiency outcomes,
- information about TDSB support for and uptake of professional learning opportunities in Core French pedagogy including the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and the shift to authentic communication and in improving French proficiency and cultural awareness
- proficiency expectations for Core French teachers, assessment during the hiring process
- a discussion of different approaches to Core French delivery and potential for impact on student engagement, retention to Grade 12 and proficiency including block/compact scheduling, determining class composition by proficiency level, intensive Core French, Accelerated Integrated Method (AIM), summer and school year e-learning for secondary credits, grade 1 start
- cohort data sets that show TDSB Core French enrolment/retention Grade 9-12 over a period of years to track student engagement
- data showing TDSB elementary schools with dedicated Core French classrooms to establish a baseline for yearly tracking and to establish goals for eliminating of carts

- data showing which secondary schools run Core French to Grade 12 to establish a baseline for yearly tracking of the accessibility of secondary Core French credits
- data showing uptake and student feedback on alternatives like summer e-learning.

### **Secondary Extended/Immersion French Courses:**

Secondary students raised the lack of courses in French as an issue in the 2018 French Review (p73) and the FSLAC brought a recommendation to the Program and School Services Committee of the TDSB in February 2013 which was subsequently adopted by the Board to “to examine the needs for additional sites and opportunities for immersion/extended French students at the secondary level and develop a plan for meeting current and future needs in consultation with the FSLAC and stakeholders”. This was to be included in the Long Term Pupil Accommodation Strategy (LTPAS) and immersion has started at East York CI and is scheduled for Oakwood CI for 2020. Staff indicated that the Secondary Review could address the course selection challenge, but 5 cohorts of secondary students have graduated since the Board’s resolution without addressing this student engagement issue.

A briefing note on the status of new and possible secondary sites and on French courses in secondary including the following would provide a common understanding of the current situation and identify solutions that could be implemented in 2020:

- courses are offered/run in French in grades 9-12 by site,
- waiting lists for courses in French,
- ways to determine student interests and respond to them at their secondary school
- ways to allow core/extended/immersion French continuation in conjunction with other specialized secondary programs like IB, Arts, STEM, alternative
- alternative methods for getting a credit in French such as dual credits, specialist high skills major, co-op, e-learning summer and school year and locally developed credits for 2-3 month exchanges.

### **Part B: For Information Only**

#### **Future FSLAC Recommendations Being Developed in Response to the 2018 French Review:**

- Improving Core French
- Planning expansion of immersion/extended French sites to achieve equitable geographic distribution
- Supporting inclusion and retention of students with special education needs in French Second Language (FSL) programs
- Improving FSL at the secondary level



- Improving access to before and after school care for immersion/extended French students who are bussed

#### **Update French Review:**

Staff reported that it is not yet known when the French Review Report will go to Board. There is also a secondary program review and discussions are happening with senior staff and Trustees in the context of the Long Term Program Accommodation Strategy (LTPAS). The FSLAC recommendations will be considered as part of the final staff recommendations.

Staff recommendations will include implementation timelines and budget implications for Trustees to consider. Every staff recommendation will not be able to be implemented in September 2019 due to the tight timeline.

#### **March FSLAC Newsletter:**

The once/term FSLAC newsletter is expected to be produced and delivered to FSLAC distribution list prior to March break. Trustee Pilkey suggested and Associate Director Gardner agreed to facilitate distribution through TDSB Connects as well which goes to 200 000 people. Anticipated articles include: the French Review, activities in French during March break, an invitation for people to attend FSLAC, information on Core French, etc.

#### **PIAC Dinner on February 21, 2019:**

Two representatives from each CAC are invited. FSLAC will provide a dinner specific newsletter from the FSLAC to include in participant packages.

#### **Parents as Partners Conference: March 30 at Beanfield Centre:**

FSLAC and Canadian Parents for French will look into having a table at this conference. FSL Staff will be doing a presentation on "Inclusion in All FSL Programs".

#### **TDSB Budget Report:**

Trustee Pilkey reported that the past few years were mostly a status quo budget. With the new provincial government and many new Trustees, the discussions are very active and detailed with senior staff, with drivers based on the Multi Year Strategic Plan. Month of February the Finance Budget and Enrolment Committee (FBEC) is meeting every week. Of the \$3.4B total budget, \$2.4B is fixed for employee contracts. Trustees are holding ward meetings to discuss the budget.

## **SK French Immersion, Jr Extended French Entry September 2019**

Offered 3,670 FI placements for entry in SK. Jr. Extended application period is now closed. Received 1,545 applications – slightly lower than last year.

### **DELf (Diplôme d'études en langue française)**

DELf exams are being organized for grade 12 core, extended and immersion students in the first week in May. This internationally recognized exam calibrated to the benchmarks of the CEFR provides proficiency credentials to successful candidates. Exams are marked by a certified Correcteur, who has four days of training.

For the last few years, since the Ministry funded pilot began, TDSB has offered this opportunity to 42-45 students. Additional funding is available this year and about 100 students will participate. In past, eligible students were chosen by lottery to participate. Students work with their teachers to select the challenge level.

### **Concours d'art oratoire**

Canadian Parents for French (CPF) in partnership with the Ontario Modern Language Teachers' Association (OMLTA) does an annual French Speaking Festival and Competition. TDSB students do speeches in their schools and can advance to the Regionals: Elementary - West on March 19 at 1 Civic Centre Court, East on March 20 at 140 Borough Drive. Secondary - East on March 26 at 140 Borough Drive, West on March 28 at 1 Civic Centre Court. Reps from TDSB will be selected to compete in provincial competition at Glendon College (York University) in May. Prizes include university scholarships.

### **French Teacher Recruitment**

Employment Opportunity Fair in collaboration with Employee Services took place January 26. Met a number of French teacher and support staff candidates. Staff is also recruiting at universities with French teacher education programs.

Ongoing interviews for teacher candidates with FSL qualifications. Continually work with graduating candidates with pending Ontario College of Teachers accreditation. Submitted FSL pilot proposal to OPSBA (Ontario Public School Boards' Association) which is working on French teacher supply, recruitment and retention. Staff is working in collaboration with Employee Services on a video for the TDSB employment website to recruit French teachers.

**Part C: Ongoing Matters**

N/A

**Report Submitted by:** Beth Butcher

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