

Community Advisory Committee: French as a Second Language Advisory Committee

Meeting held on: Thursday, June 3, 2010

Time: From: 7:20 To 9:50 pm

Location: Committee Room A, 5050 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario

Chair: Tami Oudendijk

Members present: Cindy Ewins (W 17), Fadia Farah (W 13-alt), Hagit Fry (W 14), Sharon Kerr (W 21), Chris May (W 11), Trish Murphy (W 15-alt), Tami Oudendijk (W18), Cindy Preger (W 9), Lise Snelgrove (W 7), and Trustee Sheila Ward

Members not present: Lise Bois (W 10), Karen Galler (W 12), Linda Hilpold (W 8), Frances Hincenbergs (W 2), François Routhier (W 16), Hope Smith (W 19).

Part A: Committee Recommendations

No matters to report

Part B: Information Only

FSLAC Parent Co-chair's Year End Report

1. Membership

There are 30 parent members and alternates on the FSLAC from 15 wards and 1 non-voting community member from Canadian Parents for French (Ontario). Sheila Ward is our trustee co-chair and FSL program staff attends all meetings. In addition to the parent co-chair, we have a lead parent for Emerging Issues and one for Communication.

2. FSLAC Activity at the Board

The FSLAC met 6 times in the 2009-2010 school year, deputed at 5 Board committee meetings, participated in 2 Ministry of Education on-line consultations and attended numerous SK immersion information nights to meet new parents and to support the presentations of principals and FSL staff. FSLAC members also supported students, parents and staff through school and community based French events.

Meeting notices, agendas and minutes are posted on the FSLAC page on the TDSB website. We have recently begun to receive administrative support from the Parent Engagement Office and a much needed update to our webpage is underway.

Our communications lead parent maintains our gmail account. The address is posted on the webpage. The gmail account facilitates communication with parents and stakeholders and distribution of the FSLAC news newsletter which we produced 3 times this year.

3. FSLAC Participation in Ministry of Education Consultations

Parent Engagement Survey and Conference

The survey on the Ministry of Education draft parent engagement policy was completed in December 2009. As a parent advisory committee, the FSLAC felt that the scope of Parent Involvement Committees (PIC) should be broadened to include any type of parent advisory committee operating at the Board level. In addition to PIAC, the TDSB has the FSLAC and the Alternative Advisory Committee both of whom cover parent populations bigger than some Ontario school boards. The FSLAC also felt that the draft policy was not specific enough in its assignment of staff and administrator roles and responsibilities to help foster parent engagement given the scope of the TDSB.

The FSLAC parent co-chair attended the one day conference held by the Ministry of Education with PIC members from across the province at the invitation of the TDSB PIAC parent co-chair.

Core French Curriculum

The survey on the Ministry of Education draft core French curriculum was submitted by the FSLAC in January 2010. The shift to a focus on authentic oral communication and the new structure of the curriculum reflecting the Common European Framework were noted improvements. The draft front matter of the curriculum documents, the policy piece including hours of instruction and program types and goals has not been released and is of concern to the FSLAC as the current range and intensity of FSL programs meets the varied needs and aspirations of TDSB parents. The new curriculum document is now expected in 2012.

4. Current Opportunities

Early Learning Program (ELP)

One SK immersion site is in the first year of ELP and the FSLAC hopes that this will provide the opportunity for the TDSB to develop and monitor best practices in early immersion as the roll out continues in subsequent years. The FSLAC supported the PIAC motion to have the director bring parent concerns about ELP to the Ministry of Education and asked that the director include explicit support for the continuation of SK immersion. At 100% French instruction, TDSB SK immersion is the best practice in second language learning.

Extended/Immersion Program Expansion

In September 2010, 1 new grade 4 extended and 2 new SK immersion sites will open. We congratulate staff and local trustees on these successful expansions to meet demand.

There are, however, still several year-over-year ‘hotspots’ where demand indicates opportunity for expansion that will require attention going forward.

The FSLAC participated in several meetings on how to meet demand for SK immersion spots in the Palmerston catchment. In 2009, high demand meant redirection for Hillcrest and Huron students and 2010 high demand meant redirection for Huron and Jesse Ketchum students. We also participated in the related local feasibility team meetings. Despite great effort from staff and parents, workable solutions for applicant families have not been found.

Specialized Schools

The FSLAC did a deputation at PSSC in March on Specialized schools (choir, male and female leadership and sports) to ask that extended/immersion French be part of these initiatives.

ARCs

Although not formally part of the ARC process, the FSLAC has a strong interest in the outcomes of several ARCs and has done deputations at three Planning and Priority Committee meetings on the potential impact of recommendations on extended/immersion programs and the importance of continuity and predictability, transportation, pathways and communication.

5. 2010-2011 Plans

The new FSLAC co-chair will be Trish Murphy from ward 15. Hagit Fry from ward 14 will continue as the communications lead and Sindy Preger from ward 11 will be the lead on emerging issues. Efforts will continue, particularly after the municipal elections, to work with trustees to fill vacancies in wards that do not send members to the FSLAC.

6. Upcoming meeting dates: October 19, 2010; November 16, 2010

Tami Oudendijk, FSLAC Parent Co-chair