



Community Advisory Committee Report

Community Advisory French as Second Language Advisory Committee

Meeting held on: June 17th, 2014

Time: **From:** 7:00 pm **To:** 9:00 pm

Location: 5050 Yonge St. Committee Room A,

Chair: **Kristina Laperle** (Parent Co-chair)

Members present: Dina Pizolinas (W2); David Kim (W3); Laura Steele-Gunter (W7); Lauralyn Johnston (W8); Kathryn Yung (W10); Sharon Kerr (W13); Kristina Laperle (W17); Pam Rigney (W21); Debbie-Lynn Hoste (W22)

Members not present: Nichole Jonas (W1); Rosemary Sutherland (W9); Tanya English (W14); Jennifer Story (W15); Rita Camacho-Lomeli (W16); Cheryl Wilson (W19)

Part A: Committee Recommendations

No matters to report

Part B: Information Only

Topic: FSLAC Parent Co-chair's Year End Report

1. Membership

There are 24 parent members and alternates on the FSLAC from 15 wards, and 1 non-voting community member from Canadian Parents for French (Ontario). Trustees Gough, Rodrigues and Ward are the Board's representatives.

Efforts will be made after the trustee elections to fill FSLAC vacancies and renew memberships. FSLAC members/alternates have two year terms and elections take place in odd years (ie, 2015). To be eligible to be an FSLAC voting member/alternate, one must be a parent of a current TDSB student, have an interest in French and be available to attend (in person or by phone) about seven meetings per year. Trustees may contact the FSLAC at fslactoronto@gmail.com.

2. Information Sharing

The FSLAC met 7 times in the 2013-14 school year. Meetings are open to everyone and invitations to attend are on our TDSB webpage and in our newsletter. FSLAC members supported students, parents and staff in many different ways, including attending TDSB parent conferences, individual school workshops, and immersion/extended information nights to meet new parents and to support the presentations of principals and FSL staff.

Meeting notices, agendas, minutes and reports and information about FSL are posted on the FSLAC page on the TDSB website (www.tdsb.on.ca/fslac). We receive limited administrative support from the Parent Engagement Office.

Parents communicate with the FSLAC through our gmail account (fslactoronto@gmail.com). Our parent volunteer communications team responds to inquiries and produces and distributes the FSLAC newsletter three times per year. The newsletter is sent electronically to approximately 100 schools with extended/immersion programs, trustees, and nearly 600 individual parents and FSL stakeholders who have signed up.

3. Parent Meetings, Conferences and Other Workshops

One of our goals this year was to reach out to more parents through participation in parent meetings, conferences and workshops.

FSLAC Members attended many immersion/extended information nights to meet new parents and to support the presentations of principals and FSL staff.

The FSLAC had tables at both the east and west end Models Schools Conferences, the Etobicoke parent conference and PIAC's "Parents Make a Difference Conference". Parent volunteers provided parent-to-parent support, French program information and print resources.

The FSLAC also continues to receive invitations from schools to do the "Help with French Homework...even if you don't speak French" workshop which it created for the 2012 PIAC Conference. Volunteer time permitting, the FSLAC will continue to offer the presentation upon request in 2014-15. The power point is posted at www.tdsb.on.ca/fslac under 'Resources'. Inquiries may be directed to fslactoronto@gmail.com.

As we have no funding, we have applied for a PRO Grant for 2014-15 to cover costs for materials needed for conferences and workshops and support our parent outreach project.

4. FSLAC Participation in PARCs, PARTs and in Board Committee Meetings

Ward 10 PART meetings and the final meetings for the Ward 1 PARC were attended by FSLAC members.

The FSLAC has presented at Board committees 3 times this year:

January Planning and Priorities Committee:

The FSLAC supported the Ward 1 PARC recommendation to open a new Senior Kindergarten French Immersion (SKFI) program at Melody Village, which will transition into an FI centre

over the next few years. The FSLAC also provided feedback on the report on Community Advisory Committees.

May Program and School Services Committee:

The FSLAC responded to 2014-15 Enrolment Report to thank staff and trustees for their commitment and support of French immersion/extended programs, to support the 5 new SKFI sites, and 2 Extended French sites and to draw attention to issues and concerns with redirections and lotteries in schools with no feeders.

FSLAC executive members met with Superintendents and FSL program staff to discuss the first phase of the Strategic Planning in French (SPIF) project. This group is studying areas for the growth of the program with an aim to address the ‘hotspots’ and equitable access across the Board. We look forward to more progress being made when Phase 2 starts in September 2014 and will continue to ask that our secondary programs be included in the discussion.

5. Opportunities to Support Growth and Excellence in French Programs

The 2014-15 enrolment report shows that enrolment in Immersion (SK and grade 4 entry) and Extended (grade 4 or 7 entry) is continuing to grow. This trend is expected to continue as French Immersion graduates are now parents and the opportunities in immersion and extended are being better understood by diverse communities. However, growth is not as strong as at other school boards. There continue to be barriers to participation that need to be addressed to support student achievement in French: complicated TDSB procedures, inconsistent communication with parents and coordination with before and after school care.

Full Day Kindergarten:

In September 2014, all kindergarten programs will be full day including the 61 SK French immersion programs. The first SK French immersion program with full day kindergarten was Parkdale PS in 2010 and the bulk of SKFI schools are in this last year of the phase in. The implementation of FDK means that class size and staffing will be similar to the years before the 20-student cap with about 30 students in the SKFI class with one teacher and an ECE (previously an Educational Assistant). FSL staff has observed that the increased French exposure in full day SK greatly improves readiness for the grade 1 program and they have assured us that every effort is being made to hire ECEs who are proficient in French.

FSL Needs at the Secondary School Level:

We will continue to follow up on the Board’s motion (February 2013) to take action on “the need for additional sites and opportunities for immersion and extended students at the secondary level and develop a plan for meeting current and future needs in consultation with the FSLAC and stakeholders”. Retention of students to Grade 12 in French programs is a key Ministry priority in FSL and we hear from students and parents that there is a need for a wider course selection and integration of French in specialized schools like the Arts and IB. E-learning and summer school credit courses are being provided on a fairly limited basis. Parents have identified a need to have the information available and widely communicated when students are making their regular school year choices.

Special Education and Core/Extended/Immersion

Parents continue to express concerns at the FSLAC that special education is not adequately supported within core/extended/immersion programs. Parents are seeking access to technology and specialized resources in French and more special education training for FSL teachers, particularly in the primary grades. The FSLAC plans to connect with PIAC and SEAC to explore ways to work together on these issues.

Elementary French Summer School

The FSLAC is very supportive of the elementary French summer school opportunities. This TDSB innovation is very supportive of student achievement in French and we hope that it will continue to grow and become available in more parts of the city in coming years.

7. Ministry of Education Initiatives

“Great to Excellent” Consultation:

The FSLAC discussed the Ministry’s “Great to Excellent” strategy and provided a written response to 7 questions highlighting French proficiency as a skill students need to develop in elementary and secondary school to contribute to future success. We noted that schools can support engagement of our 21st century students in French by integrating technology in teaching and learning and by providing opportunities for authentic French experiences.

Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and the DELF:

The FSLAC continues to support FSL staff in their efforts to train teachers in the application of the CEFR (language proficiency benchmarks and authentic communication) and in the TDSB participation in the Ministry funded pilot project where students are challenging the DELF exam (Diplôme d'études en langue française). With 7 trained TDSB examiners and numerous students who were excited to do this extra exam, the TDSB will be getting excellent feedback on the quality of our French programs from a global perspective. The next major step is the development of student language portfolios which support goal setting, self-assessment and reflection on the development of proficiency using the CEFR.

New Elementary Curriculum and FSL Framework

The Ministry released the new elementary curriculum this spring and implementation is underway. The document is not very parent friendly and parents will be relying heavily on teachers to interpret it for them. Secondary curriculum is on the way. The implementation of the FSL Framework continues. It is a policy document which includes information for parents.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/fs118-2013curr.pdf>

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/amenagement/frameworkFLS.pdf>

8. 2014-2015 FSLAC Executive

Kristina Laperle was re-elected at the June 17th meeting as parent co-chair with Debbie-Lynn Hoste and Betheney Maheu elected as parent vice co-chairs.

9. Upcoming meetings:

September 23, 2014

November 4, 2014

Kristina Laperle, FSLAC Parent Co-chair

Report submitted by: Vandana Bharti, Interim Committee Assistant, Parent and Community Engagement office