

# French as a Second Language Community Advisory Committee

# Meeting Date: March 19, 2024

A meeting of the French as a Second Language Community Advisory Committee convened from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm in Committee Room A and via virtual Zoom meeting, with Parent Co-Chair Lynne LeBlanc presiding.

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| **Item** | **Invitee Name** |
| **Attended**: | Lynne LeBlanc (Parent Co-Chair W8), Charles Zhu (Parent Vice Co-Chair W11), Sharlene Henry (Parent Vice Co-Chair, W5/W6 Alt), Lisa McAvoy (Parent Vice Co-Chair W2), Divya Chandra (W11 Alt), Randy Samuel (W14), Moosa Anwar (W19), Zuojun Han (W20). Also present: Mary Cruden (Canadian Parents for French), Trustee Dan MacLean (Trustee Co-Chair W2), Trustee Dennis Hastings (W1), Roni Felsen (Staff Co-Lead), Angela Caccamo (Centrally Assigned Principal), Kirsten Johnston (Program Co-ordinator) |
| **Guests:** |  |
| **Regrets**: | Audley Salmon (Staff Co-Lead), Michelle Munroe (Central Co-ordinator PCE), Mavis Ayippey (W4), Mandy Moore (W7), Elizabeth Carvalho (W7 Alt), Cheryl Batty (W8 Alt), Maeve Gray (W10), Madelaine Hamilton (W16), Gail Miller (W22), Sharon Beason (Canadian Parents for French Alt), Rosemary Sutherland (CPF Alt) |
| **Recorder:** | James Jarrett |

| Item | Discussion | Motion / Action |
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| 1. Call to Order | * Land acknowledgment – Lynne LeBlanc   Meeting recorded for minute taking purposes.   * Due to another TDSB hybrid meeting being held at TDSB offices at the same time, usual tech was unavailable. Members in person gathered around laptops in the room. |  |
| 2. Quorum / Membership Changes | * Quorum met (6 of 11 Wards represented) * Ward 20 Zuojun Han newly elected January 23, 2024. Children are both in English schools in Grade 1 and Grade 5. Volunteered for the YMCA after school. Wanted to be a bridge to parents in her community. * Mavis Ayippey’s membership is being suspended. Has not attended since June 2023. |  |
| 3. Approval of Agenda | * Charles Zhu moves, Sharlene Henry seconds. Carried. |  |
| 4. Approval of January 9, 2024 minutes | * Charles Zhu moves, Divya Chandra seconds. Carried. | James Jarrett to post minutes on FSLCAC Webpage |
| 5. Declarations - Possible Conflict of Interest | * Randy Samuel works as an emergency replacement person with the TDSB. |  |
| 6. Ward & CPF Reports | * Ward 8: Hosted a French Café for EFI middle school students to practice speaking their French, and a French club for Core French elementary students. * CPF: Online workshop for parents on early reading and Dyslexia on March 27th at 7:00 pm. * April 24 is National French Immersion Day. It’s a new initiative. | Mary will share link for workshop |
| 7. Chair and Trustee Reports | * Trustee Co-Chair: Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee (FBEC) is meeting. Staff have identified options to balance the budget. There is also a discussion of an impact on some day programs. We’re interested in what the public has to say. Get on the delegation list if you are interested on being heard. * March Events: Ramandan with celebrations at many schools, Greek heritage month, March 22 Earth Hour. * This Wednesday we will be holding our GPC meeting, included is a motion to discuss the impact of gambling and the targeting of youth in advertising. We’ve advocated with other levels of government about this. * TDSB Excellence awards are open until April 5th. * Pride Month T-Shirt contest open until April 10th. * Q: With regards to delegations for the budget, can written submissions be made publicly accessible online? * Trustee Co-Chair: Will look into it. | Trustee MacLean to investigate online availability of written delegations to Trustee committees |
| 8. French Review | Q: Families are interested in how they may access information about Core French.  Staff: New Core French resources are available at the TDSB Virtual Library. The icon is for Pearson, as they are the supplier. Classroom teachers can direct students where to find it.  Staff: French Enrichment funds   * The French Dept manages funds from the Ministry to support enrichment experiences in French, such as: field trips, performances, presentations, workshops, and school events. Experiences are open to Core, Extended and French Immersion students. We have spent ¾ of our funding for this year. We can partially subsidize these events. * Principals and VPs have this information at the school level. Community members can contribute ideas to Principals and VPs, educators. * School staff are responsible for ensuring that the field trip or virtual experience is curriculum related and in compliance with the TDSB policies and procedures on field trips/excursions or external speakers/visitors into classrooms, including virtual classroom spaces. * Trustee Hastings: How much is subsidized? * Staff: We look at the schools LOI and may end up subsidizing the whole experience. We can subsidize up to $2000. * Schools can resubmit a proposal if it hasn’t happened yet this year. * Q: Could that be something like a trip to the ROM? * Staff: If it’s in French and curriculum related, a teacher can submit a proposal through their principal.   Staff: DELF https://destinationdelf.ca/   * Each year, Grade 12 students from English-language school boards across Ontario participate in an internationally-recognized French proficiency exam called the ***Diplôme d’études en langue française* (DELF)**. This exam is based on the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) proficiency levels, which starts at the basic level A1, continuing to A2, B1, and B2; The DELF exam is an assessment of proficiency (written and oral) from an external lens. It is outside the required component of the regular French as a Second Language program. Upon successful completion of the exam, students will receive a DELF certificate indicating their level, provided by the France Education International (FEI). * DELF exams this year are from May 13-15, dates are selected by the Ministry of Education in France. Exam is done at the same time for all students. * DELF examiners have to be trained. We have two formatrices (trainers) and adding another soon and we have trained 12 more correcteurs (examiners). We need to have 2 examiners per student being assessed. * We offer the DELF to approx.150-175 students who are taking French in grade 12. * We have students that go for the A1, A2, B1 or B2 levels. A level B2 is a very fluent speaker of French. The designation the student receives is something that can be put on a resume. Highest level is C but that is professional level for adults. Globally only a few thousand attempt the C level. * You can only challenge at 1 level, so we make sure that students are testing for a level that is appropriate for their level of fluency. * There is some funding from the Ministry, which is quite minimal and is used to cover the cost of replacing the teachers who are correcteurs (examiners). * Q: What percentage of students take the test and how are they selected? * Staff: We receive about 200 expressions of interest from students, and they go through a randomized selection process. We double check the random selection to make sure that it is spread out across the TDSB.Approx.150 to 175 do the test. Most students are successful at the level they challenge. We have about 2000 grade 12 students in French. * Trustee Hastings: I have two FI schools in my ward. Is it possible that I can go through my budget to increase the numbers of students taking this test? * Staff: In Ward 1, there is no FI secondary school. Students from Ward 1 in FI are at Richview in Ward 2. Any of your students that are in your secondary schools in Grade 12 Core French could apply for the test. There is no cost to students. The cost is about covering the subscriptions to the exam and covering the Occasional Teacher costs to backfill for the correcteurs. * Q: Are you making sure that it’s a mix of different levels of fluency? * Staff: Yes. Most of our students are trying for an A1 or A2 level if they are in Core French. Our immersion students typically go for the B1 and sometimes the B2 level. You can challenge at any level that you wish to. * Q: When does the information go out about DELF and who does it go to? * Staff: It goes to all of our secondary school contacts, French Curriculum Leader (or assistant) in January. They share the information with Core, Extended and Immersion teachers. The teachers share the information with the students and explain what the descriptors/expectations are for each level. * Q: Can a student go through Alliance Française independently. * Staff: We don’t know, we can look into it. * Q: Is there a practice exam? * Staff: There are supports for students who go for a DELF designation. * Q: The DELF has been around for about 10 years. Trustees have never asked for a report on this. This committee has recommended that Trustees ask for this. * Trustee Hastings: Has our number of Core French students increased? * Staff: We have seen growth in our program over the last 3 years.   Staff: *Concours d’Art Oratoire*  French public speaking contest for all students in French programs. It is put on by the Ontario Modern Language Teachers’ Association and the CPF, Canadian Parents for French.   * There is an event in May which is for the provincial contest, and then a nationwide contest in June. * We hold 2 events for our students. March 21st will be for our West area students, and our East students will have a chance next week. 43 students this week and 55 next week. * There are 2 categories: Traditional, which means the student prepares a speech, 3-5 minutes long, and are then questioned about it. The second category is an impromptu speech where a student is given a topic, and then speaks about that topic. * We select the students that are going on to the provincial level, which is held at Glendon College. * Prizes include scholarships for university.   Occasional Teachers   * Q: Regarding OTs in classrooms, there have been concerns about finding French fluent OTs for French classes. We’ve also noted there are a high number of emergency replacement staff being used. How does a principal fill a gap in a Grade 8 Extended French class?   Staff: Filling vacancies now has never been harder. We have unfilled jobs across the system every day.   * Our qualified OTs have to do a minimum of 20 days a year to stay on the list, and some do just that much. There is a shortage with all replacement staff right now. We’ve asked for a lifting of the cap from 50 to 95 days for retired OTs, but we’re not getting that extension this year. * During the pandemic, we engaged French speaking non-teachers, and got some people on a Temporary Letter of Approval, which allows them to teach for up to one year. * We’re seeing it not only in French but in the technical vocations as well. It used to be just French, now it’s across the school board.. * Q: What happens for a teacher that is off once or twice a week? * Staff: Our call out system SmartFind Express calls our OT list. If a job isn’t filled, an emergency replacement person can be brought in. * Q: For example, I’m an ERP, and I can’t be pre-booked for a job. * Q: There was a news article that says the average number of yearly absences is now 16 days per year as an average across Ontario, and an average of 20 days for TDSB * Staff: It is a challenge. | **Standing Item**  Staff to look into possibility of students taking DELF through Alliance Française. |
| 9. Motion concerning LOI | * There is a report at Board on the LOI policy this week. It’s not going back to Board until October or November. * Quorum lost. Item deferred to next meeting. |  |
| 10. Adjournment | * Quorum Lost. Meeting adjourned. |  |
| Next Meetings | April 16 @ 7:00 PM-9:00 PM. Virtual Meeting.  Upcoming meetings: April 16, May 14, June 11 |  |