

# French as a Second Language Community Advisory Committee

# Meeting Date: September 10, 2024

A meeting of the French as a Second Language Community Advisory Committee convened from 6:30 pm to 8:30 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), Lisa McAvoy (W2), Devon Pool (W3), Andrew Waters (W3 Alt), Elizabeth Carvalho (W7), Maeve Gray (W10), Divya Chandra (W 11 Alt). Also present: Mary Cruden (Canadian Parents for French), Sharon Beason (CPF Alt), Trustee Dan MacLean (Trustee Co-Chair W2), Audley Salmon (Staff Co-Lead), Roni Felsen (Staff Co-Lead), Angela Caccamo (Centrally Assigned Principal), Trustee Dennis Hastings (W1), Trustee Deborah Williams (W10) |
| **Guests:** | Randy Samuel, Renatha Singh, Cheryl Toney. |
| **Regrets**: | Michelle Munroe (Central Co-ordinator PCE), Sharlene Henry (Parent Vice Co-Chair, W5/6 Alt),Cheryl Batty (W8 Alt) Madelaine Hamilton (W16), Moosa Alloo (Parent Vice Co-Chair, W19), Zuojun Han (W20), Gail Miller (W22), 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. * Introductions. |  |
| 2. Quorum / Membership Changes | * Quorum met 6 out of 11 Wards present. |  |
| 3. Approval of Agenda | * Q: Can we have enrolment data for the last 8-10 years? * A: The data is in the enrolment reports. * Parent Chair: We should look at the data from the last 10 years. * The French Review standing item is being sunset. * Devon Pool moves, Maeve Gray Seconds. Carried. |  |
| 4. Approval of June 18, 2024, minutes | * June minutes moved by Devon Pool, Maeve Gray seconds. Carried. | James Jarrett to post minutes on FSLCAC Page |
| 5. Declarations - Possible Conflict of Interest | * None |  |
| 6. Ward/CPF Reports | CPF:   * Membership in the Canadian Parents for French is now free. * It’s a new decision and it’s permanent. The National Board decided in the Spring. * Part of it is a recognition of how challenging things are for families. * We’re looking at other ways to provide funds for local CPF projects rather than directing funds from membership to local projects. * September 29 is the AGM for CPF. * Joining is easy at this link: <https://cpf.ca/en/join-cpf/> * Ward 10: * we rented a party room, brought in a former French teacher to help parents get comfortable with French, showed us how much French is in English. |  |
| 7. Trustee Co-Chair Report  Parent Co-Chair Report | * Trustee Co-Chair: As you may know, the Director is retiring. We have a Director’s search committee. * This won’t happen quickly, and there will be a transition. * We have to make sure that the new Director is in sync with the MYSP. * Trustee Chernos Lin has stepped away from her role as Chair for 90 days. * Trustee Shan is the acting Chair of the Board until November 4. * We will reorganize and elect a new Chair and Vice-Chair November 15. * The National Food Program that the federal government announced has its first provincial partner with Newfoundland signing on. * The federal government is looking for other provincial partners. * Learn 4 Life registration is open. * These are programs that are run through TDSB sites for the community, with many different areas of interest. * It’s a big year for this program. It operates in a deficit, and we need it to become revenue neutral. * People are doing what they can to make the community aware. The program can’t continue to be subsidized by general funds. * We have run deficits for 6 years. * The TDSB backpack program has allocated parcels to students. This is a great program for students. * PIAC has its virtual conference Saturday, November 16th. Click on this link to register: <https://tdsb.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cASicUvGd2Hlyse>. * Tomorrow night is GPC. * September 18th is FBEC. * September 25th is PPC. * The next regular Board meeting is October 9th. * Parent Chair: The Executive met in person to plan for this year and work on the agenda for this meeting. |  |
| 8. Membership Reflection for 2023/2024 | * In June, parent/community members were sent the annual survey to reflect on our work in 2023-24 and to offer suggestions for 2024-25.   Highlights:   * We are meeting earlier (6:30 PM vs. 7:00) PM given the feedback. * Positive response to topics during the year, particularly the guest speakers and discussion about the LOI. * Suggested topics for this year: transportation; how things have changed in the face of COVID; have discussion and staff guest speaker on how French programs fit in the MYSP, further ideas for guest speakers welcome. * We would like to have someone from TDSB staff come to discuss how FI is part of the MYSP, and how French integrates into the TDSB. * We would like to hear what’s coming up, so we can have a discussion as an advisory committee and provide timely, forward-thinking advice to the Board. * Want to have more regular contact with Trustees and share info with parents via Trustee newsletters. * Creation of working committees suggested.   In Person, Hybrid Meetings   * We recognize the challenges for those who are attending in person tonight. * In the winter, we may pivot to virtual only meetings, as we did last year. |  |
| 9. Staff Report | Enrolment Information   * Staff: Regarding the question about entering into French Language Programs, there is no criteria or test for entry. All students that apply on-time are guaranteed a spot in a program, though not guaranteed entry into a specific school. * 95% of applicants typically receive an offer of placement in their home French Immersion school by address. * If the applicant is late, or a student is coming to us from another board, admission is subject to available space, as well as the student’s academic background in French, though not their grades. The local school principal for FI determines space in a given grade, French equivalency is subject to available space and defined as exposure to French in an intensive way across the various subject areas. * Q: Some students from specific high rises have been redirected from John Fisher to Whitney and then on to Winchester for FI. Will they be brought back since John Fisher is under capacity? * Staff: The redirections are still based on available space in the school. Parents apply only once in FI, and then could move to another FI site through the Out of Area Attendance procedure.   New Tool for Finding FI School and Pathway   * We have been working collaboratively with several TDSB departments on a new tool that we are excited to share that will support finding your designated French schools by address on the public website. * French immersion school and the pathway are now searchable by the student’s home address, with street name automatically filled in. This tool has been a long time in the making, and we are very thrilled with the outcome. * Q: On the address finder, in the background, is it still that the home address is attached to an English catchment and the English catchment is attached to the French immersion school? * Staff: Yes * Q: Is there going to be a small video for parents, to help them navigate the website? * Staff: It lives on the main page. We have improved the address finder with ITs help, so that it auto-populates the street address.   September Updates   * We don’t have system information yet on the enrolment Report because this is the first week of school. * We are pleased to report the opening of Bannockburn PS as a French Immersion centre, currently JK-3, and will roll-up a grade each year as per the PART decision. * To recap the PART decision, given utilization and capacity pressures at Eglinton Jr PS, John Fisher PS became a dual-track French and English school, with Bannockburn PS opening as a new French Immersion Centre. * Our last cohort of Junior Extended French students is now in Grade 8; final phase-out of the program. * Q: Can Bannockburn be renamed to something that is reflective of its French programming? Also, the previous tenant in the school, a private Montessori has kept the name Bannockburn which may be confusing for families. * Staff: School Council can have a discussion on that. There will be a school renaming procedure that comes before our governance committee in October. * The public website French pages have been streamlined to support family-friendly engagement. * Information on the application process to Early French Immersion all on one page. * Information on the application process to Middle French Immersion all on one page.   Single Enrolment Period for Kindergarten   * In January 2025, we will be launching he new application portal through PowerSchool for middle FI for entry in September 2025. In fall of 2025, we will launch PowerSchool Registration for Early FI for entry September 2026. * As already mentioned a few times, the team is working towards aligning Kindergarten registration and French Immersion applications. We are working on the integration of the registration within the application process for Early French. |  |
| 10. Staff Report Google Site Review  CAC Review  Staff changes | * Staff: The Google site has a plethora of resources for educators and staff to navigate, including resources to support STEM in French classrooms. * One highlight for this month is the funding received from OPSBA for eSTIM which we used to purchase 152 robotics kits. * In collaboration with the Science department, we will be offering professional learning for the grades 6-8 Middle French Immersion school students, with specific focus on French language and science using the robotics kits. * Q: Is there reading recovery for students in FI? * Staff: The classroom teachers are equipped with similar strategies as English stream students to support foundational reading in French Immersion. * Staff: As we discussed at our previous meeting, FSLCAC is under review as part of the new CAC operational procedure. * In early summer we shared the assessment template with the parent co-chair, and we will share the completed template/report when available. * The reports will be given to Trustees at the October 23 PSSC meeting, and they will decide which CACs are renewed. The process will be completed at the November 13 Organizational Board meeting. * Staff: Angela Caccamo used to report directly to the Associate Director. She will now report to Roni Felsen in his System Superintendent role. * We’re looking at a different format, with Associate Directors not participating in the meetings. * Kirsten Johnson, formerly French Program Coordinator and regular attendee at the FSLCAC, has been promoted to a VP position in a school. Everyone wishes her great success in her new role. * Staff: Participation in PIAC is good, because you get feedback from parents across the TDSB. |  |
| 11. Staff Report  Enrolment Dates | * Staff: The application timelines for Early FI are from November 4 to November 29, 2024, for starting the JK entry program in September 2025. * Middle FI application process will be completed through PowerSchool Enrolment between January 6 to January 30, 2025, for starting the grade 4 entry program in October 2025. * Q: When will the enrolment report be available? * Staff: At the October meeting. |  |
| 12. Adjournment | * Motion to Adjourn. Moved by Maeve Gray, Seconded by Devon Pool. Carried. |  |
| Next Meeting | October 15 @ 6:30 PM, Hybrid Meeting @ 5050 Yonge St., Committee Room A. |  |

**Appendix:** FSLCAC Member Reflection Survey Report – September 10, 2024

The report reflects members responses to twenty survey questions, asked in June of each year. Number of respondents by year (over 7 year span):

2017 – 2018: 8

2018 – 2019: 13

2019 – 2020: 7

2020 – 2021: 9

2021 – 2022: 8

2022 - 2023: 10

2023-2024: 12

We asked respondents to rate their agreement with each statement, with 1 being “strongly agree” and 5 being “strongly disagree.” When you read the chart, remember, lower reflects more agreement with the statement.

Strongly disagree

The survey also gave respondents the opportunity to leave some open-ended feedback to these questions:

**Additional likes, dislikes and suggestions on how to improve the FSLCAC:**

One area that membership identified as productive from this past year was in focusing action items (to distinguish from comments and motions); carrying forward items acknowledging more work to be done; discussion of the development of working groups that can report back to the committee and remaining adaptive to developments throughout the year.

Membership recognizes ongoing challenges for those on committee, and request that in the event that quorum is not reached, an informal meeting with notes taken by admin staff is a reasonable accommodation for a volunteer committee particularly as we move through post-COVID challenges and particularly with the TDSB’s commitment to parent engagement.

A recurring theme that has been noted in past and current membership feedback includes encouraging more staff participation and engagement – they speak and mute – not a lot of room for dialogue. Although presentations provide background information that enable members to build informed opinions, it would seem more productive as an advisory committee to be able to use that information to provide perspective on an ongoing basis.

Feedback also indicated that the committee meetings should be future oriented which is more engaging and productive for membership. This could take the form of staff asking for feedback on a challenge or a solution they are working on or considering for the future. It could be a presentation on a topic chosen by the group followed by discussion and development of advice to the Board. Staff oral reports on what they have already implemented should be provided as short, informal, written notes in advance of the meeting (MYSP/FSL Framework goal, actions taken, outcome) and then, the time allocated for these retrospective items at the meeting can be used for questions and comments and/or for the question 'any ideas for improving the outcome next time?'

A focus on presentations that provide background information enabling membership to build informed opinions and use that to provide perspective.

One specific area noted for a speaker in the 2024-2025 year would be identifying someone within the TDSB who can speak to their multi year strategic plan with focus on French programs (core, immersion).

**Suggested goals for this year:**

Maintain optimal communication between FSLCAC and TDSB; ensure all parents concerns addressed in meaningful, thoughtful manner; help children who are marginalized reach their goals in French programs.

Interest in creating working committees on membership recruitment/development, French Review, committee focused on Core French program, committee focused on the CAC review, reviewing longer term affect of COVID on enrollment and participation in French programs, building direct connections with French learners and their parents (i.e. our newsletter, and other ideas).

Specific goals for rep members to de developed, including outreach and parent/caregiver engagement (e.g. number of Ward SAC meeting to attend, etc.); improve communication for JK student entry.

Increased engagement with Trustees to get some insight on what they want to hear from the FSLCAC, as well as put a focus on renewing membership with an eye on member elections during 2025, along with identifying alternate reps as need.

**For 2024-2025, what is your preference for meetings, along with timing?**

* Hybrid meetings, with a return to in-person meetings, has been well received
* Feeling that Zoom meetings offer accessibility / Easier to access without worrying about commuting
* It can still be a challenge to have meaningful conversations with staff and Trustees, membership – even in the hybrid format
* Alternate evening times were polled, with 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM outweighed the other earlier options