

# French as a Second Language Community Advisory Committee

# Meeting Date: September 19, 2023

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 Alt), Divya Chandra (W11 Alt), Randy Samuel (W14), Madelaine Hamilton (W16), Also present: Mary Cruden (Canadian Parents for French), Sharon Beason (Canadian Parents for French Alt), Audley Salmon (Staff Co-Lead), Roni Felsen (Staff Co-Lead), Angela Caccamo (Centrally Assigned Principal), Kirsten Johnston (Program Co-ordinator), Mun Shu Wong (Digital Support) |
| **Guests:** | Maeve Gray, Kaela Tenn, Trustee Dan MacLean |
| **Regrets**: | Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin (Trustee Co-Chair W11), Michelle Munroe (Central Co-ordinator PCE), Frances Shawera (W2), Mavis Ayippey (W4), Mandy Moore (W7), Elizabeth Carvalho (W7 Alt), Cheryl Batty (W8 Alt), Bahira Abdulsalam (W14 Alt), 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. |  |
| 2. Quorum / Membership Changes | * Quorum met (5 of 9 Wards represented) * Resignations: Crystal Stewart Ward 5. Deloris Williamson-Braham Ward 13. * Introductions. |  |
| 3. Approval of Agenda | * Randy Samuel moves, Lisa McAvoy seconds. Carried. |  |
| 4. Approval of June 2023 Minutes | * Corrections to June minutes:   + Bahira was not present , Sharon Beason was present , French Immersion as per TDSB policy.   + Page 4, shared by CPF, not staff “first 5 years of a teaching career”.   + Streamlining the process for foreign trained teachers.   + Mary Cruden will share complete changes with James Jarrett. * Lisa McAvoy moves as amended, Randy Samuel seconds. Carried. | James Jarrett to post minutes on FSLCAC Webpage |
| 5. Declarations - Possible Conflict of Interest | * Randy Samuel works as an emergency supply replacement person with the TDSB. |  |
| 6. Ward & CPF Reports | * Ward 11 – Concerns about transportation from families. Parents feel that French students are treated differently, since the pandemic.   Member comments/questions:   * Transportation didn’t start on the first day of school, so French students are not in the schools during the first week. * A challenge for the students’ attendance record as well. * Can the time lag be reduced to say 3 days? * Parent shared that they had considered driving a bus. Bus companies pay a flat rate for a route, not for the hours worked. The current contract is not fair, nor should it be legal. Can the 2 boards put pressure on the companies to treat the drivers better? * It’s a big conversation. * How is attendance coded for students without transportation? * How many kids are affected by the delayed transportation roll-out? * The issue with transportation is that it affects the students, not just the parents. The first week is the most important because it’s about students getting into routines. * There should be more transportation funding. * Elementary students could be going to a school in a different neighbourhood and could be the only one traveling 3 or 4 kilometers away and the only one absent the entire first week of school. * How are students not in attendance due to no bussing reported?   Staff –   * We have had a significant driver issue in transportation for 3 years. We focus on Spec. Ed. students first, to make sure we have drivers in place. Our regular routes follow. We may be able to change going forward, but we’re not there yet. We would like to move in that direction. We have faced shortages in all employee groups. Things did not return to normal after COVID as expected. * Each year is different. This year is better for certain. We’re trying to project for next year. We had students waiting for pick-up up to 90 minutes late at their schools into October in previous years. * Parents can work with your local school principal, so that they are aware that the student is away because of transportation. * We do have new absence codes for bussing in PowerSchool, our new student information system. * In good news, the empty seat policy has been reinstituted this year.   Trustee MacLean - The bus drivers are not employed by the TDSB, it’s the consortium of TDSB and TCDSB. All drivers do 2 routes, an early and late run, to maximize driver service and bus usage. Every bussed student (English and FI) who is not in special education is affected. It’s a challenge, but it is not something that is preventing students from getting to school from parents in my ward.   * Ward 2 – This is the second year of FI at Bloordale MS, who graduated from Millwood PS and Broadacres JS. Monday was curriculum night. Students are forming relationships. This decision to open Bloordale MS is having positive implications for students.   A friend who is francophone, and redoing her practicum, so that she can become a supply teacher was removed from the supply teaching list because she didn’t meet a threshold in hours. Loss of person who wants to teach French.  Member comment – teacher may not may not have responded to the conditions stipulated by Employee Services.  Staff - Supply teachers have a minimum required hours of work completed to remain on the list. The agreement is with the Occasional Teacher’s Union about the number of total members on the roster. We cannot increase the number of Occasional Teachers. Therefore, we have to eliminate people from the list in order to make room for new hires who will work the minimum hours.   * CPF report – Virtual after school programs are up and running, and we may still have spots available. These programs are delivered by student teachers and funded by the Ministry of Education. * Parent Co-chair Report – Looking forward to working with the committee. Hopefully in October, we will be talking about events we will be participating in the TDSB. |  |
| 7. Chair, Trustee Reports | * Trustee (Co-Chair) Chernos Lin, not present. * Trustee MacLean - The bussing situation has been encouraging this year.   + In the FBEC committee, there is a big change being contemplated in our budget. We’re looking at doing the budget earlier in the school-year, before we get the GSNs. We will be budgeting based on what we believe we need to function. Stopping the process of dealing with putting out fires and the deficit. We would like our budget process to be about what we require for education.   + Reorganization is happening later this month, as it is normally done. Our Planning department is doing a phenomenal job.   + Parents/families were notified today about a potential demonstration downtown, and one of our secondary schools. We support people based on who they are. We have people in place to support students that are participating in the protest.The Pride flag will be up at schools. We are paying attention to it because a TDSB secondary school is the site of a planned protest.   Member comments/questions:  Agree that no child should be bullied or marginalized. Where is this protest coming from? Is it a parent protest or students? Do we mean safe physically?  Staff - It’s a nation-wide protest. It’s about the teaching about gender in schools. Organizers are encouraging students to leave school to protest. The protest is taking place at a secondary school, near a TCDSB site and a TDSB elementary school. We wanted to make sure that parents were aware that we are planning for this. We are working with Toronto Police Services, the City and internal departments to ensure student safety, and well-being. Yes, we mean safe physically, but we are also mindful of impacted mental health and well-being   * Member comments/questions: Under previous directors, there was an organization chart for the Senior Team on the public website. Is there one posted? I found the associate director mandate letters.   Staff - We are working on mandate letters for senior superintendents and superintendents. I will look into the org. chart. | Audley Salmon to look into org chart |
| 8. Member Reflections | * Parent Co-chair – all parent/community members were sent a survey and a reminder in June with opportunity to give feedback on the committee in 2022-23, issues and ideas for 2023/24 * Support for the committee was identified as a challenge, specifically with reporting required. Going forward, support is in place that we need this year. * Work continues on reaching out to Trustees for FSL parent engagement. * Members preferred to maintain meeting start time at 7 pm. * Multi-year strategic plan with FSL/parent engagement focus will be topic at upcoming meeting. |  |
| 9. French Review | * Staff - Early FI entry has been positive. Staff has visited 2 of the 3 new sites Gracedale PS, Kingsview Village JS & White Haven PS. Enrolment is stable at those 3 schools. * We have visited the other 4 Early FI sites that opened last year: Fraser Mustard, Brookhaven, Mason Road, George B Little * Enrolment is stable at all our 77 Early FI sites. * Our 2023-24 goal is to visit as many of the sites as possible. * Our focus this year is early reading, as well as later literacy across our junior and intermediate grades, as well as Core French. * Core French - as mentioned in May/June, we received some funds from the Ministry, in partnership with the Federal and French governments as partners, and have made the purchase of digital Core French resources to support culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy, differentiated instruction, and exposure to the target language. A 5-year license for the following digital resources will support grades 4-12 across the system:   + Echos Pro (Gr 4-6)   + Mon réseau, ma vie (Gr 7-8)   + Points de connexions (Gr 9)   + Jusqu’au bout (Gr 9-12)   Digital portal access was available at the end of August. Teachers have their hands on these new digital resources and are asking for support. Hence, we have already organized two technical sessions with the vendor as a demonstration on how to navigate the resources for teachers, 85-90 teachers participated yesterday  As part of a central rollout, we will offer a series of professional learning sessions in which teachers of Grades 4-12 Core French will explore the Pearson resources and the ways in which they connect to the different approaches related to programming through the lens of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), differentiation and inclusion and the integration of authentic resources based on student voice, choice and lived experiences.  Digital Core French resources can be helpful in situations where there is potentially a non-French speaking OT; can provide students with exposure to the target language - there is some continuity to the program, so that OTs have a framework to work from.   * Member comments/questions:- in the Long-Term Planning and Accommodation Strategy (LTPAS), there is mention of an information session provided to Trustees in May of 2022. Is there a copy of the presentation available? The first several Trustee updates were reports to GPC/Board that were publicly accessible. Will future updates be made publicly available?   Staff - next steps to increasing equity of access across the system was shared with Trustees through a work plan.   * + As shared in previous FSLCAC meetings, in September 2022, we opened 4 new early FI sites: Brookhaven, Fraser Mustard ELA, Mason Road, George B Little   + We were looking at equity of access across the system, and to reduce service gaps; considered LOI and transportation, and worked closely with the Planning department.   + In addition, 2 middle school pathways were introduced: Bloordale MS and Robert Service SPS, reducing commutes for students.   + As mentioned earlier this evening, 3 new Early FI sites opened this school year at Gracedale, Kingsview Village, and White Haven.There will be an additional Early FI site opening in 2024 at Bannockburn JPS. It will be a FI centre. It was postponed by one year due to facilities repairs. We will open our application period with 78 sites in 2024-2025. Given this information, and the expansion of 8 new EFI sites in the last 2-3 years, will monitor the 8 new Early FI sites for program viability, and no new programs will open. Efficient use of resources means making sure there is a healthy cohort of students, sufficient enrolment in JK, considering attrition rates, but also across all grades, to ensure a viable program entry to grade 9. * As mentioned last year, after a local feasibility study, and community meeting, a secondary FI program will open at Lakeshore CI in 2024 to accommodate existing pressures at Richview CI   + In addition, there are existing accommodation pressures at Riverdale CI and Malvern CI (utilization well over 100%). The Extended French program is phasing out of Riverdale CI. Therefore, the question becomes where do we begin a secondary French Immersion program in the area?   + Also, there is our secondary site L’Amoreaux CI with only Extended French and it is also phasing out. * In the LTPAS, Dewson was mentioned for exploration as an FI centre. Found to be not feasible.   + As we continue to look at equity of access, staff are investigating the relation of home address to EFI programs, targeting a distance of 3.2 km. Under the current system, all addresses within an English boundary are associated with the same FI school regardless of distance from an individual address to the FI site. The study is not complete and staff will require some time to undertake the analysis. Implications of such a move are yet to be fully determined, including identifying areas without this level of service, which may, in future, reduce transportation costs.   + Changes, if adopted, may also require changes in Operational Procedure PR 597, but unknown what that may be at this time.   Member comments/questions:   * Looking at 3.2 km distance is exciting * Is there an updated boundary map for EFI with the new sites to share on the Member google drive?   Staff - Not yet, in progress. Middle FI map has not changed   * Any news about the new Thorncliffe ES’s Grade 1 FI program?   Staff - Yes, we have a visit planned there soon. The numbers are stable as a first cohort feeding from Fraser Mustard ELA. Early to establish a pattern, but the program will build.   * There is some confusion for parents about high school pathways, when there are seemingly closer FI high school sites than the designated ones.   Staff - Pathways for all programs are available on the public website.   * + However, we are aware that it’s challenging for parents to find their pathways as a search online by address.   + Also looking at changing the search mechanism for FI programs on the TDSB website. Currently, families have to search by home address for their elementary English school and then use the English school to search for their FI school. In the future, plan is that FI sites will also be searchable by home address. This will be easier for families.   + We continue to work with IT to streamline this. * How can we help as a community for the intro to EFI webinar?   Staff - The promos for the Early FI application timelines have been up on the websites since June. We should have the communication plan and the webinar information firmed up in the next couple of weeks, and we will bring them to the next FSLCAC meeting.   * What are the number of incoming students to Lakeshore CI that will be graduating this year from feeder schools?   Staff - Unfortunately, I don't have those specific numbers with me. The two feeders will be John English JMS and Second Street JMS. I do know we have a viable cohort to begin Grade 9.   * Trustee MacLean - with the expansion to Bloordale MS, are we seeing any uptick in applications at Millwood and/or retention in EFI from Millwood to Bloordale MS ?   Staff - numbers at both the Bloordale MS FI program and Hilltop MS FI programs continue to look stable including the feeder Early FI programs to both middle schools. Uptick in applications has not been noted. | **Standing Item**  Staff to provide update on communication plan at next meeting. |
| 10. Core French Digital Portal. | * See above under French Review |  |
| 11. Adjournment | * Motion to adjourn Randy Samuel, Lisa McAvoy seconds. Carried. |  |
| Next Meetings | Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 7:00 PM-9:00 PM, Hybrid Meeting.  November 14, 2023 : 2024: January 9, February 13 , March 19, April 16, May 14, June 11 |  |