



Community Advisory Committees

Name of Committee: French as a Second Language Community Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: 13 October 2020

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

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| Attendance: | <p>Mandy Moore (Parent Co-Chair W7), Matt Forrest (Parent Vice-Co-Chair W9), Charles Zhu (Parent Vice-Co Chair W11), Lisa McAvoy (W2), Doug Kwan (W2 Alt), Sharlene Henry (W5/W6 Alt), Lynne LeBlanc (W8), Polina Osmerkina (W10), Wilmar Kortleever (W11 Alt), Randy Samuel (W14), Gail Miller (W22 Alt)</p> <p>Also present were: Trustee Robin Pilkey (Trustee Co-Chair W7), Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin (W11), Trustee Dan MacLean (W2), Mary Cruden (Canadian Parents for French), Sharon Beason (Canadian Parents for French Alt), Manon Gardner (Associate Director), Angela Caccamo (Centrally Assigned Principal), Kirsten Johnston (Program Coordinator)</p> |
| Guests: | Alexander Brown (Board Chair, W12), Trustee Trixie Doyle (W14), Claudette Fava, Shalone Hendrix |
| Regrets: | Deloris Williamson-Braham (W5/13), Caroline Tolten-Paterson (W7 Alt), Jennifer Tse (W8 Alt), Sarah Smith (W15), Kathleen Meek (W15 Alt), Nancy White (W16 Alt), Christie Dunbar (W16 Alt), Rosemary Sutherland (CPF Alt) |
| Recorder: | Linda Stockdale |

| ITEM | DISCUSSION | RECOMMENDATION / MOTION / ACTION |
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| Call to Order / Quorum | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land acknowledgment – Mandy Moore Zoom Format – Matt presented format, checked attendees in. Meeting recorded for minute taking purposes only and to be disposed afterward. Quorum achieved 7:12 pm | |
| Membership Changes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rob Janes (W1/W2) resigned. Lisa McAvoy becomes W2. Doug becomes W2 Alt. Zeynab Kazi (Parent Vice-Co Chair, W22) moved, resigned Nalini Singh (W2 Alt) resigned Laura Steele Gunter (W7 Alt) resigned | |
| Approval of Agenda | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moved to approve by Mandy, seconded by Matt. Carried. | |
| Approval of Mar 10, 2020 Minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motion to table to November meeting because updates from the parent members are pending. March updates to be sent to Linda by Matt/Mandy. Moved by Matt, seconded by Charles. Carried. | |
| Declarations of Possible Conflict of Interests | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wilmar Kortleever is a W11 parent and FSLAC alternate and is also employed by the TDSB as a Shared Services Liaison, a casual position in which he supports the Board and Trustees, e.g., by helping organize and taking minutes at public meetings. | |
| Update: Parent Co-chair | <p><u>Approval of FSLAC Annual Report</u> Presented by Mandy (see attached). It describes the work of the committee over the past year. One typed correction noted. No further questions or comments received. Linda to format, final approval by parent co-chair, then submission to PSSC. Motion to approve by Matt, seconded by Charles. Carried.</p> | Linda to submit to PSSC after final review by Parent Co-chair. |
| Update: Parent Co-chair | <p><u>Member Reflection Results</u> Presented by Mandy (see attached). Mandy noted a smaller sample size than usual of 7 respondents likely due to COVID. Survey feedback is represented by the bar charts. Also included are comments received including: more parent member team effort determining agenda items; meetings with school councils to share work of the FSLAC; better new member orientation to ensure roles/objectives are understood and share</p> | Linda submit to PSSC after final review by Parent Co-chair. |

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| | <p>context; keeping focus on FSL, rather than COVID, where possible; the importance of learning about/representing all schools in our wards.</p> <p>Motion to move to PSSC by Matt, seconded by Lisa. Carried.</p> | |
| <p>Update: Parent Co-chair</p> | <p><u>Election of New Executive</u></p> <p>Mandy stepped down as Parent Co-chair but will stay on as W7 rep. A call for interest in serving as Parent Co-chair and Parent Vice Co-chairs was sent to parent members via email. Lynne Leblanc is willing to serve as Parent co-chair. Mandy asked for any other self-nominations. None were made. Motion to close nominations, moved by Lisa, seconded Matt. Carried.</p> <p>Lynne Leblanc is the 2020-21 Parent co-chair.</p> <p>Trustee Pilkey thanks Mandy for her exceptional service. Lynne thanks Mandy for her professionalism and grace, and helping to involve more parents, particularly with the French Review. Mandy thanks the membership, Trustees and staff for their hard work and support and for the flowers and gift that were delivered.</p> <p>Matt Forrest and Charles Zhu are willing to continue as Parent Vice Co-chairs. Lisa McAvoy and Sharlene Henry are also willing to serve. Mandy asked for any other self-nominations. None were made.</p> <p>Motion to close nominations, moved by Charles, seconded by Lisa. Carried. 2021 Parent Vice Co-chairs are: Matt Forrest, Charles Zhu, Lisa McAvoy and Sharlene Henry.</p> <p>Motion of support for the 2020/21 Parent Co-chair and Vice Co-chairs, moved by Matt, seconded by Doug. Carried.</p> | |
| <p>Staff Update: Manon</p> | <p><u>FSL in COVID Times (online learning, teacher shortage, bussing)</u></p> <p>After 31 years, Manon is retiring from the Board at the end of November. The FSLAC November meeting will be her last meeting with our committee.</p> <p>FSLAC members collaborated on questions which were submitted to staff prior to the meeting.</p> <p><u>Online/virtual learning:</u></p> | |

It's a challenging time for public education. When schools closed in March, we provided remote learning and learned that improvements were required. Through IT, virtual schools had been thought of before COVID, but had not moved forward. Yet, when virtual schools were confirmed in August, within 3 weeks we launched virtual schools.

Interim Superintendent Ron Felsen is leading the secondary virtual school, with 18,000 students, 164 in FI and 236 in Ext. French. Retired Superintendent Jane Phillips-Long leads elementary virtual schools with 63,000 students while 106,000 students are in physical schools. FSL makes up 6,000 of the virtual elementary registrants.

Virtual is 'virtually complex'. People are wary. In general, teachers find it challenging and some are actually struggling. PD and the pedagogy behind learning online is very important. With our youngest students it is very challenging. Parents completed a survey late August re choosing Virtual School. Staff was also surveyed – 1700 elementary teachers indicated interest in teaching in the Virtual School. 1700 was not enough to meet the demand so we hired 700/800 occasional teachers for homeroom classes, then added resource teachers and itinerant core French. The learning curve is huge and unfortunately, we are dealing with many teachers who find virtual too challenging combined with family/personal situations. Every day we're losing and gaining teachers. Many teachers try virtual for a few days and decide that it is not for them. Every week we have absences - never seeing a full complement. We still need a bank of occasional teachers for permanent and occasional teachers that are absent.

At the beginning of the Virtual School, ratio of Principal or Vice-Principal to Students was very high at 1:5000. TDSB usually has 1:1000 as a maximum. With the last elementary reorganization 41 elementary VPs were redeployed to the virtual school. Our ratio administrator to students is now 1:1000 or so which is much better in terms of supporting and serving students/families.

The Elementary Virtual School is set up in four Learning Centres. For each Learning Centre there are at least 2 Principals. In each LC there is 1 Principal for FSL and core French; 1 VP for staffing/Employee Services and 1 VP for technology services and fielding calls from parents, emails and voicemails. We've brought in OAs, i.e., admin assistance to help with returning the calls and emails.

French Teacher Shortage:

There are not enough French teachers. We have doubled our numbers of classes in both virtual and in-school combined. This past weekend, 42 French teachers moved from in-school to virtual but 48 FI or Ext classes needed one. Approximately 1000 students are without a French teacher in Virtual School. English occasional teachers are taking these classes, to give the students a connection to classmates and a teacher. As a stop gap, they are teaching the English curriculum. There are no more French teachers in the Occasional or Long Term Occasional (supply teacher) Teacher rosters now. The Ministry put out a news release outlining steps to address the shortage of French teachers and is supporting work on improving the process to hire/secure additional teachers. Ministry is restarting the FSL Provincial Working Group. We, as staff, do not yet have the details of this committee.

Staff is looking at options to meet the gap including teaching multiple classes, blending classes, acquiring teachers from Faculties of Education to assist, inter-provincial hires, utilizing teachers that are not fully accredited and an option that has been used in other jurisdictions is live streaming in a bricks and mortar classroom. However the teachers' union has concerns.

Unlikely to be resolved in the short term. Our collective agreement does not mandate that French qualified teachers must teach French. Some choose to teach in the English stream. We have reached out and asked French qualified teachers to join the French stream. Some have agreed.

As a point of information, Toronto Catholic DSB did not initially offer FI/Ext. French virtually. Now, they have been asked to do so. We are all competing for French occasional teachers.

Of note, some of our Learning Centres have close to half of their students in virtual school. All around, over 35% of our student population is in Virtual School therefore staff/support staff should be represented similarly. This is a serious situation. We want stability for all our families, students and staff. We also want a sustainable model that will support all throughout the year.

Q – Are we sure that Principals are ensuring that qualified French teachers are teaching

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| | <p>French if they wish?</p> <p>A - Manon will review this concern, if more specific information can be provided.</p> <p>Q – What are the staffing implications for in bricks and mortar schools and teacher absences?</p> <p>A - We have no occasional teachers because they are with the virtual school or with other school boards.</p> <p>Q - What about the Ministry of Education required hours for French when students aren't learning in French?</p> <p>A – Regarding Students not getting their 600 hours in Core French: this must be discussed with the Ministry of Education. FI hours are not a concern, as we're usually over the number of hours required. Biggest concern is with students who just joined extended in G4 and the late entry GR 7/8, with only 3 years of Core French hours accumulated. Additionally, if students are not in the program because of FI teacher shortage, TDSB should not lose its funding. Staff will continue to apprise the Ministry of its French situation.</p> <p>Trustee McLean: How do we fill the vacancies? Are GR 7/8s assigned teachers before the younger grades? Are we being strategic in the allocation of teachers?</p> <p>Manon: Initially, we tried to put cohorts together with students they knew (GR1-4) Last weekend we worked with LC executive staff to place over 5000 students. We placed students in a class to ensure they had a teacher and we did not necessarily look at classmates.</p> <p>Angela: We do placements based on qualifications. They need to have '1' qualification for GR7/8s. For this reason, we've offered Secondary French teachers GR7/8 assignments.</p> <p>Manon: It's a combination of solutions - making phone calls on weekends to hire teachers; looking at blended classes in the GR5-8; i.e., putting 2 classes together with an English teacher teaching the English portion and a French teacher teaching the French portion.</p> <p>Q: Do administrators have a choice in being assigned to virtual school?</p> <p>Manon: If teachers are surplus because of low numbers in bricks and mortar, some teachers have been quite happy to move. A similar process took place for administrators. Forty-two were redeployed to the Virtual School (VS). Staff from VS had a meeting with all of them, welcoming them and sharing expectations with them. The meeting was very positive. If the pandemic changes drastically, and it is deemed safe to</p> | |
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return fully to bricks and mortar, then all teachers and administrators will also return and support students in their schools. Regardless of the situation with the pandemic, the current Virtual School is for this year only. If needed, a different model meeting the evolving changes of the pandemic, the ministry and the Board will be established.

Comment: Davisville JPS has been chaotic. The VP was moved to virtual school and the Principal went on medical leave the next day. 25% of kids went to virtual because of the bussing issue.

Q: There are 48 FI/Ext. Fr. classes without teachers. Do we need to be concerned that a French teacher will not be found/assigned?

Manon: It is a concern. We will honour all FI/Ext Fr. students next year.

Q: Can the Board offer FSL remedial in summer?

Manon: We need to look at landscape in next few months. Maybe a 12-month calendar is an option? We'll look at options.

Q: Is Smash Education, an online learning program, an option?

Manon: We'll look into it.

Q: Is it feasible to continue Virtual School in French?

Manon: Not if we can't get the teachers.

Q: What is the status of the French Review?

Manon: All public consultations were put on pause 5 months ago by the Trustees' Governance and Policy Committee. Will be reconsidered at their Oct 28th meeting. Virtual consultations may get the green light soon. Regarding re-distribution of programs, no additional work has been done. Moving ahead with Middle French Immersion only at this time.

Q: JK enrolment, redistribution of sites, is this still on the plate?

Manon: What will be the interest of French going forward for parents? JK enrolment could get deferred if need be. Redistribution – the landscape needs to be revisited after this year.

Q: Interim review report in June 2020 included enrolment projections for French. Have not seen this before. Is it possible to get more information on how these projections were calculated?

Manon: It was put together by Planning Department. Staff can talk about it at the next meeting in more detail.

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| <p>Staff Update: Manon</p> | <p><u>Extended 7/Cosburn Motion at Committee of the Whole</u></p> <p>Trustees reopened their June 2019 decision on the phase out of the Extended grade 7 and Cosburn MS grade 6 programs at their Sept 2020 meetings and passed a revision to the previous plan. The last Extended 7 cohort will start in Sept 2022. The last Cosburn grade 6 cohort will start in Sept 2021. The link below provides the updates reflected on the TDSB website. https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Elementary-School/School-Choices/French-Programs/Other-Programs</p> | |
| <p>Trustee Update: Trustee Pilkey</p> | <p><u>Transportation</u></p> <p>Trustee Pilkey is the TDSB trustee representative for the bussing consortium with the TCDSB. Bussing initially started with students with Spec. Ed. needs and then added students meeting distance criteria, such as French Immersion/Extended students. Best year of bussing yet. By the 2nd week, all eligible students got their bussing as expected. Contributing factors are the changed bell times (fewer busses), the staggered start and removal courtesy seat option. There are 100 busses with 10 or less students and 100 busses with 47 or more. No busses have been taken off the road for as long as we have drivers. The routes aren't full because of virtual learning and this helps with social distancing.</p> <p>Q: Will bussing be provided 2021-22, Broadacres to Hilltop? Parent notes that the experience has been a fantastic experience this year. It is a great solution for her son.</p> <p>Manon: We are aware of situation and chances are better than ever, but we can't commit.</p> | |
| <p>Staff Update: Angela and Kirsten</p> | <p><u>Professional Learning</u></p> <p>PL is available to virtual school teachers when they wish to engage in learning. They self-select. It has been offered to FI and Ext teachers and includes literacy, math and other required subjects. Extensive learning for core teachers - 4 sessions, so they can self-select programming. Met with FSL VPs /virtual school and have expanded the Google offerings: lesson plans, resources, thorough Table of contents. We are supporting teachers coming to/out of core, into FI or Ext. French, always with a virtual lens and sharing successful practices. We have set up virtual hours and classrooms by grade/program.</p> | |

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| | <p>“Alpha Jeunes” guided reading doesn’t work in a virtual situation. ‘Je lis’ by Arcade Publishing, is being approved. The license cost is to come out of central budget not school budgets.</p> <p><u>SK FI Registration for 2021-22</u></p> <p>Recognizing JK students are in virtual school and for those in-school, the backpack option for sharing application information for SK FI may not work this year. Staff is sending information via Messenger for all in-school and virtual JK students. Staff is hosting 3 virtual information sessions – dates posted on the public website. Advertising includes a banner on the TDSB public website, and ads in public newspapers, including community papers in the 6 most used home languages. As needed, community papers will have translations of TDSB info. Continued communication in Trustee Weekly, tweeting and social media, through administrators and Facebook.</p> <p>Transportation guidelines will include SK FI students for 2021-22.</p> | |
| Other Business | nil | |
| Adjournment | Moved by Matt, seconded by Lisa. Carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm. | |
| Next Meeting | Tuesday, November 10, 2020, 7:00 pm, Virtual Meeting | |