



**French as a Second Language Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

**Date: Tuesday, February 7, 2012**

**Time: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Trish Murphy (Parent Co-chair, W15); Sindy Preger (Parent Vice Co-chair, W11 alt); Sheila Ward (Trustee Co-chair); Melanie Dickstein (Constituency Assistant); John Tancredi (Central Co-ordinating Principal); Alison Pearce (Program Co-ordinator, FSL); Mary Cruden (Canadian Parents for French); Lisa Xiao (Supercouncil); Heather Jordan (W7); Issy Vlaykov (W8); Kristina Laperle (W17); Cheryl Wilson (W19); David Dai (W21); Patricia Legrand (W21); Debbie-Lynn Hoste (W22)

**GUESTS:** Sharon Kerr (W21); Kenneth Wilson-Harrington (W9); Rebecca Mendoza (W9); Christina Zimmer (W19); Courtney Dart (Supercouncil); Gurswinder Kalsi (W1); Wilmar Kortleever (W13); Mike and Julie Ezry (W10)

**Recorder:** Amanda Tiberio

Item	Information/Discussion	Action/Recommendation
<b>Call to order-Welcome/ Introductions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.</li> <li>Roundtable introductions were made</li> </ul>	
<b>Approval of Quorum</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quorum was achieved and approved</li> </ul>	
<b>Approval of Agenda</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The agenda was approved as written.</li> </ul>	
<b>Approval of November 22, 2011 Minutes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The minutes were approved with two minor changes.</li> <li>Motion: Heather Jordan moved to approve the November 22, 2011 minutes; motion was seconded by Cheryl Wilson. Motion carried.</li> </ul>	Amanda will make changes and post to webpage
<b>Co-Chair Report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Meeting with Commissioner of Official Languages Graham Fraser</b></li> <li><b>TDSB Budget process</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trish reported that the FSLAC co-chairs, John Tancredi, Alison Pearce, and a few TDSB staff met with Graham Fraser, Commissioner of Official Languages, on January 17, 2012 at Parkdale Junior and Senior P.S. They took part in casual conversation about language learning, gave an overview of the TDSB's French program, and spoke about successes and challenges of delivery of French to the students. Alison gave an overview of how a play based learning environment is excellent for developing French oral language skills so that the children are well-prepared for the demands of the Grade 1 French immersion curriculum. Commissioner Fraser was very impressed with the fine work the TDSB is doing in rolling out full day kindergarten with French immersion and how equitable and diverse TDSB immersion is.</li> <li>Trustee Ward shared information and thoughts about the TDSB budget. The Board is facing a deficit of about \$80 million on a \$2.3 billion budget. 80% of the budget is for staff salaries so finding savings is very hard. In the past, they have deferred maintenance but now have a \$4 billion</li> </ul>	

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	<p>maintenance backlog to address. More info forthcoming- the Board will try to make decisions that can be reversed in coming years when the financial situation is better, protect critical programs, and try to treat everybody as fairly as possible. They are looking for feedback from parents and community for ideas about what to do. Talk to your Trustees about what is important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget meeting nights will be held across the city for parents' information. They will be open to all parents. Trustees need to hear from parents about what is important in each community, what ideas the community has and what direction the community wants the Board to take. They will try to give parents as much information at the meetings so they can provide informed feedback. A version of the proposed budget will be released by April, after which the community will be able to respond, but it is best to have conversations with Trustees as soon as possible before the budget is created.</li> </ul> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns arose about the possibility of cuts to transportation to French Immersion/extended. In 2010 the Board tried to cut transportation, but it didn't happen. In French Immersion programs, 41% of students use the school bus. It makes the program equitably accessible to all students. The approximate cost in 2010 was \$2 million.</li> <li>• Questions about allocation of funding were raised and whether FSL was particularly vulnerable. French is not at risk as a subject, but the funding for FSL is not "sweatered" – that is, money allocated to FSL can be, and is being, used to support different programs. The TDSB receives approximately \$30 million under the FSL grant based on enrolment in core, extended and immersion programs. Some education initiatives are sweatered, so that money cannot be redirected to other programs. Pressure can be put on the province to change policies. Parents are urged to talk to M.P.P.s about funding to the Board.</li> <li>• Parents agreed that if transportation is threatened, action must be taken to ensure that French immersion/extended remains accessible to all students, not just those families who can walk or have cars. New solutions to old problems will have to be found.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Ward Reports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Visits to immersion/extended information nights</b></li> <li>• <b>Issues, concerns, questions</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Ward Representatives gave a brief overview of information nights and any issues that arose.</i></p> <p><b><u>W7 – Heather Jordan</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At Humberside CI, parents were not told before information meetings that optional attendance was closed for extended/immersion. TDSB website was updated after the meetings.</li> <li>• Many parents rely on school-based daycares – 3 year waiting lists not uncommon – there is no way to get children switched over to daycare near school. Changing pathways without advance notice to the affected communities puts parents in situations where it is nearly impossible to choose SKFI. Parents are unclear about whether pathway changes are temporary or permanent</li> <li>• It is important to give parents optional attendance and pathway information well in advance of information nights so that they don't come with expectations that can't be met.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>W13 – Wilmar Kortleever</u></b></p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues of open vs. closed optional attendance among parents.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>W10 – Mike and Julie Ezry</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dewson information night went smoothly</li> </ul> <p><b><u>W22 – Debbie-Lynn Hoste</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a parent concerned with a grade 5/6 student struggling, resulting in behavioural issues. They are looking for assistance or support from the board with the student's issues.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>W11 – Cindy Preger</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A good turnout at the Brown information session. Applications are up to more than 50 for 2 classes, but no students are getting in from Cottingham; those parents responded they didn't want to go on a bus to Davisville. The possibility of returning to lottery will not be well received by the community.</li> <li>• Davisville information session had a good turnout. Some parents would like to avoid changing schools for SKFI by accessing JK at Davisville. Enrolment is up at Davisville. Trustee Shelley Laskin commented in her recent newsletter that the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program at Davisville will be moved to Avondale by September 2014. Question raised – does this mean there is an opportunity for further expansion of SKFI at Davisville</li> </ul> <p><b><u>W19 – Cheryl Wilson</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was excitement in the community about the potential of getting more students into French Immersion program. Concerns raised about the daycare situation as kindergarten is still half-day. Timing of acceptance for in-district applicants and coordination with daycare options is a big challenge for parents.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>W19 - Christina Zimmer</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a parent trying to get daughter into SKFI in W19. Found the information meeting professional, but they couldn't give her an answer about timing of acceptance as she is out of the catchment area. She is concerned about confusion between information found online and what she is told in the school.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>W17 - Kristina Laperle</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VP did the information session at Brian PS. There were questions about full day kindergarten. There is daycare in the building and space is a challenge. Efforts being made to readjust the space. Supt Peter Chang will be visiting at the end of March to talk about potential ARC.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>W8 – Issy Vlaykov</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Didn't attend information night, but is aware that parents are eager to sign children up for French Immersion. Space is an issue at Allenbv J.P.S. Parents are concerned about quality and qualifications of French teachers in the schools. There are concerns that improvements must be made quickly, as students are in and out of schools within a few years.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>W21 – Sharon Kerr</u></b></p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns about enrolment at Brooks Rd – see Staff Report below. .</li> </ul> <p><b><u>W15 – Trish Murphy</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 Early Immersion programs. There is a lot of anxiety at R.H. McGregor, as the school has perennial exceptional interest in SKFI program.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Staff Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Immersion/extended application update</b></li> <li><b>Status of new sites for 2012</b></li> <li><b>Optional attendance in immersion/extended programs</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>John Tancredi and Alison Pearce addressed some concerns that arose earlier in the meeting:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All SKFI and grade 4 entry programs will have online applications for Sept 2013.</li> <li>Acceptance time frame is different depending on whether in or out of district. For applications under optional attendance, French or English, there is no guarantee of placement. Acceptances, if any, will be released after the in-district students have been placed.</li> <li>The application deadline for SK French Immersion was January 31. Offer of placement in the program is guaranteed if the application was on time and made to the student’s designated SKFI school. Placements will be offered by March 1, 2012. If spots become available, placements for late applicants and optional attendance applicants will be made from the waitlist until the last day of school in December 2012– the obligation is to have the students who applied by Jan. 31, 2012 get first placements.</li> <li>Catchments are not changed for only one year. Stability and predictability help to strengthen the program and make parents feel secure in their decisions.</li> <li>Once full-day kindergarten is completely rolled out in 2014, ECEs (funded out of Foundation Grant) will replace EAs, which will ease the budget.</li> <li>John gave an oral update of number of classes, number of projected students, and number of applications received at all schools that offer immersion/extended French programs. He also gave an update on the number of acceptances made at some schools. A written report should be available by the end of March.</li> <li>Three new SKFI sites are under consideration for Sept 2012.</li> <li>Planners look at enrolment numbers, school size and feeder schools to determine how many students can come in from outside, which changes every year. Parents shouldn’t have to go to meetings to find out status has changed or is not what they expected - optional attendance status should be on website before the meeting. John will work with planners on the timing.</li> <li>Teaching and Learning is taking a close look at how Core French delivery will be affected in elementary schools that are in transition from being JK-grade 6 to being JK-grade 8. Currently, Whitehaven PS is being studied.</li> <li>Motion: Heather Jordan moved to extend the meeting by 15 minutes. Motion was seconded by Kristina Laperle. Motion carried.</li> </ul>	

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	<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some clarification was required on the Brooks Road P.S./Highcastle P.S./Alexander Stirling enrolment. John stated that right now, students are applying for enrolment at Brooks Road. There is no guarantee Highcastle will be ready in September. When Highcastle is ready, students at Brooks Road will be transferred to Highcastle. The Brooks Rd catchment was divided in half so that students north of the 401 are now in the Stirling catchment for Sept 2012 entry.</li> <li>• There were concerns about the number of classes decreasing from past years even though applications are higher than projections. John stated that new sites are under consideration; decisions to be made after applications are received. There is no hard cap on class size in full day kindergarten so the numbers in those classes are flexible, meaning easier accommodation of additional students.</li> </ul>	
<b>Other Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No other business.</li> </ul>	
<b>Adjournment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.</li> </ul>	

**Next meeting: March 22, 2012 at 6:30 p.m., Committee Room A**