

# French as a Second Language Community Advisory Committee

# Meeting Date: November 14, 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.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **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), Cheryl Batty (W8 Alt), Maeve Gray (W10), 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), Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin (Trustee Co-Chair W11), Audley Salmon (Staff Co-Lead), Roni Felsen (Staff Co-Lead), Karen Murray (System Superintendent), Angela Caccamo (Centrally Assigned Principal) Mun Shu Wong (Digital Support) |
| **Guests:** | Kaela Tenn,  |
| **Regrets**: | Kirsten Johnston (Program Co-ordinator), Michelle Munroe (Central Co-ordinator PCE), David Cameron (Research), Frances Shawera (W2), Mavis Ayippey (W4), Mandy Moore (W7), Elizabeth Carvalho (W7 Alt), Bahira Abdulsalam (W14 Alt), Gail Miller (W22), Rosemary Sutherland (CPF Alt) |
| **Recorder:** | James Jarrett |

| Item | Discussion |  Motion / Action |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Call to Order | * Land acknowledgment – Lynne LeBlanc.
* Meeting recorded for minute taking purposes.
 |  |
| 2. Quorum / Membership Changes | * Quorum met (7 of 10 Wards represented)
* New W10 rep, Maeve Gray, Winchester PS Parent
 |  |
| 3. Approval of Agenda | * Charles Zhu moves, Randy Samuels seconds. Carried.
 |  |
| 4. Approval of October 14, 2023 Minutes | * Sharlene Henry moves, 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 14: Went over the MYSP at our last meeting.
* Ward 10: Winchester did a movie night, played Encanto. Was really well attended
* Tomorrow night at AGO, Ward 10 is doing our first event for CPF Toronto Midtown West
* Friday Michel Bouchard is doing French Tours. Grades 1-5 students will be participating
* CPF: No report.
 |  |
| 7. Chair and Trustee Reports  | * Trustee Chair: There is an annual organizational Board meeting tomorrow.
* A new Trustee chair will be voted on for FSLCAC. I will be stepping down from the role after 5 years.
* Parent Chair: We had invited David Cameron from Research for this evening to share insights on the impact of the changes that have been implemented over the last few years following the French Review. In particular, is it possible to identify participation within the French Immersion programs that is reflective of the local communities and across the TDSB in general by breaking down barriers such as distance and accessibility, and the opening up new FI sites, e.g. shorter travel for students at new sites.
* Hopefully we’ll see the desired effect allowing for everyone who wants access to these programs can participate, regardless of distance.
* We have a special guest Karen Murray, System Superintendent, Equity, Anti-Oppression and Equity to speak about LOI (Learning Opportunities Index) in reference to Model Schools
* Q: What happened at the PIAC Virtual Conference?
* Q: There was supposed to be a button for attendees to have a direct link to the French department, possibly noting FSLCAC, with any questions, but unsure where that feedback actually went.
* Staff: Not sure about the button. We had a space on the virtual landing site. Lots of information was posted about French Language Programs in the TDSB. There was a one-minute video on Early French Immersion application process. Pictures that showcased classroom French language programs.
* Comment: Thanks to Angela for the quick turnaround regarding content for upcoming e-blast. There will be an e-blast for EFI application reminder, and there will be a newsletter in December as well. Send ideas to fslactoronto@gmail.com
 |  |
| 8. LOI Discussion | * Staff: Regrets that David Cameron, Senior Manager Research and Development was not able to attend, as he is the expert on LOI. We will present the big picture, and David can speak to specifics at January meeting.
* LOI was created as a tool that uses 6 indicators to identify the most underserved in our system.
* 150 most underserved schools are identified as Model Schools for Inner Cities and receive extra learning supports. Program started in 2006.
* Model Schools are where we do intentional work, based on academic achievement, using culturally relevant resources etc.
* Model schools list is revisited every 3-4 years. Some schools transition out, others transition in. We are in one of those review years. The schools have access to the funding for more than 3 years, the work on updating the list happens every 3 years, but schools can remain Model Schools for much longer.
* Schools that no longer qualify due to demographic changes transition out.
* One of the tensions is schools with French immersion, where students are bussed in, who may have different parent income and education levels than the English catchment students.
* No school that transitions out of being a Model School is immediately cut-off, there is a transition.
* Model Schools have access to pediatric clinics, special opportunities with the ROM, Science Centre, etc.
* Q: What would the culturally relevant pedagogical materials be, e.g. books?
* Staff: Materials could include books, extended learning opportunities for staff, community artists, community experiences.
* Because Model Schools tend to stay with us for some time, there is development of resources for low LOI schools that you will see these resources if you visit one of these schools
* Q: You mentioned that FI students are bussed in but FI families can also live in English catchment area. I’m curious about the 3 neighbourhoods experiencing explosive growth and change. People are being pushed out of those areas.
* Staff: I affirm and agree with you.
* Q: If the neighbourhood is changing, it could also be showing up in the English stream.
* Staff: The LOI is affected by multiple factors. I mention French because of the audience.
* Q: I want to understand the funding. There is an entire section in the Technical Paper (provincial grants to fund education) with funding for high needs schools of $163 million and 65% comes from the demographic specifics. School budgets, including the school mentioned in the Globe and Mail article receive LOI funding from the Board. Is the Model Schools funding from that allocation? What is the magnitude for school budgets? Model Schools seems to bring in about $3000 to the publicly available budgets. Are there other resources funded centrally?
* Staff: Some of this sits with our Finance department, and they may be able to tell better how funding flows into various spaces.
* Model Schools funding pays for all community support workers in the district.
* The funding also supports schools directly. Schools have their regular budget and there is additional funding in the 150 designated schools on a per pupil allotment. These schools require that additional support because of the gap of needs.
* Q: People need to understand what magnitude of funding gets allocated to Model Schools to understand what is at stake in whether a school is or is not designated a Model School.
* Staff: It’s more than the $3000 identified in school budgets.
* There is also central funding that is for supports and services.
* Q: Can you outline some of the supports and services? I want to see the impact on Blake St. PS. We don’t for example pay for the doctors and nurses in the clinics.
* Staff: That’s correct, we don’t pay for those people. Model Schools funding covers literacy and numeracy. They get access to learning coaches and early reading coaches. All schools have this access, but Model Schools get more.
* They get technology supports, access to funding to support the School Improvement Plan.
* If they are focusing on STEM, they get funding to bring in community-based educators, e.g. relationships with Toronto Metropolitan University.
* They also have hearing and vision clinics. Students get an opportunity to have family support. Families can get certifications, e.g. food handling certificates.
* There is financial literacy support, family passports and staff training.
* If you ever get a moment to go to a Model School, see how the activity affects the space.
* Q: I live in a community that has many Model Schools. Parents have questions about supports. Do you have a document that we can look at?
* Staff: Yes, we have access to some of this information on our website. The site is under renovation. We’re trying to clean it up a bit. You can connect with your school administrator to view it. We can also come to a parent council meeting to share information
* Q: I’m getting the sense that the bulk of funding is directed centrally, the school level dollars are low. If the fixed number is 150 schools, and 14-18 move every 3 years, is there any tracking of the schools that have lost their Model Schools status? What’s the impact in 3-5 years down the road? How have schools changed?
* Q: I looked at changes in LOI position since 2011. Some moved 200 places on the list. Of the 10 that changed the most, 7 were in Ward 15, Broadview-Danforth area. Two of the 7 do not have French immersion. What’s happening on the other side of the equation? There were some FI schools that moved in the other direction, like Chief Dan George and Brimwood Blvd., that became Model Schools.
* Staff: Does a FI program become a key factor in transitioning out or in of the Model Schools.
* Q: A Dave Cameron question? As a lay person I suspect FI has impact, but it’s one of many factors.
* Q: It sure looks like it is neighbourhoods changing, e.g. deindustrialization, more than programming changing the schools’ status. It’s a big thing to grapple with. Real estate and employment changes in Toronto are way beyond the control of the TDSB.
* Q: Would like to know a little more about the consultation for the LOI. Is that something that happens in a certain committee? Some FI students are from the catchment area and are low income and need to count too.
* Staff: It’s a definite Research question. The LOI consultation will be moving forward, but David Cameron can speak to it best.
* Staff: David Cameron will be coming to the January 9th meeting. There will be a consultation before the new LOI policy goes to the Board in the Spring.
* Trustee Chair: There was a motion that was brought to the Board about FI and LOI. I don’t know what staff is going to do with this information. The LOI policy is slated for review this year, and we’re in phase 2, one of the earlier phases. Sometimes we come to CAC’s to present policy changes.
* The impetus to have this looked at is not to get rid of FI, it’s to make sure student supports are in the right place. The newspaper article may have given that impression, but from a Trustee perspective, it was never about FI.
* Q: One of the concerns is that there is an assumption that FI kids are not local students and are coming from upper middle class areas. This committee has worked hard to make these programs available to all. LOI shows concentration of need, but even schools with the highest LOI may have students from low SES families that do not figure into this benchmarking system.
* Q: This committee has also asked for information on demographic impact of changes to FI from the Review as noted in our annual report. TDSB goal is to have French programs that are like the general population of the TDSB. Can we check progress to date?
* Comment: We need to be cautious about removing FI from the LOI. I’m glad to hear that these schools are still receiving some supports when they transition out of Model Schools designation
 | Members may submit further questions for next meeting for David Cameron via fslactoronto@gmail.com |
| 9. French Review | * Staff: The early FI application period opened November 6.
* 2 virtual information sessions occurred thus far, November 8 at 10 am, and November 14 at 7 pm.
* 2100 applications thus far. Last year at this time, we were at 1800.
* Deadline for application is December 1. Late applicants will be held on wait-list.
* Middle FI application period opens January 8 and closes February 2.
* We will be promoting the Middle French Immersion application process in the same fashion as Early FI.
* Q: Are the new French Immersion location maps available online?
* Staff: We have been working with Planning. We will post them as soon as possible.
* Q: Have you received any feedback from the virtual meetings and which platforms parents are finding out about FI on?
* Staff: Not really. Most of the questions have been about how to apply. We endeavour to reply to questions within 24 hours.
* Most information seems to be viewed on Facebook and LinkedIn. We’ll have some information about platforms available after the application periods are complete in April.
* Q: What are the typical questions that parents have?
* Staff: How to apply? , i.e.Is it a first come first served, sibling questions, Out of Area Attendance questions, Transportation questions.
* Q: Do any people have questions about whether or not EFI is an effective program?
* Staff: I think it’s a settled question. We dispel common misconceptions, e.g. there is no criteria for entry. We explain the benefits of EFI.
* All of this information is in the Webinar. We also have a live Q and A with French Dept staff. We talk about communication at home and transferable skills. We alleviate a lot of the anxiety
* Q: Is it possible to do a separate application for Out of Area Attendance?
* Staff: Yes. Schools with Out of Area status are only shown if they are limited or open. Closed schools not shown. There is no way to submit an application to a school like John Fisher JPS, which is closed.
* Q: Does anyone ask about Special Education?
* Staff: We’ve had a few questions about this, but it’s part of the webinar about how we support students with special education needs in French programs. We emphasize that the curriculum is the same for EFI and English program.
* Q: In high school, you can get a certificate for FI, and Extended French. Is there one in Core French?
* Staff: There are 3 separate certificates of French, depending on the program, including a Core French certificate for those that complete Grade 12. For Certificate of Bilingual Studies in French Immersion, students complete 4 FIF courses and 6 remaining credits are completed at any level in other subjects offered where French is the language of instruction. Whereas, for Certificate of Bilingual Studies in French Immersion, it’s 4 FEF, and 3 additional credits offered where French is the language of instruction.
* Q: For Extended French, there are 7 courses. Are there different courses for EFI?
* Staff: For the French Language, the course codes are FIF and FEF; at times both courses are blended together, based on the limited demand for each stream at a particular school. We have had blending in schools where separate streams are not viable.
 | **Standing Item** |
| 10. Adjournment | * Motion to adjourn Randy Samuel, Maeve Gray seconds. Carried. 8:30 pm.
 |  |
| Next Meetings | January 9 @ 7:00 PM-9:00 PM, [Hybrid Meeting](https://tdsb-ca.zoom.us/j/93600090171?pwd=cVdYbEhUYjF3UTVKWTZsNW11MlNqUT09), Committee Room A @ 5050 Yonge.Upcoming meetings: February 13 , March 19, April 16, May 14, June 11  |  |