



Community Advisory Committees

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

Meeting Date: 10 March 2020

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 at 5050 Yonge Street, with Parent Co-Chair Mandy Moore presiding.

Attendance: Mandy Moore (Parent Co-Chair W7), Matt Forrest (Parent Vice-Co-Chair W9), Charles Zhu (Parent Vice-Co Chair W11), Rob Janes (W1/W2), Doug Kwan (W2), Lisa McAvoy (W2 Alt), Lynne LeBlanc (W8), Polina Osmerkina (W10); Wilmar Kortleeve (W11 Alt), Randy Samuel (W14), Sarah Smith (W15), Gail Miller (W22 Alt)

Also present were: Trustee Robin Pilkey (Trustee Co-Chair), Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin (W11), Trustee Dan MacLean (W2), Mary Cruden (Canadian Parents for French), Sharon Beason (Canadian Parents for French), Manon Gardner (Associate Director), Angela Caccamo (Centrally Assigned Principal), Belinda Lam (Palmerston parent), Lauren Chang MacLean (Palmerston parent)

The following participated by electronic means: Kathleen Meek (W15 Alt)

Regrets: Zeynab Kazi (Parent Vice-Co-Chair W22), Nalini Singh (W2 Alt), Sharlene Henry (W5/W6 Alt), Deloris Williamson-Braham (W5/13), Caroline Tolten-Paterson (W7 Alt), Jennifer Tse (W8 Alt), Nancy White (W16 Alt), Christie Dunbar (W16), Rosemary Sutherland (CPF Alt), Kirsten Johnston (Program Coordinator)

Recorder: Linda Stockdale

ITEM	DISCUSSION	RECOMMENDATION / MOTION / ACTION
Call to Order / Quorum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quorum achieved 7:16 pm • Land acknowledgment – Mandy Moore 	
Membership Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New member - Doug Kwan, Alt W2 	
Approval of Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moved to approve by Sarah, seconded by Lisa. Carried. 	
Approval of Feb 11, 2020 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moved to approve by Charles, seconded by Matt. Carried. 	Linda will post approved minutes on tdsb.on.ca/fslac
Declarations of Possible Conflict of Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilmar Kortleever is a W11 parent and FSLCAC 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. 	
Ward Reports	<p>W11 – Regarding Thorncliff French Academy, a grass roots initiative, space and funding for snacks is needed. The Thorncliff Youth Centre is assisting with space. The goal is to have the academy run for the long term. Challenges include: delay of start date, vulnerable screening required, as well as other logistics.</p> <p>W9 – Reports that a ward school is starting a FSL reading program.</p> <p>W8 – Reports that a parent applied for transportation funds and was declined. Trustee Pilkey recommends that the family contact the Superintendent if a suitable outcome cannot/has not been reached with the Principal of the school.</p> <p>W1/2 – Reports that schools want tutor resources, parents/tutors to help students. Parking is an issue. The City of Toronto has a Vision Zero program that might be looked into. Trustee Pilkey suggested that the Sustainability Office can assist as well. CPF suggested CPF resources and FSLAC site for tools, useful tips for parents and students. As well, resources are available from Alliance Francaise</p>	

	W7 – Reports that they are supporting kids with homework.	
<p>Update Parent Co-chair</p>	<p>A group of parents met to discuss recommendations for PSSC. Trustee Pilkey confirmed all recommendations go to PSSC initially, for review and potentially sent to another committee and/or staff, thereafter. Three (3) recommendation presentations follow.</p> <p>1. Keep 2 SKFI Classes at Palmerston and follow Former PR577</p> <p>A member presents the drafted recommendation to the membership. (Note: carried recommendation included below in addendum)</p> <p>Q. Member asks if a similar redirection has happened at other schools. A. Staff respond that it has. Howard PS went from 2 classes to 1, with some students redirected to Fern Avenue JSPS, in an effort to balance the streams. . Humbercrest PS went from 2 classes to 1, with some students redirected to George Syme CS. , PR597 is the operational procedure that governs FI/EX French programs and has been in place since 2009. PR577 remained on the website until last week, but PR577 is rescinded, replaced with PR597. PR577 should have been removed from the website prior to now. P068 is the supporting policy.</p> <p>Trustee Pilkey points out that many procedures don't go to Trustees for review. Many go to Governance. PR577 is going to next GPC for formal notification of rescindment and concurs that PR597 has been in place since 2009.</p> <p>A member indicates that rescindment needs to be made public A member is concerned that this recommendation, as it currently stands might be negated, because of it references PR577. The membership agrees to amend the recommendation to reference 'former PR577'.</p> <p>The concern is raised that the recommendation refers only to the Palmerston situation, but should apply to all FI schools. The parent co-chair points out that many of the recommendation points are broad, so could apply to all schools and that presentation of the recommendations in the PSSC report is most relevant as the Trustees look for recommendations when reviewing PSSC reporting. This way the membership will be heard.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>

	<p>Trustee McLean believes that staff should review the length of time allowed parents to accept a central offer of placement. He is not of the opinion that Trustees will tell staff what to do operationally (guided by procedure) but that the time element is broad and worth exploring.</p> <p>CPF shares that this is a big concern for parents and we now know that the Palmerston redirection situation has happened to 2 additional schools.</p> <p>Trustee Chernos Lin shares that Trustees don't tend to pass items specific to schools. Trustees are aware of these issues. She shares her concern that the recommendation is contrary to direction that has been given to staff. She believes working with staff is the better approach. If the recommendation is to proceed, she suggests removing references to Palmerston Ave. to make the recommendation more generic.</p> <p>Q – What will be the impact once JK FI entry begins? Will the program be viable with only 1 FI class?</p> <p>A - Staff will be looking at this during the implementation phase. There are many parameters to consider. We'll be working with the Planning Department closely, to see what sites look like when there is JK entry, given capacity, transportation and staffing challenges which are being experienced across the country. Staff are unable to comment further on what it will look like right now.</p> <p>The parent co-chair indicates that there are 2 options regarding this recommendation – add in suggested changes and forward for next PSSC, or take some more time to review the draft for submission at a later date. A member suggests adding in the discussed changes and then move the recommendation through to next PSSC. Another member believes the membership should work with staff, concurring with Trustee Chernos Lin and asks for Trustee Pilkey's opinion.</p> <p>Trustee Pilkey reports that she did not hear from any parents who were redirected from Howard and heard from one parent who was redirected from Humbercrest (Ward 7 schools), during placement and redirection process. She doesn't think adding in the other 2 schools (Howard/Humbercrest) to the recommendation will help /increase the</p>	
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	<p>likelihood of achieving the desired outcome.</p> <p>Matt moves that the recommendation proceeds to PSSC including references to <i>former</i> PR577 and adding in references to Howard PS and Humbercrest PS (see addendum). Polina seconds it. Carried.</p>	
Staff Update Manon	<p>TTC ticket Elimination and Guidelines for Principals</p> <p>Staff followed up with Craig Snider, regarding a letter distributed referring to a proposed introduction of a central Equity Fund to support students requiring financial assistance with transportation costs, due to TTC ticket elimination. Staff reports that the criteria for a central Equity fund has not been established, so the fund is not available at this time. Staff will suggest that a communication to the administrators should be sent, reminding them of their discretion to use school funds regarding student transportation support, as a central fund is not available at this time. Staff notes that every school has discretionary monies available to support if required. Trustee MacLean adds that this communication to principals would be helpful.</p>	
Update Parent Co-chair	<p>2. TTC support for French Immersion/Extended Secondary Students in Need</p> <p>A member presents the drafted recommendation to the membership. (Note: carried recommendation included below in addendum)</p> <p>Trustee Pilkey offers a suggestion that this be implemented as part of Transportation Review, so that it can be implementable. The Transportation Review is scheduled for May. CPF suggests that the recommendation to the Board be inclusive, not specific to intensive French transportation requirements.</p> <p>Rob moves that the recommendation proceed to PSSC (see addendum). Lisa seconds it. Carried.</p>	Recommendation
Staff Update Manon	<p>French Review Recommendation/Redistribution Update/Consultation</p> <p>In concert with Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy (LTPAS), staff is meeting with groups of Trustees to discuss the overview of the wards, the Secondary and French programs and priorities through a system perspective, pathways, and redistribution, including potential relocation of programs,. Staff will be providing</p>	

Trustees with the tools to share ideas and concepts with their communities. The draft recommendations for the Secondary Review are tracking to April Committee of the Whole, with the final recommendations tracking to June Committee of the Whole. Implementation is expected to take 6-8 to 10 years. Elementary FSL redistribution, not expansion, is very challenging, and continues to track to June Committee of the Whole, with Trustee review closer to May. Many options are being reviewed and considered including repurposing underutilized secondary schools.

Trustee Pilkey acknowledges the exemplary work she has witnessed through this process.

Q: CPF asks if the review recommendations will move from the June Committee of the Whole to Trustees for approval.

A: It could come earlier in May for approval in June.

A member mentions that the Closing of Schools moratorium is being lifted. It's a non-issue, as relocation of programs doesn't involve closing schools. Trustee Pilkey notes that there are 20,000 empty seats, so we need to be able to close schools. We do need the Ministry to lift the moratorium. The longer it takes, the more likely that there will be some secondary schools that will be challenged from lack of robust/sustainable programming.

Staff points out that no one enjoys closing a school. The school closure process takes a minimum of 1.5 years. We need to broadly look at and consider that we have 20,000 empty seats, effectively 15 to 20 empty schools. The Ministry will not provide additional funding so we need a plan to be ready when the moratorium is lifted. Staff provided an example of the closure of Vaughan Road Academy; there were 40 students remaining in grade 9, could not provide programming to students with these numbers. At that time, it was thought that the Board waited too long to close the school.

Trustee MacLean recognizes that staff are doing the work now so that we can move forward when the moratorium is lifted.

A member points out that there are pressures in elementary schools. The Eglinton PS

	<p>population is bursting, yet there are many secondary schools in the area. Trustee Pilkey reports that these concerns are being discussed; Staff reports that they are looking at options, including repurposing of secondary schools.</p>	
<p>Update Parent Co-chair, CPF</p>	<p>The following proposed recommendations will be considered at a later time: Priority Expansion of FI in Underserved Areas, Middle French Immersion, Single and Dual Track FI Schools, Configuration/Intake at FI sites, Walking and Transportation, Childcare, Ext. French and Current Model of Mid Immersion Phase out, Parent Engagement, Change Management and Communication to Support TDSB Families.</p>	
<p>Update Parent Co-chair</p>	<p>3. Guiding Principles for French Immersion</p> <p>A member presents the drafted recommendation to the membership. (Note: carried recommendation included below in addendum)</p> <p>Trustee Pilkey asks for clarification on the purpose of this recommendation.</p> <p>A member raises the subject of lotteries, and if there could be a more equitable process. PR597 does not cover this aspect. It is believed that guidelines would cross-reference with the questions/opinions expressed by the membership at the February FSLCAC meeting. The importance of staff reporting and information gathering on subjects such as the decline in French enrolment numbers, should be considered</p> <p>Q - Can we track why people have left the program?</p> <p>A - CPF reports that some qualitative work has been done on retention. An annual report will help with this.</p> <p>Lisa moves that the recommendation proceed to PSSC (see addendum). Rob seconds it. Carried.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>
<p>Other Business</p>		

Adjournment	The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm. Moved by Charles, seconded by Sara and Carried.	
Next Meeting	Tuesday, April 14, 2020, 7:00 pm in Committee Room A.	

Addendum

1. Keep 2 SKFI Classes at Palmerston and Follow former PR577

Whereas all TDSB students, whether in English or French programs, deserve robust and effective programs; and

Whereas there are enough on-time applicants from Palmerston’s SK French Immersion (SKFI) catchment to make 2 full classes as recommended in PR597 to maintain French program viability; and

Whereas in French Immersion “a two class entry (58 students) is ideal for the sharing of resources, job-embedded professional growth and co-planning” and long term viability (French Review Staff Report June 2019); and

Whereas Palmerston has had at least 2 SKFI classes since 2005; and

Whereas the applicants include 43 students from the Palmerston English catchment and 15 from its feeder school, Essex; and

Whereas the TDSB has decided to offer only one class for SKFI for September 2020 and to redirect the 15 Essex students to Humewood and 14 Palmerston English catchment students to Dewson; and

Whereas these redirections put students who could walk to Palmerston on school busses thereby increasing TDSB expenditures; and

Whereas PR597 (French Immersion/Extended French) only allows for redirection as a last resort when there is insufficient space to accommodate all of the French Immersion applicants; and

Whereas Palmerston has empty classrooms with its 2018 utilization at 75% (Long Term Pupil Accommodation Strategy Dec 2019); and

Whereas the English SK program at Palmerston only has 4 students registered for September 2020, making it clear that viability of the English program needs to be addressed with the former appropriate tool, PR577 (Program Review of Dual Track Schools); and

Whereas given that most parents in the area clearly want French Immersion, the reduction to one SKFI class at Palmerston is unlikely to achieve the TDSB stated objective of creating a stronger English program with “no fewer than 20-25” in English (French Review Staff Report June 2019); and

Whereas Essex and Palmerston families redirected to other schools were given less than a week to accept spots and consider entirely unexpected logistical issues regarding the bus, and childcare causing great stress; and

Whereas the TDSB has not followed P068 (Accommodation and Program Review) requirements to notify the affected school councils and the FSLAC if intake classes are reduced; and

Whereas the TDSB has not used nor replaced former PR577 to review the issue of viability in a dual track school with the local community; and,

Whereas P068 and former PR577 support the TDSB in “build(ing) strong relationships and partnerships within school communities to support student learning and well-being” (Multi-Year Strategic Plan);

Therefore, the FSLAC recommends that for the school year beginning in September 2020 that

1. the TDSB keep 2 SKFI classes at Palmerston,
2. the redirected Essex and Palmerston on-time applicants be enrolled in Palmerston, and
3. the TDSB follow former PR577, convene a local feasibility team to examine the best options for all students in the Palmerston English and French Immersion catchments and proceed in accordance with that procedure including parents and school council chairs in the development of solutions.
4. that Humbercrest and Howard be considered as well.

2. TTC support for French immersion/extended Secondary Students in Need

Whereas the FSLAC supports and applauds the Board’s commitment to "Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students" (Multi-Year Strategic Plan); and

Whereas Toronto District School Board (TDSB) trustees decided to stop providing TTC support for ALL 1168 French immersion/extended secondary students who travel more than 4.8 km due to transportation grant shortfalls in favour of providing them only for students in financial need on a case by case basis; and

Whereas another multi-year goal -- "Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs" – may not be realized now that individual principals at the secondary school level are responsible for providing TTC support from their school funds and may not even be aware of it; and

Whereas the stigma of poverty may prevent French immersion/extended students from contacting their principal to ask for support, meaning that poverty may become a barrier to continued participation in the programs; and

Whereas poverty is often hidden, thereby preventing principals from realizing to whom they ought to proactively reach out; and

Whereas without TTC support French immersion/extended classes may become less “inclusive and reflective of a diverse community” (P080) and the Board’s commitment to “Culture for Student and Staff Well-Being” (Multi-year Strategic Plan) may be negatively affected; and,

Whereas TDSB secondary school principals have not received criteria from their Superintendents (as a June 24, 2019 letter from the Board to parents stated they would) regarding how they ought to determine whether or not a French immersion/extended student is in financial need, guidance which would help ensure a system-wide equity for students; and

Whereas there is no publicly visible budget, even on a per-school basis, or required reporting for this proposed practice and that will make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for administrators and the public to accurately determine as months and years pass whether needs are increasing or decreasing; and,

Therefore, the FSLAC recommends that the TDSB consider the following, as part of the review of student transportation that is currently underway:

1. Create and document standardized, system-wide criteria for determining eligibility to receive TTC transportation support for French Immersion/Extended French programs and
2. That information on the availability and criteria for receiving support be shared with all schools on an on-going basis, and
3. That principals receive sufficient equity funds to fulfill all requests that meet the criteria and distance minimums, and
4. That the Director present a report annually on the use of TTC Support for attending French Immersion/Extended French programs.

3. Guiding Principles for French Immersion

Whereas the TDSB has been tremendously successful in improving and increasing opportunities for TDSB students to become proficient in both Official Languages in French immersion/extended programs which provide cognitive benefits and future employment opportunities; and

Whereas this work began with the amalgamation Directional Statement on French (TDSB Minutes October 25, 2000) and moved forward significantly with the implementation of PR597 (2009); and

Whereas the scope of the changes that can flow from the June 2019 French Review Recommendations as they relate to French immersion/extended is huge; and

Whereas we want to be careful not to ‘throw out the baby with bathwater’; and

Whereas clear commitment to guiding principles will help to reassure parents and to ensure that the myriad of decisions that are going to be made have a sharp focus on continuing to improve and increase opportunities for the next generation of French immersion students;

Therefore, the FSLAC recommends that:

Implementation of the June 2019 French Review recommendations on French Immersion be guided by the TDSB’s MYSP goal “to enhance students’ access to learning opportunities” and its long standing commitment to growing and improving the program, the Ontario FSL Framework (2013) goal to increase student participation and achievement in FSL and by being responsive to both equity of access where programs are “inclusive and reflective of a diverse community” (TDSB P080) and the expectations of families by continuing with the following procedures:

- a. place every on-time applicant to French immersion,

- b. add spots/sites as needed to meet demand,
- c. give priority placement to siblings,
- d. annual reporting on FSL programs including enrolment.