

Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated March 9, 2016

Final Report FAQ

Why was a French Review necessary?	3
Does the UGDSB support French as a Second Language education?	3
What is the intended outcome of the French Review?	4
Why aren't there boundary changes or new FI centres or schools with FI identified as part of this review?	4
I want my child to attend an Orangeville area high school for FI, when can I expect this to be considered by the UGDSB?	4
A number of parents want to access to FI in Shelburne, why wasn't this considered as part of the review?	4
What are the goals of the French Review?	4
What was considered as part of the review?	5
What wasn't considered in this review?	5
How does the board generate enrolment projections?	5
Is French Immersion causing enrolment/accommodation pressure everywhere?	6
If my child is already in French Immersion could they lose their place in a French Immersion class as part of this review process and the options being considered?	6
If my child has not yet entered the school system in the UGDSB will they be affected?	6
If I have other children who have not yet entered the UGDSB school system and their sibling is already in FI will they automatically have access to FI when they register?	6
Is the cap option a one size fits all solution?	6
How is the board going to ensure that the attrition rates along with a cap option do not affect the ability to offer FI either at the elementary or secondary level? ...	6
March 9, 2016 FAQ Update	7
Why aren't there details about the random selection process?	7
Why wasn't high school FSL considered in the final report?	7
How was the composition of the French Review Committee decided?	7
What does the French Review Committee do now that the final report has been submitted?	8
What is staff's role now that the final report has been submitted?	8
What happens to the feedback submitted?	8
Will smaller English track JK classes allow for increases in the recommended JK FI caps?	8

Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated March 9, 2016

What has been done since some recommendations were approved on January 26th? 9

Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated March 9, 2016

Why was a French Review necessary?

As with all school boards in the province of Ontario, the success and associated growth of French Immersion relative to other modes of French language delivery has put pressure on a Board's ability to manage enrolment projections in a way that leads to predictable and sustainable school placements for students and their families. The impact of increased enrolment trends in FI is affecting both English track and FI track students.

The increased FI growth rate in the UGDSB has led to:

- significant accommodation pressures;
- multiple boundary reviews resulting in the frequent movement between schools of whole grades and groups/cohorts of students;
- difficulty in hiring and retaining sufficient numbers of FI/FSL qualified teachers;
- increased transportation costs and overall length of school bus rides;
- exacerbating UGDSB's geographical inequities to effectively manage equity of access and equity of opportunity for all UGDSB students and their families.

Does the UGDSB support French as a Second Language education?

The Upper Grand District School Board (UGDSB) believes in providing a range of quality instruction and learning opportunities at both the elementary and secondary level to maximize student engagement, achievement and well-being.

French Immersion (FI) is one example, which has been successfully offered by the UGDSB over the past 40 years. The success of FI is reflected by:

- the significant annual growth of FI in the UGDSB exceeding the average growth rate for the province of Ontario at both the elementary and secondary level (Appendix A);
- the total UGDSB JK French Immersion cohort being three times the size of the graduating Grade 8 cohort;
- the fact that approximately 1 in 4 new FDK students are enrolling in FI in the UGDSB;
- the fact that UGDSB regular track elementary enrolment is in general decline, while FI has been growing steadily at an average rate of 7% per year;
- the fact that FI demand is exceeding existing pupil places available using a combination of single and dual track school models.

Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated March 9, 2016

What is the intended outcome of the French Review?

The French Review is intended to create effective strategies to mitigate and manage issues now in order to help to ensure sustainability and viability of all English and FI track students in the UGDSB

Why aren't there boundary changes or new FI centres or schools with FI identified as part of this review?

The terms of reference of the review did not include identifying new schools or locations for delivering FI, or boundary changes. The outcomes of the French Review will inform future long term accommodation planning and future boundary or accommodation review.

I want my child to attend an Orangeville area high school for FI, when can I expect this to be considered by the UGDSB?

The outcomes of the French Review will inform the development of a long term accommodation plan. Boundary or accommodation review processes may be considered as an outcome to the long term plan process.

A number of parents want to access to FI in Shelburne, why wasn't this considered as part of the review?

The review does identify accommodation issues in the Orangeville/Dufferin area which persist regardless of any enrolment management strategy proposed. However, other board processes are required before any decisions are made.

What are the goals of the French Review?

1. To articulate the UGDSB values and beliefs regarding French language instruction.
2. To create a sustainable, cost effective delivery model for French Immersion instruction in the UGDSB.
3. To generate a range of strategic options and recommendations, by December 31, 2015, for consideration by the UGDSB to better manage the demand for FI within fiscal and accommodation realities.
4. To continue to improve the effectiveness of delivery models and instruction in FSL in the UGDSB as identified in the UGDSB's French plan.
5. To create a long term FI delivery plan, integrated within the Board's long term accommodation plan, taking into account geographical differences and accommodation needs across the UGDSB for all students and their families. In this way placement of program and location of programs can become more

Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated March 9, 2016

predictable and transparent for all stakeholders.

6. To ensure equity of access and opportunity to French Immersion and regular track programs that respects geographical differences and home school locations for all students.
7. To develop a comprehensive communication plan to ensure that all stakeholders are kept informed.

What was considered as part of the review?

- Instructional delivery models including core French;
- Student achievement;
- Entry point(s);
- Program locations;
- School organization;
- Registration procedures;
- Class size comparisons;
- Special education supports in French programs;
- Attracting, developing and retaining FSL/FI teachers;
- Transportation;
- Funding.

What wasn't considered in this review?

This review didn't consider changing boundaries, closing schools or opening new FI locations. These are elements to be considered in a long term plan once a strategy is in place for addressing FI enrolment pressures.

Secondary FSL was not considered in this review due to the need to have an outcome to the management of elementary FI before assessing the impact on secondary.

How does the board generate enrolment projections?

The Board's Planning department utilizes a projection software system that generates an enrolment forecast using several data inputs. This data includes new development housing units and student yield data, historical enrolment by grade and program, and attrition and participation factors.

For French Immersion specifically, historical participation by small geographic review areas is analyzed to project participation from new housing developments. As well,

Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated March 9, 2016

trends in attrition by grade from the French Immersion program are analyzed and applied.

Is French Immersion causing enrolment/accommodation pressure everywhere?

There are enrolment and accommodation pressures created by growth in FI across most of the jurisdiction. The most significant pressure to accommodate FI growth is occurring in the City of Guelph and Orangeville/Dufferin.

However, despite enrolment decline in some of the board's rural areas FI continues to place pressure on those schools and high participation rates can mean small English track enrolments. The effect on English enrolments means that these programs may not be viable if enrolment in FI is not managed.

If my child is already in French Immersion could they lose their place in a French Immersion class as part of this review process and the options being considered?

No. The proposed cap would only affect new registrants in JK. Existing students would not be affected by the cap.

If my child has not yet entered the school system in the UGDSB will they be affected?

The proposed cap would potentially affect whether a student is able to enroll in FI. If there are more students than spaces available in a school, not every student wanting to enroll in FI may have the opportunity.

If I have other children who have not yet entered the UGDSB school system and their sibling is already in FI will they automatically have access to FI when they register?

The mechanics of how a cap would be implemented would be determined by the Board once a decision on the French Review has been made. Such things as how a random selection process or other means of selecting entry and the treatment of sibling will need to be addressed.

Is the cap option a one size fits all solution?

The cap is not a one size fits all solution. Caps have been determined based on the enrolment history of each school and each school's capacity, grade structure and feeder school relationships.

How is the board going to ensure that the attrition rates along with a cap option do not affect the ability to offer FI either at the elementary or secondary level?

Attrition rates have been modelled into the enrolment projections for each elementary

Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated March 9, 2016

school. Retention of students in FI has been increasing with better supports available for struggling students. Staff is satisfied that attrition will not compromise the programming at the elementary level.

The size of elementary cohorts projected to enter secondary schools in FI are larger under the cap than they are today due to the increase in elementary enrolment in FI in recent years. The effect of a cap on secondary school enrolments will not be observed until 2027, when the first year of a capped JK class would make its way into Grade 9.

March 9, 2016 FAQ Update

Why aren't there details about the random selection process?

Until the Trustees decide whether or not to implement a JK enrolment cap, it can't be determined how a random selection process will function.

Recommendation 14 reads "that before November 2016, prior to kindergarten registration, a random selection process be developed as part of the enrolment cap to create a fair and transparent method for student entry into the French immersion program."

If a cap is approved, this work will have to consider how siblings, out of jurisdiction, out of area, and other students are treated under a cap. Staff will also have to consider how movement within and into the jurisdiction will be managed.

Why wasn't high school FSL considered in the final report?

The French Review Committee did discuss the issues faced by secondary FSL. There are many similar issues related to recruitment, hiring and retention of FSL teachers.

However, until there is a strategy to address issues at the elementary level, it is difficult to develop a high school strategy. As such, Recommendation 4 addressed "that once a strategy is approved by the UGDSB for elementary French immersion, the French Review Committee will begin a review of secondary FSL as soon as possible and submit a report with recommendations for consideration by the UGDSB no later than June 30, 2017."

Regardless of the outcomes of this initial phase, or the following review of secondary FSL, program location changes were never part of the terms of reference of this work.

How was the composition of the French Review Committee decided?

In January 2015, staff presented the report "French Immersion Management Strategy" to the Board and recommended a committee composition including four Trustees including two (2) from Guelph, one (1) from Dufferin County and one (1) from Wellington County.

Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated March 9, 2016

Trustees ultimately changed the composition of the French Review Committee to include:

- Three (3) from Guelph,
- One (1) from Orangeville,
- One (1) from Centre/North Wellington, and
- One (1) from East Wellington,
- plus a student trustee.

Trustees confirmed a similar structure of parent representation, but added one additional Guelph representative. Local Trustees identified parents willing to sit on the committee and these individuals became representatives for the communities noted.

Elementary and secondary school principals, teachers and union presidents were appointed to the committee and staff sat on the committee or were brought in as resources as required.

What does the French Review Committee do now that the final report has been submitted?

The French Review Committee completed its work in December 2015 with the delivery of the final report. Recommendation 4 suggests that the same committee be reconvened to review secondary FSL as soon as possible, however, this recommendation has not been approved by the Trustees. The committee does not have a role in the decision-making.

What is staff's role now that the final report has been submitted?

Staff presented the final report on January 12, 2016. As directed by the Board, staff is conducting four public information sessions on the report and its recommendations. Staff is collecting feedback from each of those sessions and online and collating it so it can be shared with Trustees and the public. Staff does not have a role in the decision-making.

What happens to the feedback submitted?

Written feedback submitted at the public information sessions, returned to the Board or submitted online until April 15, 2016 will be shared with Trustees and posted online. Staff uses feedback to inform updates to this FAQ document.

Will smaller English track JK classes allow for increases in the recommended JK FI caps?

No. Smaller cohorts of students in the English track do not alleviate the FI staffing

Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated March 9, 2016

pressures faced by the Board. While smaller cohorts of English students may reduce some of the accommodation pressures faced in dual track schools, these smaller cohorts also increase instability and create viability issues for local/neighbourhood English track programs without resolving quality or staffing issues related to FI.

What has been done since some recommendations were approved on January 26th?

There has always been active recruitment of French teachers in the UGDSB, however, in response to the approved French Review recommendations, the Human Resources (HR) Department is taking a more direct and proactive role to find additional qualified French teachers.

In recent weeks, HR has made contact with all the faculties of education throughout Ontario and has attended several job fairs and informal presentations to promote French teaching in the UGDSB. HR is working with faculties of education to get more student teachers in French classrooms next year.

HR is working to add French teachers to the occasional teacher roster and the permanent teachers may be hired from that roster.

It is very difficult to recruit Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) and Education Assistants (EAs) in both English and French. However, a team is recruiting English and French ECEs and HR is investigating a process for EA recruitment.

A former FI Principal is leading the recruitment of French teachers and developing a formal recruitment process for the Board for future years. We have canvassed other Boards about their processes and are incorporating many of their practices to augment our current activities.

The Planning Department is preparing the annual Elementary and Secondary Identified Schools Reports for release in April. In accordance with Recommendations 15 and 17, these reports will include the requested FI enrolment information, balance between English track and French immersion enrolment in dual track schools, as well as reporting on retention rates.