

Upper Grand District School Board
French as a Second Language Advisory Committee

Minutes
Monday, May 13, 2019

The French as a Second Language Advisory Committee of the Upper Grand District School Board met on May 13, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. in the Boardroom at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph.

The following Parent Representatives were present: Vikki Brown, Core French – City of Guelph; Rachel Cooper, Mark Paralovos, French Immersion – City of Guelph; Paul Smith, French Immersion - Secondary – City of Guelph

Present from Staff were: Tracey Lindsay, Superintendent of Program; Jonathan Walker, Principal of Program; Jillian Major, Program Staff FSL Curriculum

Trustees Present: Linda Busuttil, Robin Ross, Lynn Topping

Regrets: Chad Warren, Secondary Principal

Absent: Cheri Herdman, French Immersion – Wellington County Parent; Christine Caughill, Core French – City of Guelph; Ashley Scott, French Immersion - Dufferin County Parent

Rachel Cooper, Co-Chair welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda of May 13, 2019

Lynn Topping, Trustee, moved that the agenda of May 13, 2019 be approved. Paul Smith seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of March 4, 2019

Linda Busuttil, Trustee, moved that the minutes of March 4, 2019 be approved. Lynn Topping seconded the motion.

The motion carried.

FSLAC Norms

Rachel Cooper addressed the committee and listed the expectations for the FSLAC meetings. These norms and expectations will help to ensure that meetings are a positive and respectful experience.

PowerPoint presentation was uploaded to the May folder on UGCloud.

Upper Grand District School Board

French as a Second Language Advisory Committee

Annual LTAP Renewal Report

Robin Ross, Co-Chair welcomed Jennifer Passy to the meeting.

Jennifer Passy, Manager of Planning, addressed the committee and provided background information regarding the Long Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP) Annual Review Report. Presentations have been made to each committee of the Board so all stakeholders have this information.

She explained that the LTAP was completed during the 2017-2018 school year and presented to the Board in June 2018 for approval. The LTAP includes a schedule of short term and long term priorities. The purpose of the annual LTAP Review is for staff to ensure that the work plan priorities and timing remain appropriate.

She detailed the scheduled projects that were actioned in 2018-2019, including the secondary program review and École Guelph Lake Public School grade 7-8 implementation, which are complete. The International Baccalaureate Impact Study for Dufferin/Erin is in progress and the final report will be presented in June. Some projects have been put on hold or are pending due to Ministry delays.

Jennifer Passy updated the enrolment projections and school utilizations for 2018-2019. The annual review provides an enrolment projection check in every year and a robust assessment every five years. Board wide, our school spaces are well utilized: Elementary schools total utilization is 91% and secondary is 100%. The enrolment projections experienced a slight increase of over 400 elementary students (2% increase) and 200 students in secondary (2% increase) in 2018/2019.

It is the second year of the implemented JK French Immersion caps. The total FI enrolment is increasing; 5,000 FI elementary students were registered in 2018/2019 and this is increasing to 5,200 in 2019/2020, a 27% increase. Two new locations for FI programs were opened – Gateway Drive Public School in Guelph and Parkinson Centennial Public School in Orangeville.

UGDSB is still monitoring the class size changes. Class sizes are changing in secondary and the Ministry is moving to 28:1 funding average from the current 22:1. This is expected to also affect how the Ministry rates the capacity of our buildings and may affect the utilization calculations in the LTAP.

Link for the 2019 Long Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP) Annual Review Report:
<https://www.ugdsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/2019-Long-Term-Accommodation-Plan-LTAP-Annual-Review-Report.pdf>

PowerPoint presentation was uploaded to the May folder on UGCLoud.

Upper Grand District School Board

French as a Second Language Advisory Committee

Staffing and Recruitment

Vicky Crandall, Manager of Elementary Staffing and Recruitment introduced herself and Julie Prendergast, Manager of Secondary Staffing and Recruitment to the committee and thanked them for inviting them to the meeting.

She began her presentation by explaining that the recruitment of French qualified teachers continues to be a challenge.

She shared a chart that summarizes the new teacher licences issued each year in Ontario from 2008 - 2016 with forecasted numbers from 2017 – 2020. These numbers reflect all teachers in elementary, secondary, French and English; and teachers that have completed their teaching programs outside of Ontario and Canada.

Applicants to Teacher Education Programs have dropped significantly with the implementation of the newer two year program in 2015. She added that the level of newly licenced teachers from the U.S border programs has dropped by more than 60% and the number of newly licenced teachers educated outside of Ontario (in other provinces or out of country) has dropped by more than 40%. The overall drop in enrollments is having a significant impact on recruitment for all boards in the province.

Staffing needs for French Qualified Teachers continue to grow. Qualified FSL teachers are needed for daily jobs and long term occasional positions. In secondary, retired Core & Immersion French teachers are being utilized for daily supply, however this is limited.

To attract new teachers UGDSB: attends several Career Fairs every year, within Ontario and outside the province; has increased their efforts for hiring; and has been working on strategies to retain new teachers. Potential candidates are interviewed at Job Fairs.

Vicky Crandall explained our hiring practices and the parameters that come with Regulation 274. She explained that when hiring, UGDSB must consider our Long Term Occasional (LTO) list applicants first, then our Occasional Teacher (OT) Roster applicants and then any external applicants (if there are no internal applicants). She added that when they are recruiting, they give preference to French qualified applicants (as well as Tech qualified applicants in Secondary).

She showed the hiring trends chart for UGDSB OT Roster for elementary. The overall declining number of applicants is very concerning and there is no anticipated change in the near future. This year the OT Roster was open all year for English and French and the number of applicants increased slightly to 470.

Julie Prendergast referenced the table for the Secondary OT Roster for 2018-2019. There were 93 applicants interviewed with 71 hired. Of the 71 hired, there were 17 with FSL qualifications.

Upper Grand District School Board

French as a Second Language Advisory Committee

One of the greatest challenges is the retention of newly hired French qualified OT Roster teachers. The attrition rate over the past two years is approximately 40%. She provided details on the retention initiatives and gave examples of each.

Vicky Crandall replied that we are actively recruiting but there is a very limited pool. We will continue our efforts to attract French qualified teachers to our district, but we must be mindful of the challenges ahead.

Mark Paralovos, French Immersion – City of Guelph asked what is the retention rate of the French language teachers that were hired through the Apply to Education website? Vicky Crandall replied that in 2017-2018, 56 were interviewed and 32 were hired. The retention rate is not necessarily 40% as there are other considerations. We do not have this year's information yet. Mark Paralovos commented that the number of applicants through the job fairs was higher than through the Apply to Education website. He asked if there was a reason for the discrepancy. Vicky Crandall responded that she believes it's because we are at job fairs specifically targeting qualified French teachers applicants and they are not always on the Apply to Education website.

Mark Paralovos asked if there would be value for UGDSB if they had a specific page on the Apply to Education website to attract potential qualified French teachers. Vicky Crandall replied that for the last two years UGDSB has had a posting on the Apply to Education website specifically for French elementary. This year a general posting was added. She found that teachers would apply to both even if they did not have the qualifications. That meant that credentials were being double checked. She added that having the posting throughout the year was more successful.

Mark Paralovos asked if UGDSB knew the retention rate was for new hires over 5-10 years. Do we lose staff to another Board? Are they being offered longer contracts? How do we retain them? Vicky Crandall replied that we do not have this information. French teachers are highly marketable and it is very easy for them to relocate.

Rachel Cooper asked if ECEs or just teachers were being hired. Vicky Crandall replied that Apply to Education has two large job fairs every year and there are ECEs and EAs in attendance there. There is another person in the department that is responsible for ECEs and EAs and they are actively recruiting.

Rachel Cooper commented that we don't know the numbers of ECEs in the classroom in the future or if there will be any. Will this change the number for recruitments if there isn't an ECE or EA in the classroom? Vicky Crandall replied that it is challenging to get ECEs and even more challenging to get qualified French ECEs.

Paul Smith commented that given the unknown environment and the cuts being made to education, it is understandable that the rate of teachers coming out of teacher's college is

Upper Grand District School Board

French as a Second Language Advisory Committee

declining. How do you get teachers interested? Vicky Crandall responded that they are aware of two colleges that are increasing the number of applicants for next year. Julie Prendergast added that the March 15, 2019 Ministry memo has impacted the motivation to go into teaching due to the uncertainty of what is happening in the province.

Linda Busuttill commented that a few years ago the Parents for French Association offered a French camp in July and August. There were some difficulties in attracting students. She added that many years ago the Wellington County Board of Education also ran summer programs like Kids Speak to build language skills. She asked if there was a possibility of home-grown programs if a community was able to organize a French language summer camp which could potentially attract high school students who may be thinking of careers in French language. There is unfortunately a gap for attracting university students as they need to be earning money in May and June for school. If there was an option for the camp supervisor to offer professional development or other activities for teachers in Teachers College, this may generate interest for them to enhance their skills. This may be a way to engage high school students in French and retain them in French.

Robin Ross thanked the presenters.

PowerPoint presentation was uploaded to the May folder on UGCloud.

FDK & FI

Carrie Conrad, Early Learning Manager, introduced herself to the committee and explained that part of her role is to work with the implementation of the Kindergarten program, and to support schools and educators in delivering it within UGDSB.

At the March FSLAC meeting, the committee had requested specific information regarding Full Day Kindergarten and French Immersion.

She provided explanations and examples for the following questions which are detailed in her PowerPoint presentation:

- What pedagogy are they following in JK? Is it an inquiry-based program or is it teacher instruction?
- What PD is there for teachers/ECEs? How are we improving knowledge for teachers and ECEs? For Supply Teachers and Supply ECEs?
- Where are we in the FI track with the emergent curriculum and play based learning?

Carrie Conrad thanked the committee for the opportunity to present.

PowerPoint presentation was uploaded to the May folder on UGCloud.

Upper Grand District School Board

French as a Second Language Advisory Committee

FI Curriculum and Instruction

Jonathan Walker thanked the committee for the opportunity to present and to provide information to questions gathered at the March FSLAC meeting.

He began his presentation by providing updates regarding the implementation of the Secondary FSL review. He added that an in-house document, "Procedures for Supporting French as a Second Language" was created and shared with FSLAC, administrators, French teachers and guidance counsellors (both elementary and secondary) last year.

This document is divided into three parts:

Part 1 – How to Support Students in FSL JK to Grade 12

Part 2 – Procedures for Exempting Students from FSL Grades 4-8

Part 3 – Substitutions for Compulsory Credit Requirements in Secondary Schools

Christina Schilling, Secondary FSL Curriculum Lead explained that in secondary, a group of teachers created a two page document 'Supporting all Students in FSL' about skills in FSL; what are the transferable skills and ideas on how to support the students within the board. She added that a new introductory French class, FSF10 course, is offered this semester at both CCVI and ODSS. Students can sign up for this class in high school when they don't have the prerequisite. There are several reasons why students may not have the prerequisite: coming from out of province; they didn't start French in Grade 4; they've had an illness or been out of school. It is also popular with international students as they see it a part of the Canadian culture to have both languages.

- She provided details of the extra opportunities that are offered to secondary French students:
- St. Donat, Quebec field trip- French Immersion for 4 days
- DELF – French testing separate from curriculum
- Franconnexion – French event that includes panel discussions, French entertainer, sessions about French activities, discussions groups, all done in French

Linda Busuttil, Trustee, asked if the Wellington Catholic School Board ran DELF testing in conjunction with UGDSB. Christina Schilling replied that they initially started with UGDSB but is running it on their own now. Every board in the province has been involved this year.

Jillian Major, Elementary FSL Curriculum Lead, informed the committee that as part of the 3 Year FSL Plan, we continue to survey our students in grade 4,6,8,9 and 12. The survey is linked to the Ministry goals and we hope to learn what level of confidence in French

Upper Grand District School Board

French as a Second Language Advisory Committee

students have. The surveys are out in elementary and the response has been positive. Results will be shared with elementary teachers in the school.

Linda Busutil asked if parents are advised that the surveys are happening? Jonathan Walker responded that the information goes through principals so no information is sent out. Linda Busutil commented anything to get your child engaged to learn, to be participating, would be nice to know as a parent.

Christina Schilling added that results from the St. Donat trip survey showed two popular responses: students had fun in the snow and they had the opportunity to work on their French.

Jillian Major and Christina Schilling worked with elementary guidance counsellor on myBlueprint to include a special French page so when students are planning out their school careers, courses, researching career and pathways after school, all they would do is click on the French page and find out their options.

Jillian Major added that we continue to work with our New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) coordinator to provide opportunities for our new teachers. She gave examples of the activities that were offered at the NTIP camp last summer. NTIP sessions are also offered after school throughout the year but this is dependent on timing and number of teachers.

Christina Schilling distributed two information sheets. The first one was 'Canadian Parents for French' and is an informative sheet that has been shared with teachers on the Google classroom. This is an excellent resource and more information is available on their webpage – frenchstreet.ca.

The second sheet is a resource for students with information about exchanges, going to Quebec, things to do within the board, things that they could do outside of school, volunteer hours done in French, co-ops in French etc.

Jillian Major highlighted the supports for core French teachers. These are divided into two sections. One is professional development opportunities and the second is classroom instruction.

Professional development opportunities include:

- Collaborative inquires
- Digital Classrooms
- Subject Council
- DELF Correcteur training
- OMLTA Conference
- Ministry Webinars

Upper Grand District School Board

French as a Second Language Advisory Committee

- PD Days

The second part of supporting our Core French teachers is in Classroom Instruction. We are trying to reinforce the idea that we are teaching through an action oriented approach. This comes from the idea that communication is a social act and that it's designed to accomplish a task. The other part to this is that the experiences of communication need to be authentic.

Jonathan Walker replied that Carlo Zen, Superintendent of Education, sends his regrets for this evening. Experiential learning in French, environmental leadership, trends are in his portfolio and he would be happy to speak to the committee. Jonathan Walker added that he will share information and take back any questions to Superintendent Zen.

Experiential learning opportunities are available for students but they are not French credits. There are some exceptions with co-ops where the teacher provides instruction all in French. For experiential learning, there are opportunities for all schools to receive funding to participate in field trips, listen to guest speakers share their knowledge of French, and to showcase French in a different light. In elementary 75 % of our schools and 100% of our secondary schools participate in that funding yearly.

In terms of trends, the staffing process is not complete so it is difficult to predict the number of classes in secondary. We are waiting for information.

He added that there is nothing currently in our environmental plan that focuses specifically on French. There is an environmental committee that focuses on supporting schools or FI centres/classrooms and core French teachers would do activities in French to help schools support their environmental goals.

Linda Busutil commented that there aren't any experiential learning opportunities in French such as CELP. In secondary the focus is arts, environmental and other opportunities but there is nothing experiential similar to environment in French for credits. Jonathan Walker commented that it's difficult to offer those programs in French due to class size challenges. He will take this information back to Superintendent Zen.

Paul Smith, French Immersion - Secondary – City of Guelph, asked for more information regarding substitution for compulsory credits and making it easier on students.

Jonathan Walker explained that previously when students struggled at school and they were transitioning to high school, there was a Learning Skills class that was offered to help them with the transition. If they took this class, they would have to substitute another course and that typically was assumed that it was French as many students usually picked that class. In the transition meeting now, students going from grade 8 into grade 9 are asked what they would like to substitute; it doesn't have to be French. This is discussed

Upper Grand District School Board

French as a Second Language Advisory Committee

with the parent, student and teacher to decide which course should be substituted to support the student.

Paul Smith replied that there are already limited courses for FI students to take to get their credits. He asked if these may be potentially more limited in the future given the March 15 announcement regarding small class sizes and enrolments and what are the implications for a second FI focused high school in the Guelph area? He added that having two will split it even more.

Jonathan replied that until the staffing process is completed, we are not able to provide this information. Once this has been determined, the information could be brought back to FSLAC.

Christina Schilling added that you need ten courses to get the French Immersion certificate. Of the ten, four of those are the language courses and six are others. There will always be the ten and it will depend on the size of the school regarding the options.

Tracey Lindsay responded that the choices may be limited. The implication of the larger class sizes will definitely impact classes that are typically run with lower class sizes. This may include French immersion or our special education classes. We will be looking at what this will look like and how we can still offer those courses to the students that need them. It will be a challenge.

PowerPoint presentation was uploaded to the May folder UGCloud.

Meeting Summary, Recommendation(s), Motion(s) and Action(s)

Next meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2019

Adjournment

Rachel Cooper adjourned the meeting at 7:08 pm.