

Canadian Parents for French

**Provincial and National French
Second-Language Education
Stakeholder Consultations**

British Columbia Consultation

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Introduction

Background Information

The CPF Provincial French Second Language stakeholder consultation held on March 29th was the last in a series of consultations held across British Columbia to address provincial French Second language education issues.

In the fall of 2003, CPF-BC & Yukon Branch held a series of meeting involving its 47 chapters, partner groups, and school districts. The result was a comprehensive brief on *The Funding of French Second Language Education in BC*. This brief contains seven recommendations (please see [Appendix](#)) and a plan to double the number of French immersion graduates by 2013.

The recommendations contained in *The Funding of French Second Language Education in BC* and the brief were sent to school districts and partners groups across the province. To date, some 27 school districts (with 400,000 students) have supported the brief, as have eight partner groups. Sixty meetings across British Columbia have been held to discuss the CPF-BC & Yukon brief and its recommendations represent a broad consensus on funding issues.

The French Second Language (FSL) stakeholder conference builds on this consultation process by addressing issues beyond the financing of FSL education in BC. The intent was to identify problems and challenges and offer concrete solutions in the classroom and the broader community.

Melanie Tighe-Lovsin, president, Canadian Parents for French-BC and Yukon, welcomed participants in French and English, expressing appreciation for a great turnout at such short notice. She reviewed the background for this meeting, explaining that in March 2003, the federal government presented a plan for FSL education. She commented that it was no surprise that then-Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Stéphane Dion, announced the federal action plan in BC, given the enormous increase in interest in the province in recent years. BC has set all-time enrolment records for French education for each of the past several years, at a time when overall enrolment declined. Recently, French immersion students in BC also received top ranking in reading in all of Canada.

Local consultations held recently in BC resulted in several recommendations for financing of French second language education. Twenty-seven school districts have responded to these recommendations. The BC Teachers Federation had led the immersion coalition in its work on teacher shortage and teacher induction issues.

Canada's new Prime Minister and the new Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Official Languages, Pierre Pettigrew, reaffirmed their commitment to funding the federal action plan last week.

A National Symposium on Official Languages was held in Toronto earlier this month, called *Vision and Challenges for the 21st Century*. Stakeholders from across Canada discussed the

objective of doubling the number of young Canadians with knowledge of both official languages by 2013.

These regional meetings are intended to feed into a national meeting to be held in Ottawa on April 21. The federal body wanted the final report by the end of March. Although this presented a very short timeframe, the local chapter jumped at the opportunity to participate. The group assembled here today is primarily focused on the educational sector and the Lower Mainland. However, another conference is planned for next year, and the hope is it will have a broader representation of community groups.

Today, there is an opportunity to ensure that views are heard in the national debate, Tighe-Lovsin said. We can let them know what is required and present a strong BC voice in the national process.

Keynote Address by Peter Robinson, CEO, Mountain Equipment Co-op

Addressing the topic “Bilingualism: The Benefits to Business,” Peter Robinson explained that his presentation would outline how MEC brought French into the organization and the lessons that were learned, commenting that it was remarkable for an organization based on the West Coast to have become so bilingual.

MEC has over two million members. They tend to be a very influential group with a high household income, high education levels, and home access to the Internet.

MEC started out as a very small organization and has remained focused on its core market. Market analysis showed that Quebec has the most people who engage in outdoor activities, but MEC’s Board was very nervous about going into Quebec due to the language issue. When it finally made the decision to move into Quebec in fall 2001, MEC made a commitment to provide an equivalent level of service to its francophone members, so there was considerable work to be done. But the investment has paid off, and MEC expects its growth in Quebec to be much faster than what it has experienced to date in English Canada.

All senior management employees in Quebec are bilingual and all employees are either bilingual or French. MEC prefers to recruit staff that are already bilingual instead of training them on the job, which is very expensive and does not always work. MEC did not want to fight French regulations, so it brought Quebec language officials on board as partners from the start. The company has just won an award of merit from the Quebec government for its efforts.

MEC also had to create a unique French vocabulary for its products and catalogues, including technical terms for equipment, activities, and instructions. It created a 6,000-word glossary, which has been adopted by the official body in Quebec.

The Montreal store opened last spring and the new French language catalogue was released in August. Since then, MEC went back and refitted its Ottawa store to be bilingual. A new store will be opening in Quebec City in six weeks and MEC is now working on a French Web site.

Montreal is one of MEC's biggest stores and Quebec has given the company a promising new market.

The advantages of this initiative for MEC include compelling new opportunities for sales, growth, and member services. It allowed MEC to retool its stores in areas outside Quebec that have large French-speaking populations. There have also been less tangible benefits: embedding a new language has enriched the culture of MEC and leveraged new partnerships. Including French offerings in the stores' reference materials section has stimulated spin-off benefits for those who create French materials. Designers have also been stimulated to produce more stylish designs because of the demands of the Quebec market.

Robinson said it should not be up to the business sector to spend money to train people in French. It is up to government and the emphasis should be on the school system.

Question and Answers

Participants asked about bilingualism in the BC outlet and about how MEC determines bilingualism of job candidates. Robinson said some things like item price tags are now bilingual at all stores, but staffing and signage depend on local needs. MEC needs to recruit more bilingual staff for Vancouver. Job candidates are interviewed in French. MEC is prepared to pay a premium for bilingual employees, he added.

Baseline information about FSL in BC: Adrian Dix, Executive Director, CPF-BC and Yukon

Dix thanked Robinson, saying it was inspirational to hear of MEC's experience. He said one of the exciting things about the federal action plan is the focus on young people. There is a good balance between training federal civil servants and supporting students in schools, which is important for the long term.

He referred to statistics in the conference information package on French language enrolment in BC schools. There has been an enormous increase in elementary enrolment, especially in kindergarten, but a decline in secondary enrolment. The latter decline is linked to a decline in elementary enrolment in the mid-1990s that is being felt now in the system. This year, secondary enrolment is picking up, a trend that is expected to continue.

When CPF started, the proportion of enrolment in French second language programs was one in twelve. Now it is one in eight and is expected to be one in seven next year. Francophone school enrolment is also expected to increase.

One of our goals, Dix said, is to increase the number of French immersion programs. There has been an important increase in access to programs in BC. For some communities in the North and the interior, however, programs are under threat. Access for all is as important a goal as doubling the number of bilingual students.

To meet the objective for graduates by 2013, we can't rely on students now starting kindergarten, because they won't have graduated yet, said Dix. So the challenge lies in addressing the attrition rates for high school students (which vary tremendously by district in BC) by adopting best practices.

Dix mentioned new programs at Okanagan University College and at Simon Fraser University (SFU) to study at the post-secondary level in French. Surrey has also introduced an intensive core French program for 2004, and it is hoped this will serve as a model for other schools.

The quality of French education, which is not very satisfactory for many, requires work. By 2010, based on conservative estimates, there will be 39,000 French immersion students in BC. This will require a net increase of at least 300 additional French teachers.

Other services will need to change to meet the demands of this growing population. One of the ways to meet these challenges is by reducing attrition. But there is also a need to change the status quo and how French immersion is viewed. In the average dual-track French immersion school in BC, French immersion students represent more than 50% of the school population, up from 33% in 2000. This changes the culture of the school and necessitates a change in dealing with the non-French immersion population that may feel threatened in the process. This is another important reason to improve the quality of core French.

Education

Question 1: Students and learning

What are the first steps to be taken in marketing bilingual education to students at all levels—from elementary to high school entry, from high school graduation to post-secondary education and life-long learning—and making it a genuine experience to learn a second language? How can resources and support from outside the classroom be mobilized to enrich FSL instruction and capture the magic of bilingual education?

Recommendations

- Find a way to make French education “cool.”
- Facilitate field trips to Quebec and France.
- Develop strategies to gather and disseminate best practices to teachers.
- Motivate teachers: the best way to market programs to students is by having exciting teachers.
- Identify role models—secondary school students, graduates, business and sports personalities, and people for whom French has helped their lives and careers—to deliver the positive messages about bilingual education.

- Celebrate what the role models do with their language skills.
- Use peer outreach. Students and teacher assistants can make inspirational speeches.
- Get help from a range of organizations with brochures and information.
- Identify friendly media outlets, such as TV Ontario and local outlets.
- Improve hard data for parents.
- Be realistic about where to expend efforts. Glossy brochures about French programs are not enough.
- Build French components into all courses.
- Do a better job of teaching French immersion grads.

Discussion

Traditional marketing tools—for example, pamphlets and radio spots—might work for parents, but won't work for the current youth market. The group acknowledged that a two-pronged approach is required in any future marketing strategy for French immersion.

The first step is to market French immersion to families considering the program. There is a need to develop clear marketing strategies and decide who is going to shepherd ideas into action. A central resource should be identified, perhaps based on an existing organization.

Parents like to see hard data, statistics, and results. A good example of this is the extremely high reading level of male French immersion graduates. Parents have the ability to encourage their children to enter French immersion, and the “why” is very important for them.

Additional take-home materials for parents, such as pamphlets, would be useful when promoting French immersion to families. These should be produced in a variety of languages, including Chinese and Punjabi, to access the growing market of new Canadians. One delegate noted that the Alberta government has just developed pamphlets for core French and immersion to be circulated to all the province's school boards. Another mentioned that she would be concerned about anything that markets core French when she believes that CPF and school boards cannot deliver on any promises about the quality of instruction.

The second step is to market directly to the children themselves, including older students already in immersion—an important step in order to counter the high rate of attrition in the secondary years. The challenge is to appeal to these two very different markets using both the value of hard data and the “coolness factor.” “Cool” and fun” are major motivators for young students. Marketing to this age group may mean that CPF has to outsource its marketing material to an independent agency. “How do we turn the youth on to French?” is the question marketing materials must answer. Kids spend most of their free time online and that is where the marketing needs to go. Interactivity is very important for kids, and anything that expands their growth and learning of the language outside the textbook is valuable. Teachers need to use technology to keep the learning going on beyond the classroom. Another delegate remarked that the use of pop-up ads might prove to be an effective marketing tool. While there is some debate about the usefulness of pop-ups, it was decided that it might be a good way to draw kids' attention.

The high attrition rate after elementary school must be addressed. A possible solution is to increase the number and frequency of guest speakers to elementary school classrooms. These guests could promote secondary school French to younger students by talking about their jobs and how their studies in French helped them in their careers. These guest speakers can and should be real people with interesting jobs, not “super-heroes.” Recruiting guest speakers necessitates staying in touch with past and future French immersion graduates. The existing alumni association could be used, or graduates could voluntarily join a registry. In the shorter term, some graduates could be contacted through their parents in CPF.

Remote and rural communities might face additional challenges in accessing guest speakers; therefore, speakers in urban centres could be invited to participate in a film that could be shown to students in outlying regions. This film would be a powerful and useful tool, for both retention and recruiting purposes. Another delegate suggested that shorter video clips could be produced and shown to a larger audience to promote French, similar in style to the “Canadian Heritage” minutes shown on CBC.

A “career fair” would be a worthwhile marketing tool. Exposing students to a wide variety of career options and showing where bilingualism can take them is a good method for limiting attrition, especially if the case is made early enough.

It is also important to find teachers who are appeal to kids—teachers who are young, exciting, and enthusiastic.

Current and potential French immersion students need to be made aware of extra-curricular activities such as field trips and other out-of-class opportunities that will expose them to fun and different learning styles. There is a need for a greater cultural awareness in French immersion, and an ability to step outside the curriculum. All participants agreed that what keeps students in the program is the *feeling* they get from learning about a new culture. Knowing that teacher preparation and commitment are an issue, it was determined that to make this feasible, the entire school has to be supportive and “on board.”

CPF should consider a wider geographical representation, and the possibility of a national curriculum to streamline procedures, testing, and evaluations.

“Buddying” (partnering secondary school-aged French immersion students with students in the elementary school program) is a valuable tool that should be encouraged. This provides a positive role model for younger students, and could be incorporated in the older students’ volunteer hours for extra credit. It may also lead to the older students considering teaching as part of their career planning.

A participant asked where the economics of this apply to the students. Noting that most adults think children don’t care about money, he said that when a guest speaker talks to a high school class, and the first thing the students want to know is how much money the presenter makes. Another participant noted while money does not motivate everyone, it might be good incentive for lowering attrition rates.

The morning's guest speaker, Peter Robinson, CEO of Mountain Equipment Co-op, delivered a strong message to French immersion students—that government and business are not interested in retraining employees in French, but want the workers who already have the skills in place. All delegates agreed that that message has to go out to the students.

Question 2: Teachers and instruction

What are the prospects for attracting and training the next generation of competent, enthusiastic FSL instructors, and for ensuring that they have the resources and support that they need to succeed?

Recommendations

Group 2 did not just discuss Question 2, but talked about all three questions. It had two main points to pass on:

- Develop language competency tests. There was much conversation about language competency and about how very few high school students pass language competency exams for French immersion training programs. UBC and SFU accept low percentages of students who apply. However, UBC has changed its policies to accept some students provisionally.
- Make students aware of the career opportunities that require bilingualism.

The group also talked about changes in policies, the need for advocacy, and how and where to get the greatest impact from funding.

Discussion

The group acknowledged that much of the discussion on the question would probably overlap with the previous question. The group discussed discrepancies in various teacher-training programs, from the new core French instruction program at SFU, to the lack of instruction in French language methodology in the BC middle school training program. Delegates agreed on the need to recruit more French immersion and core French instructors, especially in smaller communities, and on the need to make teaching French an attractive option for teachers.

School boards will continue with a combination of “growing their own” teachers and selectively “poaching” teachers from other provinces. Factors such as a greater number of teachers in certain areas, and desirability of location and climate, will continue to make this a viable option for British Columbia.

One participant noted that the University of Ottawa offers five \$5,000 scholarships per year for BC students to pursue French language teaching, but it is a constant struggle to get applicants.

The entrance requirements are so high for teachers—upward of 90% in some schools—that it is discouraging. Participants agreed that the testing process is formidable—it is possible that some well-rounded people who might make excellent teachers are being excluded. Those with the highest grades do not necessarily make the best teachers.

Issues of teacher retention need to be addressed through ongoing dialogue, resources, involvement, and support, particularly from parents. One participant noted the sometimes adversarial environment between teacher and parents. Another suggested that CPF facilitators should work with parents and show them how to establish relationships with teachers even if the parents do not speak French.

A second group also addressed this question. During the round of introductions, one participant commented that language competency of French teachers is of concern. Another participant disagreed with “the excessive stress” placed on the cultural advantages of learning French versus an emphasis on what students can do with French after they leave school. FSL students provide a pool of people who could become FSL teachers after they leave school, but they are not often made aware of this. The high attrition rate among secondary-level students could be addressed by making them aware of the shortage of FSL teachers, as well as of other career opportunities that will allow them to continue using French after they graduate. There must also be ways of tracking students who graduate from French immersion programs.

Core French education is another area of concern. There is little being done to ensure competency levels among core French teachers. A report is forthcoming on an innovative program in Surrey where core French is taught using video conferencing to two classes of Grade 5 to 6 students. This will have implications for outlying Lower Mainland areas.

The role of the media is critical for the promotion of French in BC. However, most coverage tends to focus on the negative. A participant said she was approached by a French TV reporter for a story on FSL but refused to comment when she realized the reporter’s focus was the competency of French language teachers. There is a sense of being “tried in the press.” Sound bites often leave out a positive context, and tend to reflect on the negative. A suggestion was made that reporters be referred to students whose level of French competency may impress, thus garnering support for French immersion programs. However, participants noted that reporters are sometimes set on particular angles for their stories, such as teacher competency levels, and this deflection is ineffective in those situations. More discussion is needed on how to get media support for and education about the value of FSL.

One participant said her impression is that the media has been more positive toward French language training after literacy reports were put forth by Statistics Canada showing positive results. Most parents worry that their child might lose by taking French but new information showing that children do better in all subjects when they studying two languages has helped improved misperceptions.

However, most participants agreed that media coverage continues to be negative. A recent *Vancouver Sun* letter to the editor suggested that French was being taught to placate Quebec and that the focus of language training in BC should be Mandarin. A participant said that kind of

article feeds a negative perception about French in BC, where many people feel threatened by French immersion. The CPF and consortium members need to be more proactive in the media, not just reactive. Recently, the *Vancouver Sun* has published four positive stories about French immersion plus two editorials, so the message is getting out.

A participant noted that in her area of Victoria where two-thirds of kindergarten children are enrolled in French immersion, there are huge shortages of qualified and competent teachers. It was pointed out that not everyone graduates high school with the same level of competency in French. The question may be one of retraining, with a focus on core French teaching competency.

Another issue was the high levels of attrition at the secondary level. In one district, more than half the children in French immersion drop out before Grade 12. However, in another district, of 19,000 students of whom 25% are new immigrants, one in four children is a French immersion student.

One participant said that leaving French immersion in Grade 10 should not necessarily be considered a failure. As a result of the huge number of career choices, many students have to drop out of French immersion even if they don't want to. However, Grade 10 French still assures them some competency and their interest and skills in the language continue to be genuine. Graduation should not be the only indication of competency, although students who drop out at Grade 10 do not qualify for actual bilingual certification.

Another major concern is the issue of mobility between provinces and other countries. Quebecois teachers are not considered as having the same general competency standards as teachers in BC. A great deal of retraining is required, which often discourages Quebecois teachers from moving to BC. This has to be taken up with the BC College of Teachers.

Statistics on FSL can also be problematic because they do not specify who is included. For example, some areas have high percentages of international students who go to core French and not French immersion. Are statistics talking about Canadian or international students? As well, statistics do not distinguish between private and public school students. There was some question about whether French immersion programs are in fact offered by private schools in BC. Detailed and better statistics are needed.

A participant noted that while he supports late immersion programs, there may be an overemphasis on them. Meanwhile there are waiting lists for early immersion programs, which makes it an easier and more immediate issue requiring attention. The facilitator pointed out that areas such as Williams Lake cannot afford to maintain early immersion programs through Grade 12 without an infusion of Late French immersion students. A participant added that unlike BC, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, and other provinces do not ask for early immersion as a prerequisite for late immersion programs.

School trustees are underrepresented on this issue even though they drive these programs. Efforts by the CPF under the federal government initiative must bring in trustees who can make initiatives happen.

There was strong interest in creating incentives for students to become FSL teachers by having speakers such as Peter Robinson of Mountain Equipment Co-op reach out to students. As well, there should be road maps on Web sites on how students could pursue teachers and other careers. Students must be made aware of the strength of the programs available to.

Noting that the CPF Web site provides such information, Taylor acknowledged that there may be better ways to frame the information and make it more widely accessible.

Many programs compete for higher secondary school students, so targeting students for French immersion must take place earlier. Grade 10 is the last attrition point. Incentive efforts are needed before students quit. Follow up of students who take French is also essential. Students will stay the course if they have goals in mind, so incentives must stress the concrete benefits of French language training.

French immersion programs in BC must be coordinated by people who understand the issues. A brochure that a child may never show his or her parent is not enough. Face-to-face and interactive contact is essential.

Students also need special boosts to reach appropriate competency levels. The University of British Columbia (UBC) program finds that often only six students qualify for training out of 100. The competency standard is not a grade that a student achieves—it is a determination of his or her ability to follow a class taught in French. If they cannot, how can they teach it? However, UBC is now accepting students provisionally and supporting them in reaching appropriate levels.

Some participants expressed a need for a review of competency standards for training programs so that students are not being excluded and do not abandon efforts to become bilingual.

Financial support, in the form of bursary programs for example, is also essential for both French immersion students and teachers. Immersion and exchange programs are expensive and a great deal of incentive is required for students to give up their summer.

Competency levels are an issue in core French, which is mandated for students between Grades 4 and 8. This tends to be where the lowest competency standards are, whether in urban or rural settings right across the country. Core French teachers often don't even have high school French. The CPF should advocate for minimum levels of competency for teachers hired at that level because children get "hooked on French" at this age when they have good teachers.

A participant summarized issues that stood out for her: a need for hiring policies at the school board levels for competency in French, the need for the BC College of Teachers to enable exchange students from Quebec and France to teach in BC, and the need to find a way to retain students who do not quite qualify for training programs but are still keen to work in French.

There has to be a way to collect and share best practices for educators, as well as lists of mentors who can speak to career opportunities and other advantages of being bilingual.

The facilitator suggested that Advance Placement French, which is currently offered in English, be added to the list of initiatives for Students.

She wrapped up the session by summarizing the main recommendations to the larger meeting as two-fold: one related to issues of language competency, the other related to policies and practices.

Question 3: Public opinion and community context

What are the dimensions of a community-based campaign to promote FSL instruction and support Canada's Vision for 2013 objectives? What are the first steps, and who should be involved?

Recommendations

- Reach students as early as kindergarten—Grade 10 is too late.
- Offer French immersion courses at university levels.
- Offer French immersion courses to all teachers, including core French teachers.
- Present a statement to the upcoming CMEC meeting about the importance of students learning both official languages.
- Reinstate mandatory FSL from kindergarten to Grade 10.
- Made French an entry requirement for language training.
- Review assessment tools.
- Share the data used by CPF in its data-driven dialogues.
- Seek the support of ministries of education to report on how students are performing.
- Mandate mentoring programs for retaining teachers.
- Ensure that coordinators and principals support teachers in their efforts.
- Review the policy that requires teachers from other provinces to take many qualifying courses before they can teach in BC.
- Seek help from Quebec schools to train French immersion teachers in BC.

Discussion

Participants requested more facilitated exchanges between English and French classes. Another suggestion was to pair senior immersion students with new junior immersion classes, and yet another was to encourage more social activities in French for French immersion students outside school.

Promote exchanges and provide funding for them, suggested a participant. This is a heavy burden for the parents who are doing the fundraising, and it puts a lot of stress on the whole school community. She suggested cooperation with corporations such as Air Canada to help cover costs.

Participants also suggested using success stories and disseminating best practices to enhance the quality of French in core programs. Many districts have eliminated French coordinators due to budget cuts.

Several participants commented on inadequate teacher training. Quality of FSL education training is an issue. A lack of expert teachers at the elementary level leads to frustrated students dropping out of French in Grade 8.

Changes needed at the university level include examination of entry requirements and the credit courses accepted as part of teacher training. Professional programs should require completion of Grade 12 core French as an entrance requirement so ensure better quality core French instruction at elementary levels. To improve their skills, teachers need adequate support from someone who understands the pedagogy and second language learning.

Teachers should have opportunities to upgrade for three weeks during the school year as part of professional development, instead of them having to take courses on their own time over the summer. Other suggestions included given teachers credits for going to Quebec to teach for six weeks, and forming partnerships with the Quebec government. Bursaries are available, so make use of them, said a participant.

Participants discussed French instruction requirements in BC high schools. Currently, a second language is mandatory, but it does not have to be French. The province should require French instruction from kindergarten to Grade 10. All citizens should have access to French instruction because it is an official language.

The Joint Council of Ministers of Education for Canada (CMEC) should make a policy statement about French education in Canada. A joint statement about the need for French to be taught across all jurisdictions would affect BC policy.

The BC Teachers Federation (BCTF) has asked repeatedly to be represented as a stakeholder when decisions are made about allocation of funding, and is frustrated by the Ministry's lack of response. The provincial Ministry should listen to teachers. The province should invite major stakeholders to negotiate what goes into the federal/provincial agreement.

French training is needed in the provincial bureaucracy. There should be collaboration between the provincial Ministry and other programs to pool resources and create synergies on French training.

The province has placed new responsibilities on districts to report data, but there are not a lot of data on French programs. More data and assessment tools for French immersion would help to assess progress and plan. Performance standards are needed. Although assessment is important, it needs to be original, not just something adapted from Quebec, because it is about teaching a second language.

French and English tools should be issued at the same time instead of waiting for the French tools come out four years later. The province is developing a new provincial report card, but it has nothing about French.

Public Service Commission resources can be used for collaboration on training and testing. Stress the importance of mentoring as a means to improve teacher retention. There are practical, easy ways to provide the necessary support. This should be mandated in case districts do not undertake this on their own.

The shortage of teachers is a key issue: Alberta used to be able to draw teachers from Quebec but not any more. The BC College of Teachers requirements (for example, for teaching science courses) may be a disincentive for teachers coming from Quebec. A participant explained that BC has very high standards for teachers, but the answer is not to drop those standards. The BC College does recognize training received in other provinces. There is a fair process for recognizing credits from other jurisdictions and teachers have five years to meet the provincial requirements. However, the process could be streamlined.

When teachers are recruited from Quebec, it is important that they understand how to teach a second language. This should be discussed with universities in Quebec to ensure they are able to provide training in second language instruction. Mentors are needed to support teachers transitioning from Quebec. They are not just dealing with teaching challenges—there are also significant cultural changes. However, recruiting from another province will work in the short term but it is expensive. It would be more efficient to better utilize local resources. A participant described a recent job fair for immersion teachers that provided great recruiting opportunities. She suggested pooling resources to repeat this success. The challenge of finding 300 more teachers is a very significant one, especially on top of other challenges such as upcoming retirements and retention issues.

Participants discussed whether the number of teachers in training is growing. UBC did not meet its quota last year, and participants agreed on the importance of encouraging more graduating high school students to consider teaching French as a career option. It is important to address the obstacles, not continue discussing them for a further ten years. Creative solutions are needed, such as paying part of student loans. Another suggestion was to have teachers share their stories to inspire and inform high school students of the requirements that are needed. Students who make it all the way to Grade 12 in French have mostly had positive experiences, so they would be receptive. SFU surveyed over 2,000 students, asking why they would want to do enter a post-secondary French program. Many said they wanted to solidify their French, which they see as a real asset for their future careers.

A participant suggested targeted immigration programs that fast-track applicants who meet the requirements, if local faculties of education cannot produce enough teachers to meet demands. A participant countered that she was not convinced about the lack of applicants. Universities do not accept many applicants because the applicants do not have all the requirements. Students need to be told of the requirements earlier, in Grade 10, so that they can prepare accordingly. Also, there are not many available university spots, so these need to be expanded first before looking outside the province.

People who are considering teaching as second career are also potential candidates. We can also track people with BAs and MAs in French, said the participant, who stressed the importance of respecting teachers. We need to enhance the profession instead of always putting teachers down. We also need to be able to pay teachers adequately after requiring six years of university training.

Provide incentives for French immersion graduates, said a participant. It is a matter of recruiting them and making it attractive for them to stay on as French teachers. They make ideal candidates because they know the programs and understand the students' experience in French immersion programs.

"If students hear that they will get laid off every June, what is the attraction?" asked a participant. Another participant responded that this is mainly a problem for the larger metropolitan areas, not for the rest of the province. It is part of the union process. Another said this also happens in smaller communities. The message has to be broadcast that the French teachers will almost certainly get a job back in September.

It is tough to recruit teachers in outlying areas, so there are opportunities for those who are willing to move. A participant said teachers must consider their colleagues and have standards that apply for all, instead of expecting special treatment.

Participants discussed factors affecting retention and teacher numbers. Cuts are having an impact, and there is a large retirement crest approaching. Many teachers are on long-term sick leave so there are many constraints. Class size is also a big issue since the provincial government stripped class size limits from the teachers' contract.

Students also need to see French as accessible and respected in their society outside of Quebec and outside of school. It is important to let students know that they are not alone in speaking French—that they are not learning French in a vacuum. Suggestions include putting signs in stores and using employee badges to show where French is spoken. Media is also important, said a participant, noting that they have been trying for three years to persuade Shaw Cable to put MusicPlus back on.

Sometimes, noted a participant, there is too much emphasis on the business of French as opposed to placing more emphasis on the culture of French. "Second language" gives the impression that it is second-class. Students are leaving French programs in high school because they don't see the benefits of French and because it's more difficult. One suggestion was to offer less "academic" alternatives in French for students who are struggling. Incentives are also important. A participant said her school plans trips to Quebec for Grade 10 students and that is a real incentive.

A participant described how a federal committee on Official Languages has been examining ways to demonstrate the benefits to young students. Efforts are underway to compile directories of young people who speak French, of role models who can come and speak to students about their jobs, and of bilingual jobs available.

Question 4: Institutional support and accessibility

What major program and policy changes would enhance FSL instruction across Canada? What are the first, most practical steps that can be taken to build a more effective, more accessible system, and who should be involved?

Recommendations

Participants recommended that several terms used in this question be defined.

Accountability

- Learning outcomes— a challenge to determine, especially for core students.
- Tangible benefits—how to assess, how to measure?

FSL

- What is the real definition? The federal government defines it as core French instruction, but the CPF definition also comprises French immersion and intensive core instruction.
- Perhaps “Second Official Language” is a better term.

Campaign

- Only 20 per cent of high school students will attend university. What can we do to target the other 80 per cent?
- Doubling our numbers will require the inclusion of core French instruction, and a rethinking of what constitutes “functional.”

Instruction

- What can we do to improve teacher training?
- Need to have diploma programs and out-of-field studies for teachers

Effective

- “Value added” —How to measure?
- Offer extra credits to secondary students for language courses or volunteering in elementary school classes.
- What is the value of French in the larger community?
- What are the projected needs for employment in the future?
- Marketing needs to show data and visuals for parents.
- Need to tell kids who speak French to be self-promotional on the job

Discussion

The discussion centred on the definition of several key terms in the question itself, and the group debated and clarified the meaning of terms such as *FSL*, *effective*, and *instruction*. Questions of

accountability and measurable outcomes were also discussed, especially regarding the unpredictable outcomes of the Grades 5 to 8 core French instruction program.

Delegates discussed the following terms and concepts over the course of the session:

Effective

- Effective means “value added” for most delegates, particularly in a job market context. It will be important to determine the projected employment needs for the future.
- There is still a certain amount of “fear” of French language in the non-French speaking community. As this mentality persists in the general population, part of an effective community-based campaign should be helping to alleviate this fear. The value of French in the larger community needs to be determined and improved.

Campaign

- Only 20% of high school students will attend university, said one representative. What can we do to market French language to the other 80%? CPF needs a strategic plan for students who may not go to university. What is the draw for those children and their parents? Why should they study in another language? We need to look at the community attitudes in all sectors of the economy.
- Delegates agreed that there is a need to broaden parents’ abilities to access choices, and to reiterate that in the global economy, French gives everyone a leg up. There is a need to raise the profile of French in all sectors of education, especially trades and technical.
- There is a concern that achieving the required numbers by 2013 will mean that core French instruction will have to be included in the Action Plan calculations. Participants were concerned about the differing levels of quality and the challenges in measuring learning outcomes for core French students.
- Students who do not speak English as their mother tongue are a growing group of potential French immersion students. Delegates discussed several possibilities for gearing marketing to these families, including building an awareness of and a respect for different languages in the classroom at an early age.
- Any campaign that promotes French instruction must show students how it improves their opportunities in all sectors of the economy including tourism, business, the arts, health, and more. There is a clear need to address the “value added” element. “The cold business reality is that employers can hire whomever they want,” said one participant. “It’s not all warm fuzzies, and the kids need to know that.”

FSL

- The federal government defines FSL as core French instruction, but in CPF literature it also comprises both French immersion and intensive core instruction.
- One participant stated that a friend mentioned that calling it “French as a Second Language” created the impression that the French language itself was somehow second-class. It was also noted by several delegates that for many BC students, that term does not reflect the reality that learning French constitutes a *third* language.

- The term FSL may also be misleading for parents, for whom the term may generate a mindset that their children will emerge from the core program with a functional level of French.

Accountability

- “What constitutes ‘bilingual’?” asked a delegate. Learning outcomes are a major concern. Counting heads is part of accountability but knowing what to count is a challenge. Testing is also a concern. What constitutes “functional”? The goals for 2013 cannot be achieved with French immersion alone; therefore, the term “bilingual” must be redefined. CPF needs to set performance standards with parents, community, and teachers. Should different levels of proficiency be set, and will it be the same in all provinces?
- Proficiency should be tested with a written and oral exam, agreed attendees. A proactive student in the core French program through Grade 12 could reach achievable bilingual standards if he or she takes on some additional work, such as an exchange or a work experience position.
- Charting the outcomes of those Grade 5 to 8 core French students would reveal “a dirty little secret”: that there is a serious lack of qualified teachers for those children, said a participant. Participants discussed whether Grades 5 to 8 core French is a worthwhile endeavour, and it was determined that the best-case scenario is to hope the core elementary program is of sufficient quality so as not to turn students off further high school instruction. Contact hours with an enthusiastic instructor was cited as the number one issue for these students, and methodology was considered to be as important, if not more important, than fluency for core teachers.
- Several representatives suggested that perhaps expanding the mandatory core program to include Grade 9, or to start the core program even earlier would help raise the bar higher and achieve more predictable outcomes. Most delegates agreed that this would be helpful, but was an unrealistic goal at this point, as the lack of quality teachers is the chief obstacle.

Instruction

- Delegates discussed what could be done to improve teacher training, including the need for diploma programs. It was agreed that current programs do not address what students need to be teachers of French. It was suggested that new teachers be encouraged to earn extra credentials in the form of continuing education in French instruction.
- FSL teachers who were French immersion graduates could speak to senior students at the post-secondary level and reinforce the career rewards of teaching French, especially in a market oversaturated with English teachers.
- Language planning is a federal issue that needs to be presented to the government in financial terms. It should not be the job of individual school boards to ensure that they have properly trained French teachers—that should be taking place at a provincial and national instruction level.
- French immersion students need to be encouraged to stay with the program and explore teaching as a viable career opportunity. The job market, and the value placed on it by the larger community, will drive these students and their parents. Schools should look for businesses that value French and bring them into classrooms and on panels and advisory committees. These are the French language’s “champions in the community.”

- There are opportunities for students outside of the classroom as well, including summer bursary program with Human Resources Development Canada. That program allows students to earn credit for exchanges and other language-based activities. CPF could increase the value of these bursaries by matching scholarship dollars for worthy students.

Business

Question 5

Is there scope for ongoing collaboration between the business and education sectors to increase the proportion of high school graduates with a working knowledge of both official languages? If so, based on the initial list of strategies developed at the National Symposium, what are the most promising opportunities for early action?

Recommendations

This group recommended two initiatives:

Travelling Road Show (“Why French?”)

- Provide an opportunity for students and parents to see how learning French can make a difference in a child’s life, both now and in the future, in terms of the opportunities for employment advancement and cultural growth it provides.
 - Materials needed: video, pamphlets, PowerPoint presentations, and audio
 - Make same basic presentation for all regions, but each new community show should add local and community-based speakers, organizations, etc.
 - Based on the model *Le Français de L’avenir* for Grade 10 students

***Les Sorties en Français* (field trips)**

- Develop a partnership among parents, teachers, students, CPF, and local organizations
 - Translation projects and in the field studies for cultural, arts, sports, government, and community programs.

Discussion

A participant said that Peter Robinson’s comment that MEC is not interested in training its employees to become bilingual because of the prohibitive costs has huge implications for educators. Newly hired federal government employees are also required to be bilingual or are expected to pay for FSL training at their own expense. However, the federal government still funds FSL training for employees already working.

A participant pointed out that business is not done just within national borders but reaches out internationally. Immigration Canada also supports French—it assigns extra points to immigrants

who are bilingual or speak an official language, and thus could be of help with international outreach.

The availability of education programs in both French and English in the Lower Mainland has generally improved from the kindergarten level to Grade 12. As business organizations open up, educators must tap into opportunities for placements and jobs. A participant noted that the forestry industry has been making connections with French-speaking students. This contact with students has had a positive impact as FSL students are exploring job opportunities in forestry.

Most districts hold education and career fairs but because of the general nature of these fairs, FSL participation has dwindled. If smaller districts get together, they may be able to jointly reach out at such venues. It would serve the dual purpose of increasing both student and business awareness of French immersion programs.

Participants liked the idea of a “travelling road show” across the province, which updates the earlier *Le Français de l’Avenir*. The road show could use dynamic speakers to highlight the importance of French and opportunities in bilingualism. This may over-tax the resources of people like MEC’s Peter Robinson, who would have to make consecutive presentations in various towns, so local role models could also be recruited. Mentoring projects could also be extended to bilingual workers at places such as MEC, who could offer climbing courses or other activities in French.

Power point presentations and videos are also effective tools for the road show, as is word of mouth and peer outreach by students. High school students could be encouraged to volunteer with FSL teachers, and perhaps even teach FSL to lower grades as a training practicum. A model exists in the form of peer No-Smoking campaigns, where students are trained in one weekend on how to present information. Teachers in training, who are younger, may also make effective role models and inspire students to see French as being “cool.”

There must not be an overemphasis on the importance of French as related only to potential employment opportunities. French must also be promoted for the cultural exposure it offers and must be seen as beneficial whether one ends up in business, as a world traveller, or as a bilingual tradesperson.

An immediate incentive to be seized upon in BC is the upcoming 2010 Olympics. Students will be applying for jobs and volunteer opportunities during the Olympics and must be made aware now that bilingual students will make it to the top of hiring lists.

A participant who lived in Turin during the Olympics noted that French is the official language of the Olympics for all policies and rules, with English coming second. This fact greatly boosted FSL training in Turin. There are also cultural reasons to speak French, as there will be a surge of cultural activities during the Olympics. Students would benefit from learning about their own region, as tours in French would highlight local sights. When students have concrete reasons to learn French, they become more excited by the prospect of doing so. The target group for 2010 are students currently in Grades 5, 6, and 7, which have high rates of attrition.

A concern was expressed about the lack of connection between core French and French immersion educators. In some places, such as Williams Lake, one person often coordinates both and it is not an issue but links could be facilitated in urban areas.

French is not currently available in cultural and public educational institutions in BC, such as IMAX, Science World, the Lynn Valley Ecology Centre, the historic town of Barkersville, and the Vancouver Aquarium. These places attract many visitors, including French immersion students, a fact these institutions may not be aware of. Supplying institutions with statistics on French immersion students in BC may help.

Some participants said they currently translate information from these centres for use in their own classrooms and schools. A participant suggested that students could be recruited to translate materials and information. Institutions must be made aware that some translations have already been done. They could also be advised that schools might not send French immersion students to the institutions because of the lack of translated materials. French-speaking students from Grades 10 to 12 could be recruited to walk elementary school children through cultural institutions, thus reducing costs for institutions.

BC cultural institutions may be affiliated with national bodies, such as the Canadian Association of Museums, which may already have bilingual resources. National support may be forthcoming. Further investigation on such networks is required.

In BC, tying the initiative to increased cultural tourism during the Olympics provides additional impetus for institutions. Materials could also be posted on the Internet to be shared with teachers across Canada.

The role of the CPF in this initiative was discussed. Taylor said the CPF's reputation as a strong advocate of FSL is a double-edged sword. The initiative may get a better response if the CPF partnered with educators as a larger consortium. The CPF cannot do translations but has an excellent dissemination network. The initiative, however, ties in with the CPF mandate of ensuring students know of opportunities in French, as well as with federal government goals.

Leadership for the first initiative could be taken by *Le Français de L'Avenir*, which has a similar concept. It could be asked to rethink its exclusion of Grade 10 students who are not seen to be proficient enough to speak French for a whole day. Grade 10 French immersion students might benefit from meeting others like themselves and it may help address attrition rates. It also ties in with changes in BC requiring Grade 10 students to make course choices earlier.

The issue of marketing French to students is critical. Marketing cannot be done by "firing on all cylinders." A range of strategies is required for particular groups. A participant pointed out that allophone communities are particularly resistant to learning French. In her district, Punjabi students are not interested in French. The facilitator pointed out that French immersion information is available in Punjabi, Mandarin, and Korean in some districts. A concern among parents is fear of losing one's first language. However, evidence shows that when students have existing solid reading skills, learning French does not undermine these abilities.

Marketing must not focus on federal government target goals for 2013 because parents won't care. The focus has to be on why students need to learn French. The facilitator tells her students that French is not about jobs or culture but language learning improving cognitive thought by "adding a groove to their brains."

It is important also to acknowledge that immersion is not the only path to becoming bilingual—other routes have to be equally valued. In meetings with parents, resistance to learning the French language sometimes tends to be about the fact that it is French. Changing the message may help so that the issue is about learning another language. The advantage of French is it does not require bussing children because French is taught in schools.

A participant pointed out that two of 19 successful French immersion students in her district are children with learning disabilities. There is a myth about French being the culprit for children experiencing learning disabilities and the misperception has to be addressed.

A new language-training program being piloted in eastern Canada geared to Grade 5 or 6 students is a good model. Children take intensive core French, math, and English for the first five months, with a view to making them spontaneous in French. In the second five months, social studies, English and sciences studies are taught in a concentrated form, while arts and conceptual subjects continue to be in French. Early results show that children not only are more comfortable in French but also score higher in math and English. The system is mandatory in some schools and a choice in others.

A second group also addressed this question. Participants began by discussing linkages in arts and culture. A representative of an arts organization said groups such as his do not presume to be teaching French when they come to visit schools. He cited the need for a better model for dialogue and collaboration with teachers to maximize the benefits of such interactions. We are willing to adapt and we want to help as much as possible, he said. The question is best to create a longer-lasting impression instead of just coming to the school once and doing a workshop. If teachers can help point out the possibilities, groups like his can get funding and establish a longer-term relationship, instead of just doing one-off visits.

Participants brainstormed this question, offering the following suggestions: having artists in residence; getting community groups to support school activities such as a year-end school play; and establishing an advisory committee that includes teachers, which would meet several times a year to discuss how to better utilize the skills of these groups.

The following further comments and suggestions were offered:

- Dialogue between teachers and arts/cultural groups must increase to better exploit volunteer opportunities for students to assist in French cultural activities. A participant efforts are made to stress to Canadian Heritage, which provides the funding, the importance of providing opportunities for students to use the language outside the classroom.
- An organization has developed a directory of 500 businesses that are owned or operated by people who speak French, though they may not necessarily provide services in French. Schools can use that directory to match students to jobs that allow them to use their French.

This organization will also look at developing a directory of youth who are proficient in French.

- A participant cited an example of a professional francophone hockey player who linked up with a school in Vernon and was very happy to see all the students there speaking French. She proposed encouraging regular visits of professional sports teams, like hockey players, many of who are French-speaking, who can serve as role models.

Arts, Culture, and Sports

Question 6

Is there scope for ongoing collaboration between the arts, culture, and sport sector and the FSL education community to increase the proportion of high school graduates with a working knowledge of both official languages? If so, based on the initial list of strategies developed at the National Symposium, what are the most promising opportunities for early action?

Recommendations

- Foster better dialogue between community agencies and teachers/schools.
- Create an advisory committee to examine the following possibilities:
 - Artists in residence
 - Greater investments in Pro-D days
 - Greater student volunteer opportunities
 - The involvement of the Department of Canadian Heritage
- Provide role modelling for kids through professional sports team involvement/speakers.
- Present frequent French-speaking guest speakers for students.
- Look at more outside class opportunities for students, i.e., the Summer Olympics, summer jobs.
- Give students a bilingual identity to celebrate.
- Pay teachers to work in the communities with interested students during the summer months.
- Reinstate the Western consortium for French.
- Establish best practices.
- Increase federal funding for FSL teachers to learn and network i.e., a retreat weekend.
- Increase official monitoring program.
- Create an exchange of services with businesses e.g., Radio-Canada.
- Showcase bilingual role models for students.
- Ask kids what they are looking for in secondary-level immersion as a way to slow attrition rates.
- Create a publicity campaign.

Discussion

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Conclusions/Closing

Andrew Winstanley, president of the Canadian Club, thanked participants for their involvement. “The Canadian Club wants you to know that we see the results of all your hard work,” he said.

Winstanley expressed an interest in facilitating a teaching exchange program between teachers in British Columbia and Quebec. He noted that since Bill 101, Quebec is in need of qualified English teachers in all domains—not just language teachers, but maths, sciences, and more. Winstanley suggested the federal government could offer bursaries for teachers in exchange for teaching English for several years in Quebec, and that B.C. teachers would be rewarded with an immersion in Quebec culture.

Adrian Dix thanked Winstanley and listed some upcoming events of interest to delegates.

Brenda Berck thanked the groups for their feedback and welcomed final comments from delegates.

A participant cited the need to create an action plan that is concrete, achievable, realistic (showing short- and long-term results), and measurable.

Representatives also noted the absence of “the student voice” at the meeting. It was decided that to get feedback from students, CPF would need to host a different kind of event to target them.

Berck closed by saying that as an organization, CPF can recommend, but does not have the power to change policy. As the primary messengers of the advantages of bilingualism, CPF needs to feel that there is something it can actually *do* as opposed to simply offering encouragement.

Appendix

Recommendations contained in the CPF–BC & Yukon brief to the federal and BC governments on the funding of FSL education in BC

The following represents a broad consensus on funding issues developed through three months of consultation in the fall of 2003. The stakeholders' conference builds on these broad recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Canada-BC French Funding Renewal

The current funding formula with nine funding categories that support program growth and rural communities should be maintained intact with two amendments;

- 1) The creation of a new category for districts with multiple French immersion community locations. This proposal would benefit School District 27, 82 and 91 and potentially other School Districts presently considering the addition of new programs such as School District 5 (Fernie), School District 57 (Mackenzie), School 91 (Fraser Lake), School District 58 (Princeton).
- 2) Under the present Federal French funding formula for BC, a district qualifies for a Learning Assistance grant of \$10,500 for small communities if it has less than 250 FTE students enrolled. We seek an amendment to this formula to provide this funding to School District with multiple communities who have less than 250 FTE students in one or more of those communities

Recommendation 2: Federal Action Plan Resources

We recommend that Federal Action Plan French Second language monies be distributed primarily to School Districts in order to enhance access and support for French immersion and core French programs. At least 80% of Dion Plan monies in BC (roughly \$4 million) should go directly to French Second language programs through School Districts.

New monies should be used to enhance in particular the current Immersion Growth budgets to support districts with growing programs, library grants and learning assistance grants. In addition, we wish to see the following five supplementary funding categories to the existing French funding system. The intent is to provide appropriate incentives for School Districts to support universal access to French immersion and enhance programs growth.

- 1) A Small Communities fund to be provided to all districts with less than 6,500 total students. (An exception would be made for districts with several programs in different communities.) Last year, there were 18 districts in this category. Districts currently without programs would have access to this funding if they chose to launch a program. This fund would be distributed based on secondary programs (they must

- go to Grade 12), enrolment growth and the creation of new Early or Late French immersion entry points.
- 2) A New Programs Fund for Districts starting new French immersion programs or adding programs in communities within a district that are not presently served by programs. New programs would receive maximum funding in the first year, 75% of maximum in the second year and 50% of maximum in the third year. This includes incremental funding for districts whose FI programs currently stop at Grade 10.
 - 3) A core French Growth fund to encourage districts to offer FSL programs prior to Grade 5, and to reward districts who increase the core French population after Grade 9.
 - 4) An enhanced core French Supply budget to provide additional teacher and language training to core French teachers across the province.
 - 5) A transportation grant available to districts that provide reasonable access to bussing for out-of-catchment area French immersion students.

Recommendation 3: Accountability and Best Practices

- 1) As most Federal funding goes to School Districts, accountability is most effectively implemented at the local level. As a condition of receiving Federal funding, School Districts must establish a local French Advisory Committee (FAC) to review semi-annually the expenditure of French dollars. The Committee could be based on several existing French Advisory Committees (Such as Abbotsford, Maple Ridge, Nelson, North Vancouver, Saanich, Sooke and Surrey. See attached document on FACs). Decisions on the make-up and governance of these committees could be made locally but each committee should have representatives of trustees, administration, teachers and parents (CPF and DPAC) and should meet a minimum of twice a year.
- 2) At the Provincial level, the Government should set up a Provincial Advisory Committee to review the success of Federal-Provincial French Funding. (Both First and Second language.) The Committee would be made up of:
 - Ministry of Education Staff (2)
 - Representatives of Canadian Parents for French (2)
 - Representatives of French teachers (2)
 - Representative of post-secondary Faculties of Education (1)
 - Representatives of the CSF (2)
 - Representatives of the Francophone Parents Association (2)
 - Representative of School Districts (2).

The Committee will review reports on expenditures, share information and success stories and establish and measure performance indicators for success.

The role of the Committee is not to police French funding, but to make recommendations, measure success and establish and communicate “best practices.”

The Committee would meet twice a year in person.

- 3) *At the National Level, an Advisory Council on Official Language Education. The details of such a proposal will be considered and recommended by CPF-National but might be based on the National Health Council model agreed to recently by First Ministers.*

Recommendation 4: Teacher Shortage

CPF–BC & Yukon recommends that a portion of the Canada-BC French Funding be assigned to address the growing teacher shortage in language education. A plan, to be developed in consultation with the Immersion Coalition, School Districts and Faculties of Education must be developed to address the growing teacher shortage. The plan should have the following elements:

- Implementation of the SFU proposal for a Bilingual Faculty including an increase in the number of Immersion teachers.
- A publicity campaign directed to current and past Francophone and French immersion students to encourage FSL teaching as a profession;
- Funding of a School District recruitment agency to assist all districts to recruit qualified core French, Francophone Program or French immersion teachers.

Recommendation 5: Distance Education, Enhanced Core French and French immersion.

CPF–BC & Yukon supports the development of new distance learning models for French immersion and core French students in the French language, particularly at the Grade 10, 11 and 12 levels. A consortium of provinces could greatly enhance the options of students in small communities, in particular, communities unable to sustain full French immersion programs though to Grade 12.

Recommendation 6: Post-Secondary Opportunities

CPF–BC & Yukon strongly supports and is a participant in the efforts of SFU and Educacentre in ensuring French-language and bilingual post-secondary programs in BC. These efforts will enhance the success of French immersion, Enhanced core French and core French programs across BC.

Recommendation 7: Extracurricular Opportunities.

CP–BC & Yukon supports hundreds of extracurricular opportunities every year for French immersion, Francophone and core French. We are particularly proud of 7 partnerships we presently have with Francophone groups. Some Federal Action Plan monies should be set aside to support these initiatives – in particular, activities that bring together French First language and FSL communities such as the Francophone Youth Parliament, Concours, Rencontre, the Francophone Games and exchanges.