

RCCFC Guidance Counsellor Survey

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Part 1: Introduction

1.0 Introduction and Purpose of the Survey

From January to March 2006, CPF conducted an exploratory survey of high school guidance counsellors who advise senior French immersion. The objectives of the survey were four-fold:

- To determine what information high school guidance counsellors currently have about opportunities for French immersion graduates to study at francophone post-secondary institutions;
- To determine the extent to which high school guidance counsellors are aware of and recommend francophone colleges to immersion students;
- To explore reasons guidance counsellors might hesitate to recommend francophone colleges to immersion students. This will allow the Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada (RCCFC) to ensure that its promotion of francophone colleges meets guidance counsellor needs for reassurance about immersion students' ability to achieve in a francophone educational milieu; and
- To identify the information that guidance counsellors would need in order to effectively promote francophone college opportunities to immersion students.

2.0 Questionnaire and Procedures

After an interview protocol¹ was designed in collaboration with RCCFC, school districts across Canada were asked to recruit guidance counsellors to participate in the survey. The sample size requested from each school district was based on the total student population served by the district. School districts were instructed to divide their schools into rural and urban categories and to use a random sampling technique within each category to construct a stratified sample of urban and rural schools with French immersion programs. School districts then provided CPF researchers with permission to administer the online survey to these guidance counsellors. It should be noted that no guidance counsellor was required to complete the survey; districts differed in the encouragement they gave their staff to participate.

Eighty-four school districts agreed to participate in the survey and provided contact information for an appropriate sample of guidance counsellors from their districts. Of these, we received responses from 59 districts. Of the 88 guidance counsellors who completed the survey, three did not identify their district.

¹ Please see Appendix 1 for a copy of the questionnaire.

Part 2: Overall Findings

This part of the report presents the survey findings. Sections 3.0 to 5.12 offer summary profiles of overall responses to questions regarding current referral practices, perceptions of francophone colleges and their suitability for immersion graduates, level of knowledge about key aspects of the colleges and sources of knowledge.

3.0 Current Referral Practices²

In this section we look at what guidance counsellors report about their current referral practices. We also look at their views on whether students with less intensive FSL experiences than senior immersion students might be able to cope with studying at francophone colleges.

3.1 Frequency of referrals to post-secondary programs taught in French

Guidance counsellors were asked how often, in the past five years, they had suggested that senior French immersion students consider enrolling in post-secondary³ programs taught in French. Over three-quarters of the respondents suggested post-secondary studies in French at least sometimes and over one-third always or often suggested French studies (see Table 3.1.a). Almost one-quarter of respondents, however, rarely or never recommended post-secondary studies in French.

There are regional differences in the frequencies with which guidance counsellors suggest post-secondary studies in French. Table 3.1.b shows that almost half the guidance counsellors in BC rarely or never recommend post-secondary French studies, while the majority of counsellors Quebec and the Atlantic Provinces recommend post-secondary French studies at least sometimes. We should stress here, however, that our regional sub-samples are quite small.

Question 3.1: *In the past five years, have you ever suggested that senior French immersion students consider enrolling in post-secondary² programs taught in French?*

Table 3.1.a Response by percentage

	N=87
Always/often	36.8 (32)
Sometimes	40.2 (35)
Rarely/never	23 (20)

² Percentages have been calculated using the number of respondents who answered each question.

³ This question refers to all forms of post-secondary studies in French, not only to francophone colleges.

Table 3.1.b Response by region

Region	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never	N = 84
Atlantic	7.0	86.0	7.0	100.0 (14)
Quebec	25.0	75.0	0.0	100.0 (4)
Ontario	43.3	33.3	23.3	99.9 (30)
Prairies	60.0	20.0	20.0	100.0 (25)
BC	18.2	36.4	45.5	100.1 (11)
Total	38.1 (32)	40.4 (34)	21.4 (18)	99.9 (84)

3.2 Awareness of francophone colleges prior to the survey

When asked if they were aware of the existence of francophone colleges, almost every guidance counsellor indicated that he or she was (see Table 3.2.a). There are few regional variations in awareness of the existence of francophone colleges (see Table 3.2.b). Ninety-three per cent to 100% of guidance counsellors in all regions except BC are aware of francophone colleges. In BC, only 82% of respondents reported awareness of francophone colleges.

Question 3.2: *Before receiving this questionnaire, were you aware of the existence of francophone colleges?*

Table 3.2.a Response by percentage

	N=88
Yes	95.5 (84)
No	4.5 (4)

Table 3.2.b Response by region

Region	Yes	No	N=84
Atlantic	92.8 (13)	7.1 (1)	99.9 (14)
Quebec	100.0 (4)	0.0 (0)	100.0 (4)
Ontario	96.7 (29)	3.3 (1)	100.0 (30)
Prairies	100.0 (26)	0.0 (0)	100.0 (26)
BC	81.8 (9)	18.2 (2)	100.0 (11)
Total	95.3 (81)	4.7 (4)	100.00 (85)

3.3 Frequency of referrals to francophone college programs

Guidance counsellors were asked to state how often, in the past five years, they had suggested that senior French immersion students consider enrolling in francophone college programs. About two-thirds suggested francophone colleges at least sometimes, while about one-quarter suggested it often or always (see Table 3.3a). There are, however, close to 40% who rarely or never suggest francophone colleges.

There is some regional variation in the frequency with which guidance counsellors recommend francophone colleges. Table 3.3.b shows that over half of respondents in BC rarely or never recommend francophone colleges while all respondents in Quebec recommend francophone colleges at least sometimes. The number of respondents from the Atlantic Provinces, Ontario and the Prairies who rarely or never recommend francophone range from 31% to 42%. Again, readers should keep in mind that these findings are based on small samples.

Question 3.3: *In the past five years, have you ever suggested that senior French immersion students consider francophone colleges as a post-secondary educational opportunity?*

Table 3.3.a Response by percentage

	N=85
Always/often	23.5 (20)
Sometimes	37.6 (32)
Rarely/never	38.8 (33)

Table 3.3.b Response by region

Region	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never	N=83
Atlantic	7.7 (1)	61.5 (8)	30.7 (4)	99.9 (13)
Quebec	25.0 (1)	75.0 (3)	0.0 (0)	100.0 (4)
Ontario	20.7 (6)	41.4 (12)	37.9 (11)	100.0 (29)
Prairies	42.3 (11)	15.4 (4)	42.3 (11)	100.0 (26)
BC	9.1 (1)	36.4 (4)	54.6 (6)	100.1 (11)
Total	24.1 (20)	37.3 (31)	38.5 (32)	99.9 (83)

3.4 Willingness to consider recommending francophone colleges to former immersion students

Fifty-six per cent of respondents indicated that they would consider recommending francophone colleges to former French immersion students who took mainly core French classes in high school (see Table 3.4.a). Again, there are substantial regional variations. Only 42% of respondents from the Atlantic Provinces would consider recommending the francophone college option to immersion students who had not continued immersion at the secondary level, compared with 73% of those in BC and all of our Quebec respondents (see Table 3.4.b).

Question 3.4: *Would you consider recommending francophone colleges to former French immersion students who had taken mainly core French classes in high school?*

Table 3.4.a Response by percentage

	N=82
Yes	56.1 (46)
No	43.9 (36)

Table 3.4.b Response by region

Region	Yes	No	N=79
Atlantic	42.9 (6)	57.1 (8)	100.0 (14)
Quebec	100.0 (4)	0.0 (0)	100.0 (4)
Ontario	51.9 (14)	48.1 (13)	100.0 (27)
Prairies	60.9 (14)	39.1 (9)	100.0 (23)
BC	72.7 (8)	27.3 (3)	100.0 (11)
Total	58.2 (46)	41.8 (33)	100.0 (79)

3.5 Willingness to consider recommending francophone colleges to strong core French students

Almost two-thirds of respondents said that they would consider recommending francophone colleges to strong core French students (see Table 3.5.a). Regional differences follow the same general pattern as above, although in this case respondents from the Prairies are somewhat more likely to consider recommending colleges to the core French students than those from British Columbia (see Table 3.5.b)

Question 3.5: *Would you consider recommending francophone colleges for strong core French students who continued to take French to the end of high school?*

Table 3.5.a Response by percentage

	N=82
Yes	63.4 (52)
No	36.6 (30)

Table 3.5.b Response by region

Region	Yes	No	N=79
Atlantic	42.9 (6)	57.1 (8)	100.0 (14)
Quebec	100.0 (3)	0.0 (0)	100.0 (3)
Ontario	60.7 (17)	39.3 (11)	100.0 (28)
Prairies	73.9 (17)	26.1 (6)	100.0 (23)
BC	63.6 (7)	36.4 (4)	100.0 (11)
Total	63.3 (50)	36.7 (29)	100.0 (79)

3.6 Summary

Most respondents to this survey had at least some experience recommending francophone post-secondary institutions to senior immersion students. One-third reported regularly doing so. Almost all were aware of francophone colleges; however, referral rates were lower. Only one-quarter reported regularly suggesting the college option to students while almost 40% rarely or never did so. About 60% would consider recommending francophone colleges to immersion students who had not continued their program in high school or to strong core French students.

4.0 Overall Responses: Knowledge and Beliefs about Francophone Colleges and Their Suitability for French Immersion Graduates

We asked guidance counsellors to describe their knowledge and beliefs about programs, services, and practices at francophone colleges. We also asked them if they thought French immersion graduates would be interested in attending francophone colleges and if they thought French immersion graduates would be able to succeed in a francophone educational milieu. The question set took the form of a set of statements. Respondents indicated whether they agreed with the statement not at all, a little, somewhat, quite a lot, or a great deal.

4.1 Knowledge of programs and services at francophone colleges

When we asked respondents about their familiarity with programs and services at francophone colleges, only about one-quarter indicated that they had a great deal or quite a lot of knowledge. Close to one-third reporting having little or no knowledge (see Table 4.1).

Statement 4.1: *I am familiar with programs and services at francophone colleges.*

Table 4.1: Response by percentage

Agree	N=88
A great deal/quite a lot	27.3 (24)
Somewhat	42.0 (37)
A little/not at all	30.7 (27)

4.2 Post-secondary interests of immersion students

Guidance counsellors were divided on the issue when shown the statement that French immersion graduates would not be interested in francophone colleges because they tend to be university oriented (see Table 4.2). Half of the respondents did not agree or agreed only little

with the statement that immersion students would not be interested in considering college. The others thought that this was at least somewhat true.

Statement 4.2: *I think immersion students would not be interested in francophone colleges because these students tend to be university oriented*

Table 4.2. Response by percentage

Agree	N=87
A great deal/quite a lot	21.8 (19)
Somewhat	28.7 (25)
A little/not at all	49.4 (43)

4.3 Concerns about French immersion students' French

When asked whether they thought immersion students' French is good enough to study with native French speakers, the guidance counsellors surveyed had mixed views (see Table 4.3). Half the respondents agreed quite a lot or a great deal with the statement that that immersion students' French was good enough. Almost 40% somewhat agreed while just over 10% either did not agree or agreed only a little. The fact that half the respondents had reservations about the adequacy of immersion students' language skills is reflected later in the questionnaire in concerns about the willingness or ability of francophone colleges to provide assistance to those studying in their second language.

Statement 4.3: *I think immersion students' French is good enough to study with native French speakers.*

Table 4.3. Response by percentage

Agree	N=88
A great deal/quite a lot	50.0 (44)
Somewhat	38.6 (34)
A little/not at all	11.4 (10)

4.4 Would French immersion students be socially isolated?

When asked whether they thought French immersion students would be socially isolated or uncomfortable in a francophone educational milieu, more than 80% of respondents expressed no or little concern, and fewer than 5% felt strongly that they would be isolated. There is an interesting contrast between the results for this question and the question above. Are guidance counsellors making a distinction between a communicative competence adequate for social life and higher level skills required for post-secondary studies? Are they presuming that social life in a francophone educational milieu may be, in fact, bilingual?

Statement 4.4: *I think French immersion students would be socially isolated or uncomfortable in a francophone educational milieu*

Table 4.4 Response by percentage

Agree	N=88
A great deal/quite a lot	3.4 (3)
Somewhat	15.9 (14)
A little/not at all	80.7 (71)

4.5 Do you think that francophone college administrators would hesitate to accept French immersion students?

When guidance counsellors were asked whether they thought that administrators at francophone colleges would hesitate to accept French immersion students, 85% expressed little or no concern (see Table 4.5). Again, we have an interesting contrast in these findings. While half the guidance counsellors have reservations about the ability of immersion students to study in French, few expect francophone college administrators to hesitate to admit them. What the respondents are likely saying is that administrators would not impose a *categorical* restriction on admitting immersion students, although they might well screen applicants according to French language proficiency.

Statement 4.5: *I think administrators at francophone colleges would hesitate to accept French immersion students.*

Table 4.5 Response by percentage

Agree	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	1.2 (1)
Somewhat	14.0 (12)
A little/not at all	84.9 (73)

4.6 Would francophone colleges be willing or able to provide assistance to French immersion graduates?

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement that they had concerns about the willingness or ability of francophone colleges to provide extra assistance to French immersion graduates studying in their second language. Over two-thirds indicated that they had little or no concern. Fewer than 25% expressed some concern while less than 10% had more serious doubts. This is an important finding given concerns about the adequacy of French immersion students' language skills to post-secondary studies. It suggests that only a small

minority think immersion students might be left to flounder at francophone colleges, although a larger number have some concerns about availability of assistance.

Statement 4.6: *I do not think that francophone colleges would be willing or able to provide extra assistance to French immersion graduates studying in their second language.*

Table 4.6 Response by percentage

Agree	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	8.1 (7)
Somewhat	23.3 (20)
A little/not at all	68.6 (59)

4.7 Should French immersion graduates pursue post-secondary studies in English?

We asked guidance counsellors if they thought French immersion graduates had studied enough French and should pursue post-secondary studies in English. Almost 90% did not agree with this statement (see Table 4.7).

Statement 4.7: *I think senior French immersion graduates have studied enough French and should pursue post-secondary studies in English.*

Table 4.7 Response by percentage

Agree	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	1.2 (1)
Somewhat	11.6 (10)
A little/not at all	87.2 (75)

4.8 Summary

A substantial proportion of guidance counsellors had concerns that immersion students would be interested in any college option as an alternative to university. There were similar levels of concern about the ability of French immersion students to cope with post-secondary studies in French. However, most guidance counsellors thought that francophone colleges would be willing and able to assist immersion graduates studying in their second language.

Guidance counsellors did not think francophone college administrators would be biased against admitting immersion students as a group. Nor did they think that immersion students would find themselves socially isolated at francophone college campuses.

Perhaps the greatest barrier to more referrals is the fact that most guidance counsellors claim relatively little knowledge of francophone colleges.

5.0 Knowledge of Francophone Colleges

The survey included a set of questions dealing with guidance counsellors' knowledge of different aspects of francophone colleges. Respondents were asked whether they had no knowledge, a little, some, quite a lot, or a great deal in each area.

5.1 Familiarity with programs and services

Respondents were asked how much knowledge they had of francophone college programs and services. This question is similar to 4.1. The results are, however, somewhat more cautious (see Table 5.1.a). While only 31% admitted little or no familiarity with college programs, 40% indicated that they have little or no knowledge. The difference may be because the current question deals with "knowledge," which may be seen as a more stringent standard than "familiarity" Or it may be because respondents have now had a chance to test aspects of their knowledge in completing the survey.

There are variations by region in claims of knowledge about programs and services (see Table 5.1.b). Respondents from the Atlantic Provinces and Quebec are more likely to claim at least some knowledge of college programs and services. The reader is reminded again of the small sample sizes involved.

Question 5.1 *Knowledge of programs and services at francophone colleges*

Table 5.1.a Response by percentage

I know	N=88
A great deal/quite a lot	25.0 (22)
Some	35.2 (31)
A little/not at all	39.8 (35)

Table 5.1.b Response by region

Region	A great deal/quite a lot	Some	A little/ none	N=84
Atlantic	14.3 (2)	57.1 (8)	28.6 (4)	100.0 (14)
Quebec	0.0 (0)	50.0 (2)	50.0 (2)	100.0 (4)
Ontario	30.0 (9)	43.3 (13)	26.7 (8)	100.0 (30)
Prairies	38.5 (10)	38.5 (10)	23.0 (6)	100.0 (26)
BC	18.2 (2)	27.3 (3)	54.6 (6)	100.1 (11)
Total	27.1 (23)	42.4 (36)	30.6 (26)	100.1 (85)

5.2 Knowledge of French-language fluency requirements

Over half the guidance counsellors claimed at best a little knowledge of fluency requirements for students attending francophone colleges (see Table 5.2.a). Another third claimed “some” knowledge. This is an important finding because it suggests that guidance counsellors have formed opinions about the adequacy of students’ French skills without any good information about what the skill levels needed at francophone colleges actually are. Responses to this question are similar across regions (see Table 5.2.b).

Question 5.2: Knowledge of French-language fluency requirements

Table 5.2.a Response by percentage

I know	N=88
A great deal/quite a lot	14.8 (13)
Some	33.0 (29)
A little/not at all	52.3 (46)

Table 5.2.b Response by region

Region	A great deal/quite a lot	Some	A little/none	N=85
Atlantic	7.1 (1)	50.0 (7)	42.9 (6)	100.0 (14)
Quebec	0.0 (0)	50.0 (2)	50.0 (2)	100.0 (4)
Ontario	16.7 (5)	33.3 (10)	50.0 (15)	100.0 (30)
Prairies	23.1 (6)	23.1 (6)	53.8 (14)	100.0 (26)
BC	9.1 (1)	36.4 (4)	54.5 (6)	100.0 (11)
Total	15.3 (13)	34.1 (29)	50.6 (43)	100.0 (85)

5.3 Knowledge of French-language upgrading opportunities

Respondents claimed less knowledge of language upgrading activities than they did of fluency requirements. Almost two-thirds indicated that they had no knowledge or only a little knowledge of upgrading opportunities (see Table 5.3.a). Most others indicated that they had “some” knowledge. Again, given guidance counsellors’ concerns about the adequacy of immersion students’ French language skills, this is an important finding. We saw above that most respondents thought francophone colleges would be willing and able to assist immersion graduates studying in a second language. The current finding suggests that they are taking this on faith.

There are minimal regional variations for this item, excepting the except for low levels of knowledge among BC respondents (see Table 5.3.b).

Question 5.3: *Knowledge of French-language upgrading opportunities provided by each francophone college*

Table 5.3.a Response by percentage

I know	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	8.1 (7)
Some	26.7 (23)
A little/none	65.1 (56)

Table 5.3.b Response by region

Region	A great deal/ quite a lot	Some	None/a little	N=83
Atlantic	7.7 (1)	38.5 (5)	53.8 (7)	100.0 (13)
Quebec	0.0 (0)	33.3 (1)	66.6 (2)	99.9 (3)
Ontario	10.0 (3)	26.7 (8)	63.6 (19)	100.3 (30)
Prairies	11.5 (3)	27.0 (7)	61.5 (16)	100.0 (26)
BC	0.0 (0)	9.1 (1)	90.9 (10)	100.0 (11)
Total	8.4 (7)	26.5 (22)	65.1 (54)	100.0 (83)

5.4 Knowledge of financial incentives for French immersion students attending francophone colleges

Guidance counsellors reported greater knowledge of financial incentives than of language upgrading opportunities (see Table 5.4.a). However, over half indicated having little or no knowledge of the financial incentives available. There was little variation by region except for the higher knowledge levels among Prairie respondents.

Question 5.4: *Knowledge of bursaries and other financial incentives for French immersion students attending francophone colleges*

Table 5.4.a Response by percentage

I know	N=87
A great deal/quite a lot	19.5 (17)
Some	28.7 (25)
A little/none	51.7 (45)

Table 5.4.b Response by region:

Region	A great deal/ quite a lot	Some	A little/ none	N=84
Atlantic	28.6 (4)	21.4 (3)	50.0 (7)	100.0 (14)
Quebec	0.0 (0)	33.3 (1)	66.6 (2)	99.9 (3)
Ontario	16.6 (5)	26.7 (8)	56.7 (17)	100.0 (30)
Prairies	26.9 (7)	34.6 (9)	38.5 (10)	100.0 (26)
BC	9.1 (1)	36.4 (4)	54.6 (6)	100.1 (11)
Total	20.3 (17)	29.8 (25)	50.0 (42)	100.0 (84)

5.5 Knowledge of academic supports for French immersion students

Almost 70% of respondents indicated that they had little or no knowledge of the academic supports available to immersion students in francophone colleges (see Table 5.5.a). Most others reported some knowledge. This finding emphasizes that when guidance counsellors reported in question 4.6 that colleges would provide assistance to immersion students, they did not base their answer on any firm knowledge. While there are regional variations (see Table 3.5b), only in the Prairies do close to half the respondents claim at least some knowledge of academic supports.

Question 5.5: *Knowledge of specific academic supports that each college will provide to French immersion students*

Table 5.5.a Response by percentage

I know	N=88
A great deal/quite a lot	9.1 (8)
Some	21.6 (19)
A little/none	69.3 (61)

Table 5.5.b Response by region

Region	A great deal/quite a lot	Some	A little/none	N=85
Atlantic	7.1 (1)	28.6 (4)	64.3 (9)	100.0 (14)
Quebec	0.0 (0)	25.0 (1)	75.0 (3)	100.0 (4)
Ontario	10.0 (3)	16.7 (5)	73.3 (22)	100.0 (30)
Prairies	11.5 (3)	34.6 (9)	53.8 (14)	99.9 (26)
BC	9.1 (1)	0.0 (0)	90.9 (10)	100.0 (11)
Total	9.4 (8)	22.4 (19)	68.3 (58)	100.0 (85)

5.6 Knowledge of social supports for French immersion students

Lack of knowledge of social supports available to immersion students is even more widespread than in the case of academic supports. Three-quarters of respondents reported having little or no knowledge of social supports (see Table 5.6.a). This is, however, probably much less important than in the case of academic supports or language upgrading opportunities given that most guidance counsellors are not very concerned about immersion students at francophone colleges becoming socially isolated. Regional differences are narrower than in the case of academic supports (see Table 5.6.b).

Question 5.6: *Knowledge of specific social supports that each college will provide to French immersion students*

Table 5.6.a Response by percentage

I know	N=88
A great deal/quite a lot	5.7 (5)
Somewhat	19.3 (17)
A little/none	75.0 (66)

Table 5.6.b Response by region

Region	A great deal/quite a lot	Some	A little/none	N=85
Atlantic	7.1 (1)	21.4 (3)	71.4 (10)	99.9 (14)
Quebec	0.0 (0)	25.0 (1)	75.0 (3)	100.0 (4)

Ontario	3.3 (1)	20.0 (6)	76.6 (23)	99.9 (30)
Prairies	7.7 (2)	26.8 (7)	65.4 (17)	99.9 (26)
BC	9.1 (1)	0.0 (0)	90.9 (10)	100.0 (11)
Total	5.9 (5)	20.0 (17)	74.1 (63)	100.0 (85)

5.7 Knowledge of Articulation Agreements between francophone colleges and universities

Almost two-thirds of respondents indicated little or no knowledge of articulation agreements between francophone colleges and universities, or other forms of integration (see Table 5.7.a). Most other claimed some knowledge. This is an important finding given that a substantial number of guidance counsellors believed that immersion graduates were too oriented to universities to be interested in attending college.

Question 5.7: *Knowledge of how each francophone college is integrated/articulated with francophone or anglophone universities*

Table 5.7.a Response by percentage

I know	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	9.3 (8)
Some	26.7 (23)
A little/none	64.0 (55)

Table 5.7.b Response by region

Region	A great deal/quite a lot	Some	A little/none	N=83
Atlantic	0.0 (0)	28.6 (4)	71.4 (10)	100.0 (14)
Quebec	0.0 (0)	33.3 (1)	66.6 (2)	99.9 (3)
Ontario	10.0 (3)	36.7 (11)	53.3 (16)	100.0 (30)
Prairies	16.0 (4)	24.0 (6)	60.0 (15)	100.0 (25)
BC	0.0 (0)	9.1 (1)	90.9 (10)	100.0 (11)
Total	8.4 (7)	27.7 (23)	63.8 (53)	99.9 (83)

5.8 Knowledge of promotional materials

Almost 60% of guidance counsellors reported little or no knowledge of promotional materials from francophone colleges (see Table 5.8.a). Most others indicated some knowledge. There are regional variations with respondents in Quebec and British Columbia being the least aware.

Question 5.8 *Availability of posters and brochures promoting francophone college opportunities*

Table 5.8.a Response by percentage

I know	N=87
A great deal/quite a lot	13.8 (12)
Some	26.4 (23)
A little/none	59.8 (52)

Table 5.8.b Response by region

Region	A great deal/quite a lot	Some	A little/none	N=84
Atlantic	14.3 (2)	35.7 (5)	50.0 (7)	100.0 (14)
Quebec	0.0 (0)	25.0 (1)	75.0 (3)	100.0 (4)
Ontario	17.2 (5)	20.7 (6)	62.1 (18)	100.0 (29)
Prairies	15.4 (4)	34.6 (9)	50.0 (13)	100.0 (26)
BC	9.1 (1)	9.1 (1)	81.8 (9)	100.0 (11)
Total	14.3 (12)	26.2 (22)	59.5 (50)	100.0 (84)

5.9 Knowledge of presentations to students by francophone college recruiters

As guidance counsellors were, for the most part, unaware of the promotional materials from francophone colleges, so too were they unaware of presentations to students by francophone recruiters (see Table 5.9.a). It is clear that whatever outreach francophone colleges have put in place, it has been largely invisible to the guidance counsellors completing our survey. Regional variations are, however, narrower for this item (see Table 5.9.b).

Question 5.9: *Presentations targeted to French immersion students by francophone college recruiters*

Table 5.9.a Response by percentage

I know	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	10.5 (9)
Some	22.1 (19)
A little/none	67.4 (58)

Table 5.9.b Response by region

Region	A great deal/quite a lot	Some	A little/none	N=83
Atlantic	21.4 (3)	28.6 (4)	50.0 (7)	100.0 (14)
Quebec	0.0 (0)	33.3 (1)	66.7 (2)	99.9 (3)
Ontario	6.7 (2)	16.7 (5)	76.6 (23)	100.0 (30)
Prairies	8.0 (2)	32.0 (8)	60.0 (15)	100.0 (25)
BC	18.2 (2)	9.1 (1)	72.7 (8)	100.0 (11)
Total	14.3 (9)	26.2 (19)	66.2 (55)	100.0 (83)

5.10 Knowledge of research examining French immersion students' interest in attending francophone post-secondary institutions

More than 85% of guidance counsellors surveyed reported having little or no knowledge of research studies on the interest of immersion students in attending francophone post-secondary institutions (see Table 5.10.a). This is important because it could mean that counsellors are not exposed to research that might challenge either their—or their students'—conceptions of appropriate educational choices for immersion graduates. While there are regional variations, these are limited to distinctions between “none” (no) or “a little” knowledge.

Question 5.10 *Research studies examining the interest of French immersion students in attending francophone post-secondary institutions*

Table 5.10.a Response by percentage.

I know	N=87
A great deal/quite a lot	0 (0)
Some	12.6 (11)
A little/none	87.4 (76)

Table 5.10.b Response by region

Region	A great deal/quite a lot	Some	None/a little	N=83
Atlantic	0.0 (0)	7.1	92.9	100.0 (14)
Quebec	0.0 (0)	25.0	75.0	100.0 (4)
Ontario	0.0 (0)	16.7	83.3	100.1 (30)
Prairies	0.0 (0)	16.0	84.0	100.0 (25)
BC	0.0 (0)	0.0	100	100.0 (10)
Total	0.0 (0)	13.3	86.7	100.0 (83)

5.11 Knowledge of research examining French immersion students' achievement in francophone post-secondary institutions

Lack of information on how French immersion students perform in francophone post-secondary institutions is also the norm among guidance counsellors: 85% reported little or no knowledge (see Table 5.11.a). Again, given guidance counsellors' concerns about how immersion students will fare doing post-secondary work in their second language, this is an important result. As with earlier questions, the regional variation are limited to distinctions between "none" (no) or "a little" knowledge.

Question 5.11: *Research studies examining the achievement of French immersion students in francophone post-secondary institutions*

Table 5.11.a Response by percentage

I know	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	0 (0)
Some	15.1 (13)
A little/none	84.9 (73)

Table 5.11.b Response by region

Region	A great deal/quite a lot	Some	None/a little	N=83
Atlantic	0.0 (0)	7.1	92.9	100.0 (14)
Quebec	0.0 (0)	25.0	75.0	100.0 (4)
Ontario	0.0 (0)	17.2	82.8	100.0 (29)
Prairies	0.0 (0)	23.1	76.9	99.9 (26)
BC	0.0 (0)	0.0	100	100.0 (10)
Total	0.0 (0)	15.7	84.3	100.0 (83)

5.12 Summary

Lack of knowledge about francophone colleges and how immersion students are or might be accommodated is clearly a problem. Few guidance counsellors have good information on fluency requirements, on language upgrading opportunities, and on academic supports. Few are acquainted with research studies on how immersion graduates perform in francophone post-secondary institutions. Any outreach campaigns by francophone colleges appear largely invisible to our respondents.

Part 3: Guidance Counsellors Who Recommend Francophone Colleges—What makes a difference?

In this section we explore what distinguishes guidance counsellors who regularly suggest francophone colleges to senior immersion students from those who do not (see Table 6.0). We first look at differences in the level of knowledge of francophone colleges reported by guidance counsellors who never or rarely recommend francophone colleges compared with those who more frequently suggest the college option to their students. We then explore whether guidance counsellors' willingness to suggest the college option is related to the ways in which they become informed of post-secondary options in general. Finally, we examine key beliefs and attitudes likely to influence how guidance counsellors seek and screen information about francophone colleges as a destination for immersion graduates.

Table 6.0 Categorization of guidance counsellor by how often they recommend francophone colleges to senior immersion students

Recommended	Count	%
Always or often	30	23.5
Sometimes	32	37.6
Rarely or never	20	23.5
Total valid cases	85	100.0
Missing	3	--
Total valid cases	88	--

In the following tables, *each column* represents the reported knowledge profile for a category of guidance counsellors defined by the frequency with which they recommend francophone colleges (always/often, sometimes, rarely/never). The percentages in each column add to 100%, indicating that the figures describe the complete distribution of reported knowledge for that particular category. For example, in Table 6.1, dealing with knowledge of programs and services, 21.9% of guidance counsellors who “sometimes” suggest colleges indicate little or no knowledge, 56.3% claim some knowledge, and 21.9%, quite a lot or a great deal of knowledge, together totalling 100%. We compare groups by looking across columns.

6.0 Knowledge of Francophone Colleges

Overall, the more frequently a guidance counsellor reports suggesting francophone colleges, the greater the knowledge claimed of francophone colleges. We cannot state on this basis that greater knowledge leads to recommending francophone colleges more often. The relationship might run the other way—the guidance counsellors who recommend colleges regularly might be more motivated to seek information about them. It is likely, in fact, that this is a symbiotic relationship: the more counsellors know about francophone colleges, the more likely they are to recommend them, and by doing so, this in turn leads counsellors to seek a greater knowledge of the options they are suggesting to their students.

6.1 Programs and services

Of guidance counsellors who rarely or never suggest francophone colleges, almost 70% reported little or no knowledge of programs and services at them, compared with 22% of counsellors who sometimes recommend colleges and just 10% of those who often or always offer their students the option of francophone colleges (see Table 6.1). Half the guidance counsellors who often or always recommend college claim quite a lot or a great deal of knowledge; the majority of those who sometimes suggest colleges claim only some knowledge. Guidance counsellors who never or rarely suggest francophone colleges are distinguished by a very low level of knowledge of these institutions. We will see this pattern repeated for some (but not all) other knowledge areas.

Table 6.1 Knowledge of programs and services by frequency with which guidance counsellors suggest francophone colleges

Reported knowledge of francophone colleges	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	50.0 (10)	21.9 (7)	15.2 (5)
Some	40.0 (8)	56.3 (18)	15.2 (5)
A little/none	10.0 (2)	21.9 (7)	69.7 (23)

6.2 Fluency requirements

About 76% of guidance counsellors who rarely or never suggested francophone colleges reported little or no knowledge of French fluency requirements, compared with 44% of those who sometimes recommend colleges and only 20% of those who often or always do so. Again, counsellors who rarely consider the college option are the only category in which a majority of respondents fail to claim at least “some” knowledge of francophone colleges.

Table 6.2 Frequency with which guidance counsellors suggest francophone colleges by knowledge of French-language fluency requirements

Knowledge of French-language fluency requirements	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	30.0 (6)	9.4 (3)	12.1 (4)
Some	50.0 (10)	46.9 (15)	12.1 (4)
A little/none	20.0 (4)	43.8 (14)	75.8 (25)

6.3 French-language upgrading opportunities

Fully 88% of guidance counsellors who rarely or never suggest francophone colleges reported little or no knowledge of French-language upgrading opportunities. In this area, almost two-thirds (65%) of those who sometimes recommend colleges also claim little or no knowledge.

Even among those who often or always recommend colleges, the most common claim is to have some knowledge of upgrading opportunities. Clearly, even those comfortable recommending francophone colleges are frequently unsure of their knowledge in this area.

Table 6.3 Frequency with which guidance counsellors suggest francophone colleges by knowledge of French-language upgrading opportunities

Reported knowledge of French-language upgrading opportunities	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=83		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	21.1 (4)	6.5 (2)	3.0 (1)
Some	52.6 (10)	29.0 (9)	9.1 (3)
A little/none	26.3 (5)	64.5 (20)	87.9 (29)

6.4 Bursaries and other financial incentives

About 70% of guidance counsellors who rarely or never suggest francophone colleges reported little or no knowledge of bursaries and other financial incentives provided by each college, compared with 47% of those who sometimes recommend colleges and just 16% of those who often or always do so. This pattern is similar to that for fluency.

Table 6.4 Frequency with which guidance counsellors suggest francophone colleges by knowledge of bursaries and other financial opportunities provided by each college

Reported knowledge of bursaries and financial opportunities	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=84		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	47.4 (9)	15.6 (5)	9.1 (3)
Some	36.8 (7)	37.5 (12)	18.2 (6)
A little/none	15.8 (3)	46.9 (15)	72.7 (24)

6.5 Academic supports

Just over 90% of guidance counsellors who rarely or never recommended francophone colleges had little or no knowledge of academic supports provided to immersion students. A large majority (69%) of those who sometimes recommended colleges also claimed little or no knowledge of academic supports compared with 30% of counsellors often or always presenting the college option to their clients. The pattern here is similar to what we found for upgrading opportunities.

Table 6.5 Frequency with which guidance counsellors suggest francophone colleges by knowledge of academic supports provided to French immersion students

Reported knowledge of academic supports for French immersion students	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	30.0 (6)	6.3 (2)	0.0 (0)
Some	40.0 (8)	25.0 (8)	9.1 (3)
A little/none	30.0 (6)	68.8 (22)	90.9 (30)

6.6 Social supports

Close to 94 % of guidance counsellors who rarely or never suggest francophone colleges and 78% of those who sometimes do reported little or no knowledge of social supports provided to immersion students. In this area, guidance counsellors who often or always recommend colleges have a sharply different profile from other groups, with 65% claiming at least some knowledge and 20% choosing “quite a lot” or “a great deal.”

Table 6.6 Frequency with which guidance counsellors suggest francophone colleges by knowledge of social supports provided to French immersion students

Reported knowledge of social supports for French immersion students	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	20.0 (4)	6.3 (2)	0.0 (0)
Some	45.0 (9)	18.8 (6)	6.1 (2)
A little/none	35.0 (7)	78.1 (25)	93.9 (31)

6.7 College/university relations

More than 80% of those who rarely or never suggest francophone colleges, and almost 60% of those who sometimes do, reported little or no knowledge of how francophone colleges are integrated/articulated with francophone or anglophone universities. In contrast, almost two-thirds of those who often or always recommend colleges claimed at least some knowledge of articulation.

Table 6.7 Frequency with which guidance counsellors suggest francophone colleges by knowledge about how francophone colleges are integrated/articulated with francophone or anglophone universities

Reported knowledge about how francophone colleges are integrated/articulated with universities	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=83		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	15.8 (3)	12.5 (4)	3.1 (1)
Some	47.4 (9)	28.1 (9)	15.6 (5)
A little/none	36.8 (7)	59.4 (19)	81.3 (26)

6.8 Promotional materials

Almost 80% of guidance counsellors who rarely or never suggest francophone colleges reported little or no knowledge of posters and brochures promoting francophone colleges. Just over half of those who sometime recommend colleges also claimed little knowledge compared with just over one-third of counsellors often or always suggesting the college option.

Table 6.8 Frequency with which guidance counsellors suggest francophone colleges by knowledge of the availability of posters and brochures promoting francophone college opportunities

Reported knowledge of the availability of posters and brochures promoting francophone colleges	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=84		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	30.0 (6)	16.1 (5)	3.1 (1)
Some	35.0 (7)	32.3 (10)	18.2 (6)
A little/none	35.0 (7)	51.6 (16)	78.8 (26)

6.9 College recruiters

Almost 90% of those who rarely or never recommend francophone colleges had little or no knowledge of presentations to students by college recruiters. This is also the case for almost 60%

of those who sometimes suggest colleges and for more than 40% of those who often or always do so. These findings suggest that recruiters are thin on the ground—a fact that may account for the comparatively low levels of knowledge by most counsellors in many areas.

Table 6.9 Frequency with which guidance counsellors suggest francophone colleges by knowledge of presentations targeted to French immersion students by francophone college recruiters

Reported knowledge of presentations targeted to French immersion students	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=83		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	21.1 (4)	12.5 (4)	3.1 (1)
Some	38.8 (7)	28.1 (9)	9.4 (3)
A little/none	42.1 (8)	59.4 (19)	87.5 (28)

6.10 Immersion student interest in francophone colleges

Almost all (97%) respondents with little or no knowledge of research on immersion students' interest in attending post-secondary studies in francophone institutions rarely or never suggested their students do so. However, this is also the case for almost 87% of those who sometimes recommend colleges and fully 60% of those who often or always do so. In other words, few counsellors—regardless of whether they recommend francophone colleges or not—claim much knowledge of whether immersion students are interested in pursuing post-secondary education in francophone institutions.

Table 6.10 Frequency with which guidance counsellors suggest francophone colleges by knowledge of immersion students' interest in attending post-secondary studies at francophone institutions

Reported knowledge of immersion students' interest in attending francophone institutions	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=84		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Some	40.0 (8)	12.9 (4)	3.0 (1)
A little/none	60.0 (12)	87.1 (27)	97.0 (32)

6.11 Immersion student performance in francophone colleges

Almost all respondents (97%) who rarely or never recommend francophone colleges as an option to their students reported little or no knowledge of research studies examining the achievement of French immersion students in francophone post-secondary institutions. This is the case as well for 87% of those who sometimes recommend colleges and 70% of those who often or always do so. In other words, most guidance counsellors, whether or not they suggest the college option to their clients, have little or no idea of how immersion students actually perform in francophone colleges.

Table 6.11 Frequency with which guidance counsellors suggest francophone colleges by knowledge of immersion student achievement post-secondary studies at francophone institutions

Reported knowledge of immersion students' achievement at francophone institutions	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
Some	30.0 (6)	12.9 (4)	3.1 (1)
A little/none	70.0 (14)	87.1 (28)	96.9 (31)

6.12 Summary

Guidance counsellors from any area who rarely or never suggest francophone colleges to senior immersion students typically report little or no knowledge of these institutions. Most of those who sometimes recommend colleges usually have at least some knowledge of programs and services, and of fluency requirements. About half claim at least some knowledge of bursaries and other financial incentives; however, in other areas, most admit having little or no information. Counsellors who often or always suggest the option of francophone colleges are undoubtedly the best informed. Yet even among this group, barely half indicated that they know quite a lot or a great deal about programs and services; just under half claimed similar knowledge of bursaries and other financial incentives. In other areas, only a minority claimed to be so well informed.

Finally, regardless of how often they recommend francophone colleges, most guidance counsellors indicated that they know little or nothing about immersion students' interest in attending francophone post-secondary institutions. This is a disturbing finding, for it suggests that even when francophone colleges are recommended, this is likely to be a casual suggestion rather than one treated as a viable option.

7.0 Sources of Knowledge about Post-secondary Options

The survey included a set of questions on how guidance counsellors learned about post-secondary opportunities in general, that is, not specifically related to francophone colleges. Does the frequency with which guidance counsellors recommend the college option bear any relationship to the information available about post-secondary education options? With a few exceptions, the answer seems to be no. We find some notable differences in the case or reliance on information from school districts, from visits by representatives of post-secondary institutions, and from local French teachers. On other items, there is little to distinguish guidance counsellors who never or rarely recommend colleges from those who often or always do so.

7.1 School Districts

Only 25% of counsellors who rarely or never recommend francophone colleges reported receiving information from school districts on post-secondary opportunities for students, compared with 45–50% of counsellors who more frequently recommend colleges. This suggests that district involvement in disseminating information on post-secondary options can make an important difference.

Table 7.1 Frequency with which francophone colleges are recommended by counsellors from schools in which the school district provides information about post-secondary opportunities

School district provides information	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
Yes	45.0 (9)	50.0 (16)	24.2 (8)
No	55.0 (11)	50.0 (16)	75.8 (25)

7.2 Heads of guidance

There are few differences in terms of the proportion of guidance counsellors who receive information from the head of their guidance department and those don't. The percentage who have access information on post-secondary options this way is in the narrow range of 39–50% across groups defined by the extent to which they recommend francophone colleges.

Table 7.2 Frequency of recommendations for francophone colleges from schools in which the head of the guidance department provides information about post-secondary opportunities.

Head of guidance provides information	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
Yes	45.0 (9)	50.0 (16)	39.4(13)
No	55.0 (11)	50.0 (16)	60.6 (20)

7.3 Written information from post-secondary institutions

Almost all guidance counsellors (91% or more) reported receiving written information from post-secondary institutions about their programs. It is clear that having this information available makes virtually no difference to how frequently guidance counsellors actually recommend the college option to their clients.

Table 7.3 Frequency of recommendations to francophone colleges from schools in which post-secondary institutions provide written information about their programs.

Post-secondary institutions provide written information	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
Yes	95.0 (31)	96.9 (31)	90.9 (18)
No	5.0 (2)	3.1 (1)	9.1 (2)

7.4 Visits to guidance counsellors by post-secondary recruiters

While receiving written information makes little or no difference as to how frequently guidance counsellors recommend colleges, actual visits by post-secondary staff have some impact. About 90% of guidance counsellors who recommend colleges at least sometimes reported receiving a visit from post-secondary staff, compared with fewer than 70% of those who never or rarely do so. This is a notable difference. Yet what stands out is that a large majority of those who rarely or never recommend the college option have received visits. This suggests that visitors from francophone colleges may be rare.

Table 7.4 Frequency of recommendations to francophone colleges from schools in which post-secondary institutions visit guidance staff to tell them about their programs.

Post-secondary institutions visit guidance counsellors	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
Yes	90.0 (18)	87.5 (28)	69.7 (23)
No	10.0 (2)	12.5 (4)	30.3 (10)

7.5 Student-targeted visits by post-secondary recruiters

Visits by post-secondary recruiters that are targeted to students rather than guidance counsellors appear to bear little relationship to guidance counsellors' behaviour. Differences across guidance counsellor groups are very narrow (88–95%). Again, this suggests that such presentations rarely involve francophone colleges.

Table 7.5 Frequency of recommendations to francophone colleges from schools in which post-secondary institutions visit to tell students about their programs

Post-secondary institutions visit students	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
Yes	95.0 (19)	87.5 (28)	87.9 (29)
No	5.0 (1)	12.5 (4)	12.1 (4)

7.6 Guidance counsellors own information-gathering

About 60% of guidance counsellors, regardless of how frequently they recommend francophone colleges, reported that they are pro-active to some degree in gathering information about post-secondary opportunities for their own use in advising students. These similar percentages may mask substantial differences in the effort that is put into information gathering. Nevertheless, it is evident that proactive information seeking in itself is not linked to greater frequency in suggesting the college option. This suggests that for many guidance counsellors, francophone colleges may not be on the list of institutions from which they seek information.

Table 7.6 Frequency of recommendations to francophone colleges from schools in which guidance counsellors gather information for their own use.

Guidance counsellors gather information for own use	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
Yes	60.0 (12)	59.0 (19)	60.6 (20)
No	40.0 (8)	40.6 (13)	39.4 (13)

7.7 Sharing information among peer network

Fifty to sixty per cent of guidance counsellors, across groups, report that they share information about post-secondary opportunities with other guidance staff. Those that never or rarely suggest the college option are actually somewhat more likely to indicate that sharing occurs than do others. These findings indicate that guidance counsellors are unlikely to encounter informants or advocates for francophone colleges among their peers. As will be seen below, however, we get a different result when we ask about information sharing with French teachers.

Table 7.7 Frequency of recommendations to francophone colleges from schools in which guidance counsellors share information about post-secondary opportunities with other staff

Guidance counsellors share information with other staff	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
Yes	50.0 (10)	59.4 (19)	63.6 (21)
No	50.0 (10)	40.6 (13)	36.4 (12)

7.8 Receiving information from French teachers

There is good news and bad news in Table 7.8. The good news is that receiving information from French teachers seems to matter. Seventy per cent of guidance counsellors who often or always recommend francophone colleges to senior immersion students reported that French teachers provide information to the guidance department. This is the case for only 39% of those who never or rarely suggest the college options, and 34% of those who sometimes do so. The bad news is in the same percentages. It is evident that most guidance counsellors are *not* receiving information from their colleagues in the school's French department.

Table 7.8 Frequency of recommendations to francophone colleges from schools in which French teachers provide information to the guidance department

French teachers provide information to guidance department	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
Yes	70.0 (14)	34.4 (11)	39.4 (13)
No	30.0 (6)	65.6 (21)	60.6 (20)

7.9 Summary

We have seen above that with few exceptions, guidance counsellors who regularly suggest francophone colleges do not make distinctive use of particular sources of information or information-gathering strategies. The major exception is that those who often or always suggest the college options are very much more likely to be receiving information on post-secondary opportunities from French teachers.

We might conjecture that the reason use or non-use of most information sources bears little relation to recommending francophone colleges is that these sources in fact convey little or no information about the colleges. In other words, whether or not guidance counsellors use them is quite literally irrelevant. While we could not test this directly, we explore the relationships between knowledge of francophone colleges claimed by guidance counsellors and the sources of information to which they had access.

Taking the most basic aspect—knowledge of programs and courses—we found that guidance counsellors in the small minority of high schools that did not receive written materials and visits from post-secondary institutions were much less likely to indicate they had even some knowledge. For example, 70% of those in schools whose students were not visited by post-secondary recruiters indicated they had little or no knowledge of francophone colleges, compared with 36% of those whose students had received visits. However, only 10 guidance counsellors reported that post-secondary recruiters had not visited their students. (Seventeen guidance counsellors reported that they had not personally been visited by post-secondary representatives and six stated that they had not received written material from post-secondary institutions.)

Beyond this, we do not find strong relationships. Guidance counsellors in jurisdictions where the district office serves as a clearinghouse for information were somewhat more likely to indicate quite a lot or a great deal of knowledge—37% versus 20% for others. Guidance counsellors who indicate that they are directed to gather information on post-secondary opportunities are less likely to report little or no knowledge (31 versus 49%) but a little more likely to claim they have quite a lot or a great deal of information about programs and courses.

Finally, we have seen that guidance counsellors who often or always suggest the francophone college options are more likely to be supplied with information from French teachers. It does not appear, however, that French teachers are an important source of information on colleges. The knowledge claims of guidance counsellors are almost wholly unrelated to whether or not their department receives information on postsecondary options from French teachers. The input of French teachers may heighten awareness of francophone and bilingual university opportunities but does little to raise the profile of francophone colleges.

8.0 Guidance Counsellors Attitudes and Beliefs about Francophone Colleges and their Appropriateness for Immersion Graduates

In the sections above we have looked at guidance counsellors' knowledge of francophone colleges and the ways in which they become informed of post-secondary options available and appropriate to their students. In this section we look at key attitudes and beliefs about the appropriateness of francophone colleges for immersion graduates.

8.1 Immersion students' orientation to university over college

Guidance counsellors who infrequently suggest francophone colleges are much more likely than others to think immersion students are too oriented to university to be interested in a college option. Of those counsellors who rarely or never recommend francophone colleges, 25% are in quite a lot or a great deal of agreement with this view; more than a third somewhat agree. In contrast, over two-thirds (68%) of those who often or always suggest francophone colleges either do not agree or only agree a little with the statement.

Table 8.1 Frequency of suggesting francophone colleges by belief that immersion students *would not* be interested in colleges because they are university oriented

Believe that immersion students would not be interested in colleges because they are university oriented	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=84		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	10.5 (2)	28.1 (9)	24.2 (8)
Somewhat	21.1 (4)	25.0 (8)	36.4 (12)
A little/none	68.4 (13)	46.9 (15)	39.4 (13)

8.2 Immersion students' French is good enough to study with native speakers

Guidance counsellors who infrequently recommend francophone colleges to immersion students are less confident than others that the students' French is good enough to study with native French speakers. Only 30% of those who rarely or never recommend francophone colleges are in quite a lot or a great deal of agreement with the statement that immersion students' French would be adequate. In contrast, 53% of those who sometimes recommend colleges are confident immersion graduates could cope. Of the counsellors who often or always recommend francophone colleges, 85% hold that immersion students' French is sufficient to study with native French speakers.

Table 8.2 Frequency of suggesting francophone colleges by belief that immersion students' French is sufficiently good to study with native French speakers

Believe that immersion students' French is good enough to study with native French speakers	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	85.0 (17)	53.1 (17)	30.3 (10)
Somewhat	10.0 (2)	37.5 (12)	51.5 (17)
A little/none	5.0 (1)	9.4 (3)	18.2 (6)

8.3 French students would be socially isolated

While many guidance counsellors doubt that immersion graduates' French would be adequate to study with native speakers of French, only a minority are concerned that they would be socially isolated in a French educational milieu. Guidance counsellors who often or always suggest francophone colleges show the least concern about social isolation with 90% not agreeing or agreeing only a little with the statement that immersion graduates would be socially isolated. But even among those who rarely suggest the college option, 76% hold the same view.

Table 8.3 Frequency of recommendations to francophone colleges by belief that French immersion students would be socially isolated or uncomfortable in a francophone educational milieu

Believe that French immersion students	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=85
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would be socially isolated or uncomfortable in a francophone educational milieu	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	5.0 (1)	0.0 (0)	6.1 (2)
Somewhat	5.0 (1)	18.8 (6)	18.2 (6)
A little/none	90.0 (18)	81.3 (26)	75.8 (25)

8.4 Administrators at francophone colleges would hesitate to accept immersion students

Guidance counsellors are generally not concerned that administrators in francophone colleges would be hesitant to accept immersion students. Just over 20% of those who rarely recommend the college option somewhat agree that this would be the case, but almost 80% either do not agree or agree only a little. Among those who sometimes recommend colleges, 87% are not concerned about acceptance by francophone college administrators. This is the case for 96% of those who often or always suggest the college option.

Table 8.4 Frequency of recommendations to francophone colleges by belief that administrators at francophone colleges would hesitate to accept French immersion students

Believe that administrators at francophone colleges would hesitate to accept French immersion students	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=83		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	0.0 (0)	3.2 (1)	0.0 (0)
Somewhat	5.0 (1)	9.7 (3)	21.9 (7)
A little/none	96.0 (29)	87.1 (27)	78.1 (25)

8.5 Assistance to immersion students in francophone colleges

There is somewhat more concern about the willingness or ability of francophone colleges to provide assistance to those studying in their second language. Among those who rarely or never suggest francophone colleges to immersion students, almost half at least somewhat agree with this concern. This is the case among over one-third of those who sometimes suggest the colleges but only 21% of those who often or always do so. However, among all groups a majority (53–79%) either do not agree or agree only a little that this is a concern.

Table 8.5 Frequency of recommendations to francophone colleges by belief that francophone colleges *would not* be willing/able to provide assistance to French immersion graduates studying in their second language

Believe that francophone colleges would not provide assistance to French immersion graduates	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=83		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	10.5 (2)	18.8 (6)	12.5 (4)
Somewhat	10.5 (2)	18.8 (6)	34.4 (11)
A little/none	78.9 (15)	62.5 (20)	53.1 (17)

8.6 French Immersion students should pursue post-secondary studies in English

Most guidance counsellors did not agree or agreed only a little with the statement that French immersion graduates have studied enough French and should pursue post-secondary studies in English. Even among those who rarely or never recommended francophone colleges, less than 15% even somewhat agreed with this statement.

Table 8.6 Frequency of recommendations to francophone colleges by belief that French immersion graduates should pursue post-secondary studies in English

Believe that French immersion graduates should pursue post-secondary studies in English	Recommended francophone colleges to students N=83		
	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/never
A great deal/quite a lot	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	3.1(1)
Somewhat	0.0 (0)	15.6 (5)	12.5 (4)
A little/none	100.0 (19)	84.4 (27)	84.4 (27)

8.7 Summary

Guidance counsellors who infrequently suggest the option of francophone colleges to senior immersion students are more likely to think that their clients are too university oriented to consider any college option, and less confident that immersion students have adequate French to study with native speakers. On the other hand, few have fears that immersion graduates would be socially isolated in a French milieu. While they themselves may have concerns about the ability of immersion graduates to cope academically, they do not—in general—think francophone college administrators would hesitate to accept them. However, almost half those who rarely recommend colleges are confident that francophone colleges would be willing or able to provide special assistance to immersion graduates studying in French.

We find then, that reluctance to suggest the francophone college option is to a degree rooted in concerns about the adequacy of immersion students' French and about the likelihood that francophone colleges would provide special assistance. Yet these concerns are not extreme even among the majority of those who rarely or never recommend francophone colleges. While many guidance counsellors think immersion graduates are almost exclusively oriented to university, this is hardly a barrier to at least suggesting a college option that in many provinces can relatively easily lead back to university. In short, the beliefs and attitudes of guidance counsellors do not seem strongly biased against the college option. In light of these findings, francophone colleges could mount an advocacy campaign to inform guidance counsellors of this option.

Part 4: Student supports

9.0 Academic Supports That Would Assist French Immersion Students Pursue Post-Secondary Studies In A Francophone Educational Milieu

We asked guidance counsellors to rate the extent to which they thought certain academic and social supports would help French immersion students to succeed in a francophone educational milieu. Multiple responses were permitted.

9.1 Language proficiency placement tests

When respondents were asked the extent to which they thought a language proficiency placement test would help French immersion students succeed in a francophone educational milieu, just over 70% thought it would help a great deal or quite a lot and fully 95% felt that it would be at least somewhat helpful.

Statement 9.1 Completing a language proficiency placement test to ensure that students and instructors are aware of areas of strength and weakness would help French immersion students succeed in a francophone educational milieu.

Table 9.1 Response by percentage

It would help	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	70.9 (61)
Somewhat	24.4 (21)
A little/not at all	4.7 (4)

9.2 Tutorials

Respondents were asked the extent to which they thought that attending tutorials to review language needs for specific courses taken in French would help French immersion students. Slightly more than 70% answered that this would help a great deal or quite a lot and 95% thought such tutorials would be at least somewhat helpful.

Statement 9.2 Attending tutorials to review language needs for specific courses taken in French would help French immersion students succeed in a francophone educational milieu.

Table 9.2 Response by percentage

It would help	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	70.9 (61)
Somewhat	24.4 (21)
A little/not at all	4.7 (4)

9.3 Choice of writing papers in English

We asked the extent to which guidance counsellors thought that having the option of writing papers and/or exams in English would help French immersion students. Respondents were divided among those who thought it would help a great deal/quite a lot, those who thought it would help somewhat, and those who thought that it would help a little or not at all.

Statement 9.3 Having the choice of writing papers and/or exams in English would help French immersion students succeed in a francophone educational milieu.

Table 9.3 Response by percentage

It would help	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	37.2 (32)
Somewhat	25.6 (22)
A little/not at all	37.2 (32)

9.4 Upgrading classes

When asked the extent to which they thought that attending language upgrading classes would help immersion students, 56% of the respondents answered that language upgrading would be a great deal/ quite a lot of help and 93% thought that these classes would be of at least some assistance.

Statement 9.4 Attending language-upgrading classes would help French immersion students succeed in a francophone educational milieu.

Table 9.4 Response by percentage

It would help	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	55.8 (48)
Somewhat	37.2 (32)
A little/not at all	7.0 (6)

9.5 Extra time to complete work

We asked guidance counsellors the extent to which they thought having extra time to complete written work would help French immersion students. About 80% felt that extra time to complete written work would be at least somewhat helpful and about 42% thought it would help quite a lot or a great deal.

Statement 9.5 Having extra time to complete written work would help immersion students succeed in a francophone educational milieu

Table 9.5 Response by percentage

It would help	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	38.4 (33)
Somewhat	41.9 (36)
A little/not at all	19.8 (17)

9.6 Opportunity to resubmit after corrections

When asked the extent to which resubmitting assignments after the instructor has corrected the language would help immersion students studying in a francophone milieu, about 62% indicated that it would help immersion students a great deal or quite a lot and about 84% thought it would be at least somewhat helpful.

Statement 9.6 Having the opportunity to resubmit after the instructor has corrected the language would help French immersion students succeed in a francophone educational milieu.

Table 9.6 Response by percentage

It would help	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	61.6 (53)
Somewhat	22.1 (19)
A little/not at all	16.3 (14)

9.7 French conversation courses

When asked to what extent taking conversational French courses would help immersion students, about 63% of respondents thought that conversational French classes would help a great deal or quite a lot and 85% thought such classes would be at least somewhat helpful.

Statement 9.7 Taking French conversation courses help immersion students succeed in a francophone educational milieu.

Table 9.7 Response by percentage

It would help	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	62.8 (54)
Somewhat	22.1 (19)
A little/not at all	15.1 (13)

9.8 Summer bursary courses

We asked respondents about the extent to which they thought taking summer bursary courses would help French immersion students. Just over 90% of respondents thought that such courses would be at least somewhat helpful, while about 68% thought they would help a great deal or quite a lot.

Statement 9.8 Taking summer bursary courses would help French immersion students succeed in a francophone educational milieu.

Table 9.8 Response by percentage

It would help	N=86
A great deal/quite a lot	67.4 (58)
Somewhat	23.3 (20)
A little/not at all	9.3 (8)

9.9 Summer immersion programs at francophone institutions

When guidance counsellors were asked the extent to which they thought attending a summer immersion program prior to studying in French at a francophone college would help immersion students, about 74% thought that it would help a great deal or quite a lot, while about 93% felt that it would be at least somewhat helpful.

Statement 9.9 Attending a summer immersion program at a francophone university or college prior to studying in French at a francophone college would help French immersion students succeed in a francophone educational milieu.

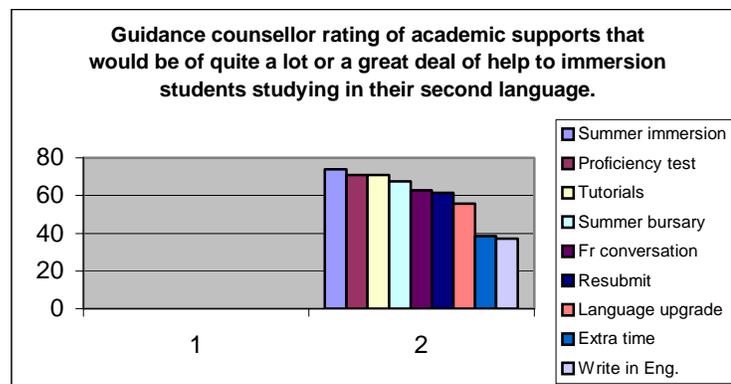
Table 9.9 Response by percentage

It would help	N=84
A great deal/quite a lot	73.8 (62)
Somewhat	19.0 (16)
A little/not at all	7.1 (6)

9.10 Guidance counsellor rating of academic supports

Guidance counsellors rated academic supports that they thought would help immersion students pursue post-secondary studies in their second official language. Summer immersion programs were their first choice, followed by proficiency testing, tutorials, summer bursary programs, and French conversation courses. The next four choices (again presented in order of preference) were an opportunity to resubmit work after an instructor had corrected the language, French-language upgrading, extra time to complete written work, and the option of writing exams and papers in French. The preferences are presented in chart form below.

Chart 9.10 Guidance counsellor rating of academic supports



9.11 Comparison of guidance counsellor perceptions and student-identified needs

In 2005, CPF surveyed French immersion graduates who were, or had been, enrolled in post-secondary courses taught in French. The students were asked which academic supports had been or would be of most assistance to students pursuing post-secondary studies in their second official language.⁴ The table below compares student ratings of five potential supports with those of guidance counsellors.

Table 9.11 Comparison of university student-identified needs and guidance counsellor perceptions of five academic supports

	University students	Guidance counsellors
Resubmit work	1	2
Tutorials	2	1
Language upgrading	3	3
Extra time to prepare	4	4
Write in English	5	5

⁴ Canadian Parents for French (2005), University Students and French Immersion Programs: A Student Survey, p.22. http://www.cpf.ca/english/Resources/FSL2005/Student_Survey_Long.pdf.

9.12 Summary

Students and guidance counsellors are in near total agreement in their rankings of the supports needed to help French immersion graduates succeed in post-secondary francophone institutions. Both groups appear to have concerns about French writing proficiency, and both groups favour options designed to strengthen French skills over those designed to accommodate weak ones.

Guidance counsellor preference for strengthening French-language skills rather than accommodating weaknesses is evidenced, as well, by their high ranking of summer immersion and bursary programs, proficiency testing, and French conversation courses, all of which are designed to increase French proficiency.

Guidance counsellor and student concerns and recommendations for addressing those concerns provide clear direction to francophone colleges about the types of academic supports that should be provided and promoted in order to attract French immersion graduates.

Part 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

10.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Comparatively few guidance counsellors—fewer than 25%—routinely suggest to senior immersion students that they consider francophone colleges as a post-secondary option. Yet our survey shows little evidence that guidance counsellors are biased against francophone post-secondary institutions in general or francophone colleges in particular.

Guidance counsellors think that francophone colleges would accept immersion graduates. They think they would assist them in studying in their second language. They think immersion students would fit in socially in a francophone educational milieu. But they are also concerned about whether immersion students' French is adequate to the task and many doubt that immersion students would be interested in *any* college option.

These beliefs and attitudes—some supportive of recommending the francophone college option but others not—are essentially unsupported by any significant knowledge of how the colleges actually operate. Most guidance counsellors have little or no knowledge about required proficiency levels, about language upgrading activities, about academic supports, about what the research says about immersion students' performance in francophone post-secondary institutions.

Given these circumstances, a promotional campaign that provides accurate and credible information on how immersion graduates can be accommodated in francophone colleges might have a significant impact on how guidance counsellors advise immersion students (and possibly other FSL students with a similar level of French language competency).

Specific Recommendations:

- RCCFC should compile a briefing book that deals with the concerns of guidance counsellors (likely shared by students).
- This briefing book should deal centrally with fluency requirements and current college screening procedures as well as ways that guidance counsellors (and students) can assess readiness, available assistance to those studying in their second language, and language upgrading opportunities. The briefing book should also include summaries of any studies of achievement of immersion students (or second-language learners in general) in francophone post-secondary institutions.
- The briefing book needs to outline opportunities in each province to construct educational careers that involve both college and university education, with specific reference to francophone colleges. Ideally the book would include summaries of any studies of immersion students attending colleges. In particular, RCCFC should look to the registrars of member colleges for data and possible exemplary cases. RCCFC can also draw on research of college recruitment and the colleges' promotional work to change their public image.
- RCCFC needs to develop a website dedicated to recruitment of second-language learners, and targeted to students, guidance counsellors, and French teachers. The material from the briefing book can be incorporated on the site together with practical information about applying, registering, financial assistance, etc., and links to member colleges.
- RCCFC needs to develop a launch strategy for the website that will get attention in high school French immersion programs. A simple, low cost strategy might involve bulk distribution of promotional bookmarks with the website address to immersion program and guidance departments.
- RCCFC could promote francophone colleges to students by using targeted advertising and contests in relevant newsletters, high school yearbooks, and other student publications.