

**Minutes of the OCASC Secondary School Committee  
Thursday, November 11, 2010  
Fisher Park PS**

The objectives of the Secondary School Committee are to:

1. Increase parent knowledge of and involvement in secondary school education in Ottawa-Carleton;
2. Promote the development of school councils and parent associations to represent parents of students in each Ottawa-Carleton secondary school;
3. Sponsor and encourage research into and study of education issues and concerns in Ottawa-Carleton secondary schools;
4. Formulate recommendations regarding secondary school education in Ottawa-Carleton, and to assist in implementing such recommendations.

**Participants:**

Jean MacIsaac (Glebe), Maria Di Rosa (Putnam), Susanne Striegler (Brookfield), Chris Ellis (Rideau), Dan Burke (Colonel By), Elizabeth Melanson (Lisgar), Nadine Clarke (Chair),  
Guest Speakers: Jennifer Adams, Executive Superintendent and Barry Bickerton, Curriculum Services, OCDSB

**Agenda covered at meeting:**

Introductions

Presentation and Discussion: OCDSB French Language Proficiency Study

Introduction:

**Presentation: OCDSB French Language Proficiency Study**

**A handout of the presentation slides was made available to the participants.**

**Jennifer Adams, Executive Superintendent and Barry Bickerton, System Principal, Curriculum Services, OCDSB**

The objectives of the French Second Language Elementary and Secondary Program Reviews were to:

- a) improve the effectiveness of delivery and instruction for FSL programs,
- b) ensure all students had access to FSL programs,
- c) ensure the programs were viable and sustainable and
- c) ensure FSL programs were cost effective.

A result of the review was a finding that there was a considerable loss of students after grade 9 in Core French; 10% retention after 4 years in academic and 5% for applied students. The retention rates for Immersion and Extended French were higher at 50-55% and 25-30% respectively. A student must complete 7 credits in French at the high school level to graduate with an extended French certificate and the Immersion student must complete 10 credits.

A recommendation from the FSL review was to investigate the feasibility of implementing a French proficiency assessment at the end of grade 12 for all FSL programme: Core, Extended and Immersion.

### Ministry of Education Research Project

The **Ministry of Education** initiated a research project considering the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) which applies to all languages. Nine boards from across the province are participating in three phases to cover the periods 2009-2009, 2009-2010 and 2010- 2011.

The Ministry objectives apply to all students, grades K-12, and across all courses in French language instruction, core, extended and immersion.

The findings from Phase 1:

- a) the descriptors matched the FSL curriculum
- b) core and immersion teachers were positive
- c) students saw a significant increase in their skills after experiencing DELF activities
- d) teachers expressed the need for more training to use CEFR and to incorporate it in to their FSL programs

### Phase 11

The objectives:

- a) to gain a deeper understanding of CEFR levels to set program objectives
- b) to provide training on teaching and assessment strategies based on CEFR
- c) to explore the benefits of sharing assessment strategies across the province

In 2009-2010, the OCDSB trained and certified assessors, administered the DELF, analyzed the student results and made a final report to the Ministry.

### The DEFL Pilot Project in the OCDSB

The focus of the project was to investigate the appropriateness of using the Diplôme d'études en langue française (DELF) as a measure of French proficiency for Grade 12 FSL students.

The sampling procedure was to include randomly selected students for each level of DEFL (A2, B1 and B2) so as to maximize the likelihood of equal representation from each grade 8 FSL program (core, EFI, MFI and LFI). The final study included 84 grade 12 FSL students: 17 taking the A2 intermediate (core) 22 taking the B1 fluency (extended) and 45 taking the B2 advanced level (Immersion). The report, which was sent out with the agenda, identified the characteristics of the students; age, gender, grade 8 programs, first language and language spoken at home, number of school represented and % IPRC.

In addition the students answered questions about their attitudes to the French language such as did they enjoy listening, speaking, reading and writing French, their perceptions of the DEFL test, their perceived difficulties in the DELF activities and the similarity of DELF and their classroom activities.

All 84 students passed the proficiency test and recommended that Grade 12 students take the test. Jennifer noted that the weakest areas were in oral and listening skills. It was interesting that our curriculum is focussed on writing and reading. The students are comfortable with writing and less with listening. This is an identified area for instructional practice in the classroom.

Observations from the OCDSB team:

#### Advantages of the CEFR

- a) K-12
- b) All FSL programs
- c) Aligns with Growing Success
- d) Accountability measure
- e) National standard potential
- f) International standards
- g) Certificate based on proficiency
- h) Public support

Assessment is feedback on what needs to be improved not just on marks. The Board Improvement Plan includes engaging students in higher order thinking- creativity and critical thinking

#### Challenges:

- a) Alignment with the Ontario curriculum
- b) Financial and human resources needed to support the administration of the DEFL
- c) Teacher training

#### The Last Phase – Three 2010-2011

The Ministry Objectives are to link the CEFR and research project to the revise FSL curriculum and to expand training opportunities in assessment strategies.

The Ministry has funded the language lab training at the OCDSB; netbooks, headsets, webcams and media cart. In Phase 2, teachers will use XPressLab.com technology to focus on oral proficiency and then in Phase 3, a collaborative teaching model to observe students learning. The result will be the creation of tasks using technology; written production, oral interaction, oral and reading comprehension.

This month, students will self-select their level of challenge in the DEFL testing and will be chosen based on random selection.

A parent asked a question about equity for poorer students and barriers to access the testing. Jennifer responded that similar to AP and IB testing, the student will pay to take the test. The parent said we need to democratize French language learning and include learning disabilities.

Jennifer responded that the proof that it is democratized is the results 2 years after the FSL review: English Language Learners now represent 50% of MFI students, up from 33% and 16% of EFI students, up from 10%.

In a discussion about the sampling process, Jennifer said that they tried to ensure the students were non francophone. However, the core French students were not all core French learners as 50% had completed EFI in elementary school.

Barry and Jennifer summarised Phase 111. Teachers know the goal. They understand the levels that are explicit in CEFR like our assessment levels 1-4. They are co-planning the courses to get there. They will debrief with the students and amongst themselves about what worked. The later phases of the project focus on the instructional practices and involve instructional coaching. The debriefing will lead to more oral training and more engaged students. There are 12 instructional coaches in the secondary schools and 26 in the elementary schools. All overlay staffing is at the discretion of the Board. It is not a deficit based decision but about relationships and building trust, looking at our strengths. School based

Secondary School Committee Draft Meeting Minutes November 2010

decisions will be about more course offerings in the senior levels because they narrow in grade 11 and 12 now.

A quick check of the action register noted all outstanding items closed.

As the hour was late, we adjourned the meeting and deferred business to the next meeting

**Next Meeting**  
**December 9, 2010**  
**Fisher Park PS**

### Action Item Summary

ID	Actions	Assigned to	Date Raised mm.dd.yy	Target Date mm.dd.yy	Status
<b>ITEMS OPENED</b>					
A8	Can students in credit recovery achieve greater than 50%	Nadine	10.14.10	11.11.10	Done
A7	Check previous Secondary School Minutes for information about the math curriculum changes for grade 12	Nadine	03.11.10		Done
<b>ITEMS CLOSED</b>					
A6	Send link to the updated Secondary School Gifted Program report (includes SEAC input)	Nadine	03.11.10		Done
A5	Send Link to the School Councils Handbook	Nadine	03.11.10		Done
A4	Send Link to the School Improvement Planning Handbook	Nadine	03.11.10		Done
A2	Is there a policy, procedure, recommendation or decision on "Turn-Around Day" evaluation process for end of the semester exams	Nadine	02.11.10	Next meeting	Done
A3	Presentation on the new testing format for standardized math test, Grade 10 and Assessment of the test	Nadine	02.11.10	April or May meeting	Done
A1	Request/Ask for information or for volunteers from OCRI for one on one tutoring. Contact Lee-Ann Scott at <a href="mailto:lscott@ocri.ca">lscott@ocri.ca</a> or 613-828-6274 X247	All	09.10.09	Ongoing	Reminder
<b>CARRY-FORWARD actions</b>					

Secondary School Committee Draft Meeting Minutes November 2010

ID	Actions	Assigned to	Date Raised mm.dd.yy	Target Date mm.dd.yy	Status
A1	Record locations and numbers of students enrolled in focus programs for secondary school (T&T completed)	Anne	09.11.08	11.13.08	Anne reported on the Trades and Technology. Will update after the SS Steering Team meeting
A3	What are schools doing to help students transition to post-secondary education. Consider school councils hosting sessions in which guidance counsellors present options. Check and ask Board to consider preparing a booklet or web based outline for transitioning help	Nadine and Anne	09.11.08	11.13.08	Anne updated that the staff is interested but overloaded now. Follow up with timing later
A4	What is the Board position on students taking a 5 <sup>th</sup> year. What are the schools authority to allow or limit	Nadine and Anne	09.11.08	11.13.08	Answered than additional questions asked for clarification
A11 of 007-008	Check at the end of the SSC term to see if any change to Action # 6 on consultation	All SSC Reps	2007.10.11	2008.06.12	OUTSTANDING
A24 of 007-008	Action items 12 and 13: update SSC on gifted centres and mandate at SSPR. Define issues and decisions	Juliet	2008.03.06		uncertain
A06 of 007-008	Check whether consultation on program changes occur with their school council	SSC reps	2007.09.13	2007.10.11	Responses that the consultation varies across the board. Some councils are asked for input, some consultation and some no request.
A12 of 007-008	Form discussion group to focus on Secondary Gifted Centres issue.	Chairs	2007.12.13	asap	Revised
A13 of 007-008	Write, get email okays and send feedback on Secondary Gifted under SSPR mandate to Education Committee	Juliet?	2007.10.11	2008.01.22	Revised
<b>CLOSED ITEMS</b>					
A2	Record those exams which are board wide exams	Nadine and Anne	09.11.08	11.13.08	Sent 10.16.08 and again 11.13.08
A5	What options are there for students and parents to follow up the evaluation and final report for students (after the school year ends and summer starts)? What options to close the feedback loop for students at the end of the school year? Is there a Board process, policy or protocol?	Nadine and Anne	09.11.08	10.09.08	No policy or protocol

Secondary School Committee Draft Meeting Minutes November 2010

ID	Actions	Assigned to	Date Raised mm.dd.yy	Target Date mm.dd.yy	Status
A6	What is the credit recovery option?	Nadine and Anne	09.11.08	10.09.08	Credit recovery, credit rescue and upgrading explained
A8 from A4	Can you be on school teams of you are in the 5 <sup>th</sup> year of secondary school? If you graduate after 4 years, how does your average calculated with the additional courses?	Nadine	10.09.08	11.13.08	Reported 11.13.08
A9	What new curriculum is expected next year which will require new textbooks? Who's going to pay; province or board?	Nadine	10.09.08	11.13.08	Reported 11.13.08
A11	What is the school policy on parents' choice of class timetable for siblings of the same age?	Nadine	10.09.08	11.13.08	Reported 11.13.08