

# French Advisory Committee

Thursday February 15, 2024

Time: 1:00-2:30

Venue: Collettsville Elementary Library

Attendance: Nicole Schulte, Maria Thueveson, Ayla Wall, Adriane Moulard, Josée Warren, Lara Sigurdsson, Nicole Mackay-Smith

## 1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement (Adriane)

## 2. Events & News

### a. Carnaval

- i. Successful week of winter activities including skating, curling, pancake luncheon, masked parade and tacot competition
- ii. Great effort from staff and families all week long
- iii. Feedback form (what went well, things to adjust, suggestions for following year) has been sent out to staff. Heather has sent out the feedback form to families.

### b. Pre-K French for a day

- i. Pre-K "French For A Day" event was hosted at the Civic Centre on Wednesday February 7 (morning session and afternoon session).
- ii. We had 15 registrations for the morning and 6 registrations for the afternoon...children aged 3-5 years.
- iii. Line Vachon, Kathleen Tanguay and Mathilde Verneaud helped Nicole M-S pull off the successful/well received event! Participants left with a French themed gift bag (French books, bilingual colouring book, french stickers, etc) and some new French vocab (letters, numbers, colours, etc).
- iv. One parent asked for this to be a weekly event!! Yeh...but Nicole M-S does not have enough time in her schedule! **Nicole M-S is considering hosting a second event in April/May.**
- v. Nicole S suggested sending any promotion of our future events (Posters, pamphlets, emails) to be sent to Public Health and Scw'exmx Child & Family. Targeted pre-school age children frequent these locations and would be a good way to reach these families.

### c. Ready Set Learn

- i. Will be hosted Thursday February 22 at Collettsville
- ii. Nicole & Maria suggested it should be hosted earlier next year. Before K registration opens or even during the first week of F.I. K registration.

### d. Quebec Trip Updates

- i. February 2024 trip has been cancelled. Staff and current grade 6 parents hoping to start planning/fundraising process sooner for 2025 trip
- ii. Kim P provided Nicole M-S with an update prior to FAC meeting
- iii. Initial interest/planning meeting was held on Thursday February 8
- iv. 9 parents/families in attendance along with Kim P and Janis T
- v. Kim contacted travel company suggested by Nicole Schulte (great/quick communication from this company)
- vi. Trip cost per student will be \$3500-\$4000.
- vii. **Kim will complete trip proposal package by April SBO meeting, so that families can officially begin fundraising**

- viii. Noted that we need to have staff/admin willing to sponsor this trip in order for it to happen each year
- ix. Nicole S shared that John Chenoweth had talked with the CV PAC about suggesting to the SBO a streamline option for the Proposal Package on recurring trips like the Quebec trip
- x. Parents would like to stick with the same tour company in years to come. Build a relationship and work together on best experience/deal for our group
- e. Métis Dance Performance
  - i. Sharing the costs of this performance with Salmon Arm & Vernon school district
  - ii. Performance given fully in French
  - iii. Performance will take place on the afternoon of Wednesday May 1st. Students from MSS have been invited.

### 3. New French Immersion Staff

- a. French Immersion EA: Kathleen Tanguay
  - i. Kathleen Tanguay was hired and started in January 2024.
  - ii. We started with Kathleen working 2 days a week at MSS and 3 day at CV. After trying this for a few weeks, Josée Warren suggested Kathleen being at MSS for certain blocks each day rather than full days part of the week. This is working much better.
  - iii. We are using French \$ to pay for Kathleen's travel/fuel between the two schools.

### 4. OLEP Funding and French Immersion Growth Grant

- a. Videographer (In progress)
  - i. Serge and Nicole M-S have met via Zoom a few times to work on the production planning for our "Prospective Student/Families" video and our "Prospective Staff" video. Nicole will meet with Serge one more time via Zoom on February 29.
  - ii. We have locked in Wednesday March 6 & Thursday March 7 as our recording dates.
  - iii. Currently polling staff, students and parents interested in being interviewed/recorded
- b. French Speaking EA (Done)
  - i. See notes above
- c. French Advisory Committee (Done)
  - i. Still some budget left
    - 1. Committee would like to look into some workshop/training opportunities
    - 2. Committee would like to collaborate with Salmon Arm F.A.C  
(Nicole will look into options)
- d. Complete Program Review (Jane)
- e. Cultural Field Trips (In progress)
  - i. Nicole has reached out to French Cultural Societies in Kamloops and Kelowna
  - ii. Other ideas include : Canadian Parents for French, Missy D, Le FloFranco, Poetry Slam (Danielle Gibson?), Children's festival
- f. Purchasing Resources (On going)
- g. Professional Development (On going)

- i. Staff have attended: APPIPC conference, SFU «J'enseigne en Français » conference & SFU French Immersion Administrators' Network conference and a 2 day virtual A.I.M. training session.
- h. Online courses (In progress)
  - i. Nicole M-S has looked into this but the courses being offered are already being taught by Josée Warren
  - ii. Brought up talk of succession planning
    - 1. What happens if/when Josée leaves? Does the SBO have a plan ?
  - iii. Broader job posting for MSS position: Job posting has been adjusted to an emphasis on French speaking requirement and then work with candidate strengths from there
  - iv. Parents pointed out that they appreciate Dick Wowchuck's effort in the meantime. While they would prefer a French speaking teacher they value the quality of subject instruction being provided in the interim.
  - v. Nicole M-S has inquired with SILC/Joanne Brunel to see how other schools are offering FI Math/Sciences. Could we be paired with a school that has a FI math/science teacher and Zoom/watch recordings of their lessons??
- i. Pre-K Symposiums (Done...may do a second event?)
  - i. See notes above
- j. Support for F.I. teachers (On going)
  - i. Line Vachon and Guy Dugas have been working with staff since December. Line has supported Jory Berthelet, Merrill Livesey & Nicole Mackay-Smith.
  - ii. Guy has supported Janis Tancowny and Dick Wowchuck. Guy is offering French lab opportunities for FI MSS students. Guy will be covering for Dick while he is away on an upcoming trip.

## 5. Supporting FI students transition to the high school

- a. Josée has welcomed grade 7s come to MSS once a month to participate in activities with older FI students (scavenger hunts, whole group/small group games, etc). Connect with a big buddy, actually experience the MSS classroom, get familiar with school & staff, etc. Josée/Janis working on setting dates.
  - i. Nicole M-S, Josée and Janis will meet in person to confirm visit dates for grade 7 visits in March, April, May & June
  - ii. Grade 12 FI students will plan activities for visits
- b. Arrange for Josée Warren to attend MSS visit to CV when counsellors come to talk to grade 7 students
  - i. Nicole M-S will reach out to Molly Brigden
- c. MSS Open House/Information Session for French Immersion families to attend/ask questions about FI at the high school level
  - F.A.C » thought we should offer this opportunity in May...May 8 or May 15?
  - Have 2 rooms : one for all parents/guardians interested in high school french immersion and one room for current F.I. students
  - Room 1 : share benefits of program...smaller class sizes, bilingual diploma, cognitive benefits, social/emotional benefits, career & travel opportunities. Clarify misconceptions like trades program conflict, band, etc
  - Room 2 : Have past F.I. students share their experiences/how they used their French/their pride in having a second language (Rory Crerar, Hannah Kaza, Brooke Sproson, etc), share scholarship opportunities, etc
  - Nicole M-S will start the planning process

## 6. Recruitment

- Online French Education Job Fairs: Make a future December 6, Feb 28, May 23.
  - Lara was in attendance for the December 6 session
  - wondering if we will be able to include a link to our promotional video with our job postings?
- In person job fairs: Need to have an engaging/professional booth, make/translate current SD 58 pamphlet, business cards, sign up sheets, etc.
  - Collaborate with the city of Merritt to create a pamphlet to showcase Merritt to candidates?
  - Promote Merritt/four seasons lifestyle
  - find a marketing company to contract to produce pamphlet/kiosk, etc (Nicole M-S)
  - Purchase screen to play promo videos, kiosk decor (table cloth, banners, lanyards, etc) (Nicole M-S)
  - What can we do about housing?
  - Need housing options for government positions...education, health care
  - Purchase some rental investments
  - Pay for temporary housing while looking for permanent residence
  - Steve & Jane any ideas around this issue?

## 7. Publicity/Promoting great things happening in F.I.

- a. Showcase great things happening in our program
  - b. Want students and families to feel pride in learning a second language
- Online: CV and PAC Facebook page
    - Include links for promotional video, new Kindergarten pamphlet
    - Send L'Action Française to Simone to be posted on the SD 58 sites (Nicole M-S)
  - Merritt Herald

## 8. Action items from last meeting

- a. Heather Ouimet & Brandi Streimer send the link to the L'action Française! newsletter to French Immersion Families via email and post on school websites monthly (DONE)
- b. Kim will submit planning package to SBO with plans for a trip in early February (parent meeting to follow)...now moving on to following 2025 planning package (IN PROGRESS)
- c. Nicole MS will talk to SILC or Joanne for more input on districts providing an early and a late FI program. (IN PROGRESS)
- d. Nicole MS Create a survey to poll the community about interest in late immersion (parent version and student version)
  - i. Nicole did not move forward with this. Need to focus on the current F.I. program, don't spread ourselves too thin
  - ii. Could advertise trial for anyone wanting to try/join French Immersion
    1. We do have a policy in place for students joining FI in grade 3 or later (must be reading/writing at grade level, entry meeting, trial period review meeting)

## 9. Round Table

- Nicole S wondered what the policy was on board attendance at French Advisory Committee meetings.
  - John Chenoweth was asked to be a part of our committee at the beginning of the 2023/2024 school year.

- Has been invited to meetings but has not been in attendance
- Nicole S wondered if Steve or Jane should be in attendance
- Steve & Jane could you please clarify?

Committee asked Nicole S and Maria what they are hearing from fellow parents about the current F.I. program :

- Not perfect (vacancy at MSS an issue) but appreciate people working together in a positive way to improve the F.I. program
- CV: improved parent perspective
- MSS: still a feeling of lack of quality due to vacant FI position. Happy with Mr Wowchuck and his work with MSS students in the interim
- Maria felt this will improve as we move forward...current MSS group's perspective may not change

Really want show students the value/reward of doing French Immersion

- Trips in Grade 7 & high school for students to see the application of their acquired second language first hand
- Connect with other districts offering French Immersion. Give students an opportunity to visit, connect & collaborate with other French speakers

Exit Survey

- This idea has been brought up many times over the past few years
- Would like to get an idea of why students are leaving the program via an exit interview/survey
- Find common issues/concerns so that they can be addressed moving forward
- Steve & Jane do you think this is possible?

## **10. Confirm next meeting date**

Thursday May 30 @ 1:00pm