A Review of the French Immersion Program in SD 45

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### Acknowledgements

The review is largely based on the perceptions of a variety of people associated with the program. The consultant appreciates the time and effort of individuals to share their perspectives in an open and honest manner. Many valuable insights were provided with regard to both the strengths and challenges of the program. Support for this strong program was evident from all players within this educational community.

The French Immersion Advisory Committee provided valuable assistance in shaping the report and methods of acquiring information. I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the advisory process and this report.

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## SD 45 French Immersion Program Review Report

### **Purpose:**

A strong French Immersion program is a feature of West Vancouver School District. In an effort to maintain this high quality, progressive program, periodic reviews are conducted. The last District Review of French Immersion concluded in 2004. The primary purpose of this previous review was to identify an additional facility to Ecole Pauline Johnson, in order to accommodate the increasing demand for French Immersion programming.

The purpose of this review will be to examine current practice, and to explore the perceptions of stake holders. The consultant will reflect and consider implications of these findings.

### **Background information:**

The French Immersion program in West Vancouver has enjoyed increasing enrolment and is well respected. Its enrolment figures compare well with other lower mainland school districts, all of which offer French Immersion, in a variety of models. School District 45 has 11.8% of its total student enrolment, involved in French Immersion (see Appendix 8). This represents the second highest proportion of all lower mainland school districts (behind North Vancouver and just ahead of Delta).

The program is offered in two elementary schools, Ecole Pauline Johnson and Ecole Cedardale. Students who remain in French Immersion in high school attend Sentinel Secondary School, which is a dual track high school.

Prior to 1992-1993, the district had two French Immersion sites: Ecole Pauline Johnson offering French Immersion in the intermediate grades only, and Hollyburn School offering the program for the primary grades. In September 1992, the two schools were consolidated into a single track school at Ecole Pauline Johnson. This school remained as the single French Immersion Elementary School in West Vancouver until Ecole Cedardale opened. Ecole Pauline Johnson has a current enrolment of 433 students.

Ecole Cedardale began to offer French Immersion in 2004. This single track program currently has 207 students enrolled in the early immersion programs.

Ecole Sentinel has been offering French Immersion in a dual track setting since 1986. Currently there are about 250 students in the program from grade eight to twelve.

### Role of FRENCH IMMERSION ADVISORY COUNCIL (FIAC)

The committee was originally established to assist with the last French Immersion Review that was concluded in 2004. The committee at that time, was charged "with the task of making a recommendation to the Board to ensure that appropriate facilities will be available to meet the future demands for this program". An inclusive structure for the committee resulted in members representing parents, teachers, principals and District Administration. The significant value of this committee was realized, and it has been maintained ever since.

FIAC has provided advice to the consultant regarding all aspects of the review including the specific topics to be explored and the methods to be used to acquire information. The committee invested considerable time in assisting with the development of both the Parent Survey and the Student Survey.

### FIAC Members:

Gary Kern	Committee Chair
Dave Eberwein	Committee Former Chair
John Simpson	Consultant
Deborah Podurgiel	Committee Recorder
Deborah Barretto	Parent Representative
Annie Bouchard-Morisse	Sentinel Representative
Christiane Boulet	Pauline Johnson Representative
Michel Finch	Sentinel Representative
David Langmuir	Pauline Johnson Representative
Lisa Mervyn	Parent Representative
Pascale Powell	Cedardale Representative
Kathryn Seely	Parent Representative
Dawn Sutcliffe	Parent Representative
Chantal Trudeau	Cedardale Representative
Michel Yin	Sentinel Representative

### Methodology

Early FIAC discussions inferred that the primary data gathering would be gleaned through interviews and surveys of stake holders (students past and present, parents, teachers, administration). After further consideration, it was decided to pursue a number of different sources of information:

A. Survey of parents and students.

The structure of the survey, the topics and the specific items were created in consultation with FIAC. The online surveys were made available to parents and students from late October to early December 2012. 231 parents and 103 students responded.

B. Student Focus Groups at Pauline Johnson, Cedardale and Sentinel.

These focus group meetings were held in late October 2012. Student participants were selected at random. In the two elementary schools, students were selected from both the early and late immersion streams, and only from grades 6 and 7. At the secondary school, three focus groups were held. Two meetings included students who were continuing in the program: students in grades eight and nine, and one for students in grades ten to twelve. The final focus group participants represented students who had moved to the English stream. *\*see the template for discussion topics in Appendix 2* 

C. Interviews of SD 45 French Immersion teachers.

An invitation to be interviewed was extended to all SD 45 French Immersion teachers. Teachers could participate alone, or with a colleague. Most interviews were conducted one on one. At Sentinel the interviews were conducted in a group setting (due to efforts to make the schedule as convenient as possible). In all, twenty teachers were interviewed. *\*see the template of interview questions in Appendix 3, i*).

- D. Interviews with French Immersion Coordinators from other lower mainland School Districts. Most school districts in the lower mainland have a position that holds responsibility for the French Immersion portfolio. Through the "Lower Mainland French Immersion Consortium" contacts were identified. Two face to face, and six telephone interviews were conducted. \*see the template for questions in Appendix 7.
- E. Discussions with University "Admissions" personnel. Telephone discussions with Admissions department personnel at UBC, SFU and UVic were arranged. A summary of the information is presented along with a table identifying a number of Universities, and their respective disposition for French Immersion involvement. *\*see the table in Appendix 5.*

- F. Review of French Elective Course Offerings in other Lower Mainland Districts. Through discussions with Lower Mainland French Immersion Coordinators, and information available on school or school district websites, a table of course offerings has been generated. \*see the table in Appendix 4.
- G. Parent Focus Groups. The PAC's from all three French Immersion Schools were asked to facilitate the invitations to parents. Participants represented a range of parent experience with the French Immersion programs in SD 45. An afternoon meeting, and an evening meeting time was provided.
- H. Review Attrition Data. Enrolment Data for all three schools from 2009-2012 was acquired and examined. Survival Curves and grade to grade transition data (up to 2010) was also examined. Observations from this data make up the comments provided. \*see the data in Appendix 6.

### Survey Results

A) Surveys: i) Parent Surveys (231 submissions)

### What did we learn?

There is profound support for the French Immersion Program with over 86% of parents finding it to be beneficial educationally and over 90% socially and culturally. Parents enroll their children in French Immersion for a variety of reasons that tend to relate to the benefits of a second language. Schools and teachers are considered to have high expectations of students, and parents believe that the program provides an increased level of challenge. Most parents believe that higher grades are more difficult to achieve in the French program, and this probably relates to the perception that most students who leave the program do so in order to achieve better grades in English. The responses demonstrate a less enthusiastic endorsement for the access to learning assistance and additional supports, as well as the level of extracurricular opportunity. Many parents felt that the number of French Immersion elective courses at secondary was not satisfactory.

The opportunity to elaborate by providing comments was taken by many parents. A review of these comments provides some detail that is worth further review.

\*See appendix 1 for recurring recommendations from parents:

- Condensed Item Analysis
- Comments from Parent Survey
- Comments from Parent Survey regarding Q 11 (available support) and Q 12 (extracurricular)
- A) Surveys: ii) Student Surveys (103 returned)

### What did we learn?

The responses indicate that most students are enjoying their experience in French immersion and are finding it very beneficial. Most students believe that they chose to study in French for reasons related to the benefits of a second language as well as the opportunity to be more challenged in school. Close to 20% of students felt that the learning resources may not be current or appropriate. While most students appreciated the value of field trips, more than half of the respondents felt that the number of field trips was inadequate. Most of these students believe that high grades were more difficult to attain in the French Immersion program and that most students who left the program did so in order to achieve higher grades in English. Most students felt that they were able to access extra help at school, at home, or in the community. While most students were satisfied with the extracurricular opportunities offered, high school French Immersion students predominantly felt that there were an inadequate number of French Immersion elective courses available to them.

\*\*not known – how many of the responses came from students who had left the French Immersion program

\*See Appendix 1 for tabulated data from Student Surveys - Condensed Item Analysis

### B) Student Focus Groups

The consultant was impressed with the students in all three schools. They were articulate, respectful and appreciative of the opportunity to contribute to the review. Generally, students were quick to identify the reasons that they chose to be in French Immersion. These include the enthusiasm to have a second language, the enhanced opportunities for future employment, education and travel, and the academic challenge. They tended to be very appreciative of their teachers and the culture in each school. They spoke fondly of both their peers and teachers, with a few exceptions. Many sited significant differences in the level of challenge at secondary compared to elementary school.

Those students who had left the French Immersion program generally identified that their time in the program was an asset. They tended to find the English program testing format easier, and the teachers more "laid back". Many who left did so for the prospect of higher grades in the English program, or to experience new teachers and new teaching styles.

Both former and current French immersion students noted the challenge of French grammar, and the need for more French speaking TOC's. Having the same teacher for a number of years was seen to be a benefit for some, and a challenge for others.

A number of former Cedardale students expressed concerns related to the resources and facility, both in the classrooms and around the school. Some students sited the need for more French reading materials in the library and more French textbooks for the earlier grades. Others were focused on chairs for assemblies and playground equipment.

\*See Appendix 2 for Significant Impressions gleaned from Student Focus Group

### C) Teacher Interviews

Teachers were generally very pleased to have a single track elementary school that allows for staff and students to "live in a French environment". While many advantages of this system were acknowledged, caution about maintaining vigilance to have French spoken in all curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular areas, was voiced.

In identifying challenges, many teachers noted the time and effort required to locate French resources, and to translate from English. Also, the level of learning support was considered to be minimal. A changing clientele is seen to be moving toward more egalitarian enrolment, rather than exclusively more capable students. This change is perceived to require more support opportunity, and many mentioned the need for more SEA or TA time.

Recent efforts to provide collaborative opportunities for French Immersion teachers have been greatly appreciated. Cedardale teachers expressed the need for more collaboration with PJ teachers, and all teachers require more assistance to find and share resources. Also, several teachers noted that they felt some degree of isolation with regard to district professional development.

A number of teachers talked about the challenges of comparing PJ to Cedardale. The facility limitations of Cedardale were often mentioned as was the long history of Ecole Pauline Johnson.

A number of secondary teachers noted the challenges of attrition and expressed concern for students moving to English anticipating higher grades. Several of these teachers pointed out the higher results on Provincial examinations attained by French Immersion students.

Teachers voiced a number of recommendations including:

- Consider ways to have elementary schools more similar in terms of size and resources.
- Create a bigger community by having 3 FI schools collaborate more frequently, and share events, or activities.
- Ensure that at least one administrator at Sentinel has French language.
- Identify a district position or person who could invest in acquiring French resources.
- Review transition planning in an effort to "soften" the transition to High School.

\*See Appendix 3 for Noteworthy Responses from Teacher Interviews

### D) Input from Lower Mainland District French Immersion Coordinators

Regarding Attrition: Most students who chose to go from the FI program into English, do so at transition times, when all student move to new schools. This includes moving from elementary, to middle, or junior high, or the subsequent move to secondary schools. The choice to move to the English program can be for performance issues, or to seek additional learning support. They may also be made for social reasons, or because of transportation issues that relate to the new school's distance from home.

Also, the attrition data demonstrates some higher rates after grade 3 as well as just before provincial examinations must be written (in grade 10). Much of the attrition in approaching high school often relates to parental concerns about the potential for a student to fare better on provincial exams in the English program. Also, the recent development of many "programs of choice" and "academies" has negatively impacted FI enrolment as many students may opt for these programs, instead of remaining in French Immersion.

Learning Support: Many coordinators noted that often if the student has any learning issues, parents opt for more learning support in the English program. This is sometimes frustrating for some FI teachers who believe the program has evolved to be more "for everyone" including those who are not so "gifted". The typical profile for a French immersion student has evolved. Today there are many more behavior, ESL and learning issues in each class, than previously. Slowly the need to be offering more learning support within FI is being recognized. However in most districts there are usually very few, if any French EA's (SEA's) or TA's.

Size of Program: The small size of many French Immersion programs has advantages and disadvantages. More personal attention may be available in smaller settings. However, these small programs can put extra pressure on teachers to do more. (higher number of preps, less sharing of supervised extracurricular or intramural activities, etc.) Also smaller programs can be too small and can "breed familiarity". Small programs have limited flexibility to change class composition.

At secondary schools the opportunity to offer increased numbers of elective courses in French is directly related to student population within the program. While staff qualifications are a factor, the biggest issue is requiring a threshold number of students to make any offering viable.

\*See Appendix 4 "French Immersion Elective Course Offerings"

**Resources:** More FI resources are becoming available as more publishers recognize the market.

### Suggestions and advice included:

- Encourage all grade 12 students to write DELF exams from France. This Diploma in French Proficiency is good for external credit (4)
- Appoint a West Van FI teacher (or other representative) to join the Lower Mainland FI Consortium
- Ensure representation and participation in October 19 Provincial Pro D.

### E) Discussions with University "Admissions"

The following paragraph summarizes the information provided by Andrew Arida who works in "UBC Admissions".

Does a French Immersion Dogwood Diploma provide any advantages to an applicant regarding the status of their university application?

The application is still very much a "quantitive" clinical formula that looks at the grades that are achieved in pertinent courses. These grades are weighed against other applicants, and with slight variations depending on which faculty is being sought, a cutoff point is reached. Grades will remain the main criteria. UBC is in the process of expanding the use of "personal profiles" in the assessment of applications. These personal profiles would deepen the application process to examine the variety of experiences students have acquired. The attainment of a French Immersion Dogwood could be presented in these "personal profiles".

The role or "weight" of these profiles will be more strongly considered in the applications of those students who have achieved a grade point average near the cut-off. In this way they may provide a final comparison between applicants. Many universities are attempting to find ways to look beyond a "grades only" process, but this is not an easy problem.

The French Immersion Dogwood Diploma should be sited in these personal profiles and will be viewed favorably to demonstrate a somewhat broader experience. Other than in this way, the university does not distinguish between the English and French Immersion Dogwood in any way. University applications consider marks attained in English12, and 3 approved grade 12 academic courses. (some use 4 approved grade 12 courses)

As the table in Appendix 5 demonstrates, most universities remain focused on admission criteria, which are "grades based" with no consideration or advantage given to students who have completed a French Immersion Dogwood.

### F) Investigate French Elective Course Offerings in other Lower Mainland Districts

The opportunity to offer increased numbers of elective courses in French is directly related to student population within the program. While staff qualifications are a factor, the most important factor is the number of students who request a course. There must be a threshold number of students to make any course offering viable.

\*See Appendix 4 for French Immersion Course Offerings in various BC Secondary Schools.

### G) Parent Focus Groups

The respective PAC's of the 3 French Immersion Schools invited parents to attend a meeting on either January 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup>. The parents in attendance were very positive toward the French Immersion programs and the experiences of their children in French Immersion. Their perceptions of some of the differences with the English program included the observation of a closer tighter school community. Parents are well involved and close relationships are formed. The work load is considered to be more challenging, and the transition to high school is thought to be a little more difficult.

Parents stated similar benefits of French Immersion as was identified on the Parent Survey. The potential for more enhanced opportunities for future study, work or travel was identified. Also, other advantages of studying a second language included research showing favorable brain development, and the potential to relate to other languages and cultures more positively. Interestingly, some saw French Immersion as a "natural filtering system".

The challenges that parents observed included issues that relate to a smaller program having less flexibility to adjust for "fit" with certain teachers. The large variation in instructional style, was discussed. Other challenges included the lack of French TOC's and the range of French language skills of different teachers. Still other challenges included the cost of tutors, the excessive amount of homework and the difficulty with assisting children for non-French speaking parents.

Parents offered a number of recommendations for the program. They felt that a French Immersion consultant or facilitator should be available to assist teachers. More linkages between elementary teachers and secondary teachers would be helpful in assisting to soften the transition between levels. Some parents felt that the resources for French could be updated, and more access to technological resources would be appreciated. In addition, it was observed that students could benefit from more opportunity to use the French language outside of class. Parents would like to be made aware of nearby French cultural activities. Parents also suggested a stronger expectation to use the French language around both elementary and secondary schools, was needed. This is particularly important at Sentinel, where the students do not get the same amount of practice that they did in earlier grades.

Parents discussed the increasing attrition rates during the high school years and lamented the difficulties of maintaining commitment to complete a French Immersion Dogwood.

One person offered: The Ministry supports "strong start" and should support "Strong Finish".

\*\*see Appendix 9: Summarized Perceptions of Parent Focus Groups.

### H) Review of Attrition Data

### Enrolment Data 2009-2012

As the data in Appendix 6 i) shows, there is very low attrition taking place in the elementary years. At Pauline Johnson, there is very little attrition in any year, and the data would appear to indicate that more students come into the program, than leave it.

At Cedardale the annual attrition typically is 2 students or less per class, with only 4 exceptions. There was an exceptional situation with last year's grade 5 class at Cedardale which appears to have lost 13 students from its grade 4 numbers.

Pauline Johnson adds late French Immersion classes in grade 6, therefore it is difficult to tell the specific attrition in moving from grade 5 to 6, or 6 to 7.

Caution must be exercised when observing the initial FI enrolment numbers at Sentinel. It would appear that only one student dropped FI when moving to grade 8 for the '10/11 year, but the enrolment shows 14 less in the grade 8 '11/12 class. However we know that these numbers include students who joined the program from out of district, in grade 8. As a result we can't be confident in the number of Cedardale and Pauline Johnson students who chose to move to English for high school.

The trend for increased attrition in high school, is nevertheless clearly evident. Fortynine students left the FI program from '09/'10 to '10/'11. Seventy-four students left from '10/'11 to '11/'12. The reason for these declining numbers has been formerly sighted. Primarily, some students and parents believe that they will attain higher grades in English; others are attracted to a variety of new programs and elective course opportunities; still others are looking to attend a different high school than Sentinel for social, geographic, or other reasons; and some are anxious to experience other teaching or learning styles not available in the comparatively small French Immersion Program.

**Survival Curves (to 2010)** for SD 45 French Immersion demonstrate that *(Appendix 6 ii)* some attrition occurs every year with the exception of the 1998 class in grades 5, 6 and 7. The most attrition occurred in the 1998 class moving from grade 2 to 3 (12%) and the 2004 class moving from grade 3 to 4 (11%).

### Ecole Cedardale

In catchment kindergarten to grade one enrolment declined each year up to 2008 and increased in 2009 and 2010. A significant number of out of district students join the program in kindergarten and grade 1.

### Ecole Pauline Johnson

A significant number of in catchment students join the program in grade 1. Attrition levels are fairly stable, (data is complicated by addition of late French immersion numbers in grade 6).

A number of out of district students join the program throughout the elementary grades.

### **Ecole Sentinel**

It is interesting to note that the size of the program has increased over time. ie. the number of students enrolled in French Immersion is greater each year.

Nevertheless there is considerable attrition that occurs throughout the high school years. This data demonstrates attrition ranges from a low of 15% (class of 2002) to the worst attrition of 53% (class of 2006).

\*See Appendix 6 ii) for specific Attrition Data to 2010

(provided for 1998, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2008)

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The French Immersion Program in West Vancouver is recognized as an exceptionally strong program. Public support was demonstrated in survey results and focus groups. This high esteem notwithstanding, this review recognizes the many recommendations that have been put forward. While many of these recommendations have strong merit, the consultant has considered each of them. The following paragraphs outline his perceptions of the most pressing concerns and the potential structures that may be able to assist in advancing the level of service of an already strong program.

### 1. Consider establishing an additional Late French Immersion Program

The French Immersion Program in West Vancouver School District is held in high esteem by every partner group. Parents strongly believe in the benefits of the program and enthusiastically endorse it. Teachers are very proud of the work that they and their students are doing. French Immersion students are very committed. Even students who had transferred to the English program reported that their time in French Immersion was valuable. It is safe to assume that the program is in high demand.

A review of the Barager data "enrolment by location of residence" (Appendix 11) demonstrates that students attending French Immersion in either Ecole Pauline Johnson, or Ecole Cedardale, travel to the school from all corners of the district and beyond. Over 20% of the elementary French Immersion students come from other school districts.

A number of SD 45 elementary schools currently have classroom space available and would be capable of accommodating a considerable increase in enrolment. One of these schools could accommodate a Late French Immersion Program to be operated in a dual track setting.

It is often stated that while parents choose the early French Immersion Program, the late Program is often the choice of the student. It is very likely that there would be strong numbers to support this opportunity.

(Note: an increase in the number of elementary French Immersion students who would transition to the secondary program could significantly assist opportunities to offer increased French Immersion elective courses)

### 2. Establish a Vision for French Immersion in SD 45

The consultant has become aware of two points of view regarding French Immersion. Clearly, many parents choose to place their children in French Immersion to provide an increased level of challenge. As one parent stated, French Immersion is a "natural filtering system". This may be a status that is attractive and warranted to attract the more capable and committed students.

On the other hand, some transition to a broader student profile has been observed in many districts. The CPF (Canadian Parents for French) would support this approach. As more parents have recognized the benefits of French Immersion more students with a wider variety of needs are entering the program. This has many significant implications. As a program becomes more representative of a broader student profile, a better understanding of how we support French Immersion learners, will be required.

Regardless of the disposition of the former issue, a vision for learning assistance is missing. Both teachers and parents have asked "Does a learning assistance teacher push to assist a student to "catch up" in French, or assist in preparing them to enter the English program?" Although the district funds learning support on par with the English program, the perception that FI is a more elite program is considered to be reflected in minimal learning support. A number of teachers perceived that the current level of Learning Support is inadequate. Exit protocols should be clarified to ensure that we "work with them before they commit to leaving". A clear understanding of the level and purpose of available student learning support should be established. There is considerable value in establishing a VISION for the program.

### 3. Develop Strategies to Increase Collaboration Opportunities.

There have been recent initiatives to allow teachers increased opportunities to collaborate. While these improvements are appreciated, they could go a lot farther in attempting to overcome some of the concerns that have surfaced during this review. Consider these recommendations from a variety of sources:

*Review transition planning to find ways to soften the transition to High School as it is very challenging.* 

Explore strategies to overcome the "second fiddle" disposition of Cedardale by sharing the best aspects of PJ.

*Create a bigger community by having 3 FI schools collaborate more frequently, and share events, or activities.* 

Review expectations regarding the amount of homework required at each grade level.

*Provide more assistance to help parents support student learning in French by sharing more resources, providing English version of texts, and a pool of resource people.* 

These topics, and many more, could be well addressed with more opportunities for collaboration among teachers. This enterprise could be assisted by a specific district position or person who could assist in organizing and leading these collaborative opportunities. A "lead teacher" or French Immersion Coordinator could attend to many issues including promoting continual advancement in effective teaching practices. Other duties might include assistance with resources, professional development and providing SD 45 representation on the Lower Mainland French Immersion Consortium. The federal French Program grant could be accessed to assist with funding for this type of position.

### 4. Establish a high profile "theme" program for Ecole Cedardale.

With the long history and high performance of Ecole Pauline Johnson, the younger program at Ecole Cedardale is challenged to acquire the same level of high regard. Consideration should be given to raise the profile of Ecole Cedardale. There are a number of attractive programs worthy of attention. An elementary International Baccalaureate, Digital Immersion or Inquiry Based Learning Program could be considered, among others. These types of programs can provide students with significant and more unique enrichment opportunity. Furthermore, programs such as these would allow Ecole Cedardale to stand apart and overcome comparisons that may not be entirely fair. In many respects the program is essentially the same. Nevertheless, some challenges with respect to facility and resources are evident at Ecole Cedardale. Examples of these challenges include:

- the lack of gymnasium space for after school activities because of the day care program
- the library is not in a central location, and is a small and challenging space
- minimal unassigned areas are available for storage, or alternate activities
- classroom space is all accounted for, leaving no opportunity for dedicated spaces for programs such as music or art

Progress has been made to acquire other resources (such as new playground equipment). Nevertheless these concerns remain and will likely require significant capital funds to overcome.

### Parent Surveys – Condensed Item Analysis Page 1

**Condensed Item Analysis Report** 

Q1 As a parent, I found the French Immersion Program to be educationally very beneficial:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.56
Strongly Agree	140	60.61	
Agree	82	35.50	
Disagree	7	3.03	
Strongly Disagree	2	0.87	
Missing	0	0.00	

Q3 Why did you choose the French Immersion Program for your Child/Children? (Please choose all that anniv)

that apply)			
Response	Frequency	Percent	t Mean: -
Parental Decision	150	64.94	
Reputation of Program	105	45.45	
Proximity to School	45	19.48	
Second Language opens Future Doors	191	82.68	
More Challenge sought	134	58.01	
Social aspect	42	18.18	
Family Background	61	26.41	
Student Decision	35	15.15	
Missing	0	0.00	

Q2 Also, my Child/Children found the Program to be very beneficial socially, culturally, etc..:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.36
Strongly Agree	104	45.02	
Agree	108	46.75	
Disagree	17	7.36	
Strongly	2	0.87	
Disagree		-	
Missing	0	0.00	

Q4 The Learning Resources at School are current and appropriate:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 2.94
Strongly Agree	46	19.91	
Agree	138	59.74	
Disagree	33	14.29	
Strongly Disagree	14	6.06	

N	Missing	0	0.00	

Q5 French Immersion Field Trips are interesting and enrich my Child's/Children's learning:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.32
Strongly Agree	87	37.66	
Agree	117	50.65	
Disagree	17	7.36	
Strongly	4	1.73	
Disagree			
Not Applicable	6	2.60	
Missing	0	0.00	

Q6	There are an	appropriate	number	of French
Imn	nersion Field	Trips:		

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 2.72
Strongly Agree	22	9.52	
Agree	122	52.81	
Disagree	72	31.17	
Strongly Disagree	11	4.76	
Not Applicable	4	1.73	
Missing	0	0.00	

Condensed Item Analysis Report

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### Parent Surveys – Condensed Item Analysis Page 2

## Q7 At my Child's school, there are high expectations for Students in French Immersion:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.15
Strongly Agree	71	30.74	
Agree	127	54.98	
Disagree	30	12.99	
Strongly	3	1.30	
Disagree			
Missing	0	0.00	

### Q8 Higher Grades are more difficult to achieve in French Immersion than in the English Program:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 2.81
Strongly Agree	52	22.51	
Agree	98	42.42	
Disagree	66	28.57	
Strongly	15	6.49	
Disagree			
Missing	0	0.00	

Q9 If you know of People who have left the Program before Graduation, what Reason(s) was/were shared with you? (Please choose all that apply)

Response	Frequency	Percen	t Mean:-
School Location	19	8.23	
Sufficient Language Experience Attained	23	9.96	
Prospect of Better Student Performance in English	137	59.31	
Social Reasons	49	21.21	
Program Issues	76	32.90	
Unknown	41	17.75	
Missing	14	6.06	

Q10 My Child/Children are able to receive any required additional Support in the French Immersion Program at their school:

Response	Frequency	Percen	t Mean: -
Strongly Agree	31	13.42	
Agree	138	59.74	
Disagree	47	20.35	
-			
~ .			
Strongly Disagree	17	7.36	•
Missing	0	0.00	1

#### Q12 The Number/Variety of Extracurricular Activities in School for French Immersion Students are adequate:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 2.78
Strongly Agree	33	14.29	
Agree	121	52.38	
Disagree	70	30.30	
Strongly Disagree	7	3.03	

Missing

0 0.00

Q13 Parents of secondary students only: I am satisfied with the variety of French Immersion course offerings at Sentinel Secondary School:

Frequency	Percent	t Mean: 2.41
21	9.09	
61	26.41	
140	60.61	
9	3.90	
0	0.00	
0	0.00	
	21 61 140 9	61 26.41 140 60.61 9 3.90

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The specific data can be viewed in the previous sections. General observations will be made regarding the comments cited from within the "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" (SA and A) selections or the "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" (D and SD) selections.

### 1. As a parent, I found French Immersion program to be educationally very beneficial.

### Strongly Agree and Agree =222

Most of the comments submitted identified a variety of benefits. There were many compliments of teachers, programs and "increased level of challenge".

Disagree and Strongly Disagree = 9

A few identified that having a second language was a benefit but not having a variety of teachers was not a benefit. Some concerns for intensity, homework levels, math, science and secondary program.

### 2. Also, my child/children found the program to be very beneficial socially, culturally etc.

### SA + A =212

There were many compliments about language, culture and friends. Some felt levels of attention to maintain "healthy school environment" was high. Many parents were pleased with the development of strong friendships.

### D + SD =19

Some comments identified no expected difference between FI and En. Students can feel some pressure to leave if they struggle in any way, and some students feel additional pressure as they can't measure up (these students may suffer socially).

### 3. Why did you choose the French Immersion Program for your child/children?

- 191 -Second Language opens future doors
- 150 Parental Decision
- 134 More Challenge Sought
- 105 Reputation of Program
- 61 -Family Background
- 45 Proximity to School
- 42 Social Aspect
- 35 Student Decision
- 4. The learning resources at school are current and appropriate.

*SA + A = 184* 

Although most agree, not many comments were submitted.

D + SD = 47

Parents who disagreed stated that they would like to see:

- more French books needed for library.
- a technology teacher,
- more effective use of technology in classrooms.
- more and newer computers,
- more science.
- more Learning support needed.
- more assistance to help parents with home study.
- more gym and sports equipment needed.
- more early detection of learning issues.
- more current or appropriate resources. Insufficient funds, often mentioned.

### 5. French Immersion field trips are interesting and enrich my child's learning.

SA + A = 204

D + SD = 21

- 6. There are an appropriate number of French Immersion field trips.
  - SA + A = 144
  - D + SD = 83
- 7. At my child's school there are high expectations for students in French Immersion.

SA + A = 198

- D + SD = 33
- 8. Higher grades are more difficult to attain in French than English program.

SA + A = 150

D + SD = 81

- 9. If you know of people who have left the program before graduation, what reason(s) were shared with you?
  - 137 prospect of better performance in English
  - 76 program issues
  - 49 social reasons
  - 41 unknown
  - 23 sufficient French language skill attained
  - 19 school location
  - 14 missing

### **Comments for "Program issues" included:**

- Concerns re teacher "inflexibility" or "ability" (small program means may get a teacher with poor match with child, more often)
- boys are more vulnerable to the less stimulating teaching approach, therefore more represented in numbers of students leaving the program.
- several specific mentions of secondary FI teachers, substandard teaching styles like copying notes from board.
- better teachers in English
- lack of self-directed opportunity
- limited extra-curricular (at elementary level)
- no TA, limited LA support
- not enough written assignments, public speaking, or science
- inability of parent to help in French
- challenge to get all desired courses and make room for FI
- challenge with respect to facility and resources at Cedardale
- 10. My child/children are able to access additional support at school.

SA + A = 169

D + SD = 81

11. My child/children are able to access additional support for French at home or in the community.

No scaled responses – only comments -\*see below for summary of comments for Q.11

12. The number/variety of extracurricular activities for French Immersion students in school are adequate" - \*see below for summary of comments for Q12

SA + A = 154

D + SD = 77

### 13. SECONDARY ONLY: I am satisfied with the variety of FI course offerings at secondary.

SA + A = 82

D + SD = 149

# \*Q. 11 "Summary of Parent Comments re: "access to support...at home or in the community".

Out of 230 parents, 106 felt that there were able to acquire additional support at home or in the community. 24 parents stated that they could not, and 13 said that they didn't know. 48 parents said that no additional support was required, and 25 responses indicated that a French speaking family member was able to provide appropriate support. There were at least 6 comments relating to the cost of tutors and indicating that they were unwilling to pay for a service that the school should provide. It appeared that some parents with more resources had no issues, while others were unwilling or not as capable of extra payments. Still other comments identified the community library as a good resource.

# Q.12 "Summary" of parent comments re: the number/variety of extracurricular activities in school for French Immersion students are adequate.

It is apparent that the wording of this question was found to be confusing to many parents. The intent was to ask about impressions for access to extracurricular opportunities, exclusive of language. Most parents (about 80%) felt that opportunities were satisfactory. Seventy-one parents chose to add a comment. Of these, 27 stated that there was not enough, 13 said they didn't know and 6 commented that they were satisfied. Ten parents offered suggestions for more activities which included sports, art, music, and drama. There were several comments that related to the Quebec exchange and some that identified that West Van is a "resource rich" community and much is available to students and families.

### Student Surveys - Condensed Item Analysis Page 1

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Q1 lenjoy/did enjoy classes in the French Immersion Program:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.25
Strongly Agree	38	36.89	
Agree	57	55.34	
Disagree	4	3.88	
Strongly	4	3.88	
Disagree			
Missing	0	0.00	

# Q2 I found the Program to be beneficial:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.50
Strongly Agree	56	54.37	
Agree	44	42.72	
Disagree	2	1.94	
Strongly Disagree	1	0.97	
Missing	0	0.00	

#### Q3 Why did you choose the French Immersion Program? (Please choose all that apply)

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: -
Parental Decision	74	71.84	
Reputation of Program	15	14.56	
Home is close to School	26	25.24	
Second Language opens Future Doors	68	66.02	
Looking for More Challenge	34 2	33.01	
Social aspect	14	13.59	
Family Background	22	21.36	
Student Decision	32	31.07	
Missing	0	0.00	

### Q4 The Learning Resources at School are current and appropriate:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.16
Strongly Agree	41	39.81	
Agree	44	42.72	
Disagree	11	10.68	
Strongly Disagree	7	6.80	

	Missing	0	0.00	
--	---------	---	------	--

Q5 Field Trips in the French Immersion program are interesting and enrich my learning:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 3.22
Strongly Agree	42	40.78	
Agree	44	42.72	
Disagree	11	10.68	
Strongly Disagree	5	4.85	
Not Applicable	1	0.97	
Missing	0	0.00	

Q6 There are	e an appropriate number of	Field Trips
for students	in French Immersion:	
Response	Frequency Percent	Mean: 2.34

Response	riequency	I EIGEIL	mean. 2.04
Strongly Agree	14	13.59	
Agree	23	22.33	
Disagree	42	40.78	
Strongly Disagree	22	21.36	
Not Applicable	2	1.94	
Missing	0	0.00	

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### Student Surveys - Condensed Item Analysis Page 2

Q7 My school's expectations for Students in French Immersion are:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 2.98		
Too High	8	7.77			
High	85	82.52			
Low	8	7.77			
Too Low	1	0.97			
Missing	1	0.97			

#### Q8 Higher Grades are more difficult to achieve in French Immersion than in the English Program:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 2.94
Strongly Agree	31	30.10	
Agree	42	40.78	
Disagree	23	22.33	
Strongly	7	6.80	
Disagree			
Missing	0	0.00	

Q9 If you know of Students who have left the Program before Grade 12, what reason(s) was/were shared with you? (Please check all that apply) Q10 I am able to receive any required additional Support in the French Immersion Program at my school:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: -	Response	Frequency	Percen	nt I	Mean: -
School Location distance from home to school	24	23.30		Strongly Agree	35	33.98		
Sufficient Language Experience Attained/Have learned enough French Language	14	13.59		Agree	59	57.28		
Prospect of Better Student Performance in English/Hoped to obtain higher Grades in English Program	39	37.86		Disagree	9	8.74		
Social Reasons	21	20.39		Strongly Disagree	2	1.94		
Program Issues wanted to take more courses in English		21.36						
Unknown	42	40.78						
Missing	5	4.85		Missing	1	0.97		

Q11 I am able to receive any required additional Support in the French Immersion Program at home or in the community:

Response	Frequency	Percent	t Mean:-
Strongly Agree	29	28.16	
Agree	55	53.40	
Disagree	17	16.50	
Strongly	5	4.85	
Disagree			
Missing	1	0.97	

Q12 The Amount/Variety of Extracurricular Activities in School for French Immersion Students are adequate:

Response	Frequency	Percent	Mean: 2.86
Strongly Agree	24	23.30	
Agree	50	48.54	
Disagree	20	19.42	
Strongly Disagree	9	8.74	
Missing	0	0.00	

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## Student Surveys - Condensed Item Analysis Page 3

Q13 For Secondary Students only: The French Immersion Program course options offered at Sentinel Secondary are appropriate:				
Response	Frequency	Percent	t Mean: 2.20	
Strongly Agree	6	5.83		
Agree	11	10.68		
Disagree	84	81.55		
Strongly Disagree	2	1.94		
Not Applicable I	0	0.00		
am an elementary student				
Missing	0	0.00		

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### Appendix 2: Significant Impressions from Student Focus Group

1. What differences do you see, in your FI school experience, compared with friends or acquaintances in the English program? (beyond the obvious)?

### Positive:

We get a wider understanding of different languages and cultures.

We get to visit Quebec and host visitors from Quebec and France.

Seems to be more trouble makers in English program.

Teachers seem to care more. More empathetic and understanding of students, smile more.

### Concerning:

More sports and intramurals in English schools.

More people seem to know the English schools.

Sometimes people don't ask questions because they don't quite know how to say it in French.

Huge jump from Grade 7 to 8.

### Interesting:

We get more homework. French students work harder.

English students get more projects to do at home.

FI students get to stay with same group.

Teachers are more relaxed in English. FI teachers are stricter.

### 2. What are the best things about being in French Immersion?

### Positive:

Federal jobs more available to bilingual Canadians.

Once one second language is mastered, others are easier.

More choice when we get to choose where to travel or where to live.

Teachers in FI are more friendly and aware of misbehaviour.

Teachers have higher expectations

Kids are really nice – no bullies. We know teachers, friends and parents longer. Parents stay friends. Close group. Kids are motivated. Develop good work habits.

FI makes you think more. We see ourselves improving, getting ready for HS.

If we want to teach, it will be easier to get a job.

Dual Diploma is good to get.

### Concerning:

Parents may not be able to help with schoolwork.

Interesting:

Teachers have a different sense of humour. FI is more about culture at elementary and deeper knowledge of language at secondary.

Former FI students think that English program is easier, but frustrated at no dual diploma. French experience makes English easier.

More exams in French.

True French environment at elementary, but not secondary.

### 3. What are the biggest challenges with being in French Immersion? (Current FI Students)

### Concerning:

Definitions in French (especially Math and Science) so may not know English definitions.

Parents may not be able to help with schoolwork.

PJ has more boys, is bigger,

Students seem to move to PJ when there is opening.

Cedardale doesn't have soccer nets, have to sit on floor in assembly,

Project work is harder since hard to find French resources and we must translate

Reading – not much pleasure reading available, vocab is challenging (Q vs. F)

Not many texts in younger grades.

We learn more speaking so writing is harder (grammar) We know the sound, may not know the grammar.

In senior grades teachers expect high levels of French, but we are not practicing as much as in younger grades.

### Interesting:

Grammar, spelling, and verb conjugations are difficult.

Teachers have different sense of humour, sometimes hard to understand a joke.

French class is hardest: English is more writing, French is more grammar

Late FI find it difficult to keep up but think they are better writers and EFI are better talkers.

French program has more tests

Because we have the same teacher so much, it is hard if learning styles don't match

### What are the biggest challenges with being in French Immersion? (Former FI Students)

### Concerning:

Loved FI in Elementary, but too hard in Secondary

English tests easier, more multiple choice.

Math and Science is a tough switch (largely due to vocabulary)

Hard to learn to spell in English

If learning style doesn't match – trouble. Some teachers don't give extra help when you go in and ask. Some won't repeat anything. Some teachers embarrass you in front of class. Some teacher is always in bad mood. (eats in front of class) Some teachers make you feel dumb or like the teacher hates you. Some teachers tried to help, but only some. No forgiveness for not getting something, or missing HW. Teachers always seem angry at you. Half are good, half are tough.

We can't redo any tests. Missed class but still had to write next test.

It is so hard to keep up with best students and if you try to get help, not easy.

Some students left to escape specific teachers.

Many want to leave, but parents make them stay in FI

# 4. What recommendations would you make to the school or district to make French Immersion even better?

### Facility:

PE gym strip and change rooms, gym too small

Have more undercover areas

PJ is getting too crowded

### Program:

Try to make effort to have more activities for kids.

Students should have option to finish French Diploma in 4 years instead of 5 years.

### Teacher:

Make sure teacher is good French speaker. (different levels)

Make sure all TOC's can speak French

Difficult to have same teacher for several years.

Allow rewrites for tests.

Ensure teachers offer and give help to struggling students.

Elementary teachers talk slow. Secondary teachers talk too fast – hard to follow vocab. Talk slower at secondary

Teachers should hear suggestions about how they are teaching.

Reduce number of tests and exams

### **Resources:**

Have chairs for assemblies.

Bigger library and more holdings at Cedardale.

Need more equipment (playground and classroom)

More textbooks at younger grades.

### Other:

Advertise about French schools since they are not well known

Elementary students look forward to having more teachers

### **Appendix 3: Teacher Interviews**

- i) Template for Teacher Interviews / Assurance of anonymity:
  - With regard to the structure of French Immersion programming in WV school district, (i.e. 2 single track elementary programs, 1 dual track secondary program) what do you perceive to be the biggest strengths?
  - 2) With regard to the structure... What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges?
  - 3) Please comment on the availability of learning resources-
  - 4) Please comment on the level of support that you receive regarding:
    - curriculum materials,
    - classroom support
    - opportunities for collaboration
  - 5) In your opinion, how does teaching in the French Immersion program compare with teaching in the English program? Are you able to comment on any similarities or differences?
  - 6) In your opinion, how does teaching French immersion in your school compare with teaching French immersion in the other two FI schools?
  - 7) With regard to your perceptions of how the FI program is viewed by "Joe Public" in West Van, are you comfortable with the "level of approval" or esteem with which the program is regarded?
  - 8) In your opinion, what are the main reason(s) students remain in the French Immersion Program until graduation?
  - 9) In your opinion, what are the main reason(s) students leave the French Immersion program before they complete Grade 12
  - 10) If there was one suggestion you could make for program enhancement, what would it be?
    - provide ongoing staff development
  - 11) Is there anything else that you would like to say, or have considered, regarding this review?

### ii) Noteworthy Responses from Teacher Interviews

- With regard to the structure of French Immersion programming in WV school district, (i.e. 2 single track elementary programs, 1 dual track secondary program) what do you perceive to be the biggest strengths?
- Single track elementary school allows us to "live" in French. We can establish a French community and French culture. The announcements and all events are in French language. The staff can be more cohesive, especially if all have high skills in French language (not all do). Nothing is diluted by English, as takes place in dual track schools.

- In single track schools we must work harder to have all teachers and staff speaking French (even music, learning assistance, library, playground supervisors, counselors etc.)
- Single track requires us to work harder with kids who are weaker, as we are not willing to move kids. It is more traumatic for the student and family to have to move out of school, if they should decide to leave French Immersion. (compared to dual track)
- Late Immersion students are advantaged in a single track school, as immersion is real in all aspects of school.
- dual track cannot push the use of French language to the same level. There is always predominant use of English outside of classroom.
- Often the French teachers feel more isolated in dual track situations
- Secondary school dual track is necessary to provide the significant level of elective subjects.

### 2. With regard to the structure... What do you perceive to be the biggest challenges?

- PJ has a French culture that is good for students, but seems to evoke some "cultural isolation" for teachers. PJ is regarded differently. It seems to be harder to get other district teachers to collaborate.
- As so many resources are available in English, the amount of time spent in translating resources to French, is challenging.
- Smaller size can be challenging in a number of ways. For example, options are limited for teacher mobility, or for students who don't work well with specific other students, or teachers
- Insufficient opportunities to acquire learning assistance.
- Vision for learning assistance is somewhat missing. Does LA teacher push to assist student to "catch up" in French, or prepare to enter English program?
- Late Immersion students face tough challenge for social changes —in being slow to understand everything regarding activities, sports etc. there may be reluctance to engage in French activities
- From a dual track setting the transition to English program is easier and less traumatic (for student who choose, or need to move)

### 3. Please comment on the level of support that you receive regarding:

### A) Curriculum materials

- Most things are available in English, and there is more all the time. But we need to translate everything and it is constant work to translate. A French web site is like gold. It would be wonderful to have a district person who could invest in acquiring resources
- Federal funds are very helpful
- Hard to find materials especially for primary reading levels. Curriculum from Quebec has more advanced reading levels. Many French books are more expensive Many Quebec resources may be age appropriate but not language appropriate
- Science is a particular problem. Exercise books only available in English, for example
- Often parents want copies of resources to assist their children often not available
- Math, Socials and Science teachers must translate their own IRP from Ministry materials
- Amount to be translated is particularly stressful for new teachers
- Cedardale teachers need more collaboration with PJ teachers, and all teachers need assistance to find and share resources
- Teachers now have access to actual budget this has been a huge step forward.
- Situation is improving better than it used to be

### B) Classroom support

- Generally not enough, Learning assistance teacher is in great demand, everyone would like her more often
- Very little pull out support, ELL is available. Not much help for struggling students
- More available in younger years
- Lost some LAC reading support
- In 11 years only have seen 2 SEA's. When support is not provided, often parents will move their kids
- TOC's must be FI capable. Constant problem as most TOC's just babysit
- The perception that FI is a more elite program has been reflected in minimal learning support. Current levels of Learning Support are inadequate
- Parent Volunteers are helpful, but come with issues regarding confidentiality. One
  TA is amazing but time has been cut
- Need more learning assistance, counseling time, and library time
- Designations take too long
As more parents recognize the benefits of FI, more students with wider variety of needs are entering FI. Therefore significant increase in demand for learning assistance is needed. As program becomes more "open to all students" more support is required.

### C) Opportunity for collaboration

- Principal has pushed successfully as collaboration time is so helpful
- Collaboration schedule is great, too bad cut this year, some pairings are not perfect, (gr 7 late with gr 3 early). Some teachers would love more time with effective partner.
- Recent meeting was first time with all 3 FI schools. Very helpful
- Need a FI coordinator. (used to have one)
- Collaboration time within a school staff is helpful, but need more opportunities to collaborate with all 3 schools.
- There may be some tension between two elementary schools. Need more shared time.
- Other school districts have FI pro d days.
- School is supportive "School Effectiveness Fund"
- Many teachers stated that they would like more collaboration time since it is so helpful.
- Pro D with all F teachers is very helpful.
- 4. In your opinion, how does teaching in the French Immersion program compare with teaching in the English program? Are you able to comment on any similarities or differences?
- More challenging in FI due to such limited resources. En program has so many resources.
- Enjoy culture and language all proud, but more challenging kids are very motivated.
- The challenges are different in FI. With no ESL, and fewer behavior issues, struggling students often end up moving to English program where there is more LA and SEA support
- A struggling math student will struggle in F or E.
- FI teachers form a close relationship.
- The perception that we have more capable, more diligent students in FI, but there are more and more distractions for FI kids. District needs to provide more help, or let them go to En where there is more help.
- Little understanding of FI LA. District resources are limited and vision is not clear. Do we work to keep in FI, or prep for move to En

- More parent pressure for high grades. Often at odds with parent behavior to take students away for holiday. Parents are engaged, yet a bit ambitious and can be aggressive.
- Much more collaboration seems to happen in En program

# 5. In your opinion, how does teaching French immersion in your school, compare with teaching French immersion in the other two FI schools?

Most teachers spoke highly of their school, no matter which of the 3 they represent. Teachers with experience in both elementary schools tended to prefer aspects of PJ.

PJ has strong foundation and tradition to make a set culture. PJ has some issues because it is so big. However it has many advantages because it is big. With more than one class in any grade it is possible to change class composition to avoid relationship issues and to offer options for fresh start. Also, there are more teachers to collaborate with.

Those with experience at both schools, found Cedardale more challenging than PJ. It seemed less controlled at Cedardale and there had been "senior class issues". The culture is different. A lack of male teachers was noted. Cedardale is a newer school, younger staff, still establishing its culture. -Higher expectations at PJ. There is less commitment to use French outside of class at Cedardale.

Cedardale is still experiencing growing pains after 8 years. It feels like it is trying to measure up to PJ. Facility is one problem. More space is needed. The Library is poorly located and small. No gym after school due to daycare. Music teacher must carry instruments from class to class. No computer lab. Facilities are more primary oriented. Cedardale's PAC resources were needed for swing sets, while PJ's went to IPads.

Sentinel seems to be a very good school. Despite this, attrition happens. The attraction of IB is significant, as are increasing opportunities for other "programs of choice". Also FI has limited opportunities for students to avoid specific teachers.

6. With regard to your perceptions of how the FI program is viewed by "Joe public" in West Van, are you comfortable with the "level of approval", or esteem with which the program is regarded?

The perception is that the public is very supportive. The program is perceived to be a good challenge for bright students. This perception of being elite leads to the considerations of FI being a "public" private school.

PJ is considered especially good, as is Sentinel. Sentinel students are great role models and award winners – athletes, musicians, academics. Many students are thought to come from other jurisdictions to attend this strong program. The opportunity to learn French is valued. However, other programs of choice are competing for appeal.

# 7. In your opinion, what are the main reason(s) students remain in the French Immersion Program until graduation?

- Sense of accomplishment regarding FI Dogwood, prestige
- Opens more avenues for travel, University (Q or F), jobs
- Stay with friends through graduation (sense of belonging)
- Parent commitment
- Passion for language and culture
- To be challenged,
- Kids are better and teachers are better

# 8. In your opinion, what are the main reason(s) students leave the French Immersion program before they complete Grade 12

- Class composition issues: (due to limited options) ie. to avoid one or more teachers, or to avoid one or more students (relationship issues)
- Because they are allowed to leave believing that grades will increase in English program (it may be more work to stay in French, but students that do more achieve at higher levels)
- Some parents feel unable to assist in French
- Some teachers as well as some parents, believe a struggling student has better chance in English
- Not as much learning support available in French
- Not enough course electives (or attractions of other programs of choice)

# 9. If there was one suggestion you could make for program enhancement, what would it be?

- Address student attrition when moving to HS by having all schools get on same page
   aligned so transition to HS softened. A single teacher can make a huge impact
  (positive or negative).
- At secondary, a French speaking administrator should be visible to demonstrate that part of culture.
- More FI staff, as some students spend too much time with a single teacher.
- Employ a French resource assistant
- Create a district position French coordinator
- Define a district vision for FI
- Find a way to make Elem schools more similar in size and resources
- Create a bigger community by having 3 FI schools collaborate more frequently, share events, or activities.
- More space is needed at Cedardale (should always have 2 K classes, and room for more resources)
- More learning support, more TA's and SEA's
- Create an "internal portal" on website for FI teachers
- More tech support and more tech training
- Need more French TOC's

# 10. Is there anything else that you would like to say, or have considered, regarding this review?

- Address shortcomings of Cedardale's facility
- General staffing issues. Teachers should have high levels of French skills. Look to hire either first language French speakers or only those with superior skills. Provide ongoing staff development opportunities directed at improvements in the area of oral and written French language skills?
- Take steps to have FI teachers more included (PJ teachers are apart at pro d, not sure why Language takes away from inclusion)
- Make successes of FI students more high profile
- Some teachers feel pressure and responsibility due to small program size, (efforts to recognize teacher contributions to student success may be very appreciated)
- Address levels of Learning Assistance and exit protocols to be sure we "work with them before they commit to leaving"

### Appendix 4: French Immersion Course Offerings

	Sentinel	Riverside		Hands	Argyle	Windsor	Moscrop	Alpha	Carib Hi	Chill	Earl Marr	Lord	Kwant Pk	Pan Ri
Courses	(45)	(43)	(43)	w 44	44	44	41	41	41	33	36	Tweed 36	36	36
10 Communication		x	x											
10 Conversation		x	x											
10 Education Physique	e		x										x	
10 e-journalism			х											
10 Francais	x	х	х	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	х	x
10 Mathematique							x	x	x	х	x	x	x	х
10 Planification			х	x	x	x	x		x					
10 Science Naturelles	x			x	x	x		x	x	х	x	x	х	x
10 Sciences Humaines	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
11 Art/dramatique									x					x
11 Communication			x											
11 Etudes des Alimen	ts	x												
11 FI Peer Tutoring		х												
11 Francais	x	х	х	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	х	x	х	x
11 Journalism													x	
11 Mathematique													x	
11 Media Lit												х		
11 Perspectives Mond	liales		х											
11 Sciences Humaines	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	х				
12 Art/dramatique									x					
12 Civ Comp										х				
12 Conversation		х	х											
12 Francais	x	х	х	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
12 Francais AP	x		х				x		x					
8 Education Physique													x	
8 Francais	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	х	x	х	x
8 Mathematique	x													
•	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
8 Science Naturelles	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
9 Communication			x										X	
9 Education Physique			x	x	x	x							x	
9 Francais	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
9 Mathematiques	x	x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
9 Mathematiques	x						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
9 Sciences Humaines		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
9 Sciences Naturelles		~	~	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

## Appendix 5: Universities and French Immersion Dogwood

University	Special admission consideration for French Dogwood?	Other			
U of Victoria, BC	no				
U of Alberta, Alta	no	Has a full French faculty so students can study in French			
U of Fraser Valley, BC	no				
St Thomas, NB	no				
Concordia, Montreal Que	No	But studying in Montreal is good to strengthen language skills			
Univ of Manitoba	no	Can study up to 80% of courses in French at the university			
Univ of Calgary, Alta	No				
Univ of Kings, Halifax, NS	no				
St Francis Xavier, Halifax, NS	no				
Trent U, Ont	No				
Ryerson U, Ont	no				
Univ of Western Ont	no				
Bishops Univ, Que	no	Personal profile is required so FRIM is considered here			
Dalhousie U, NS	no				
U of Toronto, Ont	no				
Waterloo U, Ont	no				
SFU, BC	no				
UBC, BC	No	Can be included in personal profile			
Carleton U, Ottawa Ont	no				
U of Guelph, Ont	no				
Queens U, Ont	no				

### Appendix 6: Attrition Data

### i) SD 45 French Immersion Enrolment 2009-2012

Fren	ch Immersion Enrollme	nt (Attrition) 2009-	2012
Cedardale	Early Immersion		
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
К	30	22	31
1	38	25	23
2	29	36	34
3	40	28	34
4	26	39	25
5	15	25	26
6	n/a	11	26
7	n/a	n/a	6
Sentinel			
8	74	75	60
9	59	63	55
10	59	45	56
11	47	53	37
12	34	30	52
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
К	73	65	75
1	78	73	70
2	72	77	86
3	88	70	77
4	77	86	65
5	63	77	85
6	71	83	104
7	76	74	87
8	74	75	60
9	59	63	55
10	59	45	56
11	47	53	37
12	34	41	28
Pauline Johnson	Early / Late		
	2009-2010	*2010-2011	2011-2012
	43	43	44
	41	48	47
	43	41	52
	48	42	43
	51	47	40
	48	52	59
	56/15	72	55/23
	52/24	62/12	54/27

ii) FI Survival 045, and French Immersion Cedardale/Pauline Johnson

Year In K	ĸ	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
2008	100%	92%	86%										
2006	100%	94%	92%	91%	85%								
2004	100%	91%	86%	83%	72%	72%	69%						
2003	100%	94%	88%	84%	81%	76%	73%	70%					
2002	100%	93%	85%	83%	81%	72%	65%	63%	54%				
1998	100%	88%	81%	69%	65%	60%	60%	60%	54%	50%	46%	38%	25%

Survival Curves for French Immersion Kindergarten Students in West Vancouver(SD 045)



#### Appendix 7: Template for French Immersion Coordinator Interviews

- 1. How many French Immersion Schools are in your district? (single track or dual track?)
- 2. Can you direct me to any secondary school FI course offerings web page link?... Or other source to get a list of FI course offerings?
- 3. We know that most attrition is higher in the "transition years" (elementary to middle or junior high, middle to senior). Could you briefly comment on anything else you have noted with regard to attrition.
- 4. Typical reasons for student to leave French Immersion have been for reasons of travel or transportation, social, learning support, etc. Have you noticed any other reasons that are surfacing more frequently?
- 5. I know that you are very busy, and really appreciate your assistance. If you would be willing to have a short telephone conversation about French Immersion programs, I would be very grateful. If possible, please send me your contact phone number.

### Appendix 8: Provincial Statistics on percent French Immersion (by District)

## Provincial Statistics on percent French Immersion (by District)

## www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/docs/SoK 2011.pdf

DISTRICT	08/09	09/10	<u>11/12</u>
43 West Van	12.5	12.8	11.8
44 North Van	12.7	13.2	13.9
39 Vancouver	7.4	7.8	8.1
41 Burnaby	7.1	7.3	7.4
42 Maple Ridge P.M	9.9	9.5	9.5
43 Coquitlam	7.9	8.1	8.7
37 Delta	10.9	11.2	11.5
36 Surrey	4.1	4.2	4.2
35 Langley	7.3	7.2	6.9

#### Appendix 9: Summarized Perceptions from Parent Focus Groups

1. What are your perceptions of the differences in your child's school experiences, and that of your friend's or acquaintance's children, in an English school programs?

French Immersion seems culturally different. Students seem to develop closer relationships with peers and with teachers and there is a high level of Parent involvement.

There appears to be more diversity in FI (culturally enriching) – leads to more open minded citizens.

The expectation of teachers seems too high, especially at high school. There is so much homework in a variety of subjects, no time left for other activities including pleasure reading.

Many feel that French Immersion is a more challenging program than English. Students become more actively engaged. This breeds better work habits and confidence.

There is less need for learning assistance, and less learning assistance available.

The teacher's style is very important, and some motivate use of French more than others.

Parents who do not speak French are at a disadvantage to assist with homework.

The transition to HS in FI is bigger jump, and many students leave as a result.

#### 2. What are the best things about being in French Immersion?

The advantages of "any" second language are many. The added complexity of learning, the opportunity to think in 2 different ways, and the sense of pride, may result in more grounded student. It promotes independent study skills that yield more self-reliance in solving problems. The mental gymnastics required in FI builds better logic, and hopefully these learning skills can transfer to other endeavors.

French Immersion is a natural filtering system.

We anticipate more job opportunities "down the road".

Everyone is on same level to begin with, so teacher can focus on similar stage of development of most students.

This is a strong diverse community. PJ reminds of small town school with many activities. There is more parent involvement and parent focus and many social connections are formed.

The exchange to Quebec is wonderful experience, and very important.

### 3. What are the biggest challenges about being in French Immersion?

There are large variations in instructional style, and capacity for some teachers, to embrace new learning styles, and use of individualized instruction. There are too few boys and this does not assist with teacher flexibility in addressing their needs. The impact of the teacher is very important.

The small program size results in limited flexibility to change class, to avoid specific relationships (cannot adjust for best "fit")

There are significant differences in French language skill, for different teachers.

There are challenges to hire French speaking specialist teachers, and staffing issues related to acquiring credentialed French teachers.

Worry for transition to high school and that language skills may not be adequate to handle sophistication of social studies 11 curriculum. Secondary school attrition is huge and best teachers are in gr 11 and 12.

Secondary school experience is not rich in French opportunity - students need opportunities to use French with more people (French exchange helps

The level and quantity of homework required, takes away opportunities to participate in other activity. It is very difficult to find BALANCE.

Tutors are expensive, but often needed especially if parents cannot speak French. Otherwise there must be a significant commitment of parent time committed to assist.

There is much concern for lack of TOC's that can speak French.

Sometimes students who need help are asked to move to English.

## 4. What recommendations would you make to the school, or district, to make French Immersion even better?

#### Instruction:

Consultants or facilitators from district should be available to assist some teachers.

More linkages between elementary and secondary are needed (gr 7 teachers should meet with gr 8 teachers)

Focus on individual learning styles needs to have more attention (strengths based).

There should be more flexibility with teachers and subjects in grades 8, 9 and 10.

Identify a standard of fluency by grade 7, and create a plan to ensure students achieve.

Consider offering pre AP French.

#### **Resources:**

Make tutorial assistance more accessible (some teachers better than others).

Provide more assistance to help parents support student learning in French by sharing more resources, providing English version of texts, and a pool of resource people.

Find and share web resources for students.

More current and updated French resources are needed in classes, including more technology resources.

Consider more mentorship by students (as in place in PJ – gr 7 to K). Perhaps Secondary students could mentor elementary students.

#### Using the Language:

Share nearby opportunities for francophone cultural activities.

Make more of a commitment to maintain French universally (by all teachers) anywhere at school.

Identify strategies to keep FI students united in High School.

As French exchanges are so valuable, school should be more accommodating of students going on exchange.

Provide more opportunities to use French outside of class, such as more extracurricular activities in French, and more sports at all levels.

Ministry supports "strong start" should support "Strong Finish"

#### Appendix 10:

#### Examples of significant recurring recommendations

- Inventory current resources to ensure they are current and appropriate, including technology resources.
- More French textbooks (especially in earlier grades) and French library titles (for pleasure reading).
- Consider establishing a clear "vision" for the French Immersion Program
- Examine the shortcomings of the Cedardale facility, equipment, library, classroom space.
- Explore strategies to overcome the "second fiddle" disposition of Cedardale by sharing the best aspects of PJ.
- Consider ways to have elementary schools more similar in terms of size and resources.
- Exercise more vigilance to maintain consistent commitment to use French in every possible circumstance, at the two elementary schools.
- Explore strategies to provide more opportunity to practice using French in Secondary
- More FI field trips
- Provide more opportunities to use French outside of class, such as more extracurricular activities in French, and more sports at all levels.
- More extracurricular activities
- Collaboration time within a school staff is helpful, but need more opportunities to collaborate with all 3 schools
- \*\*Increase collaboration between all FI teachers
- Create a bigger community by having 3 FI schools collaborate more frequently, and share events, or activities.
- Identify a district position or person who could invest in acquiring French resources.
- As so many resources are available in English, the amount of time spent in translating resources to French, is challenging.
- Review transition planning in an effort to "soften" the transition to High School.
- Provide more elective courses at secondary school
- Ensure that at least one administrator at Sentinel has French language.
- Encourage all grade 12 students to write DELF exams from France.
- Diploma in French Proficiency is good for external credit (4)
  Review expectations regarding the amount of homework is appropriate for each level
- Appoint a West Van FI teacher (or other representative) to join the Lower Mainland FI Consortium
- Ensure representation and participation in October 19 Provincial Pro D.
- Review expectations regarding the amount of homework required at each grade level.
- Create a district position of FI consultant or facilitator to assist teachers.

- Assist parents in ways to support student learning (expensive tutors etc.)
- Generally not enough classroom support, Learning assistance teacher is in great demand, everyone would like her more often,
- As more parents recognize the benefits of FI, more students with wider variety of needs are entering FI. Therefore significant increase in demand for learning assistance is needed. As program becomes more "open to all students" more support is required
- The perception that FI is a more elite program has been reflected in minimal learning support. Current levels of Learning Support are inadequate.
- Create a vision for learning assistance. Does LA teacher push to assist student to "catch up" in French, or prepare to enter English program?
- Identify and share an understanding of FI Learning Assistance. District resources are limited and vision is not clear. Do we work to keep in FI, or prep for move to En
- Create an "internal portal" on website for FI teachers
- Address levels of Learning Assistance and exit protocols to be sure we "work with them before they commit to leaving"
- More access to learning assistance
- Ensure TOC's for French Immersion can speak French
- At least one administrator at Secondary School should be able to speak French
- Provide more assistance to help parents support student learning in French by sharing more resources, providing English version of texts, and a pool of resource people.
- Consider more mentorship by students (as in place in PJ gr 7 to K). Perhaps Secondary students could mentor elementary students.

#### Appendix 11 – Cedardale and Pauline Johnson by Enrollment:

#### **Cedardale**

Ecole Cedardale: Where District K-7 pupils come from



#### **Pauline Johnson**

Pauline Johnson Elementary: Where District K-7 pupils come from



J: Caulfeild Elementary : 6 K: Bowen Island Community : 2 L: Out of District - Burnaby : 2