

**WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
NOTICE AND AGENDA**

A Committee of the Whole meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board will be held via video conference, on **Monday, June 20, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.**

AGENDA

Call to Order

O Canada

Approval of Agenda

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

Celebrating Board Activities/Announcements

Delegations

Pam Mounsey, Amanda Bripaul & Natalie Robinson - Critical Race Theory Motion
Kamil Ahmed - Critical Race Theory Motion
Colleen James - Critical Race Theory Motion
TK Pritchard - Critical Race Theory Motion
Aashay Dalvi - Critical Race Theory Motion
Grayson Bass - Critical Race Theory Motion
Melissa Valant - Critical Race Theory Motion
Goranka Vukelich & Barb Cardow, Children and Youth Planning Table of Waterloo Region - CRT Motion

Staff Follow Up

Policy and Governance

01 Board Policy 6010 - Student Dress

C. Hill

Reports

06 Elementary French As A Second Language Review Recommendations D. Lataille-Herdsman / M. Gerard
84 Motion: Critical Race Theory & White Privilege Trustee C. Watson

Board Reports

86 Policy Working Group Recommendations Trustees K. Woodcock / L. Tremble / J. Weston
94 Parent Involvement Committee Reports Trustees K. Meissner / L. Tremble

Question Period (10 minutes)

Future Agenda Items (*Notices of Motion to be referred to Agenda Development Committee*)

Adjournment

Questions relating to this agenda should be directed to
Stephanie Reidel, Manager of Corporate Services
519-570-0003, ext. 4336, or Stephanie_Reidel@wrdsb.ca



STUDENT DRESS

Responsibility:	Superintendents, Student Achievement & Well-Being, Teaching and Learning and Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Department - Equity and Inclusion Branch
Legal References:	Education Act Ontario Human Rights Code 1962, 2013 Canadian Human Rights Act Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Related References:	Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms Ontario Human Rights Code 1962, 2013 Board Policy 1003 - School Councils Board Policy 1012 - Religious & Creed Accommodation Board Policy 1017 - Human Rights Board Policy 1008 - Equity and Inclusion Faith and Religious Accommodations Administrative Procedure 1230 Policy 6000 - Safe Schools
Effective Date:	June 25, 2001
Revisions:	March 2020, November 2020, May 2021, September 2021, June 2022
Reviewed:	November 2020, October 2021

1. Guiding Principles

- 1.1 The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) is committed to fostering inclusive environments that are safe and equitable, and recognizes that decisions regarding dress are made with respect to individual expression, gender, cultural, creed and socio-economic needs, and are important to the overall health and well-being of an individual. Student dress guidelines should not reinforce or increase marginalization, oppression or discrimination of any individual.
- 1.2 "Student Dress" refers to all the ways a student may express themselves, including, but not limited to clothing, hairstyle, makeup, jewelry, and accessories.
- 1.3 Previously, student dress codes detrimentally impacted students who are female-identifying, Indigenous, Black, racialized, gender diverse, transgender and non-binary, and/or financially insecure, students with disabilities, and/or those experiencing other forms of marginalizations.
- 1.3 The Student Dress Policy is a crucial component of creating an anti-discriminatory and equitable environment.
- 1.4 This Policy is compliant with the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) and the Education Act, and is consistent with the WRDSB's Policy 1017 - Human Rights and Policy 1008 - Equity and Inclusion.

2. Purpose

This Policy establishes the student dress expectations for all schools, and aims to:

- 2.1 Recognize that students have the right to express themselves and dress comfortably without fear of discrimination and the responsibility to maintain a safe and respectful school environment.
- 2.2 Acknowledge that students and staff have a responsibility to maintain a safe and inclusive school learning environment.
- 2.3 Provide fair and equitable standards and guidelines for student dress.
- 2.4 Ensure that these standards and practices are student-centered and reflect the needs of our student body.
- 2.5 Acknowledge that dress plays a crucial role in how students explore self-identity, self-expression, and how they engage with others.
- 2.6 Recognize that students experience school as both a learning environment and a social environment.
- 2.7 Ensure that design, implementation, and administration of the student dress code is aligned with, and supports WRDSB commitment to anti-oppression, anti-racism, and creating an inclusive and equitable learning environment, which is in accordance with the OHRC and the WRDSB Equity and Inclusion, and Human Rights policies.

3. Shared Rights and Responsibilities

3.1 Students

- 3.1.1 The primary responsibility for student dress rests with the students themselves and their parents/guardians.
- 3.1.2 Students have the right to make decisions about their attire, and they can wear what makes them comfortable and allows them to express themselves (e.g., clothing, hairstyle, makeup, jewelry, etc.)
- 3.1.3 Students have the responsibility to respect the rights of others, and to help support a safe and shared environment in compliance with the Student Dress Policy.

3.2 Staff

- 3.2.1 Staff are responsible for ensuring that student dress does not interfere with student and staff health or safety requirements, and/or promote an offensive, hostile or intimidating environment.
- 3.2.2 Staff are responsible for ensuring the balance of student safety, health and well-being, and fostering a positive environment whilst also affirming and respecting student rights.

4. Student Dress

- 4.1 Students may attend school and school-related functions in dress of their choice, which is in accordance with the following system standards;
 - 4.1.1 Be worn in such a way that all bottom layers cover groin and buttocks and top layers cover nipples, both with opaque material

- 4.1.2 Tops may expose shoulders, abdomen, midriff, neck lines and/or cleavage
- 4.1.3 Bottoms may expose legs, thighs and hips
- 4.1.4 Undergarments (bras, underwear, nipple coverings etc.) may not be substituted as outer clothing and, if worn, should be worn beneath a layer of outer wear
- 4.1.5 Straps and waistbands may be exposed
- 4.1.6 Any headwear (e.g. hats, ski masks, baseball caps etc.) that does not hide the face may be worn.
- 4.1.7 Items related to creed and articles of faith are always permitted.
- 4.1.8 Conform with established health and safety requirements for the intended activity (e.g., health and physical education classes, science and chemistry classes, sporting events, technical education, drama/dance classes, etc.)
- 4.1.9 Respect the Board's intent to sustain a community that is positive, anti-oppressive, equitable, accepting and inclusive of a diverse range of social, cultural, and creed identities; Not promote offensive, lewd, vulgar, or obscene images or language, including profanity, hate and sexually explicit imagery;
- 4.1.10 Not promote, nor, could not be construed as or include content that is discriminatory (e.g., racist, anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, anti-Semitic, Islamophobic, sexist, transphobic, homophobic, classist, ableist, sizist, etc.), or that reasonably could be construed as defamatory, threatening, harassing or promoting bias, prejudice or hate;
- 4.1.11 Not symbolize, suggest, display or refer to: tobacco, cannabis, alcohol, drugs or related paraphernalia, promotion or incitement of violence or any illegal conduct or criminal activities;
- 4.1.12 Not interfere with the safe operation of the school, limit or restrict the rights of others, or create a reasonably foreseeable risk of such interference or invasion of rights; (e.g., except for creed accommodations and safety requirements, no head wear may obscure the face, all other headwear may be worn);

5. Discretionary Restrictions

- 5.1 Any restrictions to the way a student dresses must conform to the student dress policy and will be necessary to support the overall educational goals and activities of the school (e.g., bathing suits/ swimwear are restricted for pool/ swimming activities.)
- 5.2 Any discretionary exceptions to the student dress code must be authorized by the principal or designate and must be consistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the OHRC, and the Equity Policy. (e.g., OHRC accommodation requests, sports equipment, Halloween costumes that obscure a face, etc.).

6. Human Rights Accommodations

- 6.1 The student dress policy must be implemented with every student in mind and result in barrier free access to the fullest extent possible
- 6.2 The Board is committed to providing individual human rights based accommodations (e.g., creed dress restrictions, gender expression, etc.) short of undue hardship. However, the standard design and application of the student dress code must be flexible enough to account for the diversity, accessibility, safety and dignity of all students up front, thus minimizing the need for individual accommodation requests to ensure inclusivity.

7. Commitments

- 7.1 Staff must be consistent and fair in application of the student dress policy and base decisions on objective, verifiable evidence of impact.

- 7.2 Staff will not use personal standards to alter the student dress policy.
- 7.3 The student dress policy will not be applied in a ways that lead to discriminatory outcomes, differential treatment or increased marginalization or oppression.
- 7.4 Student dress violations that threaten health and safety, and/ or promote violence, illegal activity, bullying, harassment, and/ or are motivated by the bias, prejudice or hate against any individual or identifiable groups, are serious violations of the Caring and Safe Schools Policy (P051) and must be responded to in accordance with policy procedures.
- 7.5 Staff will respond to student dress violations in a manner that:
 - 7.5.1 Treats the violation as minor on the continuum of school rule violations.
 - 7.5.2 Ensures no student is negatively affected by dress code enforcement because of racial identity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, creed beliefs, cultural or religious identity, disability, household income, body size/type/shape or any other grounds covered under the OHRC.
 - 7.5.3 Ensures consistent and fair application of the student dress code rules that never results in differential treatment.
 - 7.5.4 Ensures students are not body shamed or required to display their body in front of others (students, parents/guardians, or staff) in school.
 - 7.5.5 Does not require the removal of students from a classroom or a loss of class time as a consequence.
 - 7.5.6 Offers a continuum of choices to remedy any inappropriate dress:
 - 1) Ask the student to wear additional clothing of their own to hide the inappropriate dress choice;
 - 2) Allows the student to seek out and borrow additional clothing from a peer;
 - 3) Allows the student to contact parent or guardian to bring additional clothes;
 - 4) Allows the student to wear clothing provided by the school;
- 7.6 Students who refuse to comply with choices provided to remedy inappropriate dress and/ or who repeatedly violate the student dress may be subject to progressive discipline under Caring and Safe Schools Policy and must be responded to in accordance with this policy and associated procedures.

8. Concern or Complaint Resolution

- 8.1 For concerns or complaints related to student dress, students are encouraged to have discussions with staff. If students' concerns remain unresolved, they must be reviewed and responded to by the school principal and/or the superintendent in a timely manner.

9. Communication

- 9.1 The student dress policy will be clearly conveyed to students, parents/guardians and staff, clearly displayed in schools and posted online, printed in student agendas and highlighted in announcements and newsletters for clear reminders.



STUDENT DRESS CODE

Legal References: *Education Act*

Related References: *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*
Ontario Human Rights Code
Board Policy 1003 – School Councils
Board Policy 1012 - Equity and Inclusion

Effective Date: *June 25, 2001*

Revisions: *March 9, 2020*

Reviewed:

1. Preamble

- 1.1 The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) provides students with learning environments that are safe, equitable, welcoming and inclusive, and recognizes that decisions about dress reflect individual expression of identity, socio-cultural norms, and economic factors and are personal and important factors to a person's well-being and health.
- 1.2 It is the policy of the WRDSB to create an environment that is appropriate for student learning through the establishment of student dress expectations in each school.
- 1.3 It is the responsibility of the principal, in consultation with the School Council and a representative student group on a biannual basis, to review expectations for student dress.



Report to Committee of the Whole

June 20, 2022

Subject: Elementary French As A Second Language Review Recommendations

Recommendation

That the Board of Trustees approve the recommendations contained in the report from the French Immersion Review Committee dated June 17, 2022 specifically to:

- *Adopt the Vision, Goals and Guiding Principles for French as a Second Language programming at the WRDSB.*
- *Develop an action plan to bring the French Immersion program into alignment with the Vision, Goals and Guiding Principles.*
- *Transition to a Grade 2 entry point for French Immersion and increase the daily French instruction time from 8% to 16% in Grade 1 Core French. Starting in September 2023, Grade 1 Core French will be increased to 16% from 8%. In January 2024, Grade 1 students may apply to the Grade 2 French Immersion program which will start September 2024.*

Status

The French Immersion Review Committee (the Committee) is currently in Phase 3 of its review. The Committee met 10 times during the 2022-2023 school year as noted in Appendix A. The Committee has representation from Trustees, the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC), parents of students in French Immersion (FI), parents of students in Core French programs, French Immersion students, Core French students, school administrators and appropriate central staff.

The Committee has completed the tasks outlined in Phase 3 of the review and have prepared a report with several recommendations, and their financial implications in Appendix B of this report.

The French Immersion Review Committee membership and meeting attendance can be found in Appendix A and B respectively.

Background

The French Immersion Review includes four Phases.

Phase 1 (Completed):

Phase 1 began in September 2017 when an Ad Hoc Committee with representation from Trustees, parents, students and staff was formed in response to a Trustee Motion initiating a

review of the WRDSB's French Immersion Program. The Committee was tasked with reviewing our French Immersion and Extended French program models and the delivery for elementary and secondary students. The review was to include issues concerning staffing challenges, equitable access for all students, transportation and the advantages and disadvantages of a French Immersion magnet school.

The Committee met over a series of meetings to analyze information relevant to the objectives outlined in the Trustees' motion. The Committee submitted a final report to the Board on April 28th, 2018.

Phase 2 (Completed):

Phase 2 began with Trustee approval of \$150,000.00 from accumulated surplus to initiate a broader review of the French Immersion program in support of the recommendations in the report presented to Trustees at the April 23, 2018 Committee of the Whole meeting.

R. A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. (Malatest) was contracted to conduct a review of French Immersion programming. [A final report from Malatest](#) was submitted to the Waterloo Region District School Board in October 2020.

Phase 3 (Completed):

The French Immersion Review Committee began the work of Phase 3 in April 2021 to review the findings of the Malatest Report and identify main areas to be addressed. The Committee has responded to the first recommendation of the Malatest report which was to articulate a clear vision and goals for French Language programming in the Waterloo Region District School Board.

The Elementary French as a Second Language Report can be found in Appendix C.

Phase 4 (Next):

It is anticipated that Phase 4 will begin in September of 2022. This phase will focus on implementation of the final recommendations brought forward to the Board by the French Immersion Review Committee.

If approved, Phase 4 of this review will involve the implementation of the following actions:

- Continue to seek feedback from a variety of stakeholders (e.g. administrators, educators, students, parents/caregivers, Parent Involvement Committee, community partners) throughout the implementation process;

- The WRDSB will continue to align with the supports and take advantage of opportunities of our provincial partners to provide feedback and take suggestions to increase the number of qualified French teachers in the immediate future;
- Develop and offer professional development for French as a Second Language classroom teachers in providing an effective program for all students;
- Continue to support school administrators in effectively supporting family inquiries and managing staffing of French as a Second Language programs; and
- Monitor implementation of elementary French as a Second language to determine if there is a need for changes in secondary French as a Second Language program.

Financial implications

The financial implications are outlined in section 7.5 of the report contained in Appendix C to this report. Should the Board of Trustees not approve the recommendations, staff will provide revised financial implications at a future Committee of the Whole.

Communications

Once the Waterloo Region District School Board approves the French as a Second Language recommendations, resources will be assigned, and school Principals, staff, parents/caregivers, community partners/members will be advised of upcoming activities to detail the implementation.

Prepared by: Della Lataille-Herdsman, Superintendent Student Achievement & Well-being
Matthew Gerard, Coordinating Superintendent, Business Services and
Treasurer of the Board
in consultation with Coordinating Council

APPENDIX A: French Immersion Review Committee Members 2021-22

	Member Name	Role
1.	Agar, Lauren	Manager of Planning
2.	Ahluwalia, Deepa	Human Rights and Equity Advisor
3.	Andrews, Peter	French Immersion Student
4.	Bileski, Karin	French Immersion Administrator
5.	Bond, James	System Administrator
6.	Bond, Mandi	Parent
7.	Brandenstein, Estefania (<i>alternate Eusis Dougan-McKenzie, interim Chief Communications Officer</i>)	Communications Officer
8.	Cresswell, Lucia	Secondary French Teacher
9.	Crits, Jennifer	French Immersion Administrator
10.	Fuller, Amanda	Parent
11.	Gerard, Matthew	Coordinating Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board
12.	Gillespie, Erica	French Immersion Administrator
13.	Grant, Amber	Elementary Core French/French Immersion Teacher
14.	Jenkins, Melissa	Parent
15.	Kay, Sydney	Parent
16.	Kuo, Madelyn	Student
17.	Lataille-Herdsman, Della	Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being
18.	Liebermann, Dana	Senior Manager, Research & Evidence-Based Practice
19.	McQuillin, Adrianna	Student
20.	Nasimi, Halima	Parent

21.	Nasimi, Haroon	Parent
22.	Piatkowski, Scott	Trustee
23.	Read, Lila	Associate Director of Education
24.	Ringwood, Stephanie	Consultant, Learning Support Services
25.	Shaw, Patricia	Parent (Parent Involvement Committee)
26.	Smit, Adam	Secondary French Teacher
27.	Smith, Kathi	Trustee
28.	Soror, Kenzy	Student Trustee
29.	Teall Breeze, Katrina	Consultant - Indigenous, Equity, and Human Rights Department, Indigenous Education Branch
30.	Thakkar, Dipali	Parent
31.	Tremble, Laurie	Trustee
32.	Wahl, Matthew	Student
33.	Wilkinson, Kelly	Elementary System Administrator, Human Resources & Equity Services

APPENDIX B - French Immersion Review Committee Meeting Attendance 2021/22

Member Name	Sept . 23, 2021	Oct. 19, 2021	Nov. 9, 2021	Nov. 30, 2021	Jan. 18, 2022	Mar. 22, 2022	Apr. 12, 2022	May 26, 2022	June 7, 2022	June 14, 2022
Agar, Lauren		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ahluwalia, Deepa	X	X	X		X			X		X
Andrews, Peter	X		X	X	X					X
Bileski, Karin	X		X	X		X				
Bond, James	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Bond, Mandi	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Brandenstein, Estefania/Doug n-McKenzie Eusis	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cresswell, Lucia	X	X	X	X			X			X
Crits, Jennifer	X	X								
Fuller, Amanda	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Gerard, Matthew		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gillespie, Erica	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Grant, Amber	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Jenkins, Melissa		X		X			X			
Kay, Sydney	X				X		X			
Kuo, Madelyn		X	X	X	X	X		X		X
Lataille-Herdsma n, Della	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Liebermann, Dana	X	X				X		X	X	
McQuillin, Adrianna		X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Nasimi, Halima										
Nasimi, Haroon										
Piatkowski, Scott	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Read, Lila	X	X								
Ringwood, Stephanie	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
Shaw, Patricia	*N/A	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Smit, Adam	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Smith, Kathi	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Soror, Kenzy	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Teall Breeze, Katrina		X	X		X		X			
Thakkar, Dipali			X							X
Tremble, Laurie		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wahl, Matthew	X	X	X		X	X				X
Wilkinson, Kelly		X								

X = Present at Meeting

"blank" = Absent from Meeting

*N/A = member joined after the meeting date

ELEMENTARY FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING REVIEW



JUNE 17, 2022



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff have completed the third phase of the French as a Second Language review. This phase was focused on elementary French language programs including both Core French and French Immersion. The objective of the French Immersion Review Committee in this phase was to review the recommendations of the R.A. Malatest & Associates report, complete public consultation, and present final recommendations to the board of trustees.

This report summarizes the activity of the French Immersion Review Committee in their process of identifying recommended changes to elementary French as a Second Language programming in the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB).

Over the course of the review, including Review Committee meetings and public meetings, the Review Committee has identified three recommendations. The final decision on these recommendations will be made by the elected Board of Trustees (Board). The three recommendations include:

- Adopt the Vision, Goals and Guiding Principles for French as a Second Language programming at the WRDSB.
- Develop an action plan to bring the French Immersion program into alignment with the Vision, Goals and Guiding Principles.
- Transition to a Grade 2 entry point for French Immersion and increase the daily French instruction time from 8% to 16% in Grade 1 Core French. Starting in September 2023, Grade 1 Core French will be increased to 16% from 8%. In January 2024, Grade 1 students may apply to the Grade 2 French Immersion program which will start September 2024.

2. INTRODUCTION

In 2017, the WRDSB formed an Ad Hoc Committee to review French Immersion and Extended French program models and the delivery for elementary and secondary students. The review was to include:

- staffing challenges;
- equitable access for each and every student;
- transportation; and
- the advantages and disadvantages of a French Immersion magnet school.

The first phase of the review, beginning in September 2017, involved an Ad Hoc Committee with representation from trustees, parents, students and staff was created in response to a Trustee Motion initiating a review of the WRDSB's French Immersion Program.

The Ad Hoc French Immersion Review Committee met over a series of meetings to analyze information relevant to the objectives outlined in the Trustees' motion.

In April 2018, the French Immersion Review Committee Report was presented to the WRDSB's Committee of the Whole with the following recommendation:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approves the four recommendations contained in the French Immersion Review Committee Report. Furthermore, that \$150,000 from accumulated surplus be committed to support the recommendations as outlined in the report presented to Trustees at the April 23, 2018 Committee of the Whole meeting.

The four recommendations contained in the April 2018 French Immersion Review Committee Report were:

- Enhance parent/caregiver and student voice to better understand what attracts and retains students in the French Immersion program;
- Continue provincial and local efforts to attract and retain additional French language educators;
- Addressing French Immersion program boundaries at senior elementary schools;
- Initiate a broader review of the French Immersion program.

The second phase of the review was conducted by R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd (Malatest). The Final Report from Malatest was submitted to the WRDSB in October 2020. This report can be found in [Appendix A](#).

The objectives of the review were to:

- Examine WRDSB French immersion programming in order to identify successes and challenges related to the current model;
- Evaluate alternative approaches to WRDSB French immersion program delivery; and
- Develop recommendations that will inform strategic planning related to:
 - French immersion program delivery in WRDSB; and
 - Operational goals and vision for WRDSB French programming – both immersion and core programming.

Through a literature review, online surveys, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews, Malatest developed six recommendations:

- Address inequity and access issues;
- Consider altering class size minimums to make the distribution of classes more even throughout the WRDSB;
- Consider a centralized registration system;

- Do not consider alternate entry points, single-track schools or enrollment caps at this point;
- Enhance the WRDSB operational goals and vision for French programming; and
- Investigate class length time and pedagogical changes for Core French.

The third and final phase of the review reconvened the Ad Hoc French Immersion Review Committee to review the findings of the Malatest report and identify the main areas to be addressed.

This report presents the findings of the review and provides final recommendations for Elementary French as a Second Language programming in the WRDSB.

3. BACKGROUND

The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) offers French as a Second Language (FSL) programs in line with the Ministry of Education's [*Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12*](#). This document, published in 2013, sets a ten-year strategic framework. The framework serves as a call to action and a guide to strengthening French programming in English-language school boards. The WRDSB is one of 60 English-language school boards in Ontario.

3.1. FSL PROGRAMS IN ONTARIO'S ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SCHOOL BOARDS

Appendix A of the [*Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12*](#) provides a summary of the FSL program requirements for English-language school boards. The following sections highlight the key components of the programs in the elementary school panel.

Core French: All students from Grades 4 to 8 take Core French unless they are enrolled in Extended French or French Immersion. The Core French program must provide a minimum of 600 hours of French by the end of Grade 8. Core French may begin earlier than Grade 4; however, program funding is not provided until Grade 4.

Extended French: The Extended French program must provide a minimum of 1260 hours of French by the end of Grade 8.

- A minimum of 25% of all instruction is provided in French.
- School boards have the flexibility to offer Extended French earlier than Grade 4.
- Students are taught French as a subject and French serves as the language of instruction in at least one other subject.

- School boards have the flexibility to decide which subject(s) will be taught in French and in which grade English instruction will begin.
- Students follow the same curriculum for the other subject(s) taught in French as their peers in English-language programs.

French Immersion: The French Immersion program must provide a minimum of 3800 hours of French by the end of Grade 8.

- A minimum of 50% of all instruction is provided in French.
- School boards have the flexibility to start French Immersion in the primary years or later.
- Students are taught French as a subject and French serves as the language of instruction in two or more other subjects.
- School boards have the flexibility to decide which subjects will be taught in French and in which grade English instruction will begin.
- Students follow the same curriculum for the other subjects taught in French as their peers in English-language programs.
- Students who have completed a French Immersion program in elementary school may proceed to either an Extended French or a French Immersion program at the secondary level.

3.2. FSL PROGRAMS OFFERED AT THE WRDSB

The first French Immersion program in the WRDSB began in September 1977. The WRDSB offers three types of FSL programs - Core French, Extended French and French Immersion.

Core French: Core French is taught to all WRDSB students from Grades 1 through 9. In Grades 10 through 12, students may continue to study French by selecting one Core French course per year. Students who study Core French learn the French language by speaking, listening, reading and writing daily for 30 minutes. The goal of Core French is to provide French instruction to gain the skills and confidence to speak and understand French in simple situations and conversations. Table 1 shows the Core French instructional minutes and subjects.

Table 1: Core French Instructional Minutes and Subjects (2021-2022)

Grades 1-6	1480 minutes/week (92%)	English Language	Health & Physical Education
		Mathematics	Music
		Social Studies	Visual Arts
		Science	Drama
		Dance	
	120 minutes/week (8%)	French Language	
Grades 7-8	1480 minutes/week (92%)	English Language	Health & Physical Education
		Mathematics	Music
		History/Geography	Visual Arts
		Science	Drama
		Dance	
	120 minutes/week (8%)	French Language	

French Immersion - Elementary: Students enrolled in French Immersion participate in a program that offers 50 percent of their day in French. French Immersion in the Waterloo Region District School Board begins in Grade 1. Students who study French Immersion learn in the French language daily for 150 minutes. Students must apply to the French Immersion program. Subjects taught in French include French Language, Mathematics, Social Studies (Grades 1 to 6); French Language, History and Geography (Grades 7 and 8); The Arts (Visual Arts, Drama, and Music); and Health & Physical Education (Grades 1 through 8, as needed to meet French minutes requirement). The goal of French Immersion is to provide a level of French instruction so that students have fluency and comfort to communicate effectively with other French speakers. Table 2 shows the French Immersion instructional minutes and subjects.

Table 2: French Immersion Instructional Minutes and Subjects (2021-2022)

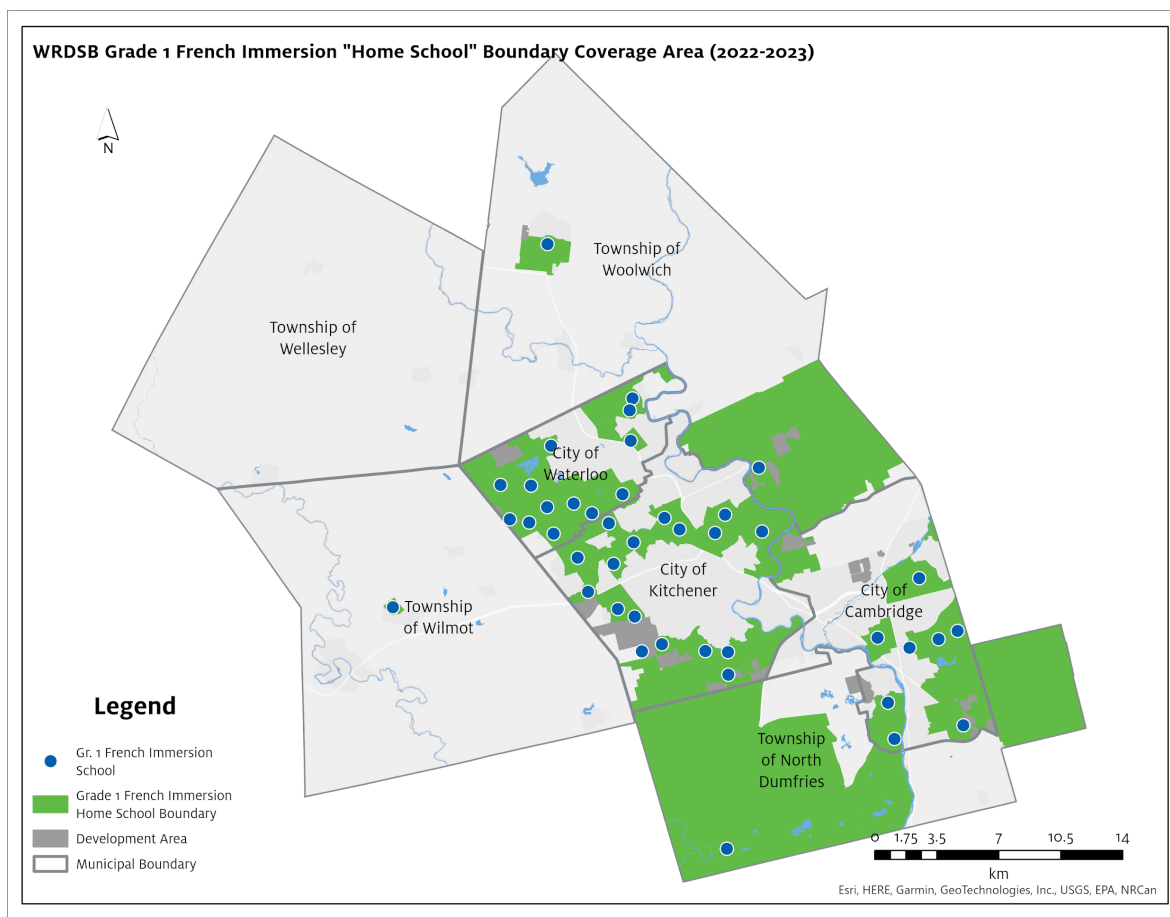
GRADE LEVEL	INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES	INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH	INSTRUCTION IN FRENCH	INSTRUCTION IN FRENCH AS REQUIRED TO MEET FRENCH MINUTES
Grades 1-6	750 minutes/week (50%)	English Language	French Language	Health & Physical Education
		Science	Mathematics	Music
			Social Studies	Visual Arts
				Drama
				Dance
Grades 7-8	750 minutes/week (50%)	English Language	French Language	Health & Physical Education
		Mathematics	History/Geography	Music
		Science		Visual Arts
				Drama
				Dance

Extended French and French Immersion - Secondary Only: Programs are available to students who have completed the elementary French Immersion program and would like to continue with more intensive French instruction. Extended French and French Immersion programs require students to complete four French language courses. Students enrolled in Extended French must also complete a minimum of three courses in other subjects taught in French. Students enrolled in French Immersion must complete a minimum of six courses in other subjects taught in French. The goal of Extended French is to provide a level of French instruction so that students have fluency and comfort to communicate effectively with other French speakers.

3.2.1. Distribution of FSL programs in the WRDSB

All WRDSB elementary schools offer Core French programming for Grades 1 through 8. For the 2022-2023 school year, French Immersion programs are offered at 49 elementary schools (including 7 senior elementary schools) and two secondary schools. Extended French is offered at five secondary schools. Figure 1 shows the distribution of French Immersion programs in the WRDSB.

Figure 1: WRDSB Home School Boundary Coverage Area (2021-2022)



3.3. FRENCH IMMERSION ENROLMENT

Table 3 shows the historic enrolment trends in the elementary French Immersion program. Both the total number of students enrolled in FI and the percentage of the total enrolment in that grade are displayed.

Table 3: Historic October 31st French Immersion Enrolment by Grade (2017 to 2021)

YEAR	GRADE								TOTAL
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
2017/18	1237 (28%)	1059 (24%)	1021 (23%)	870 (19%)	852 (18%)	768 (17%)	678 (15%)	684 (15%)	7840
2018/19	1222 (27%)	1147 (26%)	1009 (22%)	961 (21%)	825 (18%)	815 (17%)	739 (16%)	666 (15%)	7764
2019/20	1243 (28%)	1171 (26%)	1075 (24%)	957 (21%)	912 (20%)	802 (17%)	791 (16%)	724 (16%)	8122
2020/21	1343 (30%)	1177 (27%)	1057 (24%)	996 (22%)	899 (20%)	871 (19%)	764 (17%)	751 (15%)	8149
2021/22	1158 (26%)	1205 (27%)	1079 (25%)	938 (21%)	889 (20%)	852 (19%)	793 (17%)	723 (16%)	8152

3.4. FSL FUNDING

The Grants for Student Needs (GSN) is the primary funding source for the WRDSB. The French as a Second Language Allocation provides English-language school boards with funding to support the additional costs of providing French and French Immersion programs. Funding for French as a Second Language programs on the elementary panel is based on enrolment and average program minutes per school day. For the 2021-2022 school year, the WRDSB was allocated \$8,721,214 in elementary FSL funding, \$3,168,707.85 of which was specifically for French Immersion. This is broken down in Table 4.

Table 4: French as a Second Language Funding - Elementary

PROGRAM	AVERAGE DAILY LENGTH OF PROGRAM	ALLOCATION PER PUPIL ENROLLED IN PROGRAM	2021-22 PROJECTED ENROLMENT
Core (Grades 4 to 8)	20 - 59 minutes	\$313.37	17,909
Extended (Grades 4 to 8)	60 - 149 minutes	\$357.01	0
Immersion (JK/SK Grades 1 to 8)	150 minutes or more	\$399.40	8,019

3.5. TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

The WRDSB receives Provincial funding to transport students through the Student Transportation Grant, a component of the Grants for Student Needs (GSN). The Student Transportation Grant flows from the WRDSB to Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region (STSWR), a joint venture owned by WRDSB and Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB). STSWR has specific performance standards and a finite budget which guides the provision of transportation. Policies around transportation eligibility are set by the individual school boards and are funded in accordance with Ministry of Education guidelines.

4. FSL REVIEW

4.1. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVE

Phase 3 of the review was focused on the WRDSB's FSL programs at the elementary level. The objective of the French Immersion Review Committee in this phase was to review the recommendations of the Malatest report, complete public consultation, and present final recommendations to the board of trustees.

4.2. RESPONSE TO THE APRIL 2018 FRENCH IMMERSION REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.2.1. Enhance parent/caregiver and student voice to better understand what attracts and retains students in the French Immersion program.

Staff have developed a survey entitled “[Change of FSL pathways](#).” The intent of this survey is to establish reasons for why students are changing pathways (French Immersion to Core French) and to help understand what supports were put in place before the final decision was made. It is hoped this information will highlight and inform a process that is needed before students demit from the French Immersion program. Furthermore, enhancements to Administrative Procedure 100 - French Immersion - Elementary will be made to include a required form to be completed if a student is demitting from French Immersion. This form is in development.

4.2.2. Continue provincial and local efforts to attract and retain additional French language educators.

WRDSB staff have attended teacher job fairs with focused efforts on recruiting FSL qualified teachers, and have been offering Occasional Teacher (OT) positions to FSL candidates while still in Bachelor of Education programs to make sure local OTs are attracted to the WRDSB.

4.2.3. Addressing French Immersion program boundaries at senior elementary schools.

Boundaries were not considered as part of this phase of the review. In the implementation phase, program boundaries may be considered.

4.3. RESPONSE TO THE MALATEST RECOMMENDATIONS

4.3.1. Address inequity and access issues

“...creating increased supports to address access and equity likely involves ethical issues. Specifically, if supports are to be offered, and access is to be broadened, the special education and support provided needs to indeed be effective at keeping students in the program. That likely means the board has to make efforts at offering support that likely exceeds current expectations and may even involve working towards providing best-in-class special education services within French immersion within the WRDSB. To this point, literature provides some suggestions about potential in-class implementation of educational strategies for students requiring special education.”¹

¹ Malatest, 2020 p. 11

The WRDSB will address inequity and access in stages. The initial staff plan will change the French Immersion program and delivery. The program will have Special Education resources, central registration, and a proposed later entry point, and all will serve to address access issues. As these changes are implemented, staff will monitor and measure their impact and make additional changes to help further increase access to the program.

4.3.2. Consider altering class size minimums to make distribution of classes more even throughout the WRDSB

“Another equity issue is that dual track, French immersion schools tend to be located in areas that have higher incomes. At present, WRDSB will consider forming a French immersion class in any school where 20 senior kindergarten parents/caregivers’ express interest. An option may be to consider setting the minimum French immersion class size number to 23 in economically advantaged areas, and 18 in economically disadvantaged areas. A lower class size though would require the WRDSB to ensure that the program is sustainable as it progresses through progressive years and grades.”²

The WRDSB class size caps are set by the Ministry of Education and the WRDSB must adhere to those restrictions. However, staff have adjusted the minimum number of students required to form a French Immersion program at a particular school. An increase from 20 to 40 students (e.g. from 1 class of students to 2 classes of students) required at a school to start a French Immersion program ensures the sustainability of the program. Furthermore, the WRDSB has created more split classes to ensure French immersion classes remain closer to the cap. Staff will continue to explore options for altering class size in order to more evenly and equitably distribute classes throughout the WRDSB.

4.3.3. Consider a centralized registration system

“One option that may be more in line with the program pressures faced by WRDSB is to take more centralized control of registration and class formation, like the system launched in HWDSB. This will allow WRDSB to create classes in ways that meet various goals of the program including equity, utilization rates in various schools, management of teacher resources, and limit over expansion of the program to too many sites.”³

In the fall of 2019, the WRDSB implemented the central registration of French Immersion students. The Planning Department in the Business Services Division took on the administration of Grade 1 French Immersion applications and registration. The Learning Support Services Division previously handled this. This change allowed Learning Support Services staff to focus on instructional and program

² Malatest, 2020 p. 12

³ Malatest, 2020 p. 12

support. Before the fall of 2020, all internal transfers and new registrations after Grade 1 were handled at the school level. If a student with previous French-language instruction moved into an area where the home school did not offer French Immersion, the family was responsible for contacting out-of-boundary schools to find a placement.

In December 2020, the WRDSB changed *Administrative Procedure 1000 - French Immersion Elementary* (AP 1000). These changes reflect the Planning Department's process of Grade 1 applications and new registrations and transfers after Grade 2. The WRDSB further refined AP 1000 in December 2021. The new, more centralized process provides greater consistency in processing transfers and registrations.

Using the Planning Department's knowledge of the geographic distribution of the French Immersion programs, current and projected utilization of facilities, and demographics, the WRDSB is positioned to make further enhancements to the centralized system in the coming years. The criteria for determining site locations for French Immersion programs shall include the following:

- Availability of space (where space is available and projected to remain available)
- Accessibility of site to pedestrians/vehicles
- Community support: demonstrated interest in enrolling
- Ancillary spaces: gym, library, grounds
- Program and accommodation costs
- Grouping of feeder schools
- Distribution: equitable distribution to meet system needs, nearness to next school

4.3.4. Do not consider alternate entry points, single-track schools or enrolment caps at this point

Alternate Entry Points

*"Alternate, or later entry points, have the advantage of allowing students, parents/caregivers and teachers to determine if French immersion will be a good fit for their child. However, later entry points often involve a higher intensity program in order to account for less time spent in an immersive environment than if earlier entry occurred."*⁴

Malatest completed their review in 2019 and issued the report shortly thereafter. Malatest did not recommend alternate entry points at that time and instead implied the WRDSB should implement other recommendations first. Staff feel the timing is appropriate to

⁴ Malatest, 2020 (p. 13)

recommend an alternate entry point in addition to other program changes such as Central Registration, increased minimums to establish French Immersion classes, additional Special Education supports, and the increased use of combined grade classes.

Alternate entry points have been considered by staff in order to:

- Relieve staffing pressures;
- Provide families and students the opportunity to assess the French Immersion program before registering;
- Provide students with exposure to French language instruction prior to making a decision about registering in French Immersion program;
- Provide families with a great opportunity to understand the learning style and needs of their students;
- Enhance French language instruction time for all Grade 1 students; and
- A Grade 2 entry point will not overload proportional French language instruction for students as compared to later entry points (e.g., Grade 4).

Single-Track Schools

Malatest does not recommend pursuing single-track schools as “... a single track school could be perceived as making an already enriched program even more so, and in light of strong opinions about these factors in WRDSB, creation of an even more separated environment for French immersion needs to be considered.”⁵ Furthermore, to create single-track French Immersion schools, the WRDSB is required to undergo a [Pupil Accommodation Review](#) process. At this time, the Ministry of Education has paused school boards’ ability to conduct Pupil Accommodation Reviews. The next opportunity to conduct an Accommodation Review is unclear.

Enrolment Caps

Although the WRDSB has never had an official enrolment cap (i.e., a maximum number of students allowed to enroll in the French Immersion program in Grade 1), acceptance into the program is dependent on staffing and Primary Class Size averages and limits ([O. Reg. 132/12, s. 5](#)). To provide for a greater chance of acceptance into the program, the WRDSB allows for out-of-boundary enrolment in French Immersion. In other words, if a student is unsuccessful in the lottery to attend their home school in Grade 1, they may secure a spot at another school with available space.

⁵ Malatest, 2020 (p. 13)

4.3.5. Enhance the WRDSB operational goals and vision for French programming

The Malatest report recommends enhancing the operational goals and vision for French programming to include such issues as equality of access, retention, better definitions and measures of confidence and fluency⁶. The Steering Committee developed the following enhanced vision statement, goals and guiding principles. During the consultation process, stakeholders had an opportunity to provide feedback.

In addition, staff are developing key performance indicators (KPI) and outcome measures that will form part of the cultural shift moving forward. These KPIs will include but are not limited to 1) number of special education students enrolled in French Immersion; 2) number of teachers with special education qualifications teaching French Immersion; 3) availability of supports; and 4) community feedback.

VISION STATEMENT

All students in the WRDSB have equitable access to a sustainable, high-quality French as a Second Language program of choice (Core French, Extended French or French Immersion), including supports that meet their needs. Each program will serve as a bridge between languages and cultures, building students' confidence and ability to use French effectively in their daily lives.

GOALS

- Increase student confidence, proficiency, and achievement in all French as a Second Language programs
- Increase access to quality core French and French Immersion for equity-seeking groups
- Increase student, educator, caregiver, and community engagement in French as a Second Language

⁶ Malatest, 2020 (p. 13)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- French as a Second Language programs are for all students
- Policies and procedures actively disrupt and discourage streaming in order to reduce harm
- Pedagogy reflects high standards and current evidence-based practices
- Special Education and Multilingual Learners supports are equitably provided
- French as a Second Language program options are communicated, informed decisions
- Sustainable from a budgetary and staffing perspective

4.3.6. Investigate class length time and pedagogical changes for Core French

“Some issues include a lack of classroom space, large classroom sizes in the core program, behavioural concerns among some students in core, and ability of teachers to form constructive relationships with students in order to foster learning, given that core French is only 40 minutes a day.”⁷

These recommendations have formed part of the basis of our planned cultural shift within French language instruction at the WRDSB. Except for implementing a semester model in elementary Core French, staff plan to incorporate these recommendations into WRDSB curriculum and programming.

5. ALTERNATE APPROACHES TO PROGRAM DELIVERY

The Review Committee explored several alternate approaches to delivering FSL programming in the WRDSB. Options suggested in the Malatest report and approaches utilized in other boards were considered. The FSL Steering team examined these options and discussed the impacts of these alternatives from a human resource, budgetary and student learning perspective. These options and their impacts were shared with the FSL Review Committee, who discussed these within the framework of the proposed Vision, Goals and Guiding principles. With this framework in mind, considering these factors, the Grade 2 entry point was established as the option that best supported our students. The options considered, as well as the impacts, are explained in this section.

⁷ Malatest, 2020 (p. 13)

5.1. GRADE 2 ENTRY POINT FOR FRENCH IMMERSION

The FSL Review Committee supported a Grade 2 entry point for French Immersion as the preferred option for program delivery. This option also includes increased French language instruction in Grade 1 (see Table 5).

Table 5: Core French Immersion Instructional Time (Grade 2 Entry Point for French Immersion)

GRADE LEVEL	MINUTES PER WEEK INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH	MINUTES PER WEEK INSTRUCTION IN FRENCH	TOTAL
Grade 1	1260 (84%)	240 (16%)	1500
Grades 2-8	1380 (92%)	120 (8%)	1500

A Grade 2 entry point requires a change to French language instructional time to achieve the Ministry's requirement for 3800 instructional hours by Grade 8. Table 6 shows the proposed changes to instructional time by grade. These changes result in an overall increase in French language hours, totalling 3938 hours by Grade 8.

Table 6: French Immersion Instructional Time (Grade 2 Entry Point for French Immersion)

GRADE LEVEL	MINUTES PER WEEK INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH	MINUTES PER WEEK INSTRUCTION IN FRENCH	TOTAL
Grade 1	1260 (84%)	240 (16%)	1500
Grades 2-6	630 (42%)	870 (58%)	1500
Grades 7-8	750 (50%)	750 (50%)	1500

The decision to move to 58% instruction is related to scheduling/timetabling. The 42% English-language instruction to 58% French-language instruction split creates an ideal scenario for staffing. Within a 5-day cycle, teachers receive a minimum of 240 minutes (or 8 periods) of preparation time. Therefore, French instruction would be taught by the French Immersion teacher for 21 periods a week. During their

preparation time, another teacher would instruct the class in French for 8 periods throughout a 5-day cycle (a total of 29 periods of French instruction in a 5-day cycle). Table 7 shows a sample timetable for a school.

Table 7: Sample Grade 2-6 School Schedule - Grade 2 Entry Point for French Immersion (58% French Instruction)

PERIOD	DURATION	DAY 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
1	0:30	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	ENGLISH
2	0:30	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	ENGLISH
3	0:30	ART**	SCIENCE	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	ENGLISH
4	0:30	ART**	SCIENCE	HEALTH AND PE**	HEALTH AND PE**	SCIENCE
NUTRITION BREAK	0:40	NUTRITION BREAK				
5	0:30	FRENCH LANGUAGE	FRENCH LANGUAGE	FRENCH LANGUAGE	DANCE/DRAMA**	FRENCH LANGUAGE
6	0:30	FRENCH LANGUAGE	FRENCH LANGUAGE	FRENCH LANGUAGE	FRENCH LANGUAGE	FRENCH LANGUAGE
7	0:30	SOCIAL STUDIES	FRENCH LANGUAGE	FRENCH LANGUAGE	SOCIAL STUDIES	FRENCH LANGUAGE
8	0:30	SOCIAL STUDIES	MUSIC**	FRENCH LANGUAGE	SOCIAL STUDIES	MUSIC**
NUTRITION BREAK	0:40	NUTRITION BREAK				
9	0:30	MATH	MATH	MATH	MATH	MATH
10	0:30	MATH	MATH	MATH	MATH	MATH

**Blue subjects taught in English, Green subjects taught in French*

***Note: Staff will consult with administration and teaching staff to determine subject areas taught in French. HPE, the ARTS are optional French/English subjects dependent on teacher expertise and the needs of the school*

Modifying the entry point to French Immersion from Grade 1 to Grade 2 achieves the following:

- Allows more opportunities for the home school to communicate FSL choices, especially for children who do not engage in WRDSB schools during JK and SK.
- Allows more opportunity to engage the community in decision-making for FSL choices before a requirement to register for French Immersion.

- Doubles French-language instruction (from 8% to 16% of the day) in Grade 1 to support engagement in all FSL programs at an age when research indicates students are most likely to engage in second language learning and be enthused to learn a second language.
- Supports increased communication of FSL options and reduces streaming related to school selection.
- Allows French language learning experience in Grade 1 to support decision-making regarding FSL pathway preference.
- Mandatory Grade 1 at the home school could reduce streaming toward FI schools.
- Provides opportunities for early detection of learning needs or supports to assist students in preparing for entry to French Immersion in Grade 2.
- Later start, accompanied by culture shift, could support students in developing the English language supports before beginning FI.

5.2. GRADE 4 ENTRY POINT FOR FRENCH IMMERSION

The Review Committee also explored a later French Immersion entry point (Grade 4). This option also includes increased Core French language instruction in Grades 1 to 3 (see Table 8).

Table 8: Core French Immersion Instructional Time (Grade 4 Entry Point for French Immersion)

GRADE LEVEL	MINUTES PER WEEK INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH	MINUTES PER WEEK INSTRUCTION IN FRENCH	TOTAL
Grade 1-3	1260 (84%)	240 (16%)	1500
Grades 4-8	1380 (92%)	120 (8%)	1500

A Grade 4 entry point requires a change to French language instructional time to achieve the Ministry's requirement for 3800 instructional hours by Grade 8. Table 9 shows the proposed changes to instructional time by grade. These changes result in an overall no change to French language hours from the WRDSB's current 3880 hours by Grade 8.

Table 9: French Immersion Instructional Time (Grade 4 Entry Point for French Immersion)

GRADE LEVEL	MINUTES PER WEEK INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH	MINUTES PER WEEK INSTRUCTION IN FRENCH	TOTAL
Grades 1-3	1260 (84%)	240 (16%)	1500
Grades 4-6	240 (16%)	1260 (84%)	1500
Grades 7-8	750 (50%)	750 (50%)	1500

Modifying the entry point to French Immersion from Grade 1 to Grade 4 achieves the following:

- Allows more opportunity to engage the community in decision making for FSL choices before a requirement to register for French Immersion
- Allows more opportunity to engage the community in decision making for FSL choices before a requirement to register for French Immersion.
- Doubles French-language instruction (from 8% to 16% of the day) in Grades 1 to 3 to support engagement in all FSL programs at an age when research indicates students are most likely to be engaged in second language learning and be enthused to learn a second language.
- Supports increased communication of FSL options and reduces streaming related to school selections..
- Allows for French language learning experience in Grades 1-3 to support decision making regarding FSL pathway preference.
- Mandatory Grades 1-3 at the home school could reduce streaming toward FI schools.
- Provides opportunities for early detection of learning needs or supports to assist students in preparing for entry to French Immersion in Grade 4.
- Later start, accompanied by culture shift, could support students in developing English language support before beginning FI.

The Review Committee did not recommend a Grade 4 entry point because a late entry would result in disproportionate French instruction in Grades 4 through 8 and the expectation that fewer students would opt for French Immersion.

5.3. KINDERGARTEN ENTRY POINT FOR FRENCH IMMERSION

A Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) entry point was explored. Modifying the entry point to French Immersion from Grade 1 to FDK would not impact the WRDSB's current delivery of Core French (maintaining 8% French language instruction in Grades 1 through 8). FI instruction would remain at 50% for Grades 1 through 8. Instruction in French in FDK would be 68% of the day (see Table 10).

Table 10: French Immersion Instructional Time (FDK Entry Point for French Immersion)

GRADE LEVEL	MINUTES PER WEEK INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH	MINUTES PER WEEK INSTRUCTION IN FRENCH	TOTAL
FDK	240 (42%)	1260 (68%)	1500
Grades 4-6	750 (50%)	750 (50%)	1500
Grades 7-8	750 (50%)	750 (50%)	1500

A FDK entry point addresses the following:

- Early primary language learning supports strong proficiency and supports strong language acquisition.
- FSL programs could be communicated to JK/SK students at registration.

The Review Committee did not recommend a FDK entry point because Kindergarten is an optional program in Ontario. The Ministry of Education does not count instructional time in Kindergarten towards the total instructional time requirement for a French Immersion program. Furthermore, a FDK entry point results in the following:

- Increased French-qualified staffing needs with the need to hire French Language qualified Designated Early Childhood Educators (DECE) and FDK Teachers in addition to the current staffing complement.
- Potential need for a board-wide boundary review to determine locations of FI schools to support family registration in FI at the start of school.
- Not all schools would have the interest or ability to provide space and staffing for a French Immersion program, and only families with the ability to transport their child to the nearest FI school would be able to register.
- No enhancements to the Core French program.

5.4. GRADE 1 ENTRY POINT FOR FRENCH IMMERSION AND EXTENDED FRENCH WITH A GRADE 4 ENTRY POINT

An elementary Extended French program requires fewer instructional hours (1260 hours) than FI (3800 hours). The Review Committee explored an option that allows students to enter FI in Grade 1 or Extended French in Grade 4 (multiple entry points). This option requires three concurrent streams of FSL programs (Core, Extended and Immersion). Table 11 shows the instructional hours for an Extended French program starting in Grade 4. Students choosing the Extended French pathway would receive 1445 hours of French instruction by the end of Grade 8.

Table 11: French Instructional Time (Grade 4 Entry Point to Extended French)

GRADE LEVEL	MINUTES PER WEEK INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH	MINUTES PER WEEK INSTRUCTION IN FRENCH	TOTAL
Grades 1-3	1380 (92%)	120 (8%)	1500
Grades 4-6	1125 (75%)	375 (25%)	1500
Grades 7-8	1125 (75%)	375 (25%)	1500

Adding an Extended French program with a Grade 4 entry point achieves the following:

- Increases access to students wanting increased French instruction but may have missed the Grade 1 French Immersion application deadline, are new to the board or were unsuccessful in the lottery.
- Extended French could allow more time for English instruction, supporting students with Special Education needs/MLL students in English language acquisition.

The Review Committee did not recommend this option for the following reasons:

- With the reduction in French Language instruction in Extended French throughout elementary school, student proficiency in French language acquisition would be negatively impacted.
- Impacts staffing - potential for small class sizes in FI and Core French stream classes and the inability to combine FI and Extended French classes.

- Later entry Extended French could result in the need for a student to move schools to form full classes, with no transportation provided.

5.5. SINGLE-TRACK FRENCH IMMERSION SCHOOLS

The trustee motion from 2017 indicated that the program review was to look at the advantages and disadvantages of a FI magnet school (single-track FI schools). The Malatest report and Review Committee looked at the single-track school option. This option would require the closure of specific schools to Core French stream students, creating FI-only schools with boundaries. The Malatest report states that research on single-track schools is inconclusive. The Review Committee raised equity concerns related to the segregation of students in single-track schools.

Furthermore, a Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) process is required to enact this option. There is currently a Ministry of Education moratorium on school closures, preventing the WRDSB from conducting a PAR for the foreseeable future.

6. PHASE 3 CONSULTATION

6.1. FRENCH IMMERSION REVIEW COMMITTEE

The purpose of the French Immersion Review Committee (Review Committee) was to address the four recommendations contained within the report approved by the Board of Trustees on April 23, 2018. The group primarily focused on the fourth recommendation in the April 23, 2018 report. The Review Committee was directed to provide recommendations in a report to Trustees by the end of June 2022.

6.1.1. Review Committee Membership

The Review Committee meetings were co-chaired and facilitated by Della Lataille-Herdsman and Matthew Gerard. The committee was made up of 29 members listed in Table 13.

Table 13: Review Committee Membership

NAME	ROLE
Agar, Lauren	Manager of Planning
Ahluwalia, Deepa	Human Rights and Equity Advisor
Andrews, Peter	French Immersion Student
Bileski, Karin	French Immersion Administrator
Bond, James	System Administrator
Bond, Mandi	Non-French Immersion Parent
Cresswell, Lucia	Secondary French Teacher
Crits, Jennifer	French Immersion Administrator
Fuller, Amanda	Non-French Immersion Parent
Gerard, Matthew	Coordinating Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board
Gillespie, Erica	French Immersion Administrator
Grant, Amber	Elementary Core/French Immersion Teacher
Jenkins, Melissa	French Immersion Parent
Kay, Sydney	Non-French Immersion Parent
Kuo, Madelyn	French Immersion Student
Lataille-Herdsman, Della	Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being
Liebermann, Dana	Senior Manager, Research & Evidence-Based Practice

NAME	ROLE
McQuillin, Adrianna	French Immersion Student
Piatkowski, Scott	Trustee
Ringwood, Stephanie	Consultant, Learning Support Services, Teaching and Learning Division, Gr 1-8, FI
Rodriguez Y Brandenstein, Estefania	Communications Officer
Shaw, Patricia	Parent (Parent Involvement Committee)
Soror, Kenzy	Student Trustee
Smit, Adam	Secondary French Teacher
Smith, Kathi	Trustee
Teall Breeze, Katrina	Consultant - Indigenous, Equity, and Human Rights Department, Indigenous Education Branch
Thakkar, Dipali	Non-French Immersion Parent
Tremble, Laurie	Trustee
Wahl, Matthew	French Immersion Student

6.2. REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETINGS

In 2019-2020 the Review Committee met a total of 2 times between 6 pm and 8 pm. Additional meetings were scheduled; however, were cancelled due to job action and system closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meetings took place on:

- 1) October 8, 2019
- 2) November 6, 2019

In 2020-2021 The Review Committee met a total of 3 times between 6 pm and 8 pm.

Meetings took place on:

- 1) April 20, 2021
- 2) May 11, 2021
- 3) June 8, 2021

In 2021-2022 The Review Committee met a total of 10 times between 6 pm and 8 pm.

Meetings took place on:

- 1) September 23, 2021
- 2) October 19, 2021
- 3) November 9, 2021
- 4) November 30, 2021
- 5) January 18, 2022
- 6) March 22, 2022
- 7) April 12, 2022
- 8) May 26, 2022
- 9) June 7, 2022
- 10) June 14, 2022

6.3. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Virtual public consultation meetings took place in April 2022 using the Google Meet platform. In advance of the meetings, a presentation with closed captioning (which could be translated) was posted on YouTube. School administrators, staff, parents/caregivers, students and community members were invited to watch the presentation and attend a virtual question-and-answer session with staff.

For Administrators and Staff:

DATE	TIME
Tuesday, April 12, 2022	4 - 4:30 pm
Thursday, April 21, 2022	4 - 4:30 pm

For Students and the Public:

DATE	TIME
Tuesday, April 19, 2022	1 - 2 pm
Wednesday, April 20, 2022	10 - 11 am, 1 - 2 pm & 7 - 8 pm
Wednesday, April 27, 2022	7 - 8 pm
Thursday, May 5, 2022	10 - 11 am

The YouTube presentation was viewed over 865 times, and 287 people, among them students, families, community members and staff, attended the virtual meetings.

Staff sent emails to our community partners which contained the information we released to the public so that they could share it with their members or community. Staff emailed the following community partners: Adventure4Change, African Community Wellness, Carizon, City of Kitchener Community Centres, Coalition of Muslim Women, Grand River Metis Council, Greenway-Chaplin Community Centre, Region of Waterloo, Immigration Partnership, Silverheights Neighbourhood Association, Waterloo Region Family Network, YMCA.

6.3.1. Survey Results

Through the support of the Research Department, staff launched two surveys in order to obtain feedback about the proposed Vision, Goals and Guiding Principles for FSL and a Grade 2 entry point for French Immersion. Both surveys were launched on April 21, 2022, and

ran until May 9, 2022. Results from the public survey can be found in Appendix B. The survey was available automatically in 25 different languages.

6.3.2. Key Themes

There are four items that came up consistently in the public consultation sessions.

Transportation

Many participants were curious about transportation options. The WRDSB transports to in-boundary schools. Students attending a French Immersion program outside of their in-boundary school do not receive transportation.

- Changes to the transportation policy were not considered as part of this review for several reasons.
 - For the 2021-22 school year, the WRDSB will spend 14.5% more on transportation than has been allocated by the Ministry of Education. As the school bus operator contracts are tied to the Consumer Price Index, this overspending is anticipated to increase in the next few school years.
 - Transporting students out-of-boundary schools would increase the cost of transportation. These cost increases would need to be funded from elsewhere in the WRDSB's budget and would limit the resources available to support students in their classrooms.
 - The Ministry of Education is finalizing its review of the transportation funding model. The impact of these changes is not known at this time and it is ill-advised to make changes to the WRDSB transportation policy prior to understanding the impact of the Ministry of Education's changes.

Instructional time

Participants were interested in learning more about the amount of French instructional time recommended for French Immersion students, specifically why the Review Committee was not recommending moving toward 100% instructional time. Section 5.1 of this report explains the rationale for choosing 58% French instruction.

Instructional Subjects

There were several questions regarding why Mathematics is taught in French. Mathematics is taught by mirroring the Core French stream following the framework of the Comprehensive Approach to Mathematics. The framework consists of three core components, including Teaching through Problem Solving, Building Fluency from Conceptual Understanding, and Purposeful Practice. In French

Immersion, students learn Mathematics using the French language and require extensive opportunities to problem-solve mathematical situations in French.

French Immersion Lottery/Registration Process

Several participants were interested in learning what the plans are to implement a Grade 2 entry point to FI - specifically if the existing lottery and registration process. Several suggestions were offered on how to improve the process, including:

- Addressing communication/language barriers - there is a lack of understanding of the process
- Addressing information overload (how does a parent filter out what is important?)
- Making changes that address equity of access

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are presented to the Board of Trustees for their consideration and approval. Substantially all of the French Immersion Review Committee supports recommendations 1 and 2. The majority of the French Review Committee voted in favour of recommendation 3.

7.1. RECOMMENDATION 1

Adopt the Vision, Goals and Guiding Principles for French as a Second Language programming at the WRDSB.

To achieve this goal, extensive communication with all stakeholders will be undertaken. This will include posting these prominently on the WRDSB website, communicating these regularly and frequently to administrators and educators, and providing professional development for both administrators and educators in support of the impacts of these on teaching practice and school processes.

The implementation of the Vision, Goals and Guiding Principles are identified in Recommendation 2.

There are no direct financial implications associated with this recommendation.

7.2. RECOMMENDATION 2

Develop an action plan to bring the French Immersion program into alignment with the Vision, Goals and Guiding Principles. The action plan is to include:

- Clearly defining criteria to support parents in making appropriate decisions regarding French as a Second Language programming for their child;
- Addressing “myths” about French Immersion (homework support, being an enrichment program, etc.);
- Clearly communicating with families regarding how to apply to French Immersion;
- All students have a place in French Immersion and supports are provided as needed and are eligible for consideration to receive additional supports, such as Special Education supports, to contribute to their success as WRDSB students;
- All students have a place in French as a Second Language programs in the WRDSB. Based on the [Special Education Support Process](#), students who are eligible for consideration may receive additional supports that may include Special Education to contribute to their success as WRDSB students;
- Professional Development to help staff understand diverse student needs (e.g. Multi-Language Learner needs, Special Education needs, behaviour needs) and how to support all students; and
- Professional Development to support Differentiated Instruction in FSL programming.

Existing departmental budgets will support the implementation of the Vision, Goals, and Guiding Principles in French Immersion. Professional Development budgets will be focused on supporting staff through the transition including addressing the needs of all students in the French Immersion program.

The WRDSB receives Special Education funding through a variety of streams. The WRDSB receives funding for each pupil regardless of their needs as well as funding based on needs. Special Education support provided to students in the French Immersion program will be accomplished within existing budgets.

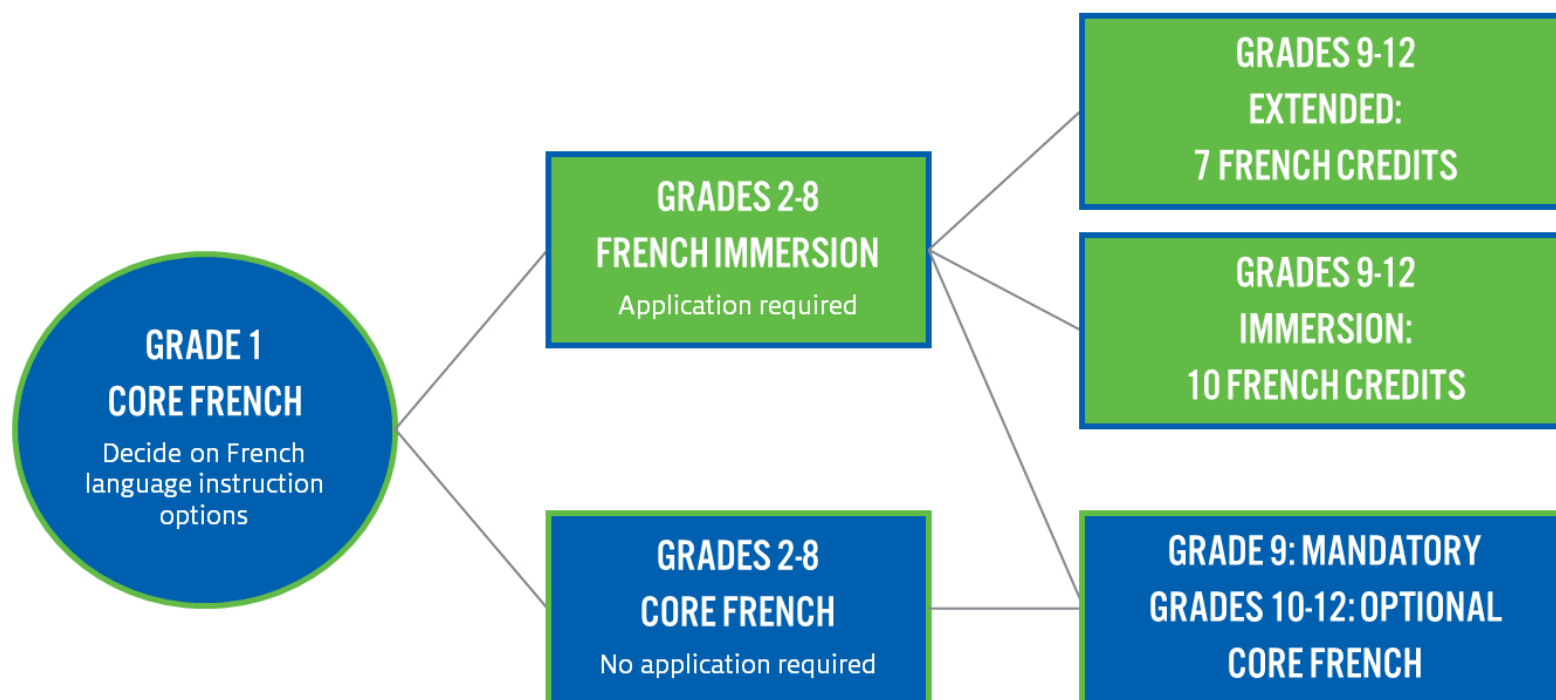
7.3. RECOMMENDATION 3

Transition to a Grade 2 entry point for French Immersion with 58% French instruction in Grades 2 through 6 and 50% French instruction in Grades 7 and 8. Furthermore, offer 16% French instruction in Grade 1 Core French and 8% French instruction in Grades 2 through 8 Core French.

Starting in September 2023, all students are to be automatically enrolled in Core French for Grade 1. If implemented, the Grade 2 French Immersion entry point would begin in September 2024.

Students choosing the Core French pathway (see Figure 2 in green) will receive 8% French language instruction in Grades 2-8 and one mandatory French credit in Grade 9.

Figure 2: French as a Second Language pathways - Grade 2 French Immersion Entry Point



Students choosing the French Immersion pathway (see Figure 2 in blue) will be taught in French for 58% of their day for Grades 2 through 6 and 50% of their day for Grades 7 and 8. Table 14 shows the proposed implementation of this change starting September 2024. This change will affect students already enrolled in French Immersion by increasing the French instructional time from 50% to 58% in Grades 3 through 6 starting September 2024.

Table 14: French Immersion Pathway and Instructional Time (Implementation of a Grade 2 Entry Point)

SCHOOL YEAR	GRADE									
	JK	SK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2021/22	N/A	N/A	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI
2022/23	N/A	N/A	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI
2023/24	N/A	N/A	16% Core	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI	50% FI
2024/25	N/A	N/A	16% Core	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	50% FI	50% FI
2025/26	N/A	N/A	16% Core	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	50% FI	50% FI
2026/27	N/A	N/A	16% Core	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	50% FI	50% FI
2027/28	N/A	N/A	16% Core	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	50% FI	50% FI
2028/29	N/A	N/A	16% Core	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	50% FI	50% FI
2029/30	N/A	N/A	16% Core	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	50% FI	50% FI
2030/31	N/A	N/A	16% Core	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	58% FI	50% FI	50% FI

Staff anticipate this change will affect demand for French Immersion, especially at the entry point. Further, it is anticipated that this change, in combination with the other recommendations contained in this report, will positively impact the retention of students in the French Immersion program.

Moving the French Immersion entry point to a Grade 2 will simultaneously eliminate the cost of Grade 1 French Immersion and the additional funding provided to the WRDSB. The financial impact of this change is expected to be neutral. Should the changes positively impact retention rates in Grades 3 through 8, it is anticipated that the WRDSB will be able to fund the French Immersion program within the appropriate funding

envelope as opposed to the current model which relies on funding from the Core French track to support smaller class sizes in the later grades of French Immersion.

The availability of French language-qualified teaching staff is another consideration. As with other school boards in Ontario, the WRDSB struggles to attract and retain French language-qualified teachers. Adopting a Grade 2 entry point is one of many changes that bring demand for French Immersion programming closer to the available supply of teachers without having to institute class caps.

Increasing the amount of core French Language instruction from 8% to 16% is expected to be cost-neutral. Principals will be able to adjust planning time to cover the additional Core French language instruction in Grade 1 and remain within their staff compliments.

8. NEXT STEPS

8.1. COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

During the implementation phase, Learning Support Services staff will reach out to stakeholders (i.e., educators, administrators, families) to ensure their voice is a part of the conversation as staff look to successfully implement the vision, goals, guiding principles and a revised French Immersion entry point. Internal stakeholder groups will also discuss specific aspects of the implementation process such as but not limited to:

- subject allocations to French as a Second Language;
- timetable considerations;
- special education and MLL support needs; and
- resource acquisition.

A communication strategy will be developed to ensure all WRDSB staff are informed of the specifics of the implementation, and to ensure all schools are prepared to support the implementation of change to French-language programming in elementary schools.

8.2. IMPLEMENTATION

If approved, Phase 4 of this review will involve the implementation of the recommendations.

- Continue to seek feedback from a variety of stakeholders (administrators, educators, students, parents/caregivers, Parent Involvement Committee, community partners, etc.) throughout the implementation process.

- The WRDSB will continue to align with the supports and take advantage of opportunities of our provincial partners to provide feedback and take suggestions to increase the number of qualified French teachers in the immediate future.
- Develop and offer professional development for French as a Second Language classroom teachers in providing an effective program for all students.
- Continue to support school administrators in effectively supporting family inquiries and managing staffing of French as a Second Language programs.
- Monitor implementation of elementary French as a Second language to determine if there is a need for changes in secondary French as a Second Language program.

8.3. EVALUATION

Successful implementation will need to be evaluated. Some of the criteria to be considered in evaluating success include:

- Retention of staff - helping educators to support students (may have a direct impact on student retention).
- Retention of students - staff improve the enrolment trend seen in Section 3.3.
- Disruption of streaming - French Immersion classes better align with Core French track classes.
- Provide appropriate levels of Special Education support to all students who are identified using [criteria](#) from the WRDSB Student Support Process

9. GLOSSARY

Access - a means of approaching or entering a place. The extent to which historically marginalized groups have equitable access to resources and opportunities.

Achievement - the current level of a student's learning, as demonstrated through a variety of assessments.

Bridge Between - a connection between language and culture.

Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy - pedagogy grounded in teachers' displaying cultural competence and encouraging each student to relate course content to their cultural context.

Dual Track - Refers to a school that offers both Core French and French Immersion programs.

Equitable Access - every student should have the same opportunity as any other student regardless of how they identify, including their racial and socioeconomic background.

Equity Seeking Groups - communities that face significant barriers in participating in society. This marginalization could be created by attitudinal, historic, social and environmental barriers based on one's social identity, including but not limited to, race, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, sexuality and age. Equity-seeking groups are those that identify barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination and actively seek social and racial justice.

Evidence-based practices - teaching practices based on the best available scientific evidence, rather than tradition, personal judgment, or other influences.

FDK (Full-Day Kindergarten) - a two-year program for four- and five-year-olds that includes Junior (year 1) and Senior (year 2) Kindergarten. FDK was fully implemented at all schools as of 2014/15 as part of a province-wide initiative. FDK uses a play-based learning approach.

FI - French Immersion

FSL (French as a Second Language) - French instruction that provides students with language proficiency in French.

Harm - the experiences of discrimination and harassment that impact a person's mental and physical health and well-being.

High Standards - any effort to set the same high educational standards for all students.

JK (Junior Kindergarten) - Year 1 of Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK).

Languages/Cultures - teaching language requires knowledge of the conventions, values and beliefs of the target language. In doing so, language learners can engage with the cultural ways of life within which that language lives.

MLL (Multilingual Learners) - a student with rich linguistic assets learning academic content in a language other than their primary language(s) from a WRDSB teacher instructing in English or French.

Pedagogy - the various aspects of teaching practice, including teaching styles, assessment strategies, and approaches to delivering curriculum content.

Proficiency - the level of achievement related to specific curriculum expectations.

Retention Rate - the percentage of students completing the FI program to graduation.

SK (Senior Kindergarten) - Year 2 of Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK).

Streaming- separating students into different course types.

Sustainable - a program that can feasibly continue, based on current staffing levels, budgetary constraints and other limiting factors.

APPENDIX A: R.A. MALATEST & ASSOCIATES LTD. FINAL REPORT

This report, is available at: <https://www.wrdsb.ca/french/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/French-Immersion-Review-Malatest-Report.pdf>

APPENDIX B: PUBLIC & STAFF CONSULTATION REPORT - MAY 2022



ELEMENTARY FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING REVIEW



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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) launched two surveys to hear feedback about:

- New Vision, Goals and Guiding Principles for French as a Second Language Programming
- A new entry point of Grade 2 for French Immersion programming

One survey asked for feedback from staff (Staff Survey) and one asked for feedback from students, families, and the community (Public Survey). Both surveys were launched on April 21 and ran until May 9th, 2022.

The following report summarizes the feedback received.

SECTION 1: PUBLIC CONSULTATION SURVEY RESULTS

About the Respondents

In total, **1,108 individuals** participated in the Public Consultation survey. This count includes parents, guardians, caregivers, grandparents of a student in the WRDSB. It also includes current students in Grades 4-12. Community members and partners were also invited to take part in the survey.

Residence of Survey Respondents

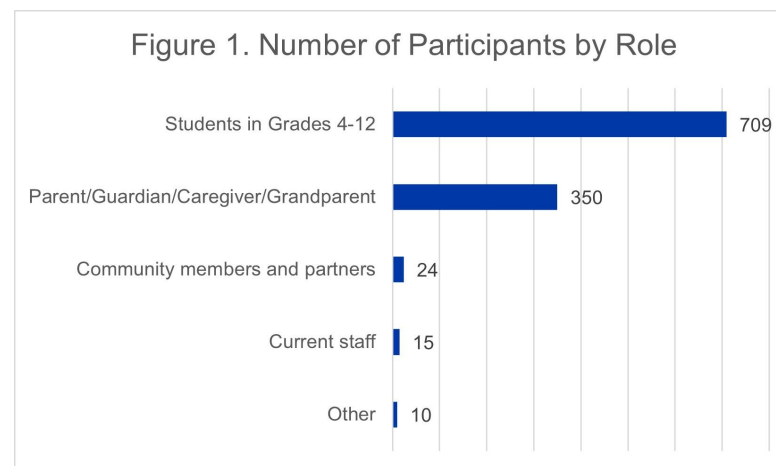
As noted in Table 1, survey respondents represented all seven local municipalities that comprise the Region of Waterloo.

Table 1. Residence of Survey Respondents

Residence	% of Respondents
City of Kitchener	39.2%
City of Waterloo	34.6%
City of Cambridge	13.8%
Township of Woolwich	4.7%
Township of Wilmot	4.3%
Township of North Dumfries	2.0%
Township of Wellesley	1.3%
Out of Region	0.1%

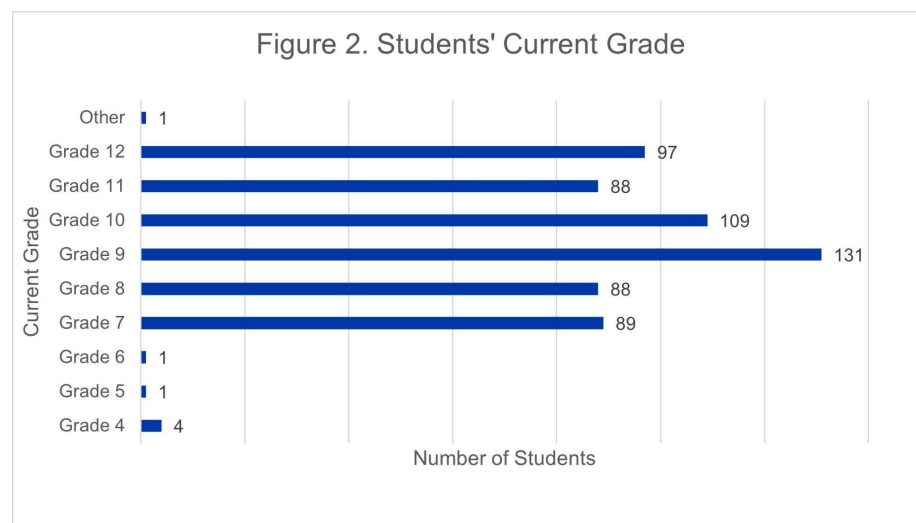
Association of Respondents with the Waterloo Region District School Board

Figure 1 shows the respondents' association with the Waterloo Region District School Board. **Most of the survey respondents were students in Grades 4-12 in the WRDSB (N=709).** A total of 350 parents, guardians, caregivers, and grandparents took part in the survey.

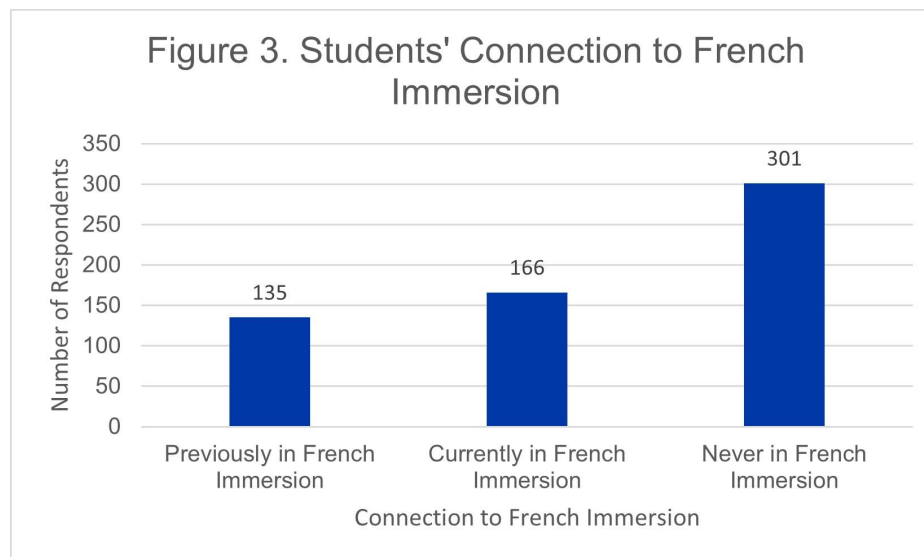


Student Respondents: Grades & Connection to French Programming

Responding students in Grades 4-12 were asked to provide their current grade. A total of 609 students responded (see Figure 2). **Most responding students were in Grade 9 (21.5%),** followed by Grade 10 (17.9%), and Grade 12 (15.9%).



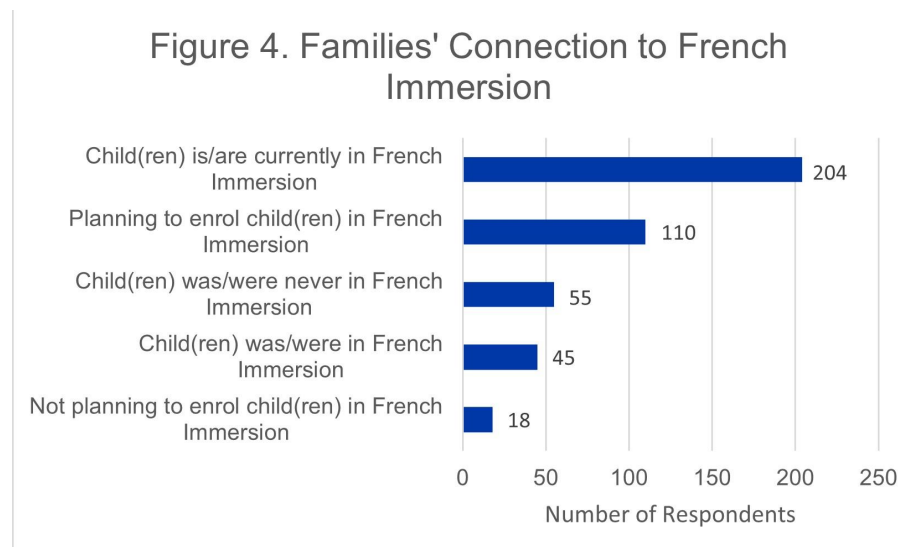
Students were also asked to state their connection with the French Immersion program. As noted in Figure 3, **half of the respondents (50.0%) had never been part of the French Immersion program.** 27.6% of the students were currently enrolled in the program. A total of 22.4% of respondents indicated that they were previously enrolled in the program.



Families Respondents: Connection to French Programming

Parents, guardians, caregivers, and grandparents of a WRDSB student were asked to indicate their child(ren)'s connection to the French Immersion program. To do so, they were asked to select *all* options that applied to them. A total of 342 parents, guardians, caregivers, or grandparents of students in the WRDSB completed this part of the survey.

Since respondents selected all choices that applied, a total of 432 choices were selected. Figure 4 illustrates the frequency of each of the selected choices. **A total of 204 respondents stated that their child(ren) is/are currently in French Immersion. Another 110 respondents said that they were planning to enroll their child(ren) in French Immersion.**



Community Members and Partners (e.g., member of community organizations) Respondents

A total of 24 respondents stated that they were community members and partners of the WRDSB. They were not asked to elaborate on their association with the school board.

Staff

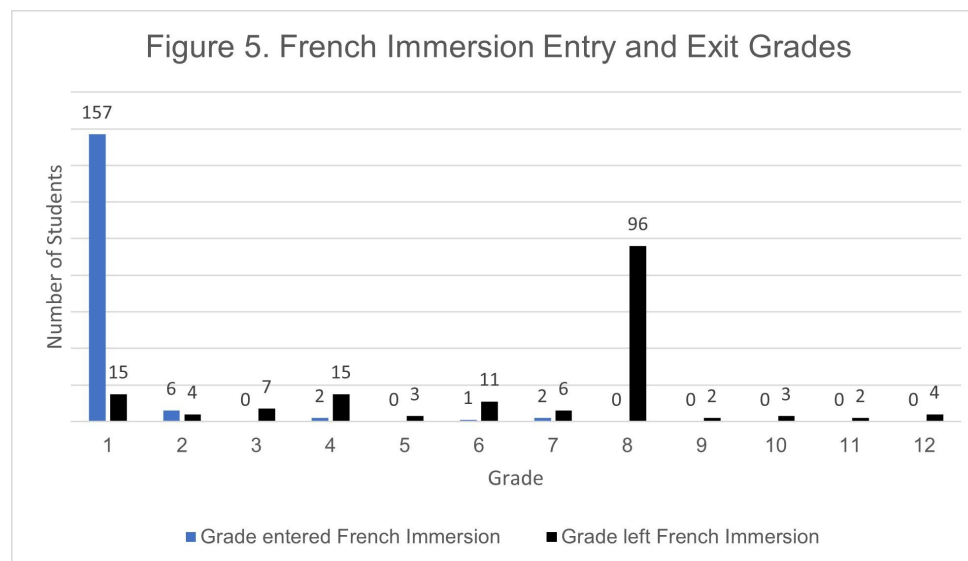
Although a separate survey was conducted specifically for WRDSB staff, 15 people said that they were teachers with the school board. Since the two surveys contained many unique questions, these staff responses were not aggregated into the staff survey findings.

French Immersion Entry and Exit Grades

Parents, guardians, caregivers, and grandparents with children who were previously in French Immersion were asked what grades their children attended the program. Students who were previously in French Immersion were asked what grades they attended the program.

The entry and exit grades for each past French Immersion student were calculated.

A total of 22 parents, guardians, caregivers, or grandparents of past French Immersion students answered this question. Some of these respondents had multiple children, and provided information about a total of 33 students. A total of 135 past French Immersion students answered this question. Together, information about 168 previous French Immersion students was provided.



As noted in Figure 5, 93.5% of students entered French Immersion in Grade 1, while 3.6% entered in Grade 2. The majority of students left French Immersion in Grade 8 (57.1%). The next most frequent points of exit were in Grade 1 (8.9%), Grade 4 (8.9%), and Grade 6 (3.6%). Only 4 students (2.4%) completed Grade 12 French Immersion.

Experiences in French Immersion

Enjoyable Aspects of French Immersion

Current and past students of the French Immersion program were asked about what they enjoyed about the program. A total of 208 students replied to this question. The most common responses are grouped together by theme. The themes are listed below in order of the most frequently mentioned. Sample quotations are included to provide rich detail.

Improved French Language Skills

Many students commented about how their French language skills improved. They also enjoyed having gained a practical vocabulary through French Immersion.

"Right now, I enjoy expanding my vocabulary and being able to maintain basic conversations in French with my peers."

Future Opportunities

Students commented that they liked how knowing French would widen their future opportunities. Students mentioned how knowing French would help them secure a good job. It would also help them communicate with others during their travels.

"I liked the fact that you are learning something and half at least half days in something that will very much benefit your future for work, travel, communication etc"

Learn about Different Cultures

Students mentioned how learning French exposed them to different cultures. It also broadened their awareness of world events.

"In French immersion, we were really immersed in the French language and culture and it makes me more aware of what is going on around me."

Listening Comprehension

Learning French also helped to improve students' listening comprehension and communication skills in both English and French.

"French immersion made me such a better communicator in both English and French."

Intellectual Enrichment/Challenge

The French Immersion program also provided an extra, and welcome, challenge for many students.

"It was much more challenging than other years where I didn't have French immersion which honestly I really liked"

Social Considerations

Students enjoyed remaining in the same classes with their peers throughout their French Immersion experience.

Although students were not asked what they disliked about the program, 28 students chose to share some comments. Of those who chose to do so, 34% said that they had a general negative experience in the program.

Some also said that they liked *"nothing"* about the program. A few students said that parts of the program were too challenging for them. For example, learning certain subjects in French (e.g., social studies and math).

"I liked how the students in our grade always felt like a community. We often shared classes with the same students for years and by the end of grade 12, we knew the majority of the French immersion students in our class."

Reasons Students Leave French Immersion

Past French Immersion students were asked why they left the program. A total of 100 past students answered this question. Additionally, 37 parents, guardians, caregivers, and grandparents of past French Immersion students gave feedback about why their children left.

Home High School Did Not Offer French Immersion

Most respondents said that their home high school did not offer French Immersion. It was also difficult for them to access the program at a different school because transportation was not provided. But many said that they took Extended French if that was an option at their home high school.

"I left French Immersion because it was not offered at my school. However, Extended French was offered, so I continued with the Extended French program throughout Grades 9-12."

Forced Choice between Speciality Program and French Immersion

Many students left the French Immersion program to attend a specialty program (e.g., an Arts high school, IB program, and/or enrichment programs).

"I wanted to do the IB programme for high school which cannot be done with french immersion."

French Immersion No Longer Enjoyable

A few respondents mentioned that they left the program because it was not enjoyable to them. Some students indicated that they did not enjoy taking certain subjects in French (e.g., math). One student said that *“it became too stressful and I found that I no longer had a purpose to continue with Immersion.”*

Left on the Recommendation of Staff/Educator

Finally, some parents, guardians, caregivers, grandparents of French Immersion students noted that their children left the program on the recommendation of school staff or teachers.

“Forced out of the program. Teachers were very clear that he was not keeping up and they had no interest in supporting his learning.”

Reasons for Enrollment in French Immersion

Parents, guardians, caregivers, and grandparents with children that are currently or previously in French Immersion were asked why they enrolled in the program.

Parents, guardians, caregivers, and grandparents of children in Kindergarten were also asked why they wanted to enroll in French Immersion. Below are the main themes, ordered by frequency of response:

Intellectual Enrichment/Challenge

Many believed that French Immersion would provide intellectual enrichment. They also thought that the program would offer an appropriate-level challenge.

“My child was very advanced before entering school, so we decided to put her in French Immersion in order for her to receive a more challenging education. We felt she was up for the additional challenge.”

Future Opportunities

Many believed that knowing French would increase opportunities for their children. For example, career growth, travel, and education/scholarships.

“Increase opportunities for schooling, scholarships and jobs in the future as well as to gain increasing confidence and competency speaking French.”

Family Beliefs

Many believed that the French Immersion program was valuable. Some indicated that these values came from their own participation in French Immersion as a child. Others said they valued French Immersion because they had family members who spoke French.

“Our family is from Montreal and it is important for our children to learn French to speak more effectively with our family and friends.”

Enhanced Fluency in French

Some believed that French Immersion would help enhance the likelihood that their children would become fluent in French.

"To have a better chance of being more fluent in another language or a working comprehension and knowing and ability to converse in Canada's official language."

Reasons for Not Planning on Enrolling in French Immersion

Parents, guardians, caregivers, and grandparents of child(ren) who were in Kindergarten and were not planning on enrolling in French Immersion were asked to provide insight into their reasoning.

Home School Does Not Offer French Immersion

Many are not planning to enroll their children in French Immersion because their home school does not offer the program.

"Due to boundaries - the closest school that offers [French Immersion] is very far away. Our school is about 100 meters away. It's simply due to where it's being offered in our area. If it were at her home school, we would have strongly considered it."

Negative Reputation of French Immersion Program

Some were also concerned about the reputation of the French Immersion program. One person described the program as *"breeding bullies and students with poor attitudes."* Others said that they *"have never heard a positive thing about the program"* and *"believe it is not a helpful program."*

Concerns with Certain Subjects Taught in French

Some were worried about the impact of having certain subject courses in French (e.g., math and social sciences).

Academic Readiness

Some were unsure if their children were ready for the French Immersion program.

"Readiness in reading, writing in math. Not sure they'd be able to handle reading and writing in both languages"

SECTION 2: STAFF CONSULTATION SURVEY RESULTS

About the Respondents

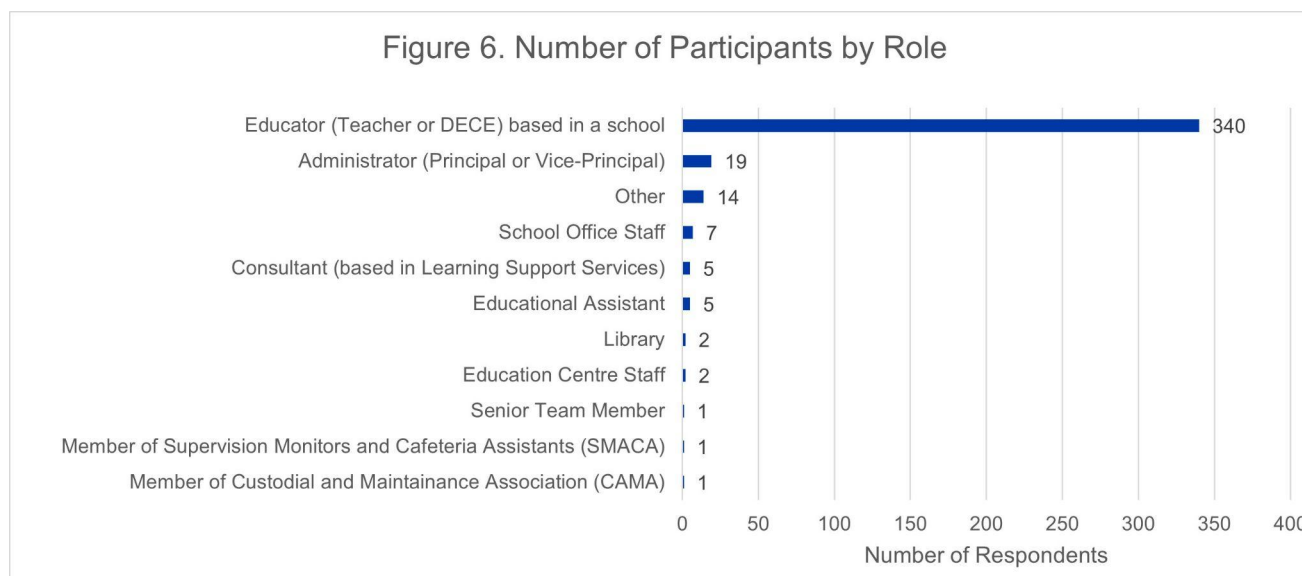
In total, **397 individuals participated in the Staff survey**. This count includes the following groups:

- 1) Educators based in schools,
- 2) Administrators,
- 3) School office staff,
- 4) Consultants,
- 5) Educational assistants,
- 6) Library staff, and
- 7) Education Centre Staff

Senior team members, members of Supervision Monitors and Cafeteria Assistants (SMACA) and members of Custodial and Maintenance Association (CAMA) were also invited to participate.

Figure 6 depicts the number of participants in the Staff Survey by role.

315 respondents worked in the Elementary school panel (86%). The remaining 50 respondents worked in the Secondary school panel (14%).



French Qualifications and Experience

Most Educators and Consultants (76%) were qualified to teach French. Of those who were qualified to teach French, most were currently teaching French Immersion (65%). And 35% were not currently teaching French Immersion.

Respondents qualified to teach French were asked what divisions they were currently teaching. Most were teaching Primary (51%), followed by Junior (30%).

Administrators were also asked about their experience leading schools that offer French Immersion. They were asked to select all options that apply to them. All respondents indicated that they were currently leading a school that offers French Immersion (60%) and/or had previously led a school that offered French Immersion (40%).

Reasons Qualified Educators Were Not Currently Teaching French Immersion

Those who were not currently teaching French Immersion were asked to share why. A total of 46 educators provided feedback to this question. Their responses were grouped together into common themes and then listed below in order of the most frequent answers:

Currently employed as a Core French teacher

Most respondents commented that they were currently employed as a Core French teacher. Many did not elaborate further.

Of those who did elaborate, a number said that they accepted the contract that they were offered, which did not include French Immersion.

Others said that they enjoyed teaching Core French. They liked that they could provide excellent French programming to their students.

Another reason for educators to be employed as a Core French teacher was due to preference. As one respondent explained, *“I prefer to teach the English language. When I have to teach French, I prefer Core French. We have fantastic French Immersion teachers at my school and I am better at teaching Core.”*

One respondent noted that they *“found the policies in the WRDSB made teaching in French Immersion impossible/very difficult. So I moved to teach Core French instead.”*

“There were no available contract positions to teach French Immersion. I accepted a contract position to teach Core French since it was all that was available to me.”

“I am qualified to teach in French immersion and I also have my Master's in French literature. Though I have often been tempted, I am a firm believer that all programming needs excellent language instruction and that teachers like myself with an excellent command of the language are needed in the CORE programs equally. Too often FI placements and LTOs are filled first by the most desired candidates.”

French Immersion was not offered at their home school.

A respondent explained that French Immersion “*is not offered at my current school, but I would love it if it were an option for students coming from our feeder schools.*”

Currently teaching or otherwise occupied in other roles.

Some were unable to teach French Immersion as they were currently teaching in another specialty position, employed in a central role, or on maternity leave. One person noted that they were currently taking a full-time Master’s degree online.

Lack of qualifications to teach French Immersion

Some felt that they were “*not strong enough in French to teach immersion.*” Others noted that they were not qualified to teach certain subjects, such as history, in French.

SECTION 3: FEEDBACK ON VISION, GOALS, GUIDING PRINCIPLES, AND SCENARIO

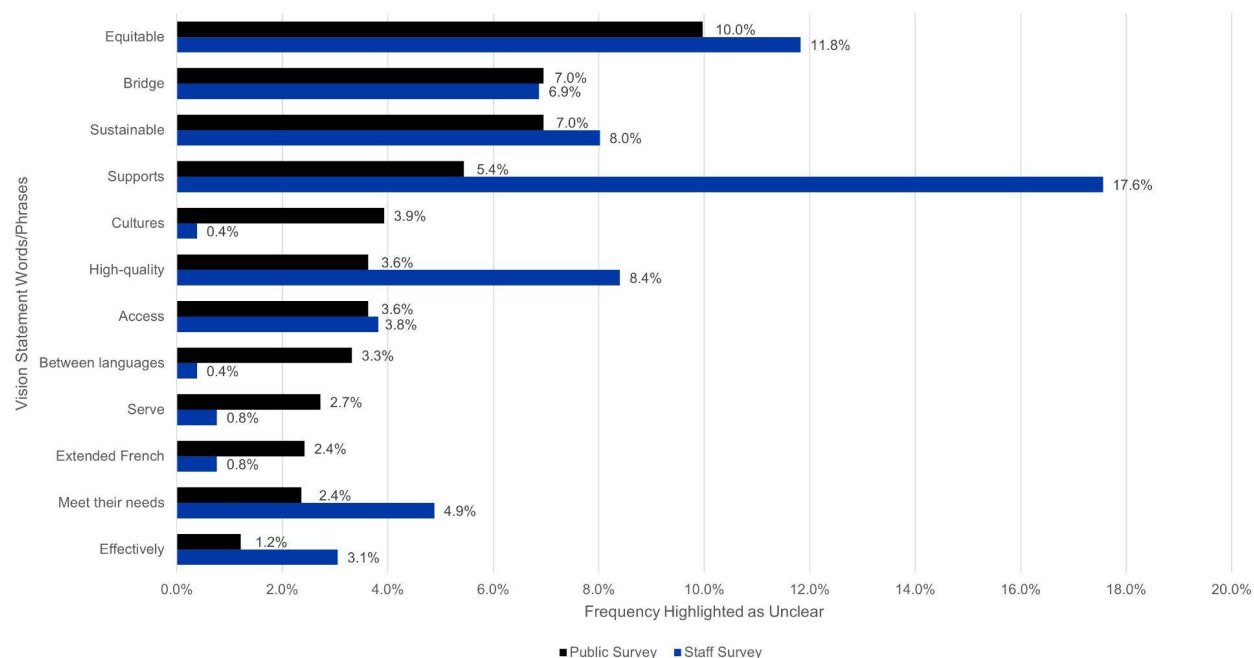
Feedback on Vision Statement

The proposed Vision statement (below) was provided to respondents in both the public and staff surveys. They were asked to highlight any words or parts of the statement that might seem unclear to them.

VISION STATEMENT: All students in the WRDSB have equitable access to a sustainable high-quality French as a Second Language program of choice (Core French, Extended French or French Immersion) including supports that meet their needs. Each program will serve as a bridge between languages and cultures, building students’ confidence and ability to use French effectively in their daily lives.

Figure 7, below, shows the words/parts of the statement were particularly unclear to some respondents:

Figure 7. Vision Statement Feedback



Respondents were also asked to provide feedback about the parts of the Vision Statement that they found unclear. The main themes from this feedback from both surveys are listed below. They are grouped by the word that the feedback refers to.

Agreement with the Vision Statement

A number of respondents from both surveys agreed with the vision statement. They believe that the vision statement is “very clear” and “is a great goal to have.”

One person said that they “like the idea that we are trying to change the culture so that French Immersion is seen as a program in which students who are having some academic struggles are not streamed out of the program. Equity of access is important.”

But many who agreed with the statement also questioned whether the WRDSB would be able to meet it with the current system of Core French, Extended French, and French Immersion.

Feedback on Term: Equitable

About 10% of respondents from the public survey highlighted the term “equitable” as unclear. One person explained that they “*had to look it up.*” Others were unsure about the difference between the terms “equitable” and “equal.”

Many stated that the word “equitable” itself was clear. But their own experience and knowledge of the French Immersion system highlighted inherent inequities. As such, they wondered “*how the program would be made more equitable, as it is not currently.*”

Some questioned how the lottery system and lack of transportation for out-of-boundary students could be considered to be equitable.

Staff also believed that there was inequity in the lack of transportation for students who did not have French Immersion at their home school:

“How will FI be truly equitable if transportation is not provided to those who want it or need it in order to get to an FI program/school?”

Respondents from the staff survey believed that access to French Immersion programs is often limited for many equity-seeking groups:

“Students are frequently weeded out of these programs based on their needs (academic/behavioural). Additionally there is a disproportionately smaller percentage of racialized/immigrant/lower SES students in these programs likely due to a lack of awareness of these opportunities within these communities. This leads to the “regular” core french streamed classes having often many more students, and a far higher/disproportionate number of students with academic, behavioural, social needs.”

Feedback on Term: Sustainable

Respondents from both the public and staff surveys were unclear about what the term “sustainable.” meant in this context, and how French (as a language) could be considered “sustainable.” One respondent from the public survey said that the term sustainable “reads like this is a buzz word dropped in without a precise meaning in this statement.”

In particular, respondents from the staff survey also questioned how the French Immersion program could be considered sustainable because of a perceived lack of quality French teachers.

"How can a program be sustainable or high quality when there are only so many French language teachers to go around? If you can get a job mostly based on the fact that you have your FSL qualification (as many French jobs are hired externally), then how can we be sure we are filling the positions with the highest quality educators?"

Feedback on Term: Bridge

Respondents from both the public and staff surveys felt that the term "a bridge between languages and cultures" was vague. Many wondered what language and culture would be "bridged," such as English and French cultures or students' cultures. One person wondered whether the term "bridge" was the best word choice. They explained that *"a bridge implies linking two disjoint groups. Here in Canada, where both are official languages, they are not entirely disjoint."*

"I feel like this is unclear. Are you talking about how the program will bridge students' understanding of French culture and language? Is the bridge between the language and culture for each individual student and French?"

Feedback on Term: Supports

Some respondents from the public survey felt that the term "supports" was too vague. They wondered what types of support would be provided to students.

Respondents from the staff survey had many questions about what the term "supports" meant in this context:

- 1) What types of support would be offered to educators? (e.g., behavioural support; physical supports like teaching material, books, classroom resources; professional development opportunities; subject specific training)
- 2) Who will provide these supports?
- 3) Will students in French Immersion programs have equal access to special education support (e.g., French Special Education Resource Teachers)? Respondents mentioned that having additional support for students with special education needs may help ensure *"students are not sent away to an alternate location to be accommodated by SERTs or EAs."* Many also believed that supports currently available for students with special needs were insufficient.
- 4) Will there be additional supports for French Immersion students who felt challenged learning certain subjects in French, such as reading and math.

Feedback on Term: High-quality

Some respondents believed that the term "high-quality" was relative and not clearly defined. Respondents from both surveys wondered how high-quality programming would be measured.

For example, respondents from the staff survey asked: “*who is defining a “high-quality” program? Francophones? Francophiles? Anglophones?*” as well as “*how will “high-quality” be measured? This seems rather subjective.*”

Feedback on Terms: Core French, Extended French, or French Immersion

Respondents from the public survey did not seem clear about the different programs. They were unsure about the differences and similarities between each. One person said that the vision statement “*sounds like [all three programs] provide the same level of understanding of the French language.*”

Feedback on Goal Statement

The proposed Goal statements (below) were provided to respondents. They were asked to highlight any words or parts of the statement that might seem unclear.

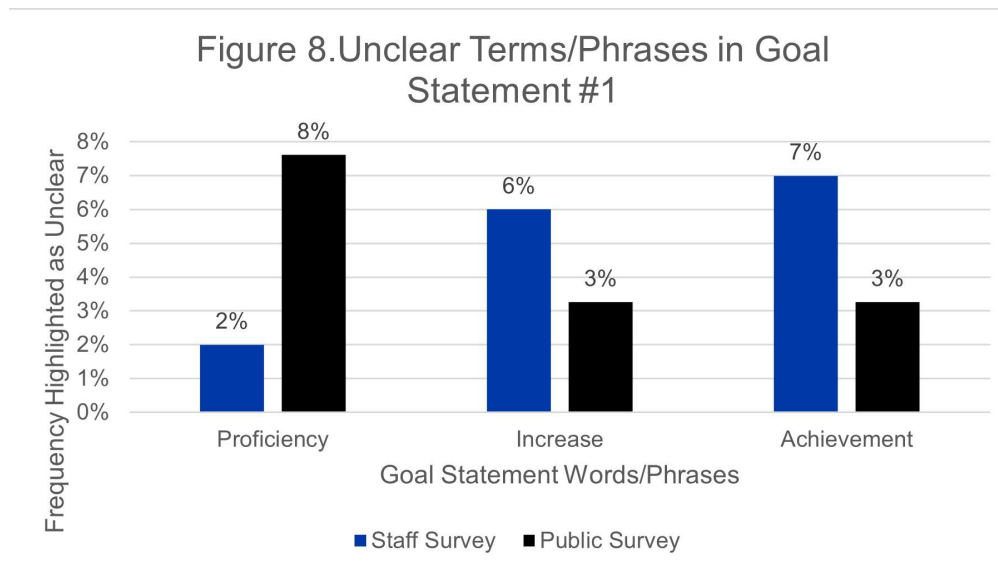
Respondents were asked to provide any feedback they wished to share about the Goal Statements. Overall, respondents from both surveys agreed with the goal statements.

Many respondents from both surveys felt that the goals were “very clear.” Others noted that “*I like the goals as they reflect what the program should offer.*” Respondents’ feedback reflected a desire to understand how these goals would be put into practice. They also wanted to understand the measurement of success.

The following words/parts of each of the statements were noted as particularly unclear to some respondents.

Goal Statement 1: Increase student confidence, proficiency, and achievement in all French as a Second Language programs

Respondents from both surveys also believed that the term “proficiency” was vague. One person suggested that “*there might be a more clear word for “proficiency (i.e., expertise or competence).”*”



Goal Statement 2: Increase access to quality core French and French Immersion for equity seeking groups

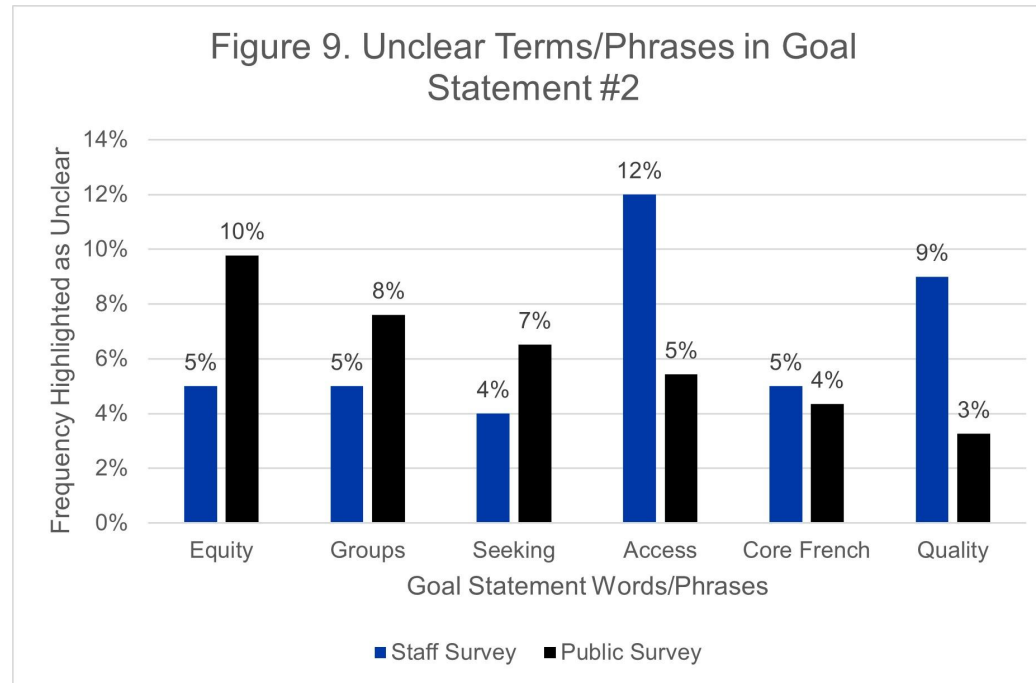
Respondents from the Staff Survey wondered “what [is meant] by access?” They also wondered how the WRDSB would increase access (e.g., provide transportation, offer French Immersion at every site). Moreover, one respondent asked “how does one increase access to Core French when it is the default?”

Some respondents from both surveys questioned the term “equity seeking” groups. They suggested clarifying the term to state which groups are equity seeking. Some people also suggested that different dimensions of class (e.g., parental educational attainment, parental income) should be considered.

“Despite the above definition, I find equity seeking groups to be overly ambiguous and unclear. How is the French Immersion program creating barriers for certain groups? How can these barriers be addressed other than a complete overhaul of Grade 1 French programming?”

“I’m not sure who would be included in “equity seeking” groups”

Another person wondered whether “*equity deserving groups*” was a more appropriate term than “equity seeking groups.”



Goal Statement 3: Increase student, educator, caregiver, and community engagement in FSL

Some respondents from the Public Survey were unclear about use of the acronym “FSL.” They suggested that the term be written out in all goal statements. Respondents from the Staff Survey did not appear to share this concern.

Respondents from both surveys wondered how the term “engagement” was defined. They wondered what caregiver, educator, and community engagement in French as a Second Language programming would look like.

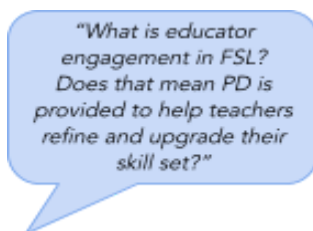
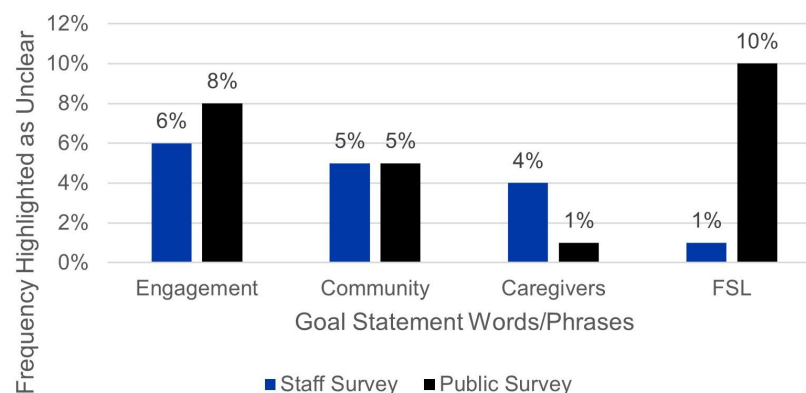


Figure 10. Unclear Terms/Phrases in Goal Statement #3



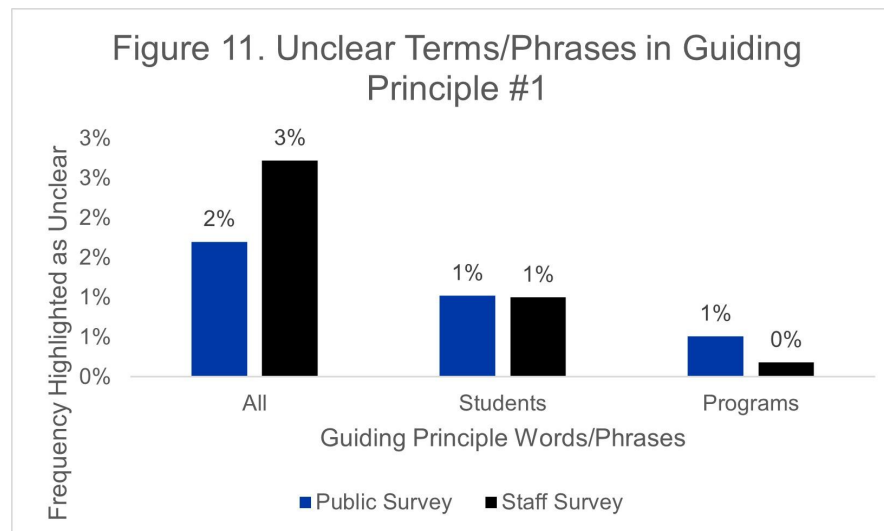
But respondents liked that caregiver and community engagement was one of the goals. One person said that this *“is a great way to market the value of a second language and helps them to ameliorate their own elementary school experience. I can see this helping everyone to grow in proficiency!”*

Respondents from the staff survey wondered *“how do we get caregivers and our community engaged in their child’s FSL program?”* One respondent from the public survey suggested that the creation of a *“community where parents and educators can connect to share resources and support each other with the goal of helping students succeed with confidence in FSL”* would be helpful.

Feedback on Guiding Principles

The proposed Guiding Principles (below) were provided to respondents. They were asked to highlight any words or parts of the statement that might seem unclear to them. Respondents were also asked to provide any feedback they wished to share about the Guiding Principles. This feedback is grouped under the appropriate Principle.

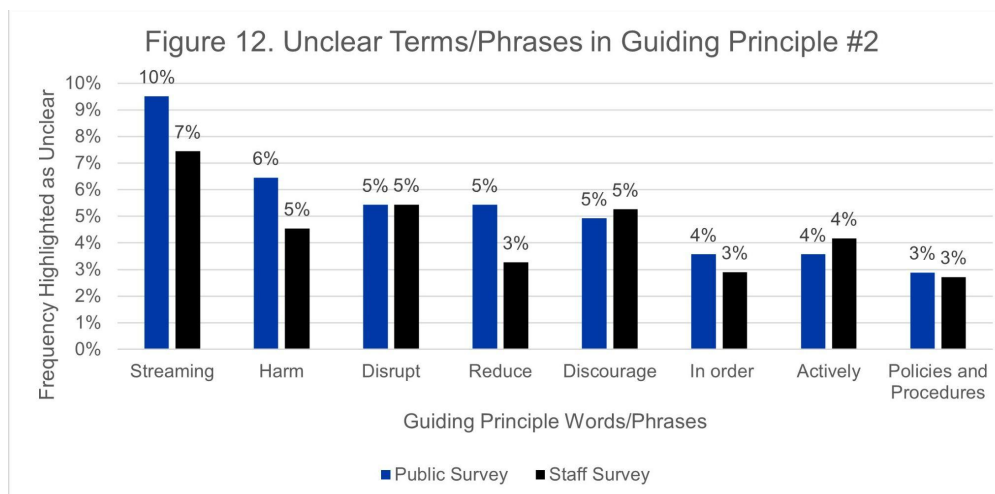
Guiding Principle #1: French as a Second Language programs are for all students



Respondents from both surveys questioned whether French as a Second Language programs “are for all students.” They discussed three general areas where they felt this may not be the case:

- 1) There are not enough vacancies for all interested students to attend French Immersion. Someone suggested that *“rather than “for all students” in the first guiding principle, I might suggest “open to any student” or similar phrasing.”*
- 2) French is not offered in JK or since French special education support has not traditionally been provided.
- 3) There are perceived differences between French Immersion and Core French. As one person stated, *“[French as a Second Language programs are for all students, but is [French Immersion] only for the “best” and “brightest”?”* Someone else suggested that the guiding principle should reflect that *“Core French is for all students, while French Immersion is for those who are fortunate enough to live nearby or have parents who can drive them to a program.”*

Guiding Principle #2: Policies and procedures actively disrupt and discourage streaming in order to reduce harm



Respondents from both surveys believed that this guiding principle was poorly worded. They felt that its intent was not clear. In particular, many were unclear about what *streaming* referred to and why it was considered undesirable. Further, some people wondered what types of policies and procedures would disrupt and discourage streaming.

Some respondents agreed with the movement to disrupt streaming,

"I'm happy to see that the guiding principles seek to disrupt and discourage streaming and hope to see action taken to make sure this doesn't continue. I know it was a concern when we chose French Immersion in a different school from our home school - I felt that I was participating in that system of streaming by choosing the school that I did."

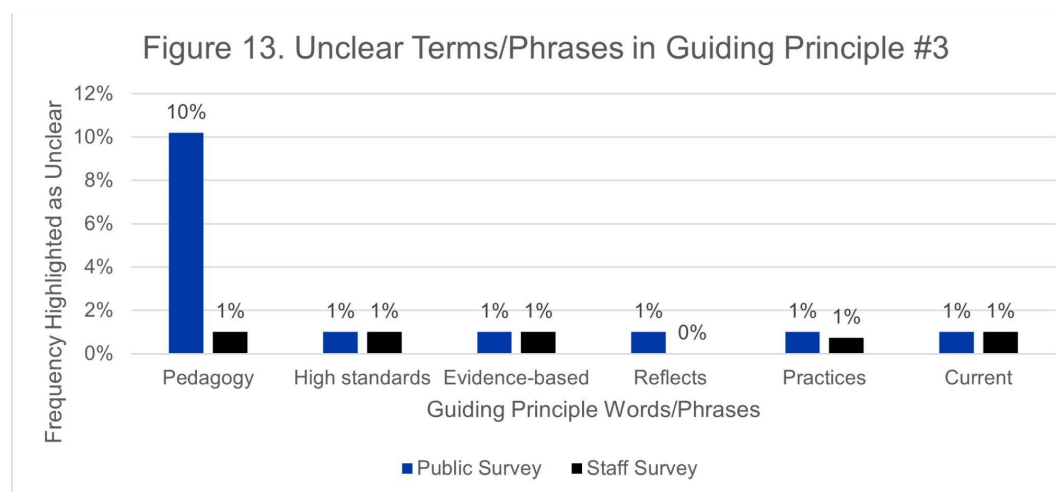
In contrast, a few respondents noted that they were concerned with the desire to destream:

"Streaming is important! It allows students to work within their level and feel comfortable doing so."

"Destreaming everything may have advantages, but I am concerned that the effort to include everyone in the same learning space will not properly support the learning of as many students."

Respondents also asked for additional clarity about what kind of harm this guiding principle referred to, who is being harmed, and how that harm would be measured.

Guiding Principle #3: Pedagogy reflects high standards and current evidence-based practices



Many respondents from the Public Survey found the term “pedagogy” to be confusing. One person argued that it was an “*edu-babble word*.”

“I had to google pedagogy. The average parent does not understand that word. Please use simple words so we understand The real meaning of what you are saying. E.g., the highest teaching standard and the best researched/ proven/method available will be used.”

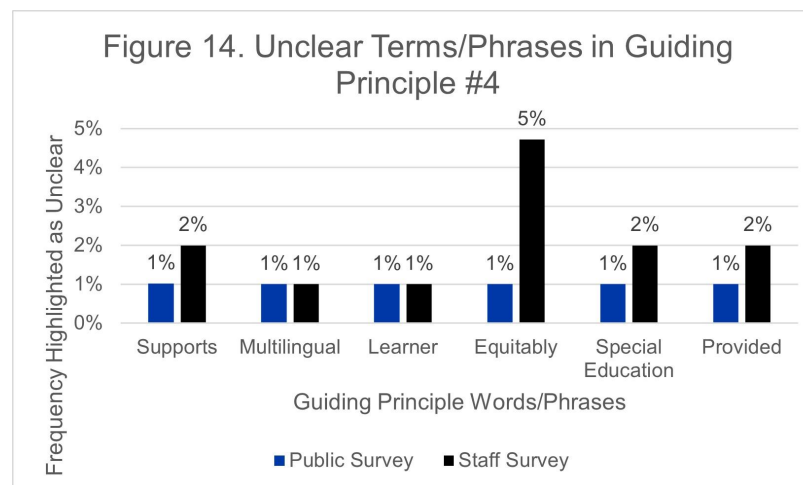
But respondents from the Staff Survey did not find “pedagogy” confusing or unclear.

Respondents from both surveys questioned what “high standards” and “evidence-based” entailed. For example, respondents from the Staff Survey wondered what standards were being referred to. One person felt that the term “high-standards is weird here. Isn’t our standard professionally supposed to be high?”

Respondents also said that it would be helpful to clarify what is meant by “evidence-based.”

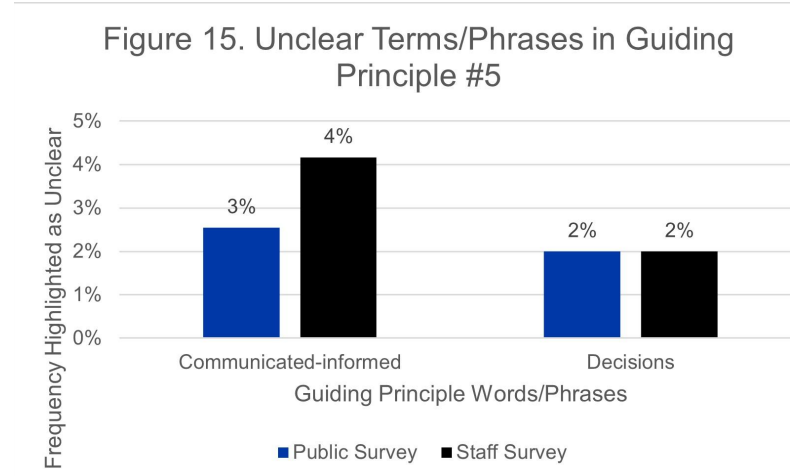
Guiding Principle #4: Special Education and Multilingual Learner supports are equitably provided

Respondents from both surveys did not appear to find this guiding principle to be unclear or confusing. But many believed that special education supports were not currently equitably provided. As one respondent noted, *“supports are based on available resources and highest need. My son needs some support in the form of breaks but doesn’t get them because there is not an available [Education Assistant] due to higher needs in other classes.”* Other comments reflected a desire to have French Special Education Resource Teachers available.



Guiding Principle #5: French as a Second Language program options are communicated-informed decisions

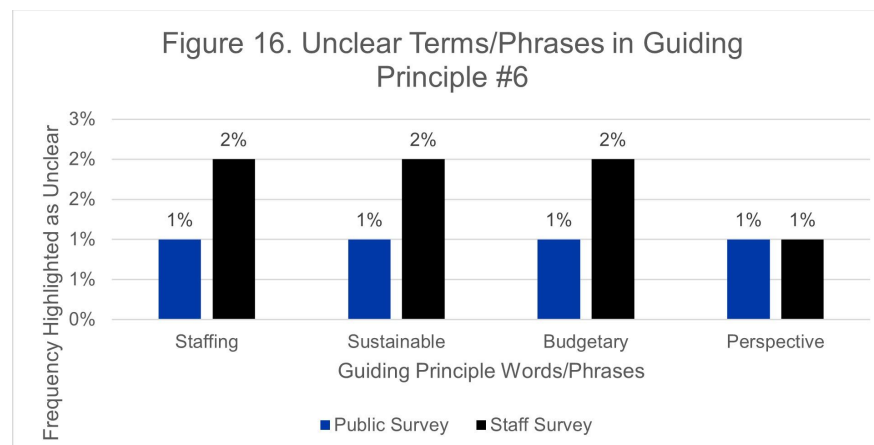
Some people found the term “communicated-informed decisions” vague. Respondents wondered who would make these decisions. One person asked whether it meant that *“decisions will be made after consulting and will be communicated and informed with interested parties.”*



Guiding Principle #6: Sustainable from a budgetary and staffing perspective

There were few comments from respondents about this final guiding principle. One person asked why is *“this relevant as a guiding principle? Either French as a Second Language is important to WRDSB or it’s not.”* Another person wondered what *“a sustainable budgetary and staffing perspective entails for 2023?”*

Feedback from staff mentioned that the guiding principle implies that *“we want to include all but if we don’t have money it might not work”*. Someone also said that *“this principle makes it sound like you are only willing to commit to these principles IF you can find the funds.”* Some staff were concerned about the shortage of qualified French as a Second Language teachers to support the current demand.



Feedback on Grade 2 Entry into the French Immersion Program

Respondents were then asked what might need to be considered with a Grade 2 entry into the French Immersion program.

Feedback about the entry point:

Respondents' comments were grouped into themes. The themes articulate common topics, ideas, and patterns that were described by respondents. The themes are organized in Table 2 (pages 23-25) in order of most commonly mentioned.

Respondents also noted that a Grade 2 entry might need additional resources to support:

- Grade 1 students' families to learn more about the French Immersion program. This may include opportunities for families to have conferences with French teachers to discuss the possible entry of their children into a French Immersion program
- Parents to help students transition into Grade 2 French Immersion. This may include resources to help strengthen specific and individualized reading and writing areas.

- Students starting French Immersion in Grade 2 who must catch up with students who took Grade 1 French Immersion. This would help to ensure that students are not overwhelmed with the material they are learning in class.

Table 2. Themes and Key Concerns about a Grade 2 French Immersion Entry

THEMES	KEY CONCERNS	EXAMPLE QUOTATIONS
1. French Immersion should begin as early as possible (e.g., Kindergarten)	A grade 2 entry negatively impacts language acquisition and decreases the likelihood of fluency in French	<i>"[Students] would lose a year of valuable time that could have been used at a younger age to develop French skills."</i>
2. Curriculum considerations	<p>The Grade 1 French program would have to be reconsidered and modified to support a Grade 2 entry into French Immersion. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional phonetics focus and support, • A consistent curriculum for Grade 1 French across all schools, • A focus during Grade 1 Core French on developing a language base that will support students' learning of subjects (e.g., Math), • Daily exposure to French, • More play-based learning 	<i>"The education received in Grade 1 would have to be made up efficiently and in such a way that students that start immersion in Grade 2 are not missing the basics of language/rushing to learn them."</i>
	Teaching math in English rather than French may help improve numeracy skills and standardized testing results.	<i>"Would Math still be a French subject? I feel like this would be a great opportunity to put Math as an English subject. While I loved teaching Math in French, I always felt like it would have been so much better for my students to do it in English, and switch other, more oral/language based subjects to French. I feel their Math competency would increase greatly."</i>
	Having a Grade 2 entry may require reconsidering split classes.	<i>"What about students that will have started with grade 1 French Immersion along with the students who will only start in Grade 2 - will they be 2 separate groups or will they be in a class together?"</i>
	If additional hours of Core French are being added to Grade 1, will there be subjects that will receive less hours of instruction as a result? What subjects will be taught in French in Grade 1?	<i>"What subjects will be removed from Grade 1?"</i>

THEMES	KEY CONCERNS	EXAMPLE QUOTATIONS
	How will the total hours needed for students to complete a French Immersion program be impacted?	<i>"If you delay until grade 2 then you need to increase the hours of French Immersion. A certain amount of hours need to be attained by grade 12 to graduate with a French Immersion diploma."</i>
	The proposed structure for Grade 1 would take time away from specialty arts teachers.	<i>"For grade 1, this structure then takes away specialty arts teachers. Taking away music qualified teachers for planning time to make for more French is also inequitable."</i>
3. Staffing availability should also be considered in deciding whether to delay entry to French Immersion until Grade 2. Care should be made to keep class sizes small	Altering the French Immersion entry point may not sufficiently address the shortage of qualified French teachers.	<i>"I view this as a Supply and Demand issue and this new model does not address this problem. The board is not able to hire enough certified teachers who are fluent and/or bilingual to deliver the [French Immersion] program effectively."</i>
	The increase in French instruction in Grade 1 may impact staffing schedules and planning time requirements. Some staff are also concerned about what happens to the Grade 1 French Immersion teachers once Grade 1 Immersion is no longer offered.	<i>"Will the increase in French instruction from 50 to 58% continue to allow one primary/Junior teacher to teach 2 halves of 2 classes? As it stands one teacher can teach in French 100% of the time. The switch to 58% may make this less likely."</i>
4. Student peer groups will be established throughout Kindergarten and Grade 1	As a result, students and their families may be less inclined to switch schools.	<i>"Since not every school offers French Immersion, would students be willing to change schools after being established for two, potentially three, years (JK-Grade 1) and leave their community? I don't know how many families would be willing to do that."</i>
	The transition to French Immersion may be harder for students to handle in Grade 2	<i>"By Grade 2, a student will have been in school for 3 years and then be disrupted in order to go to another school to participate in FI. This is disruptive to the student in many aspects including socially and psychologically but it is also disruptive to entire families who may have younger children still going to the home school."</i>

THEMES	KEY CONCERNS	EXAMPLE QUOTATIONS
5. Later entry into the French Immersion program may provide time for students to get a firmer understanding of reading and writing in English first	A focus on English literacy in Grade 1 may reduce struggles for students upon entering dual track programs in Grade 2.	<i>"Many kids need until grade 3 to really get their literacy and math foundations down. Delaying the start of FI until after the first two years of English instruction may allow for better foundations for students."</i>
6. A later entry would allow students and families time to make informed choices about whether to enter the French Immersion program	Waiting until Grade 2 to enter French Immersion would allow families to see their child's letter grades. This can help them make an informed decision. But it is important to consider the timing of when families will need to decide by in Grade 1 (e.g., after term one).	<i>"I think waiting until Grade 2 for entry would give parents a better idea of how well their child is doing in terms of French language acquisition based on their success in Grade 1. Parents can gauge whether or not immersion would be a good fit."</i>
	Parents, guardians, caregivers, and grandparents have more time to learn about the program.	<i>"This is a great idea - it allows for families new to school in general or new to the area time to learn about the program."</i>
	What amount of influence will Grade 1 teachers have in recommending the immersion program to specific families? There is potential for biases to be evident through these recommendations.	<i>"First-year teachers should be able to recommend the immersion program to parents for students they deem capable of learning in a linguistic duality."</i>
7. There are concerns whether the lottery format will still be required to access Grade 2 French Immersion. And if so, whether there will be enough spots for all interested children.	Maintaining the lottery format to access Grade 2 French Immersion may still be necessary if there is high demand for the program. This may maintain perceived inequities between the Core French and French Immersion programs.	<i>"How will admission into French Immersion be decided? Is it a lottery? What percentage of children will be admitted to French Immersion? My understanding is that there are constraints. So we need to be transparent about admission."</i>

Additional Comments

Respondents had the opportunity to provide additional comments about the possibility of a Grade 2 entry point. The majority of comments reflected the above themes.

But some said that they would like to see more evidence to support the WRDSB's proposal to move French Immersion to a Grade 2 entry. They wondered about the success of Halton District School Board's Grade 2 entry. They wanted to know about the impact of the change on retention and how the change was received by public stakeholders and staff.

Others believed that the recommended Grade 2 entry was because of budgetary and resource constraints. Some said that they would like to see Math taught in English throughout all of Elementary School. Others wanted to see the proposed increase of French instruction in the Core French program be maintained throughout Elementary School.

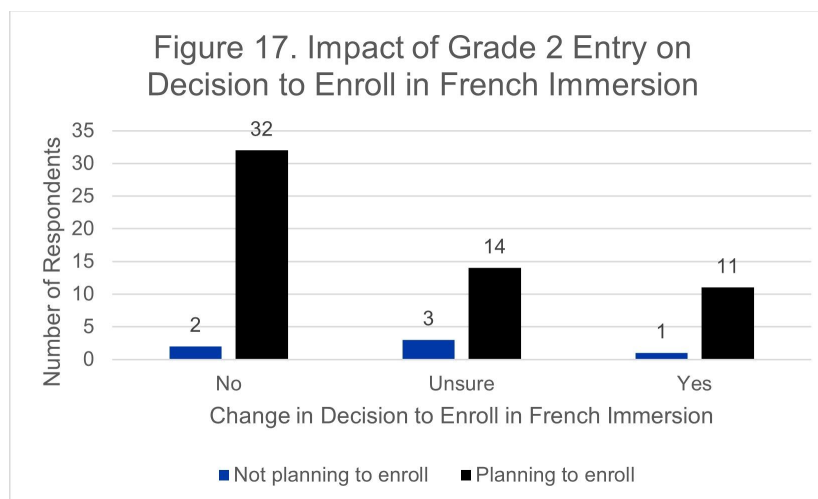
Finally, a number of staff were concerned about the French Program review. They believed that teachers were not included in the process as much as they should have been.

Impact of Grade 2 Entry on Decision to Enroll in French Immersion

At the beginning of the Public survey, **families with children in Kindergarten** were asked whether they planned to enroll in French Immersion in the future. At the end of the survey, they were presented with information about a Grade 2 entry. They were then asked whether a Grade 2 entry point would change their decision to enroll in French Immersion.

Figure 17 (below) shows **the impact of Grade 2 entry on families' decision to enroll their children in French Immersion based on whether they were originally planning to enroll their child(ren).**

A total of 32 respondents (56%) who originally planned to enroll said that a Grade 2 entry point would not change their decision. Two people were not planning to enroll their children in French Immersion, regardless of the entry point grade.



Eleven respondents (19%) who originally planned to enroll their child(ren) in French Immersion said that a Grade 2 French Immersion entry would cause them to change their decision. One respondent who was not previously planning to enroll said that a Grade 2 entry point would cause them to enroll after all.

A total of 17 respondents were not sure whether the change in entry point would alter their decision to enroll.

Comments in support of Grade 2 entry:

A few people mentioned that the later grade entry may enhance childrens' readiness and interest for French Immersion. This might be particularly true among students with special education needs. One person explained: *"It would provide parents some real input based on how their children are doing, instead of having to make a decision based on nothing other than what is heard from others."*

Comments not in support of Grade 2 entry:

But some people said that the change to Grade 2 entry may prompt them to *"find a school elsewhere outside of the [Waterloo] public school system that will accept younger children to have an immersion experience."* This may include private schools (e.g., Bilingual school) and other school boards (e.g., Waterloo Catholic District School Board). Respondents said that this would help ensure that child(ren) are able to receive substantial French instruction at an early age.

Another concern about the later entry grade was for social development. One person explained that *“by Grade 2, students will have formed friendships from Grade 1 already.”* As another respondent said, *“at this older age, the decision is at risk of becoming more about “which of my friends will and won’t.” It could become more peer-pressure based, as a way of controlling which friends a child will continue to keep in their class. This is less of a concern when transitioning from the kindergarten program into the elementary curriculum-based model.”*



Report to Committee of the Whole

June 20, 2022

Subject: Motion: Critical Race Theory & White Privilege

Recommendation

That the Waterloo Region District School Board request that staff prepare a report and a presentation that explains the working definition of CRT and “White Privilege” as they relate to the development of “anti-racist” lesson plans, as well as the grade levels that the plans are introduced; and

That this report and presentation be presented back to the board no later than the end of Sept 2022; and

That staff also provide recommendations that will help support children if they internalize guilt and shame and solutions that will help prevent a possible stigma and or bias that could affect the school climate; and

That parents be provided supplemental material on the theory of “White Privilege” before their students are taught White Privilege; and

That a letter be written to the Minister of Education about parental concerns regarding CRT and or the theory of “White Privilege” that are being taught to their children.

Status

This Notice of Motion was served at the May 30, 2022, Board meeting by Trustee C. Watson with support from Trustee M. Ramsay.

Background

The following recitals were included by Trustee C. Watson to serve as a Background for this motion:

Whereas I have heard from some parents that they fully support Equity and Inclusion but have concerns that “Critical Race Theory” (CRT) and or the theory of “White Privilege” are being drawn on to develop “anti-racist” lesson plans that are being used in WRSDB Schools,

Whereas I have heard that some students, parents and staff fear they might be labeled racist or a white supremacist if they share/bring their concerns to the attention of the Board,

Whereas I have heard from some parent that they are concerned that the use of these lesson plans could create a sense of shame and guilt in their children as well as create a stigma and or bias among the school population,

Financial implication

The financial implications are not known at this time.

Communications

If approved, the requested report will be provided at a future meeting of the Board of Trustees and the letter to the Minister of Education will be communicated.

Prepared by: Stephanie Reidel, Manager of Corporate Services
for Trustee C. Watson in consultation with Coordinating Council



Report to Committee of the Whole

June 20, 2022

Subject: Policy Working Group - Update to Governance Policy G300 & Policy Review Process

Recommendation

That the Waterloo Region District School Board of Trustees approve the amendments to Governance Policy G300 - Policy Development and Reviews as per the Policy Working Group recommendation presented at the June 20, 2022, Committee of the Whole meeting.

Status

In the development of a Policy Review & Development Process, the Policy Working Group (PWG) has determined changes required to Governance Policy G300 - Policy Development and Reviews provided in Appendix A.

Changes to the policy include updates to reference the new Policy Review Process and changing the review cycle to four years to provide time for public consultation.

The new Policy Review Process prioritizes consultation. The Communications department will communicate upcoming policies for review through normal communication channels and the general public will have an opportunity to provide input on the policies via a form on the WRDSB website. With this stakeholder feedback in mind, staff will draft the revisions following a checklist which ensures the use of the Human Rights and Equity Policy Review Guide.

The draft revised policies will then be shared with Board Advisory Committees for feedback. Board Advisory Committees currently include:

- Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group
- Indigenous Education Advisory Circle
- Parent Involvement Committee
- Special Education Advisory Committee
- Student Senate

The draft policies will continue with the existing practice of a review by Coordinating Council, which consists of the Director of Education, Associate Director of Education, Coordinating Superintendents, Chief Communications Officer and Manager of Corporate Services.

The Policy Working Group will review the final draft policy and related supporting documents. The PWG will develop a recommendation and present the policy at a Committee of the Whole meeting for Board of Trustee approval.

This process is outlined in Appendix B.

A similar process has been developed for the creation of new policies and is outlined in Appendix C.

At the end of the 2022-2023 school year, the PWG will reflect and review the process for efficiency.

Background

On March 22, 2021 the Board of Trustees approved striking a Policy Working Group. The policy working group has been meeting monthly since May 2021.

The PWG has the following mandate:

2.1 Focus

The role of this committee will be to research and provide information and recommendations to the Board of Trustees on matters related to policy. Committee members will review policies prior to coming to the Board of Trustees.

2.2 Powers and responsibilities

The committee shall review and examine policies for formatting and to review content and to develop draft policies where required and to ensure that consultation has taken place. This committee has no decision-making powers. All policies will be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval.

2.3 The committee will develop and recommend a Policy Review & Development Process to review existing and create new policies.

Financial implications

There are no known financial implications to amending Governance Policy G300- Policy Development and Reviews and the updated policy review process.

Communications

If approved, the updated policy will be posted to the internal and external WRDSB websites after ratification.

Prepared by: Stephanie Reidel, Manager of Corporate Services
for the Policy Working Group in consultation with Coordinating Council



Board Policy G300

GOVERNANCE POLICY - POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEWS

Legal References: Bill 177, Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act, 2009

Related References: [Board Policy G100 – Governance Policy – Foundations](#)
[G200 – Governance Policy – Roles and Responsibilities](#)
[Board Policy G400 – Board of Trustees Planning Cycle and Evaluations](#)
[Board Policy 2006 – Consultation](#)
[Board Policy 1017 - Human Rights](#)
[WRDSB Board of Trustees Bylaws](#)
[Human Rights and Equity Policy Review Guide](#)

Effective Date: May 2006

Revisions: ~~May 2008~~, October 19, 2015, **June 20, 2022**

Reviewed:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 A key responsibility of the Board of Trustees, as per the Education Act, is to develop and maintain policies that are based on the Board's vision, mission and goals.**
- 1.2 It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of policies in achieving the Board's goals.**

2. Definitions

WRDSB - Waterloo Region District School Board.

Board - Board means the Board of Trustees of the WRDSB.

Policy Working Group (PWG) - The role of this committee is to research and provide information and recommendations to the Board of Trustees on matters related to policy. Committee members will review policies prior to coming to the Board of Trustees.

Policy - A policy is a principle or rule that guides decisions that will achieve the organization's goals. It articulates what must be done, the rationale for it and a framework for the system. Policies do not deal with how it is to be done. It is a commitment by which the Board is held accountable to the public.

Procedure - Procedures outline how a policy or operational matter is to be implemented. Some, but not all, procedures are associated with a Board policy. Administrative procedures may outline responsibilities and specific actions that must be taken by staff members at different levels of the organization.

3. Application of the Policy

- 3.1** *This policy applies to all WRDSB students, employees, trustees and includes users such as members of consultative committees, families/caregivers and members of the community.*

4. Policy Development

- 4.1 Policies for Board of Trustees consideration will be based on the following practices.

- 4.1.1 Policy development and review will be governed by the following principles:
- Integrating the strategies, priorities and expressed values of the Board;
 - Providing public statements through which the Board can be held accountable;
 - Complying with legal requirements and established parameters around which staff can develop administrative procedures;
 - Affording the opportunity for consultation with students, ~~parents~~ **families/caregivers**, staff and community representatives as determined by the Board of Trustees;
 - Striving to ensure policies are written clearly, free of jargon or technical words and use inclusive language.
- 4.1.2 The need for a new policy, where none exists or the amending of an existing policy, can arise from any source, i.e.: students, ~~parents~~ **families/caregivers**, staff, community representatives, government bodies, Trustees, etc. The **decision** need to pursue a policy initiative is at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.
- 4.1.3 In determining the need for a new policy or existing policy amendment, the Board of Trustees will give consideration to, but is not limited by, the following parameters:
- ~~Is the~~ **A** policy **is** required by an Act or regulation?
 - ~~Is there~~ **is** a defined need related to governance, operational considerations, future perspectives, health and safety, **equity, human rights, Truth and Reconciliation** etc.?
 - **There is a** ~~is the~~ need at a level that warrants a policy, in that it has Board-wide implications or consistency, risk/liability, equity/fairness or other considerations?
- 4.1.4 **The Board of Trustees, through the Policy Working Group, will define the level of public consultation to be undertaken during policy development and review. The public consultation will be consistent with the Board Policy 2006 - Consultation.** ~~In developing a policy or an amendment to an existing policy, the Board of Trustees will define the level of public consultation to be undertaken consistent with the Board's Consultation Policy.~~

5. Policy Approval Process

- 5.1 The following points outline the Board's policy decision-making process:

- 5.1.1 Board of Trustee discussions and motions will lead to the development, approval/non-approval and monitoring of a new policy, affirmation of an existing policy or amendments to/deletion of an existing policy.

5.1.1.1 The Policy Working Group will lead this work on behalf of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees will have final approval of all policies.

- 5.1.2 Board of Trustee decisions will normally be undertaken on one of four possible outcomes:

- ~~A~~ motion providing recommendations on a new policy or amended existing policy as presented;
 - an amended motion that provides recommendations on a new policy or amended existing policy;
 - a referral motion to review, develop, analyze and make recommendations in regards to a new policy or an existing policy;
 - a deferral motion with an appropriate rationale and a reconsideration time frame.
- 5.1.3 Where a decision is required as to whether a motion is policy or procedural in nature, the Board of Trustees decides the status of the motion and how to proceed.
- 5.1.4 The discussions, deliberations and research undertaken in support of developing a new policy, or amending an existing policy, can involve various levels of research activities, **consultation**, ~~stakeholder input~~, etc., as deemed appropriate by and as directed by the Board of Trustees ~~at its discretion~~. **through the Policy Working Group.**
- 5.1.5 For a referral motion on policy development and/or a review, the Board of Trustees decides who the referred-to party will be, and can identify the types of research, ~~community~~ consultation and other activities to be undertaken in support of the process, as well as reporting timelines, etc.
- 5.1.6 The Board of Trustees, at its discretion, can decide to approve a motion that requires an existing policy **to be amended** ~~amendment or does not connect with an existing policy if an emergency response is required; timeliness issues prevail; or for any other reason.~~ The Board can decide at that time, or subsequently, that a new policy or existing policy amendment is to be developed and considered by the Board.
- 5.1.7 Board of Trustee decisions are determined through motions put forward by Trustees and the result of a majority vote of Trustees on those motions.

6. Policy Motions

- 6.1 ~~Implementation of Board policy motions~~ **should be written in as plain language as possible and will include the following components** ~~be undertaken as follows:~~

- ~~3.1.1 Policy Motions – New policy recommendations put forward for Board of Trustees consideration are to have the following components:~~
- Policy title and Legal and Related References;
 - ~~Brief description of the policy need and focus;~~
 - Policy statement that defines the **purpose and intended impact** intent, direction and specific requirements of the Board of Trustees with the level of detail dependant on the scope of the proposed policy;
 - **Definitions**
 - **Application of the Policy**
 - Identification of key performance indicators, outcomes, measures or specific strategies the Board wishes to be implemented within the context of the policy;

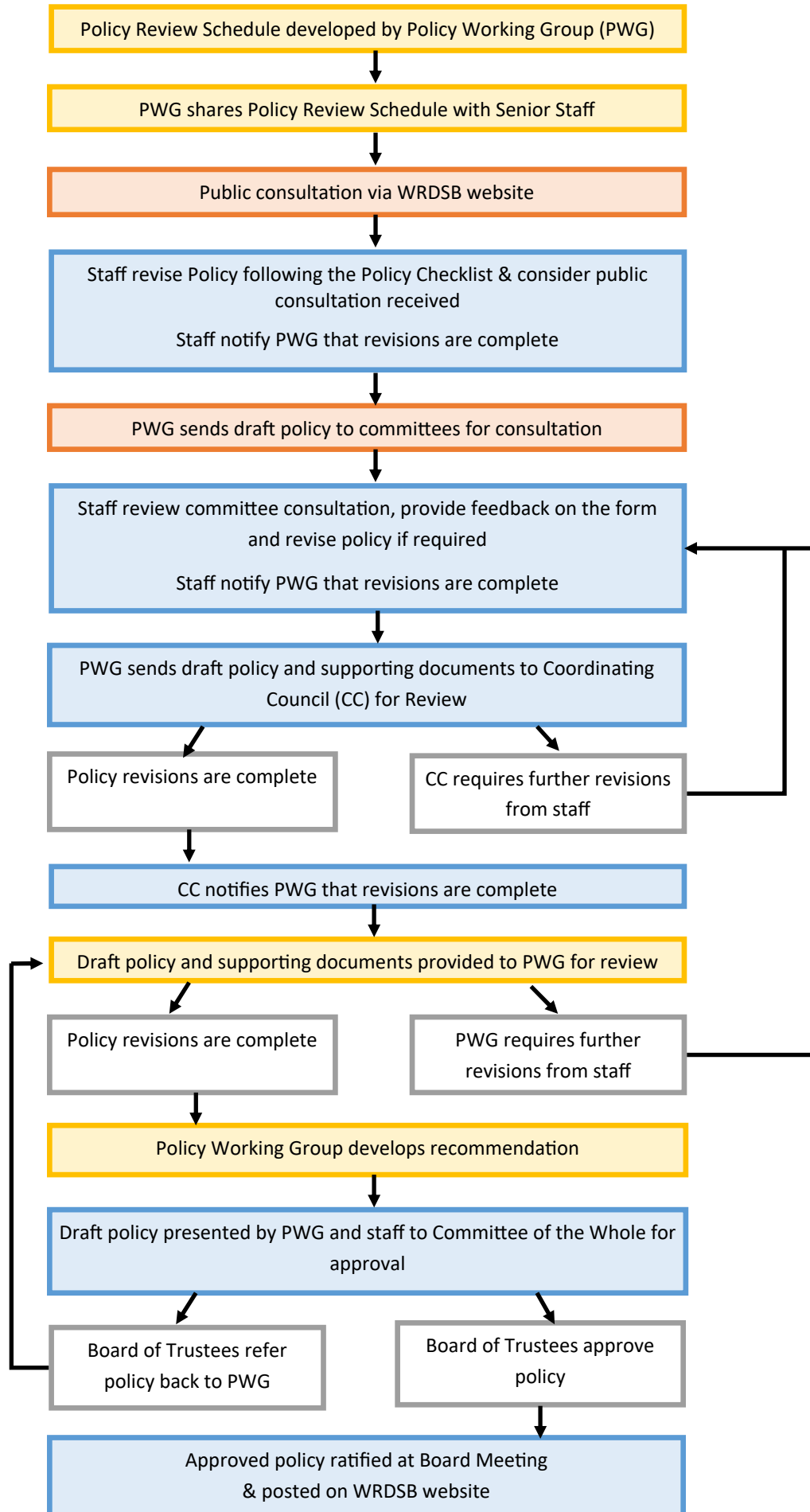
- 6.2 Draft policies should be presented on the Policy Template. The Policy Template can be requested from the Manager of Corporate Services.**

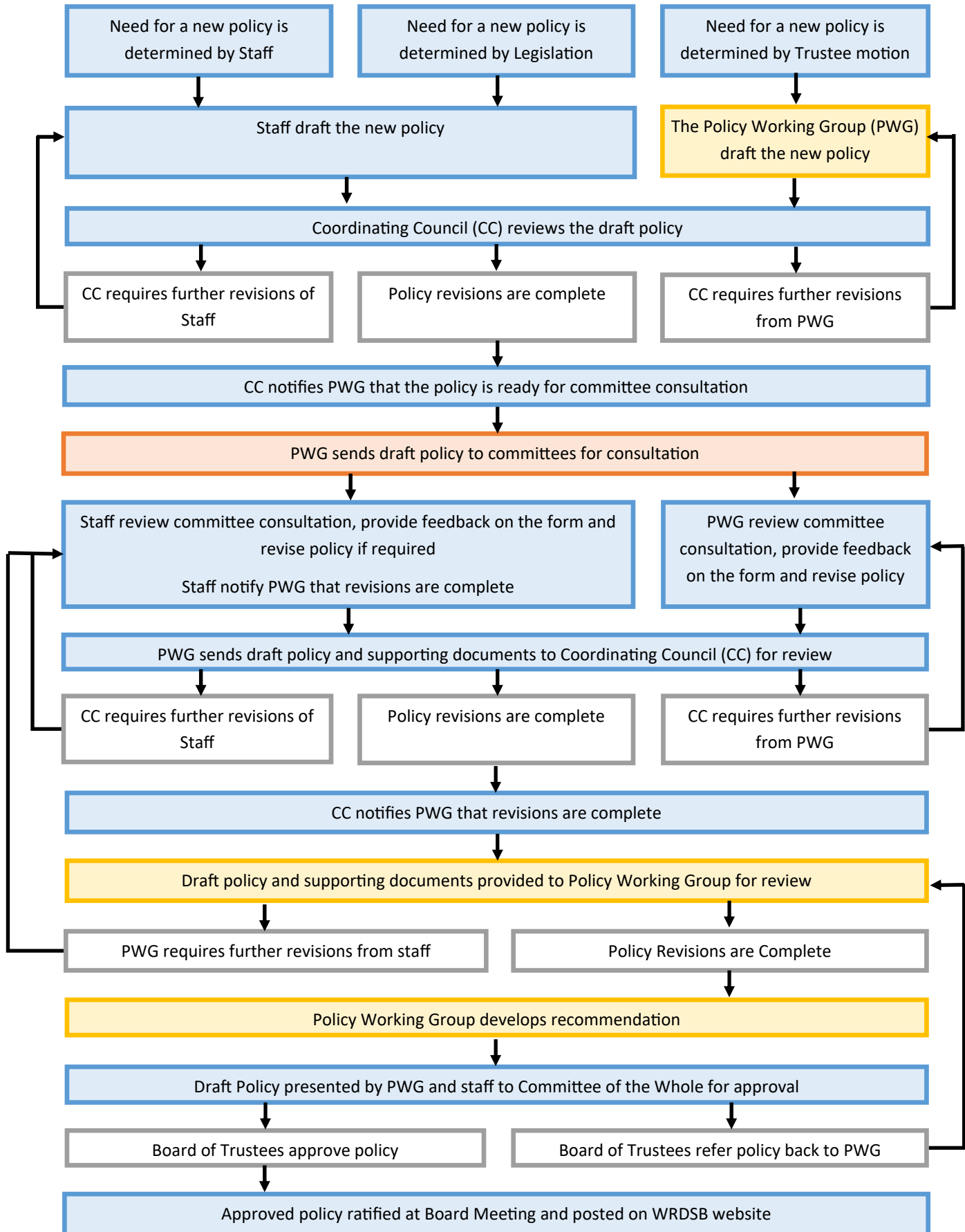
7. Policy Review Process

- 7.1 The regular review of policies is important to ensure conformity with changing regulatory and statutory requirements, effectively responding to emerging community expectations and practices; and to assess implementation effectiveness and outcomes.

- 7.1.1 The regular review of existing Board **policies** ensures that the Board is working with relevant, practical and consistent policies.
- 7.1.2 The Board of Trustees will undertake a review of each Board Policy at a minimum of once every **four** ~~three~~ years, or sooner if ~~events warrant~~ **ed**.
- A complete Policy Review Schedule as determined by the ~~Agenda Development Committee~~ **Policy Working Group**, will be provided to Trustees and will include the policy title, policy number, last review date and date of scheduled review;
 - A Policy Review Schedule will be posted on the Corporate Website for community information and will be provided to **committees with whom the WRDSB consults** ~~the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and Special Education Review Committees (SEAC)~~ to encourage and facilitate policy consultation.

Draft







Report to Committee of the Whole

June 20, 2022

Subject: Feedback from the Parent Involvement Committee

Recommendation

That the Waterloo Region District School Board refer the feedback from the Parent Involvement Committee to staff for consideration in the Strategic Planning Process.

Status

At the May 17, 2022, Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) meeting, members presented their responses to questions posed to improve parent engagement at the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB).

A summary of the feedback and recommendation are as follows:

How can WRDSB change school council & other parent volunteer opportunities to be more inclusive, productive & varied?

1. Allocate WRDSB staff member(s) and their time to develop, maintain, resource, and oversee the implementation of a board-wide volunteer management program, which includes the more formal structure of PIC, WRAPSC, ad hoc involvement on Board-led committees, as well as school-based, principal-led volunteer engagement.
2. Develop a shared value statement and consistent management process for volunteers across the WRDSB system, including an outline of the scope of involvement and accommodation for the diversity among potential volunteers, which schools can then adapt to suit the dynamics within their respective communities.
3. Support and train school principals in how to involve volunteers as a part of their school community, specifically in adapting the above recommendation as an ongoing program to enrich their school's operations and their students' learning environment.
4. Communicate all volunteer opportunities on one centralized, fully accessible platform at each school to ensure equal opportunity for all parents with the capability for translation.
5. Support each school in organizing a School Council with a consistent purpose, structure, and recruitment process, endorsed by the principal, and designed to enrich its community.

How can communication be improved to support a productive relationship between parents/guardians & teachers?

1. Adopt a web-based Parent Portal to provide consistent and equitable access to communication from teachers, schools, and the WRDSB. Parent Portals share real-time information ranging from teacher's newsletters to student progress and attendance, and support on-going direct communication between teachers and families.
2. With representative participation of stakeholders, develop and commit to standards of communication that establish essential content, the timeline for distribution, and the expected tone of the messaging. Communication standards should support the Board's stated goal of engaging parents as partners.

How can the WRDSB improve the way parents/guardians navigate their schools and school system?

1. Hold parent orientation sessions
2. Set up an online parent portal where parents can access various information as well as interact with staff directly
3. Provide opportunities for safe face to face parent-teacher meetings
4. Support teachers in enhancing classroom communications
5. Survey parents board-wide for feedback

Background

At the PIC meeting on December 7, 2021, Director Chanicka asked parent members of PIC to gather feedback in three question areas. The purpose of this work was to help the WRDSB improve parent engagement with deeper, more meaningful connections with the families and communities they serve, especially during their strategic planning process. The three questions were as follows:

1. How can WRDSB change school council & other parent volunteer opportunities to be more inclusive, productive & varied?
2. How can communication be improved to support a productive relationship between parents/guardians & teachers?
3. How can the WRDSB improve the way parents/guardians navigate their schools and school system?

Financial implication

The financial implications are not known at this time.

Communications

If approved, the feedback will be forwarded to the appropriate staff for consideration.

Prepared by: Stephanie Reidel, Manager of Corporate Services
for Trustees K. Meissner and L. Tremble in consultation with Coordinating Council