

CPF SCHOOL SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

FOR FRENCH-SECOND-LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

ASSESSMENT RESULTS SUMMARY

MAIN AREA	INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT				
		A VERY STRONG	B STRONG	C MODERATE	D FAIR	E NEEDS GREAT IMPROVEMENT
ENROLMENT	1 AVAILABILITY					
	2 COMMUNICATIONS					
	3 REMEDIAL ASSISTANCE					
QUALITY	4 FSL POLICIES					
	5 FSL RESOURCES					
	6 SCHOOL COMMUNITY					
	7 EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY					
	8 QUALIFIED TEACHERS					
	9 COMPETENCE PROFILE					
	10 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT					
	11 CORE FRENCH INTEGRATED					
	12 HIGH SCHOOL COURSES					
	ACCOUNTABILITY	13 PARENT INVOLVEMENT				
14 CLASS TIME RESPECTED						
15 STABILITY						
16 PROVINCIAL GUIDELINES						
17 DESIGNATED FUNDING						
18 PROGRAM REVIEW						



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FOR FRENCH-SECOND-LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

USING THIS TOOL FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

This tool has been developed by Canadian Parents for French (CPF), the national network of volunteers which promotes and creates opportunities for young Canadians to learn and use French as a second language.

The self-assessment tool is intended to help schools assess for themselves how their French-second-language (FSL) programs are faring. It is not CPF's intent to collect and compare these assessments, but rather to **encourage a conversation** among all stakeholders about the importance and performance of FSL programs in the local community. Programs and the needs of communities will vary across the country but dialogue among all those involved in and affected by these programs can only lead to improvements in both the FSL programs themselves and the levels of support for them within the school system.

Eighteen indicators are outlined below with brief explanations. School performance in each area can be assessed using a five-point scale. The indicators are based on research done on FSL programs in Canada over the last 30 years. (Please note that for the purposes of this self-assessment tool, FSL programs refer to both immersion and Core French programs.)

The self-assessment tool can be used to assess both French immersion and Core French programs (also known as basic French in some provinces). In order to use it effectively, evaluate only one of these program types at a time. (For example, if you decide to evaluate your Core French program, answer all the questions with only Core French in mind.) You can go back and use the tool to evaluate the other program option(s) at another time and we recommend that you do so in another, separate session.

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The suggested way to use this tool is to engage in a large group discussion on the indicators. With all participants gathered (teachers, students, parents, administrators):

- 1) **READ** the indicators one at a time;
- 2) **DISCUSS** the level of implementation of each indicator in your school;
- 3) **COME TO A CONSENSUS** on where your program fits on the implementation scale;
- 4) **NOTE THE RESULTS** on the assessment results grid.

Once you have considered all the indicators, you will have a picture of your FSL program's strengths and areas for improvement. This tool and the discussions it will involve provide an excellent opportunity to raise issues important for FSL programs and to celebrate program successes. Be proud of your school's strengths and work now to build an action plan in those areas where you feel you need improvement. The discussion itself will be valuable, but you may also want to follow up on certain areas to ensure that next year's assessment is even better!

If you find that a question does not apply to your situation, you may skip it. Be careful however about skipping a question too quickly just because it is easier than trying to answer it. (If your school doesn't rate well on a question, this is no reason to skip it!) There may be areas where you feel that responsibility for the issue does not rest with the school alone (e.g., involvement of the school board). In this case, your school may need to ask where to find support for improvement of this indicator, but the indicator is still important to a quality FSL program.

CPF is committed to supporting you as you undertake this self-assessment process. At our website, www.cpf.ca, you will find dedicated resources to assist you, including information on how to gather together a group of stakeholders and how to decide if you need a facilitator; fast facts and current research to help you in your deliberations on each indicator; a list of contacts for your local CPF Branch; an action plan format to help you take the next steps in improving your FSL programs—and much more!

HOW TO ASSESS PERFORMANCE

To assess your school's performance in each area (i.e., for each indicator), establish a rating using the following five-point scale.

RATING	PERFORMANCE
A	VERY STRONG
B	STRONG
C	MODERATE
D	FAIR
E	NEEDS GREAT IMPROVEMENT

- A. VERY STRONG:** This means that your school's performance in this area is excellent. The indicator has been fully implemented or is being regularly applied and is reviewed regularly for possible corrections or improvements where needed.
- B. STRONG:** School performance in this area is good. The indicator has been largely implemented but no review process is in place to allow for possible corrections and improvements where needed.
- C. MODERATE:** The indicator has been partially implemented or some definite progress is being made towards its implementation. The school may be further ahead in some areas than in others.
- D. FAIR:** A rating of fair would apply when the issue has been explored and there is some acknowledgement of its importance but little or no action has been taken. Issues and/or obstacles preventing full implementation of this indicator may have been identified.
- E. NEEDS GREAT IMPROVEMENT:** School activity in this area is non-existent (e.g. no formal discussion has occurred and no action has been taken).

GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR SCHOOL'S SELF-ASSESSMENT, AND CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR COMMITMENT TO QUALITY FRENCH-SECOND-LANGUAGE PROGRAMS FOR CANADIAN CHILDREN!

UNDERSTANDING THE INDICATORS

The 18 indicators are grouped under three main themes: enrolment, program quality and accountability. A short text describes each indicator and related issues.

ENROLMENT

This set of indicators focuses on enrolment issues (i.e., ensuring maximum access to FSL programs).

- 1. AVAILABILITY. FSL Programs are available to all students, including gifted students and those with special needs.**
Enrolment in FSL programs is encouraged by policies and practices that provide for the participation of interested students. FSL programs that are available to all students provide free transportation for both urban and rural students and have no program enrolment limits or admission criteria. Programming for gifted and special needs students is also provided within FSL programs to ensure that the programs are available to all students.
- 2. COMMUNICATIONS. All FSL options are clearly communicated and promoted.**
Enrolment in FSL programs is enhanced when parents and students receive relevant information. Effective communication and promotion of FSL programs can be accomplished by holding annual information sessions for prospective parents and by ensuring that informational materials encourage enrolment. Information about FSL options and entry points should be distributed regularly so that informed choices may be made as the student progresses through the educational system.
- 3. REMEDIAL ASSISTANCE. All FSL programs provide remedial assistance to students who need it.**
Students experiencing academic difficulties are retained in FSL programs when they are given extra help. FSL programs should encourage these students to continue their FSL studies by ensuring that adequate remedial services and resources are available to all students who need them.

PROGRAM QUALITY

The second set of indicators encompasses a variety of program quality issues.

- 4. FSL POLICIES. FSL policies concerning staffing, resources and funding exist and are evaluated regularly.**
FSL policies provide an opportunity for the school to state its commitment to providing quality FSL programs, to clearly define the conditions that must be met to achieve quality programs, and to provide a model for evaluating progress toward these goals.
- 5. FSL RESOURCES. Sufficient French classroom and library resources and learning materials are available.**
FSL programs require quality resources and classroom materials. There should be enough French textbooks for all students and a varied collection of resource centre and classroom materials that have been specifically designed for French-second-language learners.
- 6. SCHOOL COMMUNITY. The entire school community supports and encourages FSL programs.**
Quality French-second-language programs thrive where the entire school supports and encourages the use of French. This may mean that the French language and culture are visible in the school outside the classroom in the form of posters or hallway conversations, and in the use of French at recess or during announcements and assemblies.
- 7. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY. Extra-curricular activities in French are available to all FSL students.**
The use of French for non-school communication has been shown to enhance language mastery for FSL learners. To encourage the use of French outside of the classroom, the school should promote both in-school activities (e.g., clubs, Internet pen pals) and out-of-school activities (e.g., field trips, student exchanges). Parents and students should be informed of the importance and availability of these activities.
- 8. QUALIFIED TEACHERS. Qualified teachers, including substitute teachers, are available for all FSL assignments.**
In order to ensure effective second-language instruction, it is necessary for FSL programs to ensure that all teachers assigned to FSL classes are fluent in French and have received training designed specifically for second-language instructors. The school may want to discuss with the school district the need for a strategy to recruit and retain qualified FSL teachers, and to ensure that qualified substitute teachers are available when needed.
- 9. COMPETENCE PROFILE. New teachers are hired on the basis of French-language competence, teaching ability, and subject-matter knowledge.**
In order to provide quality FSL programs, school administrators must ensure that FSL teachers have the necessary skills to be effective second-language teachers. A competence profile that evaluates French-language competence and teaching ability should be used when selecting new teachers. Teachers hired for subject areas such as math and science in high school immersion classes should also be subject-matter specialists.



10. **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. Professional development for FSL teachers is supported and encouraged.**
Teachers should be assured of a rich variety of professional development activities designed specifically for FSL teachers. School administrators must encourage and support their participation in these activities.
11. **CORE FRENCH INTEGRATED. Core French is treated as an integral part of the main curriculum.**
(This indicator is only used when reviewing Core French programs.)
Core French is treated as an integral part of the main curriculum when it is given the same importance as other subjects. Timetabling conflicts that put Core French courses in competition with other popular options should be minimized. Core French classes should also be provided with the same level of resource materials as other subjects. Core French is taught in a Core French classroom to provide a supportive environment.
12. **HIGH SCHOOL COURSES. High school programs offer high quality FSL courses that are accessible to all interested students.**
(This indicator is only used when reviewing high school FSL programs.)
Quality high school FSL courses are accessible to all interested students. Timetabling conflicts that put FSL courses in competition with other popular options, and gaps in FSL studies caused by semestering are minimized. Students have been consulted, and the school offers a rich variety of FSL courses that are known to appeal to students.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The final set of indicators focuses on accountability issues.

13. **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT. Parents are involved in decision making about FSL programs.**
Parents are important stakeholders in FSL programs and should be included in FSL decision making. Parents should be encouraged to attend and actively participate in meetings and should be systematically notified when FSL issues are to be considered.
14. **CLASS TIME RESPECTED. The amount of class time dedicated to instruction in French is specified and respected.**
In quality FSL programs, class time dedicated to instruction in French is clearly specified and consistently respected. Teachers are not required to vary the time allotted to French instruction to accommodate other subjects or school activities. Remedial, special education, and gifted programming is equitably distributed across the students' timetables so that students are not systematically removed from French classes. Administrators ensure that guidelines on French instructional time are met.
15. **STABILITY. The types of FSL programs and the grade levels at which students enter programs are stable from year to year.**
FSL programs operate most effectively when they have achieved stability. It is necessary to ensure that stable program funding has been secured so that decisions about the continuation of FSL need not be taken annually. Entry points and the types of FSL programs offered should be maintained from year to year; program changes and reductions of entry points should be avoided.
16. **PROVINCIAL GUIDELINES. Provincial guidelines for FSL programs are communicated directly to parents, teachers, and administrators.**
It is necessary for all stakeholders in FSL education to have timely, accurate information upon which to base decisions and policies. Provincial guidelines should be systematically communicated and made readily available to parents, teachers, and administrators. The guidelines should be reviewed regularly to ensure that FSL programs are responsive to guideline changes.
17. **DESIGNATED FUNDING. All government funding designated for FSL programs is used specifically for those programs.**
In order to develop and maintain quality programs, government funding designated for FSL programs must be used specifically for those programs. School administrators must be aware that these funds exist and ensure that they are not re-directed for other purposes. Records should be kept concerning the use of these funds and these records reviewed to ensure that funds are used effectively.
18. **PROGRAM REVIEW. The quality and effectiveness of FSL programs are assessed regularly and adjustments are made when necessary.**
In order to develop and maintain quality FSL programming, student outcomes in school FSL programs and current FSL research findings must be reviewed regularly. A process should be in place to ensure that FSL policy, practice, and curriculum is adjusted in response to these reviews. Changes to policy, practice, and curriculum should be supported by professional development activities.

