

## CONSULTATION FEEDBACK – UNFILTERED COMMENTS

The following comments were taken directly from the textboxes found at the end of the LTPP Survey. The comments have been organized into categories for ease of reference.

### A. COMMENTS FAVOURING THE EXPANSION OF FI SCHOOLS

- Yes, please expand on French immersion and/or extended French. The workforce is highly competitive and building skills (like those of additional languages) of students is critical to their potential success later in life. The provincial government has French Language Services legislation and this requires even greater accountability by bodies who receive provincial funding to provide services in French when requested. As a past employer compelled to comply with FLS, the most challenging issue to address was staff who could speak French. I had 1 out of 50 people fluent. She was only fluent because she was born and raised in Quebec. Implement at St. Benedict in Sept 2017, please. My son will start grade 1 and I hope he will be eligible to enroll.
- While I support the French programming, I disagree with the lateness in timing proposed by the Board to implement. If possible, it would be great to implement them earlier. 2025 is quite late. I support additional program offerings, however, we need to ensure they are equally distributed across the city so that students have the opportunity to easily attend.
- There is a lack of extended French programs in the elementary level in the downtown area. Students who attend schools that only go up to grade 6 are limited to choosing public extended French school due to this gap in extended French schools in Toronto.
- It is also important that proposals are made to accommodate the increasing interest in FI and EF programs at both levels, thus I agree with the implementation of these programs, given that the school can accommodate them.
- We live in a country that is English and French speaking. We need to increase the amount of French that is taught. We need to have the children as excited about French as they are about English.
- Looking forward to having greater access to French Immersion programs in our board.

- Looking for further French Immersion programs & hope prioritization is based on the needs of the district... my district is at capacity for French Immersion in the TDSB schools & the TDCSB does not offer a French Immersion program - which I believe is a gap - as it's evident the ward has a high desire for the program. School: St Anselm's
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## B. COMMENTS OPPOSING THE EXPANSION OF FI SCHOOLS

- Any new program comes at the reduction of another as there is a finite amount of money to go around. I can't agree with French Immersion that benefits the stronger learners at the expense of reductions to special education and the special needs of our weaker students.
- Extended French programs have no valued added to the students. They won't walk away fluent. Making more FI schools is great if you have qualified teachers (very hard to find) and if you have parent/student interest.
- Interesting that we are going to expand the French program, but cut services to Special Education - that doesn't make sense.
- I strongly disagree with implementing new FI programs, particularly Extended French beginning in grade 5. My child was in the program. Except there is no real program. He learned vocabulary. Not content. I removed him after one year. FI is a way for parents to feel good about themselves. Bragging rights, if you will. It is divisive. Not inclusive. Children in FI are deemed to be smarter by the school community. Behaviour kids were not allowed to be in it. More opportunities for them in a school. Not a fair and inclusive program. I will be fighting against this in my child's school.
- Offering French immersion in communities where the ESL needs have become such a priority seems quite unrealistic for those students whose English proficiency is weak. So many students who are put in French immersion often struggle with English in secondary school and face huge challenges in literacy in post-secondary.
- As resources are limited, I am not in support of French language programs outside of basic French. English is the main language of Canada and children

would do far better learning how to properly spell, speak and read English in elementary levels. French can be offered later to any interested in high school.

- Implementation programs of French immersion programs is not really understood by many communities and in reality serve a very small percentage of students successfully. A small percentage really benefit from French immersion and often many students end up struggling in both French and the English language. Parents need to be better educated about the impact of putting their children in French immersion. The board should not be focused solely on obtaining funds from the ministry to cater to parents who think they want their kids in French immersion at the expense of students who really need help in the English language and meeting success.

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In regards to changing school into a French immersion school. For student already attending these school what happens to them. If I wanted my children to attend an immersion school I would have sent them to an immersion school. If school are going to be changed shouldn't parent been consulted. If school are changed are the changes going to start for new enrolment only. Or will parents not wanting their children immersion be forced to leave their local school.

The Board need to further develop the support programs at current FI schools before opening up the program on a larger scale. Current practice is to re-route children back to English stream schools when supports are not available. A French language education should not be treated as "boutique" as far as supports. Further more the premise is that neither parent needs to be French speaking. Even the French Board is opening up spaces for children who do not come from a French speaking background and guaranteeing the supports required to help enrich the education of the children in their care.

I would hope that by introducing FI in the schools, that there would be an option for a non-FI stream. My children already go to one of the schools which seem to be ear-marked for FI in 2017 and neither have any interest in FI. I would hate to move them to another school.

the "demand" for french immersion programs is misleading, the retention rates are low, i question the validity of this program when there are not the proper supports (by grade 2 more than half of children switch stream and the board does not offer spec ed support in french. What FI does in some of these school areas is allow parents and school to stream their own kids from a diversified classroom, thus leaving the english stream kids with less educational supports and larger class sizes. We are not losing "accademically inclined" elementary students to public school we are losing them to Private schools, (who do not concentrate their curriculum on FI) The number of schools you are proposing are not in the secondary school boundary schools that the elementary school belongs to. Example where would St Jerome and St jane Frances children go should they choose to continue with with FI? They will be competing with many more students to get into high schools outside of their district.

Give our children the proper tools for the future. If they want to learn French they can go to Saturday classes or night school or pay for it themselves. Please invest in skills that students will need to be successful in the economic climate we have today and the future.

Your solution is French Immersion and yet the ones you have implemented at Don Bosco and other areas have not been successful because no one likes that area perhaps? Yet more FI in Etobicoke and those who want English stream and science have to travel further. This is an inequality to students of English stream and to the special education students. Public money the board receives seems not to be evenly distributed and given to other areas more favourable for better services.

I believe many of the present FI and EF schools/programs at both the elementary and secondary level are mediocre at best. It is difficult to find good French teachers who understand learning needs of students in a Canadian context. Tripling FI pograms? Where will the teachers come from?

Why can't they all have french immersion? In Europe, everyone gets equal education in this regard - everyone must learn a 2nd language by grade 5 - equal

for all. You seem to be selective as to which schools get FI and which don't. Either everyone gets it or no one gets it - equality.

Think about a Speciality Program for St. Basil. Something like IB or French Immersion would be great for that school community. The proposed secondary sites already have programs. Share the programs in other areas!

Please have an elementary school starting in kindergarten in the mccowan and finch area . Maybe even changing our lady of Grace to kindergarten start. Because there was no school I sent my child to the public board. My neighbours are also look for a Catholic French immersion school in the area. Also Libermann would be a great choice for secondary school and French immersion.

I am a parent at St. John with a child in the extended French Program. The school has been unsuccessful in retaining Principals and VP's and my daughter was without a full-time English teacher for the first two months of this school year. I believe the school needs to address the staff retention issues and come up with a permanent solution for this before there is any thought of adding a full French Immersion program.

Students should be evaluated for admission to French Immersion. Many students have challenges learning in english, and while I know parents want the immersion opportunity for their kids, not all can handle the challenge.

St Jane Francis - not interested that the school be included in FI Parents in the school are NOT interested. What happens to the special needs programs with LD's formthe students in the school? It will NOT be FAIR if the current students at St Jane if they will need to be going to be bused to nearby schools for their special needs programs for the school to accomodate FI.

French Immersion should be an option but not mandatory. Extended French must be implemented than Immersion. It will be hard for those people who English itself is their second language which 60% of the students in TCDSB right now belongs to. TCDSB must concentrate to increasing students and providing necessities to various school in Toronto, focusing in French Immersion could drive new students away as most of them are immigrants.

Notre Dame does not offer French (but St John's does - this is not good continuity).

\*I feel that French Immersion will further direct St. John's Schools' ability to

provide good teachers. There are not enough French Teachers. The school is too small. It needs to have French Immersion or EXTENDED but cannot support both. You need a much larger school to accommodate all three streams.

While these are all great, only IF you have the French staff on board should you consider implementing further French programs. Just hiring because someone can speak French, does not mean they can teach. French teachers are hard to come by. Putting more and more money into specialized programs for SOME kids is not fair to all.

### C. SCHOOL-SPECIFIC COMMENTS

- I would like to see St. Brigid's French Immersion implementation moved up to 2017.
- I can only comment about St. Brigid School because I teach there. It is already very full with the population growing each year by one classroom. To further increase our enrollment (which I believe Immersion may do) would further put strain on a school which already is stretched. Also we seem to be attracting a number of higher needs /behaviour and autistic kids into our younger grades. We are struggling to give them the support they need with the resources given to us. I feel adding immersion will likely encourage the stronger kids to move over to that stream (as I would have done if it was available to my own children) and the result would be an English stream with a lot of academically and socially challenged kids in a school that is already growing. I suggest putting the Immersion program into a smaller local school that is not growing and has fewer challenges.
- St. Gerald is in need of extra English support with the incoming of many new students from Syria, not French immersion. This is an area with high needs and once again, the board is simply looking at available space and geography and not the specific needs of the area.
- The board should consider an Extended French programme at the Jane/Finch or Jane/Sheppard area.
- Suggestion for a French Immersion (secondary) site in the north-west quadrant of the city at a school with no direct-entry programs, namely St. Basil-The-Great College. The Extended French and French Immersion programs should be

expanded equitably across the system and not merely placed in schools that already have existing/similar programs.

- I would strongly suggest St. Basil the Great to offer French Immersion as it is an ideal location as it would feed off of St. Jane Francis.
- There are a lot of good ideas mentioned however, I think it would be great to see an FI program at St. Basil's.
- I am glad to see French Immersion as a priority for this board. I am not in agreement with the selected sites for secondary. I would like to see St Basil considered for French Immersion. I do not want to have my child go to the other schools when St Basil is a much closer site. Why can't St Basils have French Immersion or at least Extended French?
- The schools that will be implementing FI or French Extended already offer one of them or already have specialty programs at their school. For example, St. Basil-The-Great College does not have a specialty program to offer their students. In the long run, the school will end up losing enrolment due to lack of program offerings. It is important to make these programs accessible to all our students.
- The proposed secondary schools for French Immersion already have speciality programs, consider a school that does not have a speciality program and that has the potential to offer a viable program. You should add St. Basil-The-Great to the list of proposed to offer French Immersion.
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#### D. STAFFING CONCERNS / QUESTIONS

- There is already a shortage of French teachers, is it possible to staff all of these programs properly?
- Given the difficulty in hiring qualified French teachers currently, I sincerely hope there is a recruiting strategy for strongly qualified French teachers in place prior to placing such a heavy emphasis on French programming. It is currently very difficult to hire a sufficiently qualified extended French teacher, in my experience, for the last few years. I am concerned that the success of this plan

hinges on an existing challenge that has not yet been addressed for current needs, much less for the planned growth in this subject area.

- With respect to French Immersion, the board continues to struggle with hiring and maintaining qualified French teachers. The rapid expansion of the FI and EF programs is not going to help the situation. Students might be better served with an overhaul of the Core French program so that students actually receive a better quality of instruction. My children both attended Extended French and at the end of four years, they lacked the ability to carry on a simple conversation in French.
- Until the pool of French speaking teachers is great enough to guarantee effective instruction in all French Immersion classrooms, I don't think implementing more programs just to appease demanding parents is a responsible decision.
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