



French Advisory Committee

Date: May 8, 2025

Time: 12:30-2:00 p.m.

Venue: DESC- Shuswap Lake Room

MEETING Minutes

Item	Notes
1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgment (Megan)	Members present: Marianne VanBuskirk (Board Trustee), Michelle Guillou (Assistant Superintendent, HR), Emily Johnson (Recording Secretary) <u>Bastion Representation:</u> Megan Weir (Vice-Principal), Megan Hanson (parent rep), Julie Delcid (parent rep) <u>Shuswap Middle Representation:</u> Amanda Tait (teacher rep), Emma Nieman (student rep) <u>J.L. Jackson Representation:</u> Gloria Cox (Vice-Principal), Megan Glasser (teacher rep), Melinda Smyrle (parent rep), Avery Mullins (student rep), <u>Salmon Arm Secondary Representation:</u> Elliot Sorban (Teacher Rep) Member regrets: Candy Martel (Bastion Teacher rep), Lara Matthews (Shuswap Middle Vice-Principal rep), Rebecca Scott (Shuswap Middle parent rep), Rhys Waters (Salmon Arm Secondary Vice-Principal rep), Martine Dollack (Salmon Arm Secondary Teacher rep), Susan Lorenz (Salmon Arm Secondary parent rep), Ben Bonthuys (Salmon Arm Secondary student rep). Megan Weir, District French Coordinator, called the meeting to order at 12:33 p.m. and opened the meeting with the acknowledgement that the Committee holds its meeting on the traditional and unceded land of the Secwépemc peoples.
2. Meeting Norms (Megan)	Megan Weir shared the meeting norms with the committee, as they are connected to the First People's Principles of Learning: -Respectful Communication (value discussions) -Be Present & Engaged -Assume Positive Intent of Others -Start and End Times Adhered To
3. Budget & Funding Guide	Megan Weir shared information about the French Funding Guide, following up on the information that was discussed at the last French Advisory Committee meeting. Megan Weir had attended a conference with the Ministry of Education and shared the feedback from this committee's last meeting.

3. Budget & Funding Guide (continued)	Next year’s French budget: \$172,981 (2024-25 was \$170,292 + carryover from previous year’s remaining special grant \$55,064) Megan Weir shared that there is baseline funding, as well as additional funding. In the upcoming French budget, the baseline should stay roughly the same, though the other amount may adjust a little. With this being a set amount, it is helpful for the district to be able to plan for that. This current school year, the amount was a little less but had some carryovers for a grant covering the cost of a FI helping teacher to help with the French program at Shuswap Middle. Year-End Financial Report: Staffing + 4 initiatives (spending projects) Megan Weir shared information about the Year-End Financial Report with the committee. The report covers the District French Coordinator position and notes that the district should share four initiatives that the district is working on with details. The District already has some of these initiatives in place, and it is just a matter of reporting on them and their impact on student learning. Some initiatives include buying a set of grade 9 science textbooks and the K-3 French Film Festival. Megan Weir will be touching base with the schools to get more information about the initiatives that they have been working on, to include in the Year-End Financial Report. Planning form (to complete by October in order to access funds) Megan Weir shared that this is a brand-new planning form to connect with French immersion staff and core French staff to know about where needs in the district are. Flexibility between the categories, to ensure needs are met Megan Weir addressed the question at the last meeting about how the funding model separates out Core French from French Immersion. Megan Weir looked into this and learned that there is recognition that French Immersion programming will potentially require more money than Core French because it is an immersive experience. With that said, there is recognition that there could be a year where Core French might need a boost for resources and there is flexibility to make that happen – there is a lot of flexibility based on the five new categories. For the funding, the district needs to explain what it envisions spending the money on. It is important for the district team to work collaboratively to map out what it wants to do with the funds, although there is some flexibility to move the money as the year progresses, if need be.
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3. Budget & Funding Guide (continued)	• Permission to have a part-time CEA to assist with early literacy support as a “student retention” project for 2025-2026 Megan Weir provided an update that came out of conversations with the Ministry: the district has special permission for a part-time Certified Education Assistant to assist with early literacy support as a student retention project. Excited that that came through. • We will continue to run our French funded local scholarships also as a “student retention” project. At the last meeting, Megan Weir shared that there may be upcoming changes to the scholarship program. After hearing feedback about how the students are looking forward to scholarships, and how it can be a motivator for students to stay with the French programs, the decision was made that the district will continue to run local scholarships to help retain students in the French programs. Assistant Superintendent, Michelle Guillou, expressed her appreciation that the scholarships will remain available.
4. Exciting Events and New News (School teams)	District Megan Weir presented information about the following: • Collaboration: time for FI staff gr. 8-12 to meet for a half day – in progress This is in progress and there are still decisions being made like which teachers to work together and when the afternoon will be. This is, in part a progression out of the April 7th Pro-D Day (see below). • April 7 Pro D FI Conversations & Collaborations – 21 staff: Scope & Sequence; Ways to support oral French communication 21 staff participated in the Professional Development Day session; almost all were French Immersion teachers, though there was one core-French teacher. This was led by one of our teachers and was a huge opportunity to talk about scope and sequence and a pathway to success as a FI grad. This conversation has just begun and will continue. Determining the path to help students succeed will help in determining budget priorities. • 2 French Teaching Assistants for 2025-26 (Bastion and SMS) The district was successful in its application for funding for two French Teaching Assistants, as outlined in the French Funding Guide, and has had two applicants. Megan Weir noted that they are not necessarily adults who are majoring in Education, though having extra help in the classroom will still be welcome. Megan Weir has reached out to them to share information that might help them to start feeling excited about coming to Salmon Arm and she is working with the District

4. Exciting Events and New News (School teams) (continued)	French Coordinator in Vernon to collaborate, so that the French Teaching Assistants may be able to make connections with other French Teaching Assistants nearby. • French Monitor Leyla: last day May 30th Leyla has been part of the Odessey program – she has been able to do a lot at Bastion, Shuswap Middle, and Jackson earlier in the year. • Survey for FI families With reconfiguration, there are changes on the horizon for the French program, and possibly the students’ commitment to the program. Megan Weir indicated that she is hopeful that students in the program are going to want to stick with this program – it’s a program that has so much to offer. Hopefully, we will know more as we hear back from families. Once we know more, that can inform other pieces. At this point, the survey has not gone out, but some parents have started sharing. Anecdotaly, the opinions about the move from Bastion to the Shuswap Middle School campus and reconfiguration in general have shifted to be more positive. The committee discussed bussing, and why students within a program of choice do not have the option of bussing. Assistant Superintendent, Michelle Guillou, noted that these rules are established at the provincial level, but that the district could look into other options, such as courtesy riders, as a possible way to meet in-between. There was a question around student retention in the French programs in grades 10/11. At this point, there are around 9-10 dropping the program, but these numbers are around the same as usual, and there is no indication whether reconfiguration is a factor weighing in on these students’ decisions to drop the program. There was discussion about how other program options, such as theatre, athletics, etc. relate to students’ decisions. Exit interviews are done with PVP and family/student when leaving the program. There was conversation about the Parent Advisory Committee at Bastion, and its composition of parents from the French Immersion stream, and the site at Shuswap Middle School not having a playground. Megan Weir noted that there is an active grant application for a playground, and there are some good low-cost options for kids in the meantime. Jennifer Findlay, Director of Instruction for Early Years and Elementary has looked at Shuswap Middle School to determine changes needed for its modification to an elementary school and Operations will be enlisted to make these changes.
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4. Exciting Events and New News (School teams) (continued)	Megan Weir thanked the committee for their input on the survey piece, as far as informing questions around reconfiguration from a French immersion lens. <u>Bastion</u> Megan Weir presented information about the following: CPF French Film Night: April 17th Canadian Parents for French (CPF) hosted a French film night at Bastion on April 17th. The film night went well, there were upwards of 20 kids. Most kids liked it, but it was a little harder for the younger kids, as their attention span waned about three-quarters of the way through. CPF expected there to be subtitles, but that didn't work out so that is something to consider if this happens again. It was also noted that April 17th was right before the long weekend, so that would also have impacted the attendance numbers. Overall, it would be worth doing again if there is funding from CPF. <u>Shuswap Middle</u> Amanda Tait presented information about the following: French Immersion CEA Practicum Shuswap Middle had a CEA practicum student working on their practicum, and they were bi-lingual. This was immensely helpful, since they could understand everything and be more helpful in the classroom. This has now wrapped up, but it was phenomenal to have the help. Late Immersion Registrations Shuswap Middle is down one late immersion class next year. That hasn't happened in 14 years. Amanda Tait commented that this may be part of reconfiguration, but that it likely be a temporary dip that will resolve as everything shakes out. Quebec Trip The trip is coming up in 17 days. Everyone is getting excited. Faisons un Boeuf (to strum a tune) Amanda Tait and 3 other SMS FI teachers went to this event in Kelowna put on by the Regional French Immersion Coordinator. Faisons un Boeuf was started 3-4 years ago. The event has kids in middle schools create music videos, all in French, and then there is a panel of judges who vote on the best videos and prizes are awarded. Amanda Tait observed that the kids were very engaged, and it was a great celebration of French culture and learning which was very heartwarming. She appreciated seeing what the set up was like and it got her thinking about how to do something similar here.
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4. Exciting Events and New News (School teams) (continued)	• DEL F (Diplôme d'Études en Langue Française) Grade 8s are informally taking the A2 DELF exam. This was part of the conversation at the April 7 Professional Development Day as a piece guiding student success as they move through the program. There is definitely some anticipation from the students about it, and it is good so far. It is helpful for kids who are keeping with the program to know their knowledge level. J L Jackson • DEL F Megan Glasser did the training in February to be an evaluator for DELF exams and had the opportunity to observe some exams and grade the written part for A2, and some B2's. Megan Glasser noted that, as stated in the past, students are slightly stronger in oral French than written. • Planning for End of Year event for French Immersion • Brand new grade 9 Science textbooks • Crepe Breakfast • Scheduling for next year School administration is looking at the numbers of students for next year and working on building the schedules. • School Makeover • The school has been repainted and the signage showcases the French Immersion program. Nice refresh. Salmon Arm Secondary (Sullivan) Elliot presented information about the following: • France Trip with Martine Dollack • Martine Dollack Overseeing the DELF exams – Massively successful • Reconfiguration – concerns about impacts
6. Round table thoughts on improving French programming (open)	Megan Weir expressed her appreciation for the productive conversations the committee has had this year, thanked the committee members for their participation and welcomed the committee to reach out if there are questions.

Meeting adjourned at 1:49 p.m.