

**Upper Grand District School Board
Business Operations Committee
Minutes**

May 10, 2016

The Business Operations Committee of Upper Grand District School Board met on Tuesday, May 10, 2016, in the Board Room at 500 Victoria Road North, Guelph, Ontario commencing at 7:00 p.m.

The Chairperson, Trustee Schieck presided, and the following Trustees were present: Bailey, Busutil, Cooper, Fairbairn, Lustgarten Evoy, MacNeil, Moziar, Topping, and White along with Student Trustees Challinor and Johnson.

Present from the Administration were Dr. M. C. Rogers, Director of Education, together with Superintendents Benallick, Lindsay, McDonald, Morrell, Slater, Talbot, and Wright, Communications Officer Loney, Executive Officer of Human Resources Rose, Student Success Lead Zen, Planning Manager Passy, Operations Officer Scinocca, Assistant Superintendent Heaslip, and Manager of Operations Veit.

Approval of Agenda

Trustee Topping moved that the agenda be approved as printed.

The motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that the minutes of the meeting of April 12, 2016 be approved as printed.

The motion carried.

Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

Delegations in Support of French Immersion

1. Chris Pipe and Carolyn Paquet

Through their presentation, Chris and Carolyn offered three suggestions; that FI has an economic impact on our communities, an accessible and strong FI program is attractive to recruiting new teachers, and we, as a Board, need to develop a new strategy for housing FI students. They requested an effective

solution to the main issues of staffing and accommodation for a growing French Immersion program, capping be placed on hold for the next two years, and that an FSL advisory committee be created to develop a long term strategy for hiring FSL teachers and housing FI students.

2. Nicole Aouhalka

Ms. Aouhalka noted that English and French are the two official languages of Canada and children should have the right to evolve in them equally. She requested that the Board not restrict FI, be a leader, and keep language opportunities open to all children from kindergarten through to graduation.

3. Jenn MacLeod

Ms. MacLeod noted that solutions in recruitment and retention of qualified French teachers are already addressed by recommendations previously moved. She suggested that the Board consider the creation of a French Immersion Advisory Standing Committee, no caps, no reduction in FI instruction time, and grade 1 entry point for FI. She further suggested that the Board be allowed time for Human Resources recruitment and retention strategies to be fully implemented before considering any other changes to the FI program.

4. Samantha Sturgeon Crabb (Sandra Paolucci)

On behalf of Sandra Paolucci, Samantha Sturgeon Crabb noted that every school district was experiencing the growing pains of FI program delivery, and in particular Erin. She noted that the placement of caps would be a detriment to the community, and that the Board not cap schools that do not have accommodation issues.

5. Dan Gibson

Mr. Gibson Ward 1 City Councillor in Guelph, stated that he felt compelled to speak tonight on behalf of his constituents, but not on behalf of the City of Guelph. He spoke in support of FI, and suggested no caps on FI unless as a last resort.

6. Michelle Watterson

Parent from Ecole Arbour Vista and school Parent Council Co-Chair, Michelle Watterson suggested that all families have the opportunity to register their child in an FI program, and should have equity of access to type of education. She suggested the development of a central FI registration process, the utilization of

empty spaces in other schools, that the Board provide a process to address sibling priorities, and that the Board not implement caps.

7. Lindsey Glavaz and Jad McGregor

Together Lindsey and Jad presented and requested that the Board develop a policy similar to TDSB to retain the practice of welcoming every student who applies to an FI program. They noted that they did not support the proposed recommendations 12, 13, or 14.

8. Tyler Whale (Krista McGregor)

On behalf of Krista McGregor, Tyler Whale noted that every argument in support of a sustainable FI program was already heard. He suggested that capping was not a progressive decision, is aware of the concerns around recruitment and retention of qualified teachers, and understood boundary reviews and bussing. He further suggested that a healthy number of students would leave the Board should a viable FI program not be available.

Trustees expressed thanks to all the presenters tonight as well as recent presentations, for sharing their concerns, for their patience, and for their passion for French Immersion.

Report of the French Review Committee 2015

At a previous meeting, Trustee Busuttill moved that recommendations 3, 4, 12, 13, 14, and 16 from the Report of the French Review Committee come back to the May 2016 Business Operations Meeting for consideration by the Board. Those recommendations are listed below.

3. That the UGDSB explore the concept of starting core French in Grade 1 in conjunction with an FSL review by the Ministry of Education as outlined in Recommendation 2.

4. That once a strategy is approved by the UGDSB for elementary French Immersion, the French Review Committee will begin a review of secondary FSL as soon as possible and submit a report with recommendations for consideration by the UGDSB no later than June 30, 2017.

12 That effective September 1, 2017, JK be confirmed as the only entry point for new French Immersion students into the French Immersion program in the Upper Grand District School Board.

13 That a differentially applied JK enrolment cap, based on school capacity and historical enrolment trends together with a reduction in French instructional time to

84% for JK-2, 68% for Grades 3-5, and 50% for Grades 6-8 be placed on JK French Immersion programs in the jurisdiction totaling 579 students, effective for the 2017/18 school year.

14 That before November 2016, prior to kindergarten registration, a random selection process be developed as part of the enrolment cap to create a fair and transparent method for student entry into the French Immersion program.

16 That the enrolment cap be reviewed no later than December 31, 2019 and every 5 years thereafter, unless significant changes in demographics, enrolment or school utilization would indicate an earlier review.

Trustee Cooper moved that (# 3) the UGDSB explore the concept of starting core French in Grade 1 in conjunction with an FSL review by the Ministry of Education as outlined in Recommendation 2.

The motion carried.

Trustee Cooper moved that (# 4) once a strategy is approved by the UGDSB for elementary French Immersion, the French Review Committee will begin a review of secondary FSL as soon as possible and submit a report with recommendations for consideration by the UGDSB no later than June 30, 2017.

The motion carried.

Trustee Cooper moved that (# 12) effective September 1, 2017, JK be confirmed as the only entry point for new French Immersion students into the French Immersion program in the Upper Grand District School Board.

The motion carried.

Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that (# 13) a differentially applied JK enrolment cap, based on school capacity and historical enrolment trends together with a reduction in French instructional time to 84% for JK-2, 68% for Grades 3-5, and 50% for Grades 6-8 be placed on JK French Immersion programs in the jurisdiction totaling 579 students, effective for the 2017/18 school year.

The motion was defeated.

Proposed Enrolment Caps and Reduction in French Immersion Instructional Time.

Recommendation # 13 which was defeated earlier, prompted a discussion on how to deal with the proposed enrolment caps and the reduction of instructional French Immersion teaching time.

Trustee Cooper moved that a differentially applied school level JK French immersion enrolment cap will be applied, based on school capacity and enrolment trends effective for the 2017/18 school year as follows: École Arbour Vista PS 40, Couling Crescent PS 60, Edward Johnson PS 46, Fred A. Hamilton PS 35, John McCrae PS 46, École King George PS 46, Paisley Road PS 46, Victory PS 30, Brisbane PS 40, École Harris Mill PS 30, James McQueen PS 50, Palmerston PS 30, Princess Elizabeth PS 90, and further that a reduction in French instructional time to 84% for JK-2, 68% for Grades 3-5, and 50% for Grades 6-8 be placed on JK French Immersion programs.

Trustee Cooper advised that the above proposed recommendation represented a compromise between a hard cap for the Board and individual school caps. It allows growth, and provides an opportunity for a process by which if there is not enough room in the home school, the student may attend another school. It can offer or divert students to different places to access the FI program. She pointed out that this new recommendation does not include a global cap, French Immersion within Upper Grand will continue to grow, two individual school caps were revised (Brisbane PS and Palmerston PS) since they were constrained compared to their current enrolment levels. She further advised that this replacement motion was vetted and supported by staff. Manager of Planning Passy advised that the establishment of caps was needed to allow time to review the demands for the FI program, and to ensure that the provision of the program was the best that the Board could offer, considering the restrictions encountered. A discussion followed regarding how the caps would be implemented, sustainability, and future growth considerations. It was suggested and agreed that the recommendation be dealt with as three separate motions. The separated motions were placed and discussed individually.

Trustee Cooper moved that differentially applied school level JK French Immersion enrolment caps will be applied, based on school capacity and enrolment trends effective for the 2017/18 school year.

The motion carried.

- a) Trustee Cooper moved that school level JK FI enrolment caps will be applied as follows: École Arbour Vista PS 40, Couling Crescent PS 60, Edward Johnson PS 46, Fred A. Hamilton PS 35, John McCrae PS 46,

École King George PS 46, Paisley Road PS 46, Victory PS 30, Brisbane PS 40, École Harris Mill PS 30, James McQueen PS 50, Palmerston PS 30, and Princess Elizabeth PS 90.

The motion carried.

- b) Trustee Cooper moved that a reduction in French Instructional time to 84% for JK-2, 68% for grades 3-5, and 50% for grades 6-8 be placed on JK French Immersion programs.

A lengthy debate ensued regarding the proposed reduction of FI instructional time, as well as the staffing criteria and potential problems that could arise should the instructional time not be reduced. Reduction in services currently offered, pressure on staff, implications on FSL grants, wrong direction for the FI program, disappointed parents, retention of the number of French teachers required and the related recruitment process, increase capacity for FI accommodation, and status quo were discussed in great detail. Another concern raised was the possibility of passing a motion with the inability to support the FI program if recruitment was unsuccessful in obtaining the number of qualified teachers to properly support the FI program. It was suggested, that the Board may end up without enough qualified teachers to meet the demands of the FI program, and that a motion passed on speculation, would be a risky decision. Trustee Busutil outlined the steps that she had taken to assist with the Board's French teacher recruitment (e.g. calling various Faculties of Education such as Brock and Queens). Trustee Bailey suggested a friendly amendment. A lengthy debate ensued regarding the reduction of FI instructional time. Trustee Bailey withdrew his amendment and motion 13 c was defeated.

The motion was defeated.

Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved (new motion # 13 c) that the status quo instructional time in French Immersion remains, unless Human Resource requirements cannot be achieved, in which case instructional times will be reviewed annually and adjusted as required.

The motion carried.

Selection Process for Registration in the FI Program

Trustee Cooper moved that (# 14) before November 2016, prior to kindergarten registration, a random selection process be developed as part of the enrolment cap to create a fair and transparent method for student entry into the French Immersion program.

The motion was defeated.

Trustee Cooper clarified that the intent of replacement motion # 14 (see below) was that staff would develop a process for FI registration. Although complete details of the application process were not defined, it was her understanding that they would include a defined date for application, would be subject to available space, and would include considerations for siblings to be placed in priority where other siblings were currently enrolled in the program. Creation of a waitlist was also included, however recognized that some children may not get into the program. Parents may have options should space at the home school not be available. Parents would register their child and, if space in FI was not available in their home school that child may be put on a wait list. An offer may be made for another space in an existing FI program where the number of JK applications is lower than the school's JK cap, or a new program in a new location based on qualified French teacher availability, and sustainable space in an underutilized school.

Trustee Busuttil requested clarification of the proposed process for centralized registration, and how it would work to identify the number of applications. Trustee Cooper agreed that the language was unclear, and reminded Trustees that staff still needed to determine the process details.

Replacement Motion # 14 was tabled with several suggestions for wording changes. It was agreed that in some cases the applications may not be accommodated. After some discussion about reasonable accommodation, it was agreed that the process include timelines for registration which, if received before the deadline, will be processed and if received after the deadline would be considered but may not be processed, subject to availability. Trustee Cooper suggested that a new location for an FI program could be triggered by an accommodation review, a boundary review, or a waitlist review, and that each new program will have a cap to ensure sustainable enrolment at each location. Although it is intended that the program be offered to all students, Trustee Cooper advised that there will be instances where some students may not be able to get into an FI program. Clarification on the registration process and the implementation will be available once staff have the opportunity to develop the process, and consider the concerns raised by all stakeholders.

Trustee Cooper moved (replacement motion # 14) that staff be directed to develop a selection process for registration in the French Immersion program and report back with details of the process prior to November, 2016 in order to create a fair and transparent method for student entry into the French Immersion program and:

- a. The process for registration, include a defined date range for application. Applications received before the application deadline will be processed.

Applications received after the deadline will be considered, subject to available space;

- b. Siblings of students registered in French Immersion be given priority access to French Immersion in the same school as their sibling;
- c. A waitlist be established for any student who does not get access based on the differentially applied school level JK French Immersion enrolment caps specified in Recommendation 13b);
- d. Placement of waitlisted students in French Immersion beyond the existing schools listed in Recommendation 13b) will be considered based on the availability and sustainability of pupil places in one or more underutilized schools, and availability of qualified French as a second language teachers, and
- e. Any new location for French Immersion resulting from boundary, accommodation or waitlist reviews will include establishing a differentially applied school level JK French Immersion enrolment cap.

The motion carried.

Trustee Cooper moved that (# 16) the enrolment cap be reviewed no later than December 31, 2019 and every 5 years thereafter, unless significant changes in demographics, enrolment or school utilization would indicate an earlier review.

The motion was defeated.

Trustees raised a concern about timelines, and stated that five years was too long and suggested an annual review. Manager of Planning Passy reported that an annual report could work and would provide staff with an indication of the numbers and whether or not adjustments needed to be made for subsequent years. Trustee Busuttill moved a friendly amendment that the review be annual which was accepted by Trustee Cooper.

Trustee Cooper moved that (new # 16) the differentially applied school level JK French Immersion enrolment caps be reviewed annually.

The motion carried.

Trustee Bailey expressed thanks, to everyone involved in this process, and for the development and consideration of the many solutions and compromises for the delivery of the FI program. He felt that the recommendations reflected a good balance between the Board's ability to manage growth in light of accommodation and resources concerns. He felt that the program will stay strong. He noted that if the number of applications exceeded the cap in any given school, the Board will do everything it can to

accommodate students and create a sustainable program in the schools, but accommodation is not guaranteed. He noted that these compromises allow growth for the FI program, address accommodation and Human Resource concerns, and address many concerns raised by parents and the community. Again, he thanked Trustees, particularly Trustee Cooper for the support and consideration of a fair compromise, and a great solution without destruction.

Trustee Cooper also expressed thanks to everyone who helped make this happen and a special thanks to Trustee Busutil for her hard work in researching alternative methods for the management of French as a Second Language. Trustee Cooper also noted that what was proposed represented a compromise, which was preferable to implementing global caps and enabled growth and expansion of the FI program in UGDSB.

Secondary Identified Schools Report 2016 2017

This item was deferred to the May 2016 Board meeting.

Health and Safety Report - nil report

Other Business

Trustee MacNeil reported that a new Executive Director was appointed for the Art Gallery of Guelph; Dr. Shawna McCabe.

Adjournment

Trustee Lustgarten Evoy moved that this Committee adjourn at 11:20 p.m. to report to the Board.

The motion carried.

This document is available in alternative formats upon request.