

FSL for School Administrators

FROM AWARENESS to ACTION

From Awareness to Action is a professional learning publication to support school administrators in the strengthening of French as a Second Language.



ISSUE 8 Supporting New Teachers of French as a Second Language

IN THIS ISSUE

the focus is to highlight strategies and key factors for supporting new FSL teachers and meeting their professional development needs.

School administrators are instrumental in providing new FSL teachers with personalized opportunities and supports in developing their professional practice and self-efficacy. An awareness of incoming teacher unique needs is critical in providing resource assistance and mentoring opportunities. Establishing a school culture that values language learning and where French is visibly displayed throughout the school will help to create a sense of belonging for FSL staff.

WHAT'S MY ROLE?

FSL teachers benefit from the same New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) that administrators follow with all staff. It is helpful to keep in mind a few needs that may be unique to FSL teachers. According to the Ontario Public School Boards' Association Report of the *French as a Second Language Ontario Labour Market Partnership Project* 2018 (p. 33), FSL teachers in their first two years of teaching ranked their professional learning needs as:

- The availability of effective teaching resources
- Opportunities to improve French language skills
- Knowledge of effective second language teaching strategies

Research by Christine Frank & Associates June, 2021 **Beginning Teachers' Learning Journeys Longitudinal Study** indicates that school administrators can support FSL teachers through quality mentorship, personalized learning opportunities, school culture, principal encouragement, and feedback. These key factors make a difference for new teachers in all four of the NTIP goals (confidence, efficacy, instructional practice, and commitment to continuous learning). The graphic on the next page is not exhaustive but is meant to highlight some ways that administrators can offer support.



One article to read, one quote to consider, one link to click...



1. The introduction to this resource provides administrators with positive reasons for promoting and supporting FSL programs. Administrators will want to share this resource with new FSL teachers. *Ontario's New Teacher's Handbook: Surviving and Thriving in the French as a Second Language Classroom*, p. 1 Introduction (CASLT, 2017) [Ontario New FSL Teacher Handbook](#).
2. "Principal encouragement has emerged as a key factor in the growth of new teachers. New teachers who highlighted the important role their principal played in their development, trusted their principal. They felt they could speak openly about their learning without the worry of being judged. Simply put, new teachers felt they had their principal's support." *New Teacher Induction Program – Induction Elements Manual*, p. 21 (2021)
3. The four core goals of NTIP are confidence, efficacy, instructional practice, and commitment to continuous learning in service of improving student learning and well-being. [NTIP Induction Elements Manual](#)

Begin with Relationships





It is important to develop a trusting relationship with new teachers that supports and encourages open dialogue. The following administrator actions support the building of relational trust:

- Listen and observe
- Provide encouragement and ongoing feedback
- Be visible in the classroom during French instruction
- Intentionally recognize positive instructional practice
- Check in regularly
- Invite the new teacher to share their needs and reflections
- Discuss resources and teaching needs
- Speak French with students and staff
- Connect with system French consultant / coordinator
- Initiate and support collaborative networks with colleagues
- Offer membership in a professional association (e.g., Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers CASLT)
- Dedicate school budget to support the FSL program

“As a new teacher, I would really appreciate feedback from my colleagues & principal outside of the performance appraisal time. Ongoing feedback that tells me what is going well with my teaching and suggestions of improvement, I find very helpful and meaningful to me as an educator.”

New Teacher, Limestone DSB

Key Factors in Supporting New French as a Second Language Teachers

		Opportunities for:
	Quality Mentorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-school, online, group, communities of practice in FSL • Classroom visits (e.g., co-planning/co-teaching, focused observation/debrief) • Support with FSL-specific teaching and assessment strategies (e.g., the action-oriented approach in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)
	Personalized (Differentiated) Learning Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authentic learning via joint release days with mentors • Professional learning that addresses pedagogy, content, and language proficiency (e.g., opportunities to practice French in a professional setting) • Participation in professional associations and conferences (e.g., Ontario Modern Language Teachers' Association, Association Canadienne des Professionnels d'Immersion, Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers)
	School Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributing to making language learning visible in the school's daily routines and procedures (e.g., school website information, school displays, extra-curriculars in French) • Modeling the value of language learning throughout the school and promoting plurilingualism • Promoting the benefit of language learning for ALL students
	Administrator Encouragement and Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging in learning-focused conversations with new FSL teachers • School administrator presence in FSL learning environments • Providing meaningful and professional growth feedback (e.g., annual learning plans as an opportunity for growth)

How can I support FSL teachers as they build a mentoring web?

Principals play a critical role as “broker mentors” for new FSL teachers. The more connections or “threads” in the new teacher’s mentoring web, the more flexible, authentic and powerful it will be. Consider the new teacher’s role (grade/program), context (access to colleagues with similar roles) and professional learning needs (based on students’ learning needs). Based on these factors, new teachers may benefit from working with a variety of experienced colleagues and school board staff.

