

FSL for School Administrators

FROM AWARENESS to ACTION

From Awareness to Action is a professional learning publication written by the Provincial Principal Focus Group members to support school administrators in the strengthening of French as a Second Language.



ISSUE 7 Pathways in French as a Second Language in Grades 7 to 12

Principals and vice principals have a critical role in ensuring that all students are provided opportunities and supports as they plan their individual pathways through school and transition to their initial postsecondary destination. The recent documents *Creating Pathways to Success: An Education and Career/Life Planning Program for Ontario Schools 2013*, the *Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12: French as a Second Language – Core, Extended and Immersion French 2014*, and *Including Students with Special Education Needs in French as a Second Language Programs: A Guide for Ontario Schools 2015* present an opportunity to review current practices to ensure that the benefits of second language learning in Grades 7 to 12 are highlighted for all of our students.



New Courses, New Opportunities

The 2014 secondary FSL curriculum emphasizes FSL as an essential component of diverse pathways. The following table summarizes some of the new courses and other opportunities for students to continue their FSL studies:

	Key Information	New Opportunities
New courses in Core French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 9 and 10 Core French Open (FSF10, FSF20) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gr. 9 Open (FSF10) is an introductory course for students who have little or no knowledge of French or who have not accumulated the minimum of 600 hours of elementary Core French instruction
New courses in French Immersion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grades 9 and 10 French Immersion Applied (FIF1P, FIF2P) Grades 11 and 12 French Immersion Open (FIF30, FIF40) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immersion students may continue their FSL studies in either the academic or applied pathways.
Alternative (non-credit) course options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> K courses, which are alternative (non-credit) courses, can also be designed to include FSL components for students working towards an OSSC (Ontario Secondary School Certificate) or a Certificate of Accomplishment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, the alternative (non-credit) course KEN (Language and Communication Development) might offer simple expressions and vocabulary in French.
Graduation requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students must earn a minimum 30 credits, including 1 credit in FSL. A maximum of 2 credits in FSL may count as additional compulsory credits. 1 credit from Group 1, and 1 credit from either Group 2 or Group 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students may select up to three FSL credits to meet the requirements of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

WHAT'S MY ROLE?

The role of principals, vice principals and guidance educators is to bring these new opportunities to the attention of students while reinforcing the part FSL plays in their pathway and career planning. Students will benefit from

understanding all pathway implications. This will enable them to make connections between the advantages of language learning and the impact on longer term career/life goals.

“Schools and school boards explore the use of flexible timetabling and scheduling to provide students with a wider range of options and to avoid conflicts with mandatory courses (e.g., use block scheduling).”

A Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools (2013), p. 16



FROM the FIELD

A guidance counsellor who is also a FSL teacher shares strategies for encouraging FSL pathway options such as:

- Focusing mostly on the grade 9 students as they are the future of the French program. “If you can hook them in grade 9, then you have a good chance of keeping them.”
- Inviting exchange students to visit the class on a regular basis.
- Promoting the exchange program with students as they are more likely to continue to take French if they complete an exchange.
- Organizing trips with cultural opportunities such as French restaurants, plays, and bookstores.

Substitutions and Exemptions

School policies concerning substitutions and exemptions clearly impact individual student pathways. Policy/Program memorandum (PPM) No. 58 that provided for the possibility of individual exemptions was revoked in 2004. The 2014 secondary FSL curriculum policy supports a differentiated approach to teaching and learning where an understanding of each individual student’s strengths and needs will help teachers plan effective instruction for all.

Including Students with Special Education Needs in French as a Second Language Programs invites boards to review their local procedures and practices regarding exemptions and substitutions for FSL programs. Are students’ individual strengths, needs and interests taken into consideration when program decisions are being made?

Transitions and Career / Life Planning

It is important to include FSL in conversations regarding transitions and career/life planning. *Creating Pathways to Success* outlines policies and processes to guide schools in creating comprehensive programs. The “All About Me” portfolio (Kindergarten to Grade 6) and the Individual Pathways Plan (Grades 7 to 12) provide a structure for student/parent/teacher conferencing as well as documentation to support ongoing planning at home and at school. Students need to consider such questions as:

Why is learning French important to me? How does French fit into my goals?
Can I foresee how I might need French in the future? How can it broaden my opportunities?

Experiential Learning including Cooperative Education

Experiential learning connected to a community provides students an opportunity to deepen their understanding by applying their learning in various settings outside of the classroom. Cooperative education is an example of experiential learning available to FSL students. Students develop and come to recognize their strengths, interests and skills with respect to expectations in a community or workplace. Students gain a better understanding of the advantages of FSL pathway options and how these relate to education and career/life planning. These experiences in FSL allow students to apply and extend knowledge and skills in exciting and meaningful contexts that render the language pertinent and applicable to their real lives as they explore education and career/life options.

The messages that students and families receive during transitions and educational planning have a significant impact on participation in FSL. School staff are encouraged to examine transitions and course selection processes, timetabling practices, and experiential learning experiences including cooperative education in order to provide all students with access to FSL learning opportunities.

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

1. ***Including Students with Special Education Needs in French as a Second Language Programs: A Guide for Ontario Schools*** (2015). This document serves as a companion to *A Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2013* by providing additional research, data and examples of inclusive practice. It focuses on ways to make all FSL programs more available to students with special education needs and on the supports these students need to succeed.
2. **“Planned learning experiences in the community, including job shadowing and job twinning, field trips, work experience, and cooperative education, provide students with opportunities to see the relevance of their classroom learning in a work setting, make connections between school and work, and explore a career of interest as they plan their pathway through secondary school and on to their postsecondary destination.”** (*The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12: French as a Second Language – Core, Extended and Immersion French, 2014*, p. 54)
3. ***Supporting Students in FSL***: A resource released in **September 2015** for principals and vice principals including a video for self-reflection and a second video to support principals in their ongoing dialogue with special education and guidance educators. Of particular note, a guidance counsellor speaks directly about the strategies she uses in the promotion of FSL at the secondary level.

www.curriculum.org/fsl/projects/from-awareness-to-action-supporting-students-in-fsl

