

CPF

Canadian Parents for French British Columbia and Yukon Branch

President's Report

CPF BC AND YUKON has had another busy and innovative year, with new programmes, new partnerships, and new ideas complementing our increasing enrollment around the province. The word is out across the country: French language programmes are a priority in the west. Because so much has happened in the past six months, I seek your indulgence: in a slight departure from previous years, this report will seek to outline achievements from October 2005 to October 2006. Our annual audited statements remain consistent, however, with the fiscal year April 1, 2005 to March 30, 2006.

French on the Rise

For the sixth year in a row, BC has record numbers of students enrolled in French immersion programmes, our numbers now closing in on 40,000 students. At a time when overall enrollment numbers in school are dropping, the percentage of immersion students has continued to rise. One in every nine children, or nine per cent of the population of BC is now in French immersion, as compared to two per cent just five years ago. This represents an increase of 22 per cent in five years. In some districts, like Victoria, immersion kindergarten students comprise a full 25 per cent of all kindergarten enrolment.

In the Yukon, French language programmes have experienced a similar increase. Numbers in immersion jumped by 101 students in September 2005, while the overall number of students in school declined by 263 in 2005-2006.

At the same time, new programmes at Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, University of Victoria, and Educacentre now provide bilingual graduates with post secondary opportunities to continue using and improving their language abilities.

Our Strength is in Our Chapters

These numbers show also in the strength of local chapters. There are nearly 6,700 members throughout British Columbia and the Yukon, and with the present recruitment drive set to end in November, I hope to see our numbers to more than 7000 by the new year. Chapters across the province are being

revitalized and encouraged through programmes like the Francopalooza events being held in Prince George (October, 2006), Kelowna (November 2006), Vancouver and Victoria (Spring 2007). These events bring training and materials to local chapter members who may not be able to travel to a provincial AGM or conference, and raise the profile locally, not only of Canadian Parents for French and the services we offer, but also of French Second Language programmes, and the wealth of benefits they bring to children.

Chapters are often instrumental in bringing new programmes to the community. BC and the Yukon have 33 late immersion programmes, including new programmes in Summerland, Duncan and Whistler. There are 45 early immersion programmes with Chetwynd, population 3000, being the newest of the lot. Immersion programmes exist in 248 BC schools, and in 44 of the 59 school districts. Moreover, the number of communities with new programs in that period has risen by 16. Each one was initiated and pushed to a successful conclusion by CPF BC & Yukon and its chapters.

Advocacy efforts Locally, Provincially, and Nationally

At the branch level, Nancy, Rita, Olivier and Loraine continue to focus primarily on advocacy issues, working with local CPF members to urge local districts to eliminate lotteries and other caps on enrolment, or to promote programmes in smaller communities where enrolments are generally low.

Over the past year, the branch office and our chapter counterparts have presented more than 50 briefs to local school districts on subjects important to French Second language programs, including resource allocation, expansion of programmes, and the defense of existing programmes. We've also helped push for greater transparency in funding of FSL programmes; new, collective



mechanisms for teacher recruitment; a greater number of French language post secondary study options; and strong endorsements for FSL programmes from decision-makers.

CPF BC & Yukon continues to offer critical policy advocacy support to chapters by preparing and delivering presentations on their behalf before teachers, principals, school boards and the general public, as well as being a central participant at the educational stakeholders meeting organized by the BC Teachers Federation. Meetings with senior politicians at the federal and provincial level, public servants, and education leaders from across BC and the Yukon have helped keep our concerns in the public as well as the government eye.

As I told a meeting of parents, teachers, administrators, and Francophones in Prince George, CPF BC & Yukon has an uncommonly good relationship with both the provincial government and Francophone communities. Not every branch can boast a collegial and cordial partnership with these two most influential groups. We count ourselves fortunate to have been able to maintain such a close working relationship with the Ministry of Education.

Nationally, the Branch has an important role to play as well. Rita Parikh, our executive director, has been asked to provide input on several national committees, while Melanie Tighe-Lovsin, our past president, is also involved at the National level as a member on the Pan-Canadian Future Directions Committee, which will help set the direction for French language opportunities across the country for the next five years. As this includes advocating for federal funding, it is easy to see how significant a strong BC presence is.

Flagship Programmes and Partnerships

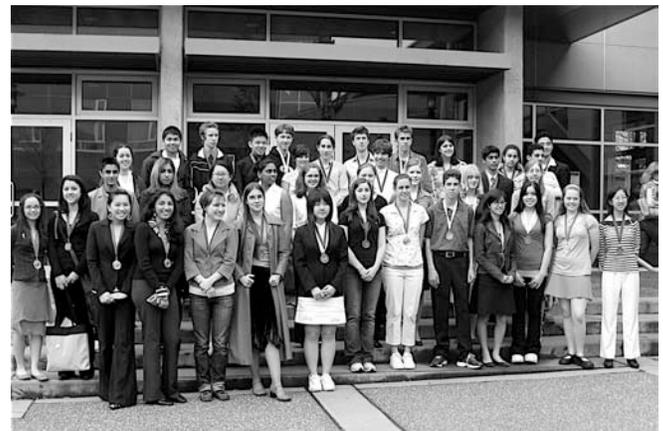
Concours d' Art Oratoire

In 2006, more than 5,000 students participated in this public speaking competition at a school and district level throughout the region. The competition continues to grow in popularity. District winners travelled to Surrey's Kwantlen University College in May, where more than 250 finalists from grades six through 12 competed in four categories. Grade 12 finalists in each of the four categories then went on to Ottawa to compete against students from across the country. In a remarkable achievement, three of our four BC participants placed first in their respective category, each winning a \$20,000 scholarship to the University of Ottawa; our fourth participant placed third in her category. I'm sure next year's president will be equally proud of that remarkable achievement on the part of BC students. A heartfelt note of thanks goes out to Lana Sanghara and Deborah Jackson for their incredible commitment and considerable efforts in organizing this year's Concours. And another note of thanks to the events community

supporters who include the French Consulate, the Conseil Scolaire de la Colombie-Britannique; the Canadian Club, the Bureau des affaires francophone et Francophile and Katimavik.

Rencontre

In May 2006, 150 Grade 7 and 8 students came together with 30 senior moniteurs to explore science, recreation, art and dance over a long weekend in French at SFU. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The majority of monitors are former participants in *Rencontre*. This activity is quickly outgrowing its available space, and the staff is actively looking at ways to improve and possibly expand this exciting weekend for students looking to have fun in French outside the class-



Concours d'art oratoire 2006 winners

room. A special note of thanks goes out to *Rencontre* coordinator, Kim Adamson-Sharpe for making *Rencontre* an incredible success for all children. I wish to express my gratitude in particular to the Bureau of Francophone and Francophile Affairs at SFU for its generous contribution to this event.

Partnerships

CPF continues to enjoy strong relationships with Francophone community partners including BC's only Francophone professional theatre company, Théâtre La Seizième and the Conseil Jeunesse. Through our efforts at collaboration, the branch has been able to bring our partners' rich and varied programmes – including elementary and secondary school-level plays, the Francophone Games and Francophone Parliament – to our membership across the region.

Scholarships

CPF-BC & Yukon gave two major provincial bursaries to future French Second language teachers in May 2005, and one in 2006. In addition, chapters donated Grade 12 and post-secondary bursaries worth \$27,000 to deserving students. At the same time, Ottawa University offered a \$2,000 entrance

scholarships to winners of CPF-BC and Yukon branch's Concours in each of four categories, and a \$20,000 scholarship to the national winners in each category.

Chapter Activities

Over the past year, CPF chapters have organized more than 150 events for more than 14,000 students. Almost every chapter held two or more events including theatre camps, summer camps, Maple Sugar Shack festivals, reading and writing festivals, entertainment evenings and more. Thousands of volunteer hours are contributed to make these events a success. Moreover, each financial contribution by CPF is matched at the community level, dollar for dollar, a demonstration of the strong support being displayed by communities across the region for French-language sport, arts and cultural events.

Innovations

Two projects were completed this year that I am particularly proud of: the launch of our Multi-Cultural Project and the completion of a branch-level three-year Strategic Plan..

Multi-Cultural Project

As new Canadians increase in number across the Lower Mainland and BC, CPF BC & Yukon recognized that few of these second-language students entered French Immersion classes. Clearly, communities such as the Chinese-Canadian, Indo-Canadian, Filipino-Canadian and Korean-Canadian are ones which understand the value of language instruction. However, information about French immersion programmes was difficult for parents to access, and links with Francophone communities were few.

CPF BC & Yukon began an innovative program of consultation, outreach, promotion and awareness-raising among BC's diverse multicultural community. Through posters, brochures, and advertising in newspapers, we sought to inform parents in the Filipino, South Asian, Arabic, Japanese, Chinese and Korean communities in particular, not only of the cognitive benefits of second and third-language learning, but also of the ways in which children pick up English. With "multicultural ambassadors" chosen from each of these six communities – young tri-lingual women and men who spoke neither English nor French before entering early immersion –



Two of our tri-lingual ambassadors distribute our posters and brochures printed in one of six languages

we offered living proof to our claims that French immersion is for everyone.

These materials are now being made available across the country to all CPF Branches.

Strategic Planning

The Board and staff spent a weekend working with Tekara Consulting considering the present and potential future of French Language Advocacy in British Columbia and the Yukon. Through a series of planning steps, the Board developed a three-year plan which will, we hope, take us into the future.

Vision

As an autonomous branch of a national organization, CPF – BC & Yukon subscribes to the national vision and mission of CPF. The CPF family is working towards:

A Canada where French- and English-speakers live together in mutual respect with the understanding and appreciation of each other's language and culture and where linguistic duality forms an integral part of society.

Building on this vision, we further believe that:

We are a catalyst fostering vibrant life-long FSL opportunities in B.C. and the Yukon

Mission

CPF BC & Yukon Branch subscribes to the national organizational mission which states:

Canadian Parents for French is the national network of volunteers which values French as an integral part of Canada and which is dedicated to the promotion and creation of French second language learning opportunities for young Canadians.

For CPF BC & Yukon Branch, this means that:

We are a network of youth, parents, educators and partners working to ensure diverse educational programs by:

- *Advocating for new and expanded services*
- *Providing training and information*
- *Fostering partnerships*
- *Creating our own opportunities*

(President's Report continued on page 6)

Financial Reports

The Finance Committee of the Canadian Parents for French BC & Yukon is pleased to report for the April 2005 - March 2006 financial year, that:

CPF BC/Yukon moved out of a significant operational deficit into a solid positive financial position with a balanced budget.

All reports were completed and handed in on time. This has ensured that funding from our major source, Canadian Heritage, was received as projected, and provided a consistent, predictable cash flow. At no time in the past year was CPF BC & Yukon in a position of having to borrow money or delay payments. This is a major accomplishment over previous years.

The accounting procedure was streamlined and fine-tuned to better reflect the actual expenditures and project areas. This was a critical step to better substantiate funding proposals and more accurately prepare budgets.

To ensure the long term viability of the organization, financial diversification was adopted as a strategic goal. In the past, CPF BC & Yukon has relied primarily on Heritage Canada funding. In 2005-2006, CPF BC & Yukon diversified its funding base by signing a four-year contribution agreement with the Ministry of Education, expanding its advertising revenue and producing a post-secondary educational supplement, securing grants from universities and other post-secondary institutions, signing a one-time technology grant agreement with Industry Canada, organizing fundraising activities including marketplaces and an auction, and gaining in-kind support from community-level businesses. In 2005-2006 non-Canadian Heritage Revenue totaled \$185,749 (38 per cent). In 2006-2007, it is anticipated that non-Canadian Heritage Revenues will increase to 50 per cent (\$314,684) of revenue total.

We look forward to another successful year.

Respectfully submitted

October 20, 2006
CPF BC & Yukon AGM, Ottawa, Ontario
CPF BC & Yukon Finance Committee Members

Sabine Schweiger – Board Member
Heather Newman – Board Member
Rita Parikh – Executive Director
Susan Albion – Bookkeeper

Statement of Revenue and Expenditures
Fiscal Year April 1, 2005 – March 31, 2006

Revenues	Amount
Canadian Heritage – Core Grant	287,106
Canadian Heritage – Innovations	35,800
BC Ministry of Education	66,253
Advertising	13,675
Memberships	54,922
AGM Registrations	10,857
Other	54,885
Total Revenue	523,498

Expenses	Amount
Programs and Operations	370,859
Governance	30,743
Annual Conference	24,878
Socio-cultural grants	82,202
Total Expenses	508,682
Excess in Revenue over Expenses	14,816

Balance Sheet for the year ended March 31, 2005

Assets	266,968
Liabilities	159,387
Fund balances	266,968

Excerpted from audited statements from Helen Ross (CA). (Copies of audited statements are available upon request.)



*Member Relations and Educational Outreach Officer
 Olivier Hill with Verbathon creator, Emmanuel Escueta*

(President's report continued from page 3)

We identified the five priority areas in which we want to focus our efforts, and elaborated on the strategic goal we expect to achieve within three years in each of these areas.

Priority Area	Strategic Goal
Membership	To create and mobilize an advocacy force that secures the future of FSL in BC and the Yukon
Financial Health	To diversify sources of long-term funding at chapter and branch levels while maintaining the integrity of our vision
Communications	To be valued and recognized as an effective and influential voice on FSL issues
Educational and Cultural Outreach	To have an expanded range of FSL educational options for K-12 in the public school system, and to broaden access to a range of socio-cultural activities that help French come alive for students outside the classroom.
Infrastructure	To have the information systems, financial and human resources in place to meet all of the above commitments

The Final Word

The past six years, since I joined the Board of CPF BC & Yukon, has been an extraordinary journey. I wish the new Board well as they pursue not only the key ideas of the strategic plan, but face new challenges and find new ways to expand and improve the French language opportunities in British Columbia and the Yukon. I envy you the voyage.

In addition, there are some special people to acknowledge and thank. First of all, Loraine Cassidy is the heart of CPF BC and Yukon, and has kept the office running smoothly no matter what comes her way. Laurelle Keashley, Nancy Taylor, Michel Kouadio, and Olivier Hill have all brought their gifts, passions, and knowledge to the organization throughout the time I have been on the Board. I appreciated their skills as much as the laughter. Rita Parikh has brought grace, skill, and passion to the ED's office: I look forward to seeing where she takes CPF in the future.

To past Board members - Melanie, Anna, Margaret, Jonathan, Diane, Barb, Mary Ann - to present ones - Laurin, Heather, Marie, Marie Chantal, Sabine - and Adrian: my thanks and gratitude to all of you. You each exemplify the depth volunteers bring to our communities. I know that the strong spirit of commitment will continue with the new Board of Directors and throughout the membership of CPF British Columbia and Yukon.



Sherry Taylor and family at their home in Williams Lake

And finally, to my children Rachel, Anne, Danielle, and Patrick: you have literally grown up as CPF "volun-tolds", being the public face and voice of French language opportunities in our community and beyond. To my husband Rob, who was away volunteering for his own advocacy organization the day we took the picture. Without all of you, this opportunity would have been closed to me. Anything I have been able to bring to this organization is due to you.

Sherry Taylor, President

Board of Directors 2006/07

Up for Re-election

Heather Newman

Heather has been involved with CPF since 1988 and is an active volunteer with many other school and community organizations.

She believes passionately in supporting French Second Language opportunities, not just through French immersion; she hopes that innovative core French strategies such as Intensive Core French might also help to "turn on" more students to the value of learning French and to being able to fully participate in and enjoy the richness of our bilingual nation.

Heather brings to the board a much needed northern and rural perspective on issues respecting the different challenges we all face.

Marie Reed

Marie's association with Canadian Parents for French began in 1994 in her home community of Kamloops. In the past four years on the BC Board, she has been exposed to all of CPF's accomplishments and looks forward to the next year as we continue to see the effects of the implementation of CPF BC & Yukon's strategic plan.

Sabine Schweiger

Sabine hails from Whitehorse where she has been an active CPF member since 2001. Sabine helped organize the CPF BC/Yukon conference in 2003, and assisted with the introduction of late immersion as an option for Whitehorse students.

She serves as a part-time environmental coordinator with the City of Whitehorse, and is completing a master's degree in environmental education. Sabine has plenty of energy and dedication, and hopes to continue her work on the CPF BC & Yukon Board, working to ensure that French immersion continues to grow in strength and vitality.



CPF BC & Yukon Staff: Executive Director Rita Parikh, Nancy Taylor, Lorraine Cassidy and Michel Kouadio

Nominees

Marie-Noelle Genest

Brand new this year is a youth representative position on the Board of Directors. Marie is that nominee. Born in Vancouver, Marie was raised speaking both French and English because of her Quebec heritage. She was educated in the French immersion and Francophone programs during her schooling.

In 2005, Marie won the CPF - BC & Yukon bursary which is awarded annually to a university student in BC who plans on pursuing a career as a French immersion or Core French teacher. She is now teaching Grade 7 Late French Immersion in Pitt Meadows.

Marie is now interested in taking her involvement to the next level because she believes she not only has much to contribute from a teacher's perspective, but much to learn from the parents' perspective.

Marcela Navarro

Marcela was born and raised in Mexico City, immigrating to Canada in 1982. For the past 24 years she has worked as a Medical Laboratory Technologist at Prince Rupert Regional Hospital.

Because Marcela values French as a second language, she enrolled her two daughters Jennifer and Jessica in French immersion. They have both recently graduated from the program and yet Marcela is passionate enough about French immersion to continue her involvement at the provincial level. She is a firm believer that parent involvement

in children's education improves student attitude and achievement.

Not one to sit back and relax now that her daughters are grown, Marcela continues to be involved in her community: she volunteers with the Canadian Red Cross, CIBC Run for the Cure, Telus Tour for the Cure, and several boards of non-profit societies.

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(Board of Directors Nominees continued from page 7)

Leila Remfry

Leila has three children aged 18, 11 and 7 and all have been enrolled in the French immersion program. She became involved with CPF in 1993 when her eldest son was entering Kindergarten at Pitt Meadows Elementary. She immediately became involved as class rep and then school rep for CPF.

The family moved for a brief time to a small community in Alberta where CPF didn't have a chapter and quickly learned how important the organization was to the strength of the program.

Returning to BC, Leila re-immersed herself in chapter activities and at the same time became certified to work as a Special Education Assistant. She has attended the past three provincial conferences and is excited about the prospect of working at the Board level for the organization. Says Leila, "It is always a fascinating experience [attending the provincial conference] and validates all the reasons I selected French immersion as a choice for my children 13 years ago."

Victoria Vaseleniuck

Literary passion sparked Victoria's interest in languages. When the family moved to the small community of Nelson in 1997, they were more than a little surprised to discover that this School District only offered Late French Immersion (LFI) (and capped at that) in a province where French instruction was demanded and growing by leaps and bounds. Victoria became actively involved with Canadian Parents for French when a small group of parents reestablished the Nelson Chapter and then actively worked to reinstate the French Advisory Council (FAC). Their latest challenge was to open up an early immersion program – a bid which has yet to reach a successful result. Victoria looks forward putting her advocacy skills to good use in addressing the many changes and challenges to and within the education system.

Retiring from the Board

CPF bids a fond farewell to Sherry Taylor of Williams Lake, Laurin Shadforth of Burnaby and Marie-Chantal Lepage of Richmond. Thank you for your incredible commitment!

In Appreciation

Canadian Parents for French - British Columbia and Yukon Branch would like to thank the following for their support:

*Maison de la Francophonie
Federation des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique
Department of Canadian Heritage
BC Ministry of Education
Industry Canada
BC Francophone Affairs Programme, Intergovernmental
Relations Secretariat, Government of BC
Theatre la Seizième
Conseil Scolaire Francophone de la Colombie Britannique*

*Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages
Collège Éducacentre College
The French Consulate
The Bureau des affaires francophones et francophiles,
Simon Fraser University
The Canadian Club
Mosaic
Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society of Vancouver
Alliance Française
Success
Verbathon – Emmanuel Escueta*

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