

French Advisory Committees & Federal French Funding —The CPF 2017 Guide

French Advisory Committees (FAC)

The role of the French Advisory Committee (FAC) is to advocate for excellence in district French programs. The committee should work together to ensure that schools have equitable access to the Federal French funding and use it in a fiscally prudent manner. As well, the committee should monitor enrolment numbers and analyze trends, and participate in forming policy and guidelines on French programs. FACs operate at the school district level and are currently optional, with no official policy existing to indicate their power, parameters, or the people within the district who should sit on one. However, there are many FACs that *do* operate within school districts, and that play a strong, and invaluable role in guiding, coordinating, and supporting their French Second Language (FSL) learning for the benefit of all students. In the absence of an official operational framework to look to regarding FACs, CPF BC Yukon has put together this guide.

Introduction

This guide contains recommendations about who should sit on your local FAC; how to run FAC meetings; what kinds of issues and activities your FAC focuses on; as well as some examples of what a few of FACs look like that are currently operating in BC. We've also provided a summary explaining the *BC Action plan of the Canada–British Columbia Agreement on Minority Language Education and Second Official Language Instruction 2013-2014 to 2017-2018*, as well as providing the breakdown of funding allocations for each BC School District under the current agreement's [French Funding Guide 2013-18](#).

FAC Objectives and Operations, and Funding – An Overview

CPF BC/YK recommends that the objectives of your FAC be to maintain, strengthen, and grow current FSL programs; to support FSL students and teachers; to promote FSL programming; and to monitor the success of FSL via such markers as enrolment numbers and data, including those for attrition. We also want to emphasize the key role of accountability that FACs provide by ensuring that funds are properly allocated in the district, as per the French Funding Guide.

Your FAC should be dynamic, with representation from all program stakeholders, and it should be a place where collaboration is valued, and actively sought and supported. We see FACs as the vehicle for teachers, administrators, and parents to work together collaboratively to enhance and advance the inputs that create successful FSL learning; we also see them as a place that empowers its stakeholders to have meaningful involvement in district-wide decisions that impact FSL.

It's worth noting that the BC Ministry of Education, as part of its current *BC Action plan of the Canada–British Columbia Agreement on Minority Language Education and Second Official Language Instruction 2013-2014 to 2017-2018*, encourages school districts to “form a French Advisory Committee with representatives from the various stakeholders, i.e. trustees, administrators, parents and teachers”, and that, where established, the committee be a part of the district discussion regarding the allocation of French Funding. CPF BC Yukon agrees!

What's the *BC Action plan of the Canada–British Columbia Agreement on Minority Language Education and Second Official Language Instruction 2013-2014 to 2017-2018*? Read on.

Federal French Funding Guide and BC

The BC Action Plan is BC's negotiated agreement between the provincial Ministry of Education and the federal Department of Canadian Heritage; action plans are part of four-year protocols for agreement and address the objectives, programs, funding arrangements and undertakings. The current agreement, 2013-14 to 2017-18, outlines how FSL funding is delivered in BC until 2018. The BC Ministry of Education administers the federal funding attached to this agreement and its intended to support incremental costs resulting from offering French as a second official-language in British Columbia. The current support calculations are based on school year 2012-13 enrolments.

The provincial action plan's agreed areas of intervention are:

- student participation,
- provision of programs,
- student performance,
- enriched school environment,
- access to postsecondary education, and
- support for educational staff and research.

With BC's Action Plan centered on student participation, it says that recruitment, integration and retention of students are essential to meeting its overall objectives. Moreover, BC says that given the enrolment projections for further decline, the greatest challenge will be to sustain, "and hopefully increase", the number of students in FSL.

French Funding Guide – It's Scope

Under the current *BC Action Plan of the Canada–British Columbia Agreement on Minority Language Education and Second Official Language Instruction 2013-2014 to 2017-2018*, school districts will receive \$8,204,596 each year, for years 2013-14 through 2017-18, allocated based on school year 2012-13 enrolments. This funding may be reviewed, amended or supplemented at the Ministry of Education's discretion, on an annual basis, depending on reported enrolment in French as a second language.

The guide states on page 5 that **All Federal Funds received by school districts must be spent entirely in support of French Immersion Programs or Core French Courses**. The ministry could reclaim any portion of the grant not used for this purpose.

The guide further states that school districts may apply up to 20% of their total federal funding to the maximum of a 0.4 full-time equivalent (FTE) position, for French as a second language teacher's salary or at the district level for a coordinator position responsible for French as a second language programs.

Here's a breakdown of the allowable spending categories and percentages per category.

<u>Funding Categories</u>	<u>% of total funding envelope</u>
Learning Assistance Grant	7%
e-Learning Technologies Grant	9%
Learning Resources Grant	8%
Core French Grant	16%
French Immersion Grant	53%
Teacher Professional Dev. Grant	5%
Cultural Activities Grant	2%

Again, the BC Action Plan encourages school districts to form a French Advisory Committee with representatives from the various stakeholders, i.e. trustees, administrators, parents and teachers. CPF BC/YK agrees. It also states that, where established, best practice would suggest that allocation of funds be discussed with the FAC. CPF BC/YK agrees.

How much funding do school districts receive?

According to the funding formulas contained within the current Federal French Funding Guide, you can see the total amount allocated to each BC school district by clicking [here](#).

FAC Composition – CPF BC/YK recommendations:

The committee should have representation from all partners. The FAC should extend an invitation to all interested parties to meet, including the following (* means ideal)::

- senior school board staff, such as the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, or Director of Instruction responsible for FSL
- the principal or vice-principal from each FI school in the district
- a teacher from each FI school in the district, and possibly a resource coordinator and/or librarian
- 1 or 2 parent representatives from each FI school in the district, possibly CPF members
- the president of the local CPF chapter
- a school board trustee
- the district language coordinator
- DPAC representative

FAC Meetings – CPF BC/YK recommendations:

CPF BC/YK recommends that the FAC conduct their meetings as follows:

- meet on a regular basis, either monthly, or at a minimum quarterly, and that, following each meeting, the outcome, along with the minutes, be reported to the district Board of Trustees at their next meeting
- ensure that a meeting held prior to trustees budget meeting each year, so that budget decisions for the upcoming year include FSL. Meeting monthly or bi-monthly would be suggested with each meeting at least 90 minutes
- request agenda items should in advance and added to at the meeting if required
- each group provides an update to the committee about news, concerns, funding, school activities and events, etc
- one person chairs meetings, ideally the district language coordinator or a senior district staff member
- minutes, along with actions items, are be recorded and sent out to all committee members following each meeting

A FAC may form other subgroups or working groups to address short term or implementation needs, addressing topics such as:

- budget and funding
- performance standards, improving and updating curriculum, curriculum implementation plans
- exchange trips
- cultural performances
- surveys (especially exit surveys)
- school updates and reports
- attrition
- class size
- goals for the program and new programs
- policy and regulations pertinent to the program
- professional development & in-service workshops/seminars, anything to improve service to teachers & schools
- supplementary materials for classroom use, books for libraries
- teacher shortage and recruitment campaigns
- FI program promotion, publicity, removal of caps, kindergarten registration process
- process for entering the program outside usual entry points
- locations for the program from amongst those identified as possible from the Planning Dept., expansion or reorganization of the program
- any special qualifications for teachers in the program within the parameters of the joint work of the Human Resources Dept and the Teachers' Association
- issues of bilingual Music teachers, Librarians, Administration, secondary elective teachers
- transportation
- sharing of best practices with other districts and creating a unified image across the province vis-à-vis FSL

programs

- ensuring board is educated about the benefits of FSL education

Chapters in Action:

Here are a few sample FACs – how they operate, and who’s involved – including a sample of a district that is starting to plan to establish a FAC.

FAC Sample 1

The FAC is composed of:

- 2 FI teacher reps
- 1 FI school principal
- 2 CPF reps
- 1 DPAC rep
- 1 school board trustee
- district languages principal

Types of topics and issues handled:

- French Immersion pathways
- French Immersion future programming in the district
- Issues surrounding FI programming
- Accommodating program growth

FAC Sample 2

Currently in the process of establishing a French Advisory Committee.

Committee goals will be:

- to ensure the French funds are being spent appropriately
- to ensure the trustees are aware of CPF, and know about CPF activities
- to ensure the superintendent and assistant superintendents are aware of CPF, and know about CPF activities
- to ensure French Immersion and Core French thrive in the district

FAC Sample 3

The FAC is composed of:

- 1 SD Trustee
- local CPF Chapter president
- SD Language Coordinator
- SD Head of Languages
- 1 CUPE rep
- a principal or vice-principal from each FI school
- some teachers from FI schools

Types of topics and issues handled:

- receives FSL advocacy concerns within the district to represent to the board of trustees
- advises (after agreeing as a committee) the board of trustees on FSL programming needs and best practices, and makes recommendations for needed changes to address the unique needs
- determines how to allocate the Federal French Funding in the district, and ensures that full amount adheres to the guidelines and is disclosed
- works with the local CPF chapter on cultural activities to maximize funding impacts
- reviews enrolment and attrition each year

FAC Sample 4

The FAC is composed of:

- District Director of Instruction

- District Language Coordinator, Secondary
- District Language Coordinator, Elementary
- Principals from each FI school
- Teachers from FI
- CPF Chapter President
- CPF Chapter parent

Meetings:

The FAC meets three times a year, setting the dates (time and location) at the beginning of the school year.

Types of topics and issues handled:

- the year's outline
 - socio-cultural activities
- CPF news
 - can also raise questions about the district's capital and operational plans effecting FSL
 - supplies written report to attach to FAC meeting minutes
- curriculum and school updates
 - for all streams of FSL programming, school by school
 - including addressing resource and support needs
 - transition from K to G1, and G7 to G8
- technology
 - to communicate and coordinate digital resources required and developed re: FSL
 - for example:
 - Google Forms for Assessment
 - Freshgrade to measure oral proficiency (a free app for collaboration between teachers, students and parents with digital portfolios, learning objectives, grade book and communications <https://www.freshgrade.com/>)
 - Read&Write (Chrome-based literacy software <https://rwchrome.texthelp.com/drive/support/home>)
- Quebec and France trips
 - Plan and coordinate field trips to French language countries, including obtaining and managing funding
- Innovation Partnership program
 - district initiatives incentivizing students to speak French outside the classroom
- Budget
 - Review and determine federal French funding allocation
 - Reviews how other districts allocate funds to FSL, including non-French funding monies
 - Projects and analyzes district FSL growth, and related funding impact/requirements
 - Determines if and how to request from trustees general district funds to supplement FSL

As of December 2016, districts we know of that are operating FACs in BC school districts:

1. Cowichan Valley
2. Dawson Creek
3. Central Okanagan (Kelowna)
4. Nelson
5. New Westminster
6. Parksville Oceanside
7. Ridge Meadows
8. Sooke
9. South Cariboo
10. Vernon
11. Victoria