

Canadian Parents for French B.C. and Yukon Branch
April 8, 2008
Minutes
Teleconference 19:00-22:30

Present: Directors: Heather Doty, Brittany Harris, Marcela Navarro (President), Debra Pool (VP), Sabine Schweiger, Victoria Vaseleniuck
Joined at 20:06: Joy Haley
Staff: Nancy Taylor

19:02 **Call Meeting to order**

19:04 **Agenda** approved by consensus with the following additions:
Marcela resignation as president
Meeting with Ministry of Education
Public relations
Board meetings
Bylaws

19:06 **February 23-24 Minutes** approved by consensus.

19:10 **Executive Director Report**

Nancy provided additional information to the interim report that was circulated in advance.

The Canadian Club has increased their support.

Robert Rethon from Intrata Consulting is available to take on contract work. FSCB is submitting an Olympic torch relay project proposal . Nancy recommends that CPF accept the offer of the partnership:

We have the capacity to become the liaison.

Intensive French Project – CPF has \$8,000 for promoting intensive French. Concerns raised with the project centre around promoting a program that will have resource issues and potentially work against FI as it has in New Brunswick. In discussions that Nancy has had with Minister of Education Shirley Bond, she has indicated that she is not even remotely interested in canceling EFI in BC. Nancy should send a letter to Ms. Bond re-iterating that Intensive French and EFI have two different goals and outcomes and are not substitutes for one another. Board direction after discussions was to build on the publicity of intensive French versus EFI/LFI raised by NB by developing newsletter article re-educating CPF members on what the options and differences are between the FSL programs in BC – goals, outcomes, limitations, possibilities (i.e. challenging grade levels...) of each of the programs. As well,

Nancy to contact Britta (Britta Gundersen-Bryden is the Executive Director for the Measurement Evaluation & International Languages Department of the Ministry of Education) and enquire whether some of the funding earmarked for this project could be re-allocated to augment other funding priorities (recognizing that core French is already under spent); and to enquire what her perspective is on Intensive french as well as the status is of the FSL task force (as follow-up from **ED meeting in Montreal**, ED's were urged to work closely with their Ministers of Education). Nancy requested a meeting with Britta, we are waiting for a date to be scheduled. Nancy will discuss with Rita the possibility of writing funding proposals on contract.

Nancy attended the ED's meeting in Montreal, funded by National. Guest speakers were great, and it was good to hear what is happening in other places (high staff turn-over is not limited to BC).

Rencontre Francaise is under-subscribed. Program costs per student are approximately \$380, and revenue is \$150. Board needs to re-evaluate the program. Registration has been opened to Grade 6 students, and schools have been notified. Difficult program for students outside of the lower mainland to attend, as the transportation costs and logistics are added to the cost of the weekend.

Rencontre Plein air has been cancelled (for Spring) as registration was too low. Difficult to determine if the advertising was insufficient or if there is not interest. Nancy reviewed the regular communication strategy - publish events in the newsletter, send emails to chapters and fax schools directly with relevant deadlines.

Concours will celebrate 30th anniversary with a large birthday cake for the students. Nancy has lined up an impressive list of guest speakers and dignitaries.

CPF 30th Celebration is being hosted at the École Lord Tennyson school in Vancouver. The principal is very excited about the event and proposes an assembly, with media and invited guests. Nancy to request that the school provide cake and refreshments for an estimated 350 guests. Suggested that the school concours winners present their winning speeches to showcase FSL.

AGM – Ottawa October 16-19. Nancy has started work on the budget, but is still waiting for National to set the registration fee per person. This will impact how BC is able to send delegates and staff. Nancy to work with national to discuss topics of common concern, so that we do not unnecessarily duplicate workshops.

Discussions revolved around striking a balance between offering BC members the extra day in Ottawa (to hold workshops relevant to BC members, provide the networking that is a high priority, and celebrating the 30th just with BC/Yukon), and the added cost of that extra day. Nancy to provide update on budget, costs, workshops, at next meeting. (Joy joined the teleconference 20:06).

Bilingualism Rocks – Robert Rother is a possible contractor to coordinate the project. This would allow Nancy to seek the other funding needed for the project to succeed. The Quebec 400 project was determined to not be an eligible funding source. Stephane Audet has verbally approved \$2,000 in cash and \$5,000 in kind, but additional funding is still required. As this project is high profile for Heritage Canada, it may negatively impact CPF if the project does not proceed. Nancy will enquire whether the project can be deferred a year (would be very helpful given the staffing events over the past year). Board members to submit possible names for bands that could perform for this project.

Job Descriptions and Staff Evaluations - Nancy has reviewed the contracts and the Personnel Manual and notes that the two are inconsistent. Nancy completed verbal and written employee evaluations with all staff.

20:15 **In-camera**

20:47 **Out of in-camera**

Approval to extend the meeting to 21:30, with Brittany having to leave at 21:00 due to school commitments.

Presidents Report - Interim ED contract was signed March 20th. Victoria, Debra and Marcela conducted an exit interview with Rita which will provide useful information for looking for a new ED. ED job description to be discussed/developed at the May Board meeting.

Marcela had been forwarding all the information on the NB cancellation of its EFI program. NB has requested funding from BC to support a post card campaign. Marcela will attend presidents meeting April 25/26. Marcela has tendered her resignation as President effective the end of May. She has accepted a new work position and cannot commit the time required to be president, and will stay on as a board member. Debra indicated that she would be willing to be president, but needs more certainty on the level of commitment of Board members. The work load needs to be more evenly distributed, and all Board members need to take on some of the work load between meetings. Nancy indicated that nationally

the ED's all work on several committees, with reporting requirements and published deadlines.

21:07 Brittany left the meeting and verified that she would not be available to attend Concours.

Discussions continued about Board commitment, Carver model, Board process for making decisions and recorded action items. Google groups – consensus that all Board members to use only google groups until May to give it a fair trial. Contact Heather if you need personal instructions on how to set up and personalize it so that it works to your advantage.

21:35 Consensus to extend meeting another 20 minutes

Budget – Nancy presented highlights from the preliminary budget, and noted that some items are still not adding up properly (eg travel budget). Although the Board budget was high, it has not increased over last year and is important for face-to-face meetings. The extra day for each board meeting is a high priority, and the Board will look for accommodation and meal arrangements to stretch the budget. Board development has been removed for this coming year. The staff retreat is seen as being important to provide office cohesion and develop a strategic work plan – this work needs to be completed somehow, and is not easily done with day-to-day tasks in the office. Nancy has ideas on fundraising possibilities for money that is not tied to a project. Marcela needs to get the auditor contract signed, but is uncomfortable that the contract does not state a total number of hours or a total cost estimate (range). Marcela will call Susan and either Susan or Marcela will talk directly with the Auditor. Suggested that the line item for legal fee be increased to \$10,000 to cover auditor increased and need for legal advice for upcoming staff contracts (ED).

Postage costs for direct mailing to schools may be lowered – Nancy looking into partnerships with BCFT and superintendents, as they already have mailing going out.

Nancy to finalize the books for this past year, and finance committee to set conference call. It was reiterated that the budget for this coming year must be a balanced budget, and that any surplus from the previous year is not revenue to balance the budget.

Concours – given the financial implications and the need to have the president or vice-president present to welcome the guests and students, Debra and Joy will be the board members attending the event. Duties will include introductions, making guest feel welcome and helping at the CPF table.

Canadian Heritage proposal will be an action item for the coming year – current agreement ends March 31, 2009. Bernard Lord is advocating an increase for FSL.

Board approved providing \$500 maximum to support NB post card program, and recognized that Nancy will be creative with how that is allocated and still have a balanced budget.

Joy volunteered to organize board member duties including personnel manual, policies, HR group for ED search and Bylaws. Joy also volunteered to write a 300-word update on Board activities for the upcoming newsletter. Nancy and Joy will work together, and Heather will provide a brief synopsis on what feedback we received from the Victoria AGM.

Nancy expressed her appreciation to all Board members for their volunteer work and input.

22:30

Meeting adjourned

Next meeting – May 29th to June 1, Vancouver