



ANNUAL REPORT 2003-2004

Canadian Parents for French BC & Yukon

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Melanie Tighe-Lovsin

Dear CPF-BC & Yukon Members and Friends:

It is my honor to present the Annual Report of Canadian Parents for French-BC & Yukon Branch for 2003-04.

This has been a terrific year for Canadian Parents for French --BC & Yukon Branch.

Our profile as an organization has never been higher. Our chapters continue to initiate new programs. CPF-BC & Yukon is involved in more high-level policy discussion, more partnership and our voice is heard in the province's media with a positive message about education more than ever before.

The results truly speak for themselves: a record 6,300 members of CPF-BC & Yukon, a 20% increase in enrolment in the Yukon, a record number of students in French Immersion in BC for the fourth consecutive year, 11 new French Immersion programs launched either in the fall of 2003 or the fall of 2004 all the direct result of advocacy initiatives by our Branch and Chapters, a new Late French Immersion program in Whitehorse, the first-ever Intensive Core French program in Surrey and a successful AGM and Conference held in Whitehorse attended by more than 100 participants.

In particular, French Immersion programs are growing at a dramatic rate. They are a true public education success story in our province. The numbers speak for themselves. This year, we are expecting 35,000 French Immersion students an increase of 5,000 in the last five years in a period of declining overall enrolment in our province. This success will present new challenges for us, from finding teachers to finding classroom space, but it is a cause for celebration.

Year	French Immersion Enrolment	Total School Enrolment
2003-04	33,407	616,472
2002-03	31,990	623,344
2001-02	31,136	632,024
2000-01	30,423	634,555
1999-00	29,979	637,724
1998-99	29,434	631,612

Source – BC Ministry of Education

As President, I know that our current success is built on the work of so many of you over our 27 year history. Our volunteers, members, past board members and current and past staff have contributed enormously. Without them, what we are achieving now would not be possible. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our proud history.

Membership and Chapter Development

In our 2001-2002 Annual Report, then CPF President Anna Maddison set out an ambitious goal: to increase CPF-BC & Yukon membership to "more than 6,000 members by March of 2004." In the wake of last year's remarkable membership drive, I am happy to say that we met this goal with months to spare. Here are the year-over-year membership statistics dating back to 2000.

CPF-BC & Yukon Members	
August 2004	6,381
January 2004	6,037
January 2003	5,225
January 2002	4,681
January 2001	4,230

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2003 -2004



Melanie Tighe-Lovsin
President
Vernon, BC



Sherry Taylor
Vice-President
Williams Lake, BC



Mary Ann Annable-Roots
Director-at-Large
Whitehorse, Yukon



Heather Newman
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Larin Shadforth
Director-at-Large
Burnaby, BC

The CPF-BC & Yukon Board of Directors is comprised of dedicated volunteers from across British Columbia and the Yukon.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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Most importantly, this increase in membership brought financial resources to our chapters. Again this year, we are continuing our policy of returning 80% of membership monies to chapters (90% during the current membership drive). In the most recent fiscal year, this meant \$68,675 in membership rebates to chapters.

Again this year, we focused on supporting advocacy at the school district level. Our provincial office, working with local chapters, prepared some 34 briefs on issues relating to transportation, the creation of new programs, configuration of schools, secondary programs, secondary attrition, single and dual-track schools and split-grade classes.

Nancy Taylor organized our first ever regional conference on Vancouver Island in March with delegates from all over the Island attending. By all accounts, it was a great success and a model for future conferences in other parts of BC and the Yukon.

Funding Agreement with Canadian Heritage

Our existing funding agreement with Canadian Heritage expired on March 31, 2004. I am happy to report that Canadian Heritage renewed funding agreements with CPF-National and CPF-Provincial sections for one year as the basis of a longer agreement.

CPF-BC & Yukon received an increase in funding of over 4% for the 2004-05 fiscal year, by far the biggest increase for any CPF organization in Canada. As you know, Canadian Heritage routinely reviews our activities and performance. Our increase in funding is a reflection on the performance of CPF-BC & Yukon in meeting its goals over the past five years. We wish to thank Canadian Heritage and the Federal Government for their continuing support and in particular express our appreciation to Nicole Laplante, Liliane Le, Chris Natuik, Hilaire Lemoine and Pablo Sobrino as well as Ministers Sheila Copps, Helene Chalifour-Scherrer and Liza Frulla.

Yukon – A Break Through Year

This was a breakthrough year for CPF in the Yukon. After two years of advocacy, some delicate negotiations around the time of the Federal election and a late media campaign in August, Late French Immersion was launched at Whitehorse Elementary this September with 17 students. In addition, Whitehorse elementary had a record registration for Early French Immersion.

In Whitehorse, it was a year of activity that culminated in these successes as well as the 2003 CPF-BC & Yukon confer-

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ence, the Yukon Concours, participation by Yukon students in the National Concours, summer camps for French Immersion, Francophone and Core French students and a stakeholder consultation process.

Our team in the Yukon, led by BC & Yukon Board Member Mary Ann Annable and Chapter President Mary Jane Warshawskim has done a superb job. We wish to also thank our partners in the Yukon Government such as Gilbert Lamarche and Sandra Henderson for all of their assistance and insight.

Advocacy – Federal, Provincial and Chapter Level

Over the past year, CPF-BC & Yukon has pursued an active advocacy agenda. We have met with senior politicians, public servants and education leaders from across BC, the Yukon and Canada. Board members and staff had formal meetings with the Hon. Tom Christensen, BC Minister of Education, Federal Cabinet Ministers Mauril Belanger, Helene Chalifour-Scherrer and Sheila Copps, Official Languages Commissioner Dr. Dyane Adam, Richard Stewart MLA responsible for Francophone Affairs, UBC President Martha Piper, SFU President Michael Stevenson and His Excellency John Ralston Saul.

In March, we hosted a consultation meeting at SFU Downtown with stakeholders from across BC – teachers, school administrators, universities, colleges, parents, language coordinators and students – to review progress in Core French and French Immersion and make recommendation on future directions. We were particularly honored by the keynote speech of Peter Robinson, the CEO of Mountain Equipment Co-Op, who has transformed his Vancouver-based company into a fully bilingual enterprise as part of a successful effort to enter the Quebec market.

In addition, we sent out questionnaires to all BC and Yukon candidates in the Federal election to inform them of FSL issues and to seek their support of our goals. We were delighted with the universally positive response from all parties. This further marks a sea change in public attitudes toward the learning of French.

Much of our effort has been to further the implementation of the Federal Action Plan on Official Languages. CPF-BC & Yukon's comprehensive brief has been formally endorsed by a majority of BC school boards and many partner organizations. In addition, we have formed a formal coalition with the Conseil Scolaire Francophone, the Francophone Parents Association, SFU and Educacentre to pursue our joint objectives. We need to keep the pressure on Ottawa and Victoria to ensure adequate resources for our growing programs. This coalition will help bring the full force of the Francophone and Francophile communities together to support our common aims.

Our advocacy has borne fruit at the post-secondary level. In particular, we celebrate the launch of the SFU Bilingual Program, the result of three years of joint effort with the Francophone community. Thank you and congratulations to all of our partners. CPF-BC & Yukon will serve on the Advisory Committee of the new program to ensure it meets the needs of FSL students.

Of course, **the focus of our efforts continues to be at the local level.** This year again, new French Immersion programs were created in Whitehorse (LFI), Ladysmith (EFI), Williams Lake (LFI), 100 Mile House (LFI), Salmon Arm (LFI), Fernie (LFI) and Cranbrook (LFI). All of these successful efforts were initiated by local chapters in cooperation with the branch office.

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Table 4: French Immersion Programs across BC and the Yukon, 2000-2004

	BC/YK Communities with Early French Immersion	BC/YK Communities with Late French Immersion	BC/YK Communities with both Early and Late
2004-05	44	32	25
2003-04	43	26	20
2002-03	41	23	17
2001-02	41	22	16
2000-01	41	22	16

Source – CPF-BC & Yukon

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Table 4 (see page 3) illustrates the continuing success of our mission to expand access to French Immersion across BC.

In addition, the Surrey School District initiated BC's first Intensive Core French program, a subject that will be a focus of the Annual General Meeting and Conference in Abbotsford.

I want to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of local CPF Chapter activists such as Nancy Hadden, Sherry Taylor (who plays a big role in the Williams Lake Chapter), Jodi Thomson, Yves Beaumier, Blaine Carson, Jeannette Leitch, Sue Cairns, Cindy Hagen, Mary Ann Annable-Roots, Sandra Henderson, Mary Jane Warshawski and many, many others in bringing new programs forward this year. We are also privileged by the strong relationship among CPF-BC & Yukon, local CPF chapters and school districts across the province.

Partnerships

CPF-BC & Yukon is proud of its partnerships which help expand access to opportunities in French for FSL students and for parents. We wish to extend our thanks to the Théâtre la Seizième, the Conseil Jeunesse Francophone, BC Hydro, the Artists' Response Team, Simon Fraser University, the University of Ottawa, Terasen Inc., the Fédération des Francophones de la Colombie Britannique, the Conseil Scolaire Francophone, Educacentre, the Begbie Historical Society, Verbathon, the BC



Students in Grades 7 and 8 have the chance to spend a weekend in French at CPF-BC & Yukon's Rencontre Française.

Bilingual Debates, Encorp Pacific, Parks Canada, Radio-Canada, French for the Future, the Vancouver International Writers' Festival, the Yukon and BC Department of Education, la Fédération Franco-Yukonnais and BC Family French Camp Society.

As a result of these partnerships, we have been able to provide access to a myriad of events to FSL students and their parents from the Begbie History Content in French, the French for the Future, to the Terasen-Théâtre la Seizième tour (this coming year to be sponsored by BC Hydro) to French for parents classes and many other activities.

Of course, we want to make special mention of our ongoing support from the Department of Canadian Heritage, our principal sponsor.

Finally, I want to especially thank Denis Simard who left the Conseil Jeunesse in September. All of you whose children have attended the Francophone Youth Parliament and Francophone Games, will appreciate Denis' incredible contribution to the lives of young people and to building bridges between Francophone youth and French Immersion students. Thank you Denis and we hope to see you down the road.

Rencontre Française

Rencontre Française was held again this year on the SFU campus. Freda Heinrich, our Rencontre Coordinator, was again terrific and more than 150 Grade 7-8 students and Moniteurs took part in a weekend of fun, activity and French.

Thank you so much Freda. And a big thank you to Nathalie Ladouceur-Thomas and the team of Moniteurs. The continuing success of Rencontre as a signature CPF is a tribute to their commitment and to the support of our sponsors, Canadian Heritage and the Province of BC.

Concours d'Art Oratoire

Concours was again a great success this year. Charlene Dobie did a fantastic job organizing the Provincial Concours this year. Concours is a difficult event to organize and Charlene did the job with talent and humor. Charlene, like Freda, is a great example of the commitment of parent-volunteers across BC. In addition to organizing Concours, she does an excellent job as Chapter representative in Surrey, BC's largest chapter. Thank you Charlene.

More than 210 students took part in the BC Provincial finals at Kwantlen College in Surrey and their efforts and ability to communicate in French is inspirational. The Whitehorse Chapter, with the assistance of Sandra Henderson, organized the Yukon Concours as well. In addition, five BC and Yukon students represented us at the National competition in Edmonton in June and did us proud.

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Communications, Website and Newsletters

Canadian Parents for French – BC & Yukon Branch pursues an aggressive and comprehensive media strategy focused on both provincial and local media. So far, in the current fiscal year, we have sent out more than 130 distinct press releases many with a local angle. The results have been impressive. More than 200 articles have mentioned CPF-BC & Yukon by name. Every single major television station in the province and the Yukon Territory has done a story about CPF connected to French Immersion and other activities. CPF's Board members and the Executive Director have given more than 60 radio interviews to local and provincial media outlets in English and in French.

CPF-BC & Yukon even provoked a national debate with our expression of concern about the Coach's Corner segment on Hockey Night in Canada.

Most impressively, media campaigns have been linked to successful advocacy campaigns in communities such as Whitehorse, Vernon, Prince Rupert, Quesnel, New Westminster, Salmon Arm and Williams Lake.

CPF-BC & Yukon has always produced outstanding newsletters. Our Newsletter Editor Karynn Oxley is a person of enormous talent and commitment. Thank you Karynn. I have been part of a number of organizations over the years, but you are simply the best newsletter editor around.

Our website www.cpf.bc.ca has seen an increase of 30% in traffic this year, yet another reflection of the growing enthusiasm and interest in the organization. The website has over 400 distinct pages and is up-dated several times a week. Laurelle Keashly does a fabulous job maintaining the site which is a terrific source for information about CPF and French Immersion.

Scholarships

The winners of the CPF-BC & Yukon bursary this year were Chantal Nixon, a graduate of Burnaby Central Secondary School and Vanessa Chapman of Kelowna Secondary School. Both Chantal and Vanessa were outstanding candidates and we hope that the \$2000 scholarship prize will assist them as they pursue their careers in French Second Language education.

Board of Directors and Staff

On a personal note, I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their advice and support. Sherry Taylor, Laurin Shadforth, Heather Newman, Marie Reed and Mary Ann Annable-Roots all contribute to furthering French Second Language programs in different ways and bring such diversity to the issues discussed on a daily basis.

I would also like to thank our extraordinary office staff:

Laurelle Keashley and Loraine Cassidy from our New Westminster office, and Nancy Taylor from our Saanich office. They bring experience, joy, and passion to their work and are always 110% service oriented with a smile.

Having worked with Adrian Dix, our Executive Director, on almost a daily basis for the past two years, I would like to say how privileged I feel to have had this opportunity. I have benefited greatly from Adrian's judgment, expertise and advice.

I'm not alone. Adrian is well-respected in the FSL community provincially and nationally. He has been called upon frequently by other CPF Executive Directors across the country as well as many others, including His Excellency John Ralston Saul. Adrian was also asked to sit on the CPF National negotiating team for federal funding and continues to do the work of two people. He has raised the profile of CPF in the media in BC, the Yukon and across Canada as well as in the Federal Department of Canada Heritage and the BC and Territorial Ministries of Education. He has fought for an ever-improving French Second Language education for our children. For this we are grateful.

A Final Word

My involvement in CPF is first and foremost as a parent-volunteer. From experience, I know of the incredible work of our Chapter Representatives and volunteers across BC and the Yukon. I know what you contribute to our success. I also know the demands on your time. Thank you for your incredible and continuing contribution. As my term ends as President, you can rest assured I will continue to be involved, working with all of you on our mutual goals.

Melanie Tighe-Lovsin



CPF-BC & Yukon is proud of its partnerships which help expand access to opportunities in French for FSL students and for parents. These students took part in the French Parliament held in Victoria, BC earlier this spring thanks to cooperation with the Conseil Jeunesse Francophone.

**Statement of Revenue and Expenditure
for the year ended March 31, 2004 (General Fund)**

REVENUE

Canadian Heritage	\$274,375
AGM Registrations	\$12,333
Membership	\$72,650
Other	<u>\$10,849</u>
Total	\$370,207

EXPENSES

Programs and Projects	\$433,453
Excess is revenue over Expenditures	(63,246)

*Excerpted from audited financial statements prepared by Helen Ross CA.
(Copies of the financial statements are available upon request.)*

Balance Sheet for the Year ended March 31, 2004

Assets	\$229,277
Liabilities	\$ 67,857
Fund Balances	\$161,420

*Excerpted from audited financial statements prepared by Helen Ross CA.
(Copies of the financial statements are available upon request.)*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dear Friends:

I am honored to serve as Executive Director of Canadian Parents for French – BC & Yukon. Over the past few years, I have had the opportunity to visit with thousands of CPF members in their homes, in their children's schools and in their communities. Your commitment to your children, to French language programs and to education is an inspiration.

We can change things for the better if we try. People almost always surprise themselves with *how much* they can accomplish when they work together to improve their school, their neighbourhood or their community. CPF-BC & Yukon chapters, members, board members and staff have proven this point again and again over the past few years with an enviable record of advocacy and program success.

I wish to thank our staff at the CPF-BC & Yukon offices in New Westminster and Saanich. Loraine Cassidy, Laurelle Keashly and Nancy Taylor are more than talented and dedicated employees. They contribute to CPF-BC & Yukon above and beyond the call of duty. It is a privilege to work with all of them.

The CPF-BC & Yukon Board is a pleasure to work with. They are great leaders at a provincial level for CPF and they each contribute enormously to the life of their home chapters. Like all true voluntary community leaders, they not only give direction, they pitch in to make sure things happen.

I wanted to especially thank Melanie Tighe-Lovsin as she ends her two-year period as President. Melanie is an outstanding communicator who has build relationships at senior levels of government. Her talent and grace has greatly enhanced CPF-BC & Yukon's reputation across BC, the Yukon and Canada.

One of our priorities over the past few years has been to support local efforts to bring new French Immersion programs to communities. And what a successful effort it has been with 13 new programs in communities that did not previously have them. And there is more to do without doubt. Communities such as Sechelt, Powell River, Mackenzie, Creston and Whistler lack any French Immersion program. We will continue to work to expand access.

Priorities change however. I estimate that we will have 40,000 French Immersion students by 2010. This is great news. But there are challenges to growth. Here are five issues we will be working with our partners to address in the coming years.

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Over the past year, CPF-BC & Yukon has pursued an active advocacy agenda meeting with senior politicians, public servants and education leaders from across BC, the Yukon and Canada. Much of our effort has been to further the implementation of the Federal Action Plan on Official Languages. Seen in the photo above, President Melanie Tighe-Lovsin meets with Federal Cabinet Minister Mauril Belanger who is the Minister responsible for Official Languages.

Canadian Parents for French

MISSION STATEMENT

Canadian Parents for French (CPF) 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.

OUR VISION

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

The CPF-BC & Yukon Annual Report 2003-2004 is printed on 100% PC (post consumer fiber) paper which is manufactured with windpower.

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1) Teacher Shortage – To meet French Immersion needs alone, we require a net increase of 300 teachers by 2010 in BC. When you consider that some 40% of teachers are expected to retire by 2010, this is an enormous challenge.

2) Improving Core French – It is very important to improve the quality of Core French in our province. However popular French Immersion becomes, the opportunity to learn French must be more broadly available. That is why we need more Core French teachers truly fluent in French. That is why we need to offer new alternatives such as Intensive Core French.

This is important not just for students in FSL, it is vital for the future of French Immersion as well. We need to use the momentum created by French Immersion's popularity to build interest and support for language education in the broader school community.

3) Program Quality – The success of French Second Language programs is always linked to the quality of the learning experience. We have to ensure that the quality of French Immersion proves as the size of the program grows.

4) Footprint of Schools – This is a more prosaic problem caused by the growth of FI programs in the Lower Mainland. The footprint of schools offering French Immersion no longer meets the demand. School districts are loath to reconfigure their

school facilities and catchment areas to meet this demand. This means overcrowding of schools and the potential reimplementation of caps on enrolment that we fought hard to lift.

5) Relevance of French – New post-secondary options, French for the Future, our partnership with the Francophone Youth Council, an increasingly dynamic Francophone community and many other developments in the last few years have served to promote the relevance of the French fact in BC, Canada and the world. Given the increasing number of young people who speak both official languages, there is developing a real French language market in BC.

French Immersion students are a savvy audience. We need to add opportunities and programs that demonstrate that the French language is not an abstraction, a historical curiosity, an advantage elsewhere, or a constitutional right, but a living breathing part of our community.

Together, I know that CPF-BC & Yukon can address these challenges and many others. Thank you for all of your help and support. En avant!

PS: I want to again thank CPF volunteers across BC and the Yukon for your efforts. We know even as our organization grows, the burden on our active volunteers is significant. I want to hear from CPF members. Let me know how we can serve you better.

Adrian Dix



Each year CPF-BC & Yukon sponsors the French public speaking contest Concours d'art oratoire. These young winners from across BC proudly show off their medals at Concours 2004.