

Canadian Parents for French-BC & Yukon

ANNUAL REPORT 2004 - 2005



Canadian Parents for French BC & Yukon is proud to support efforts to expose our children to the world of French beyond the classroom. BC Family French Camp offers one such opportunity. Seen above, happy campers Candice and Jennifer Lipski enjoyed BC Family French Camp at Okanagan Lake.



Executive Director's Report



Rita Parikh
Executive Director

What a privilege and honour it is to be part of this movement that is Canadian Parents for French. In more than 15 years of experience of working within the non-profit sector, I have yet to encounter a more determined, committed and influential group of individuals and volunteers.

When I look back at the accomplishments that you have achieved over this and many, many years of struggle – 276 B.C. schools offering either early or late immersion or both, bringing to 44 out of 58 the number of B.C. school districts in which immersion is offered; B.C. enjoying the highest rate of immersion enrolment in all of Canada (we had almost 100 new immersion classes begin last year alone!); and, an increasing number of strong, bilingual graduates readying to take on the world – I am humbled. And I am inspired. Your accomplishments are considerable and are cause for celebration! Here's some of what you've done over the past year.

Last year, Canadian Parents for French-BC & Yukon Branch pursued four strategic goals – objectives that you helped us establish last year. Your insistence, for instance, that our children need more than one chance to enter an immersion programme led us to work in communities up and down the province, and to support local chapters as they advocated for late immersion.

PROGRAM GROWTH

British Columbia now boasts six new Late French Immersion programmes in communities as diverse as 100 Mile House and Williams Lake, Fernie, and Whitehorse, bringing the B.C. and Yukon total to 27, with others set to start in 2005 and 2006. Much of the demand, however, remains focused on early immersion and school boards have been working hard to keep up with demand. So, in districts

like Victoria and Vancouver, existing programmes are expanding, and new programmes have been established in communities like Ladysmith.

B.C. was also proud to launch its first ever Intensive Core programme – an alternative approach to getting kids hooked on French – and we'll get a report on its success in Surrey at this year's conference.

FRENCH ADVISORY COUNCILS

Your determination to be part of decision-making processes in your community, and to be able to hold your district accountable for spending on language programmes, led us to campaign for the establishment, resurrection or strengthening of French Advisory Councils.

These are district-level bodies that bring together diverse stakeholders such as parents, school administrators, trustees and others to oversee the implementation of FSL programmes. The process is a slow one, but many districts – including those in Victoria, North Vancouver, Saanich, Nelson, Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows, Abbotsford, Richmond, Sooke, Surrey and Yukon – now have FACs that not only meet on a regular basis, but also serve as the main advisory body to trustees on FSL. This year's conference focuses explicitly on the possibilities that arise out of French Advisory Councils, and the branch office is now pushing for a provincial-level FAC that can advise the Ministry of Education on FSL issues as they emerge.

FEDERAL FUNDING

One of these issues has been the torturously slow release of federal funding for FSL programmes. The injection of cash that the federal government promised each province more than three years ago, a contribution to help provinces achieve the federally established goal of doubling the number of bilingual graduates in Canada by 2013, has not materialized. Past President Melanie Tighe-Lovsin has been working with B.C.'s Ministry of Education, as well as with key Francophone part-

Continued on page 3

CPF-BC & YUKON MEMBERS

March 2005	6,945
August 2004	6,381
January 2004	6,037
January 2003	5,225
January 2002	4,681
January 2001	4,230

ners, both to advocate for release of those funds, and to put forward recommendations as to how those monies should be spent. And while the date for release of the promised grant remains uncertain, a Ministry of Education planning document floated this spring makes it clear that our recommendations have become a cornerstone of the ministry's targeted measures.

PARTNERSHIPS

Finally, fueled by the conviction that our children will stick with FSL programmes if they experience the joy and vibrancy of French outside the classroom, our branch has sought to extend and deepen our partnership with Francophone partners across the province, ensuring that their rich assortment of social and cultural programmes can be accessed by FSL students.

Through agreements with the **Conseil Jeunesse Francophone de la Colombie Britannique**, for instance, we've been able to include our students in its wildly popular Francophone Games and Francophone Parliament.

Moreover, through the generous and enthusiastic support of the **Embassy of France**, we were able to invite immersion students from across the province to submit entries to a national theatre competition focused on Cultural Differences and Tolerance. Their winning entry secured three lucky winners from Moscrop Secondary School in Burnaby a once-in-a-lifetime, all expenses-paid, 10-day trip to France.

CPF has also been delighted to have the support of **Vancouver's Canadian Club** whose substantial prizes have extended the thrill of victory at our annual Concours d'Arts Oratoire. And all of this is underpinned by the faith and considerable financial support that the **Department of Canadian Heritage** and the **B.C. Ministry of Education** have invested in us throughout the year.

These kinds of partnerships afford us the opportunity to pool resources and expand our children's horizons. Equally importantly, they offer us critical leverage in our efforts to advocate for better programmes, build stronger teacher recruitment strategies, attract greater financial resources, and extend the benefits of FSL. Today, our much amplified voice has become a movement for change.

All of these activities were initiated and pursued by our former executive director, Adrian Dix. Many of you know already that it has been a year of transition, and that change is often difficult to accept and to manage.

But from where I sit, I see great strength in the changes that have transpired – indeed, in Adrian's leaving, we have not so much lost an effective and strategic executive director, as gained an impassioned and eloquent advocate for CPF in the legislature. CPF BC and Yukon has never been better placed

Year	French Immersion Enrolment	Total Enrolment
2004-2005	35,519	606,401
2003-2004	33,407	616,472
2002-2003	31,990	623,344
2001-2002	31,136	632,024
2000-2001	30,423	634,555
1999-2000	29,979	637,724
1998-1999	29,434	631,612

Source: BC Ministry of Education

to build political support for our work.

Under the leadership of branch president, Sherry Taylor, and the stewardship of a strong and representative board of directors, changes at the branch level have continued apace. We bid adieu to Laurelle Keashly who has served you well as Chapter Support and Programme Officer – thankfully, Laurelle continues to stay involved as CPF's gifted webmaster – and welcome Michel Kouadio, a multilingual and passionate believer in second (and third!) language learning. Loraine Cassidy, our office manager, and Nancy Taylor, our Community Liaison Officer, remain incredibly skilled, diligent and dedicated CPF representatives.

With this team of committed staff, we will continue to position ourselves strategically to embrace the challenges of the future and to serve you and your community well as you pursue your FSL goals. Thank you!

CPF goes to the Legislature in Victoria



Members of CPF-BC & Yukon Board of Directors, Laurin Shadforth, Heather Newman and Melanie Tighe-Lovsin along with Nancy Taylor, CPF-BC & Yukon Community Liason Officer, met with the MLA responsible for Francophone Affairs, Richard Stewart. Seen in front, Katherine Whittred, an MLA for North Vancouver, also met with CPF.

**CANADIAN PARENTS FOR FRENCH
BC & YUKON
BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2004-2005**



Sherry Taylor
President
Williams Lake, BC



Laurin Shadforth
Vice-President
Burnaby, BC



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



Heather Newman
Director-at-Large
Dawson Creek, BC



Marie Reed
Director-at-Large
Kamloops, BC



Melanie Tighe-Lovsin
Past President
Vernon, BC

*The CPF-BC & Yukon Board of Directors
is comprised of dedicated volunteers.*

**CPF sponsored activities make
a difference**



We are proud that our annual events really do make a difference to helping young people experience French outside of the classroom. Each year CPF sponsors events such as Concours d'art oratoire, a French public speaking contest, Rencontre Française, a special weekend for students in grades 7 and 8, and many other activities. Seen above, students enjoy an African music workshop at this year's Rencontre Française.

A Special Thank You...

CPF -BC & Yukon expresses a special thank you to the following organizations. Their support is gratefully acknowledged:

- The Department of Canadian Heritage
- British Columbia Ministry of Education
- BC Hydro
- Terasen Gas

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.