

# *The French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee Constitution*

## **1. Mission Statement**

The French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee will advocate for French Immersion children by making and providing recommendations and advice within the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division.

## **2. Action Plan**

- Recognize and acknowledge the growth and positive changes in the French Immersion program;
- Educate parents about the responsibility, mission and action plan of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee and a parent's role in the education system;
- Ask a Superintendent of Schools to act as a liaison or as a bridge between the advisory group and schools to facilitate a positive working relationship between the schools and advisory group;
- Ask school division administration and the Board of Education to promote and publicly state the rights, roles and responsibilities of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee;
- Obtain and review French Immersion curricula;
- Provide advice in regards to the scope and sequence planning for the French Immersion K-12 program;
- Initiate discussion on the definitions of fluently bi-lingual, fully bi-lingual and functional in French as they apply to the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division French Immersion Program;
- Generate and distribute a summary of the parent's survey; and,
- Network, in cooperation with the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division, with other advisory groups and bodies to learn about what they are doing about French Immersion.

## **3. Membership**

### 3.1 Representative Parent Members

Any parent of a child in the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division French Immersion Program is a member of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee.

### 3.2 Permanent Members

- The principals of schools with a French Immersion Program

## **4. Officers**

4.1 The following French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee Officers will be elected annually:

- Chairperson
- Vice-Chairperson
- Secretary-Treasurer

The roles and responsibilities of officers can be found in Appendix A of this constitution.

## **5. French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee Meetings**

### 5.1 Annual General Meeting

The Annual General meeting will be held in September of each year. During this meeting members of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee will be selected and officers will be chosen.

5.2 The French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee will meet 8 times per school year.

### 5.3 Model of Governance

#### **The Town-Hall Model**

In this model members are elected to the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee but regular meetings are open to the entire school division. Any member of the school community can participate in the meeting and be involved in the decision making process of matters brought before the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee.

### 5.4 Voting

On matters requiring a formal vote, only Representative Members of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee may vote.

### 5.5 Quorum

A quorum of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee shall be a majority of the Representative Members.

## **6. Public Consultation and Communication**

The French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee will consult and communicate as outlined in the Action Plan.

## **7. French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee Code of Conduct**

The French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee will adopt the Code of Conduct of the Saskatchewan Association of School Councils which can be found in Appendix B of this constitution.

## **8. Conflict of Interest**

A French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee member may occasionally find him/herself in a conflict of interest position in terms of some issue under consideration by the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee. When this happens, the Member should declare that s/he is in a conflict of interest situation and leave the room for the portion of the meeting, thus refraining from participating in the discussion. The Member should not vote on any decision made on the issue.

## **9. Decision-Making Process**

### **Consensus Building Model**

Consensus does not necessarily mean that all parties agree, but that all can live with a decision for the sake of the group's ability to move forward. It requires that all Members listen to each other's opinions and try to find solutions to problems and differences. Consensus will almost always involve compromise and can release a group to move beyond individual wants to determining and pursuing shared needs. Consensus does not necessarily mean that all parties agree, but that all can live with a decision made for the sake of the group's ability to move forward.

## **10. Handling Complaints or Concerns**

### **10.1 Complaints or Concern about an Individual Student or Staff Member**

Any matter concerning an individual student or staff member must be directed to the staff member or Principal. It is not the responsibility of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee to deal with concerns or complaints about individuals other than to direct the concern to the appropriate individual. Board of Education Policy 2040 Parent and Student Concerns outlines the appropriate procedure to resolve complaints or concerns.

### **10.2 Complaints or Concerns about French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee Initiatives or Activities**

#### **10.2.1 Informal Complaints or Concerns**

Provided French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee Members are comfortable in their knowledge and feel at ease expressing themselves, concerns or questions about the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee.. initiatives or activities expressed informally to members of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee may be addressed immediately by the Member. If a Member is unsure of the appropriate response, s/he should say so but indicate that s/he will check and get back to the individual. If such a commitment is made the Member must follow through. After responding to the complaint or concern the Member should always ask if their response has been satisfactory. If the individual is not satisfied with the response, the Member should explain how

the concern or complaint could be brought to the attention of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee in a more formal manner.

#### 10.2.2 Formal Complaints or Concerns

Concerns or complaints can be brought to the attention of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee by addressing the concern in writing to the Chairperson or by requesting that the Chairperson provide the individual with an opportunity to meet with the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee at an upcoming meeting. The French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee will provide a written response regarding how they have or will address the concern or complaint.

### **11. Conflict Resolution Process**

The Conflict Resolution Process will be used by the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee to address both internal conflict, which may occur among individuals within the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee and external conflict that may occur between the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee and individuals, groups or organization outside of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee. The conflict resolution process is outlined in A Handbook for School Community Councils and Principals (p 99).

If reasonable attempts to resolve the conflict have been unsuccessful, the chairperson will contact a Superintendent of Schools.

### **12. Committees**

The French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee will act in a coordination role for committees operating in support of the French Immersion program.

### **13. Amend the Constitution**

The French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee may amend its constitution by sending suggestions for change in writing to the Board of Education.

# Appendix A

## Roles and Responsibilities of French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee Officers

### The **Chairperson** will:

- conduct meetings of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee;
- ensure that all members have input to discussion and decisions;
- prepare meeting agendas in consultation with the Principal and other French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee Members;
- oversee operations of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee;
- establish networks that support the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee; and,
- act as a spokesperson for the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee.

### The **Vice-Chairperson** will;

- support the Chairperson in his/her duties, taking over when the Chairperson is unable to attend; and,
- perform responsibilities assigned by the Chairperson.

### The **Secretary** will;

- take minutes at French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee meetings;
- receive and send correspondence on behalf of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee;
- take charge of any official records of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee; and,
- ensure that appropriate notice is given for all meetings of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee.

### The **Treasurer** will;

- manage the finances of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee using procedures outlined in the School Community Council Funds: Operation and Procedures Manual.

## **Appendix B**

### **French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee Code of Conduct**

1. French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee is not a forum for the discussion of individual school personnel, students, parents, or other individual members of the school community.
2. A member of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee who is approached by a parent with a concern relating to an individual is in a privileged position and must treat such discussion with discretion, protecting the confidentiality of the people involved.
3. A parent who accepts a position as a member of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee:
  - i. Upholds the constitution and bylaws, policies and procedures of the French Immersion Parent Advisory Committee.
  - ii. Performs his/her duties with honesty and integrity.
  - iii. Works to ensure that the well-being of students is the primary focus of all decisions
  - iv. Respects the rights of all individuals.
  - v. Takes direction from the members, ensuring that the representation processes are in place.
  - vi. Encourages and support parents and students with individual concerns to act on their own behalf and provides information on the process for taking forward concerns.
  - vii. Works to ensure that issues are resolved through due process.
  - viii. Strives to be informed and only passes on information that is reliable and correct.
  - ix. Respects all confidential information.
  - x. Supports public education.

Source: Saskatchewan Association of School Councils