

# Maplehurst Middle School: Consultation Report

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Anglophone East School District  
Province of New Brunswick

March 31, 2023



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This final report summarizes the approach Ernst & Young LLP (EY) used to facilitate consultations for the New Brunswick Anglophone East School District (hereafter “School District”) and Maplehurst Middle School (MMS) in March 2023. The report is intended to synthesize learnings, highlight emerging themes, and identify areas for consideration. Supporting this report is an appendix containing the consultation supporting materials including session notes and survey analysis.

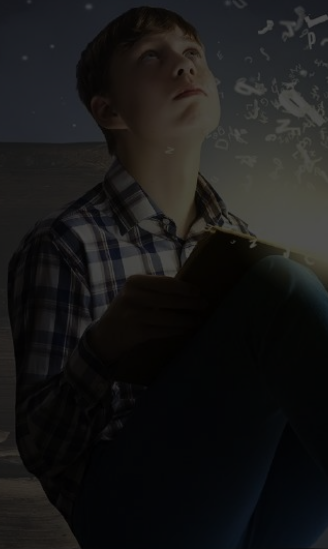
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## Executive summary



- ▶ As the only official bilingual province in Canada, New Brunswick has the mandate to provide an education system where all learners have the opportunity to learn both English and French so that they can communicate with one another and pursue careers and other opportunities in both languages. The Government of New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) is committed to support all Anglophone sector graduates to attain at least a conversational level of French by grade 12.
- ▶ In 2021, the Government of New Brunswick’s Department of Education and Early Childhood Development worked with schools and districts to develop the Language Learning Prototype (LLP) initiative to explore how to: 1) maximize readily available school resources; 2) increase students’ exposure to conversational French; and 3) give students more opportunities to speak French to improve their confidence and interest. MMS was one of the first schools chosen to implement the LLP, which has been implemented at the school since the 2021-2022 school year.
- ▶ EY was engaged by the Anglophone East School District to facilitate a series of consultations with MMS. These consultations were conducted in March 2023 and involved issuing a survey to garner feedback from all MMS parents followed by a series of focus group sessions to seek feedback and input from both parents and learners. The consultations focused on learner and parent experience with the LLP at MMS including what is working well and ideas for areas for improvement as the LLP continues to go through an iterative review and development process.
- ▶ In total, **14** sub-themes were identified across the three categories: **school environment, learning environment, and the LLP process**. Key considerations have also been identified across the three categories to support the School District and MMS leadership teams as they begin their school planning for next year.

# 1

## Scope and Approach





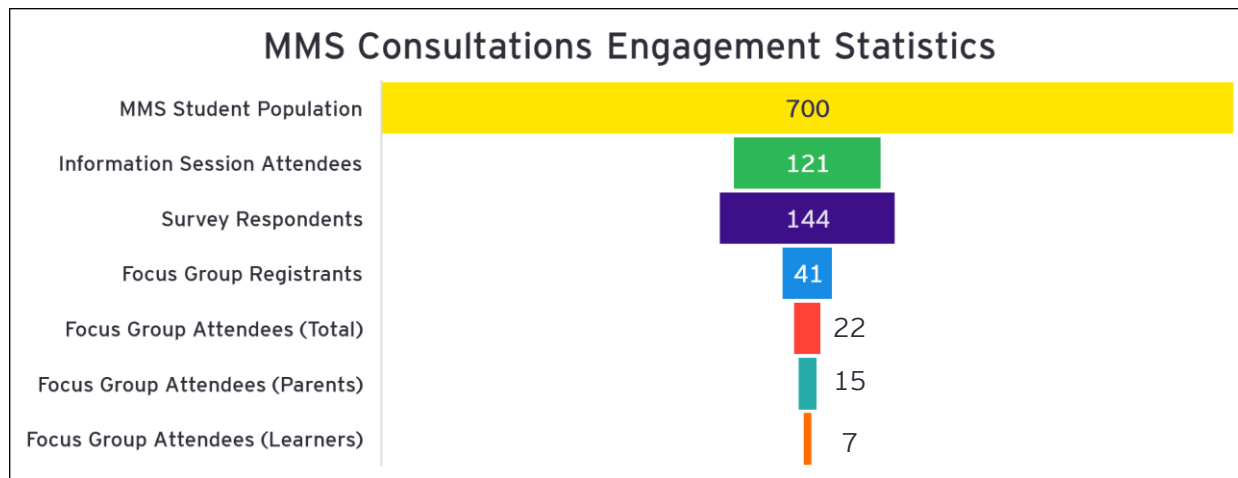
# EY engagement and role within Language Learning Prototype (LLP) initiative

The Anglophone East School District in New Brunswick engaged EY to advise on and conduct consultations around the implementation of the LLP initiative at Maplehurst Middle School (MMS) as an independent third party.

Together with School District and MMS leadership, EY developed the following objectives for the consultations with the target audience of parents and learners at MMS:

- ▶ Better understand learner and parent expectations around school and learning environment.
- ▶ Better understand learner and parent expectations around French language learning.
- ▶ Develop a stronger understanding of what is working well and what could be improved as the LLP initiative continues to be implemented in the future.

Despite best efforts to effectively engage all parents at MMS, the consultation process received relatively low engagement and mostly from parents of French Immersion learners.



## STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION PROCESS

The consultation approach was broken down into four steps:

### STEP 1

**Information Session:** The School District and MMS leadership held an information session with parents at MMS to ensure parents understood the objectives of the LLP initiative as well as the intentions of the consultations. A recording of the information session was sent out to parents who could not attend during the original session.

### STEP 2

**Survey Link and Focus Group Registration:** EY developed a survey on the Qualtrics platform using questions co-created with the School District and MMS leadership team to gain a base-line understanding of how parents viewed the implementation of the LLP over the last two years. The link to the survey was distributed immediately to all parents after the information session, which included options for parents to register for the focus group sessions scheduled on March 20-21, 2023. The survey was open to respondents until March 30, 2023, and parents were sent repeated reminders to fill out the survey and ensure their experiences were heard. Detailed results of the survey can be found in the appendices.

### STEP 3

**Focus Groups:** EY visited MMS and conducted three focus groups between March 20-21, 2023.: 2 with parents and 1 with learners. These focus groups were used to better understand the nuances behind participants' experiences, and an interactive question and answer platform approved by EECD and MMS, Sli.do, was used to facilitate these focus groups. Questions for the Sli.do tool and the wider consultations were drafted by EY and approved by the MMS team. Detailed notes and Sli.do results can be found in the appendices.

# 2

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## Summary of Themes



# Summary of themes

A thematic analysis of insights generated from the survey and focus groups identified 14 sub-themes:

## 1.0 SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

### ▶ 1.1 Hub of Activity and Creativity

The school was positively described as a hub of activity where students were able to be highly engaged in the community

Parents find the promotion of creative learning models to be positive

### ▶ 1.2 Interactive

The interactive nature of how the Language Learning Prototype has been implemented was seen to be a positive experience for learners

Learners are helping one another learn French throughout their school day

Learners often feel more comfortable speaking French and taking risks

### ▶ 1.3 Diversity and Inclusion

The school's aim for diversity was well-received and noted for its contributions to an inclusive community and student wellbeing

### ▶ 1.4 Student Mentorship

Some parents are frustrated by their children becoming mentors in the classroom instead of a pure learning experience

## 2.0 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

### ▶ 2.1 WIN Block

Most parents indicated positive experiences with the WIN Block

### ▶ 2.2 Language Arts Change

Parents largely supported the recent change of FLA classes to be divided by program and ability level

### ▶ 2.3 Speaking French

French Immersion parents want to have core academic classes conducted in French

Learner's use of French is often dependent on the teacher's strictness

### ▶ 2.4 Level of Challenge

Some parents and learners, especially those enrolled in French Immersion, do not feel challenged enough in French classes

Students who are challenged find they are getting enough support from teachers

### ▶ 2.5 Teachers Default to English

Parents and learners alike felt that teachers often defaulted to English because English is often the only common language in the classroom

In some cases, students only experience French in French class

## 3.0 LANGUAGE LEARNING PROTOTYPE PROCESS

### ▶ 3.1 Engagement with Parents

Parents appreciated the opportunity to be engaged in discussions in focus groups and provide feedback in the survey

### ▶ 3.2 Communications

Parents felt frustrated around the lack of clarity of communications stemming from the lack of individualized communications in the province.

Some parents also indicated there were inconsistencies in the use of MyBlueprint

### ▶ 3.3 Alternate Options

Some parents indicated they want the option to opt-in or out of the LLO including the option to attend a different school

### ▶ 3.4 Fidelity in Implementation

Some parents expressed frustration over the perceived mismatch between communications and what occurs throughout implementation

Some felt the prototype would be more effective if implemented earlier

### ▶ 3.5 Measures of Success

There was a desire for more transparency to see the data and evidence supporting the decisions being made including the implementation of the LLP as a prototype



# 1.0 School Environment

To gain insights into perceptions of the school environment, EY engaged parents and learners at MMS by asking questions related to the following:

- ▶ What is usually the highlight of your school day?
- ▶ Do you feel comfortable and safe learning new things at school?
- ▶ In a perfect world, what do you hope to hear your child(ren) say about their school day?
- ▶ How can we enable all students to have access to great French learning opportunities?

## What is Working Well

### 1.1 Hub of Activity and Creativity

The school was positively described as a hub of activity where students were able to be highly engaged in the community. Parents find the promotion of creative learning models to be positive.

### 1.2 Interactive

The interactive nature of how the Language Learning Prototype has been implemented was seen to be a positive experience for learners. Learners are helping one another learn French throughout the school day and feel more comfortable speaking French and taking risks.

### 1.3 Diversity and Inclusion

The school’s aim for diversity was well-received and noted for its contributions to an inclusive community and student wellbeing. Parents appreciated the opportunity for their children to participate in diverse classrooms and mingle with children of all learning needs.

## What Could Be Improved Upon

### 1.4 Learner Mentorship

While learners indicated positive experiences with the interactive nature of the LLPs, some parents are frustrated by their children becoming mentors in the classroom instead of a pure learning experience.



“That they found something challenging. They felt safe to take risks or try something new. They were positive and kind towards others. And over the course of a few days, weeks, months, they could recognize they’ve learned something.”  
 - Focus Group parent on what they want to hear their child say about their school day

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ **1A:** Maplehurst is well received as a great school by parents and learners alike. Learners enjoy attending school at Maplehurst and feel very welcome in the community. Efforts by the school leadership team and teachers to implement this culture at the school should be continued and encouraged.
- ▶ **1B:** Inform parents of the benefits of an interactive learning environment, including the benefits of student mentorship and leadership in the classroom and school community.
- ▶ **1C:** Communicate to parents to insights learned from consultations and thank them for their engagement. Provide additional information on timelines and how the school intends to communicate moving forward in 2023-2024.



## 2.0 Learning Environment

To gain insights into perceptions of the learning environment, EY engaged parents and learners at MMS by asking questions related to the following:

- ▶ Do you like learning French? Do you find it to be important? Why or why not?
- ▶ Do you feel more comfortable speaking French now versus a year ago? Why do you think that is?
- ▶ What would be the ideal learning environment for your child to learn French?
- ▶ Would you prefer for your child to learn Math and Science in English or French? Why?

### What is Working Well

#### 2.1 WIN Block

Most parents indicated positive experiences with the newly implemented WIN block, noting that it allowed for their children to interact with a more diverse cohort of students at school.

#### 2.2 Language Arts Change

Parents largely supported the recent change of French Language Arts classes to be divided by program and ability level.



**“Teachers this year especially have been really encouraging me [when it takes a lot of effort to explain what I am trying to say in French].”**  
 - Focus Group learner on when they can't express themselves in French

### What Could Be Improved Upon

#### 2.3 Speaking French

French Immersion parents want to have core academic classes conducted in French. However, they had few objections for other elective subjects like Practical Arts and Gym to be conducted in English if it is required to facilitate inter-program mixing.

A learner's use of French at school is often dependent on the teacher's strictness.

#### 2.4 Level of Challenge

Some parents and learners, especially those enrolled in French immersion, do not feel challenged enough in French classes. Learners who are challenged find that they are getting adequate support from their teachers.

#### 2.5 Teachers Default to English

Parents and learners alike felt that teachers often defaulted to English as it is often the only common language in the classroom. In some cases, learners only experience French in French Language Arts classes.

### KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ **2A:** Investigate the possibility of allowing increased French instruction in core academic classes for French Immersion learners.
- ▶ **2B:** Where possible, seek to provide challenging opportunities for French Immersion learners to further develop their French skills. Successful examples identified in the focus groups include the use of highly engaging French materials or providing alternate materials in French for French Immersion learners.
- ▶ **2C:** Work with teachers to monitor and encourage the use of French in classrooms to aid the development of French learning for all learners across all subjects where possible.
- ▶ **2D:** Identify to the District the necessary next steps and resources (including immersion teachers, when to blend classes and what subjects to teach in French) to improve future implementation of the LLP.

## 3.0 Language Learning Prototype Process

To gain insights into perceptions of the LLP process, EY engaged parents and learners at MMS by asking questions related to the following:

- ▶ How do you feel about the blended classes and regrouping model introduced this year? Why do you like or dislike these learning models?
- ▶ How do you feel about the smaller and flexible learning model implemented this school year?
- ▶ How have the blended French classes affected your child? If any, what have been the benefits and what have been the negatives with this approach?

### What is Working Well

#### 3.1 Engagement with Parents

Parents greatly appreciated the opportunity to be engaged in discussions in the focus groups, as well as the opportunity to provide written feedback in the survey.



**“It’s time we call it what it is. Streaming hasn’t worked for everyone, and it is no longer an acceptable way of educating our children. I completely applaud Maplehurst for trying something new.”**

- Focus Group parent on the benefits of the Language Learning Prototype initiative implemented at Maplehurst over the last two school years

### What Could Be Improved Upon

#### 3.2 Communications

Some parents indicated frustrations around the lack of clarity of communications. This is likely a result of a lack of individualized communications from the province. Parents indicated that they are not using MyBlueprint consistently.

#### 3.3 Alternate Options

Some parents want the ability to choose pathways for their children’s educations. This includes the option to opt-in or out of the LLP next year, as well as the option to attend different schools if the LLP is to be implemented at MMS again.

#### 3.4 Fidelity in Implementation

Some parents are frustrated over a perceived mismatch between communications and what occurs in implementation. Some parents felt the prototype would be more effective if implemented earlier in a learner’s education journey.

#### 3.5 Measures of Success

There is a desire to see data and evidence supporting decisions being made by the leadership teams, including the implementation of the LLP as a prototype versus a pilot.

### KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ **3A:** As per IAP2 guidelines,<sup>1</sup> provide balanced information to parents and provide opportunity for feedback on major changes to their children’s education. Inform parents early in the process to set expectations the professional authority of teachers and how proposed changes may impact their children’s learning to help address parent questions and concerns.
- ▶ **3B:** Seek to understand the cause of the perceived lack of clarity of communications to address parents’ concerns. One example is MyBlueprint, whose usage remains low by parents.
- ▶ **3C:** Investigate the possibility of providing alternate options to parents at Maplehurst.
- ▶ **3D:** When results of the LLP data being tracked by the Department becomes available, MMS and District leadership can use the data to drive decision making processes and share with parents where relevant.

1.The [International Association of Public Participation](#) (IAP2) is the preeminent international organization advancing the practice of public participation, with established [best practices for public participation](#).



# Roadmap

Outlined below are key considerations the leadership teams at MMS and the School District can contemplate as they plan for the next academic school year. Over the next few months, the following key considerations can be looked at when incorporating the feedback and insights gathered from the consultations recently conducted in March of 2023.

## 01 APRIL - MAY 2023

- ▶ **1B:** Inform parents of the benefits of an interactive learning environment, including the benefits of student mentorship and leadership in the classroom and school community.
- ▶ **1C:** Communicate to parents to insights learned from consultations and thank them for their engagement. Provide additional information on timelines and how the school intends to communicate moving forward in 2023-2024.
- ▶ **2B:** Where possible, seek to provide challenging opportunities for French Immersion learners to further develop their French skills. Successful examples identified in the focus groups include the use of highly engaging French materials or providing alternate materials in French for French Immersion learners.
- ▶ **2C:** Work with teachers to monitor and encourage the use of French in classrooms to aid the development of French learning for all learners across all subjects where possible.

## 02 JUNE - AUGUST 2023

- ▶ **2A:** Investigate the possibility of allowing increased French instruction in core academic classes for French Immersion learners.
- ▶ **2D:** Identify to the District the necessary next steps and resources (including immersion teachers, when to blend classes and what subjects to teach in French) to improve future implementation of the LLP.
- ▶ **3B:** Seek to understand the cause of the perceived lack of clarity of communications to address parents' concerns. One example is MyBlueprint, whose usage remains low by parents.
- ▶ **3C:** Investigate the possibility of providing alternate options to parents at Maplehurst.

## 03 SEPTEMBER 2023 ONWARDS

- ▶ **1A:** Maplehurst is well received as a great school by parents and learners alike. Learners enjoy attending school at Maplehurst and feel very welcome in the community. Efforts by the school leadership team and teachers to implement this culture at the school should be continued and encouraged.
- ▶ **3A:** As per IAP2 guidelines,<sup>1</sup> provide balanced information to parents and provide opportunity for feedback on major changes to their children's education. Inform parents early in the process to set expectations the professional authority of teachers and how proposed changes may impact their children's learning to help address parent questions and concerns.
- ▶ **3D:** When results of the LLP data being tracked by the Department becomes available, MMS and District leadership can use the data to drive decision making processes and share with parents where relevant.

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# 3

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## Appendices





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## Appendix A: Survey Results

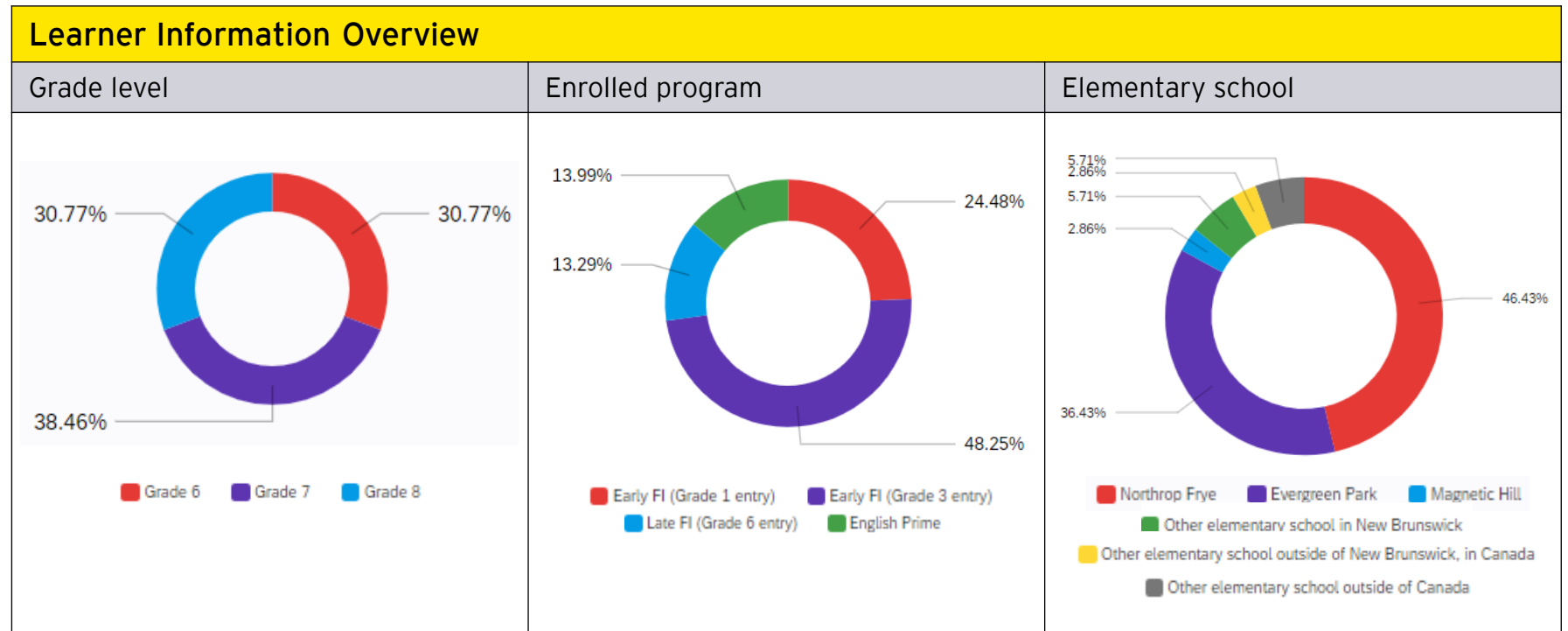
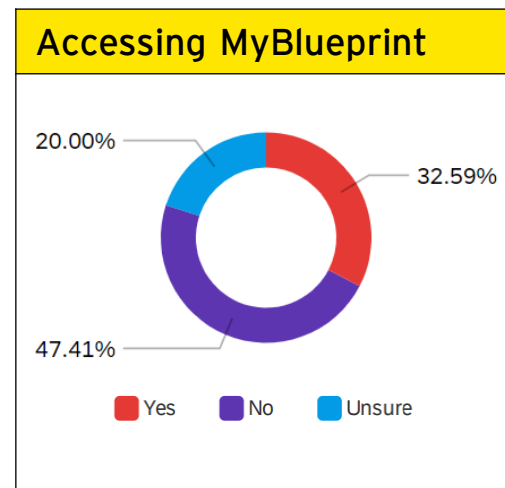




# Survey Results (1/4)

Information accurate as of: March 30, 2023

Survey Overview	
Number of completed responses	144
# of respondents who provided consent	144 (100%)
# focus group registrants	41
# focus group attendees	24 (7 learners)

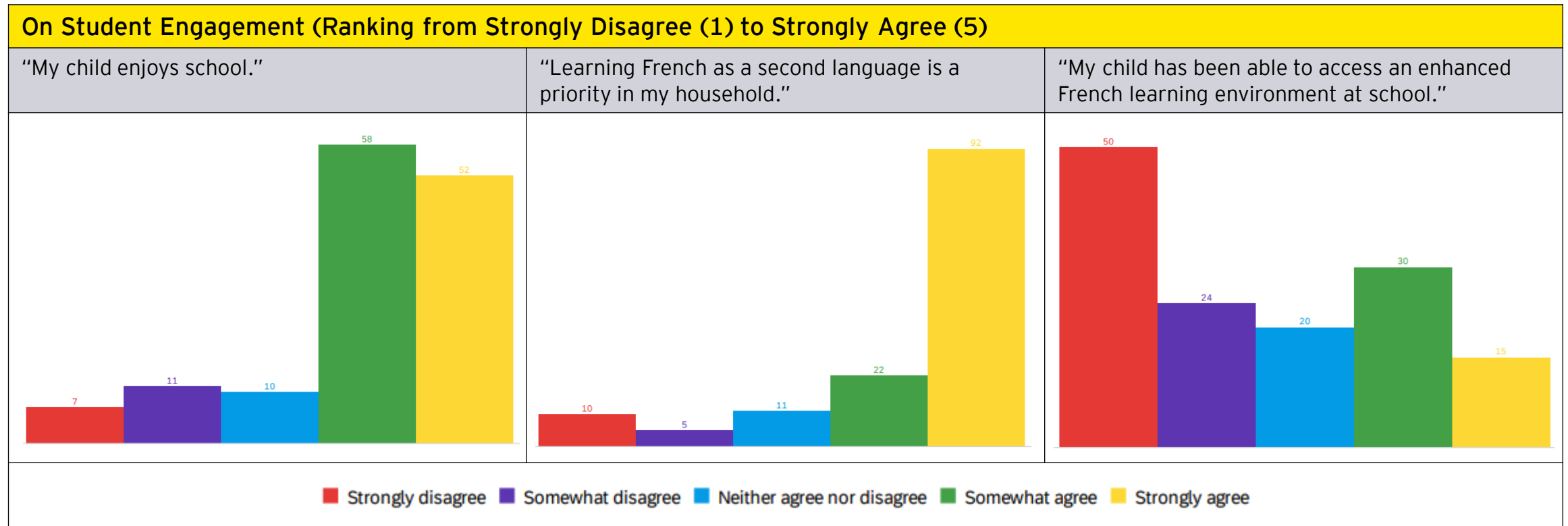


- ### Highlight observations:
- ▶ 144 responses, representative of approximately 20% of school's population
  - ▶ Only 22 participants (15 parents, 7 learners, 3% of school's population) attended the focus groups
  - ▶ Mostly representative of parents of French Immersion learners who attended Northrop Frye or Evergreen Park for elementary school
  - ▶ Respondents are relatively evenly split across grade levels

\*Note: Responses to the open text question are attached in a separate PDF

# Survey Results (2/4)

Information accurate as of: March 30, 2023



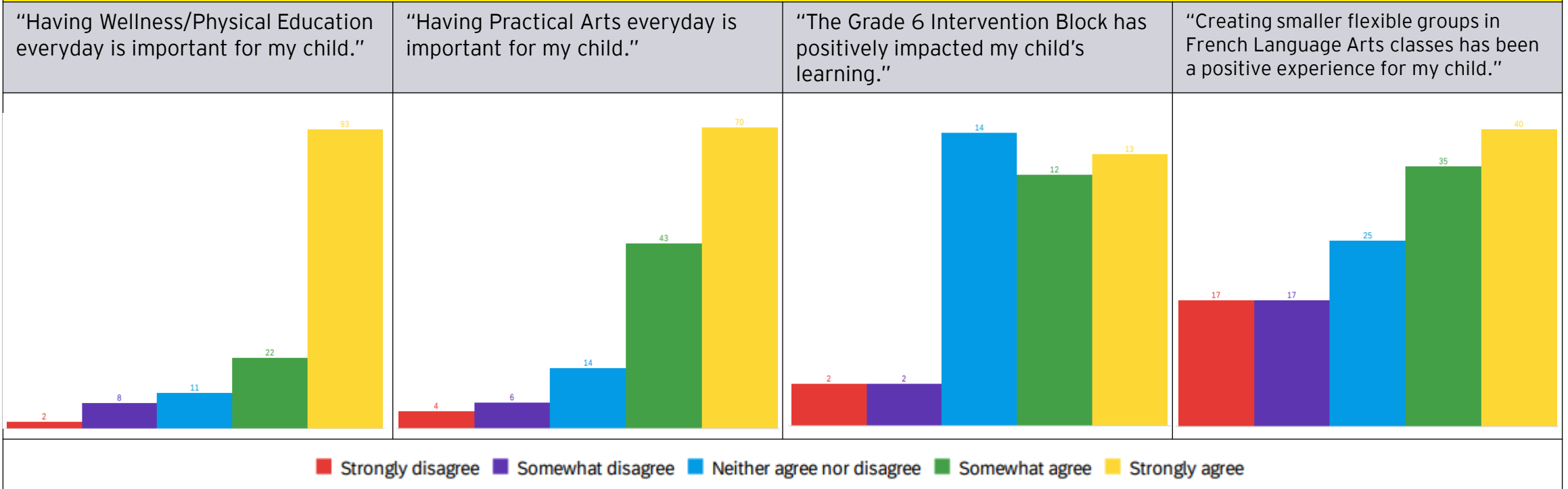
## Highlight observations:

- ▶ Most respondents indicated that their child enjoyed school, a great indication for Maplehurst!
- ▶ French learning continues to be a priority for most respondents, but most do not feel their child(ren) have had access to an enhanced French learning environment at school, pointing to disagreements with how the LLP has been implemented

# Survey Results (3/4)

Information accurate as of: March 30, 2023

## On Learning Structures (Ranking from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5))



### Highlight observations:

- ▶ Elective classes like Wellness/Physical Education and Practical Arts have strong importance to respondents, most of whom would like their child to be able to participate in those classes everyday
- ▶ Only some view the Grade 6 Intervention Block and smaller flexible groups in French Language Arts classes in a positive light

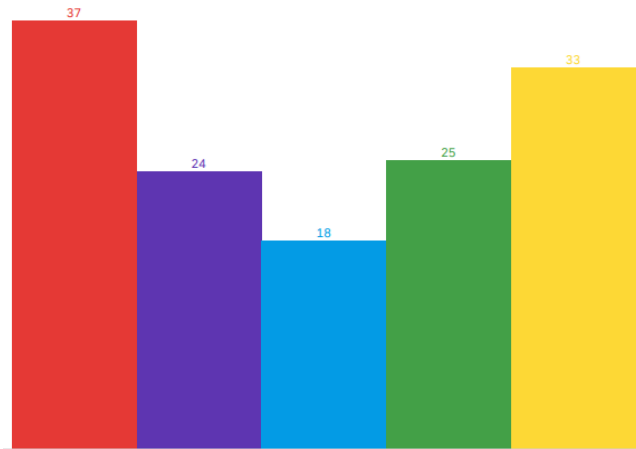


# Survey Results (4/4)

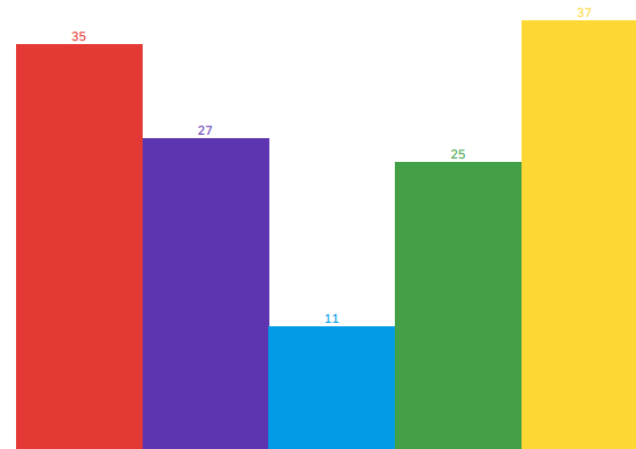
Information accurate as of: March 30, 2023

## On Learning Structures (Ranking from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5))

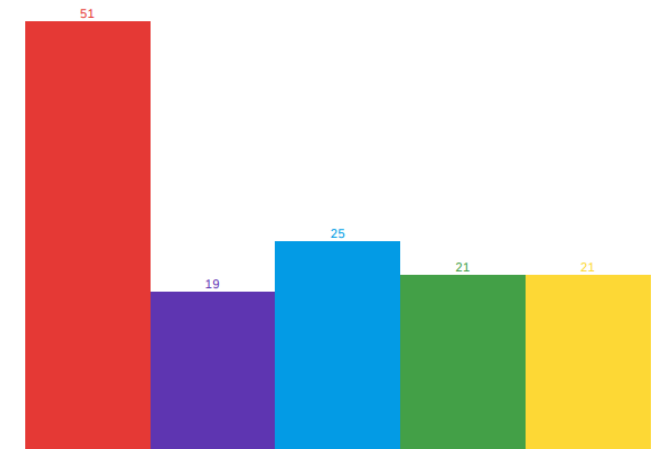
“Having Science concepts taught in English is important for my child.”



“Having Math concepts taught in English is important for my child.”



“Having homeroom classes/Advisory blended by program (Immersion and English Prime) has contributed to excellence in diversity at Maplehurst.”



■ Strongly disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Strongly agree

### Highlight observations:

- ▶ Given that many respondents of the survey are parents of French Immersion students, it is understandable that most don't feel that it is important for their child to learn Math and Science in English
- ▶ Not all parents view the blended homeroom and Advisory classes in a positive light

## Appendix B: Sli.Do Results



# Sli.Do Results: “In a perfect world, what do you hope to hear your child(ren) say about their school day?”

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Below outline the answers parents gave in response to the question “In a perfect world, what do you hope to hear your child(ren) say about their school day?” during the consultation sessions. Answers are collated across both consultation sessions on Mar 20 and 21:

- ▶ The day was interesting, interactive, creative and full.
- ▶ A great day, learned new things and was challenged
- ▶ They were engaged and happy at the end of the day
- ▶ That they learned something new and had an enjoyable day
- ▶ They were engaged and challenged
- ▶ It was fun, challenging and engaging.
- ▶ Challenged and engaged in their day to day learning. They can build upon concepts that they are learning. Excited to learn.
- ▶ That they felt supported and encouraged. They are confident in their abilities and spending their day in a positive environment.
- ▶ That they found something challenging. They felt safe to take risks or try something new. They were positive and kind towards others. And over the course of a few days, weeks, months, they could recognize they’ve learned something.
- ▶ Happy Safe Supported Encouraged Felt success Grew in some way
- ▶ That they had an engaged day and interacted with their peers and teachers in a positive way. That they were excited about what they were learning and felt it was valuable for their life and learning journey.
- ▶ They felt connected with other students and school staff. They were engaged in a variety of rich learning opportunities. They were challenged and supported.
- ▶ I hope my child says they had fun, everyone was kind, they learned something(s) new, and they experienced challenges.
- ▶ They enjoy it and are learning



# Sli.Do Results: “What would be the ideal learning environment for your child to learn French?”

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Below outline the answers parents gave in response to the question “What would be the ideal learning environment for your child to learn French?” during the consultation sessions. Answers are collated across both consultation sessions on Mar 20 and 21:

- ▶ General French learning for all. Specialized courses for those interested in furthering French language.
- ▶ Students with similar French language levels being taught exclusively in French experienced French-speaking educators who understand the unique needs of students learning additional languages
- ▶ Access to enrol in French School District Immersion with similar levels combined with experiential learning opportunities imbedded as part of using language in “real world”
- ▶ In a typical and informal situation like hallways, having lunch, sports, etc. Also researching in a topic interested in them.
- ▶ Minimum 70% French learning without English translation in the same class.
- ▶ They would have the opportunity to have all core classes exclusively in French,
- ▶ Students with the same French language abilities, being met and challenged to read and write in French language
- ▶ The more French the better, otherwise interest and motivation falls off.
- ▶ The environment is not the problem. It’s the method of teaching. The method should include intensive French learning for those who want it
- ▶ Inclusive, supportive, safe, dynamic, flexible. Flexible, personalized, inclusive and positive
- ▶ Learning French in context of everyday life... practical arts, culinary, non-urgent office/teacher interactions. French language at the level my child is at.
- ▶ Grouping based on ability: - reading - writing - speaking - subject specific Mixes change through the day.
- ▶ Immersed. As in full, all, complete French speaking and writing and listening, with peers and teachers.

## Appendix C: Focus Group Notes



# Session 1: Parents

## March 20, 2022

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- 7 parents, mixed grade levels (4 early FI, 2 late FI, 1 EP)
- RE: diversity etc.
  - Child feels they're not being challenged enough in French. There are poster boards teaching other kids how to say mom/dad/brother/etc. despite having been doing French since 5y.o. Child is now in a coaching role instead of being challenged herself; "this was disappointing"
    - If there are different levels in the classroom, they need to be meeting the needs of everyone, or at least the majority [and not just those with weakest proficiency levels]
  - If the LLO was implemented at an earlier age the dichotomy wouldn't be so strong
    - Lots of nods from other parents, agree that kids aren't always being challenged
    - Not necessarily saying to the school "don't do this" but instead implement this earlier
  - Piggybacking on the challenge - doesn't just affect the child finding it challenging, kids are also getting retaught the same things in French and English. Child is bored - understood it in French initially then English again. How are the kids getting a full year of curriculum if you're teaching it twice?
    - Is it slower if you do it bilingual?
    - As FI parents we were given information, and with that information chose to have their children learn in French etc. And they could choose to talk to each other in English but things are presented in French
    - If things are in both English and French, kids are going to do what's easier which is usually easier English and not French. It is human nature for what parents do. French movies with English subtitles - kids just read the English subtitles
  - The blended classes is hard - the forced learning in French is what get kids to use and learn French
  - Child who went through FI thinks in French sometimes despite being Anglophone. That type of learning only comes from consistent French learning and exposure
  - With the blended aspect - conversational is wonderful but that's not the intention of what the FI was intended for. Blended piece makes it very fractured for them., They don't have the mindset to be speaking in French, not being engaged and challenged in the way that FI is intended to be
    - FI objectives vs. intent of blended
  - Don't feel reasonably assured that their kids are getting the FI delivery that the teachers/school admin have been describing their kids should be getting based on FI in LLOs
  - One parent has a really good positive: international students joining the school typically join English stream and with the blended classes in Math kids are getting a lot of learning from their peers
  - Math is 100% in English in French - "I think it is across the board" for grade 7s. Not sure for grade 8.
    - Always taught FI Math. Francophone teacher who has always taught FI Math but says can't do English and French because of repeating. So only teaches in English. Therefore in practice, expectation for teachers is really do what you can
  - With EAs: child needed some support with Math. One on one support was amazing. While in FI, finding resource support was basically non existent since they started, wouldn't have gotten that without the LLP
    - Child hasn't needed resource support since
- Child couldn't join FI because missed the entry point. Child joined the LLP program to see if she could learn French, but haven't seen improvements in French language
  - Sends many emails to principals/teachers, but haven't really seen any French improvements. English of course has seen improvement
  - Child says: some groups mix with the FI students, but they don't try to learn any subject in French but instead just do English
  - Trying to join the FI but school didn't allow their child to join
  - Do they give you any resources for your child since they couldn't do FI?
    - They have some but not really
- What are some ways we can enable all children no matter when they enter the education system that they have the opportunity to learn French? Or build community?
  - Culture and those pieces - huge asset as far as the school goes
  - Only school in the region that does LLP, concern for children as they go into high schools
    - How would my child do compared to kids who did FI in a traditional way
  - Increasing population and increasing diversity -
    - Entrance pieces have area of opportunity - shouldn't be just gates, you should be able to have many opportunities to enter into FI
  - There's an opportunity to build community without affecting the academic environment and without affecting the school day
    - Up to school community rather than detriment to kids' education
    - resourcing is a big issue
- More on access
  - Don't really think their kids would be using French in the hallways, nor do they really think (maybe only 1)
  - One of the benefits of blended classrooms is it eliminated streaming because EP were mixed with Late FI and Early FI, same classrooms with kids of very different areas of spectrum on
  - Huge benefit for my kids, huge benefit for everyone but especially my FI kids (younger EP kids)
  - Impact time, have advisory, blended → why not do bubble classes for PE, practical arts etc? they'll get conversational there. Don't impact my kids' FI in curriculum classes like social studies
- "Time that we call it what it is. Streaming hasn't worked for everyone. And it's no longer an acceptable way of educating our children." School system and education needs to reflect the diversity
  - "completely applaud Maplehurst for trying something new" but can't improve diversity at the cost of academics
  - A start, yes. Something to work with, yes. But where do we want to go.
  - How do we create learning environments that is diverse for the kids? Don't believe we can have FI the way it has always been and keep it diverse



# Session 1: Parents

## March 20, 2022

### French language learning:

- It's a really big assumption that it is a bilingual classroom.
  - The kids all do half a year in social science and science. Science is straight up bilingual 50/50, but first term social science was 90% English. And then presented with homework or tests that were entirely in French, and was expected to be able to read social science assessments in French despite being taught it in English
- Experience of bilingual is only a goal or ideal, which they don't even think is good enough, but currently it is just basically mostly English
- Data for LLPs are getting done at the end of the year
  - Unfortunately already don't have faith in the integrity of the data
  - Parent: not assessing everyone, and was supposed to assess their child and for the first two assessments took the wrong child in the first and took their child for the second assessment
  - Concern: calibration over every student' academic learning environment
    - Not every student's academic environment is the same, with LLPs variation is even stronger given the differences in how different teachers approach teaching their classrooms
      - Every 7<sup>th</sup> grader is experiencing a different academic experience that isn't calibrated
      - A lot of it comes down to teaching quality - experience, how they want to approach the class, tools, resources, etc.
      - How do we get all the teachers to have the resources, tools, etc. to be able to do this? Level of excellence and resourcing, and level of language skills to be able to do that (fluency in French)
      - Feel so bad for teachers, thinks it's an unreasonable expectation for teachers, and usually gravitate towards English as a result because it is the common language for most kids in the classroom
      - The math teacher just says "I am teaching the language of Math"
    - Coupled with the want for increased French, and increased depth in French language. When it's questioned, it's sort of dismissed as not being accurate but that's what their kids say and what they experience when they come into pick up their kids etc.
- Regrouping we like but the model isn't great i.e., good to have flexibility to have 1-on-1 is great and be able to do that for non curriculum classes is great; but some things we don't like (are the teachers the right teachers to do this to the quality and consistency? Assessments aren't valid for what we're looking for "fidelity to what you intend").
- Anything else?
  - Lack of consent to the pilot - issue that many of the parents feel very strongly about. Would like to hear perspective on legality of that, but would ask you to speak to Randy about that
  - We didn't know and had couldn't choose to put their kids in it or not. Enrolled my child in FI and the prototype wasn't explained and communicated, eventually
    - Kids would come home asking their parents why their classes was in English
    - Slow action isn't great, late October is when the conversations with the school
    - Very very few parents knew their kids would be enrolled; only 1 out of 7
    - Communications was not clear and working with parents on educational options; things are happening all the time but a big structured thing happening
  - Think that it was a significant enough change that there should've been a conversation beforehand
  - Never had concrete communications on what it actually means and what it means impact
    - Not all the parents understood
- As someone who was new and wanting to join, she knew had opportunity to join FI but it was just mixed, not really actually FI
  - Not good for FI not good for EP
- Was aware of the initial change but not about how it was going to be run. So only communication was on additions of "authentic" French, so as any FI parent, they would say yes.
  - But no implication of changing how things were going to change
- For the future, would want the option to opt in or opt out. Or have the opportunity to enroll into another school (out of district?) and transit there. Need to have more choices.
  - Future need to be careful about word choice and not misrepresenting what it would actually look like

### Math and science in French/English:

- If you go back to why we want our kids in FI, it's for the language
  - Worked in high school for 12 years, messaging was always do not do Math in French because it's an entirely different language. So understand that piece.
  - But the parents chose for their kids to be taught Math in French. It's a challenge for my kid to be learning in French.
- One parent thinks it doesn't matter as long as you start at the beginning - FI parent so wanted their kids to do it in French.
- One parent: either way works. But with math and science in French that's the only way you get to the 70% required for FI.
- But also if you don't give them the option to do math and science in French in middle school, you don't give them the option to do it in high school.
- There are opportunities to do extra curriculums in French. But issue is they're all optional and not available to all parents, so should only be in addition to school.
- Schools do bear huge responsibility in the classroom time to give our kids the best opportunity they can [to speak French].
  - Want to be able to put their kids in Francophone but couldn't - argument is you can't support your kids if they're learning in a different language. But in FI that's already happening.
- Anecdote of a student on a PLP in FI with learning disabilities. She is the strongest in FI. Orally one of the strongest in her class, but struggles with everything else. No one taught them how to read/write/speak English. But if this student comes to Maplehurst next year, will be at a disadvantage as Math is taught in English AND takes away her strongest skill (French)
- If LLP is going to be what is best for everyone and is going to happen, what are my options for my child? Needs to have something that I can choose to replace Math in English for my child
- Use professional assessments and data after baseline for moving up and down levels etc., at the end give the choice to the parent. Would be a huge amount of work to assess every single child, need more than just the homeroom teacher. The key here is: choice, which is what has been taken away.
- There is opportunity for change - but inability to make modifications. Parents should be able to have choice.
- Surprised that they want to continue to LLP. So many parents have voiced concerns about benchmarking against other kids and loss of language, that the school has added French class back in. Signal that there is a problem, and certainly hope that it is a signal to make changes.
- Might be because of curriculum standards, was able to get additional resources, and separated an existing French class into two to get the additional piece.
- Only realized regrouping was happening when they reached out directly to Liz. Regardless: a communication problem.
- Year 1: 50% was in English (because 6 periods a day, English gym and practical arts were in English). But not blended so French everything else (FLA, Math, science, social science)
- This year: because it was blended, and slightly flex based on your ability, it's still 3 groups.
- 1 parent: isn't that still streaming?
- One parent asked if we are keeping track of who is coming etc.

# Session 2: Parents

## March 21, 2022

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### 1. Thinking about inclusion and the diverse people moving to community - want their children to learn French. They want the very best for their children. Sometimes met with barriers.

- Not all parents are engaged in their child's learning - how many parents are not engaged. Interested; what are some of the ways we create those opportunities.
- Engaging parents in different ways.
- Depends where you live in the province. There is a higher rate - in Moncton than in St. John. Making the choice document - PPT - if you don't have the mechanism, can't engage, create opportunities.
- More from the department - offering information sessions. There could be more presentations from the government.
- I feel that if we really want language instruction. We need to meet people where they are at. Spent time at their level - progress to next level. They met my need - French immersion programs are not flexible not to meet the needs of learners. Daughter significant disadvantage in the French immersion program. Data on the personalized learning plans - we look at those in challenge than an opportunity. Why aren't we doing PLPs for every child, meet children where they are. Organize their year based on an understanding of where they are. How they resource this schools to meet these needs.
- Example of student who had no choice in programs (given availability of classrooms) and felt excluded, anxiety, and lowered confidence as extracurriculars were only available to another program (non-immersion).
- Differentiation between immersion and non-immersion - class system - judge for where their parents put them. It comes down to flexibility.
- Roots and the problem - going to the meetings closed minded.
- School today is very different - info. Sessions, early, late or known - not helpful - need to have more information for parents to make decisions. Things that happen subconsciously. Maintain discipline in home environment.
- What are the diverse supports that are needed to support learners?
- All considerations to create opportunities.
- Appreciate the opportunity - anxious to come to this. Concerned some voices are not being heard. Thank you for creating that space. Need to hear from you in ways to feed the decisions. Adamant independent firm.
- Passionate leaders. Defensive, thank you for the feedback. Legitimate things for the school to consider.
- Have to understand that there are voices that won't come to the table - we need to consider. There are so many other voices that need to be accounted for.
- Learning opportunity - great thing - people can join later on. People who have moved here have missed an entry point - create access to newcomers.
- Didn't have safe space this year.

### 2. Ideal Learning Environment (SI;do)

- Learning French on the context of every day life
- Creating the safe space to speak French - confidence putting them in their role. Learn where it needs to be.
- Great disadvantage when they go to high school
- Prototype - for english prime - not good for French immersion - loss of learning over the last 2 years.
- It's a great idea on paper - can do this with english prime - and with the French immersion signed up for. Not getting the instruction they did last year.
- Blending of the classes - core subjects stay the same - arts and phys ed are blended. That is not happening, according to their child. (*the fidelity to the model*)
- Adult in NB - disadvantage in learning French. If Maplehurst stays as is, by the time the students gets to high school they won't have the same base. Is the view, the concept, adequate resources have not been put in. But still graded in french immersion.
- e.g. motivated academic student - and they found in Middle school much less French in grade 6 or 7 - through regrouping they acquired what they would - intensive - FI daily and feels like they are getting what they need. They wouldn't have gotten there is she wasn't immersed in it.
- Option - hybrid - exposure than grouping and regrouping.
- French language arts - in a french class, resources to change the model.
- Early immersion - total immersion - talking english when the teacher isn't around.
- There are a lot of levels - deficit - when they go into grade 9. LLO is not going to be put behind. Everyone going through grade 9 went through COVID. Mid-pack as a immersion student, they are feeling comfortable.
- Some many things to balance in the classroom - intensive with one, deficit to another.
- French immersion - language block - focus hard and regrouping them. If would be great if they had the resources - within these two homerooms, where are you in your french speaking. Nice that you would have pinpointed groups. A lot of available teachers to teach in concurrently.
- Grade 8 - math - test to start - understand where they are. Why isn't that happening at other grade levels?
- Are there ways we can do this in a consistent way...a lot of talk in the education community.
- Teachers want the supports in different ways

# Session 2: Parents

## March 21, 2022

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- Assessment and Resources - find where their child is - and provide them with the supports. Give me kids that are the same level and manage the day and group and regroup.
- This is what your parents signed you up as. Not a personalized learning plan.
- Education to meet kids where they are.
- Parents don't understand that the traditional school day is not what it is - no preparing kids - focus on critical thinking, self assess and re-evaluate that is the world we are living in. Remove the traditional learning environment.
- It is happening in grade 8 - lessons learned - what feeder school the grade 6's come from.
- Adapt and change - some things to investigate.
- How do we make this work - things we need to define - all sorts of avenues.
- We have to change something - different opportunities.
- Recognize that people learn differently - high school is a different environment again, interest into pathways.
- Don't do it on your own, involve us.
- Recognize meet, every expectation.
- Analogy: I trust my Doctor - it is a partnership.
- Trusting the school with my kids.
- French immersion in general - it isn't working. We have kids that can speak French - they are not entering that - when you get to high-school you have to make a choice.
- Difference in students in feeder schools going to high school.
- Glad you raised the specialization - there is a lot of pluses, just going to be like more involved. Right now they feel - think Liz and team.
- Classes are bilingual.
- Other design is English. Teaching other kids more than he is learning.
- The way it is structured and is not practical. Not getting french anywhere else other than french class. "Weakest player on the strongest team".
- Solution - what is causing that?
- Teach shop - present, ici, (attendance), immersion students talk to him, non-immersion pushing it - more authentic.
- French language arts traditional
- Math mark shouldn't impact French language ability.
- More French in a day if I did it the way I did it.
- What changes can they make, to improve and enforce French language?
  - Reinforcing what the language arts; part that is connected to the FI. If we are feeling those diminished.
- Difference between grade 8 and other classes.
- Are they meeting them where they are at?
- Playing catch-up on the math part.
- Communications to teachers - on what is going on, parents still don't know what is going on, don't know what the expectations were. Having a meeting with grade 6 parents, this is our plan for the year, we want to get our kids here and this is our plan xyz.
- There is curriculum, collectively (learner, teacher, volunteer) to support in achieving those goals.
- There wasn't those opportunities in the last 2 years.
- Views on how we get there - we need to trust our professionals
- Relationship and understanding - I hear you.
- Concerns French language learning out of FI - difficult meeting the 70% a day.
- School - French and English and meet you where you are. e.g. english immersion in the french district; when they come from the french district, they can't go into FI.
- English Prime - class composition - make them a more even split.
- Blueprint - variation of what is actually playing out.
- Doing a prototype - make sure the resources are there. Conversations, and the goal point not defending the prototype - adapting, learning and making changes as we go.
- Achieving the outcome - pre-prototype? Those outcomes are not being met that is why the prototypes are being implemented.
- Proven - quality in the word shop - french on paper we are trying to get.
- Don't be scared to have the conversations - let's understand where we are situational.
- There is a lot more commitment. Set strong foundations for their cohort that hasn't been met - understand cohorts of kids and lived experiences.
- We had two years to recoup.
- Science in english - speaking, writing and reading in French - would like to have more of this.
- French immersion right from grade 1. Kids are sponges, going to learn in their earlier years.
- Prototype in preschools.
- Helping kids to understand our bilingual province. There is a base there for those educators and boost them from there.



# Session 3: Learners

## March 21, 2022

Highlight/Favourite part of your day:

- No favourite class
- Math, hanging out with friends mostly
- Going to class with other people, math class in problem solving
- Reading in English class
- Probably being able to work in class
- Talking in class with your friends, depends on the class (if teacher is more strict then would talk in French, so social studies and French)
- Gym (mostly English, teacher isn't really fluent)
- Extra curriculums (talk to each other in English, but the work that is done is usually bilingual. English friends then talk in English)

Social studies is really strict, all in French but the late FI students get to do it in English

- A lot of studying, teacher is rather strict
- French language program tends to happen in class

Science - teacher doesn't speak any French, but it's kind of cool that he's the only one that doesn't speak French

One class does mostly French and then a quick English explanation if really need it

Most people are comfortable speaking French, but one of them only does it in French class because all her friends speak only English or only really little French

- Partner may not speak lots of French so only can speak a little bit

Even if friends speak French, but the large percentage of class wouldn't really understand in French

LLO makes her feel really comfortable to speak in French, not always comfortable and more used to doing it now than before

- Environment is more comfortable
- Learn from other students too - a lot of French classes also framed in helping others learn French, really enjoy that

Why you like to learn French/whats important?

- Helpful for job, more opportunities
- Meet more people
- Bilingual province, may be difficult if you only speak English
- Benefits to the brain and development
- Help other people
- Know more languages
- If you're travelling

What's the most challenging part about learning French

- Writing (accents and conjugating verbs)
- Spelling
- Not being able to explain what you're trying to say, takes a lot more effort
  - "teachers this year especially have been really encouraging me"
- Hard to express yourself, but irks you that they're not learning French at the same pace as English
- When someone talks really fast in French, takes a few minutes to decipher what they're saying

Mixed programming

- Hard to learn French, teachers cater to English, so FI kids aren't getting what they need
- FI isn't really happening, it's more like the FI people aren't getting in what in he opinion needs. Teachers are talking in English
- Not learning anything, still not a lot even after the regrouping
  - Teacher is newer, and thinks they don't know what to teach it
- Think they've learned French than before, learning while helping which is really nice, teachers speaks to them in French as well
- When she realized she wasn't progressing as much as she wanted to, took on that upon herself and independent with learning and does French practice at home
  - DuoLingo
- Learning a lot less French - one French class. With the regrouping by ability it's more French

Math/science in French or English

- French so that you get French in other subjects, more French throughout the day you can get better and learn the language faster
- Science in French, math in English
  - When math teacher uses fancy name in French it's hard to get help
- Both in French fully
  - Much better to help you develop the French learning
  - In FI, go with the concept of being immersed in French
- Prefer it in English, right now science is in English it's a nice break, nice to get a break and relax and encourages her to pick up French outside of the classroom environment
- English, remember more things when it's in English. Math is hard enough don't need it in French.

French now vs before

- Much more comfortable, especially with conversational. Conversational French is almost instinct now. Before she starting approaching students and teachers (by herself not so much program oriented),
- Pretty much the same, students in classes in French are the same
- More comfortable speaking to teachers in French
- Pretty much the same, levels are split in French so that's the only opportunity to speak French
- Much more comfortable, feel like she's allowed to make more mistakes bc other people may be not as proficient. Before she feels like
  - Teachers a lot, but also students because other students make mistakes too

Anything else to add:

- Would be more beneficial to stop LLP
- Agree, would want to go back to classes where you're entirely immersed in French. If English kids are already struggling in one class and you put French on top that would be more difficult.
- Will this change anything?
- Personally really like the program, can speak freely, and learning French just as much while having English friends in the class
- Would be still good, if English kids were in a program where they could learn French but not mixed
- Found this year, social part of class was much better, meeting kids in other programs was a lot more beneficial
- I missed French class to talk about French

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