

# Meeting Labour Market Needs for French as a Second Language Instruction in Ontario

*Understanding Perspectives Regarding the French as a  
Second Language Teacher Labour Market Issue*



ONTARIO PUBLIC  
SCHOOL BOARDS'  
ASSOCIATION



# Why this Project?

Increasing FSL program demand, especially French Immersion (as much as 5%/year in some school boards)



Decreasing capacity to recruit and retain FSL teachers (60% drop in FSL teacher graduate rate since 2015)

# Project Objectives

- To study the supply and demand issues specifically related to the recruitment, hiring and retention of FSL teachers;
- To develop and begin to implement recommendations towards workable solutions with education partners.

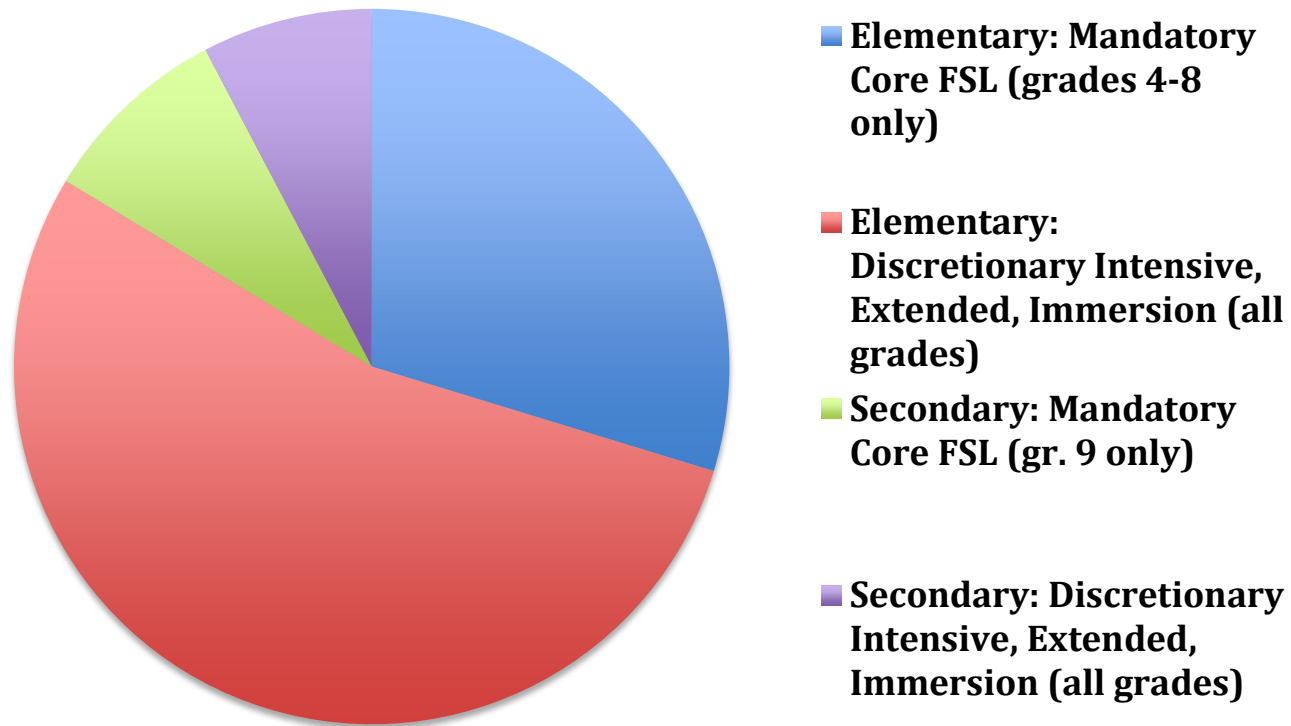
# Research

## **3 data sources**

- a review of past studies and reports on FSL teacher recruitment, attrition, working conditions and policy implementation;
- qualitative and quantitative employment data from Ontario English language public school boards, the Ontario College of Teachers, and the Ministry of Education to quantify the FSL teacher shortage and to better understand related factors in different board contexts;
- quantitative and qualitative data from recently hired FSL teachers regarding their experiences looking for work, being hired, and transitioning to the role of FSL teacher.

# From HR departments:

## *Demand for Teachers by Program Type, September 2017*



# Findings

- Language proficiency is an issue in the hiring process leading to teacher applicants not being successful in the interview process;
- New FSL teachers identify “access to effective teaching resources” and “opportunities to improve French language skills” as key professional learning needs;
- Nearly half of new FSL teachers rate their French language skills in the B range (intermediate) based on CEFR global scales.

# Recruitment #1 a)

School boards continue to support the expansion of implementation of CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference)-based assessment tools with secondary school-aged students in order to provide a common measure of French language proficiency for graduating students.

# Recommendation

## Recruitment #1b

The FSL-LMPC facilitate a collaborative forum to discuss the viability of creating and consistently using a provincial framework for describing and developing FSL teachers' French proficiency, e.g.: informed by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

Viability discussions to include:

- Faculties of Education using/implementing such a provincial framework to develop teacher candidates' French proficiency and French language pedagogy in preparation for employment in FSL programs in Ontario schools.
- School boards using the provincial framework to describe their respective proficiency level requirements when recruiting, hiring and developing teachers in their FSL programs.



## Recruitment #2

School boards, the Ontario College of Teachers, and the Ministry of Education collaborate to extend the Ministry's current efforts and further develop a communication strategy to highlight the employment opportunities available in Ontario for FSL teachers. This strategy will target both the international teacher community as well as teachers who received their Canadian teacher-education from outside the province.

# Recruitment #3

Faculties of Education, Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skill Development collaborate to develop a targeted recruitment strategy that maximizes enrolment of teacher candidates in the FSL qualifications streams.

# Recruitment #4

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) facilitate forums with English language public school boards' Human Resources officials to share data collected in this project related to effective recruitment and hiring strategies, e.g.: use of technology to conduct portions of job interviews, use of social media, pool hiring, hiring timelines, and others.

# Recommendation

## Retention and Professional Support #1

The Ministry of Education provide financial subsidies for FSL teachers to enrol in courses and other language learning opportunities that support French language development, e.g.: language development courses, general interest courses taught in French, language immersion experiences, Additional Qualification courses taught in French.

# Recommendation

## Retention and Professional Support #2

Key stakeholders develop a coordinated provincial strategy for professional learning that articulates a range of professional learning opportunities for FSL teachers that includes:

- being responsive to professional learning needs identified by FSL teachers and school boards;
- developing teachers' own French language proficiency;
- professional learning opportunities that span the first 5 years of an FSL teacher's employment in a board and provides continuity with the New Teacher Induction Program;
- providing funding as an incentive to participate in French language and cultural immersion experiences.

# Retention and Professional Support #3

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) facilitate forums with English language public school boards' Human Resources and Program officials to share research that identifies issues that may affect the long-term retention of teachers in FSL programs.

# Next Steps

The Ontario Labour Market Partnership (OLMP) project, *Meeting Labour Market Needs for French as a Second Language Instruction in Ontario: Understanding Perspectives Regarding French as a Second Language Teacher Labour Market Issue* is envisioned as a three-year project. If successful in a follow up OLMP application, the next step is to develop action plans to implement the recommendations and to conduct research and develop recommendations that address the recruitment, hiring, and retention of sufficient numbers of French speaking education workers (ECEs and EAs)

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