

Chapters

CPF needs chapters!

A significant part of our influence nationally and provincially is due to our strength in numbers. Funders, policy-makers and key decision-makers want to know that beyond its membership numbers, CPF has organized activity in communities across the country.

More than this, CPF needs chapters to coordinate efforts to obtain, keep and improve quality FSL programs.

CPF chapters also provide focused activities outside the classroom for children to learn and use the French language.

Chapters need CPF!

CPF provides its chapters with information and resources to help achieve its mission in the community.

In addition to links with over 170 CPF chapters across the country, CPF can provide:

- informative publications to help parents choose an FSL program for their child
- promotional materials to identify and promote yourselves as a local group associated with a strong national network
- resource people at the branch and National offices to answer your questions
- access to the latest research in the field of FSL education
- a portion of membership fees (a minimum of 65% of the fee) to fund local activities and initiatives
- conferences, seminars, a website forum and other opportunities to connect with a network of people across the country who are facing and solving similar issues in their communities
- assistance with youth programs such as *Mini Rendez-vous* and *Fête du soleil*

How to establish a chapter

A chapter formation kit is available from CPF-SK which contains an agenda, bylaw template, forms to be completed and sent to the branch. The following requirements must be met:

- Have at least ten CPF members in good standing (*National bylaws 14.1*)
- Hold a meeting at which it is agreed to start a CPF chapter and at which the members adopt basic chapter bylaws that conform to branch and National bylaws.
- Elect a Board of Directors
- Open a bank account in the chapter's name (Canadian Parents for French – xxx chapter). There need to be appropriate signing officers and a specification that cheques must be co-signed by any two of these officers
- Obtain approval from the branch Board of Directors

How to maintain chapter status

The Chapter Development Officer (CDO) works to support and provide resources for chapters in Saskatchewan. In order for the CDO to respond to the chapter's needs and concerns, the chapter needs to provide the CDO with as much information as possible about its activities and plans. Sending a copy of your minutes to CPF-SK is a good place to start. In addition the following are conditions that you must adhere to in order to maintain chapter status.

- Abide by the conditions for chapters specified in branch and National bylaws (see appendix and above)
- Advise the CPF-SK Chapter Development Officer of the results of elections immediately following the chapter annual general meeting including names and contact information
- Present an action plan each January outlining programs for the following school year that require branch support. Budgets must be submitted for any new initiatives for which branch funding is requested
- Provide within 30 days of the event, detailed activity and financial reports of chapter/branch co-sponsored activities on the forms provided by the branch
- Provide the branch with an annual report including an activity report and financial statements by the third week of April in each year. See forms included in the appendix and the CPF-SK website.
- Send at least one representative to the branch annual general meeting

If these conditions are not met the CDO will approach the chapter in an effort to ensure that reporting requirements are completed. Membership rebates may be withheld until the conditions for maintaining chapter status are met.

Chapter dissolution

1. If a chapter Board deems that they are unable to continue functioning as a chapter, they may pass a motion of dissolution.
2. Funds held by the chapter at dissolution will be forwarded to the branch which will hold the funds in trust for one year.
3. The branch will attempt to re-establish the chapter during the ensuing year.
4. After a full year if the chapter has not been re-established, the funds will revert to the branch.

Chapter activities

CPF chapters are involved in varying degrees with the following:

- Monitoring school board meetings
- Writing and presenting briefs as required
- Supporting extra curricular activities for children in French
- Holding information meetings for parents
- Attending and/or arranging Kindergarten information nights
- Advocacy for school boards to institute FSL programs or expand existing ones
- Keeping up-to-date information on programs offered in your school district and supplying these to national office for use in the immersion and core registries
- Keeping the chapter active by continually recruiting new members, working together to facilitate cooperative advocacy
- Establishing and maintaining a good rapport with media in your area. See the section on Visibility in this manual.
- Maintaining a good relationship with schools and the school division administration
- Communicating ideas, concerns and any new information regarding FSL programs
- Establishing contact and possible partnerships with francophone groups in your area
- Offering workshops for members on subjects pertinent to personal and group goals (These could include stress management, public relations, and advocacy skills).

How to Avoid Some Pitfalls

- Support all FSL programs including core French and immersion. This enlarges the potential group of members and volunteers and will avoid any conflict between supporters of various programs.
- Offer incentives to members, students and volunteers to congratulate effort and achievement and to motivate future involvement
- Communicate with CPF-SK regularly
- Learn how to delegate to avoid burnout
- Find ways to have fun
- Keep meetings short enough to keep attention and long enough to accomplish clearly defined goals
- Find family activities for members and volunteers to keep kids in the picture
- Set up a newsletter to offer members an accessible and easy way to keep in touch
- Keep the media, schools and elected officials aware of chapter activities
- Offer resources to parents to keep them active and aware. (Speakers, updates of recent research or information about upcoming policy and funding issues can be invaluable.)

Chapter bylaws: your most basic rules

The bylaws of an organization belong to the members. This is the fundamental document that establishes the organization.

The bylaws articulate the reason for the organization, the “what” of the organization (where it exists, who belongs), the most basic rights of its members, and the terms under which the members agree to be led by their Board of Directors.

Bylaws should be minimal – that is, they should include only those rules that the group considers so important that they:

1. Cannot be changed without previous notice to the members and the vote of a specified large majority of members;
2. Cannot be suspended (except under specific conditions as provided for within the bylaws).

It is the responsibility of every board member to be familiar with the chapter’s bylaws and to ensure that the chapter’s business is conducted in a way that conforms to the members’ requirements as established by those bylaws. A review of the bylaws at the beginning of each term and a crosscheck with the chapter’s calendar and upcoming plans is the first important step in meeting this expectation.

Bylaws are a “living” document and can always be updated and improved (as outlined in the clause referring to amendments). However, your chapter bylaws must conform to the requirements articulated in the CPF (National) bylaws and the branch bylaws. They are best formulated before there is a crisis for future guidance if there is a disagreement.

CPF-SK and the Chapter Development Officer is always ready to assist you in understanding your bylaws and their application to your procedures and activities. Simply contact the CPF-SK office with your questions.

Knowing where you're going and deciding how to get there

Belonging to CPF means that you subscribe to its vision, mission, and values (see Section 1) and support its object or purpose, which is "to promote and support opportunities for young Canadians to learn and use the French language."

What does that mean for your chapter? Why does your chapter exist: what are its long, medium, and short-term objectives? How are your members involved in establishing your objectives?

Once an objective has been identified you will need a:

- Plan of action
- Timetable
- Committed volunteers who know their roles and responsibilities
- Delegated responsibilities: who, what, when, where, and why important
- Resources: human, materials, funds
- Coordination

It is possible for just a few hardworking, dedicated members to effect important changes, but they must be organized, thorough, and patient.

Formulate a plan of action, including a timetable. And be sure to spread the workload around your Board of Directors and establish specific responsibilities. Each person should know what he or she is expected to do, why it is important, when it is to be done, and to whom they should report.

Consider the human resources available to you. Are any community leaders willing to lend their support? Can you have experts in the field of language learning come to speak on the subject? Are people, who have had children in a similar program elsewhere, willing to discuss their experiences? Do you have a skilled computer operator in your group? Are there parents able to do some phoning or emailing? Who might enjoy writing publicity releases? Is there an artist able to make or design posters?

Will you need funds to cover items such as mailing, photocopying, and public meetings? What CPF resources might be helpful? CPF-SK can provide you with speakers or resource people to attend parent information meetings.

Be sure at all times that your individual efforts are coordinated. Disorganization and poor timing can defeat you before you have begun.

Planning a Calendar

A rotating calendar can be a helpful planning tool. Following are some key national and provincial activities and a sample chapter calendar for 2008/2009. Only those national and branch activities which most directly affect the chapters have been noted. *Items in italics are provided as examples. Items in bold are required in order to maintain chapter status.*

National	Branch	Chapter
	JANUARY	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mail out information packages about Concours d'art oratoire to schools (Provincial Final: April 25, 2009) • Preparations for Chapter Planning Meeting/Branch AGM (June 13, 2009) • Newsletter deadline for articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 15 (Submission deadline - Chapter Report). • Determine if your chapter will host a Fête du soleil in the summer and book dates with the branch office. • Make arrangements to have chapter representation at kindergarten and high school registration events. • Contact branch for resources to use at these events. • Present an action plan outlining programs for the following school year that require branch support, including budgets of new initiatives requiring branch support. • Contact school/school division to offer assistance with Concours d'art oratoire events. • Prepare to send 1 delegate to the <u>National AGM</u> (every 2 years: fall 2008, 2010, etc). • <i>Meeting of chapter Board of Directors.</i> • (ongoing) Start to inform the office who will represent your chapter at <u>The President's Reception and Branch AGM/Chapter Planning Meeting</u> (June 12 and 13, 2009). Send at least 1 delegate to this event (submission deadline – April 15, 2009).
	FEBRUARY	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National newsletter mailed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French Immersion and Core French Week in Saskatchewan (varies) • Membership rebates for the previous 6 months sent to chapters • Rendez-vous (February 13-15, 2009: Blue Mountain, North Battleford) • Provincial Newsletter mailed out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book venue for Fête du soleil, inform the office about your dates and start advertising the event in schools, any public places, etc. • (ongoing) Start to inform the office who will represent your chapter at <u>The President's Reception and Branch AGM/Chapter Planning Meeting</u> (June 12 and 13, 2009). Send at least 1 delegate to this event (submission deadline – April 15, 2009).
	MARCH	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31st fiscal year end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31st fiscal year end • Rendez-vous (March 13-15, 2009: Land of the Loon, Anglin Lake, 45 min. N of Prince Albert) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>31st fiscal year end</i> • <i>Meeting of chapter Board of Directors.</i> • Send registration forms for Fête du soleil to the schools.

APRIL		
1 st beginning of fiscal year	1st beginning of fiscal year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concours d'art oratoire Provincial Final 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 15, 2009 (deadline) for informing the office who will be your chapter representative for <u>The President's Reception and Branch AGM /Chapter Planning Meeting</u> (June 12 and 13, 2009). By the third week of April, send the branch an annual report including financial and activity report using forms provided on internet www.cpfask.com. Under Governance, click on CPF-SK Chapters. Concours d'art oratoire school division finals.
MAY		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National newsletter mailed Call for nominations for the national board of directors Concours d'art oratoire national finals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiting for summer camp (Fête du Soleil: July-August) Rendez-vous (Regina, May 8-10, 2009) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Annual general meeting</i> Chapter Executive form completed and returned to the branch office immediately following the chapter AGM. <i>Meeting of chapter Board of Directors.</i>
JUNE		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruiting for summer camp (Fête du Soleil) Branch annual general meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter representatives attend the President's Reception, Chapter Planning Meeting/Branch AGM on June 12 and 13, 2009.
JULY		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Les Jeux de la francophonie canadienne (every 3rd year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fête du soleil (July-August, every year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fête du soleil Prepare Fête du soleil summary form, financial statement and evaluation form for submission to the branch within 30 days of the end of your event.
AUGUST		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fête du soleil Membership rebates for the previous 6 months sent to chapters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fête du soleil (ongoing) Prepare Fête du soleil summary form, financial statement and evaluation form for submission to the branch within 30 days of the end of your event.
SEPTEMBER		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter Chat resumes Multi-media kit loan program resumes Newsletter Nuggets resumes Membership renewals - letters to be sent to lapsed AMOs French for Parents Class (Level 1) Provincial newsletter mailed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Book dates for Mini Rendez-vous with branch. <i>Meeting of chapter Board of Directors</i>

	OCTOBER	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National newsletter mailed • Annual general meeting and launch of The State of French Second Language Education in Canada (varies) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare to organize Rendez-vous (Triple Effect) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini Rendez-vous (varies) - Complete required reports and submit to the branch office 30 days after the event. • <i>Get together with chapter representatives at National Conference/ AGM (every 2 years: 2008, 2010, etc).</i>
	NOVEMBER	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French for Parents Class (Level 2) • Foire des carrière (Fall 2009=every two years: 2009, 2011) • Mailout and recruit for Rendez-vous (Triple Effect) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Present the State of FSL to local education authorities and elected officials and discuss.</i> • Start preparing a chapter report or article (between 100-150 words) about your current activities, past events, future programs, plans and ideas that can be printed in our February newsletter (submission deadline - January 15, 2009).
	DECEMBER	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial contact with schools and consultants on Concours d'art oratoire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Seasonal events for schools and families</i> • (ongoing) Prepare to send the branch a chapter report or article (between 100-150 words) about your current activities, past events, future programs, plans and ideas that can be printed in our February newsletter (submission deadline- January 15, 2009). • Start to discuss who will represent your chapter at <u>The President's Reception and Branch AGM/Chapter Planning Meeting</u> (June 12 and 13, 2009). Each chapter should send at least 1 delegate to this event (submission deadline - April 15, 2009).