



ASSOCIATION FRANÇAIS LANGUE ETRANGERE HONG KONG
The Hong Kong Association of French Teachers
25/F., Tower 2, Admiralty Centre, 18 Harcourt Road, Central, Hong Kong
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Meeting with EMB on Dec. 9, 2004

Time : 4:15 - 5:30 p.m.

EMB:

Dr George S. K. Kwan (Principal Education Officer)
2 assistants

AFLE (Hong Kong Association of French Teachers):

Bernadette Boniface (Diocesan Boys' School Primary Section)
CP Chan (Po Leung Kuk Camoes Tan Siu Lin Primary School)
Christian Chasset (Hong Kong Institute of Languages – Manager)
Dominique Chasset (Hong Kong Institute of Languages)
Joséphine Chung (Sir Ellis Kadoorie Secondary School)
Mrs Fletcher (Wah Yan College)
Paul Ip (La Salle College)
Bonnie Lau (Marymount Secondary School)
Amy Liu (St Joseph College)
Jessica Luk (Delia Memorial School – Hip Wo)
Denis Meyer (Hong Kong University – Head of French Dpt)
Véronique Mirchandani (St Mary Canossian Secondary School)
Jean-Luc Rey (AFLE chairman – Baptist University Language Centre)
Hélène Roos (French Consulate General in Hong Kong – Cultural Attaché)
Evelyne Siréjols (Alliance Française de Hong Kong – Head of Studies)
Jean-Michel Sourd (AFLE vice-chairman – Diocesan Boys' School)
Clara Yeung (St Paul's Convent School)

1. Dr Kwan opens the meeting by explaining the following aspects of the reform:
 - a. 4 core subjects: Chinese, English, Maths, Liberal Studies;
 - b. 21 elective subjects: French not included;
 - c. at the time EMB has no intention of introducing any foreign language either among the core subjects or the elective subjects. 3 main reasons:
 - i. which language to choose: French, Japanese, Korean, German ?
 - ii. lack of resources
 - iii. the IGCSE examination currently run for F. 5 French candidates will no longer be compatible with the advanced level of the future SS3 subjects.

2. AFLE explains its position:

- a. need to cater for non-Chinese-speaking students as well as those who prefer not to study Chinese, for various reasons;
- b. need to have this option clearly labeled as “core subject” as this would eliminate many envisioned complications;
- c. need to have end-of-secondary-school French examination organized or at least endorsed by EMB since local universities require applicants to demonstrate their ability to speak at least 2 languages, English and Chinese or another language such as French;
- d. need to have EMB’s very prompt response to our requests because parents of students currently enrolled in primary 6 are already making choices (Chinese or French) for September 2005;
- e. ask for possibility to delay the reform by at least one year (i.e. implementation in Sept. 2009 rather than 2008) so as to allow more time for primary and secondary schools and parents to better understand all the implications of the reform and get ready;
- f. ask if the policy of a minimum quota of 10 students in French classes at F.1 level can be further tolerated or relaxed (this concerns mostly the 4 grant schools).

3. EMB replies:

- a. the current situation can remain unchanged: schools currently offering French as an alternative to Chinese can continue to do so. It is up to them, as long as they can afford it. No extra funding for French from EMB;
- b. not likely to have this option labeled “core subject” (but will discuss with colleagues);
- c. no way to have HKEA organize a paper for so few candidates (around 200 each year) but again will discuss with colleagues – AFLE, the Alliance Française and the French Consulate can help in this area;
- d. French results can however appear in the Student Learning Profile document instead of on the HK Diploma of Secondary Education after completion of SS3;
- e. The quota of at least 10 students enrolled in French classes in Form 1 must be observed (this is already a relaxation of the normal enrolment quota of 20 students per class).

4. AFLE suggests to introduce Foreign Languages among the elective subjects and puts forward the following arguments:

- a. undoubtedly a plus on the job market;
- b. will enhance HK status as cosmopolitan world-class city;
- c. not a problem for good students to master 4 languages or more;
- d. excellent opportunity for universities to form language specialists;
- e. the reform presents an excellent opportunity for EMB and Hong Kong to introduce foreign languages in the secondary curriculum;

- f. schools offering foreign languages should benefit in terms of enhanced reputation and academic excellence;
- g. there is a very strong demand for the learning of foreign languages (and French in particular) in HK as witnessed by rising enrolment in universities' foreign languages programs, at the Alliance Francaise and other foreign language teaching institutions as well as by rising demand for French-speaking employees by local/French companies through the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- h. again AFLE, Alliance Française and the French Consulate can help with examinations

5. EMB replies:

- a. French and Foreign Languages not currently in the reform but will discuss further with colleagues;
- b. Agress to put down our points for the authorities' consideration.

6. AFLE asks for possibility for a follow-up meeting. No answer on this request.