**Speaking Points**

* Good evening, thank you for the opportunity.
* Our first concern is with respect to the how and why. Public policy development is typically driven by identifying a problem, followed by research, analysis, consultation, identification of options and a recommended solution. In this case, we have a solution, with references to a review of French second language programs undertaken eight years ago.
* The research within the proposal is not done examining pros and cons, but instead provides sources that seemingly support the proposal. However research has been misconstrued. The research of Nancy Wise, a prominent French immersion educational consultant, is quoted as support for introducing English instruction in Grade One. However, since the proposal, she has written an article concerned with the changes and signed the online petition opposing them.
* We are concerned with the implementation across schools at the same time as opposed to a staged process. The transition to full day kindergarten was done in a staged process and numerous issues remain, including an inability to deal with behavioural issues. How will the introduction of French language 50% of the time enable resolution? Will increasing points of contact not negatively impact this? The Board took steps in 2007 to reduce teacher contacts for intermediate students and in 2015 is working to increase contacts for JK students?
* The elimination of English language instruction for kindergarten students in the Board is concerning. According to Report 15-147, ¼ of students are English Language Learners. In some schools, this is more significant, for example, Queen Mary Public School cites 75% ELLS. The report states 36% of ELLs are enrolled in French immersion in OCDSB, meaning 64% are not. How will these learners cope in full day kindergarten in two second languages?
* Communications were in English only, although an OCDSB guiding principle for consultation is “to reach out to broader community- engage participants who are typically less inclined to become involved in formal consultations, for example, parents facing language barriers). Furthermore, the consultations in Report 15-155 outline meetings were hosted **in dual-track schools**. Consultations seem to have deliberately excluded our English language schools who frequently have high ELL populations, most of whom we expect are unaware of the proposal.
* Instead, the consultation strategy relied on email communication to all current parents. Using 2014 data, the parents of 47,990 students were sent an email, yet none of our current students are entering JK next year. Why was this selected as the stakeholder base? Less than 40% of current students will be impacted by any changes, yet every year OCDSB welcomes approximately 4500 new JK students. Were the views of these parents sought??
* Consultation was done under the banner of Proposed Changes to French Instruction in Kindergarten and Primary Early French Immersion. From the title, many parents assumed only instruction in Early French Immersion is impacted. Given English language schools were not engaged, many parents are unaware they will have no option for an English language education in JK.
* It is very difficult to believe these changes are pedagogical in nature. We understand the Board will benefit from a $2million grant for increasing JK to 50/50. As school council members who work to raise funds to improve our school, we understand the Board’s financial challenges. However, we question if financial concerns should be the primary driver of such drastic changes.
* We ask that you consider voting against this proposal that will see OCDSB have:
  + One of the lowest amount of French language instruction in an early French immersion program in Canada , here in the bilingual city of Ottawa and the Nation’s capital;
  + No opportunity for English only instruction for JK and SK students in the Ottawa English language public board; and
  + No French instruction in the subject of mathematics in the immersion program

As there has been no issue identified, no research or evidence, nor consultation with those who will be impacted.