

RUNNING HEAD: School administrator support of FSL teachers

Exploring how Ontario school administrators' FSL background knowledge and experience
influence their support of FSL teachers

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Dedication

To all those writing: I wish you the cheer from a positive comment, the elation of finding that perfect article, and the ultimate satisfaction of dedicated hard work.

Abstract

This study adopted the theoretical lens of instructional leadership to investigate how Ontario school administrators support their FSL teachers, as well as the impact that school administrators' FSL background knowledge and experience have on the support they provide. It also served as a platform for recommendations for school administrator training programs in Ontario. Participants from across Ontario completed an online questionnaire ($N = 58$), with a subsample ($n = 12$) completing a follow-up interview. Closed-ended questionnaire data were analyzed for frequency and convergence/divergence between FSL teaching background and French language levels; open-ended questionnaire and interview data were analyzed for emergent themes. Findings showed that participants reported being highly supportive of their FSL teachers, offering different types of both emotional and physical supports. These supports diverged slightly from what is recommended in the instructional leadership literature, suggesting that support may look different in the FSL context. As a result, an Instructional Leadership Taxonomy was developed with the FSL teacher in mind. Findings also revealed that support for FSL teachers varied according to whether participants had French language skills or experience teaching FSL. Finally, participants offered a variety of recommendations for school administrator training programs, with the majority seeking concrete examples of successful FSL practices to be used when providing feedback and guidance for their FSL teachers.

Keywords: French as a second language; FSL; school administrator; instructional leadership; emotional support; physical support

Résumé

Cette étude se situe en Ontario et vise à examiner l'étendue du soutien apporté aux enseignants de langue seconde (FLS) par leurs administrateurs scolaires, ainsi que l'impact de leurs connaissances globales et de leurs expériences en enseignement sur le niveau de soutien offert, le tout dans l'optique du leadership pédagogique. Des participants recrutés à travers l'Ontario (N = 58) ont répondu au questionnaire en ligne; un groupe (n = 12) a ensuite participé à une entrevue complémentaire. Les données des questions fermées du questionnaire ont été analysées selon les convergences et les divergences entre les différents niveaux de communication de la langue française ainsi qu'entre ceux qui avaient de l'expérience avec l'enseignement du FLS et ceux qui n'en avaient pas. Les résultats ont démontré que les participants déclarent qu'ils soutiennent fortement leurs enseignants de FLS, offrant des soutiens émotionnels et physiques. Ces résultats ne concordent pas avec les recommandations de la littérature sur le leadership pédagogique, qui suggère plutôt que le soutien offert par les administrateurs scolaires est différent dans le contexte du FLS. Par conséquent, une *Taxonomie du leadership pédagogique* a été développée pour mieux représenter le soutien offert par les administrateurs scolaires dans ce contexte. De plus, les résultats ont démontré que le soutien offert aux enseignants du FLS variait selon les expériences d'enseignement en FLS et le niveau de communication en langue française des administrateurs scolaires. Les participants ont aussi offert de nombreuses suggestions concernant des programmes de formation pour les administrateurs scolaires : la majorité mettant de l'avant des exemples concrets de programmes de FLS qui ont eu du succès lorsqu'ils donnaient de la rétroaction et des conseils aux enseignants de FLS.

Mots clés : français langue seconde, FLS, administrateur scolaire, le leadership pédagogique, le soutien émotionnel, le soutien physique

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List of Acronyms

The following table provides the meaning of the acronyms used throughout this thesis.

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
CASLT	Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference
CF	Core French
CPF	Canadian Parents for French
CSC	Curriculum Services Canada
DSB	District School Board
EF	Extended French
ES	Emotional Support
FI	French Immersion
FSL	French as a Second Language
IF	Intensive French
OCT	Ontario College of Teachers
OME	Ontario Ministry of Education
OPC	Ontario Principals' Council
PD	Professional Development
PQP	Principal's Qualification Program
PS	Physical Support

Chapter 1: Introduction

Student enrolment in French as a second language (FSL) programs in the province of Ontario is growing yearly (Canadian Parents for French, 2013b), increasing the demand to provide quality FSL education for these students. Drawing from the proverb “it takes a village to raise a child”, there are many important stakeholders in FSL who work together to contribute to the program’s success (Ontario Ministry of Education [OME], 2013a), two of whom are the FSL teacher and the school administrator¹. Research has shown that the school administrator’s support of their FSL teachers is an important contributing factor to the success of the FSL program (Burns & Olson, 1989; Hertberg-Davis & Brighton, 2006; Kissau, 2005; Ma & MacMillan, 1999; Richards, 2002). In recognition of the important role school administrators play in supporting FSL teachers to deliver a quality FSL program, several ministries of education across the country, including the Ontario Ministry of Education (2014b), have committed to supporting school administrators’ work more actively through the creation of FSL-specific professional resources including, for example, handbooks explaining different FSL programs, what instruction looks like in FSL, and how school administrators can support their FSL teachers (Alberta Education, 2014; Saskatchewan Learning, 2005). In particular, the OME has created a website dedicated to school administrators, containing relevant research, pertinent professional documents, and e-learning modules (Curriculum Services Canada, n.d.) to help them better understand how to support their FSL teachers. Despite these initiatives and the availability of useful resources, little is known about the actual strategies school administrators use to support their FSL teachers (Milley & Arnott, 2016) and the extent to which these administrators’ background knowledge (i.e. French language skills) and experience in FSL (i.e. experience having taught FSL programs) (or lack thereof) influences their practices (Safty, 1992). Studies have yet to capture the school administrator’s perspective on how they feel they support their FSL teachers, which is significant considering existing literature from the FSL teacher’s perspective concluding that FSL teachers feel they are not receiving adequate French-specific support from their school administrators (Lapkin, MacFarlane, & Vandergrift, 2006; Lapkin, Mady, & Arnott, 2009). No explanations exist to explain this reported lack of support, although some older studies suggest that unilingual school administrators feel restricted by their lack of

¹ For the purposes of the present study, the term “school administrator” will be used to refer to both school principals and vice principals.

French knowledge (Burns & Olson, 1989; Calman, 1988) and that they have not received adequate training to support FSL teachers (Calman, 1988; Olson & Burns, 1983; Safty, 1991, 1992). The present study aims to fill this gap, by investigating the lived experiences of school administrators, with particular attention to how those with and without FSL background knowledge and experience support their FSL teachers. It also aims to provide suggestions for the improvement of training programs for school administrators, to support future school administrators in their support of FSL teachers.

The inspiration and motivation for this study comes from my experience as an FSL teacher candidate, followed by the completion of an empirical mini-research project for a Master's course, during which I learned that despite board-level standardized hiring procedures for FSL teachers at the secondary level, many school administrators still felt the need to individually assess candidates on their French language skills (among other skills [see e.g. Ziebarth-Bovill, Kritzer, & Bovill, 2012]) during one-on-one interviews. Because few school administrators in that particular school board were able to speak French, my Associate Teacher at the time told me that the school's vice principal relied on his weak French skills to assess each candidate: if they spoke a level of French where he could not understand what was being said, the conclusion was that their French was at an appropriate level for teaching. As a completely subjective way to assess a potential FSL teacher's French language proficiency, I imagined the amount of variability among school administrators in this position looking to hire FSL teachers. I continued to reflect on the amount of variability that potentially exists between school administrators looking to support their FSL teachers, regardless of the resources available to them. This thought process was the inspiration for the present study.

This thesis is segmented into several chapters. In Chapter 2, the present study will be contextualized, in terms of both societal factors and existing research, and is broken into two segments. The first segment discusses FSL programs in Ontario to provide background information on the current conditions of FSL, including the reported teaching conditions of FSL teachers and possible explanations for this reported marginalization. The second segment provides an overview of school administration in Ontario, including the instructional leadership role of school administrators. This transitions to an overview of the theoretical framework (instructional leadership) used for the study in Chapter 3, where an Instructional Leadership Taxonomy is developed to better understand how school administrators could support their FSL

teachers. In this chapter, the three research questions guiding this study are also presented. In Chapter 4, the methodology is explained, including an overview of the research design, participants, instruments used, procedure followed, and the five phases of data analysis. Chapter 5 presents the findings in response to each of the three research questions presented. Chapter 6 then draws from the findings in Chapter 5 to respond to each research question, contextualizing the responses in relation to the literature where relevant. Finally, Chapter 7 outlines the limitations of the study and implications of the findings with respect to the support school administrators reportedly provide to their FSL teachers.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review is to contextualize the present study, both in terms of societal factors and existing research and relevant professional and policy documents. The literature review is broken into two major sections: “FSL in Ontario” and “School Administration in Ontario”.

FSL in Ontario

This section will discuss the different FSL programs offered in Ontario, the governmental support of said programs, becoming an FSL teacher, the negative mindset towards FSL programs, and possible explanations for the poor support FSL programs receive from school administrators.

FSL programs in Ontario. The delivery of public education in Canada is a provincial responsibility. In Ontario, the Education Act (2014) outlines the basis on which education is delivered; the OME administers the system of publicly funded education, including FSL programs. The Education Act (2014) defined an FSL program as “a [program] for English speaking pupils in which French is the language of instruction” (Education Act, 2014, p. 1). The following subsections describe the four FSL programs currently offered to Ontario students: Core French, French Immersion, Extended French, and Intensive French.

Core French. In Canada, FSL programs originally took the form of a basic French program (Lang & Manitoba Department of Education, 1920), now known in many provinces as either Basic French or Core French (CF). Currently in Ontario, CF is a mandated program for all students in Grades 4 through 9²; during the elementary years, students receive 600 instructional hours of French, and one credit³ in secondary school (Canadian Parents for French [CPF], 2008). The purpose of the CF program is to “help students develop a usable command of the language” (OME, 2013a, p. 27).

Designers of CF originally anticipated very positive results: after just a few years, students were expected to emerge as functionally bilingual (Lang & Manitoba Department of Education, 1920). Decades later, however, the program received much criticism (e.g., LeBlanc, 1990; Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, 1967; Stern, 1983), particularly for

² Some school boards opt to begin earlier than grade 4; however it is at their discretion. (OME, 2013a)

³ One credit is equal to a minimum of 110 classroom hours (OME, 2011).

its “poor results” (Brisk, 2006, p. 36), inspiring a group of parents and linguists in the mid-1960s to develop a program that would do what CF could not.

French Immersion. In 1965 in a Montreal suburb, French Immersion (FI) was founded by a group of parents. In present-day FI programs, “students are taught French as a subject, and French serves as the language of instruction in two or more other subjects” (OME, 2014b, p. 16), as compared to CF, where students only learn French as a subject. These parents sought to realize the “instrumental” (e.g. increased job opportunities) and “integrative” (e.g. cultural connections with French Canadians) (Hayday, 2015, p. 44) benefits of bilingualism in a program for anglophone school-aged children. Gathering the support to develop a FI program was challenging as the parents faced several rejections from the local school board: board members believed that they were “‘selling out’ to French Canadians and [...] putting the English system at risk” (Hayday, 2015, p. 47). In fact, the development of the FI program in this particular location was seen to be a direct response to the Quiet Revolution⁴ taking place; the FI founders were making a statement “of their commitment to living in Quebec as a minority” (Fraser, 2011), in light of “unwritten rules” implying that Francophones in Quebec were expected to learn English, but Anglophones were not expected to learn French.

Eventually, enough support was received and the program was launched. FI programs quickly grew in success: in the late 1970s and early 1980s, they boomed across Quebec (and across Canada more widely) (Canadian Education Association, 1983) and they continue to grow today (CPF, 2013a). In fact, FSL enrollment statistics from the 2012-2013 school year show that 9.1% of eligible Ontario students were enrolled in an FI program (CPF, 2013b). While initial FI projects (e.g. the suburban Montreal project) involved teaching the first three grades entirely in French (Hayday, 2015), FI programs currently vary in terms of intensity (i.e., ranging from 50% to 100% of instructional time in French - CPF, 2008) and entry points (i.e., early FI: kindergarten or Grade 1; middle: Grade 4; and late: Grade 6 or 7) (Dicks & Kristmanson, 2008; Netten & Germain, 2004). In Ontario, decisions about the intensity, the availability of the program (e.g., some programs have enrolment limitations while others do not), as well as the entry point, are up

⁴ The Quiet Revolution was a “period of intense social change” (Bélanger, 2000) that began with the election of Jean Lesage in 1960 as the premier. His Liberal Party sought to improve the life of French Canadians and to established equal rights for French Canadians, through policy reform and the shifting of fiscal power from the federal government to the provincial government. The result was a feeling of independence, nationalism, and empowerment for French Canadians in Quebec (Bélanger, 2000; Canada History, 2013; Hayday, 2015).

to each individual school board (OME, 2013a). By the end of elementary school, students will typically have received a minimum of 3800 hours of French instructional time (OME, 2013a). To complete the program in secondary school, students will need a minimum of 10 FI credits (CPF, 2008).

Extended French. For those looking for a less intensive immersion experience later in their French language learning journey, the Extended French (EF) program is offered. In this program, students learn FSL as a subject and have at least one other subject taught to them in French (OME, 2014b). At the school board's discretion, EF begins between Grades 4 and 7, (CPF, 2008; OME, 2013a) and by the end of elementary school, EF students receive a minimum of 1260 hours of French instructional time; to fulfill the program requirements in secondary school, students must complete seven secondary credits (three of which are subjects taught in French) (OME, 2013a).

Intensive French. Finally, after its initial implementation in Newfoundland and Labrador in 1998 (Netten & Germain, 2009), Intensive French (IF) has become an FSL program option in all provinces and territories except for Quebec. This program “may be defined as an enrichment of the CF program” (MacFarlane, 2005, p. 1). It was specifically developed “to respond to the serious difficulties of teaching communication in the CF classroom” (Netten & Germain, 2004, p. 278), as well as the poor linguistic accuracy of FI students (Netten & Germain, 2004). Children in IF partake in a period of intensive French instruction (about 70% of instructional time) during 5 months of the school year, while the remaining 5 months is a compact format of the regular curriculum delivered in English (MacFarlane, 2005). During the period of French instruction, students focus only on language learning (i.e., language arts in French), and not subject curricula in the second language (unlike the FI and EF programs [Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers, n.d.]). Netten and Germain's (2009) research suggested that IF teaching is very successful, as students who participated in the study achieved a much higher level of French communication skills than their CF peers (although students in FI still demonstrate the highest levels of French proficiency [Hayday, 2015]). Netten and Germain stipulated that once teachers become more familiar with the teaching strategies, “70% of [students] will be able to communicate spontaneously in French”(Netten & Germain, 2009, p. 778).

Governmental support of FSL programs. Despite the early beginning of FSL as an optional subject in school (Lang & Manitoba Department of Education, 1920), the recommendation to make it obligatory across Canada only came in the late 1960s, as a result of the Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1967). In response, the Secretary of State (now known as the Department of Canadian Heritage) developed the *Official Languages in Education Program* (2007), with a primary goal of fund allocation to the provinces for their minority and second language education programs, including FSL. Federal governments have also pledged funds to official languages education (e.g. Government of Canada, 2003, 2008, 2013, 2018) in an effort to aid and develop bilingual education across Canada.

While this aforementioned support is coming from the federal government, the primary source of support for all FSL programs is the provincial government, given that education is provincially controlled. In Ontario specifically, the regulatory body for education is the OME. The OME provides financial support to individual school boards based on a number of factors (e.g., the number of students in the board, the board's geographical needs, etc.). Upon receiving their allotted funding, school boards then make decisions about individual school budgets based on a variety of criteria (e.g., the number of students at the school, the demographics of the student population, etc.) and the number of specialist staff (e.g. vice-principals, teacher-librarians, custodians, secretaries, and educational assistants) to include in each school's budget. Once principals have received their school's budget, they allocate the funds at their discretion (People for Education, 2016), parts of which could be directed towards FSL programming (Kissau, 2005).

It is worth noting that support from the OME does not exclusively refer to funding, but also curriculum and policy development. For example, the OME has recently announced a "renewed focus on strengthening FSL education in Ontario" (OME, 2013a, p. 5), modernising both the elementary (OME, 2013b) and secondary (OME, 2014b) curricula. Further, *A Framework for FSL, Kindergarten to Grade 12* (OME, 2013a) was also recently published. This document drew on recent research in the field of second language acquisition and instruction (e.g. Council of Europe, 2001; Cummins, 2007; Lapkin et al., 2009), in addition to the OME policies and goals identified in a wide collection of resource documents (e.g. OME, 2011) to identify clear objectives for FSL programs, as well as pathways that schools, school boards, and the OME, can follow to achieve them. It specifically seeks to "provide appropriate support to

[school administrators], particularly those who do not speak French, to strengthen their role as instructional leaders of [these] programs” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013a, p. 15). Two supporting documents to *A Framework for FSL, Kindergarten to Grade 12* have also recently been released: *Welcoming English Language Learners Into French as a Second Language Programs* (OME, 2016) and *Including Students With Special Education Needs in French as a Second Language Programs* (OME, 2015).

Recognizing that school systems are “only as good as the leadership” (Learning Partnership & The Institute for Education Leadership [Ontario], 2008, p. 71), the OME has also announced that “with the goal of further supporting FSL [...] a new focus will be on supporting [school administrators]” (OME, 2014a, p. 18). Such support has been provided by Curriculum Services Canada (CSC), who have created an FSL-dedicated website called *Transforming FSL* (n.d.). In the section of the website dedicated to school administrators, tools and resources have been created to help these school leaders understand various FSL initiatives (e.g. CSC, 2014b, 2014d) and their role in leading FSL programs (e.g. CSC, 2014a). These supports will be described in more detail later in this chapter.

FSL teachers. While educational policy in Ontario is controlled by the OME, the teaching profession is regulated by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT). The primary responsibilities of the OCT include: (i) standardizing the process of obtaining a license to teach; (ii) accrediting universities who offer the Bachelor of Education program that all teacher candidates are required to complete prior to becoming a licensed teacher; (iii) accrediting institutions to provide Additional Qualification and Additional Basic Qualification courses (that teachers can complete after their Bachelor of Education); and (iv) acting as a self-governing body for teachers with the designated Ontario certified teacher status (OCT, n.d.-e).

Becoming an FSL teacher in Ontario. According to the OCT, one must become a member in good-standing (see *Registration Guide for Becoming a Teacher of General Education*, 2015) in order to teach in publicly funded schools in the province of Ontario. To do so, one must complete an accredited Bachelor of Education program and submit various documents to the OCT (e.g. proof of identity, criminal record check report, etc.).

For those looking to become certified to teach in FSL programs, there are a few paths they can take. The first is to complete an FSL teachable within the required Bachelor of Education program. Requirements for entry into this option vary based on the institution the

candidate will attend (see Ontario Universities' Application Centre, 2016); however all graduates, regardless of the institution they attended, will be eligible for OCT certification as FSL teachers at the end of their studies. Those who have already completed their Bachelor of Education and subsequently wish to become certified to teach FSL can complete an AQ course (called FSL Part 1 [OCT, 2004]). This course is offered through various universities and governing bodies (e.g., teachers' unions [for example Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, 2017]) and also has varying entrance requirements. The minimum requirement to teach an FSL class is the Part 1 course⁵. Teachers can complete AQ courses beyond FSL Part 1 (e.g., Part 2 and Part 3/the specialist course).

Demand for FSL qualified teachers. Despite the decline in school enrolment across Ontario (Fraser Institute, 2015), the number of students registered in FSL programs continues to increase, particularly in FI (CPF, 2013b). With this increase in popularity, some school boards have reported difficulty in finding staff to teach FSL programs (CPF, 2008). Although no empirical reports have documented an FSL teacher shortage in Ontario (unlike in other provinces ([e.g. CPF (British Columbia and Yukon Branch), 2015]), FI program caps and lottery systems are being used by some school boards to cope with the shortage of staff qualified to teach FSL (CPF, 2008; Mady & Masson, in press). This shortage is further exemplified when examining unemployment rates: in 2016, those certified to teach FSL programs only reported a 5% unemployment rate within one year of completing their Bachelor of Education, as compared to 34% amongst those not certified to teach FSL programs (OCT, 2016c).

In reaction to the higher unemployment rates, teachers without FSL qualifications are seeking qualification to teach FSL: enrolment in the FSL Part 1 AQ is steadily increasing (both online and face-to-face courses), and in 2015, it was in the top 10 most popular Aqs taken by Ontario Certified Teachers (OCT, 2016b). However, while the number of qualified FSL teachers may be increasing, the quality of these teachers has been called into question (Alphonso, 2017), particularly in the case of online AQ courses where teachers may not be required to demonstrate their capability to communicate orally in French (during the course) – a skill which

⁵ The only instance when a teacher would be permitted to teach an FSL class without being a qualified FSL teacher would be through a Letter of Permission, which is granted to school boards when they have “pursued all recruitment requirements [...] and found that no member of the College is available to fill the position” (OCT, n.d.-f). In this situation, a teacher who is not certified to teach FSL would be expected to teach it because no one else is available. When a Letter of Permission is granted, school boards require the teacher to become certified to teach FSL as soon as possible.

is necessary for teaching FSL. Although each of the institutions that offers the FSL Part 1 AQ course do require a French proficiency test to be completed prior to admission (as of 2017), several (i.e. the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, the University of Western Ontario, Trent University, and the University of Ontario Institute of Technology) permit exceptions to be made should the candidate have completed undergraduate coursework in French studies. No standard has been established for such undergraduate coursework (e.g., undergraduate courses where the candidate did not need to communicate could be counted towards the exception). Furthermore, only three (i.e. the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, the University of Ottawa, Queen's University, and the University of Windsor) of the 14 institutions who offer the FSL Part 1 course explicitly advertise that the course is entirely in French. As a result, there may be some teachers who become certified to teach FSL who are unable to speak French at a level necessary to teach FSL programs (Alphonso, 2017).

It has been noted by CPF that "students receive instruction from teachers with varying degrees of proficiency in French" (2008, p. 11), resulting in a call to action, directed to the OME, to "specify FSL teacher qualifications, including French-language proficiency and subject competence for all FSL programs" (p.11) in order to ensure a clear benchmark for French language proficiency for practicing teachers.

Poor FSL teaching conditions. Despite the timely employment benefits of being an FSL teacher, the general perception is often that "French is not taken seriously" (Lapkin et al., 2009, p. 9) by stakeholders, as teachers have continually reported being marginalized as a result of indifference and resentment towards FSL (Safty, 1992). This has resulted in poor teaching conditions for many FSL teachers, with accounts of marginalization and negative mindsets about FSL programs and teachers coming from a variety of personnel (Lapkin & Barkaoui, 2008; Lapkin et al., 2006). However, given the present study is focusing on the relationship between school administrators and their FSL teachers, only marginalization as a result of the actions of school administrators will be reviewed here. Some examples of such marginalization by school administration have included:

"excluding [FSL] from the planning process and cross-curricular opportunities; loss of French time for other subject needs; lack of administrative responsibility for misbehaving students; excluding [FSL] teachers from school events and meetings; and creating a

perception among [FSL] teachers that their input was not valued.” (Lapkin et al., 2006, Appendix A: Status of Core French)

After feeling marginalized by her school administrators in her role as a CF teacher, Richards (2002) investigated the workplace of CF teachers in Ontario. She interviewed 21 FSL teachers of urban school boards in Ontario, focusing on themes of empowerment, hierarchy of school subjects, inclusion/exclusion the teachers felt at school, their workload, and their work satisfaction. Among other conclusions, Richards determined that “the majority of participants felt that very little administrative effort went into presenting CF as an integral and important part of the curriculum” (p. 253) and that the CF program was either the least or among the least important subjects at school. She also reported that her CF teacher participants felt undervalued as school administrators outright ignored them and their program, to the point where “simply having [a school administrator] insist that CF time not be interrupted was interpreted as a sign of validation” (p. 281).

Richards’ results are extreme, but they are not isolated. In Calman’s (1988) review of the North York Board of Education, some FSL teachers “indicated that [school administrators] have a negative or indifferent attitude toward the program and [viewed] French as a low priority” (p. 127). While the majority of school administrators surveyed felt the French teacher was important, Calman concluded that the evaluation and supervision of the FSL program, as part of the duties of a school administrator, “was not as high a priority as that of the rest of the curriculum” (Calman, 1988, p. 20).

Recent research into the inclusion of English language learners in FSL programs (Mady, 2013; Masson & Mady, 2016) came to the same conclusions as Richards (2002) and Calman (1988) regarding the marginalization of FSL in schools. Through surveys and follow-up interviews with FSL teachers, Mady (2013) noted that although respondents were largely in favour of including English language learners in the FSL classroom and agreed that the goal of achieving success in FSL applied to both Anglophones and English language learners, they reported school administrators discouraged English language learner participation in FSL programs; a finding echoed in other research (e.g., CPF, 2010). As an example, before formal policy was in place promoting the inclusion of English Language Learners in FSL classes, some school administrators did not require English language learners to take the obligatory French credit during their secondary years, on the belief that learning English should be the priority.

This decision to encourage English Language Learners to not take FSL classes resulted in FSL programs being viewed as being of lower status, because they were not seen as being as important for students to pursue (Mady, 2013). Since Mady's study, the OME has published *Welcoming English language learners into French as a second language programs* (2016). This document has acknowledged the previous negative mindset of some key decision makers (including the school administrator), and has offered suggestions and examples on how to successfully integrate English Language Learners into the FSL classroom, as well as strategies to be used by the FSL teacher when instructing English Language Learners. Despite the welcoming tone of the document, it also states that the decision to include an English Language Learner in FSL "should be made on a case-by-case basis" (p. 6). Recent research into the perspectives of school administrators on the inclusion of English language learners in the FSL classroom has concluded that school administrators believe they should be included in FSL programs, suggesting a shift away from previous biases (Mady & Masson, in press; Masson & Mady, 2016).

Lack of resource allotment to FSL programs. A nation-wide study of FSL teachers conducted by Lapkin, MacFarlane, and Vandergrift (2006) provided a clearer picture of how the negative mindsets described above are then manifested in concrete actions (e.g., lack of physical resources for FSL). The authors surveyed Canadian FSL teachers on the themes of teaching resources, support from key stakeholders (including school administrators), teaching conditions, and professional development (PD) opportunities. The results were then re-analyzed with a specific focus on the realities of Ontario teachers by Lapkin and Barkaoui (2008). Of the physical resources that FSL teachers⁶ reported to be lacking, a "complete unavailability" (Lapkin & Barkaoui, 2008, p. 15) of classrooms for CF was mentioned by 50% of the respondents, resulting in teachers having to move from classroom to classroom and use a cart instead of working in a stationary classroom. A limited availability of French-speaking personnel, including "administrative staff, supply teachers, [and] librarians" (Lapkin & Barkaoui, 2008, p. 2) (p. 2), was also noted. Decades earlier, inadequate resource allotment was the focus of Olson and Burns's (1989) research, who "found systematic evidence [...] that while various available texts in FI were in the hands of the school administrator, these texts had failed to reach classroom

⁶ Only results from FI and CF teachers were considered because of the low response rate of EF teachers (Lapkin et al., 2006).

teachers” (Burns & Olson, 1989, pp. 10–11). Richards (2002) also suggested that school administrators “feel completely justified in giving [CF teachers] fewer classroom resources” (Richards, 2002, p. 266), and that when a classroom is provided to CF teachers, “it does not guarantee that [the] classes are important enough to be located in an environment that is conducive to learning” (Richards, 2002, p. 55), giving gymnasium stages, kitchens, and backs of libraries as examples of where CF programs have been held.

While the above studies are slightly outdated, and despite recent indications of a more positive mindset in regards to FSL (e.g. Mady & Masson, in press; Masson & Mady, 2016), Milley and Arnott’s (2016) work on the role of school administrators in leading FSL programs paints a picture very similar to those in Lapkin et al.’s (2006) survey results. After interviewing principal-teacher partnerships from different schools, Milley and Arnott (2016) then compared the resulting image of a school leader as described by the school administrator and the FSL teacher. While the struggle to obtain resources was only present in half of the teacher-principal pairings, Milley and Arnott suggested that the ways in which school administrators sought to support their FSL staff are “very similar to those documented by Calman (1988) more than two decades ago, suggesting little has changed” (Milley & Arnott, 2016, p. 17). For example, looking beyond resource allotment, half of school administrators in Calman’s study indicated that the FSL program was not integrated into the school culture and that offering a French concert, for example, was very rare; in Milley and Arnott’s (2016) study, only one quarter of teacher-principal pairings referenced the incorporation of FSL in school concerts. Milley and Arnott also reported that CF teachers continue to be “isolated in a portable classroom” (p. 14), similar to the reality reported by FSL teachers in Lapkin et al.’s (2006) survey.

Possible explanations for poor school administrator support of FSL. There are a number of possible explanations for why school administrators have regularly displayed a lack of support towards their FSL teachers, however little empirical research has been done on this specific topic. Considering the research to date, and other relevant research from the field of educational administration more broadly, five possible explanations emerge, as described below.

Explanation 1: Lack of time for instructional leadership. While instructional leadership (i.e. Leithwood, 2006) provides a prominent model for guiding school administration (as discussed in greater depth below), school administrators have reported a lack of time to dedicate to supporting the instructional program overall, including FSL. In a recent annual report

published by People for Education (2011), school administrator testimonies have made it clear that there is not enough time to be an instructional leader: one school administrator states that “we are stretched to the max because there are so few of us to keep up with the mandated initiatives... Being an instructional leader is becoming increasingly challenging” (People for Education, 2011, p. 5). Both the Catholic Principal’s Council of Ontario and the Ontario Principals’ Council (OPC) have reported that “while [the principals] love their jobs, it is becoming increasingly difficult to fulfill their vast array of responsibilities”, with the later stating that the current role of the principal is “almost unmanageable” (People for Education, 2011, p. 5). Pollock’s (2014) comprehensive research into the nature of school administrators’ work came to similar conclusions. On average, principals only spent about 5 hours per week on instructional leadership, while the vast majority expressed a desire to see that amount increase, with one participant saying “the focus of my work should be curriculum, instruction, delivery, programming, assessment, and evaluation [...] but I get bogged down with running the school” (Pollock et al., 2014, p. 16). Although participants in this study indicated they frequently interact with their classroom and specialist teachers, it is just not frequently in the capacity of an instructional leader. Therefore, because school administrators reported a lack of time to act as instructional leaders in general, it could be considered that there is a lack of time for instructional leadership of FSL programs as well, which is then manifested in a lack of support for their FSL teachers.

Explanation 2: FSL-related system-level constraints. Another possible reason for the poor leadership of FSL programs are “system-level [constraints]” (Milley & Arnott, 2016, p. 19) reported by school administrators at the board-level, such as “funding for FSL” (Milley & Arnott, 2016, p. 17) and “[committing] time and energy to higher profile subjects” (Milley & Arnott, 2016, p. 18). These same types of constraints have also been noted in earlier research: Calman’s (1988) research reported that principals received “little or no assistance” (Calman, 1988, p. 127) from the board to support elementary-level FSL, while almost 30 years later, the same comments about unavailability of board-level consultants were reported by one-third of teacher participants (Lapkin et al., 2006). Kissau’s (2005) research specifically addressed such system-level constraints and the resulting lower status attributed to FSL programs. After performing a document analysis of Canadian FSL-related federal and provincial policies, and relevant publications (for example, those by CPF), Kissau (2005) reported that budget cuts (at

the federal level) for FSL programming forced provincial governments to make “difficult and often controversial decisions in regard to FSL programs” (Kissau, 2005, pp. 4–5). Further, school boards no longer received the funding to conduct research on their FSL programs (as Calman also noted in 1988). However, when additional funding is received, it “[did] not necessarily go towards improving FSL programming” (Kissau, 2005, p. 7); rather, it went towards compensating for growing teachers’ salaries. Kissau reported other system-level constraints, including the reduction of Ontario high school from five to four years (which gave students less time to pursue courses for interest’s sake, and was also reported in recent research [McGregor, 2016]), and school board timetabling procedures, where FSL courses were almost always in conflict with other (often more-popular) courses, thereby disadvantaging students who may wish to study other electives as well as French⁷.

Explanation 3: Poor school administrator training programs. While system-level constraints may provide many hurdles for school administrators in supporting their FSL teachers, other authors suggested the challenge lay in poor school administrator training programs (more detailed information on these training programs is presented later). While some recent studies have identified gaps in the curriculum content of the Principal’s Qualification Program (PQP) course (Smith, 2012; Winton & Pollock, 2013), there are no recent studies on the preparation school administrators receive prior to leading FSL programs. Older research has concluded that school administrators received little to no special training in the leadership of FSL programs (Olson & Burns, 1983), rendering all administrative decisions with regards to FSL even more difficult (Safty, 1992) despite school administrators’ documented interest in more training on the leadership of FSL programs (Calman, 1988; Guttman, 1983).

Despite the calls from school administrators to receive more training on FSL programming, neither the current (OCT, 2009) nor the proposed draft guidelines (OCT, 2016a) formally require that Part 1 and Part 2 PQP course providers specifically cover how to support FSL programs. The 2016 draft (OCT, 2016a) does leave much room for the review of FSL-related policies (for example, the draft says that in the Part 1 course, candidates will “explore ways of utilizing and maximizing current resources and supports available from the OME” [OCT, 2016a, p. 18], which could refer to the new FSL-related OME support documents [i.e.

⁷ Some school boards, are beginning to offer FSF4U-O (the Grade 12 CF course) online, to combat these course conflicts, thereby allowing students to take their preferred elective at school, and complete FSF4U-O online.

2013a, 2015, 2016]). However, it is at the discretion of the program provider to explicitly include such content.

Explanation 4: Lack of previous FSL teaching experience. Previous research (although not FSL-specific) has outlined that background knowledge and experience does impact the instructional leadership provided (Burch & Spillane, 2003; Fuller & Schrott, 2015; Lochmiller & Acker-Hocevar, 2016; Spillane, 2005; Theoharis & Brooks, 2012). For example, school administrators with a mathematics background are more likely to provide instructional leadership to their mathematics teachers (Fuller & Schrott, 2015). In this FSL context, one possible way to prepare principals to lead FSL teachers would be to actually have taught in FSL programs during their careers as teachers; however, studies have shown that few FSL teachers move into positions of administration (e.g. Richards, 2002; Safty, 1992), resulting in few school administrators having previous FSL teaching experience. In 2014 and 2015, only 9%⁸ of Ontario certified teachers in “Good Standing” were both qualified principals (i.e., had completed both Part 1 and Part 2 of the PQP) and qualified FSL teachers (i.e. had completed FSL Part 1 or the equivalent) (OCT, personal communication, January 23, 2017), as compared to 12% of the general teaching population having the same FSL qualifications (OCT, 2016b).

Historically, FSL teachers were not encouraged to pursue positions of leadership because their interests would not align with those of the majority English teacher population (Safty, 1992), which could explain the very small percentage of those moving into school administration. Currently, it could be suggested that most FSL teachers were uninterested in moving into positions of leadership because they were aware of the constant demand for their speciality (Kipp-Ferguson, 2013).

Explanation 5: Lack of French language skills. School administrators have also reported that being able to communicate in French would be advantageous in the leadership of a FSL program; as such, those without such skills could struggle to support FSL programs (Calman, 1988; Olson & Burns, 1983; Safty, 1991, 1992) . As a participant in Guttman’s (1983) study summed up: “I can't provide leadership in the immersion program; I don't even speak

⁸ This statistic captures all those who are qualified to be school administrators and who are qualified to be FSL teachers, however it is possible there are Ontario certified teachers who have such certifications but did not ever need them in practice (e.g. they completed the PQP but have not become a school administrator, or they have FSL Part 1 but have never taught FSL). This statistic does, however, reflect the maximum number of active principals who could have FSL teaching experience.

French" (Guttman, 1983, p. 21). Other studies have arrived at similar conclusions: school administrators in Calman's (1988) study, for example, felt "restricted by their lack of French skills" (p. 113) when evaluating teachers, an aspect of program leadership; Safty (1992) also declared that unilingual English school administrators are at a disadvantage with regards to the leadership of FSL. While the Canadian Education Association (1983) downplayed the impact of linguistic restrictions of Anglophone school administrators on their ability to support FSL, other authors have suggested that it could explain the poor support of FSL programs. Safty (1991), for example, attested that school administrators unable to communicate in French and providing instructional support for FSL teachers is a "difficult task at best" (p. 483). Despite his push for French-speaking administrators, Safty also wrote:

"Of course, a [school administrator unable to communicate in French] may prove far more successful than a [school administrator who is able to communicate in French] at providing the school with a culture conducive to the development of professionally and personally rewarding experiences. The linguistic competency in French of a school administrator has significant relevance to the FI teachers but no amount of fluency in French will compensate for a lack of "people" skills or lack of commitment to professional ideals, and certainly no amount of ease in French will be sufficient to provide the ingredients of administrative and curriculum leadership where none exists." (Safty, 1992, p. 396)

Guttman (1983) agreed, implying that language abilities are not the solution to the poor support provided to FSL teachers. Still, research investigating how such language ability may affect school administrators' practice is lacking, despite decades-old calls for more such studies (Greenfield, 1987; Guttman, 1983; Safty, 1992).

Given these possible explanations for the lack of support provided to FSL teachers by their school administration, and the lack of literature on said topic, the present study aims to provide much-needed insight into some of the factors that could be affecting the lack of support provided to FSL teachers by their school administration, namely the influence that their teaching background and their (in)ability to communicate in French has on how they support their FSL teachers. This study also seeks to explicitly ask school administrators about how their training programs could be modified to help them more effectively support their FSL teachers.

School Administration in Ontario

The purpose of this section is to provide contextual information about school administration and school administrators in Ontario, including how to become a school administrator and how their role is operationalized in the literature to date.

Educational leadership in Ontario. In the province of Ontario, there are a number of leadership positions teachers can undertake to contribute to their school and board, on top of their regular classroom duties (e.g., Teacher-in-Charge, being an instructional lead, or acting as a department or division chair [Peel District School Board, 2011]). Alternatively, should teachers wish to leave their role in the classroom, they can pursue a career in school administration, by becoming a vice-principal with the goal of eventually becoming a school principal.

Becoming a school administrator. There are several prerequisites to becoming a school administrator within the publicly-funded education system of Ontario. The OME states that to become a school administrator, candidates need “an undergraduate degree, five years of teaching experience, certification in three divisions⁹, two Specialist or Honour Specialist AQs¹⁰ or a Master's degree, and [candidates] are required to complete the Principal's Qualification Program” (OME, n.d.). Once all of these prerequisites have been completed, teachers are invited to apply for school administrator positions in Ontario.

The Principal's Qualification Program. The Principal's Qualification Program (PQP) is “designed to support candidates as critically reflective educational leaders who function effectively in dynamic, diverse and complex contexts” (OCT, 2017) in Ontario schools; the prerequisites for the program are all of the other prerequisites to becoming a school administrator, as listed above. The PQP program is regulated by the OCT, and draws from the leadership domains found in the framework entitled *Putting Ontario's Leadership Framework into Action: A Guide for School and System Leaders* (henceforth referred to as the “Ontario Leadership Framework”). This framework was first published in 2008 by the Institute for

⁹ When teachers become certified teachers through the OCT, they are certified to teach certain grade divisions. The divisions are: Primary (kindergarten to grade 3), Junior (grade 4 to 6), Intermediate (grade 7 to 10), and Senior (grades 11 and 12) (OCT, n.d.-d). After initial certification, teachers can then take AQ courses to become certified in other divisions (OCT, n.d.-b).

¹⁰Both Specialist and Honours Specialist courses are subject-specific courses focused on leadership within that subject area (OCT, 2017). The primary difference between the two courses is in the prerequisites required: an Honours Specialist course requires at least nine courses in that subject area from the teacher's undergraduate degree, while a Specialist course requires the completion of the Part 2 AQ in that subject area. Both courses require at least two years of teaching experience, one of which must be in the subject area (York University, 2018).

Education Leadership (and updated in 2013) and was originally developed after three years of consultation with administrators and researchers across Ontario. It outlined a variety of practices and competencies that school administrators should be implementing in their daily practice to positively impact student success. The OCT also uses the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* (OCT, n.d.-c) as well as the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* (OCT, n.d.-c) to inform how it shapes the PQP.

The PQP is typically completed in a sequence of three parts. The Part 1 course is first completed, followed by the Leadership Practicum, and then Part 2. The courses for Part 1 and Part 2 are each 125 hours in length. The purpose of these courses is to “explore [...] topics and issues of particular relevance to the context in which [the candidates] may work” (OCT, 2009, p. 2). The topics and issues are listed as practices and competencies, and are grouped under the following five categories: setting directions, building relationships and developing people, developing the organization, leading the instructional program, and securing accountability. These five categories originate from the Ontario Leadership Framework (The Institute for Education Leadership, 2008).

The Leadership Practicum is a 60-hour “leadership experience” (OCT, 2009, p. 2). During the Leadership Practicum, candidates are mentored by a “fully qualified, experienced, practicing principal or vice-principal” (p. 11). This practicum acts as an opportunity for candidates to join a school’s administration, under the supervision of a mentor, to live the experience of being a school administrator, as they regularly log and reflect on their personal growth during the practicum. As of 2015, approximately 15,000 Ontario certified teachers in Ontario had completed the PQP, making them qualified to act as a school administrator in Ontario (OCT, 2016b).

Other leadership training. The PQP is the only formal program that teachers are required to complete should they be interested in pursuing a role in school administration; however other forms of professional development (PD) exist that introduce teachers to leadership responsibilities and leadership skill development prior to moving into a school administrator role (Smith, 2012). For example, the OME offers a “Teacher Learning and Leadership Program” (OME, n.d.-a), which funds teacher proposals that support teacher professional learning and leadership. As well, in addition to their regular duties, teachers can take on a variety of leadership roles within their school, including acting as the Teacher-in-Charge, a mentor in the

New Teacher Induction Program¹¹, a grade level or division chair, an associate teacher¹², or an acting vice-principal (Peel District School Board, 2011). Coming in the Spring of 2017 is a new AQ course entitled “Teacher Leadership” that is specifically dedicated to support teachers in their pursuit of leadership roles within their school (OCT, 2017a).

Once school administrators have begun their career in leadership, a number of other PD opportunities are available. Each of the Ontario principal’s councils (i.e. the OPC [n.d.], the Catholic Principals’ Council of Ontario [n.d.], and the Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes [n.d.]) offers seminars and e-learning modules that can help practicing school administrators expand their professional knowledge and inform their practice. There are also AQ courses that school administrators can complete to continue their learning (e.g. “Principal’s Development Course”, “Special Education for Administrators”, and “Mentoring Qualification Program” [OPC, 2017]).

The role of the school administrator. The explicit role of the school administrator is outlined within the Education Act (2014): Section 265 lists a variety of duties that the school administrator is expected to fulfill. Some examples include maintaining discipline within the school, preparing a timetable for the school, providing textbooks necessary for instruction, maintaining cooperation amongst the staff and students, caring for the building, and reporting on any of the above to their school board. Since 2000, the role of the principal has expanded to include more managerial and administrative responsibilities, and “an ever-increasing number of government-directed initiatives and accountability requirements”, with one study revealing 64 different OME directives for school administrators (People for Education, 2011). One of the priorities for school administrators, however, is fulfilling their role as an instructional leader (The Institute for Education, 2013), which is described in more detail below.

Instructional leadership. Instructional leadership is a theory of leadership that is argued to have existed for one century (Blase & Blase, 2004). While Greenfield (1987) suggested that instructional leadership dates back to the 1920s, the formal study of instructional leadership has

¹¹ The New Teacher Induction Program was launched in 2010 to support new teachers within the province of Ontario that have been hired into a permanent position (either full- or part-time). Teachers in this program participate in PD within their first year of teaching that focuses on orientation to their school board; mentorship by experienced teachers; strategies for successful classroom management, communication, and differentiated education; and training in various educational policies. (OME, n.d.-c)

¹² An associate teacher is someone who mentors Bachelor of Education candidates during their practicums in addition to regular teaching duties.

only existed for roughly 30 years (Knapp, Mkhwanazi, & Portin, 2012; Smith & Andrews, 1989) and has just recently been considered as one of the central roles of the school administrator (Greenfield, 1987; People for Education, 2011; Rossow, 1990; Smith & Andrews, 1989; The Institute for Education, 2013).

Instructional leadership as a theory has many definitions (Smith & Andrews, 1989): Bennis (1984) suggests that there are more than 50 recorded in the literature, many of which are central to the improvement of instruction and the engagement of teachers. Greenfield (1987), for example, suggested that the essence of effective instructional leadership is improved instruction. Blase and Blase (2004) broke down improved instruction to include staff supervision and development, as well as curriculum development. Other authors (Knapp et al., 2012; Leithwood, 2006; Smith & Andrews, 1989) suggested that in addition to instructional improvement and teacher engagement, school administrators are expected to respond to environmental demands like school board policies and the needs of their teachers.

Greenfield (1987) stipulated that instructional leadership has historically derived its meaning from emphasizing outcomes instead of concrete actions. In response, Greenfield's definition of instructional leadership highlights the actions taken that lead to desired instructional results, with other models providing further clarity. For example, Gersten and Carnie (1981) placed emphasis on monitoring performance of students and teachers, and implementing effective programs into the curriculum. Hallinger's (2003) model appeared to emphasize school administrators' "hip-deep" (p.32) involvement in developing and improving the curriculum, as an active means to improving student success, and creating a positive and high-standards culture amongst the teachers. Leithwood's (2006) model, although not explicitly about instructional leadership, developed and thoroughly explained four core action-oriented competencies (setting directions, developing people, designing the organization, and managing the instructional program) and their 13 sub-competencies. This model contrasted these sub-competencies with the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium standards for leadership development programs (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996), as well as Walters, Marzano, and McNulty's (2003) 21 leadership responsibilities. It also compared these core competencies with Hallinger's (2003) model above, thereby providing a connection to the theory of instructional leadership. For the purpose of this study, Leithwood's above model of instructional leadership (2006) will be

used, as his conceptualization continues to influence the various leadership resources provided by the OME (e.g. OME, 2012, 2013b; The Institute for Education, 2013).

Subject-specific instructional leadership. Historically, instructional leadership has been talked about “in subject matter neutral terms” (Spillane, 2005, p. 387). Emerging research has, however, shown that instructional leadership can vary based on the subject matter of the teacher receiving the instructional leadership. For example, Spillane (2005) followed leaders (including, but not limited to, school administrators) for several years who provided instructional leadership to their teachers, to determine if instructional leadership differed across subject area. While school administrators talked about providing instructional leadership in the same manner across all subject areas, in practice the instructional leadership provided differed by subject area. Participating school administrators were more likely to provide instructional guidance for literacy (54%) as compared to mathematics (14%), and to connect their teachers with PD opportunities regarding literacy more frequently than mathematics. Spillane (2005) suggests simply that, overall, school administrators were much more present when it came to the instructional leadership of literacy as compared to mathematics, and concluding that instructional leadership does look different based on the subject.

Stein and Nelson (2003) were also able to shed some light on what Spillane observed. They first explained that teaching practices differ based on subject area, and used the term “pedagogical content knowledge” (Shulman, 1986, p. 9) to describe teachers’ abilities to use appropriate instructional methods based on the subject area they are teaching. The authors extended this notion to administrators, saying that given instructional leadership is focused on the improved instruction of teachers (Greenfield, 1986; Knapp et al., 2012; Leithwood, 2006; Smith & Andrews, 1989), it is therefore important for school administrators to be equipped with instructional leadership skills particular to the individual subject area, called “leadership content knowledge” (Stein & Nelson, 2003, p. 424). Beauchamp and Harvey (2006) further explained this “leadership content knowledge” as being the subject-specific lens used by school administrators to guide the instructional leadership they provide their teachers.

The challenge for administrators, however, is achieving such “leadership content knowledge” across all subject areas. Some research has aimed to respond to this dilemma. First is the suggestion that “[school administrators] require some form of [...] content-grounded knowledge” (Theoharis & Brooks, 2012, p. 6) in order to be able to provide effective

instructional leadership. In their book “What every principal needs to know” (Theoharis & Brooks, 2012), they attempted to elaborate on this argument by providing a collection of chapters around common subject areas with information they felt would help school administrators succeed (including the history of the subject, best practices of teachers in that subject, and “what a leader needs to know and do to be effective in regard to specifics in that content/area.” (Theoharis & Brooks, 2012, pp. 7–8). Other studies have also shown that school administrators can provide more effective, frequent, and in-depth instructional leadership when they have background knowledge and experience pertaining to the subject area (Burch & Spillane, 2003; Fuller & Schrott, 2015; Lochmiller & Acker-Hocevar, 2016). Unfortunately, few attempts have been made to equip school administrators with the necessary knowledge these authors call for. In the province of Ontario, the PQP does not include subject-specific information, nor how to provide instructional leadership on a subject-specific basis. As this is the only required training for school administrators, acquiring subject-specific information would be optional.

Second is the suggestion that school administrators need depth and breadth of only one subject area: “from their knowledge of their first subject, [school] administrators will have a general orientation toward knowledge, learning, and instruction and, in fairly focused explorations, will be able to see how such ideas are worked out specifically in other subjects” (Stein & Nelson, 2003, p. 444). These authors suggest that school administrators with background knowledge of one single subject area need not learn about other subject areas in great depth, but that such learning would instead act as an assimilation to what they already know. Unfortunately empirical research has yet to really document whether or not there is success in using this “postholing” (Stein & Nelson, 2003, p. 444) practice by school administrators in providing instructional leadership. One study showed administrators drawing from their other content-area expertise to provide instructional leadership to a new content-area (Lochmiller & Acker-Hocevar, 2016), suggesting that this is a strategy used by practicing school administrators.

Finally, other reports have suggested the use of “distributed leadership”, where school administrators provide subject-specific instructional leadership for their teachers by relying solely on the expertise of their teachers. Stein and Nelson explain: “where individual administrators do not have the requisite knowledge for the task at hand they can count on the knowledge of others” (Stein & Nelson, 2003, p. 444). In a distributed leadership model, school

administrators would draw on department or subject leaders, other teachers in the building, or other support staff available to them (for example, school board-level instructional coaches), and work alongside these subject-area experts to provide subject-specific instructional leadership. This has proven to be effective when working with music, where subject leads support their teachers alongside the school administration (Beauchamp & Harvey, 2006; Harvey & Beauchamp, 2005), and thus could be successful in other contexts.

Given there is no concrete solution to the request that school administrators have background knowledge and experience for every subject to which they provide instructional leadership, some organizations have begun offering publications for all school administrators to refer to when supporting specific subject areas. For example, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (2012) published recommendations for instructional leadership that were specific to the context of the visual arts, including actions school administrators could take to better provide instructional leadership to their visual arts teachers. Similarly, the CSC (CSC, 2014c) has produced a resource for school administrators in Ontario to better understand what instructional leadership looks like for FSL programs.

Summary

In this chapter, existing research was presented alongside relevant professional and policy documents, providing context for this study. Information on current FSL programs in Ontario, as well as governmental (federal and provincial) support of said programs was presented, along with the process to become an FSL teacher, the demand for FSL teachers, and the poor teaching conditions they reported facing. Given the importance (Burns & Olson, 1989; Hertberg-Davis & Brighton, 2006; Kissau, 2005; Ma & MacMillan, 1999; Richards, 2002) of strong school administrator leadership in FSL programs, this chapter elaborated on several reasons why FSL teachers report they lack support from their school administrators. These reasons include school administrators' lack of time for instructional leadership, FSL-related system-level constraints, poor school administrator training programs, school administrators' lack of previous FSL teaching experience, and school administrators' lack of French language skills.

This literature review then presented information on school administration in Ontario, including what school administration looks like, how to become a school administrator, and the role of the school administrator, with a focus on instructional leadership. It then discussed the impact of background knowledge and experience on instructional leadership, the dilemma

presented when school administrators are expected to have background knowledge of all subject areas, and three possible ways of addressing this dilemma. Instructional leadership will act as the theoretical lens that frames the present study, which I will explain in further detail in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

The following chapter provides an explanation of the theoretical framework used to frame the present study and describes in detail the Instructional Leadership Taxonomy used to analyze the data.

Explanation of Theoretical Framework

The theoretical lens that will be informing this study is instructional leadership, a perspective outlining the practices school administrators should use, or the actions they need to take, to help improve teaching and learning in classrooms towards the goal of student success (Leithwood, 2006). For several decades, instructional leadership has moved the role of the school administrator away from a managerial role towards a focus on instruction (Blase & Blase, 2004; Smith & Andrews, 1989) and has had a significant impact on how school administrators are currently expected to lead (Greenfield, 1987; Rossow, 1990; Smith & Andrews, 1989). Leithwood's (2006) work has greatly informed an instructional leadership framework set out by the OME (The Institute for Education, 2013), which outlines what instructional leadership should look like in Ontario schools. Literature on instructional leadership is typically prescriptive (e.g., offering a list of means to improve student success); for this study, however, it will be used as a descriptive lens to better understand the different ways school administrators could support their FSL teachers. Instructional leadership is also often talked about in "subject matter neutral terms" (Spillane, 2005, p. 387), not specifying specific practices necessary for individual subject areas. Recent research, however, has suggested that leadership of individual subject areas should differ, given that pedagogy differs across subject areas (Beauchamp & Harvey, 2006; Shulman, 1986; Stein & Nelson, 2003). For example, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (2012) developed a list of instructional leadership strategies to follow that are specific to the visual arts context. Following in their footsteps, a taxonomy was developed (see Table 1) that moves instructional leadership from being "generic" (Harvey & Beauchamp, 2005, p. 52) towards the specific FSL context, drawing from relevant literature in the field (see below).

Instructional Leadership Taxonomy

Table 1 provides an outline of the emotional and physical supports that school administrators could provide to their FSL teachers, as developed in consultation with the below

Table 1
Taxonomy

<u>Emotional Supports (ES)</u>	<u>Physical Supports (PS)</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining high expectations of all teachers • Developing and inspiring a shared sense of direction • Being supportive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffering teachers from disruption • Rewarding teachers for good work • Providing feedback on teachers' work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquiring and distributing appropriate resources to the appropriate parties • Providing technologically-relevant resources as needed for 21st century learning • Providing adequate preparation time for teachers • Providing time for teacher collaboration • Offering time and opportunities for appropriate professional growth, where possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging and supporting teachers' input in decisions that affect their practice • Modelling appropriate values and practices • Providing instructional guidance • Listening to, and being open to, teachers' suggestions 	

five resources. This taxonomy is named the “Instructional Leadership Taxonomy” (hereafter referred to as the “Taxonomy”). While this taxonomy does not attempt to list all ways a school administrator *could* support their FSL teachers, it provides a basis for categorizing how participating school administrators in this study *claim to* support their FSL teachers.

This taxonomy is broken into two sections: PS (anything to do with time or money [OPC, 2004]) and ES (also known as human resources or the emotional intelligence required of a modern principal [Crawford, 2009]). The following five pieces of relevant literature were drawn on to develop the taxonomy: four of the five¹³ were published by Ontario educational stakeholders, and all of the pieces focus on the needs of the individual teacher, instead of teachers as a whole, as FSL teachers have needs unique to their language of instruction (Richards, 2002).

1. *School-Level Leadership in The Ontario Leadership Framework* (The Ontario Institute for Education, 2013, p. 12-13). This document outlines over 100 specific mandates of a school

¹³ The second resource (i.e., Leithwood, 2006), is very pertinent in Ontario, however it was not published by a governing body of education in Ontario.

administrator, and was used as the basis for the taxonomy as it encompassed many forms of teacher support.

2. *The 2005 Willower Family Lecture: Leadership According to the Evidence* (Leithwood, 2006). This publication was consulted to add further depth into how principals can emotionally support their teachers. In this article, Leithwood suggests that emotionally supporting teachers is imperative to ensure teachers can make full use of their abilities.
3. *Teacher Working Conditions That Matter: Evidence for Change* (Leithwood & McAdie, 2007). This was consulted in combination with the previous Leithwood publication. This chapter provides a concrete table summarizing working conditions that influence teacher practice, with pages 51-52 listing explicit practices of school administrators that influence teachers' emotional needs (as discussed above).
4. *The Role of the Principal: A Discussion Document* (OPC, 2004). This publication ensured that the lens of Ontario school leaders was maintained throughout the development of the taxonomy, as it specifically outlines the responsibilities of a school administrator in Ontario.
5. *FSL for School Administrators: From Awareness to Action – Issue 3: Instructional Leadership within the FSL context* (CSC, 2014c). This was the final document used in the development of the above taxonomy, to maintain a constant perspective of instructional leadership of FSL programs in Ontario.

To develop the taxonomy, first all supports in the above five pieces of literature were listed, and then grouped together based on overarching theme (i.e. similar wording). Supports that spanned at least three of the pieces of literature were included in the taxonomy. For example, “*Offering time and opportunities for appropriate professional growth, where possible*” was a support listed across all five, whereas “*Listening to, and being open to, teachers’ suggestions*” was only included in three of the above pieces of literature (Leithwood & McAdie, 2007; OPC, 2004; The Institute for Education, 2013). There were only two exceptions to this inclusion criteria: first, “*Securing funding*” was only listed across two of the five resources (OPC, 2004; The Institute for Education, 2013), however this was included in the taxonomy because the OME clearly states that managing funds is a responsibility of all school administrators (n.d.-d). Second, “*Providing technologically-relevant resources as needed for 21st century learning*” was also included in the taxonomy despite only being mentioned twice in the relevant literature (Leithwood & McAdie, 2007; OPC, 2004). It was felt that this category should still be included,

given the OME's recent initiative for promoting 21st century learning (2014a). Please see Appendix A for a complete overview of which pieces of relevant literature are listed within each of the categories selected for the Taxonomy.

Using the theoretical lens of instructional leadership in tandem with the above Taxonomy, this study aims to better understand how school administrators support their FSL teachers, and to compare the support provided by school administrators with and without previous FSL background and experience for the purposes of informing local and provincial school administrator training programs. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions:

1. How are participating school administrators supporting FSL teachers in their schools?
2. What are the similarities and differences between the administrative practices of school administrators with FSL background knowledge and experience, and those without?
3. What suggestions can be made for local and provincial school administrator training and support programs in regards to supporting FSL teachers?

Chapter 4: Methodology

Research Design

This study is qualitative in nature, as it aligns with Creswell's (2013) definition of qualitative research (p. 44). First, Creswell suggests that such research should make use of a theoretical framework which informs the research; in this study, the theoretical framework of instructional leadership is used. Second, Creswell suggests that qualitative data collection occurs in the natural setting sensitive to the subject; in this study, data collection occurred around school hours while participants were at their school, therefore being relevant to the subject of study (i.e. school administrator support in schools of FSL teachers). Third, Creswell indicates that qualitative data analysis searches for repetitive themes and patterns, an analytical process that was followed for this study. Fourth, Creswell indicates the importance of using multiple methods of data collection for qualitative data: in the present study, both online questionnaire (open-ended and closed-ended) and interview data (open-ended) were used and the themes that emerged were across both data sources. Finally, Creswell describes the final report of qualitative research to include the voices of participants, the interpretation of the problem, and to clarify its contribution to the literature, all of which were followed in the present report.

Participants

In the following section, demographic information will be provided for the participants of the study, separated by how they participated in the study (i.e., online questionnaire and interview).

Online questionnaire participants. 58 individuals participated in the online questionnaire. Thirty-eight participants (63%) said they were currently school principals; 20 (33%) said they were vice-principals.

Participants came from across Ontario, representing 20 of the 34 public English school boards in the province. Three participants did not declare which school board they currently worked for: two left the question blank, and one simply said they worked in the Greater Toronto Area. Figures 1 and 2 summarize the distribution of representation of participants across the province as organised by district school board (DSB).

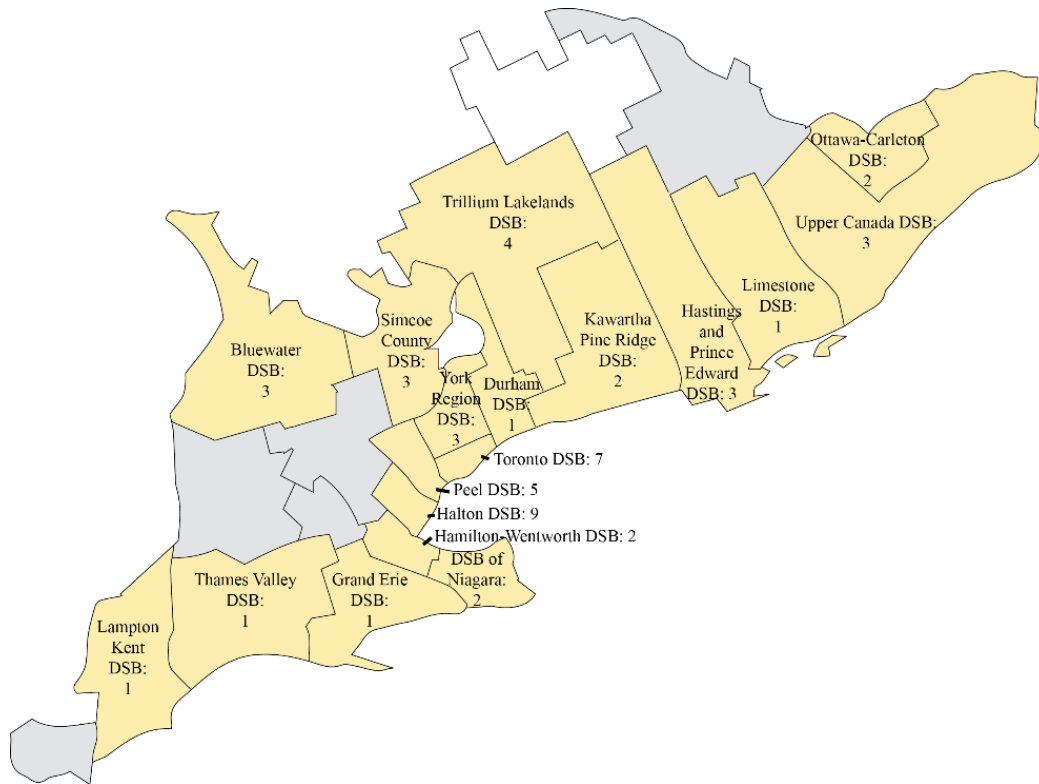


Figure 1. Map of participants in southern Ontario.

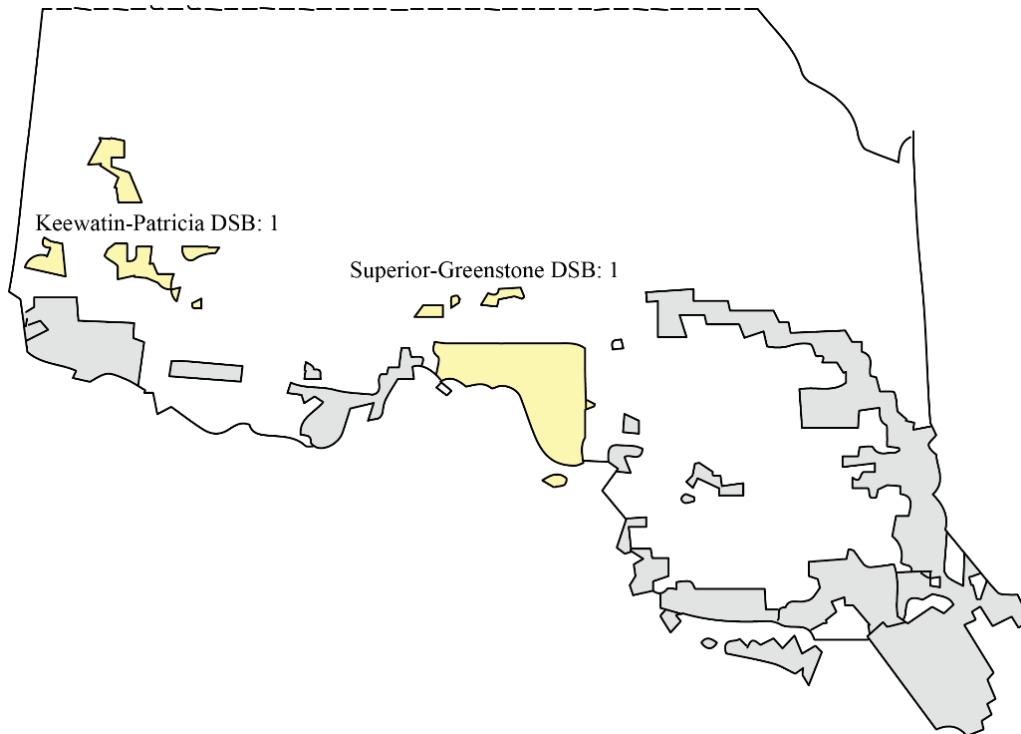


Figure 2. Map of participants in northern Ontario.

Participants were asked how long they had served as a vice-principal before becoming a school principal. On average, participants had completed four years of being a vice-principal, with the shortest vice-principal career being one year and the longest being 19 years. All respondents were also asked to indicate how long they had served as a school principal (those who were vice-principals were asked to leave the question blank). The majority of participants stated they had been a school principal for five to nine years. The shortest school principal career was one year, while the longest was 27 years.

Participating school administrators had also been administrators of a variety of FSL programs, as summarized in Figure 3. Almost all participants had experience with CF: eight years was the average number of years of CF leadership, with a range of one to 28 years. Leadership of FI programs was also quite prevalent - 75% of participants indicated they had experience leading an FI program at some point in their career, and the range of time leading such a program varied from one to 14 years. Almost all of the participants who indicated having experience leading an FI program indicated that it was an early immersion program (typically beginning in senior kindergarten or Grade 1 – 83% of these participants). Roughly 20% of participants had experience leading an EF program. On average, participants report 4 years of experience with it and a range of one to seven years. No participants indicated that they had led an IF program.

In terms of teaching experience, participants had taught for an average of 20 years before moving into a position of school administrator, and most had between 25 and 29 years of teaching experience (14 participants). The shortest teaching career was five years; the longest teaching career was 34 years. A total of 31 participants (53%) had experience teaching FSL; among this group in the sample, almost all had experience teaching CF (90%); more than half had experience teaching FI (58%); 13% had experience teaching in the EF program. Twenty-six other participants (45%) claimed to have no experience teaching FSL. One participant did not answer this question.

Finally, as described below, participants completed a self-evaluation to determine their ability to communicate in French. As Figure 4 shows, of the school administrators who claimed to have some proficiency, 31% were given a determined French level of “Basic” in the online questionnaire. The remaining participants were either “Independent” (24%), “Proficient” (16%), or “Tourist” (11%).



Figure 3. Number of years of experience leading FSL programs.

Interview participants. There were a total of 12 interview participants for this study. Although no demographic questions were asked during the interview, some basic demographic information was collected (i.e. school role and FSL teaching experience) when participants originally completed the online form expressing their interest to participate in the interview. First, participants were asked to select what their current role was: eight of the participants stated they were school principals; four were vice-principals. Second, the majority of interview participants indicated having FSL teaching experience: 75% indicated having this experience, while 25% did not. Such indication was made when participants signed up for the interview, where they were asked to select their FSL teaching background (experience teaching FSL or not). Pseudonyms were given to all interview participants; Table 2 lists the interview participants by their pseudonym according to their role in the school and whether or not they had FSL teaching experience.

Instruments

There were two instruments used for data collection: a questionnaire that participants accessed online, and a semi-structured interview protocol that guided all interviews.

Online questionnaire. An online questionnaire (see Appendix C) was created and used with the user-friendly and confidential Survey Monkey software. First, participants were presented a letter explaining the nature of the study. They were then prompted to complete a consent form prior to completing the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into four main parts: basic participant information, participant support of FSL teachers, the influence of their FSL teaching background and French language skills on their practice, and their background as a school administrator.

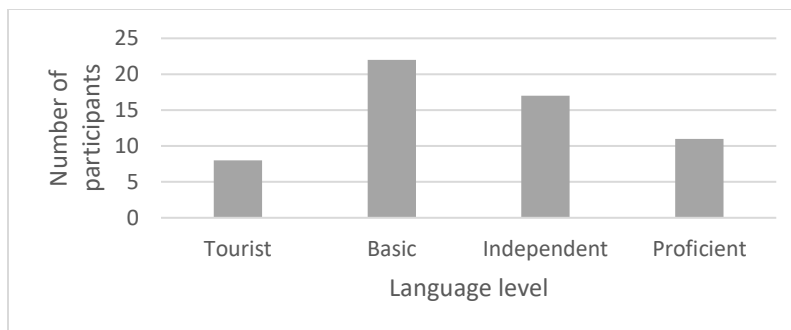


Figure 4. Reported French language level of online questionnaire participants.

First, some basic demographic information was collected (i.e., role and school board). Then, participants were asked the various types of PS and ES they feel they provide their FSL teachers: the Taxonomy was presented, and participants checked off which supports they provide. Then, there were three open-ended prompts where participants could elaborate on their responses or indicate additional types of support they provide. Next, participants were asked to list the various resources they consult to understand how to best support their FSL teachers, as well as their recommendations for external bodies that govern education in Ontario on what needs to be done to better support school administrators in their work with FSL teachers, specifically with regards to school administrator training programs.

Then, additional demographic information was gathered about the participants' FSL teaching background and their French language skills. To determine their proficiency in French, participants were prompted to complete a self-assessment of their French language skills. For this part of the questionnaire, the *Common Reference Levels: Self-assessment grid of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 26-27) was used. This framework outlines six levels of proficiency¹⁴ for five communication skills¹⁵, providing statements that participants chose from. It was developed by the Council of Europe for the purpose of frequent learner self-assessment in any language, and was validated using “a systematic combination of intuitive, qualitative and quantitative methods” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 22), including reliability to the statements. After this self-assessment, participants were asked about the extent to which they felt their ability to communicate in French, and/or their background teaching FSL programs affected how they support their FSL teachers.

¹⁴ The levels, in increasing ability are: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2.

¹⁵ Listening, reading, writing, spoken production, and spoken interaction.

Table 2

Interview participants (FSL teaching experience)

<u>Pseudonym</u>	<u>Role</u>	<u>FSL teaching experience?</u>
Allison	Principal	Yes
Andy	Principal	Yes
Ann	Principal	Yes
Audrey	Principal	Yes
Charlotte	Principal	Yes
Claire	Principal	Yes
Jane	Vice-principal	Yes
Joanne	Vice-principal	Yes
Kate	Principal	No
Leslie	Vice-principal	No
Mark	Principal	Yes
Shauna	Vice-principal	No

Finally, the survey ended with demographic questions about the length of their school administrative career, and which FSL programs they had been a school administrator of in the past. At the end of the survey, a link was provided to invite each respondent to participate in the interview portion of data collection, as well as another link should the respondent have wanted to receive a summary of the results. It concluded with a brief message offering thanks to all who participated.

Before the online questionnaire was distributed to participants, it was piloted by a retired school principal, who would have been ineligible to partake in the study, but was able to accurately answer the questions. No changes were made after he completed the online questionnaire. It was also reviewed by the participating Greater Toronto Area school board's Research Advisory Committee (which included several school administrators), who suggested some minor modifications (e.g. reordering certain questions). Please refer to Appendix C for the final version of the online questionnaire that was administered.

Interview protocol. A semi-structured interview protocol was created to allow participants to elaborate on their online questionnaire responses. As such, the questions followed many of the same themes as the questionnaire.

The interview began by asking participants about their teaching background prior to moving into school administration. Then, they were asked how they supported their FSL teachers in terms of emotional and physical supports (prompts were provided for both upon request), and how they believed that their ability to communicate in French, as well as their teaching background, affected how they supported their FSL teachers. Participants were asked if they

agreed or disagreed with two pieces of relevant research (i.e., that school administrators have difficulty supporting their FSL teachers, and that few FSL teachers move into positions of school administration), and to elaborate on their responses. Participants were then prompted to list what resources they used, or know are used, to help school administrators learn how to better support FSL teachers. Finally, participants were prompted to: (i) describe the training they had received in preparation to be a school administrator; (ii) assess if it prepared them to actually support their FSL teachers; and (iii) suggest changes they would like to see for their training specifically and for the support of FSL teachers more generally. Please see Appendix D for the full interview protocol.

Procedure

The following section describes the timeline and procedures that were used for participant recruitment and collecting data.

Participant recruitment. Participants were recruited for the present study in two phases: first for the online questionnaire, and then for the interview.

Online questionnaire participant recruitment. Participants for the online questionnaire were recruited by two means: an email invitation distributed by one Greater Toronto Area public school board (with approximately 200 school administrators), and a weekly e-newsletter distributed to the OPC members (i.e., approximately 5000 active school administrators as well as aspiring and retired school administrators) for eight weeks. Both the email invitation and the e-newsletter included a brief summary of the research, the researcher's contact information, and a link to the online questionnaire. A total of 78 people originally replied to the online questionnaire. Only complete responses were included in the research study; complete responses are defined as those who responded to all questions up to and including the language self-assessment (described in further detail below). After discarding those that were incomplete, and removing those that were not vice-principals or school principals, a total of 58 participants remained.

Interview participant recruitment. At the end of the online questionnaire, participants were asked if they were interested in participating in an interview and subsequently instructed to click on a link that took them to a separate online space where they provided their contact information and indicated what their current role was in their school (i.e., vice-principal or principal). With this procedure, every interview participant ended up completing the

questionnaire prior to their interview; however, due to confidentiality concerns, interview participants' questionnaire responses were unable to be directly linked to their interview responses.

Everyone who indicated they were interested in participating in an interview was contacted by email within three business days. The email message provided more details about the study, scheduling information for the interview, and a copy of the consent form for them to sign. If a reply was not received within two weeks of the first email being sent out, a follow-up email was sent to see if they were still interested in participating. If the respondent still did not reply after the second email, it was presumed they no longer wanted to participate in an interview. A total of 22 online questionnaire respondents indicated they wanted to partake in an interview, but in the end 12 scheduled and attended the interview.

Data collection. Data was collected in two phases, corresponding with the two instruments used. These phases were not sequential: interview data was collected during the same time that the online questionnaire was open for participants, and interviews occurred based on interest and at a time convenient for the participants. Table 3 outlines the timeline followed during this study. In the first phase (February 2017), online questionnaire data was collected through the Survey Monkey platform. In the second phase (also beginning February, 2017), interviews were conducted, audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed.

All but two interviews were completed over the phone: one was completed in-person and another was completed over Skype. One interview was conducted in French, while the others were conducted in English. Before the interview began, each participant was briefed on the context of the study. They were also asked if they gave permission for the interview to be recorded, to which all participants consented, and the interviews were recorded with two devices for subsequent transcription. The consent form was then reviewed and signed by the participant, with an additional copy being provided for the participant's records.

The interview data was meant to elaborate and expand on the survey findings; however, it was impossible to connect survey responses to interview responses (where applicable) due to the confidential nature of the survey (i.e., they were never asked to give their name). Therefore, during the interviews, participants were reminded to reiterate what they had said in the online questionnaire and to elaborate whenever relevant. After the interviews, transcription occurred, and interview transcripts were sent to all participants for review. Participants were given two

Table 3
Timeline of study

<u>Date</u>	<u>Phase</u>
January 2017	Ethics approval
February – March 2017	Data collection (both online questionnaire and interview)
March – July 2017	Data analysis
August 2017 – March 2018	Reporting

weeks to review the interview transcript, and to reply with any changes or additions to be made (should a response not be received, participants were made clear that an approval would be assumed): two participants modified their interview transcripts, four participants confirmed their approval of the transcript, and the remaining six did not reply (their approval of the transcript was therefore assumed).

Data Analysis

Data analysis occurred in the five phases described below.

Phase 1: Participant demographics. Before any analysis could be completed, a “determined French level” needed to be calculated, so that the types of support provided could be grouped into categories of participants with similar French proficiency levels. This began in the online questionnaire: to determine their French language skills, participants were asked to self-assess their ability to communicate in the French language. They were first asked to generally describe their French language skills by choosing one of the following three possibilities: can communicate well, can communicate a bit, or cannot communicate at all. Those who selected either of the first two options (i.e., can communicate well or a bit) were then asked to further specify their skills using self-assessment descriptors from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001). A total of five modalities were presented: listening, reading, writing, spoken production, and spoken interaction. Participants were asked to choose from descriptors aligned with seven possible self-assessment levels (i.e., A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2, and Tourist). These levels were used to describe the self-assessment choices that participants made relative to each modality (e.g., A1 for writing; A2 for spoken production, etc.). If participants did not believe they fit any of the first six descriptors, they did have the option to select “None of the above”.

A “determined French level” was then calculated for each participant to provide a holistic overview of each participant’s language abilities. As such, the level the participant had chosen for each modality was converted into its numerical equivalent and then an average was taken of

the five values¹⁶ for each participant, per North and Jones's (2009) suggestion for calculating a global language level. Table 4 outlines the numerical equivalents provided by North and Jones (2009, p. 15) used when performing such calculations. For example, a participant who reported the levels A1 in listening (a value of -4.29), A1 in reading (-4.29), A2 in writing (-3.23), B1 in spoken production (-1.23), and B1 in spoken interaction (-1.23) would have a calculated average of -2.854. Once the average was taken, the values for the A1 ("Basic"), B1 ("Independent"), and C1 ("Proficient") levels were used (Council of Europe, 2001; North & Jones, 2009) to determine at which level of language skill the participant could communicate. If a participant had not yet attained the A1 "Basic" level (their calculated average was less than -4.29), the participant was given the level of "Tourist". In the previous example, the participant would be classified as "Basic", because they have surpassed the A1 cut-off (-4.29) but have not yet surpassed the B1 cut-off (-1.23). Those who answered that they "cannot communicate in French whatsoever" in the online questionnaire (and thus skipped the self-assessment questions) were automatically attributed the global level of "Tourist"¹⁷. Once each participant was given a "determined French level", the remainder of the data analysis could continue.

Phase 2: Closed-ended questions. Data analysis began with the importing of closed-ended question information from both the questionnaire and the interview into Microsoft Excel. Then, questionnaire data reflecting the overall frequency of different types of support provided to FSL teachers was calculated using the "yes" or "no" responses to supports listed. Then, participant responses to these same questions were analyzed according to how participants were classified in terms of FSL teaching background and French language skill in order to inquire as to whether there was variance across these categories. Points of convergence and divergence were also calculated across the support types for each of the classified categories (for example, did those with FSL teaching background and those without converge/diverge when it came to the types of emotional support offered?). To do so, the range was calculated for a given code and category, across the FSL teaching backgrounds and reported French language levels (for

¹⁶ If a participant selected "None of the above" instead one of the other six possibilities, that value was attributed to that of "Tourist" (North, 2000) for that modality for the purpose of calculations. This assumption was made on the understanding that all school administrators need to have completed a Bachelor of Education, and to do so must have completed a secondary school program, for which they would likely have taken an FSL program, an assumption also reinforced by one interview participant.

¹⁷ Following the decision to attribute participants who selected "None of the above" at a "Tourist" level, the same decision was made for participants who answered that they "cannot communicate in French whatsoever".

Table 4
 Numerical equivalent for CEFR language skill levels

<u>Level</u>	<u>Numerical equivalent</u>
C2	3.90
C1	2.80
B2	0.72
B1	-1.23
A2	-3.23
A1	-4.29
Tourist	-5.39

example, the range across reported French language levels – Tourist, Basic, Independent, and Proficient – for the code “Yes” to the category “*Being supportive*”). For this study, a point of divergence is defined to be a range of 15% or greater (Davis & Pecar, 2013); with the purpose of “data cleaning” (Davis & Pecar, 2013, p. 320) in mind, the value of 15% was selected by the researcher as a cut-off value as, upon calculation, the majority of ranges were less than 15%.

Phase 3: Open-ended questions. After Phase 2, Phase 3 began with the importation of answers to the open-ended online questionnaire questions into Nvivo 11, the qualitative data analysis software used for this study. Responses were then grouped across the following broad themes:

- “Support of FSL T”, referring to how school administrators reported supporting their FSL teachers.
- “Influence on practice”, referring to the perceived impact of their French skills and previous FSL teaching experiences on how they supported their FSL teachers;
- “Recommendations”, referring to their recommendations for school administrator training programs specifically, and for supporting school administrators more generally.

After ascertaining these broad themes, an iterative analysis process began: these broad themes were then individually analyzed and subsidiary codes were created. For example, under the “Recommendations” theme, answers were grouped if they were for school administrator training programs, or just in general. This process was repeated several times (within themes, each theme’s codes, and each code’s sub-codes), creating a “tree” of themes, codes and sub-codes until there were no further divisions to be made. In the above example, additional sub-codes were created under “school administrator training programs” to reflect knowledge or skill acquisition. For a full list of codes used for the open-ended data (organized hierarchically), please refer to Appendix E

Codes for open-ended .

Through this process, it became clear that there were large numbers of sub-codes mentioned by participants, and it would be impossible to report all of them within the limitations of a master's-level research report. The decision was made that under the broad themes of "Influence on practice" and "Recommendations", only those codes and sub-codes with a z-score greater than one¹⁸ would be included (i.e. more than five and three participants mentioning the given sub-theme, respectively).

The remaining codes under "Influence on practice" were grouped into a table format, organized by FSL teaching experience and reported French language levels in order to respond to the second research question of this study (*what are the similarities and differences between the administrative practices of school administrators with FSL background knowledge and experience, and those without?*). Following this regrouping, the comments provided were then analyzed for emergent themes specific to the criteria by which they were compared (i.e. FSL teaching experience or French language level) for the purpose of determining how each group (e.g. those with/without FSL teaching experience) perceived how their background influenced the support they provided.

Finally, given that the primary purpose for this study was to determine how school administrators supported their FSL teachers, and in an effort to capture as much data as possible, a different analysis process was used for the "Support of FSL T" broad theme. Instead of using z-scores to determine which codes and sub-codes were most prevalent, response trends were analyzed across sub-codes that had the same parent code, to determine response patterns and ultimately which sub-themes were more prevalent (for example, those who reported they provided resources for their FSL teachers [a code] were also very likely to have reported providing technology [a sub-code] for their teachers).

Phase 4: Interview responses. Following the analysis of the online questionnaire open-ended questions, interview transcripts were also imported into Nvivo 11. This data was then

¹⁸ A z-score is defined as the number of standard deviations a piece of data is from the mean. In this study, frequency counts for each sub-theme were tabulated, and the mean and standard deviation were calculated. Then the z-score for each sub-theme were calculated, and only those with a z-score of 1 or greater were reported. Only reporting data within a certain standard deviation of the mean is a means of "data cleaning" (Davis & Pecar, 2013, p. 320), to ensure that outliers are removed from the data set. This process of using quantitative counting methods to select pertinent qualitative data compliments - while still maintaining - the overall qualitative orientation of the research (Maxwell, 2010; Schwandt, 2007).

analyzed and thematically organized to find points of expansion on the themes that emerged from Phase 3 of data analysis. This provided additional in-depth insight into the various themes that emerged, where applicable.

Phase 5: Comparison of closed-ended and open-ended data. The final phase of data analysis was a comparison between the results of the closed-ended and the open-ended questionnaire data. First, findings for how FSL teaching experience and French language skill affected the supports reportedly provided (as explained in Chapter 5) were compared in a T-chart to how participants felt their FSL teaching experience and French language skills affected the support they provided. Comments made during the interviews were also used to expand further on insights gained from this iterative data analysis into how participants believed these two factors affect how they supported their FSL teachers. Findings from this analysis across the two sets were recorded and are reported in Chapter 5.

Second, the results of the closed-ended questions about the supports provided to FSL teachers were compared against the sub-themes of the open-ended questionnaire data under the theme “Support of FSL T”. Through this comparison, it was clear that online questionnaire participants had mentioned supports that were not reflected in the Taxonomy, and often would combine separate Taxonomy categories together when responding to three open-ended questions (the prompts asked if there were other means of ES, PS, or other supports the participants provided that they had not previously mentioned) of the online questionnaire. This signaled the possibility that the Taxonomy may require revision to reflect what participants were reporting in terms of support for FSL teachers. To determine if these non-conforming supports were also reflected in the interviews, the responses to the prompt “What ES and PS’s do you provide your FSL teachers?” were reviewed, and corroborated what had been noticed in the online questionnaires: participants mentioned new supports, and grouped other supports together. With this in mind, the Taxonomy was updated before continuing through the remainder of the data analysis process. This ensured that all further conclusions best reflected participants’ realities.

A total of five revisions were made to the Taxonomy, as described below, divided into revisions related to ES and PS. When the findings are presented in Chapter 5, it will be made clear which version of the Taxonomy (pre- or post-changes) was used.

Modifications to emotional supports. First, the ES categories “*Providing feedback on teachers’ work*” and “*Providing instructional guidance*” were combined to create a new category

“Providing instructional support”. After consulting the relevant literature, it was clear that feedback is a form of instructional guidance that principals are encouraged to provide their teachers (Leithwood & McAdie, 2007; Leithwood, 2006; OPC, 2004). Further, a total of 78% of participants responded the same way to both original categories: 40 participants (69%) were classified as Yes-Yes, meaning they reportedly provided both instructional guidance and feedback to their FSL teachers, while five participants (9%) were classified as No-No, that they provided neither. Given that the remaining 25 (22%) participants said they provided one but not the other, two additional codes were also created: Yes-No, for the 11 participants (19%) who claimed they provided feedback but did not claim to provide instructional guidance, and No-Yes, for the two participants (3%) who maintained providing instructional guidance but not feedback.

Second, a new ES category, entitled *“Maintaining individual and group well-being”*, was created. Many participants indicated that this was a priority for them, because they wanted to ensure the positive mental health of their FSL staff through individual, school-wide, and board-wide efforts. Participants also mentioned the importance of creating a positive space for their FSL teachers, particularly in recognition of the marginalization often experienced by FSL teachers. The addition of this category is also supported in the relevant literature: four of the five pieces outline that school administrators should be supporting FSL teachers’ welfare in creating a positive school climate (Leithwood & McAdie, 2007; Leithwood, 2006; OPC, 2004; The Institute for Education, 2013). The addition of this category also reflects the growing awareness of the importance of mental health in society as a whole (Bell Let’s Talk, 2017) as well as recent province-wide mental health initiatives (Government of Ontario, 2011; OME, 2013). Table 5 summarizes these two changes to the Taxonomy, and provides a comparison between the list of ES’s from the original Taxonomy to the updated Taxonomy. Text and categories that were added are italicized.

Modifications to physical supports. First, findings showed that the PS category *“Providing technologically-relevant resources as needed for 21st century learning”* needed to become part of the PS category *“Acquiring and distributing appropriate resources to the appropriate parties”*. A total of 41 participants (71%) responded that they provided both resources and technology (referred to as Yes-Yes), 7 participants (12%) responded that they provided neither (referred to as No-No), and 10 participants (17%) said they provided one or the other. In an effort to not lose these latter individual perspectives (i.e. a participant saying they

Table 5

Modifications to the ES's in the Taxonomy

<u>ES's – Before changes</u>	<u>ES's – After changes</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining high expectations of all teachers • Developing and inspiring a shared sense of direction • Being supportive • Buffering teachers from disruption • Rewarding teachers for good work • Providing feedback on teachers' work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining high expectations of all teachers • Developing and inspiring a shared sense of direction • Being supportive • Buffering teachers from disruption • Rewarding teachers for good work • <i>Maintaining individual and group well-being</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging and supporting teachers' input in decisions that affect their practice • Modelling appropriate values and practices • Providing instructional guidance • Listening to, and being open to, teachers' suggestions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging and supporting teachers' input in decisions that affect their practice • Modelling appropriate values and practices • Providing instructional <i>support</i> • Listening to, and being open to, teachers' suggestions

provided resources but not technology, and vice-versa), while still maintaining that most participants felt that resources also included technology, two additional codes were created: Yes-No, for the eight participants (14%) who said they provided resources but did not indicate providing technology, and No-Yes, for the two participants (3%) who said they provided technology but not resources. In the literature consulted for the creation of the Taxonomy, only the OPC (2004) report distinguishes between resources and technology; all other works either do not specifically mention providing resources to teachers as a means of support (CSC, 2014c; Leithwood, 2006) or do not specifically mention technology as being separate from other resources (Leithwood & McAdie, 2007; Leithwood, 2012). Given that the majority of participants responded in the same way when indicating which resources (i.e. resources or technology) they felt they provide, it is clear that the two categories can easily be merged.

Second, the PS categories “*Providing adequate preparation time for teachers*” and “*Providing time for teacher collaboration*” were combined to create “*Structuring the organization to facilitate learning and collaboration*”. This change was inspired by many comments made by school administrators who specifically reported that they structured the schedule of their FSL teachers to provide common preparation times so that they could collaborate and learn from one another during this time. This was also a suggestion listed in how principals can support their FSL teachers in the *Awareness to Action* article (CSC, 2014c), one of

the five pieces of literature used when creating the original Taxonomy; the four other pieces of relevant literature consulted also suggest that providing time for teacher preparation and providing time for teacher collaboration are synonymous. A total of 44 participants (76%) responded Yes in both categories (so were coded as Yes-Yes), while an additional five participants (9%) responded No to both (so were coded as No-No). The Yes-No code was created for 9 participants (16%) who indicated that they provided teacher preparation time but not time for teacher collaboration, and the code No-Yes was created for the inverse, when school administrators reported providing time for teacher collaboration but not preparation time (no participants). Table 6 summarizes the three instances of double-codes used.

A smaller change, the “*Securing funding*” PS category was renamed to be “*Securing and allotting funding where necessary*”. This change is a direct result of the number of participants who indicated that they connected their FSL staff with funding opportunities (e.g. with their union, organizations dedicated to FSL and other second language teachers, etc.) and specifically mentioned that the CF teacher received some budget funds, despite CF not being included in the funding model for schools. Because the category was simply retitled and it was not combined with another category, no new codes (i.e. no Yes-No or No-Yes codes) needed to be created. Table 7 summarizes all changes made to the physical supports in the Taxonomy. Italicized text and categories are what was added to the Taxonomy. Finally, Table 8 summarizes the changes to the original Taxonomy by showing the revisions: text and categories with a strikethrough were removed and italicized text/categories were added.

Although the Updated Taxonomy (see Table 9) does provide a basis for describing the types of support school administrators claimed to provide to their FSL teachers, it does not attempt to encapsulate all possible supports reported, as only supports with 10 or more participant mentions were included in Taxonomy changes. Many additional supports were listed by participants that were not included in the revisions of the Taxonomy due to low frequency of responses (for example, helping connect new FSL teachers with the New Teacher Induction Program, or assisting in fundraising efforts), however these are still means of supporting FSL teachers (please see Appendix B for a full list of supports listed by participants). In subsequent chapters, it will be made clear which Taxonomy (pre- or post-changes) was used for data analysis.

Table 6

Explanation of double-codes

<u>Category</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
Acquiring and distributing appropriate resources to the appropriate parties	Yes-Yes	Reportedly provided both resources and technology
	Yes-No	Reportedly provided resources but not technology
	No-Yes	Reportedly provided technology but not resources
	No-No	Reportedly provided neither technology nor resources
Providing instructional support	Yes-Yes	Reportedly provided both instructional feedback and guidance
	Yes-No	Reportedly provided instructional feedback but not instructional guidance
	No-Yes	Reportedly provided instructional guidance but not feedback
	No-No	Reportedly provided neither instructional feedback nor guidance
Structuring the organization to facilitate learning and collaboration	Yes-Yes	Reportedly provided time for both teacher preparation and collaboration
	Yes-No	Reportedly provided preparation time but not time for teacher collaboration
	No-Yes	Reportedly provided time for teacher collaboration but not preparation time
	No-No	Reportedly provided neither time for teacher collaboration nor teacher preparation

Table 7

Modifications to the PS's in the Taxonomy

<u>PS's – Before changes</u>	<u>PS's – After changes</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing <i>and allotting</i> funding where necessary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquiring and distributing appropriate resources to the appropriate parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquiring and distributing appropriate resources to the appropriate parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing technologically-relevant resources as needed for 21st century learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Structuring the organization to facilitate learning and collaboration</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing adequate preparation time for teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering time and opportunities for appropriate professional growth, where possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing time for teacher collaboration 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering time and opportunities for appropriate professional growth, where possible 	

Table 8

Revisions to the Taxonomy

<u>ES's</u>	<u>PS's</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining high expectations of all teachers • Developing and inspiring a shared sense of direction • Being supportive • Buffering teachers from disruption • Rewarding teachers for good work • Providing feedback on teachers' work • Encouraging and supporting teachers' input in decisions that affect their practice • Modelling appropriate values and practices • Providing instructional <i>support</i> guidance • Listening to, and being open to, teachers' suggestions • <i>Maintaining individual and group well-being</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing <i>and allotting</i> funding <i>where necessary</i> • Acquiring and distributing appropriate resources to the appropriate parties • Providing technologically relevant resources as needed for 21st century learning • Providing adequate preparation time for teachers • Providing time for teacher collaboration • Structuring the organization to facilitate learning and collaboration • Offering time and opportunities for appropriate professional growth, where possible

Table 9

Updated Taxonomy

<u>ES's</u>	<u>PS's</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining high expectations of all teachers • Developing and inspiring a shared sense of direction • Being supportive • Buffering teachers from disruption • Rewarding teachers for good work • Encouraging and supporting teachers' input in decisions that affect their practice • Modelling appropriate values and practices • Providing instructional support • Listening to, and being open to, teachers' suggestions • Maintaining individual and group well-being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing and allotting funding where necessary • Acquiring and distributing appropriate resources to the appropriate parties • Structuring the organization to facilitate learning and collaboration • Offering time and opportunities for appropriate professional growth, where possible

Chapter 5: Findings

This chapter is organized around the three research questions guiding the project and pulls from both data sets (i.e. closed-ended and open-ended data) as necessary. Relevant findings are presented within each of the three sections.

Research Question 1: *How are participating school administrators supporting FSL teachers in their schools?*

This question was answered using the original Taxonomy (i.e. pre-changes as described in Chapter 4), with responses to online questionnaire prompts related to supports divided into two categories: ES and PS. As participants completed the online questionnaire, they reported whether they provided each support or not. The resulting frequency tabulations (see *Figure 5*) indicate which supports were most and the least commonly said to be provided.

The three most commonly reported ES's claimed to be provided were "*Being supportive*" (98%), "*Listening to teachers and being open to their suggestions*" (98%), and "*Maintaining high expectations of teachers*" (93%). The least common ES reportedly provided was "*Rewarding teachers for good work*" (36%). Of the PS's, "*Offering time and opportunities for appropriate professional growth, where possible*" was the most commonly reported (97%), while "*Securing funding*" had the lowest frequency (55%). On average, participants were just as likely to state providing ES's (74% responding "Yes") as they were to declare providing PS's (75% responding "Yes").

In summary, participants indicated being quite supportive of their FSL teachers: on average 74% of participants responded "yes" to the listed ES and PS's. Participants were also just as likely to declare providing ES as they were PS.

Research Question 2: *What are the similarities and differences between the administrative practices of school administrators with FSL background knowledge and experience, and those without?*

The following section is grouped according to data type: closed-ended findings, open-ended findings, and the comparison between those two data sets.

Closed-ended questionnaire findings.

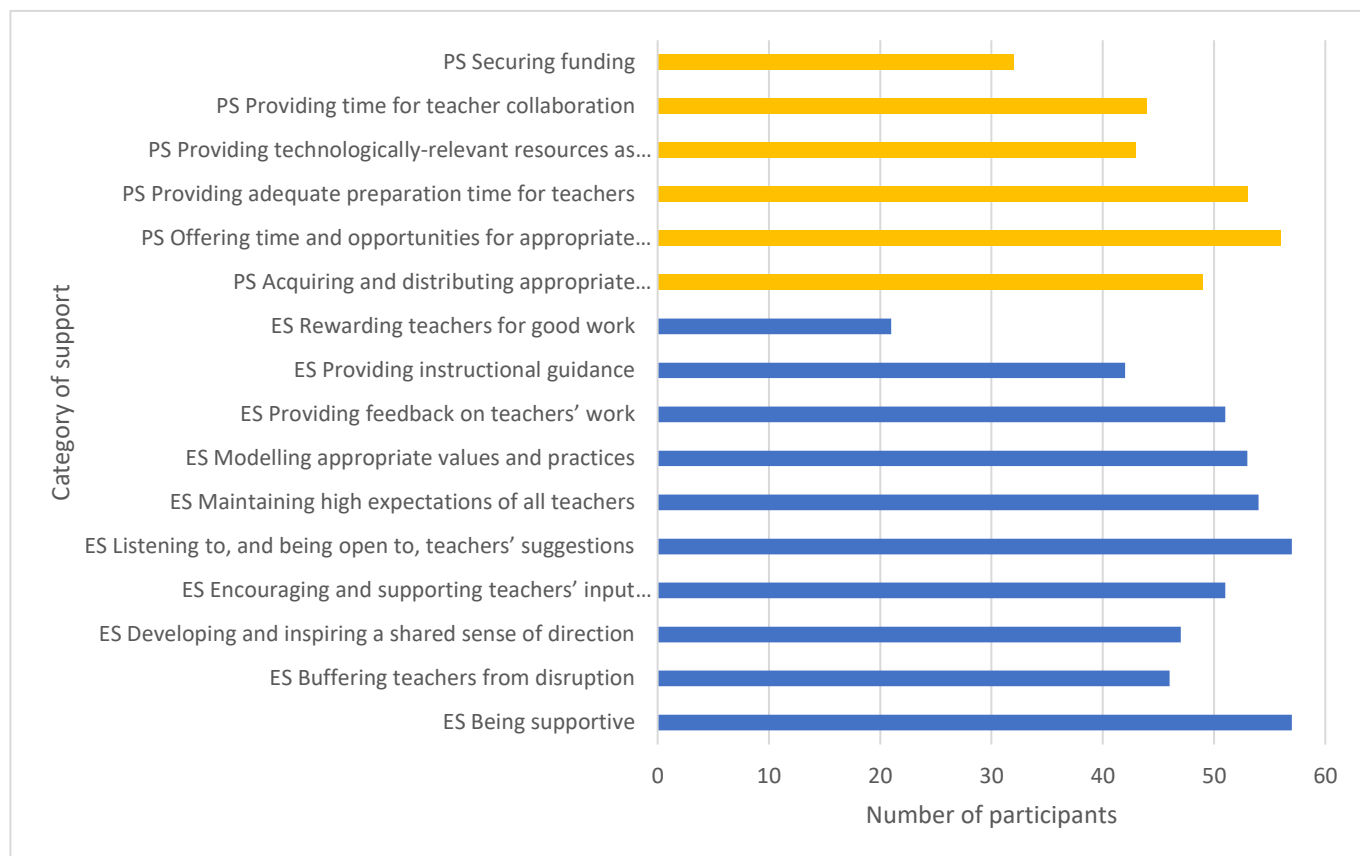


Figure 5. Frequency of support reportedly provided.

In this section, a comparison of the different ES and PS reportedly provided by participants with/without FSL teaching background and those with/without French language skills (i.e. Tourist, Basic, Independent, and Proficient) is presented. For this section, the Updated Taxonomy (i.e., post-changes as described in Chapter 4) will be used.

Comparison by French teaching background. The supports said to be provided to FSL teachers were first compared across participants' FSL teaching background. The majority of respondents indicated they either had no experience teaching an FSL program (under the column "None") or that they had taught in an FSL program (or several) prior to moving into the role of school administrator. There was one participant who did not respond to this question, so their results were excluded from this comparison. Table 10 provides a summary of the responses to the different supports from the Updated Taxonomy according to FSL teaching background (those who indicated they have taught in one or more FSL programs for at least one year), as well as the range between the two.

Table 10
Frequency of support reportedly provided by FSL teaching background

<u>Category</u>	<u>Code¹⁹</u>	<u>No FSL</u>	<u>Yes FSL</u>
Being supportive (ES)	Yes	100%	100%
	No	0%	0%
Buffering teachers from disruption (ES)	Yes	73%	84%
	No	27%	16%
Developing and inspiring a shared sense of direction (ES)	Yes	81%	81%
	No	19%	19%
Encouraging and supporting teachers input in decisions that affect their practice (ES)	Yes	85%	90%
	No	15%	10%
Listening to teachers and being open to their suggestions (ES)	Yes	96%	100%
	No	4%	0%
Maintaining high expectations of teachers (ES)	Yes	96%	90%
	No	4%	10%
Maintaining individual and group well-being (ES)	Yes	0%	10%
	No	100%	90%
Modelling appropriate values and practices (ES)	Yes	85%	97%
	No	15%	3%
Providing instructional support (ES)	Yes-Yes	58%	81%
	Yes-No	31%	6%
	No-Yes	4%	3%
	No-No	8%	10%
Rewarding teachers for good work (ES)	Yes	35%	39%
	No	65%	61%
Acquiring and distributing appropriate resources to the appropriate parties (PS)	Yes-Yes	58%	81%
	Yes-No	23%	6%
	No-Yes	0%	6%
	No-No	19%	6%
Offering time and opportunities for appropriate professional growth, where possible (PS)	Yes	92%	100%
	No	8%	0%
Securing and allotting funding where necessary (PS)	Yes	50%	58%
	No	50%	42%
Structuring the organization to facilitate learning and collaboration (PS)	Yes-Yes	77%	74%
	Yes-No	15%	16%
	No-Yes	0%	0%
	No-No	8%	10%

¹⁹ As a result of online questionnaire results as corroborated in the interview data, some changes were made to the original Taxonomy that involved the combining of several categories of support. In the Updated Taxonomy, double-codes were used in an effort not to lose the original data. Please see Table 6 for an explanation of all double-codes.

On the whole, participants did not differ significantly in the types and frequencies of support indicated to be provided. In fact, two types of support – “*Being supportive*” and “*Developing and inspiring a shared sense of direction*” – were identical across the different FSL teaching backgrounds. Despite this high level of convergence, there were still two categories of support that showed large levels of divergence:

1. “*Acquiring and distributing appropriate resources to the appropriate parties*” was a support more frequently reportedly provided by those with an FSL teaching background (81% with the code Yes-Yes – yes to both resources and technology) than those without (58%). Participants without an FSL background were more likely to report providing resources but not technology (the Yes-No code) at 23%, as compared to their peers with an FSL teaching background (6%).
2. “*Providing instructional support*” was a support more frequently reportedly offered by those with an FSL teaching background (81%) than those without an FSL teaching background (58%). Those without an FSL teaching background were more likely to claim to provide instructional feedback but not guidance (and therefore coded as “Yes-No”) at 31% as compared to those with such background (6%).

These points of divergence suggest that school administrators with an FSL teaching background did support their FSL teachers slightly differently than those without said background.

Comparison by French ability. The types of support allegedly provided by questionnaire participants were also compared across the four different reported language levels of the participants: Tourist, Basic, Independent, and Proficient. Table 11 provides a summary of this information.

There were several supports indicated to be provided that suggested areas of convergence between school administrators, regardless of their language level. For example, “*Being supportive*” showed the highest level of convergence across the language levels, with at least 95% of participants at all language levels claiming to provide this type of support to their FSL teachers. At least 75% of participants at all language levels claimed to support their FSL teachers by “*Developing and inspiring a shared sense of direction*”. At least 91% of participants at each language level reported that they did not support their FSL teachers by “*Maintaining individual and group well-being*”.

Table 11
Frequency of support reportedly provided by reported French language level

<u>Category</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Tourist</u>	<u>Basic</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<u>Proficient</u>
Being supportive (ES)	Yes	100%	95%	100%	100%
	No	0%	5%	0%	0%
Buffering teachers from disruption (ES)	Yes	88%	73%	76%	91%
	No	13%	27%	24%	9%
Developing and inspiring a shared sense of direction (ES)	Yes	75%	82%	82%	82%
	No	25%	18%	18%	18%
Encouraging and supporting teachers input in decisions that affect their practice (ES)	Yes	63%	91%	94%	91%
	No	38%	9%	6%	9%
Listening to teachers and being open to their suggestions (ES)	Yes	88%	100%	100%	100%
	No	13%	0%	0%	0%
Maintaining high expectations of teachers (ES)	Yes	100%	91%	88%	100%
	No	0%	9%	12%	0%
Maintaining individual and group well-being (ES)	Yes	0%	5%	6%	9%
	No	100%	95%	94%	91%
Modelling appropriate values and practices (ES)	Yes	63%	95%	94%	100%
	No	38%	5%	6%	0%
Providing instructional support (ES)	Yes-Yes	50%	59%	82%	82%
	Yes-No	25%	27%	18%	0%
	No-Yes	0%	5%	0%	9%
	No-No	25%	9%	0%	9%
Rewarding teachers for good work (ES)	Yes	13%	41%	24%	64%
	No	88%	59%	76%	36%
Acquiring and distributing appropriate resources to the appropriate parties (PS)	Yes-Yes	25%	64%	82%	100%
	Yes-No	50%	9%	12%	0%
	No-Yes	13%	0%	6%	0%
	No-No	13%	27%	0%	0%
Offering time and opportunities for appropriate professional growth, where possible (PS)	Yes	88%	95%	100%	100%
	No	13%	5%	0%	0%
Securing and allotting funding where necessary (PS)	Yes	25%	59%	59%	64%
	No	75%	41%	41%	36%
Structuring the organization to facilitate learning and collaboration (PS)	Yes-Yes	38%	86%	76%	82%
	Yes-No	38%	9%	18%	9%
	No-Yes	0%	0%	0%	0%
	No-No	25%	5%	6%	9%

There were also many supports that showed high levels of divergence across the language levels. “*Acquiring and distributing appropriate resources to the appropriate parties*”, for example, had the highest level of divergence. In the Yes-Yes code of this category, it appears that the higher language proficiency one had, the more likely the participant was to reportedly provide this support: only 25% of Tourist respondents responded Yes-Yes while 64% of Basic users, 82% of Independent users, and 100% of proficient users responded in the same way. It is also worth noting that 50% of Tourist users responded Yes-No (i.e., claimed to provide resources but not technology) while Basic, Independent, and Proficient users responded between 0% and 12%, indicating that those with higher language proficiency were more likely to report providing technology. Two other supports with high levels of divergence were “*Rewarding teachers for good work*” and “*Securing and allotting funding where necessary*”.

Other noteworthy results emerged where there was convergence between some language levels and divergence across others. For example, the categories “*Encouraging and supporting teachers’ input in decisions that affect their practice*”, “*Modelling appropriate values and practices*”, and “*Structuring the organization to facilitate learning and collaboration*” were highly convergent across the Basic, Independent and Proficient levels. However, significantly fewer Tourist-level participants reported providing these types of support. Finally, there was a similar frequency of the “*Providing instructional support*” category across the Tourist-Basic levels and Independent-Proficiency levels. Higher-level users (Independent and Proficient) were more likely to report providing this support.

To summarize, it is clear that there were many similarities in how school administrators report supporting their FSL teachers. There was some variance in a select number of ways across FSL teaching background, and French language skills, as those with an FSL teaching background or higher French language proficiency were more likely to report providing certain supports than those without an FSL teaching background or with a weaker ability to communicate in French.

Open-ended findings. The following sections summarize the responses to the open-ended data (from both the questionnaire and the interview) to illustrate how participants perceive their FSL teaching background and French language ability influences how they feel they support their FSL teachers.

Perceived impact of FSL teaching experience. The overwhelming response from participants who had been previous FSL teachers was that having an FSL teaching background greatly affected their practice, with participants using terms such as “huge”, “significant”, and “vital” to describe to what extent their FSL teaching background influences how they felt they supported their FSL teachers. One participant even stated: “it is why I am able to do this [be a school administrator]”.

When prompted to elaborate, participants with an FSL teaching background commonly indicated that their background permitted them to easily understand the role of an FSL teacher. For example, Allison stated, “I understand what it is to teach a language, I understand what it is to learn a language. I think that helps because I know the difficulties”. Ann confirmed, “because I have the background, I can go in the classroom and understand what is going on [pedagogically]”. When talking about a previous school principal she had had, Charlotte (a previous FSL teacher) suggested that, “he wasn’t able to monitor the learning of the children or really understand what the teacher was teaching”.

As the terms “understand” and “understanding” were used in 39% of the responses to this question, it is worth elaborating further on what participants meant by these terms. For instance, understanding the difficulty in finding resources was one area of “understanding” highlighted by participants with an FSL teaching background. Allison said her background allowed her to “[know] how hard it can be to find some of the resources and knowing what teachers are looking for in resources”. Audrey indicated that she drew from her background when helping search for resources, as she could evaluate their appropriateness for the students and program. Mark reflected on the challenges he experienced in searching for resources as an FSL teacher:

“I remember as a teacher myself how much time I spent translating things. You would spend an hour and a half translating an activity and the kids would get [it] done in 20 minutes and you cry that night thinking ‘wow what a waste of my time, I could’ve used my time so much better.’”

As a result of this experience, Mark added that his office was full of useful resources for FSL teachers, saying that when he first came to the school he brought in “buckets of [resources]” and that the FSL teachers were “thankful and appreciative”.

Another area of “understanding” related to supporting FSL teachers is understanding what is happening pedagogically when participants found themselves in the FSL classroom.

Those with an FSL teaching background claimed that this understanding allowed them to offer their FSL teachers concrete instructional guidance. When responding to the online questionnaire prompt “How do you think your previous FSL teaching experience and/or ability to communicate in French affects how you support your FSL teachers?”, one school administrator with FSL teaching experience said “I am not afraid to enter the room and assess what is happening [with respect to] instruction. I can challenge my FSL teachers and get them to consider alternate approaches.” To the same prompt, another former FSL teacher stated: “my ability to understand what is going on in classrooms assists in supporting teachers to share and implement best practices in the classroom”, reiterating the benefits of having previously teaching FSL when it comes to providing instructional support.

Finally, other areas of “understanding” that emerged from the data were in regard to barriers in funding, barriers in training, and expectations from parents. Overall, this sense of understanding mentioned by school administrators with FSL teaching experience seemed to be rooted in a place of empathy; their experience with these barriers and expectations when they were teaching FSL guided them when supporting their FSL teachers. Joanne, an interview participant with previous FSL teaching experience, recounted a defining anecdote in her practice, as she explained how her school principal did not support her program and the discipline of the students when she was an FSL teacher: when she sent students to the principal, they were simply told to return to class. As a school principal, she reflected on that experience when trying to best support her FSL teachers: “If a French teacher sends a kid down to me I deal with it. There is no ‘you just go back to class and here’s a sucker and have a good day’ kind of thing”. She continued by saying, “I really do empathize, I really do understand, as a French teacher, sometimes you feel stuck, you feel unsupported, your program doesn’t feel valued. I get that, I do.”

Interestingly, those without FSL teaching experience explicitly highlighted that they lacked this type of empathy when supporting their FSL teachers. These participants recognized that not having experience teaching FSL limited their ability to empathize with their FSL teachers. Kate, for example, stated that, if she had been an FSL teacher, “the empathy piece would be there”. One respondent elaborated on this theme by saying that not having the FSL teaching background “makes it more difficult to relate” to their FSL staff.

While those without an FSL teaching background felt limited in the empathy they are able to show their FSL teachers, findings showed that attempting to show sympathy was not

always a viable alternative. Respondents described how some FSL teachers were skeptical of their efforts to provide support. For example, when talking about the ES she provided her FSL teachers during her interview, Leslie stated that “sometimes people will think that I’m not able to help because [...] I don’t have that background”. She continued by saying “I’ve had teachers say to me ‘well you can’t possibly understand because you haven’t taught French” and that when offering suggestions, she “can just see the look on [the FSL teachers’] faces like ‘I wish’”. Leslie was not alone, as another questionnaire participant stated that, “If they need an ‘out’ it is always the fact that I haven’t taught FSL.” School administrators being dismissed because of their lack of FSL teaching background was also a large concern for Shauna, as she described how she tried to support her FSL teachers with reading strategies she knew would work for English, but was dismissed because she did not have the experience to “back up” her support. During her interview, she mentioned several times the inability to “push back” because of her lack of experience.

Although skepticism was mentioned by several participants, participants generally maintained high levels of confidence in support they claimed to provide their FSL teachers despite not having been FSL teachers themselves. Responding to the negative pushback experienced by some school administrators, Leslie stated that “part of it [...] is the relationships you build with staff, and more people now are past the point of worrying about whether or not I taught French”. During her interview, she talked about working to create a “language-rich” environment drawing from her previous experiences in other subject areas; for example, she described how she drew from her time as a kindergarten teacher and consultant:

“I look at some of the issues that we encounter and I think of my years as a kindergarten consultant and I see connections. Connections to kids learning to read, connections to learning a language, and the push to get kids talking – you want kindergarten kids to be talking, you want [FSL] kids to be talking.”

During his interview, Andy also reported drawing on his experiences with students in the English as a Second Language program, and the patience needed when introducing a new language to students: “I’m able to remind teachers of the fact that kids might struggle a bit before they understand.” Other principals reported making connections to “strong literacy practices” from other subject areas that helped them to understand the FSL program.

Overall, it is worth noting that school administrators without any FSL background indicated that they valued the FSL programs in their schools, despite not having previously taught FSL. Many mentioned that they wished for better results from their students than they had going through CF in the hopes of becoming bilingual, while others cited employment and travel benefits as motivation for their FSL programs to succeed.

In summary, looking across the two classifications (those with an FSL teaching background and those without), it is clear that participants felt strongly about their positioning in this regard. Those with FSL teaching experience felt it greatly impacted how they support their FSL teachers, and that it is necessary to succeed as a school administrator. Those without FSL teaching experience felt confident that they were able to support their FSL staff, and drew on their other previous teaching experiences involving literacy and communication when doing so, despite lacking the experience to empathize with them and the resistance and skepticism from FSL teachers they may experience as a result.

Perceived impact of French language skill. Unlike the comparison by FSL teaching background, where many comments were made about how that aspect of a school administrator's background affected how they supported their FSL teachers, there were only a few comments explicitly made in the open-ended online questionnaire questions about how one's perceived French language skill level affected how they supported their FSL teachers; as such, there are few findings to report in this respect. In fact, none of the Tourist-level participants made comments in this regard in their questionnaire responses. Unfortunately, due to this scarcity of data on how participants perceived their French language skills as impacting how they support their FSL teachers, no comparison across language level was able to be completed. The findings below are reported in relation to general comments made in this regard.

When asked to discuss how they felt their French language skills affected how they supported their FSL teachers, the most prevalent theme of online questionnaire participants was that comprehending what was being said by FSL teachers and students in the classroom helped to better support them. For example, an Independent-level participant said, "I think it is helpful in some ways, to be able to communicate in the language of instruction". One Proficient-level participant appreciated the ease of entering an FSL classroom to "communicate with both teachers and students". Those with weaker French speaking skills expressed a desire to be more fluent, with one participant stating, "I feel I could support more if I had a better knowledge of

reading, writing, and speaking French” as another confessed that they “feel embarrassed that [they] cannot communicate effectively in French with [the FSL teachers]”.

Aside from understanding the language of instruction during class time, other online questionnaire participants indicated the usefulness of understanding French for “completing [teacher performance appraisals]²⁰ in French classrooms” and for supporting those FSL teachers whose first language is French and therefore “are not as fluent in English”.

Although their French language level was unknown, the interview participants also made several comments about the perceived impact of having French language skills on the support they claimed to provide to FSL teachers. Shauna stated that “my [French level] hampers me because I don’t feel like I get the whole picture all the time”. Leslie also commented generally that “there’s certainly advantages to having a French-speaking administrator”, adding that her superintendent recently commented that “we would if we could [have a French-speaking school administrator in her school]”. At the same time, however, Leslie suggested that language ability may not be the most important criteria:

“There’s a lot of things that I think a strong administrator has to offer that certainly supersede their ability to speak the language. Sometimes I think of those four-quadrant deals: speaks French, doesn’t speak French, is a good principal, is not a good principal. Certainly, the best-case scenario is a French-speaking good principal, but I think there’s something to be said for being a good principal and not being able to speak the language.”

In the few comments provided on how French language skill affects how participants felt they supported their FSL teachers, it is clear that being able to communicate in French is an asset when providing such support, particularly when comprehending classroom instruction.

Comparison of closed-ended and open-ended findings. The closed-ended and open-ended findings previously presented were compared to determine the extent to which FSL teaching background and reported French language level impact administrator support, as determined through different data collection techniques.

The results of the closed-ended findings indicate that FSL teaching experience does have an impact on the supports allegedly provided to FSL teachers; open-ended findings also

²⁰ Teacher performance appraisals are the formal teaching evaluation regularly completed by school administrators to provide feedback on the teacher’s practice. For more information, see the OME (2017).

concluded that participants believe that an FSL teaching background is beneficial to the role of a school administrator. First, findings from closed-ended questions show that those with an FSL teaching background are more likely to report that they “*acquire and distribute appropriate resources to the appropriate parties*”; the findings to open-ended questions also revealed that those with FSL teaching background report being better able to help with resources, including obtaining appropriate and relevant resources to the program.

Second, school administrators with an FSL teaching background were also more likely to reportedly “*provide instructional support*”. Open-ended findings also found that participants had much more confidence and ability when reportedly providing instructional support for their FSL teachers, as Ann explained: “because I have the background, I can go in the classroom and understand what’s going on.” Therefore, findings suggest that school administrators with an FSL teaching background declare providing different types of support than their peers without said background.

However, while closed-ended data showed little difference in the extent to which those with an FSL teaching background and those without reportedly “*maintained individual and group well-being*”, empathy as a means of being emotionally supportive did emerge as a theme in the open-ended findings. One online questionnaire participant stated they provide “personal supports through empathy”; Joanne, an interview participant elaborated: “that start[s] with the empathy”: once she got to know her FSL teachers and their needs, she was able to create a “positive atmosphere within the school”, contributing to the well-being of the FSL teachers in the building. Those with an FSL teaching background felt they were able to provide empathy as an ES for their FSL teachers, while those without an FSL teaching background indicated feeling unable to provide such empathy.

The above comparison between closed-ended and open-ended data shows that school administrators support their FSL teachers in different ways based on whether or not they have FSL teaching experience. As well, the importance of empathy that emerged from the open-ended data was not corroborated by closed-ended data, suggesting that the Taxonomy (i.e., the category “*maintaining well-being*”) may not adequately capture this element of support identified by administrators as being important to how they support FSL teachers. Conversely, while the closed-ended findings suggest that those with French language skills support their FSL teachers in different ways (for example, those with stronger French ability are more likely to report

providing resources and reward teachers for good work) the open-ended data related to how participants felt their French language skills affected the support they said they provide their FSL teachers did not corroborate these findings.

Research Question 3: *What suggestions can be made for local and provincial school administrator training and support programs in regards to supporting FSL teachers?*

Both the online questionnaire and the interview prompted participants to volunteer any recommendations they may have had for school administrator training targeting the support of FSL teachers in particular. Over 100 recommendations were provided, indicating that participating school administrators were keen to contribute to the improvement of how school administrators support their FSL teachers. Despite analysis efforts to regroup recommendations by theme, the majority of recommendations provided were only mentioned by a few participants (less than three).

The most commonly reported recommendation was to teach school administrators how to evaluate their FSL staff, including “look fors” in the classroom and “how a successful FSL program is run”, specifically requesting concrete examples (23% of all participants). A smaller proportion (i.e., 11%) also retold experiences of FSL teacher evaluations where the school administrator did not understand what was happening in the classroom, and struggled to give an accurate evaluation with concrete details of improvement for the FSL teacher, underlining the need for more focused training on FSL teacher evaluation.

Also frequently recommended was more training on “how to support FSL programming” (19% of participants), including several demands for “practical, relevant support, not theory”; familiarization with the FSL curriculum (10% of participants); and contextualization of FSL curriculum (13% of participants): for example, some requested additional training on FI programming specifically, as well as the new “emphasis on oral language” seen in the most recent curricula (OME, 2013c, 2014b). Several comments (17 unique comments from four participants) were also made specifically with school administrators who do not speak French in mind: Joanne wished for the training to “[help] them understand that you don’t have to have French to support your French teachers, you just have to show that you care and put the money where they need it.”

While the majority of participants recommended the inclusion of FSL-specific content in school administrator training programs, a small minority of participants (6%) indicated that no

changes were needed to accommodate for such programming, explaining that “all curricular subjects require the same amount of attention” and therefore no FSL-specific content should be added unless other subject-specific criteria are also added. Still, the resounding message from these findings is that school administrators want more FSL-specific training.

Overall, given the vast number of recommendations put forth by participating school administrators, it is clear that school administrators have concrete ideas that should be shared with other relevant stakeholders (in this case, the OME and their school board), in order to further support school administrators in their support of FSL teachers.

Summary

A number of key findings emerged from within and across both data sets (closed-ended and open-ended). First, it is clear that school administrators supported their FSL staff in a variety of emotional and physical ways, and that while there are many similarities in how they support their FSL teachers, those having FSL teaching experience or French language skills did result in different types of support offered to FSL teachers. Participants with previous FSL teaching experience believed it to have greatly impacted the support they reportedly provided to their FSL teachers, while those without such experience offered sympathy. School administrators also underlined the benefits of speaking French when trying to understand what is going on in the FSL classrooms in their schools, particularly for teacher evaluations, where having stronger French skills is beneficial. Finally, participants also had specific recommendations for improvements to principal training programs around evaluating and supporting FSL teachers, and more generally in regard to resources and funding. In the next section, these findings will be discussed in further detail to respond to the research questions, and in light of relevant literature in the field.

Chapter 6: Discussion

Following the presentation of the findings, the three research questions originally listed will now be answered, drawing from the findings and relevant literature as necessary. Points of convergence and divergence between the present study's findings and the relevant literature are highlighted.

Research Question 1

The first research question guiding the present study was *How are participating school administrators supporting FSL teachers in their schools?* This study found that, overall, school administrators reported being supportive of their FSL teachers, with an average of 74% responding "yes" to each of the different listed types of support. This aligns with other literature that captures the school administrator's perspective, where school administrators report being supportive of their FSL teachers (Calman, 1988; Milley & Arnott, 2016). This is a positive sign for FSL teachers given the poor support previously documented (Lapkin & Barkaoui, 2008; Lapkin et al., 2006, 2009). Increased support of FSL teachers from their school administrators is also particularly noteworthy given the FSL-support being provided by the OME for school administrators (i.e. CSC, n.d.; OME, 2013a, 2015, 2016), and could imply that the OME's support is successfully transferring to individual school administrators. In fact, some suggestions made by recent OME publications were frequently reported as being a means of providing support in this study: for example, one CSC resource (2014c) encourages school administrators to provide time for collaboration amongst their FSL peers, and to seek out opportunities for professional growth, both of which were in the top five most commonly declared provided supports by participants. Another resource, *A Framework for FSL in Ontario Schools* (OME, 2013a), promotes the development of a shared vision for FSL programs, which was also frequently reported as being a means of support this study's school administrators reportedly provide their FSL teachers. This suggests that these professional documents may have had a positive impact on how school administrators support their FSL teachers.

This positive trend of school administrator support of FSL teachers contrasts empirical research capturing the recipient's perspective (i.e. that of the FSL teacher), where FSL teachers have reported not feeling supported by their school administrator (Richards, 2002), that FSL is not taken seriously (Lapkin et al., 2009), and that they are under-provided certain ES and PS's (Lapkin & Barkaoui, 2008; Lapkin et al., 2006). In light of these findings, a possible disconnect

is present between what school administrators report providing their FSL teachers and what is perceived as being provided, bolstering the cases of such disconnect already empirically reported (Milley & Arnott, 2016).

This study also found that the original Taxonomy, developed to understand instructional leadership in the FSL context, and based in relevant research (CSC, 2014c; Leithwood & McAdie, 2007; Leithwood, 2006; OPC, 2004; The Institute for Education, 2013), needed to be updated as findings pointed to particularities that may be inherent to educational leadership in the FSL context. For example, the PS categories “*Providing time for teacher collaboration*” and “*Providing adequate preparation time for teachers*” were combined in the Updated Taxonomy to reflect that participants indicated they often scheduled the same preparation timeslot for FSL teachers, to allow for teacher collaboration during said prep time. Another example of a necessary change made to the ES of the Taxonomy was the addition of the “*Maintaining individual and group well-being*” category, as school administrators recognized the importance of supporting teachers’ mental health needs, particularly in light of previous research highlighting the negative feelings of exclusion and unimportance FSL teachers report experiencing and the perpetuation of these feelings as a result of school administrators’ actions (e.g. Richards, 2002).

Unfortunately, little research has been done that clearly articulates how school administrators provide instructional leadership in subject-specific contexts (Burch & Spillane, 2003; Fuller & Schrott, 2015; Harvey & Beauchamp, 2005; Theoharis & Brooks, 2012) and no research has captured the use of instructional leadership in FSL, leaving little comparison available for the applicability of the Taxonomy to marginalized subjects (Bleazby, 2015). One of the few examples was that of visual arts: similar to the Taxonomy developed in this study, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (2012) developed a list of practices school administrators could follow to improve their instructional leadership of the visual arts. The majority (11 of the 16) supports listed in this study’s Taxonomy were also mentioned in this publication. For example, the author suggested school administrators ensure “the key components of an effective arts program” (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2012, p. 10) are readily available, “including [...] professional development [and] resources (such as materials)” (2012, p. 10), which aligns with two PS’s in the present study: “*Acquiring and distributing appropriate resources to the appropriate parties*” and “*Offering*

time and opportunities for appropriate professional growth, where possible". While there was significant overlap, there were some of this study's Taxonomy supports not listed in the publication, including "*Buffering teachers from disruption*" and "*Providing instructional guidance*". Likewise, there were supports mentioned in the article that are not present, including reviewing research on best practices in visual arts, and "[marshalling] support from partners" (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2012, p. 10). The fact that there are both similarities and differences in the application of instructional leadership to these marginalized subject areas reinforces the notion that while there may be good instructional leadership practices across all subject areas as shown across non-subject-specific literature (i.e. Leithwood, 2006; The Institute for Education, 2013), instructional leadership may need to be catered to individual subject areas to be as successful as possible (Burch & Spillane, 2003; Fuller & Schrott, 2015; Harvey & Beauchamp, 2005; Spillane, 2005).

This conclusion that specific subject areas may require specific supports is further reinforced when reflecting on the literature originally used to create the Taxonomy for this study: four of the five publications were not subject-specific. While the fifth piece of relevant literature (Curriculum Services Canada, 2014c) was specifically included to help provide the FSL lens, changes were still made to provide additional examples of how school administrators can act as instructional leaders for their FSL teachers. The resulting Taxonomy offers a response to previous calls to understand instructional leadership within the second language context (McAlpine, 2012; Theoharis & Brooks, 2012), in this case being FSL.

Research Question 2

The second research question guiding the present study was *What are the similarities and differences between the administrative practices of school administrators with FSL background knowledge and experience, and those without?* The findings will be discussed first with regards to the impact FSL teaching experience had on the supports reportedly provided, followed by the impact French language skill had on the supports participants indicated providing, and then connections to relevant research that consider both FSL teaching experience and French language skills.

First, the closed-ended survey findings concluded that there were many similarities between FSL teaching backgrounds in terms of how school administrators report supporting their FSL teachers. However, there were two instances where participants who had an FSL teaching

background were significantly more likely to provide certain support, as compared to those without an FSL teaching background: “*Providing instructional support*” and “*Acquiring and distributing resources*”. Participants with an FSL teaching background elaborated on how their FSL teaching experience positively impacted how they support their FSL teachers, whereas those without cited it as a shortcoming.

It is interesting to note that these two Taxonomy categories parallel the supports that FSL teachers report lacking receiving from their school administrators (Lapkin & Barkaoui, 2008; Lapkin et al., 2006). These findings - suggesting that having an FSL teaching background makes a school administrator more likely to provide instructional support and resources - could provide a possible explanation for why a lack of support has been historically reported. Considering these findings, it is possible that resources and instructional support were not being provided because school administrators lacked an FSL teaching background in order to truly understand their importance. The trend of certain supports being more commonly provided by school administrators who have an FSL teaching background could persist, given that FSL teachers are under-represented amongst school administrator-trained Ontario Certified Teachers (i.e., as compared to 12% of the general teaching population (Ontario College of Teachers, 2016b), only 9% of Ontario Certified Teachers who are qualified to be a school administrator are also qualified to teach FSL programs [OCT, personal communication, January 23, 2017]).

In fact, this study contributes to a growing body of literature documenting the disconnect between the support school administrators claim to provide their FSL teachers and what those teachers reportedly receive. Milley and Arnott’s study (2016), for example, sheds light on the divergence between school principals’ and CF teachers’ understandings of the role of the school administrator in FSL. In all three occurrences of divergence between the school administrator’s perspective and the CF teacher’s belief on the school administrator’s role in FSL, the school administrator did not have a CF teaching background. Still, Milley and Arnott’s study also showed other instances of convergence between the school principal and their FSL teacher when the school principal had no CF teaching background. Given the present study’s results and that having an FSL teaching background only impacted two of the supports provided, it is possible that additional factors could be impacting the supports school administrators reportedly provide their FSL teachers, and that school administrators without an FSL teaching background can experience success in supporting their FSL teachers.

In terms of French language skills, closed-ended findings showed that French language skills have an impact on several supports school administrators reportedly provided their FSL teachers in a select number of ways. For example, those with stronger French language skills were more likely to “*Acquire and distribute resources*” and “*Provide instructional support*” than those with weaker French language skills. Unfortunately, there were minimal comments made about the impact that French language skills were thought to have on how participants supported their FSL teachers; those that were made focused primarily on understanding the language used in the classroom.

Older argumentative essays (Guttman, 1983; Olson & Burns, 1983; Safty, 1991, 1992) suggested that school administrators would be unable to provide quality instructional leadership to their FSL teachers if they were unable to communicate in French. As indicated, while this study’s findings suggest that perceived language ability does impact how school administrators support their FSL teachers, it is not to the extreme portrayed by rhetoric used (for example, one author describes the instructional leadership of FSL teachers by school administrators without French language skills as being a “leadership crisis” [Safty, 1992, p. 398]). Instead, these findings provide a portrayal of how language skill might affect the support they reportedly provide, in that school administrators all reported being supportive of their FSL teachers regardless of French language level, but language level does impact some supports they claimed to provide. Open-ended findings also showed that participants felt their French language skills did impact the support they felt they provided their FSL teachers, particularly with regards to comprehending what was being said in the classroom and being able to understand “the whole picture”, which is remarkably similar to other qualitative research (Guttman, 1983) and as reported by the OME (2015a). Research on the leadership of mathematics and science teachers has also noted that school administrators feel their inability to understand what is happening in the classroom hampers the instructional support they are able to provide those teachers (Lochmiller & Acker-Hocevar, 2016), suggesting the feelings of “embarrassment” (as said by one of this study’s participants) may not be exclusive to the leadership of FSL.

Although the importance of being able to speak French was highlighted in previous research (Calman, 1988; Guttman, 1983; Olson & Burns, 1983; Safty, 1991, 1992), these same studies concluded that those without French language skills could still be more successful than their peers with an ability to communicate in French in supporting their FSL teachers, as French

proficiency does not dictate the types of support a school administrator can say they provide. This was echoed by participants in this study, who suggested that while useful, French language skills are not necessary for good instructional leadership.

In considering the broad umbrella of background knowledge and experience (including both FSL teaching experience and French language ability), this study also contributes to the growing body of research around subject-specific knowledge of school administrators and how having (or lacking) such knowledge affects the instructional leadership they provide their teachers. Other (non-FSL) studies have shown that school administrators with subject-specific background knowledge and experience provide more in-depth and frequent instructional leadership than those without (Burch & Spillane, 2003; Fuller & Schrott, 2015; Lochmiller & Acker-Hocevar, 2016). Although background knowledge and experience does occasionally impact the support reportedly provided by school administrators in this study, the overarching conclusion is that this study's participants emphasize being supportive of their FSL teachers regardless of the background knowledge and experience they have with FSL, a deviation from other subject-specific literature. One possible explanation for this divergence could be what is reported in other studies: that school administrators feel they are supportive of their teachers, when in fact that support does not actually manifest (Burch & Spillane, 2003; Spillane, 2005), a divergence that has also been recorded in the FSL context (Milley & Arnott, 2016).

Another explanation could be simply that instructional leadership of FSL is different than other subject areas previously researched (e.g. mathematics, science, and music). In other research (e.g. Beauchamp & Harvey, 2006; Burch & Spillane, 2003; Fuller & Schrott, 2015; Harvey & Beauchamp, 2005; Lochmiller & Acker-Hocevar, 2016), school administrators paint the picture of a distant instructional leader when discussing leadership of subject areas with which they do not have background knowledge or experience, mentioning seeking "alternative ways" to provide instructional leadership "that do not require them to acquire an understanding of the content areas or engage directly with classroom teachers" (Lochmiller & Acker-Hocevar, 2016, p. 283). This approach to instructional leadership is that of that of distributed leadership, as participants draw from their teachers (Beauchamp & Harvey, 2006; Harvey & Beauchamp, 2005) and indicate seeking "outside expertise" (Burch & Spillane, 2003, p. 528) to provide subject leadership, in coordination with the leadership of the school administrator. However, participants in this study appear to follow Stein and Nelson's (2003) concept of "postholing", as

school administrators used their background knowledge and experience in other subject areas to support teachers of a different subject area (in this case FSL). Participants, for example, mentioned drawing from their kindergarten and English as a Second Language teaching backgrounds, where the importance of communicating in the target language is similar to that of FSL, and using that background knowledge and experience to guide the instructional leadership they provide to FSL. While other subject areas succeed with the distributed model of instructional leadership (Beauchamp & Harvey, 2006; Harvey & Beauchamp, 2005), this study's findings suggest that school administrators could succeed in following the "postholing" method in the FSL context as a means to provide subject-specific instructional leadership without having to become an expert in FSL teaching. Seeking out an effective method for school administrators to be able to provide quality subject-specific instructional leadership does appear to be necessary in all subject contexts: as participants in this study talk about their FSL teachers being skeptical of their efforts to provide instructional leadership without background knowledge and experience in FSL, school administrators in other studies have also indicated teachers' rejection of instructional support when they are unfamiliar with the subject area: "[the teachers] don't think I have the credibility to walk into their classroom and offer suggestions. It takes a different approach for me to be able to help them" (Lochmiller & Acker-Hocevar, 2016, p. 284).

Research Question 3

The third research question that was asked was *What suggestions can be made for local and provincial school administrator training and support programs in regards to supporting FSL teachers?* Participants in this study had a number of recommendations: the most frequently mentioned was to improve FSL teacher evaluations, as participants indicate wanting specific "look-fors" (i.e. success criteria) for strong FSL classrooms, and to globally understand what a successful FSL classroom looks like.

These specific requests provide necessary detail to compliment the general requests for additional FSL-specific training for school administrators seen in older research (Guttman, 1983; Olson & Burns, 1983; Safty, 1991, 1992). Historically, calls for additional training for school administrators simply requested that they receive FSL training, but did not provide any details as to what that training should include. In fact, the only specific FSL-related training requests from school administrators were vocalized in Calman's study (1988), where school administrators reported wanting specific criteria to assess their FSL teachers, particularly when the school

administrator was not able to communicate in French. Given this request is decades-old, and that school administrators in the present study also requested concrete “look-fors” and a better understanding of how to assess their FSL teachers, it can be concluded that school administrators still feel the training they have received has not prepared them as much as they would have liked to assess their FSL teachers.

One possible way to facilitate such training on assessment of FSL teachers would be in the PQP, as all school administrators in Ontario are required to complete this course. In reviewing the current and proposed future PQP guidelines (OCT, 2009, 2016a) that all providers must follow, school administrators are vaguely taught how to give feedback, particularly in the interest of improving instruction. School administrators in the present study were not only looking for training on how to give feedback, but also how to assess and understand what success looks like in the FSL classroom. That is, they are looking for the training on providing feedback to go into more detail, towards concrete practices instead of simply theory, and particularly with the FSL context in mind. As course providers continue to develop their curriculum for the PQP Part 1 and Part 2 courses, these school administrator perspectives should be considered in order to ensure that the course continues to support new school administrators who provide leadership for FSL programs.

Beyond the PQP, there are other potential opportunities for school administrators to learn about what successful FSL teaching looks like and how to assess their FSL teachers, primarily in the form of documents and resources put out by the OME (2013a, 2015, 2016) and the CSC “Transforming FSL” initiative (n.d.). Unfortunately, analysis shows that these documents do not yet respond to the requests put forth by participating school administrators, as they simply provide general direction for FSL programs, and offer guidance with regards to special education students and English language learners. While they are certainly still useful (as demonstrated in response to the first research question), they are not able to supply school administrators with the concrete information they seem to be seeking about how to assess their FSL teachers.

Two additional documents that would respond to the participants’ requests have been created by the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT). The first, entitled “Leadership for Successful FSL Programs” (2016), includes six folios specifically directed at school administrators in the interest of summarizing “key points of best practices in teaching and learning from research and literature related to FSL programs” (p. 2). The fifth folio, “Assessing

for Learning”, responds directly to current and past school administrators’ calls for “look-fors” in a successful FSL program, providing guiding questions school administrators can use to engage with their FSL teachers in the interest of supporting their instructional practice. Additionally, CASLT (2004) published a list of “look fors” that administrators can use to provide feedback to the FSL teacher, which responds directly to what participating school administrators requested. Unfortunately, neither resource is publicly available, but it can be purchased from CASLT’s website.

Based on these documents and research findings showing that the request for specific criteria on which to assess and provide instructional guidance to FSL teachers has been repeated for decades, the OME should consider developing a similar resource to the above-mentioned CASLT resources that would be publicly available for school administrators, particularly for those who do not speak French and struggle to comprehend what is being said in the FSL classroom.

It is also interesting to note that none of the school administrators’ requests in previous literature (Calman, 1988; Guttman, 1983; Olson & Burns, 1983; Safty, 1991, 1992) or in this study are to include French language instruction in their training. This, coupled with the results of the second research question where school administrators feel that an ability to communicate in French is useful but not necessary, demonstrates that school administrators are compensating for an inability to communicate in French by other means, and that learning French is not necessary to improve one’s instructional leadership in FSL. Therefore, the above-mentioned requests for “look-fors” need not be developed in order to compensate for lack of French skills, but instead with the understanding that school administrators are currently drawing from their existing language repertoires and teaching backgrounds when supporting their FSL teachers.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This section is comprised of the limitations of the study and the implications of the findings for administrators, other stakeholders (i.e. FSL teachers, parents, other teachers, and providers of training of school administrators), as well as for both theory and research in the area of FSL leadership in Ontario public schools.

Limitations

While piloting the online questionnaire, collaborating with a local school board, and reviewing participants' comments, three limitations emerged that potentially impacted the findings of this study. All are detailed below.

Anonymity of online questionnaire participants. In the interest of preserving the anonymity of online questionnaire participants, those who were interested in participating in the interview were directed to a link where they could submit their contact information to schedule an interview. As a result of the separation between the online questionnaire results and the expression of interest to participate in the interview, none of the online questionnaire results could be linked with the interview participants. While the decision to have participants indicate interest in participating in an interview through the use of a second link was made with participants' anonymity in mind, this unknowingly limited the potential of the interview data to expand on the online questionnaire data, as it was impossible to link the two together. Future research should consider linking online questionnaire data with interview data, in the interest of the possible expansion of ideas and themes (found in the online questionnaire) through the interview.

Differences between elementary and secondary school structures. The present study did not ask participants to indicate if they worked in an elementary or secondary school environment, as it was not a central objective of the study to compare these contexts. Therefore, it is impossible to determine if this impacted the results. Still, based on the feedback of the retired school administrator who piloted the online questionnaire, it would seem that gathering this demographic information may have provided further insight into factors that affect how school administrators support their FSL teachers in both contexts, and could have potentially revealed any difficulties participants had in responding to the questions. For example, the retired school administrator who piloted the online questionnaire indicated the challenges that secondary school administrators may have had in participating in the present study. He suggested that in the

secondary school environment, FSL teachers may be grouped with another set of teachers, resulting in a mixed-subject department (e.g. French and Business, or French and English). When the school administrator then provides support it is by department, and in scenarios of mixed-subject departments, there may be a lack of clarity as to what exactly is going to the FSL teachers. Therefore, it may have been difficult for secondary school administrators who participated in this study to indicate how they support their FSL teachers specifically, as they may not be the ones directly supporting them: in this case, support might be provided to the department head, who is then the direct line of support to the FSL teacher, similar to “middle management” structures seen elsewhere (Beauchamp & Harvey, 2006; Harvey & Beauchamp, 2005). Future studies should consider how leadership is distributed in the schools participating in the study (i.e. primarily amongst school administrators, or if other teachers/leaders are involved in instructional leadership) to provide a better background of what practices may be used at different levels; if instructional leadership is present amongst school faculty other than the school administrators, research should include these “middle leaders” (i.e. department or subject leaders) in the investigation of instructional leadership of FSL.

Participant demographics. Unfortunately, the perspective of school administrators without FSL teaching experience is under-represented in the present study. Slightly more than half of the questionnaire participants and three-quarters of the interview participants indicated that they had previously taught an FSL program. This is in stark contrast to the wider population of school administrators in Ontario – as of 2015, only 9% of qualified school administrators in Ontario were also qualified FSL teachers (meaning that a maximum of 9% of school administrators could also have FSL teaching experience) (OCT, personal communication, January 23, 2017). Despite the growing interest in becoming qualified to teach FSL (OCT, 2016b), and the decreasing number of Ontario Certified Teachers also becoming certified school administrators (OCT, 2017b), it is clear that the percentage of participants who responded to the present study with an FSL teaching background is disproportionate to the rest of the province: 41% of the present study’s participants did not have an FSL teaching background, compared to 91% in the rest of the province.

This could have impacted the present study’s findings as the perspective of school administrators without FSL teaching experience may have been underrepresented in the data. There are several possible explanations for the lower proportion of participants without FSL

knowledge or teaching experience who consented to take part in this study, including a generally low level of interest in the study's topic, or a belief that the information they would provide would not significantly contribute to the findings. Another possible explanation for why those without FSL background knowledge or experience would not participate could be the level of vulnerability required for participation. One participant stated:

“I think some [school administrators] feel like the expectation is that they know it all and that they're capable in all areas and so to sit around a table and say, ‘I don't go into my FSL classroom because I have no idea what's going on’ takes a level of vulnerability that I don't know if everybody has.”

As a result of this under-representation of school administrators without FSL teaching experience, it is possible additional perspectives on how to support FSL teachers could have been missed. Additional research should seek representation that is more reflective of the demographics of the larger population, or should continue recruiting participants until data saturation is reached (Creswell, 2013), to ensure all potential perspectives are included.

Implications

These findings present noteworthy implications for the field of FSL education in Canada. Administrators and other relevant stakeholders (like teachers, students, and those in charge of training administrators) will benefit in several ways from the findings of this study. As well, these findings help to advance our theoretical understandings of instructional leadership in the context of FSL in particular and suggest relevant directions for future research.

Administrators. This study's findings concluded that school administrators claim to support their FSL teachers in a variety of ways, both in terms of ES and PS. Administrators will benefit from understanding the different types of ES and PS others say they provide, and what types of support are most commonly lacking, to reflect on how they are supporting their FSL teachers relative to this sample and related literature.

The findings also show that having FSL teaching experience and being able to communicate in French do impact how school administrators support their FSL teachers, and as such offers another opportunity for reflection of those with such background knowledge and experience on how those factors may positively impact how they support their FSL teachers. However, this study also shows that those without such background knowledge and experience are still supportive of their FSL teachers. It is recommended that school administrators without

FSL teaching experience or French language skills seek out opportunities for collaboration with other school administrators in similar situations (following in the recommendations of one OME publication on collaborative inquiry (2014c)), to benefit from understanding how their peers support their FSL teachers. In fact, all school administrators, regardless of FSL teaching experience and French language skill, would benefit from collaboration and reviewing the above-mentioned resources (see Chapter 6, research question 3), to broaden their understanding of supporting FSL teachers.

In the interest of promoting the support of FSL teachers, it is also recommended that school administrators make the effort to connect with their FSL teachers to help bridge this gap of background knowledge and experience as they seek to understand what's happening in FSL classrooms in their school, and to step into the shoes of an FSL teacher, albeit temporarily.

School administrators are also encouraged to seek out opportunities for language learning. Although French would be encouraged, any opportunity to learn a new language gives the learner a chance to understand what it is like to learn a second language. Familiarizing themselves with the language learning process would certainly help in being able to provide empathy to their second language teachers (in this case, their FSL teachers).

Stakeholders. There are also a number of implications for various stakeholders in FSL teaching. First, FSL teachers can now better understand the different ES and PS's that school administrators report that they are providing, and that overall, school administrators are interested in supporting their FSL teachers and value FSL programs. These positive results indicate a possible positive shift away from FSL being the "forgotten cousin" (Milley & Arnott, 2016, p. 12), especially with the OME's renewed focus on FSL (2014b), support of FSL programs, teachers, and school administrators in the form of important publications and resources (CSC, n.d.; OME, 2013a, 2013c, 2014b, 2015, 2016), and overall interest in developing FSL programs (CPF [Ontario], 2017). FSL teachers can also take the Updated Taxonomy (see Table 9) into consideration when reflecting on the support they feel they are receiving, or are not receiving, from their school administrators, to understand how school administrators feel they are supporting their FSL teachers. By reflecting on the perspective of their school administrator, perhaps the gap between what support is reportedly being provided and received can begin to close, and FSL teachers and school administrators could work more effectively towards the common goal of student success in FSL.

Second, both parents and non-FSL teachers could become more aware of exactly what school administrators are doing for their FSL teachers. In the past, both parents and non-FSL teachers have been reported to challenge FSL teachers. Parents, for example, have been reported to diminish the status of the FSL teacher by demonstrating explicitly (i.e. telling their child that French was not important) and implicitly (i.e. a lack of interest in collaborating with the FSL teacher to solve behaviour problems) that French is not a valued subject (Lapkin et al., 2006). Non-FSL teachers have also contested FSL teachers, seeing the introduction of more FSL programs, and therefore more FSL teachers to the school, as a threat to their job (Calman, 1988; Hayday, 2015). Providing both of these groups a better understanding of what exactly school administrators do to support their FSL teachers grounds the belief that FSL is a valued subject that should be supported by all. As the OME would contend (2013a), this could help to develop a community around FSL programs where all stakeholders are involved in the interest of “strengthening FSL” (p. 4).

Third, given that different support is being provided based on the background knowledge and experience of school administrators, there may be implications for school boards as they assign school administrators across their elementary and secondary schools. Similar to Fuller and Schrott’s (2015) suggestion, school boards may want to consider ensuring that school administrators with FSL background knowledge and experience are distributed across all schools instead of being grouped together, to ensure that their expertise is being offered to as many FSL teachers as possible. If that is not possible, Fuller and Schrott (2015) also suggest that school boards identify where there is an absence of FSL background knowledge and experience amongst school administrators, and provide additional FSL-related instructional leadership to that school.

Fourth, these results have implications for stakeholders who provide training for school administrators, both the PQP courses, as well as those who offer optional PD and resources for school administrators (for example, principals’ organizations and Faculties of Education). School administrators in the present study have clearly voiced the need for additional resources and training so that they are better able to support their FSL teachers, demonstrating to the training providers that offering training to school administrators on FSL-related topics is of importance to their practice as school administrators and therefore FSL-related content should be included. Further, participants also vocalized what specific areas of training they need – particularly with

regards to FSL teacher evaluation. Providers of school administrator training should consider these requests when developing curriculum and content for the training and PD opportunities, understanding that there is an interest amongst school administrators to receive such training that is both Ontario and FSL-specific, to compliment what is available outside of these contexts (e.g. McAlpine, 2012; Theoharis & Brooks, 2012).

Theory. As the OME continues to support school administrators in the goal of strengthening FSL, it is important to take the Updated Taxonomy into consideration. Previously, little literature existed that discussed school administrator leadership of FSL teachers and programs, let alone instructional leadership of subject-specific areas, as instructional leadership literature was generalized (Theoharis & Brooks, 2012). With the results of this study, including the Updated Taxonomy, discussions around school administrator support of their FSL teachers in Ontario can become more focused and aligned with school administrators' actual practices. Of note is the inclusion of the "*Maintaining individual and group well-being*" category in the Updated Taxonomy; this category was included due to the high number of participants who indicated efforts to support the well-being of their individual FSL staff members and of their body of FSL teachers as a whole. The recognition of these efforts is particularly important in light of commonly-reported poor working conditions for FSL teachers (Lapkin & Barkaoui, 2008; Lapkin et al., 2006, 2009).

Given the emerging body of literature on the instructional leadership support of specific subject areas (to which this study contributes), and the proven impact that school administrators' background knowledge and experience has on the instructional leadership they provide (as reported this study and in other empirical research [Burch & Spillane, 2003; Fuller & Schrott, 2015; Harvey & Beauchamp, 2005; Spillane, 2005]), there are additional theoretical implications for the theory of leadership informing school administrators' practices. An interesting paradox exists within the literature of subject-specific instructional leadership: "school administrators require some form of content or subject-matter knowledge [...] while scholars and practicing school leaders assert that [they] cannot be subject-matter specialists across all areas" (Theoharis & Brooks, 2012, p. 6). A potential solution is found in reforms in leadership in the United Kingdom: while literature on instructional leadership in North American has focused on the role of the school administrator in providing instructional leadership that is general (Greenfield, 1987; Leithwood, 2006; Rossow, 1990; The Institute for Education, 2013) and subject-specific

(Burch & Spillane, 2003; Curriculum Services Canada, 2014c; Fuller & Schrott, 2015), reforms from the United Kingdom (National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services, 2011) have begun to focus on an opportunity for "leading from the middle" (Harvey & Beauchamp, 2005, p. 52) wherein subject and department leaders take on more of an instructional leadership role from the perspective of a leader with subject-specific knowledge, following under the distributed leadership model (Fuller & Schrott, 2015). Empirical research has begun to document the experiences of distributed instructional leadership from the perspective of the "middle leader" (Beauchamp & Harvey, 2006; Harvey & Beauchamp, 2005) however conclusions about the impact of such instructional leadership on student success has not yet been documented. Despite the obvious response that distributed instructional leadership provides to the call for school administrators to have subject-specific knowledge, it has been critiqued within the Ontario context (Leithwood, 2006). Leithwood (2006) explains that notions of distributed leadership are founded primarily in "philosophical and democratic values than by evidence" (p. 178) and that his own research has concluded that instructional leadership is best provided by one distinct source, instead of across many different sources (per the distributed leadership model) (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). Further, Leithwood contests that actions typically classified as distributed leadership (for example, shared decision making) "should not be confused with leadership [...] otherwise the concept loses all unique meaning and significance" (Leithwood, 2006, p. 179). Leithwood's critique does not specifically address how distributed instructional leadership responds to the need for school administrators to have subject-specific knowledge as it was published before this need was documented. The incorporation of distributed leadership into Ontario school administrators' practices could respond to the subject-specific needs of teachers in the province, and should be investigated.

Research. There are several directions that can be taken for future research in response to these findings and the limitations discussed. First, additional research capturing how school administrators support their FSL teachers should be undertaken, with an interest in recruiting participants without an FSL teaching background as well as those from both the elementary and secondary contexts.

Second, as indicated in Chapter 6, a gap exists between what school administrators reportedly provide their FSL teachers and the support that FSL teachers feel they are receiving from their school administrators. Additional research into this gap (similar to Milley and Arnott's

work [2016]) should be conducted to determine why such a gap exists, and if the school administrator's background knowledge and experience contributes to the gap.

Third, while the present study asked participants what was missing from their training with regards to supporting FSL teachers, and while some of the more common supports reportedly provided aligned with what was suggested in some resources, it did not explicitly investigate the resources and documents that school administrators actually use to better understand how to support their FSL teachers. Determining what resources are being used would help training providers determine the formats in which school administrators commonly access this type of training, as well as which content is regularly being accessed and which is not, to ensure that future training and resource development is successfully accessed by all school administrators. Additional research should also investigate the extent to which providing FSL-specific training to school administrators affects the ES and PS's they provide their FSL teachers, to determine whether or not a lack of FSL-specific training is the reason for which there is a disconnect between the support that is reportedly being provided to, and received by, FSL teachers.

Overall, the present study contributes to the greater understanding of the practices of school administrators as they support their FSL teachers. It moves the perspective from previous literature around what school administrators "should" do (CSC, 2014c; Leithwood & McAdie, 2007; Leithwood, 2006; OPC, 2004; The Institute for Education, 2013) towards a perspective on what school administrators report "actually" doing. This study acts as a stepping stone for further research investigating school administrator support for FSL teachers, and opens the doors for future research to bridge the gap between what support school administrators reportedly provide, and what their FSL teachers reportedly receive.

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Appendix A
Literature used to develop the Taxonomy

As described in Chapter 3, five relevant pieces of literature were consulted in the development of the Taxonomy used for this study. Table A12 provides a more detailed explanation of which pieces of literature included each of the categories selected. Only categories that were included in at least three times across the five pieces of literature were included, with the exception of “Securing funding” and “Providing technologically-relevant resources as needed for 21st century learning.”

Table A12

Literature used to develop the Taxonomy

<u>Type of support</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Teacher working conditions that matter (Leithwood & McAdie, 2007)</u>	<u>The 2005 Willowar family lecture (Leithwood, 2006)</u>	<u>School-level leadership (The Ontario Institute for Education, 2013,)</u>	<u>FSL for school administrators (CSC, 2014c)</u>	<u>The role of the principal (OPC, 2004)</u>
ES	Maintaining high expectations of all teachers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ES	Developing and inspiring a shared sense of direction	✓		✓		✓
ES	Being supportive	✓	✓			✓
ES	Buffering teachers from disruption	✓	✓	✓		
ES	Rewarding teachers for good work	✓	✓	✓		
ES	Providing feedback on teachers' work	✓		✓		✓

<u>Type of support</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Teacher working conditions that matter (Leithwood & McAdie, 2007)</u>	<u>The 2005 Willower family lecture (Leithwood, 2006)</u>	<u>School-level leadership (The Ontario Institute for Education, 2013,)</u>	<u>FSL for school administrators (CSC, 2014c)</u>	<u>The role of the principal (OPC, 2004)</u>
ES	Encouraging and supporting teachers' input in decisions that affect their practice	✓	✓	✓		✓
ES	Modelling appropriate values and practices	✓	✓	✓		✓
ES	Providing instructional guidance	✓	✓	✓		✓
ES	Listening to, and being open to, teachers' suggestions	✓		✓		✓
PS	Securing funding			✓		✓
PS	Acquiring and distributing appropriate resources to the appropriate parties	✓	✓	✓		✓
PS	Providing technologically-relevant resources as needed for 21st century learning	✓				✓
PS	Providing adequate preparation time for teachers		✓	✓		✓
PS	Providing time for teacher collaboration		✓		✓	✓
PS	Offering time and opportunities for appropriate professional growth, where possible	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Appendix B

All supports reportedly provided by participants

Table B13 lists all of the ways in which participating school administrators reported they support their FSL teachers. The supports are organized by theme and sub-theme and combine both online questionnaire and interview results.

Table B13

All supports reportedly provided by participants

<u>Support reportedly provided by participants</u>		<u>Number of participants</u>		
ES	Checking in	4		
	Supporting teachers' work	Classroom management	5	
		Have their back	1	
		Managing parents	4	
	Listen to teachers	Know their needs	1	
		Listening when they need	10	
	Teacher well-being	Mental wellness	4	
		Positive school climate	6	
	Promoting FSL	Showcasing FSL	7	
		Talking in French	9	
		Value the program	1	
	Providing instructional support	Curriculum-related support	8	
		Help manage special education students	1	
	PS	Resources	Getting and giving FSL resources	19
			Help teachers access resources	3
Physical space			10	
Technology			2	
PD		Offering time and opportunities for PD	2	
		Help teachers access human resources	21	
		Help teachers access NTIP	2	
		Help teachers access relevant PD	7	
		Promote leadership opportunities	2	
Funding		Provide relevant PD	10	
		General	6	
		For FSL events	11	
Providing time		For supply teacher coverage	2	
		For preparation	2	
		Release time for PD	10	
	Scheduling FSL teachers together	5		
	For teacher collaboration	1		
Neither ES or PS	Nothing special for FSL	3		

Appendix C

Online Questionnaire

The following is the online questionnaire participants completed. The platform used for the online questionnaire was Survey Monkey. Prior to completing the questionnaire, a letter inviting participants to complete the questionnaire was shown, as well as the consent form. After the questionnaire, participants were thanked for their participation. They were provided a link to schedule a follow-up interview if they were interested.

Part 1: Basic Demographics

The purpose of this section is to gather basic information on all participants.

- 1) I am a _____
 - a. Principal
 - b. Vice principal
 - c. Other (please specify)
- 2) My school board is
 - a. Public
 - b. Catholic
 - c. Other (please specify)
- 3) School board: _____

Part 2a: Physical support of FSL teachers

The purpose of this section is to understand what physical supports you provide your FSL teachers. *For the purpose of this study, physical support is considered to be any physical resources that can be provided to a teacher that could involve either money or time. For example, classroom space, textbooks, or professional development.*

- 1) Please select which physical supports you offer your teachers.
 - a. Securing funding
 - b. Acquiring and distributing resources to the appropriate parties
 - c. Providing technologically-relevant resources as needed for 21st century learning
 - d. Providing adequate preparation time for teachers
 - e. Providing time for teacher collaboration
 - f. Offering time and opportunities for appropriate professional growth, where possible
- 2) If you provide any other physical supports, or would like to elaborate on a physical support you provide, please explain here.

Prompt: The information entered here will not be reported and will not be linked to your subsequent responses. It will be used to decipher more generally the representativeness of the whole sample in relation to the broader context of Ontario.

Part 2b: Emotional support of FSL teachers

The purpose of this section is to understand what emotional supports you provide your teachers. *For the purpose of this study, emotional support is considered to be showing empathy and compassion for another person. For example, providing reassurance, and helping teachers working with difficult parents.*

- 1) Please select which emotional supports you offer your teachers.
 - a. Maintaining high expectations of teachers
 - b. Developing and inspiring a shared sense of direction
 - c. Being supportive
 - d. Buffering teachers from disruption
 - e. Rewarding teachers for good work
 - f. Providing feedback on teachers' work
 - g. Encouraging and supporting teachers' input in decisions that affect their practice
 - h. Modelling appropriate values and practices
 - i. Providing instructional guidance
 - j. Listening to, and being open to, teachers' suggestions
- 2) If you provide any other emotional supports, or would like to elaborate on an emotional support you provide, please explain here.

Part 2c: Other support of FSL teachers

The purpose of this section is to understand how you support your FSL teachers, that may not fit into the classification of "physical" or "emotional" support.

- 1) If you provide any other support to your French teachers, please describe it here.
- 2) If you have any other comments about supporting your FSL teachers, including specific support you provide them, please note that here.

Part 2d: External factors to supporting FSL teachers

The purpose of this section is to understand how factors external to your school affect how you may support your FSL teachers.

- 1) What do external bodies in education do to inform and support how you support your FSL teachers?

Prompt: For example, the external body could be publishing new support documents for administrators, offering conferences about new practices, creating professional development opportunities, or providing reading materials about recent trends. Examples of external governing bodies may include your school board, the Ontario College of Teachers, the Ontario Principals' Council, the Ontario Ministry of Education, the provincial government, and the federal government.
- 2) If you could make any requests to these external governing bodies in education, with regards to helping school principals to support their FSL teachers, what would you recommend?

- 3) What changes, if any, would you like to see made in school principal preparation programs, specific to the support of FSL teachers?

Prompt: For the purpose of this question, school principal preparation programs refer to both the formal Principal Qualification Program as offered by the Ontario College of Teachers, as well as any workshops/seminars/events that principals may attend to continue their training.

Part 3a: French teaching background

The purpose of this section is to gain an understanding of your teaching background with respect to teaching French.

- 1) Length of teaching career (years)
- 2) I have...
 - a. Taught in a French first-language school
 - b. Taught in a French as Second Language program (Core French, Extended French, French Immersion, or Intensive French)
 - c. Both (a) and (b)
 - d. Neither (a) or (b)

Part 3a (continued) (for participants who selected 2a)

- 1) Please indicate how many years you taught in a French first-language school.

Part 3a (continued) (for participants who selected 2b)

- 1) Please indicate how many years you spent teaching the following FSL programs. If you have never taught one of the programs listed, please indicate “NA”.

Prompt: The following definitions may help you answer this question:

Core French: In Ontario, Core French is a basic French class that typically begins in grade 4; one French secondary school credit is required for Core French students. French Immersion: In Ontario, French Immersion typically begins in either grade 1 or kindergarten. In elementary school, between 50% and 100% of instructional time is in French; in secondary school, students must complete 10 credits in French. Extended French: In Ontario, Extended French begins between grade 4 and 7 and is less intensive than French Immersion but more intensive than Core French. In secondary school, students must complete seven credits in French. Intensive French: In Ontario, Intensive French is a subset of the Core French program, where approximately half of the school year focuses solely on learning French while the remainder of the year focuses on English curriculum subjects.

- a. Core French
- b. French Immersion
- c. Extended French
- d. Intensive French

Part 3a (continued) (for participants who selected 2c)

- 1) Please indicate how many years you taught in a French first-language school.

- 2) Please indicate how many years you spent teaching the following FSL programs. If you have never taught one of the programs listed, please indicate “NA”.

Prompt: The following definitions may help you answer this question:

Core French: In Ontario, Core French is a basic French class that typically begins in grade 4; one French secondary school credit is required for Core French students. French Immersion: In Ontario, French Immersion typically begins in either grade 1 or kindergarten. In elementary school, between 50% and 100% of instructional time is in French; in secondary school, students must complete 10 credits in French. Extended French: In Ontario, Extended French begins between grade 4 and 7 and is less intensive than French Immersion but more intensive than Core French. In secondary school, students must complete seven credits in French. Intensive French: In Ontario, Intensive French is a subset of the Core French program, where approximately half of the school year focuses solely on learning French while the remainder of the year focuses on English curriculum subjects.

- a. Core French
- b. French Immersion
- c. Extended French
- d. Intensive French

Part 3b: French language background

The purpose of this section is to understand your current ability to communicate in the French language. For the purpose of this section, “communicate” refers to reading, writing, spoken production, listening, and spoken interaction.

- 1) I...
 - a. Cannot communicate whatsoever in French
Note: If participants selected this response, they skipped Part 3b (continued)
 - b. Can communicate a bit in French
 - c. Can communicate well in French

Part 3b (continued): French language background

The purpose of this section is to understand your current ability to communicate in the French language. For the purpose of this section, “communicate” refers to reading, writing, spoken production, listening, and spoken interaction.

- 1) Please describe how you learned to communicate in French.

Instruction: For each of the following 5 language skills, please select the prompt that best reflects your current level of French for that skill. Please only select the statement if you agree with all/the majority of the prompt.

- 2) Spoken production
 - a. I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.

- b. I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.
 - c. I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.
 - d. I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
 - e. I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.
 - f. I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
 - g. None of the above: I cannot speak French at all.
- 3) Listening
- a. I can recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate and concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly
 - b. I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements
 - c. I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.
 - d. I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.
 - e. I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.
 - f. I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
 - g. None of the above: I cannot understand any spoken French.
- 4) Reading
- a. I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogs.

- b. I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.
 - c. I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.
 - d. I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.
 - e. I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialized articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.
 - f. I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialized articles and literary works.
 - g. None of the above: I cannot read in French.
- 5) Writing
- a. I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.
 - b. I can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate needs. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.
 - c. I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.
 - d. I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.
 - e. I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select style appropriate to the reader in mind.
 - f. I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.
 - g. None of the above: I cannot write in French.
- 6) Spoken interaction
- a. I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.

- b. I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.
- c. I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).
- d. I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.
- e. I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.
- f. I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.
- g. None of the above: I cannot interact at all with a French speaker.

Part 3c: Influence of background knowledge and experience on support

- 1) How do you think your previous FSL teaching experience and/or ability to communicate in French affects how you support your FSL teachers?

Part 4: Background as a school administrator

The purpose of this section is to gather more in-depth information on your background as a school administrator.

- 1) Length of experience as a vice-principal
- 2) Length of experience as a school principal (not including time as a vice-principal)

Instruction: For the next questions, the following definitions may be of assistance.

Core French: In Ontario, Core French is a basic French class that typically begins in grade 4; one French secondary school credit is required for Core French students.

French Immersion: In Ontario, French Immersion typically begins in either grade 1 or kindergarten. In elementary school, between 50% and 100% of instructional time is in French; in secondary school, students must complete 10 credits in French.

Extended French: In Ontario, Extended French begins between grade 4 and 7 and is less intensive than French Immersion but more intensive than Core French. In secondary school,

students must complete seven credits in French.

Intensive French: In Ontario, Intensive French is a subset of the Core French program, where approximately half of the school year focuses solely on learning French while the remainder of the year focuses on English curriculum subjects.

- 3) Please indicate how many years you have been a school administrator where the following programs were offered at your school

Prompt: If you have never been a principal where a listed program was offered, please indicate "NA".

- a. # of years with Core French
 - b. # of years with French Immersion
 - c. # of years with Extended French
 - d. # of years with Intensive French
- 4) If you have ever been a school administrator where there was a French Immersion program offered, please select which kind of French Immersion.

Prompt: Please select all that apply.

- a. I have never been a school administrator where there was a French Immersion program.
- b. Early immersion (typically beginning in SK or grade 1)
- c. Middle immersion (typically beginning around grade 4)
- d. Late immersion (typically beginning around grade 7)

Appendix D

Interview Protocol

The following is the interview protocol used to conduct semi-structured interviews. Prior to the interview, participants were briefed on the nature of the study. They also reviewed and signed the consent form.

- 1) Prior to becoming a school principal, what was your teaching background?
- 2) Describe how you support your FSL teachers in terms of:
 - a. Emotional supports
 - i. *Possible Prompt:* Emotional support is considered to be showing empathy and compassion for another person. For example, providing reassurance, and helping teachers working with difficult parents.
 - b. Physical supports
 - i. *Possible Prompt:* Physical support is considered to be any physical resources that can be provided to a teacher that could involve either money or time. For example, classroom space, textbooks, or professional development.
- 3) Do you support your FSL teachers in any other ways?
- 4) Thinking of your own French language skills, including reading, writing, speaking, listening, and having a conversation, can you tell me how you think your skills affect how you support your FSL teachers?
 - a. *Possible prompt:* In general, how do you think a school principal's ability to communicate in French affects how they support their FSL teachers?
- 5) In general, how do you think a school principal's previous FSL teaching background affects how they support their FSL teachers?
 - a. *Possible prompt:* If you have previous FSL teaching experience, how do you think it affects how you support your teachers? If you do not, how do you think that affects how you support your FSL teachers?
- 6) Previous research suggests that school principals who do not speak French feel unable to adequately support their FSL teachers. Do you agree or disagree with this finding? Why?
- 7) Previous research suggests that few FSL teachers move into leadership positions, therefore few school principals have previous FSL teaching experience.

- a. Have you seen this trend in your experience as a principal?
 - b. What do you think about this trend?
- 8) Please describe the training, both formal and informal, that prepared you for your role as a school principal.
- a. Was any of your training explicitly related to supporting FSL teachers?
 - i. If so, tell me about this training.
 - ii. If not, do you feel that the training you did receive prepared you to support your FSL teachers? Explain why or why not.
- 9) Do you know of any resources that principals use to better understand and support their FSL teachers? If so, what are they? Which resources do you primarily use?
- 10) What changes, if any, would you like to see in school principal preparation programs specific to the support of FSL teachers?
- 11) If you could speak directly to your school board, the Ontario College of Teachers, the Ontario Principals' Council, or the Ontario Ministry of Education, what would you say or recommend in terms of helping school principals to support their FSL teachers?

Appendix E

Codes for open-ended data

During the analysis of the data, open-ended data was grouped and re-grouped by theme, an iterative process terminating once sub-themes could no longer be divided. The following list outlines the themes and their sub-themes of all open-ended data. The primary four themes are listed in order of creation; all sub-themes are ordered in alphabetical order.

- Support of FSL teachers
 - Emotional Support
 - Buffering teachers from disruption
 - Encouraging and supporting teachers' input in decisions that affect their practice
 - Have their back
 - Managing parents
 - High expectations
 - Listen to teachers and be open to suggestions
 - Listening when they need
 - Maintaining individual and group well-being
 - Positive school climate
 - Modelling appropriate values and practices
 - Talking in French
 - Value the program
 - Providing instructional support
 - Curriculum-related
 - Help manage special education students
 - Providing feedback on teachers' work
 - Physical Support
 - Acquiring and distributing resources to the appropriate parties
 - Help teachers access Resources
 - Physical space
 - Technology
 - Offering time and opportunities for PD
 - Help teachers access human resources
 - Help teachers access New Teacher Induction Program
 - Help teachers access relevant PD
 - Promote leadership
 - Provide relevant PD
 - Securing and allotting funding
 - Events

- Occasional teacher coverage
 - Structuring the organization
 - Release time
 - Scheduling
 - Teacher collaboration
 - Why they provide certain supports
- Influence on practice
 - It does
 - Empathy and understanding
 - Empathy with respect to parent demands
 - Instructional guidance
 - Modelling for teachers
 - Optics and credibility
 - Previous FSL teachers
 - Registering parents
 - Resources
 - Role-modelling
 - Teacher performance appraisals
 - Understand context of FSL
 - Understand second language acquisition
 - Value the program
 - It doesn't
 - Those without
 - Difficulty...
 - evaluating FSL teacher
 - not understanding reality of FSL teacher
 - What I do instead
 - Unknown
- Resources for consultation
 - Authors and publishers
 - Board-level
 - CEFR
 - CPF
 - English resources
 - Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario
 - Federal
 - Learning french
 - OME
 - A Framework for FSL
 - Capacity Building series
 - Curriculum docs
 - Edugains
 - Effective Guides

- FSL and English as a Second Language
 - FSL and Special education
 - Growing Success
 - Literacy and Numeracy secretary
 - Transforming FSL
 - Webinars
- OCT
- Ontario Modern Languages Teachers' Association
- OPC
- Other communications
- Other provinces
- Personnel
 - Colleagues
 - Their staff
- Unknown source
- Videos
- Recommendations
 - For school administrator training
 - How to...
 - Evaluate FSL - look-fors
 - Find resources
 - Get in their shoes
 - Help parents
 - Include FSL in school climate
 - Schedule FSL
 - Support FSL teacher
 - No changes needed
 - No FSL-specific training received
 - Structure of PQP
 - What is or are...
 - CEFR
 - Challenges of being an FSL teacher
 - Consequences of actions towards FSL teacher
 - FSL curriculum + other MOE docs
 - Resources for school administrators
 - Resources for teachers
 - Similarities between FSL and English
 - Trends in FSL teaching
 - In-general
 - Board-level
 - Hiring school administrators
 - Hiring teachers

- Math transition
- More board consultants
- Need more support staff
- School administrator language skills
- Special education
- Make FSL a priority
- OME
 - Equity
 - FI structure
 - Make more resources
 - Modifications to curriculum
 - Need more funding
- Personal belief
 - Understand French and English links
 - Unique situation
- Raise awareness
- Redo FSL teacher PD
- School-level
 - Encourage collaboration
 - Expose kids to culture
 - Focus on students
 - Provide a classroom
 - Scheduling