Connecting Parents to the French Program

Making connections with your students' families, both at the beginning and throughout the year, will tie them to your program and provide the support network you need if you feel that French is being threatened in your school. Here are some quick ways to catch your parents' attention:

Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Bring various realia, books, flags, etc., to decorate your conference space if you cannot meet with parents in your classroom.
- Prepare an "assignment" for parents – ask them to post a copy of an irregular verb conjugation somewhere unexpected in their home for the student to find.
- Encourage parents to become involved in an upcoming class project or activity, have a sign-up sheet available (it helps to be specific in what you need).
- Ask for parent e-mail addresses and keep them up-to-date with a mailing or newsletter
- If parents have ties to the francophone community, find out if they would be willing to share their experiences with the class.
- Provide brochures (available from AATF) on why the study of French is valuable.

Incoming Student Orientation

- Present a mini-lesson to give them an idea of what to expect on the first day of class.
- Provide brochures (available from AATF) on why the study of French is valuable.
- Present a video that shows what current students are doing in French class.
- Suggest websites, movies, or other resources that students can use to get familiar with French before the school year begins.

Open House

- Present a mini-lesson giving parents an opportunity to experience learning French.
- Provide a newsletter, calendar of activities, or other welcoming handout for parents to take home.
- Provide brochures (available from AATF) on why the study of French is valuable.
- Bring French pastries, bonbons, pencils or other treats for students and families.

General

- Send out parent letters at the beginning of the school year asking for their support, as well as any specific requests for assistance.
- Maintain a class web page detailing assignments and providing parents and absent students with a means of keeping up with what is going on in class.
- Provide translations of any documents sent home for those parents unable to communicate well in English.
- Create greeting cards for students to take home (Valentine's Day, Mothers' Day, etc.).
- Host a French-themed pot-luck dinner and invite students' families.