

Section 2: Supporting the Teaching and Learning of French

Section 2 provides data regarding the support for the teaching and learning of French (English Program) offered by school divisions. The teaching and learning of French requires school divisions and schools to support the professional learning of teachers and administrators and to also support student learning by creating rich linguistic and cultural learning experiences.

Teaching: It is important to ensure that French is used as the language of instruction and that it is taught using the balanced literacy approach with the integration of Francophone cultures. This pedagogy includes:

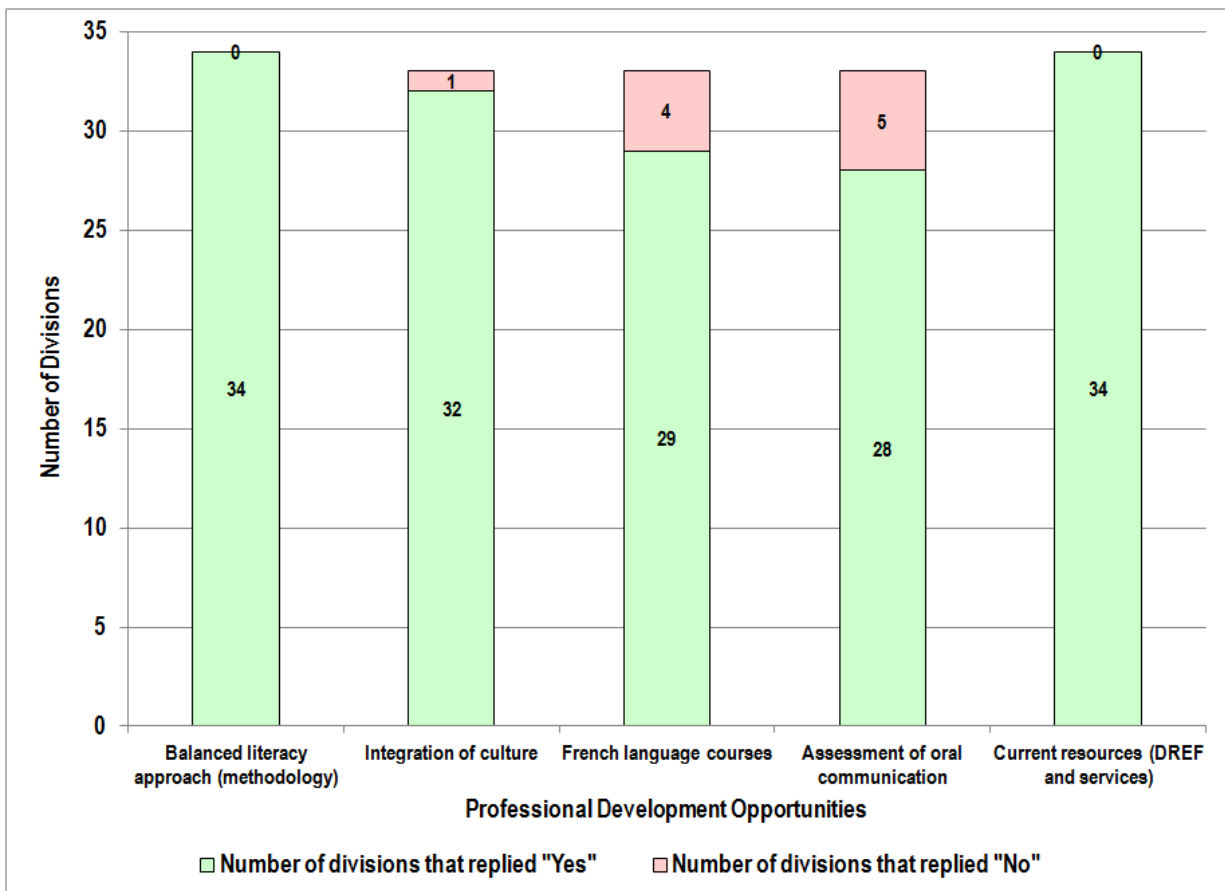
- teachers using balanced literacy (oral communication, reading, writing)
- students and teachers interacting spontaneously in French building fluency, accuracy and confidence
- teachers infusing cultural activities regularly to enrich students' learning experiences
- students discovering the value and benefits of learning another language
- teachers using ongoing formative assessment of students' French language skills

School divisions are asked to consider if the appropriate supports are in place for educators to implement this pedagogy.

Learning: Students acquire the French language through their active participation in various learning situations and contexts inside and outside the classroom. Students should have opportunities that engage them and allow them to improve their language skills, explore Francophone cultures and validate their French language learning experience.

Supporting Professional Learning

7. Are teachers provided with opportunities to participate in professional learning in the following areas:

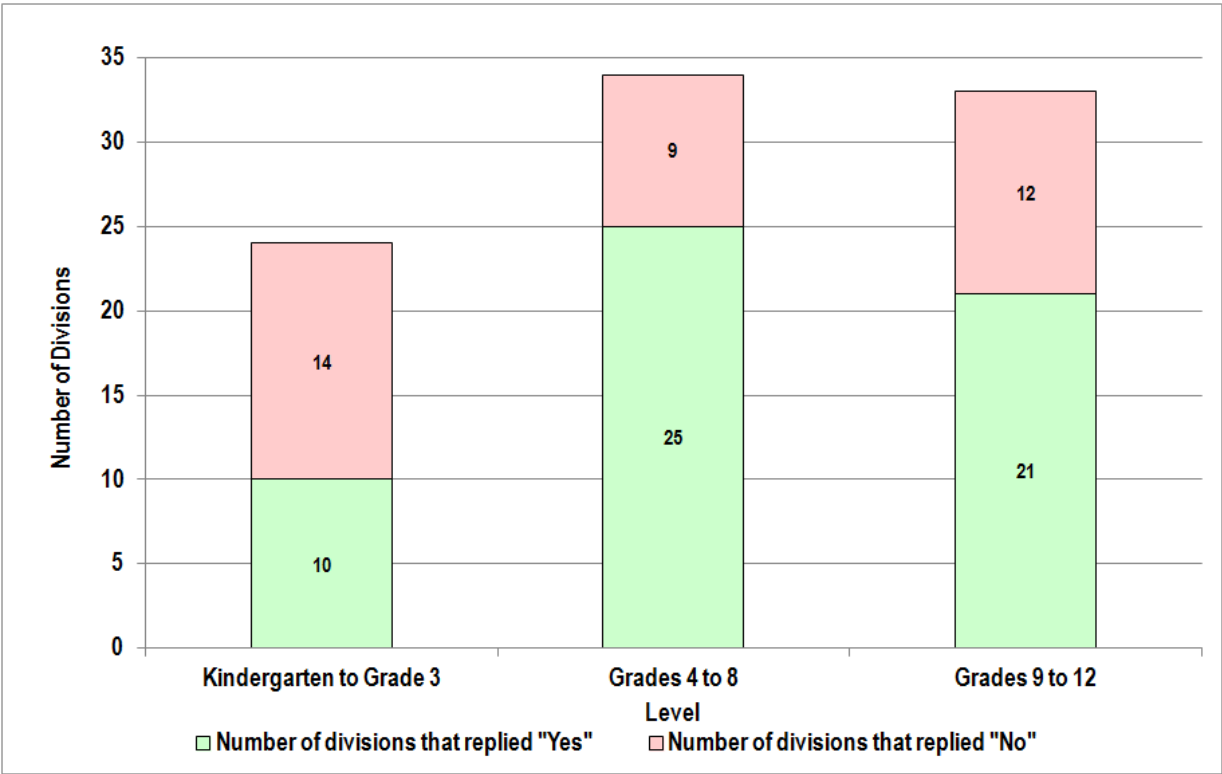


The following is a summary of the responses provided as **optional comments** related to Question 7.

In most school divisions teachers are made aware of professional learning opportunities offered and are encouraged to attend. Most divisions do not offer sessions locally and seek opportunities provincially through the Bureau de l'éducation française (BEF), Université de Saint-Boniface (USB), University of Brandon and Manitoba Teachers Society (MTS) professional learning. The majority of teachers from K-8 are generalists and must make a choice as to their professional learning priorities for the year. This may or may not include French. Funding from the French Second Language Revitalization Program has supported increased professional learning opportunities in some school divisions and divisional coordinators have organized local Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), team meetings and French language courses.

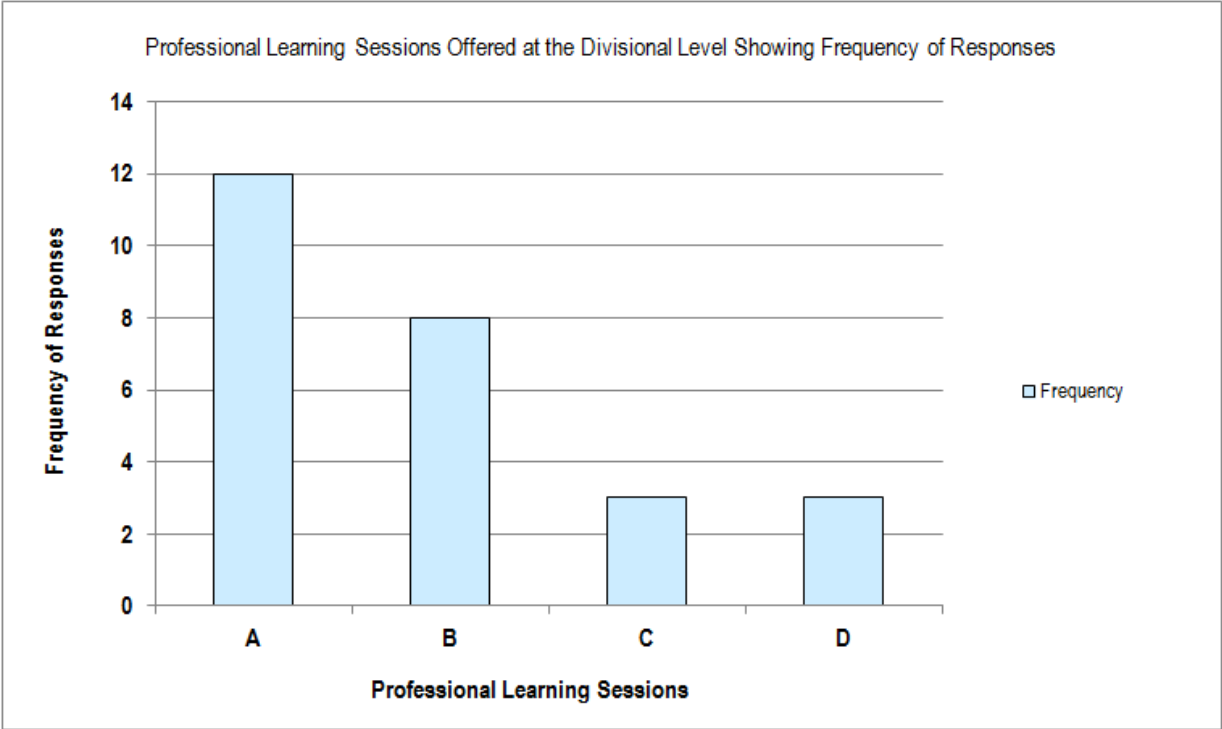
Note: DREF stands for *Direction des ressources éducatives françaises*, the Department's French Language instructional resources branch.

8. Are professional learning sessions for teachers of French courses offered at the divisional level?



Please note that there are fewer schools province wide that offer French from K-3

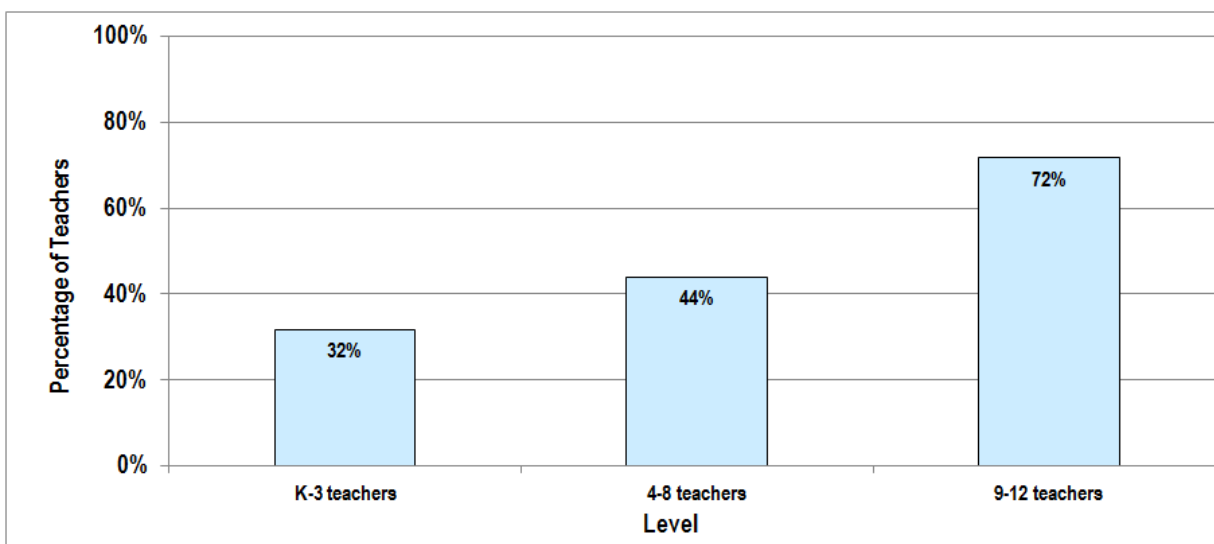
The following chart and summary depict details and examples provided by school divisions who replied “yes”, that they offer professional learning sessions at the divisional level, as per Question 8.



- A - Locally organized professional learning sessions (invited facilitators, BEF, DREF, collaborations between school divisions)
- B - Collaboration with other French teachers (PLC, French team meeting, common prep time, co-teaching, observations, book study, sharing)
- C - French courses for teachers
- D - Individual support from language coordinator upon request

Most school divisions in Manitoba indicated that teacher requests for professional learning for French are supported by the language coordinator or lead teacher. School divisions provide professional learning by offering professional learning sessions, inviting facilitators, coordinating PLCs, organizing co-teaching and classroom observations, offering French classes for teachers, and collaborating with other school divisions. School level initiatives also occur and include common preparation time for planning, team meetings or grade group meetings.

9. During the 2013-2014 school year, how many French teachers have participated in professional learning related to the delivery of French courses?



School divisions were asked to estimate how many French teachers participated in at least one professional learning activity by grade grouping (K-3; 4-8; and 9-12) for the 2013-2014 school year. The intent of this question was to ascertain the degree to which French teachers availed themselves of professional learning opportunities in order to improve teaching practices focussing on student learning. The data indicates that 72% of Grade 9-12 teachers, 44% of Grade 4-8 teachers and 32% of K-3 teachers participated in professional learning.

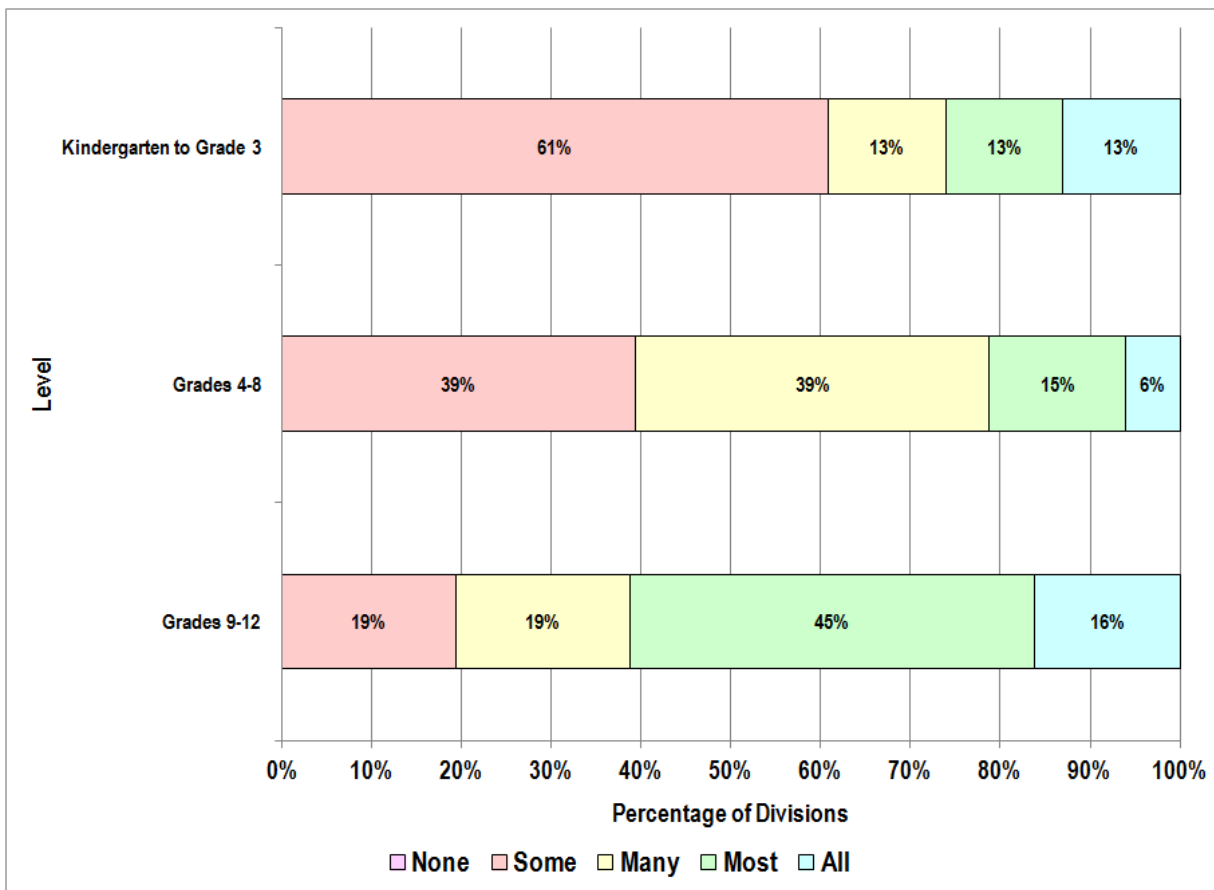
It is important to note that based on a total enrolment of close to 59,000 students in 2013-2014, approximately 20% of these students are in Grades K-3, 71% in Grades 4-8 and 10% in Grades 9-12. Assuming that the distribution of French teachers by grade level is similar to that of enrolments and that the French teacher count is about 1700, this represents approximately the following number of teachers; 331 in K-3, 1192 in 4-8 and 160 in 9-12.

At first glance, this data is concerning as less than 50% of K-8 teachers attended professional learning. To provide a more complete picture though, it is important to consider the proportion of teachers at each level as mentioned above and their teaching responsibilities. A larger percentage of Senior Years teachers attended professional learning (72% representing approx. 115 teachers) and this may be due to the fact that they are specialists and the majority of their teaching assignment and focus is teaching French. In K-3, it is reasonable that this grade grouping shows the lowest participation rate (32% representing approx 106 teachers) in professional learning as French is a course offered by fewer schools and has the lowest intensity of French language instruction time. In Grades 4-8, teachers are generalists and teach most, if not all subject areas and their priorities are divided among all curricular areas. Even though the percentage of teachers at these grades attending PD is relatively low at 44%, it represents a fairly large number of teachers, approximately 524.

An increase in participation of professional learning among Grades K-8 teachers is important to ensure the successful delivery of French courses. This is also important as it has an impact on student achievement and retention of students in the Senior Years.

Enriching the French Language Experience

10. How many teachers create a rich linguistic and cultural environment in their classrooms making French come to life for their students?

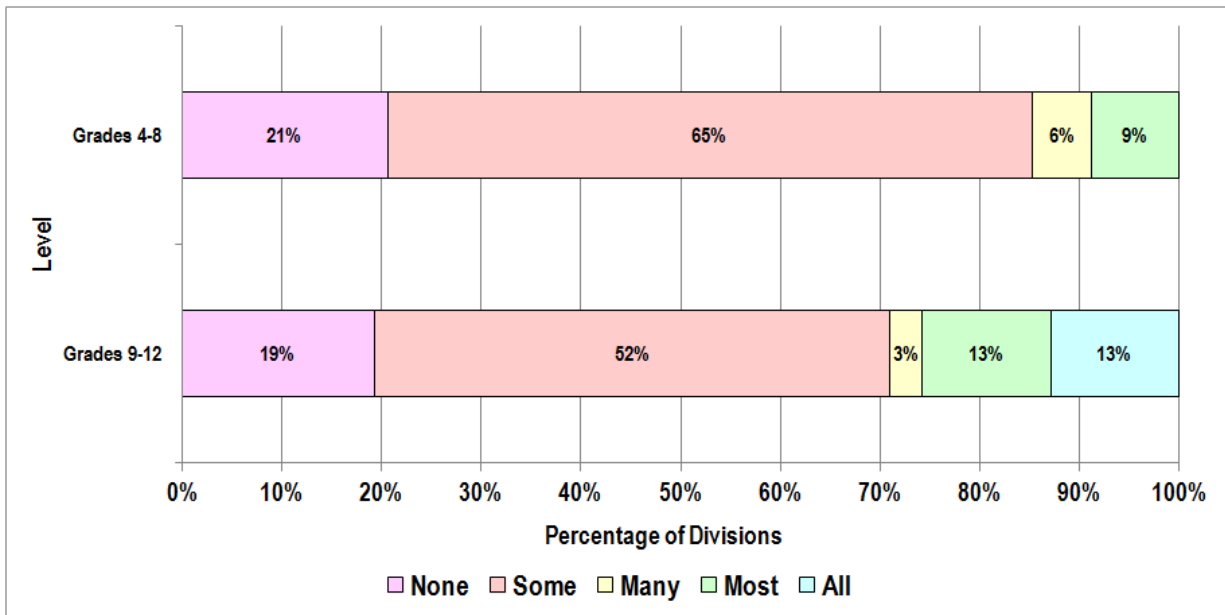


The following is a summary of the responses provided as **optional comments** related to Question 10.

The ability to create a rich linguistic and cultural environment in the classroom, making French come alive for students depends on the teacher's comfort with the French language and culture. In schools where there are specialists and/or teachers who have had appropriate professional learning, students are more likely to experience rich linguistic and cultural learning. At the Senior Years level, the majority of teachers are French language specialists and have the appropriate language skills and training to provide a rich linguistic and cultural environment.

Some school divisions have indicated that more professional learning is needed, with a focus on oral language learning and the integration of culture. Others have indicated that the French Second Language Revitalization Program provides further support to enrich the linguistic and cultural experiences inside and outside the classroom.

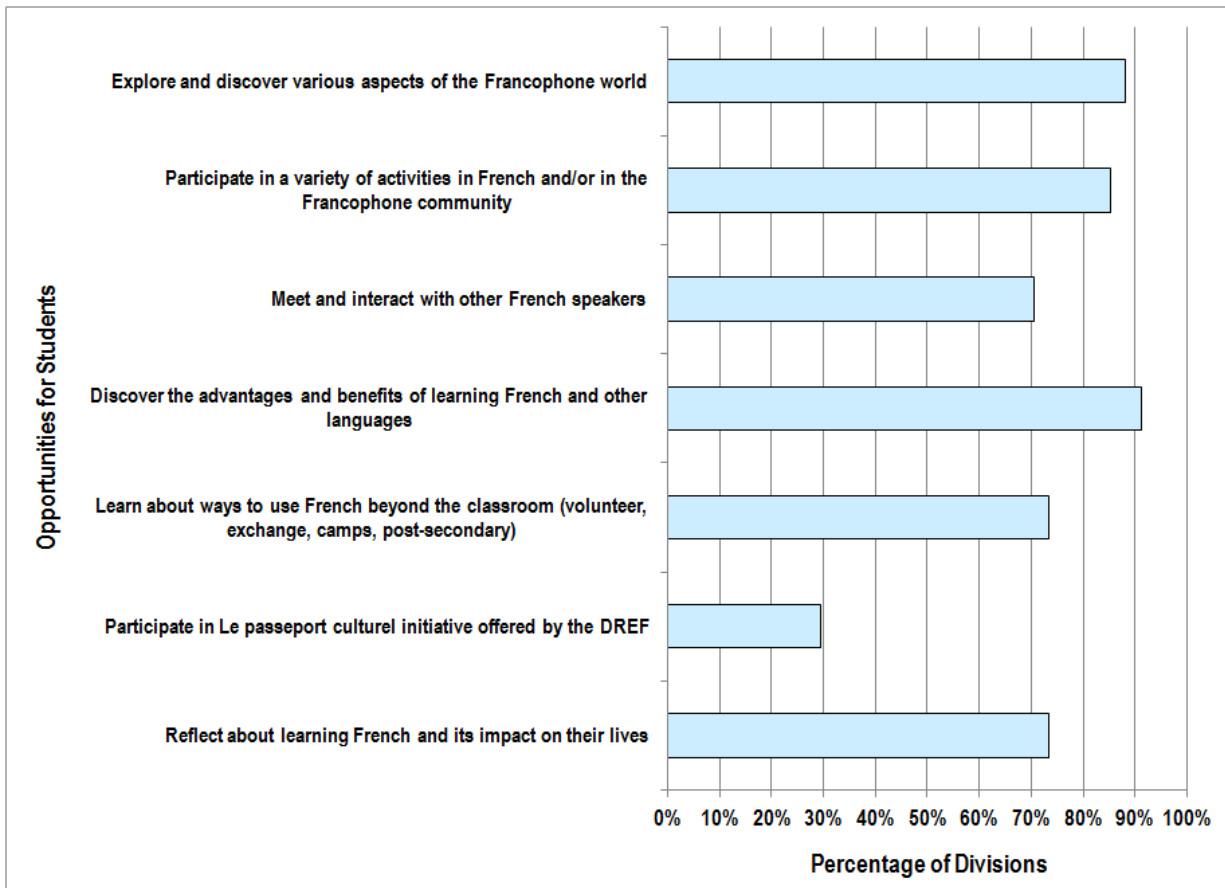
11. How many teachers in your school division are using the BEF's assessment tool for oral communication to assess students' oral skills?



The following is a summary of the responses provided as **optional comments** related to Question 11.

School divisions noted that there is a lot of work to be done in this area. The assessment tool is still relatively new and as the new curriculum framework is implemented, awareness and use of this tool should increase. However, it will take some time before teachers become comfortable using it.

12. Indicate the opportunities provided to engage students, and to enrich and validate their French language learning experience.



The following are examples that demonstrate the opportunities provided to students by school divisions in order to engage them and allow them to improve their language competencies, to explore Francophone cultures and to validate their French language learning experience.

- Field trips – Festival du Voyageur, Radio-Canada, Cercle Molière, Cinémental
- Interactions/discussions/presentations with other French students or speakers (letters, Skype)
- Province wide activities – Concours d’art oratoire, La semaine par excellence, Festival théâtre jeunesse, Festival du conte
- Exchanges/travel – SEVEC
- School based activities: artists to offer presentations and facilitate workshops, school based French film festival, improvisation, activity days, camps
- Classroom activities/projects