



AGENCE DES AFFAIRES FRANCOPHONES

735 Rue Jefferson
Lafayette, LA 70501

tél: (337) 262-5810
fax: (337) 262-5812
sans frais: (800) 259-5810

www.codofil.org

September 5, 2014

The Honorable Bobby Jindal
Governor, State of Louisiana
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9004

Dear Governor Jindal:

I am pleased to submit to you the enclosed Annual Report from the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana dated September 5, 2014. Submission of this report is a requirement of Act No. 679 and sums up "actions taken and progress made toward achieving the purposes and duties established for the council."

Respectfully,

William Arceneaux, Ph.D.
President

Cc: President John A. Alario, Jr.
Speaker Charles Kleckley
Senator Conrad Appel
Representative Stephen F. Carter

ANNUAL REPORT
COUNCIL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRENCH IN LOUISIANA
(CODOFIL)
September 5, 2014

Introduction

The beginning of 2014 was not without challenges following the resignation of the executive director. At the board meeting on March 15, 2014, a new executive director was selected. The following months were intense with the director and a part-time employee maintaining the administration of scholarships (30), the Escadrille program, and the recruitment and orientation (in collaboration with LDOE) of foreign associate teachers (126). Thanks to the State of Louisiana restoring and even increasing funding to CODOFIL, the state agency has been able to increase its staff in order to more adequately and efficiently address the CODOFIL mandates. The following describes the manner in which those mandates have been and continue to be addressed.

I. Consolidation of CODOFIL legislative mandates

By focusing on areas conducive to greater success of goal attainment, these mandates may be carried out in articulated concert. Presently, Avoyelles Parish is the area that has been selected to carry out the CODOFIL mandates with the intent of duplicating best practices that may be considered by other areas/parishes. With CODOFIL, Avoyelles Parish has recently revived their CODOFIL chapter and tasks forces have been set up to address each of these areas:

- French Language Service Act
- Bilingual Signage
- Toponymy (Place names)
- Education
- Youth
- Military
- Health Care

The recently revived Avoyelles CODOFIL Chapter meets now in Mansura every 2nd Thursday of the month. By tapping into the considerable existing francophone resources of this parish, accomplishing these goals/mandates should meet less “resistance.” For example, the Avoyelles CODOFIL chapter is now planning to canvass that area’s state employees who speak French (as per French Languages Services Act, point persons will be designated throughout the parish to identify French service providers). Their process may establish a template that other parishes may be able to use. From there, the mandate of “*Franco-Responsable*” becomes a logical next step where businesses and other entities are catalogued for Francophone resources, which are then “parlayed” to the market place by way of the local cultural economy. In order to enhance this new local French value add, bilingual signage becomes more easily achievable whereby locals continue to enrich this value with more visual elements. Once the community

has created this “new and improved” Louisiana French brand, in order to sustain its economic development, **a linguistically skilled workforce becomes of concern where French Immersion programs then become vital.** Evangeline Parish is targeted for a similar approach as it has already had two “French Camps” and now is in the process of implementing bilingual signage.

CODOFIL efforts are underway to twin Avoyelles parish with ancestral partners, Quebec (Comté Bellechasse) who have recently expressed interest in partnering with Louisiana “extended family.”

Restored State of Louisiana funding will now allow for:

1. Increased capacity for **community outreach** targeting Avoyelles, Evangeline and Lafourche Parishes.
2. Increased coordination of all CODOFIL staff.
3. Increased coordination with all state departments/agencies concerned.
4. Increased exchange and cooperation with “transcultural” family.

II. Louisiana teachers of French

CODOFIL presently recruits, sponsors and monitors 126 Foreign Associate Teachers. Since 1968, Louisiana public school French programs have always been supplied with foreign teachers (primarily from France) due to the lack of Louisiana French teachers. Without the support of our international Francophone partners, Louisiana would not have the excellent programs that exist today. However, it has always been the goal of CODOFIL to develop a corps of Louisiana French teachers and we have never been able to satisfactorily fulfill that need. Three and a half years ago, Escadrille was created to actively develop this corps of Louisiana French teachers with a special scholarship resulting in a Masters in the Art of Teaching with recipients pledging to teach French or teach in French in Louisiana upon completion of their program. While Foreign Associate Teachers have an excellent reputation in Louisiana schools, a considerable number of parishes in Acadiana are very interested in having Louisiana teachers for various reasons. **CODOFIL is now working to upgrade Escadrille for better results (higher numbers of participants and more efficient mainstreaming into the teaching workforce); and establishing more programs such as a domestic Escadrille to increase the numbers.**

III. Twelve percent of products of French Immersion

Louisiana alligator egg harvester-farmers are required by law to return to the marsh 12% of the hatchlings in order to sustain populations and avoid extinction. If 12% of Louisiana students (especially of French Immersion programs) were “placed” in nurturing environments (Louisiana French), they should be allowed to thrive in that environment. **The recent addition of an intern from the *Société Nationale de l'Acadie* will facilitate outreach to youth.**

Recent formalizing of **bilateral agreement between New Brunswick and Louisiana** will allow for more international coordination for these efforts.

In reaching out to youth, CODOFIL is:

1. Implementing a “*Plannification Stratégique Louisiane.*”

2. Devising a method for metrics.
3. Federating youth ages 13-18.
4. Preparing to launch a “12%” publicity campaign.
5. Incorporate 12% philosophy throughout CODOFIL initiatives.
6. Preparing to celebrate the “12%.”

IV. Career paths through French

With the New Orleans Tricentennial coming up in 2018, it is incumbent upon CODOFIL to help French Immersion programs (especially in New Orleans) create school-to-work French career paths in targeted professions such as local tourism, culinary arts, etc. By developing a Louisiana Francophone cultural workforce for tourism, we may finally create a “pipeline” of language specialists for Louisiana tourism. These specially trained workers will eventually need to be incentivized. An additional benefit of developing career paths through French is that the CODOFIL brand is improved in New Orleans.

CODOFIL is collaborating with Lafayette Convention and Visitors Commission (LCVC) to develop phone apps for driving cultural tourism trails in French: Balado. The first two are: 1) historic buildings in Lafayette and 2) Creole history in Lafayette, St. Martin and Iberia Parishes.

In the Lafayette area, CODOFIL is involved with Le Centre International de Lafayette’s International Trade and Development Group and their vision of a “trilingual” high school in Lafayette where French and Spanish are both incorporated in a career-based second and third language program.

CODOFIL has undertaken an **agreement with Club France-Louisiane de Grenoble** where we will be sending musicians to immerse themselves in contemporary “fusion” productions whereby they will return to apply those techniques to young Louisiana Francophone budding musicians with an eye toward composition in Louisiana French for performances. CODOFIL is working with Le Centre International de Lafayette in this effort.

CODOFIL is also **working with “Travel Host,”** a national magazine whose local office has begun French editions with an eye toward inclusion of ***Franco-Responsible*** entities.

Restored and increased state funding will allow CODOFIL to:

1. Ramp up our relations/agreements with international partners (particularly the founders of New Orleans: France and Quebec) to assist us in putting together a **“French for Tourism” program** for the schools.
2. Increase collaboration with Festival International de Louisiane.

V. Louisiana French for military communities

In February of 2014, CODOFIL was contacted by Fort Polk with a request to approach **Vernon Parish** (which serves over 3,000 Fort Polk military family students) about the **possibility of establishing French Immersion** for that community. This resulted in CODOFIL creating a **dialogue** with Fort Polk, Vernon Parish, Barksdale Air Force Base, the Roosevelt Group consulting firm, and the **Louisiana**

National Guard (who subsequently requested to partner with CODOFIL). Vernon Parish School Board will conduct French Immersion site visits in Calcasieu Parish this fall.

Reaction in the Louisiana State Legislature was very positive about this new initiative and a **Resolution** was unanimously adopted urging and requesting **CODOFIL to extend its French Immersion mandate** beyond the 22-parish region of Acadiana and **into Louisiana military communities**. Two institutions of higher learning (LSUA and Centenary) have expressed interest in being part of this articulation. With the assistance of CODOFIL, **LSUA has added a French component to their Early College Academy**, which serves Avoyelles Parish high school students. Also, LSUA recently revived its ROTC program with a nod to French for the military. Once again, **Avoyelles Parish becomes the staging ground for CODOFIL initiatives and mandates**. (LSUA is looking at Evangeline Parish to offer a similar Early College Academy program.)

Sen. Mary Landrieu's office is interested in having Louisiana French leveraged for energy and security interests, especially in Africa. Landrieu's former Military and Foreign Affairs staff person, Mark Tiner (now Energy and Natural Resources), is **working with CODOFIL** on this initiative. Mr. Tiner has recognized that "investment will ultimately be necessary." (CODOFIL will ultimately require additional resources to be able to adequately serve these populations as they are non-traditional (transitional) and there is also a request for the establishment of French language programs for active military personnel.)

As part of their interest in partnering with CODOFIL, the Louisiana National Guard (LANG) will be seeking a nation partner in Africa. We expect to leverage this **new field of Louisiana French activity for inclusion in the *Organisation internationale de la francophonie***.

VI. Scholarships

CODOFIL, with our partners, offers an average of 30 scholarships per year. Some of these scholarships are for specific experiences, but most are not. As CODOFIL is now focusing more on professional paths through French (tourism, military, etc.), it is incumbent upon us to reassess our scholarship program with an eye toward professionalization. Discussions are underway for the **re-establishment of a bourse with the *Centre Linguistique du Collège de Jonquière (Québec)***. The executive director will meet with this college in September. CODOFIL will be proposing changes/additions to international accords up for renewal; publicizing the new career-orientated scholarships; and exploring ways to reciprocate more with international partners.

VII. *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)*

The *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF) regroups most of the Francophone nations around the world. While Louisiana is not a nation and therefore cannot be considered as a member of this prestigious organization, we do have a privileged status among these nations. Louisiana is regarded internationally as the Francophone "representative" of the United States, and as such, we could have a special place in this group as "member observer." This could be significant. The OIF did have a role to

play in the Poverty Point-UNESCO decision (due in no small part to the involvement of CODOFIL through relations with Ambassador Savadogo). The OIF could provide invaluable international support for future initiatives, especially now with CODOFIL's involvement with the U.S. military and U.S. interests in Africa and the Caribbean. CODOFIL is now working to have a presence at the next "*Sommet de la Francophonie*" (OIF sanctioned assembly) in Dakar, Senegal (29-30 November 2014). CODOFIL is also working to on the possibility of **accords with an African nation** as well as Haiti.

VIII. French in the media

In 2014, the *Centre de la Francophonie des Amériques* will be lending to CODOFIL *Radio-Jeunesse*, a multi-media platform where Louisiana French content will be produced throughout our communities, especially in the school systems. This content could be shared with Louisiana public, community and access television and radio. Also, there is no Louisiana French television channel. The same law that created CODOFIL in 1967 also called for the creation of "Television Louisiane." This has never come about and CODOFIL will work toward the reality of a Louisiana French channel/network.

IX. Goals for fiscal year 2015

1. Consolidate all recent CODOFIL legislative mandates into several clusters of public-private "spheres of activity" for more efficient development of best practices that may be duplicated for the benefit of Louisiana stakeholders at large.
 1. Increase number of Louisiana teachers of French.
 2. Engage youth. Assure that a minimum of 12 % of the products of French Immersion (former students) are actively engaged in "living, working and playing" in French in Louisiana.
 3. Grow career paths through French, especially in tourism.
 4. Develop a program for articulating Louisiana French to military communities.
 5. Increase number of scholarships.
 6. Improve Louisiana's standing with the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*.
 8. Increase presence of Louisiana French in the media