The Council for the Development of French in Louisiana is looking for a new executive director.

As of now, Jean-Robert Frigau, director of CODOFIL's exchange program, is the only employee at the organization's Lafayette office.

His post is only part time, but even without leadership in the office, there is lots to be done, including preparing work visas for French immersion teachers and handling day-to-day operations and phone calls to the office, he said.

The state agency, which is overseen by a 23-member board, was recently placed under the Louisiana Office of Cultural Development's Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. In 2012, CODOFIL lost half its state funds, $100,000, due to legislative budget cuts, prompting the organization to launch a massive campaign to replace the lost funding.

That may be the reality again for 2014, but right now CODOFIL's priority is filling the executive director position left vacant by Joseph Dunn. Dunn, who has been executive director since 2011, recently resigned, CODOFIL board member Barry Ancelet said. His tenure ends July 31. CODOFIL's spokeswoman, Erin Stickney, previously left for a position outside state government.

This week CODOFIL's board is expected to review
credentials for candidates for the executive director post.

“We’ve received a few highly qualified candidates,” Ancelet said Friday. Ancelet is chairman of the board’s search committee.

Fundraising efforts are expected to continue this year with little expectation that lawmakers will renew the agency’s lost funding, Ancelet said.

Private donations covered state money lost in 2012, but the organization will have to continue looking ahead in order to maintain its services that provide educational and cultural programs.

At one time the 45-year-old agency had up to seven employees and was heavily involved in cultural programming for state departments, such as the Office of Tourism and the Department of Transportation and Development. The agency was also instrumental in establishing Festivals Acadiens et Créoles in the 1970s.

From providing scholarships to recruiting French teachers from Francophone countries around the world to teach in state schools, CODOFIL has and continues to spearhead countless endeavors to promote French Louisiana, Ancelet said.

“The list goes on and on,” he said. “But when you have a person and a half, a lot of that can’t happen.”