A committee of the Lafayette Parish School Board is looking into the possibility of implementing compulsory French language courses at the elementary level in the parish public school system.

The committee was appointed by board president George Dupuis to study ways and means of funding French programs, the kinds of programs that could be implemented, and the priority French could take over other subjects already on the curriculum.

The committee was created at the request of James Domengeaux, chairman of the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL). He warned that the French language in this state would “die forever” unless parish school boards take the leadership in initiating French language programs at the elementary level.

Domengeaux reminded board members of the 1968 legislative act which urges school boards throughout Louisiana to implement French programs in their elementary schools “as expeditiously as possible” but not later than the beginning of the 1972-73 school year.

Domengeaux told the board he would see to it that hundreds of teachers from France would be sent to Louisiana to teach French in the state’s public schools. The French government, in cooperation with CODOFIL, would send the teachers, he said.

Lafayette Parish has done “very little” toward implementing French education programs in its schools, Domengeaux said, and he suggested that the school board take steps toward starting the programs.

Board members applauded Domengeaux after his remarks, and they passed a resolution commending him for his leadership in the movement to preserve and expand the French language and culture in Louisiana.