



Special Needs Advisory
Committee (SNAC)

Special Needs Advisory Committee
Lester B. Pearson School Board

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING – MAY 21st, 2014

Held at the Lester B. Pearson School Board, 1925 Brookdale, Dorval Room 219/221

In Attendance: Sandra Buckingham, Jennifer DiMarco, Christopher Fuzessy (Student Services), Brett Hillgartner, Carollynn Jones (PTU), Christine McLean, Douglas Stewart (PASA), Kiley Philp, Robert Gilmartin (IASS), Allison Provost (IASS), Barbara Schnider

Regrets: Marie-Eve Claude, Cindy Finn, Linton Garner (Commissioner), Stephanie Herault (PASA), Robin Keough, Franca Kesic (WIAIH), Daniel Olivenstein (Commissioner), Donnalynn Rainey, Ruth Schwarcz (Professionals), David Szabo

Observers: Shannon Bird Robertson

Recording Secretary: Brett Hillgartner

1.0 Confirmation of Quorum: establish voting rights to Alternate members as required

It was confirmed that quorum had been established and the meeting was called to order by Sandra Buckingham at 7:10pm.

1.1 Appointment of Recording Secretary

The regular recording secretary, Andrew Graham, was unable to attend the meeting. Brett Hillgartner agreed to take the minutes in his absence.

2.0 Additions to Agenda

2.1 Approval of Agenda

Motion: It was moved by Jennifer DiMarco to approve the agenda with the addition of item *8.1 JEM Workshop* (previous item 8.1 becomes 8.2). The motion was seconded by Kiley Philp and unanimously resolved.

3.0 Approval of Minutes of April 23rd, 2014

The minutes were included in the kit. **Motion:** It was moved by Barbara Schnider to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded Jennifer DiMarco, and unanimously resolved.

4.0 Business Arising

4.1 Update: SNAC AGM Posters

At a cost of \$137.97, SNAC printed posters to advertise SNAC and its AGM. Two posters per school will be distributed by Student Services so the posters should be put up at the schools in June and remain there over the summer to inform new parents in September. PDF versions of the posters will be provided to Administrators for their distribution.

4.2 SNAC Chat Newsletter

Minor changes were made to the draft of the June 2014 SNAC Chat Newsletter. A request was made to include SNAC Chat in the June edition of Pearson News. The PASA reps were requested to remind in-school Administrators to include it with their June newsletters. In addition, SNAC Chat will be distributed via the CPC and Parent Committee Network. **Motion:** It was moved by Brett Hillgartner to approve the June 2014 SNAC Chat Newsletter with the updates. The motion was seconded by Allison Provost and unanimously resolved.

4.3 Update: “Student Transportation Policy” Consultation

SNAC has had confirmation that the SNAC response to this consultation has been received.

4.4 Update: LBPSB “Home Schooling Policy” Consultation

Jennifer DiMarco and Kiley Philp will prepare a draft response to the “Home Schooling Policy” Consultation and provide it to the other SNAC members for review in early June. SNAC members will have an email vote on this policy response prior to its June 20th due date.

4.5 Update: LBPSB “Emergency Preparedness Policy” Consultation

There has been no response to the letter sent to Commissioner Doug Flook who was the Chairman of the Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee, on February 3rd, 2014 in which SNAC recommended that all alarmed fire doors be tested during routine fire drills. Sandra Buckingham prepared a Response to Consultation to re-submit the recommendation. **Motion:** It was moved by Jennifer DiMarco to approve the Response to Consultation. The motion was seconded by Kiley Philp and unanimously resolved.

4.6 SNAC 2013-2014 Final Budget Approval

The budget document included in the kit for consideration was incorrect due to the last-minute cancellation of the recording secretary, reducing SNAC’s final budget by \$40.00. Taking the changes into consideration, the final tally of SNAC expenses was \$992.20, leaving SNAC with a remaining \$15.97 to be carried over to September. **Motion:** It was moved by Brett Hillgartner to approve the 2013-2014 SNAC Budget with the updates. The motion was seconded by Jennifer DiMarco and unanimously resolved.

4.7 SNAC Annual Report 2013-2014

Sandra Buckingham is in the process of drafting the SNAC Annual Report for this school year. She provided the Committee with an excerpt entitled “Recommendations for the 2014-2015 SNAC Committee” that outlines some of

the recommended projects for SNAC to consider working on next year. Some committee members provided additional ideas to be included in this part of the Annual Report, including:

- look into ways to re-distribute the IEP kits to parents electronically;
- establish a SNAC presence at January Kindergarten Open Houses;
- suggest that the MELS-MESS Committee, of which C. Fuzessy is a member, hosts evening information sessions for families of students with special needs known to the MESS system who will be coming into the school system the following year.

Sandra Buckingham will include these suggestions in the Annual Report and send the final document to SNAC members once it has been completed. SNAC members will be asked to comment on and approve the Annual Report by email.

4.8 SNAC Constitution Review

The SNAC Constitution was reviewed and updated in consideration of the upcoming November 2nd, 2014 school board elections where there will be a new position introduced: Special Needs Parent Commissioner, and the term for parent commissioners will increase from 1 year to 2 years. It was recommended that SNAC increase its parent membership from 6 to 7 since the new SNAC Parent Commissioner will be very busy and may not be able to actively participate in all SNAC projects. The SNAC Constitution was updated to reflect these changes and at the meeting some formatting was changed in section 10 (Powers and Responsibilities) to clarify SNAC's role as per the Education Act.

Motion: It was moved by Brett Hillgartner to approve the updated SNAC Constitution. The motion was seconded by Barbara Schnider and unanimously resolved.

4.9 SNAC Recommendations to the “School Success Plan”

CPC is working on a project to offer suggested improvements to Administration regarding the template that is used to document every school's Annual Success Plan Update. A subcommittee has been struck to work on this and is requesting input from all parent groups, including SNAC. A draft document of SNAC suggestions was reviewed at the meeting and there was some discussion as to how much information should be collected and if it was a good representation of schools since much of this information should be seen as more of a “snap shot” of the needs at that particular time. Changes to the document were made as a result of this discussion and the suggestion will be sent to CPC.

4.10 Update: June 23rd PED DAY Discussion at the April 28th Council of Commissioners Meeting

At the last Council of Commissioners meeting, a formal Request for Reconsideration of a Decision was put forth and put to a vote as to whether June 23rd should be kept as the last day of school. The result of the close (10 to 9) vote was to keep June 23rd as a school day. Only 48 hours prior to this meeting, Sandra Buckingham was asked by the Chairperson of the Council of Commissioners, Suanne Stein Day, to speak at Caucus and present the different types of planning meetings required for LBPSB staff with regards to Special Needs issues. During Sandra's presentation, she also spoke of SNAC's disappointment to the April 25th PTU Memo which stated that parents are not

supportive of LBPSB teachers. It was clarified that parents of Special Needs children have the utmost respect for their children's teachers and rely on a positive relationship between parent and teacher.

5.0 Reports

5.1 Administration

The administration report was included in the kit. Robert Gilmartin from IASS highlighted the Peace It Together Symposium held of May 16th, stating that it was a terrific event.

5.2 Council of Commissioners

A report from Danny Olivenstein was included in the kit; however Danny was regrettably too ill to attend the meeting. The members of SNAC wish him a speedy recovery.

5.3 Central Parents' Committee

A report from Sandra Buckingham was included in the kit. There were no questions.

5.4 Education Committee

A report from Barbara Schnider was included in the kit.

5.5 P.T.U.

PTU had nothing to report as they did not meet this month.

5.6 P.A.S.A.

Douglas Stewart had nothing to report from PASA.

5.7 Professionals

A report was included in the kit. The report highlighted the Peace It Together Symposium of May 16th and that the last round of technology orders for Special Needs students has been placed for this school year (the funds have now been exhausted). LBPSB staff continues the process of conducting observation visits to daycares and preschools of special needs kids who have registered with the LBPSB for the fall of 2014.

5.8 I.A.S.S.

The IASS report was included in the kit. The issue of the Toileting Guidelines Policy was discussed.

5.9 Treasurer's Report

5.10 Please see Section 4.6 "SNAC 2013-2014 Final Budget Approval".

5.11 Website Administrator's Report

Jennifer DiMarco provided a verbal report about the number of main page hits for last month (432), webcast views (62) and emails (16). One particular email was discussed wherein a parent was requesting information about a situation at Horizons. Christopher Fuzessy offered to have the parent contact him directly so that he could be of assistance.

5.12 Workshops Attended

No workshops were attended since the previous meeting.

6.0 New Business

No new business.

7.0 Correspondence

7.1 INSPIRATIONS Magazine

An article on LBPSB's LIFE (Learning Independence through Functional Education) Program was published on page 29 of INSPIRATIONS Magazine. The article emphasizes how this program transitions older students to independent living.

8.0 Varia

8.1 JEM Workshop

This local Montreal business provides employment opportunities for adults with physical or intellectual disabilities: <http://www.jemworkshop.org>

<http://www.montrealgazette.com/life/Montreal+Diary+Disabled+gain+acceptance+careers+Workshop/9775323/story.html>

8.2 Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation "Caring for Kids Radiothon"

The Radiothon fundraiser will be held this year on Thursday May 29th on CJAD. Our very own Sandra Buckingham and her daughter Stefanie will be speaking around 12pm, so tune in if you can!

8.3 Concordia Arts and Human Development

Kiley to provide the link to this here

9.0 Questions from the Public

The following question was raised by a member of the public: What is a Special Ed Technician? Christopher Fuzessy as well as Allison Provost and Robert Gilmartin of IASS answered the question by explaining that a Special Ed Technician does not have training in education but they do hold a university degree and they can modify and adapt curriculum to the student's needs. More detailed job descriptions can be found on the new IASS website: <http://iass.ca/>.

10.0 Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:18pm: Jennifer DiMarco, seconded by Brett Hillgartner, and unanimously resolved. The meeting was immediately followed by an end-of-year celebration where SNAC members had refreshments and played SNAC Jeopardy.

The next meeting will be the AGM held at 7pm on Wednesday, September 17th, at the School Board (1925 Brookdale, Dorval).