



Special Needs Advisory Committee Lester B. Pearson School Board

MINUTES OF THE MEETING – OCTOBER 1st, 2014

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

In Attendance: Sandra Buckingham, Camelia Burlec (from 7:23pm), Maria Colavita, Romina Costantini, Cindy Finn (DG/SSD), Christopher Fuzessy (Student Services), Colleen Galley (P.A.S.A.), Robert Gilmartin (I.A.S.S.), Brett Hillgartner, Maureen Hunt (P.E.P.), Carollynn Jones (P.T.U.), Franca Kesic (WIAIH), Caroline LeBrun (from 7:21pm), Christine McLean, Kiley Philip, Donnalynn Rainey, and Barbara Schnider.

Regrets: Marie-Eve Claude (Student Services), Jennifer DiMarco.

Recording Secretary: Laurie Kathleen Fox

The meeting was called to order by Brett Hillgartner at 7:06pm.

1.0 Introductions

Members of the SNAC introduced themselves to the committee and related their experiences.

Caroline LeBrun arrived at 7:21pm.

Camelia Burlec arrived at 7:23pm.

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

(SNAC1415-10.1) It was confirmed that quorum had been established and that Romina Costantini was assigned voting rights in Jennifer DiMarco's absence. It was moved by Kiley Philip to approve the Confirmation of Quorum. The motion was seconded by Sandra Buckingham and unanimously resolved.

3.0 Approval of Recording Secretary

(SNAC1415-10.2) A vote was required to establish approval to have Laurie Fox appointed as recording Secretary for the 2014-2015 year. Laurie Fox has volunteered to be Recording Secretary without compensation. It was moved by Kiley Philip to approve nomination of Laurie Fox as Recording Secretary, seconded by Sandra Buckingham, and unanimously approved.

4.0 Additions to Agenda

4.1 Approval of Agenda

(SNAC1415-10.3) It was moved by Romina Costantini to approve the agenda with the items of the agenda changed as the number 4 was used twice. The second number 4 on the agenda become item 5 and so forth. The motion was moved by Romina Costantini, seconded by Sandra Buckingham and unanimously resolved.

5.0 Corrections to the Minutes of May 21st, 2014 [last year]

5.1 Approval of the Minutes of May 21st, 2014

(SNAC1415-10.4) The minutes were included in the kit. As there were no changes to the minutes of the May 21st, 2014 meeting, Barbara Schnider approved the minutes, seconded by Kiley Philip, and consequently, unanimously approved.

6.0 Corrections to Minutes of September 17th, 2014 [AGA and Meeting]

6.1 Approval of Minutes of September 17th, 2014

(SNAC1415-10.5) The minutes were included in the kit with the AGA minutes as the first page of the minutes. It was noted that the name of Romina Costantini was incorrectly spelled (from Constantini→Costantini). **(SNAC1415-10.5)** It was moved by Barbara Schnider to approve the minutes with the proposed change. The motion was seconded by Romina Costantini and unanimously resolved.

7.0 Business Arising

7.1 SNAC Budget Review 2013-2014

A report compiled and drafted by Sandra Buckingham for the 2014-2015 year was included in the kit, showing that \$15.97 of the \$1000.00 budget was remaining from last year's budget. The proposed budget for 2014-2015 uses the allocation of an increased budget of 1500\$. Sandra Buckingham mentioned that she would provide an update every month.

Donnalynn Rainey offered again this year to provide snacks. In the event that she cannot provide snacks, she will pick up some. Sandra Buckingham reiterated the importance of keeping all receipts. She will also be sending everyone an expense form for future expenses should they arise.

8.0 Standing Reports

Brett Hillgartner explained to the members what exactly Standing Reports were. She let the members know that there were three (3) main committees in which SNAC members sat on. These Committees include The Council of Commissioners, the Central Parents' Committee (CPC), and the Education Committee. It was requested that all reports be submitted in advance (*i.e.*, Friday noon before the Wednesday SNAC meeting). In addition, external committees that have members on SNAC (PASA, PTU, IASS, Professionals) were also requested to submit written reports.

8.1 Administration

Cindy Finn would be submitting a report for the next meeting. Cindy emphasized that September 30th was the School Board Enrollment Day whereby the total numbers of students were officially counted, necessary for the determination of funding.

8.2 Council of Commissioners

Sandra Buckingham informed the committee that the Council of Commissioners had been dissolved due to the upcoming November 2nd elections. The next meeting of the Council of Commissioners will take place at the end of November.

8.3 Central Parents' Committee

Two reports were included in the kit: one for the meeting held September 4th, 2014, and one for the June 5th meeting. AGM. October 1st was the last day of the CPC mandate. For the September meeting, much discussion revolved around the anticipated School Board budget cuts.

The AGM on will take place on October 2nd. Sandra Buckingham gave a brief description of the committee. She also mentioned that in the September meeting, it was discussed that the CPC will be holding a Leaders' Debate for those individuals running for Chairperson of the Lester B. Pearson School Board. She also explained that she would be speaking about SNAC at the CPC during the AGM.

8.4 Education Committee

Barbara Schnider explained that there would be no new meetings at the Education Committee until after the November 2 Election.

8.5 P.T.U.

Carollynn Jones gave a verbal report of the Pearson Teachers' Union (PTU) meeting. She also mentioned that the teachers would be going "Google," meaning that the teachers will be trained on a new Google System.

8.6 P.A.S.A.

Colleen Galley stressed and explained that the Pearson Association of School Administrators (P.A.S.A.) represents all of the school administrators. She also mentioned that there has yet to be a formal meeting at the P.A.S.A., and that she would have a report for the next meeting. She mentioned that that all attestations were in for September 30, and that the IEP Day was taking place on Friday October 3rd, 2014.

8.7 Professionals

Maureen Hunt gave a verbal report to the committee. In the report she spoke about the current contract negotiations underway. She specified that the current

collective agreements will expire at the end of 2015, and that all employment groups are currently contract negotiations.

8.8 I.A.S.S.

Robert Gilmartin gave a verbal report about the last meeting at the Independent Association of Support Staff (IASS). Again, of common apprehension was the proposed budget cuts at the LBPSB.

8.9 Treasurer's Report

The budget was discussed under item 7.1 of the agenda.

8.10 Website Administrator's Report

Due to Jennifer DiMarco's absence, no update was given regarding the SNAC website. Sandra Buckingham will therefore check the website, and subsequently, the website hit and email counts will be forwarded by Brett Hillgartner after the meeting.

8.11 Workshops Attended

Brett Hillgartner explained that SNAC members are often provided funds to attend workshops with the intention of providing a report to the committee to share the knowledge gained at the workshop. A template whereby a member fills in a synopsis of the workshop will be sent out to all the members. Once a member attends a workshop, they are to fill in the template for the others to read.

Maureen Hunt shared with the committee that she did attend a workshop. She will consequently send a written report.

9.0 New Business

9.1 SNAC Annual Report 2014/15: Review Recommendations; Discuss Priority Projects

The report and recommendations were sent out via email. It was emphasized that everything prioritized last year was accomplished.

The recommendations were reviewed and discussed through by Sandra Buckingham. It was agreed that at least 5 priority items be tackled for the upcoming 2014-2015 SNAC year. in brief at the meeting. Potential projects for the year included:

- 1. Increasing SNAC's awareness and visibility as our children need to be supported;**
- 2. Drafting/creation of an SNAC letter to be included in student IEPs;**
- 3. Workshop to review what is an IEP;**
- 4. Support Group Meetings in February through Christopher Fuzessy's project of pairing a SNAC parent with a parent of a Kindergarten, Special Needs child;**

5. Various Consultations.

10.0 Correspondence

10.1 Miriam Foundation & Jean Coutu working together to clear the ASD/ID diagnosis waiting lists:

<http://www.montrealgazette.com/health/Donation+should+help+clear+autism+diagnosis+wait+list+Miriam+Foundation+says/10226178/story.html>

Sandra Buckingham shared an article from the Montreal Gazette whereby Montreal parents who have been waiting up to two years to have their child diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder or an intellectual disability received some encouraging news.

The Miriam Foundation says it intends to clear the waiting lists for children who are awaiting a diagnosis of the disorders.

The foundation will open a diagnostic centre early next year that will allow a team of health-care professionals, including psychologists and speech and language therapists, to diagnose at least 500 children a year. Parents will not have to pay for the diagnosis because the cost will be covered by the foundation.

Some of funds for the diagnostic centre will be covered by a \$5-million donation from the Marcelle and Jean Coutu Foundation.

10.2 WIAIH's Investing Project for the Pat Roberts Centre

Again, Sandra Buckingham shared with the committee an article from a local paper that the West Island Association for the Intellectually Handicapped is looking for partners to raise \$1.7 million dollars to expand the popular Pat Roberts Centre. The expansion will assist in helping new parents and families to the Pierrefonds and Ste-Geneviève area.

10.3 Lac St-Louis CLSC ASD Support Group Seminars

Sandra Buckingham shared the contents of an email in which she received from the Lac St-Louis. In the email, it specified that on every last Thursday of the month, from 7 to 9 pm, there would be free ASD Support Group Seminars. Sandra will be forwarding the link to all Committee members.

10.4 Grade 9 Riverdale High School Students and Monique Polak, Author of the book, Hate Mail

<http://westislandgazette.com/news/story/2014/09/16/riverdale-high-school-students-help-author-shape-her-latest-book/>

Sandra Buckingham shared her last piece of correspondence with the committee by sharing the story about a group of Grade 9 students from Riverdale High School in Pierrefonds-Roxboro and author Monique Polak and how their meeting of minds resulted in the book Hate Mail.

An established author is invited to work with high school students to shape a book from A to Z. This year's predetermined subject was autism and depression.

Polak visited Riverdale seven times over the last academic year reading her chapters and learning and drawing from the students' comments. She read and incorporated their observations into the book. **Hate Mail** is about a boy named Jordie and his cousin Todd. Jordie goes to a West Island high school. When Todd, who has autism, is transferred to the same school, Jordie is mortified because the other students immediately notice Todd is different and begin to pick on him. Jordie retreats instead of standing up for his cousin until Todd's family receive a hate letter. The story was inspired by a story widely reported in the media in August 2013 about a family from Newcastle, Ontario who received a hate letter about their 13-year-old son who has autism.

11.0 Varia

11.1 Cindy Finn provided the Committee with some extra copies of the SNAC IEP Kit.

11.2 Franca Kesic informed the Committee that le Salon de L'Autisme TSA du Québec will take place October 2, 3, 4 at the Cosmodôme de Laval. For more information, please visit, <http://www.salondelautismetsa.com>.

12.0 Questions from the Public

Nil.

13.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm. The next meeting will be held at 7pm on Wednesday October 22nd, 2014 in room 219/221, 1925 Brookdale, Dorval.