 <p>Special Needs Advisory Committee</p> <p>http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/</p> <p>Email: snac@lbpearson.qc.ca</p>	<p>SNAC Report to the Council of Commissioners, Central Parents' and Education Committees</p> <p>From SNAC Meeting April 15, 2015</p> <p>Page 1 of 3</p>
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2015 Budget Consultation: SNAC ratified the email vote to approve the committee's response to the LBPSB Budget Consultation. All recommendations from prior year's Consultations were deemed to be still relevant, with one new addition: to "recommend specialised training to Support Staff personnel (Daycare Staff, recess/lunch supervisors) and to Bus Drivers regarding how to effectively deal with students with special needs". As in prior years, SNAC has once again requested "the receipt of more detailed financial information about the specific breakdown of the allocation of funds for the support of students with special needs", in order to better fulfill the committee's mandate in the Education Act to "to advise the school board on the allocation of financial resources to the services intended for those students."

3 Year Plan of Allocation and Destination of Immovables 2015-2018 Consultation: The committee discussed and approved a Response to this Consultation. SNAC recommends that great care be taken before any decisions are made to re-locate any of the special services or programs offered to students with special needs, such as the LIFE program, REACH program, WOTP programs, and others. SNAC recognizes that change is very challenging for students with special needs, and that relocation of programs that could lead to longer travel times can be very problematic for these students. Thus, SNAC strongly recommends maintaining these programs in the current locations. In addition, SNAC encourages that attention be given to extending physical accessibility to all LBPSB buildings, rather than just a select few, to ensure that all LBPSB buildings can be accessed by all.


Major School Change (MSC) Consultation: SNAC members were informed of the MSC website that is accessible via the LBPSB main page, and were encouraged to join the email list to be advised of updated information that will be shared amongst all stakeholders. SNAC members will be considering what additional information the committee feels it requires in order to make informed recommendations regarding MSC. Some initial questions/concerns regarding the MSC consultation that were raised thus far include:

- a) How do we ensure that services to Special Needs students continue through this process?
- b) How will the transition plans work? If a student changes schools, will their Aide follow them?
- c) Will the board continue its focus on "integration" of Special Needs students?
- d) What are the various programs offered at LBPSB for S.N students, and the costs for each?
- e) How can SNAC play a larger role in the allocation of financial resources, and provide recommendations of priority services for students with Special Needs?

SNAC meeting schedule and AGM 2015-2016: In light of the deadline for Briefs for the Major School Change (MSC) Consultation being October 31, 2015, SNAC has decided to hold an additional meeting this June, to begin the creation of the SNAC Brief this year. In addition, the committee would like to establish and publicise the dates for next year's AGM, and hold 2 meetings prior to the Brief deadline, to enable the community as much opportunity as possible to provide feedback to the committee, and for the committee to complete the Brief. To that end, the meeting dates will be as follows:

- a) SNAC additional meeting: Tuesday, June 2, 2015
- b) SNAC AGM 2015-2016: Wednesday, September 16, 2015 [TBC – pending boardroom availability]
- c) SNAC first meeting 2015-2016: Wednesday, September 30, 2015
- d) SNAC second meeting 2015-2016: Wednesday, October 21, 2015

PTU presentation to SNAC: The Director of Student Services received a request from John Donnelly, President of the Pearson Teachers Union, to make a presentation to SNAC. In light of the current MELS budget compressions, and the current negotiations for the Teachers Collective Agreement, Mr. Donnelly would like to share with SNAC the perspective of the teachers with respect to students with special needs. SNAC has agreed to welcome Mr. Donnelly to the next SNAC meeting. However, the committee has requested that members may ask Mr. Donnelly questions at the end of his presentation.

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Inter-Board Special Needs Meeting: A follow up was provided to the February 22, 2015 meeting of the Special Needs Parent Commissioners and the Executives of the Special Needs Advisory Committees of the Quebec English School Boards (QESEC). The SNAC committee was pleased to be advised that the QESEC letter regarding school board governance from the perspective of parents of students with special needs was hand-delivered by the President of EPCA to Mme. Chantal Beaulieu, Assistant Deputy Minister of English Affairs at MELS, during their meeting on March 21, 2015. Mme Beaulieu commented to the EPCA President that she was delighted to see that the special needs community is working together as one to present a point of view that has been missing. The next QESEC meeting is scheduled for April 19, 2015. SNAC members were asked to provide proposed discussion items to be added to the Agenda.

CPC and lack of representation of parents with Special Needs: The SNAC Chair expressed concern about the lack of representation of concerns from parents with special needs at this year's Central Parents' Committee (CPC). In February, CPC members developed a letter of recommendations on the subject of school board governance to be forwarded to MELS via EPCA. Amongst other items, CPC has recommended that mainstream parent representation be increased within the school board, via an increase in the number of parent members on Governing Boards, as well as an increase in the number of Parent Representatives elected to the Regional Parent Committees. The SNAC representatives to CPC, and Special Needs Parent Commissioner, expressed a similar concern on the behalf of parents of students with special needs, who also feel the need for increased representation on various committees throughout the school board. The SNAC Chair attended the last 2 CPC meetings in March and April to explain the position of S.N parents, but has been unable to illicit the support of CPC in this matter. SNAC members, in particular the SNAC parent members, were very concerned about this. Since SNAC is not a parents committee, and SNAC has only 1 representative at CPC, special needs parents feel that they lack representation within the school board and do not have a place to go to share their concerns and recommendations. As a result, the SNAC members voted to write a letter to the Council of Commissioners outlining this concern, and recommend potential solutions. This letter will be completed in the coming weeks.

Re-Printing IEP Resource Kits: Due to the popularity of the IEP Resource Kits, SNAC is investigating the feasibility of printing additional kits so that they would be available for distribution to new students with Special Needs in the upcoming 2015-2016 school year, as well as to all of the school-level Resource teams. A small amount of SNAC's remaining budget must be reserved for printing flyers for schools to advertise the SNAC AGM in September. However, the committee members agreed and approved to forego all operational costs for the SNAC committee for the rest of the year, including not charging for refreshments at meetings and not holding an end of the year celebration, so that most of the committee's remaining committee funds can be assigned to the printing of more IEP Resource Kits. Printing costs for 500 complete kits will exceed the remaining SNAC budget by approximately \$600 [exact figures TBC], so the committee would like to request that Administration/Council provide these additional funds so that this important project can move forward.

Workshop Reports: "Autism in Motion" Conference: 2 SNAC members attended this conference, and prepared written reports to share with all members. The reports will be posted to the SNAC website shortly: <http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/ExternalReports/page.asp>



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- “Stimulation Jeunesse” is a pilot project for students with special needs that takes place in Valleyfield. Once a week, a group of LBPSB students with special needs from Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary in Vaudreuil and Edgewater Elementary in Pincoirt are bused to Camp Bosco where they practice relaxation and sensory techniques that enhance learning. Feedback has been positive from the LBPSB Special Education Technician and Integration Aide who support these students, and expressed that they feel the program is having a positive effect on the student participants.
- The Montreal Centre for Learning Disabilities (MCLD) is having a Parent Conference on Sunday April 26th, 2015 from 8:00-4:30. For more information:
<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07ea9sz4j083e81c19&llr=hlz9vblab>

Next Meeting: The next SNAC meeting will take place on **Wednesday, May 20, 2015 at 7pm** at the school board, **with a special presentation by John Donnelly, President of the Pearson Teachers Union**. All parents of children with special needs are invited to attend as guests, and may ask questions during the Q&A period.

Respectfully submitted,

Brett Hillgartner, Chairperson, LBPSB Special Needs Advisory Committee 2014-2015
Sandra Buckingham, LBPSB Parent Commissioner for Special Needs 2014-2016