

Special Needs Advisory Committee *Lester B. Pearson School Board*

MINUTES OF THE MEETING – OCTOBER 21ST, 2015

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

In Attendance: Sandra Buckingham, Marie-Eve Claude (S.S.D.), Maria Colavita, Jennifer DiMarco, Laurie Kathleen Fox, Robert Gilmartin (I.A.S.S.), Brett Hillgartner, Maureen Hunt (P.E.P.), Franca Kesic (W.I.A.I.H.), Samantha Marco, Christine McLean, Daniel Olivenstein (Commissioner), Kiley Philp, Kathy Robinson, Barbara Schnider, Arlene Tennant (P.T.U.), and Cheryl Vienneau.

Regrets: Angela Berryman, Mary Ann Davis, Cindy Finn (DG/SSD), Diana Martire (P.A.S.A.), and Donnalynn Rainey.

Recording Secretary: Laurie Kathleen Fox

Observers: Carrie-Ann Houthuys, and Marie Maguigad.

Brett Hillgartner called the meeting to order at 7:08.

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

With Donnalynn Rainey's absence, voting rights were accorded to Maria Colavita. Laurie Fox was given voting rights with Angela Berryman's absence. Barbara Schnider was given the right to vote until Jennifer DiMarco's arrival. (SNAC1516-10.1) It was confirmed that quorum had been established.

2.0 Ratify the email Vote on the Changes to the Constitution

Due to the large turnout at this year's AGM, including the large number of parents who put forth their nominations to be elected as members of the committee, there was a vote to change the SNAC Constitution to increase parent membership. The changes include the addition of 1 Voting member, and 1 Alternate member to the committee. The Constitution was also updated to include the explanation of members' roles and involvement in external committees, and include mention of website duties. Brett informed all members that 11 SNAC members voted in favor of the changes to the SNAC Constitution.

Jennifer DiMarco arrived at 7:11 during this discussion. Voting rights were then given again to Barbara Schnider until Kiley Philp's arrival.

3.0 Additional Parent Positions on SNAC

3.1 Confirm Kiley Philp as a 2-year voting member

With the above ratification to the updated Constitution, Kiley Philp, as a result of the run-off election from the September AGM, was given a 2-year voting position.

3.2 Review Nominations and Election of two additional parent “alternate” positions

The five parents that put their names forward for alternate positions, and were not selected, were contacted to determine if they were still interested in an Alternate position. Two new alternate seats were filled from this group of individuals. Four candidates provided a brief speech to the SNAC members. An election took place, and after the votes were tallied, Kathy Robinson and Cheryl Vienneau were appointed to Alternate positions.

(SNAC1516-10.2) A motion to destroy the ballots was put forth by Jennifer DiMarco, seconded by Robert Gilmartin, and unanimously approved.

MOTION CARRIED by unanimous vote.

4.0 Additions to Agenda

There was a request for the following changes to the Agenda:

- That point 2.0 becomes point 1.0 in order to achieve Quorum.
- That point 5.0 be switched with 6.0.
- That under Section 9, New Business, section 9.4 be added entitled "The Next Meeting Date" be added.
- That the year be changed from 2014 to 2015 on the Agenda under point 6.0.

4.1 Approval of Agenda

(SNAC1516-10.3) A motion to approve the agenda with the aforementioned changes was put forth by Samantha Marco, seconded by Jennifer DiMarco, and unanimously approved.

MOTION CARRIED by unanimous vote.

5.0 Questions from the Public

A member of the public inquired about whether or not she could use SNAC Minutes in a report to her respective school's GB. As Brett mentioned, once minutes are approved by the committee, all minutes are available to whoever requires them via the SNAC website.

6.0 Corrections to the Minutes of September 30th, 2015

6.1 Approval of the Minutes of September 30th, 2015

(SNAC1516-10.4) The minutes were included in the kit. Jennifer DiMarco approved the minutes, seconded by Christine McLean, and consequently, unanimously approved.

MOTION CARRIED by unanimous vote.

7.0 Business Arising

7.1 MSC

Brett Hillgartner asked all members at the last meeting review the MSC brief that was submitted by SNAC last June and possibly establish any new ideas to present prior to the October 31st deadline. Collectively, the committee has reviewed the brief, and is satisfied with its content. Therefore, there will be no additions submitted by SNAC.

7.2 SNAC Email: Updating IEP kits & SNAC pamphlets with stickers

Jennifer DiMarco informed the committee that the labels were printed. These updated email address labels will be applied to 500 new IEP kits. The committee is grateful to the students of the LIFE program who will apply the labels to the kits with the goal to have them ready for distribution to new students receiving IEPs at the next reporting session. Approximately 1350 SNAC pamphlets will also need to be updated with labels listing the new email address. SNAC has requested support from in-school Administrators to communicate the email address change to parents via school newsletters and websites.

Kiley Philp arrived at 7:49 during these discussions. Voting rights are relinquished from Barbara Schnider and given to Kiley Philp.

(SNAC1516-10.5) A motion to approve \$100 towards the labels was first approved by Sandra Buckingham, seconded by Jennifer DiMarco, and unanimously approved. Barbara Schnider volunteered to contact the printer and oversee the updating of the SNAC pamphlets.

***MOTION CARRIED** by unanimous vote.*

7.3 Follow-up: Identification of Special Needs GB Reps

SNAC will be contacting CPC to follow-up on the optional Special Needs parent representative position that was introduced last June in order to determine how many of these positions were established at the GB AGMs in the fall. A special Question and Answer document to clarify the role of this position is under development. This document will be further discussed at the next SNAC meeting on November 18th.

7.4 SNAC Workshop for Parents on IEPs

SNAC would like to host a follow-up to last January's popular IEP workshop that would be presented in a parent-to-parent Q&A format. A sub-committee consisting of Maureen Hunt, Kiley Philp, and Jennifer DiMarco was created to establish the content and format of the workshop, with a target date early in 2016.

7.5 SNAC Workshop on Transitioning from Elementary to High-school

Another potential workshop will be considered later in the year on the topic of "*Transitioning from elementary to high school for special needs students*". However, due to the current teacher negotiations, the organization of this workshop will be tabled until further notice.

7.6 “IEP Frequently Asked Questions” group

This item was previously discussed under Point 7.3.

7.7 Possible SNAC Facebook page

Discussion as to whether or not SNAC should create a Facebook page took place. The creation of a Facebook page will potentially increase awareness; however there are a lot of challenges associated with the idea regarding moderation, content, etc. The primary issue is how to increase awareness of SNAC to the parent population so that SNAC can have a more effective role supporting parents and students with special needs. The idea of creating a Facebook page will be put on hold for the time being.

8.0 Standing Reports

8.1 SNAC Report to CPC, Education, and Council (FYI)

Every month, Brett Hillgartner submits a report to these committees. Discussion as to whether Brett's report or Danny Olivenstein's report should be submitted to the Council of Commissioners was discussed. It was decided that Sandra Buckingham should meet with Suanne Stein Day to clarify the proper procedure for Council.

8.2 Administration

The Administration Report was provided in the kit. Marie-Eve Claude (in Dr. Cindy Finn's absence) reported that on October 14th and 15th, the Lester B. Pearson teachers, administrators and professionals took part in the 7th annual provincial conference on differentiation and inclusion (ALDI). Keynote speakers included Suzy Pepper Rollins who spoke about using acceleration to reach all students, and Adam Finkelstein who spoke about organizing learning spaces. On October 19th, ESD is offering workshops to teachers. The theme is Digital Learning across the curriculum. Sessions are offered in various locations by consultants in ESD in conjunction with teachers from across our system.

8.3 Council of Commissioners

No new report was proved as the next Council of Commissioners meeting will be held on Monday October 26th, 2015.

8.4 Special Needs Parent Commissioner Report

Sandra Buckingham provided a report in the kit. Specifically, Sandra noted that there would be three MSC Town Hall Meetings: November 17th at LCCHS in LaSalle; November 18th at Westwood Jr. in Hudson, and November 19th at JRHS in Pointe Claire.

8.5 Central Parents' Committee

A verbal report was provided by Jennifer DiMarco. Of interest, the new chair of the CPC is Mr. Darren Kotania. The remainder of the executive includes Tom Samolis (Vice Chair); Sandra Buckingham (Treasurer/Parent Commissioner for Special Needs); Mike Nalezcz (Executive - Parent Commissioner/ EPCA Director 2), and Shane Ross, Executive - Member-at-Large. All priority items were tabled for the next meeting.

8.6 Education Committee

Barbara Schinder provided a detailed report in the kit.

8.7 QESEC

No new report was provided as there has been no new meeting.

8.8 Pearson Teachers Union (P.T.U.)

Arlene Tennant provided a verbal report of the P.T.U. She reported that teacher negotiations are still on-going, and also provided an update on recent votes to support a strike mandate. The committee was advised that negotiations with the teacher's union have begun to improve as a result of public pressure from parent groups.

8.9 P.A.S.A

Diana Martire was unable to attend the SNAC meeting, however she reported via email to Brett that Administrators are continuing to work with teachers to ensure a safe environment for students. Interim report cards will be sent out late and with no additional comments from teachers because of their current pressure tactics.

8.10 Professionals

Maureen Hunt verbally reported that the union will support a strike mandate.

8.11 I.A.S.S

Robert Gilmartin gave a verbal report about the last meeting at the I.A.S.S. Similar to the PTU and PEP unions, the committee was advised that negotiations with the teacher's union have begun to improve as a result of public pressure from parent groups. A one-day strike date is set for Wednesday November 4th.

8.12 Treasurer's Report

Due to Donnalynn Rainey's absence, the Treasurer's Report will be tabled for the next meeting.

8.13 Website Administrator's Report

Jennifer DiMarco advised the committee there were 357 hits to the SNAC Website in the two-week period of September 30th to October 21st. Additionally, there were also 22 views of the archived webcasts of previous parent workshops offered by SNAC.

8.14 Workshops Attended

None.

9.0 New Business

9.1 School Board Consultation: Enrollment Criteria (due Nov 27th)

SNAC members were asked to review the School Board Consultation: Enrolment Criteria Policy and SNAC responses to the Consultation from previous years. Any new ideas or

proposals are to be sent to Brett. The due date for the response is November 27th, 2015.

9.2 Request that Dr. Cindy Finn make a presentation to SNAC at our next meeting about Educating Special Needs Students in Quebec.

Once again, Dr. Cindy Finn will be doing her informative presentation on Educating Students with Special Needs in Quebec at our next meeting. Some of the ideas to be discussed include the MELS Coding, definitions, funding, and more. Brett asked all new members to review Dr. Finn's webcast, and any member who has questions could present them to Dr. Finn.

9.3 Inquire about a presentation on LBPSB Budget and how it relates to Special Needs.

An informative presentation revolving around School Board Financing is usually presented by the Assistant Director General of the School Board in the January meeting. The School Board budgeting process, with particular emphasis on funding for students with special needs is usually highlighted. No date for the presentation has been scheduled yet.

9.4. Next Meeting Date

As previously discussed under item 8.4, there will be 3 Town Hall MSC meetings held on November 17th, 18th, and 19th. There is a conflict in the date (November 18th) with the next SNAC meeting date. Discussion as to whether or not to change the date to November 25th transpired. (SNAC1516-10.6) A vote was taken, and 12 members voted to keep the meeting as scheduled for November 18th.

***MOTION CARRIED** by unanimous vote.*

10.0 Correspondence

- November 8th: “All Abilities Expo”: <http://www.expotouteshabiletes.com>
- November 13th: Light a Dream Fundraiser: Casino Night and Auction: <http://www.eventbrite.ca/e/2015-light-a-dream-casino-night-and-auction-tickets-18505647891>
- November 18th: WIAIH sponsored presentation: “What is an Estate, a Will and a Trust”: <http://wiaih.qc.ca/info-session-what-estate-will-and-trust>

11.0 Varia Nil.

12.0 Questions from the Public Nil.

13.0 Adjournment

(SNAC1516-10.7) Upon a motion set by Jennifer DiMarco, then seconded by Robert Gilmartin, the meeting was adjourned at 9:38pm.

The next meeting will be held at 7pm on Wednesday November 18th, 2015 in room 219/221, 1925 Brookdale, Dorval.