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

### **Minutes of the Meeting – November 15, 2017 Held at Lester B. Pearson School Board 1925 Brookdale, Dorval, Room 106/107/108**

**In Attendance:** Angela Berryman, Leeann Blondin, Marie-Hélène David, Jennifer DiMarco, Dr. Cindy Finn, Robert Gilmartin, Christine McLean, Sheila Moody, Danny Olivenstein, Geneviève Raymond, Kathy Robinson, Stephanie Shaffer, Arlene Tennant

**Regrets:** Mei Feng Chen, Maureen Hunt, Franca Kesic, Donnalynn Rainey, Randi Spanier, Brigitte Valois

**No reply:** Annette Banton

**Recording Secretary:** Marie-Hélène David

**Observers:** 4 members of the public

**Jennifer DiMarco** called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm

#### **1.0 Special Presentation by Dr. Cindy Finn on “Educating Students with Special Needs in Quebec”**

Dr. Cindy Finn gave an outstanding and detailed presentation to SNAC on Educating Students with Special Needs in Quebec. It is a presentation that Dr. Finn offers to present annually as it is most informative and helpful to the committee as questions of coding and funding come up often from the parent population.

A snapshot was taken of the special needs statistics as of October 2017 for LBPSB

The total population of students in LBPSB from K-11 in 2017-2018 is **19,717** students

**Total Number of students with special needs in LBPSB is 13.4% (2647 students of 19,717 total students)**

**Within the 13.4%, the breakdown is as follows:**

- **58% (1533 of the 2647) are students considered to be in difficulty** (learning difficulties, mild intellectual impairments, behaviour disorders etc.)
- **42% (1114 of the 2647) are students with a handicapped code** (Students with coding such as Autism, Psychopathological, Language Disorders, Hearing Impairments etc.)

\*more students on IEPs than students coded.

Within her presentation Dr. Finn shared how students are identified.

Provincial policy on special education last updated in 1999, titled “Adapting our schools to the needs of All students” can be found here:

[http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site\\_web/documents/dpse/adaptation\\_serv\\_compl/polite00A.pdf](http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/adaptation_serv_compl/polite00A.pdf)

Focus is on success for all – favoring inclusion (inclusion as a guiding policy)

In Quebec there are different classifications for special needs according to the Ministry.

Students with special needs breaks into one of two categories:

1. Students at risk or in difficulty (learning or behavior – learning difficulty, mild intellectual impairment, behavior disorder)
2. Students with social maladjustments or handicaps – identification and funding different (also depends on the codes)

Every school board must have a policy on students with special needs – and an advisory committee. At LBPSB our policy was last update in 2013 and can be found here:

[http://www.lbpsb.qc.ca/content/policies/Special\\_Needs\\_Policy\\_3\\_5\\_sept2013.pdf](http://www.lbpsb.qc.ca/content/policies/Special_Needs_Policy_3_5_sept2013.pdf)

Note: Children with special needs identification must (by law) have an IEP, but a child without identification can also have an IEP (a school based decision)

Steps for Identification of a student:

1. Student discussed by the resource team. Professionals (psychologists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists etc) will study the reports or the referral for the assessments. Team discussions take place regarding strengths and weaknesses of the student as well as a need for services (aide or techs).
2. The Student Services Department coding team reviews the proposed code or designation. A memo will be sent to the school regarding the student's preliminary identification
3. All declarations to the government have to be done by September 30th. Validation of codes back from the government are by April.

LBPSB has inclusion as a guiding policy, as a philosophy of belonging.

Organization of services for students with special needs are based on:

- students needs (not code)
- school-based services
- changes over time
- teamwork approach (school resource teams)

#### **QUESTIONS from the Committee:**

If you assign a code but the child receives an updated diagnosis that reflects another code that is stronger and more debilitating do you recode the child?

Yes

How legally bound is an IEP?

It is a legal document to show where the difficulties are and what services are in place along with the progress.

Who is responsible to ensure that the IEP is being followed?

The principal

If parents have a complaint regarding the IEP who are they to contact?

In order, first contact the teachers, followed by the resource team, the vice principal then the principal

Are parents involved in the IEP?

Parents are encouraged to be collaborators in the IEP however parents do not have to sign the IEP, nor do they have to agree to the IEP

Can a school strongly encourage a child to be medicated?

No one can mandate medicating your child. They can strongly recommend that you speak to a doctor about it.

What is policy for communication with parents who have a child on an IEP

10 contacts per year (one per month). Contact can be in person, in an email, a phone call, the report card etc.

If everything the IEP is changed does it have to be sent home to the parents.  
Parents should be advised yes, but sent home, not necessarily but it is best practices.  
Parents can request a copy of the IEP at anytime.

## **2.0 Confirmation of Quorum:**

Quorum confirmed (quorum is considered half the voting members as per the internal rules)

## **3.0 Additions to Agenda:**

### **3.1 Approval of Agenda**

MOTION to approve by Geneviève, seconded by Rob  
MOTION carried by unanimous vote

## **4.0 Corrections to Minutes of October 18, 2017**

Correct the spelling of Leeann's name. Instead of listing the names and school's of the general public, simply list how many members of the public.

### **4.1 Approval of Minutes of October 18, 2017**

MOTION to approve by Rob, seconded by Sheila  
MOTION carried by unanimous vote

## **5.0 Questions from the Public**

None

## **6.0 Business Arising**

### **6.1 Rules of Internal Management (Angela)**

Edits: Delete extra period in composition section, delete the word to in code of conduct section. Under programs and services committee add "as a non voting member"

MOTION to approve by Geneviève with edits mentioned, seconded by Angela  
MOTION carried by unanimous vote

### **6.2 SNAC letter re: Cancellation of Mini Day (Jen)**

In the second paragraph the word these will be replaced by "all" .  
MOTION to approve by Christine, seconded by Stephanie  
MOTION carried by unanimous vote

Letter found on the SNAC website here: [http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/SNAC\\_Letters/page.asp](http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/SNAC_Letters/page.asp)

### **6.3 High School Open Houses (Jen and Sheila)**

SNAC was invited to Riverdale's open house. Jen and Sheila represented SNAC and shared a table with the resource staff at Riverdale. Many parents came with questions, there were line ups at different moments in the open house. SNAC passed out IEP resource kits, pamphlets and magnets. It was so very well attended and a wonderful partnership.

Jennifer and Sheila strongly recommend seeing if it is possible to organize something similar with other schools to have a table at their open houses. The elementary open houses are held in January and it would be wonderful to attend. SNAC will mention it at the larger Parents' Committee so it can be brought back by parent representatives. Many SNAC members stepped forward willing to volunteer their time.

#### **6.4 Community Learning Centre Schools (CLC): Community Volunteers Discussion (Sheila)**

A Community Learning Centre (CLC) is a partnership of school and community organizations designed to enhance education services, sports, leisure and recreational activities for its students, families and community at large. Riverdale and Lakeside are CLCs within LBPSB. Sheila was asking if it is possible to have community organizations (perhaps retired teachers) come in and help the students in CLC due to the current lack of specialists.

#### **6.5 Consultation: Evaluation of Student Learning Policy Response Due January 19, 2018**

SNAC has agreed to have a special meeting on Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 pm at the school board. Cindy Finn will see if room 219/221 in student services is available. For members who are not able to attend, it is strongly encouraged they send in questions or comments on the consultation at least a day before.

#### **6.6 Priority List for the 2017-2018 Committee - survey results & formation of subcommittees (Jen)**

Results: Host information event for parents, host parent to parent meeting on IEPs, policy on extracurricular activities, CASP implementation, update the SNAC parent handbook

A subcommittee will be formed in the new year so we can have our first parent to parent event in February or March

## **7.0 Reports**

### **7.1 SNAC Report to Parents' Committee, Programs & Services and Council (Jen DiMarco)**

It was recommended by the programs and services committee to no longer submit this report directly to them.

Full meeting summary report here: <http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/ExternalReports/page.asp>

### **7.2 Administration (Cindy Finn)**

see full report in kit

- Stephanie Stever is the Coordinator of Student Services. Stephanie is taking over the dossiers and responsibilities previously held by Erik Olsthoorn.
- CASP Training for involved teachers took place on October 30<sup>th</sup> , November 1 and 9.
- The Centre of Excellence in Autism Spectrum Disorder held a full day workshop with Sandra Gluth on October 31<sup>st</sup> on the topic of Supporting Literacy Learning for Students with an ASD. Over 120 teachers, professionals and administrators from all over the province participated in the event.
- Currently, SSD coordinates 6 communities of practice to support resource teachers and technicians throughout our system. A new professional learning community to support elementary special education technicians has recently been created and supported by professionals in Student Services. This groups will be known as NEST (network of elementary special education technicians) and will meet several times during the school year. Their first meeting will be held on Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **7.3 Council of Commissioners (Danny Olivenstein)**

see full report in kit

- The new IEP is being implemented at the high school level right through to grade 11. Consultants have created video tutorials and are doing training sessions in the computer labs
- A new curriculum CASP is underway. CASP stands for **C**ompetency based **A**pproach to **S**ocial **P**articipation. Training began in September and 15 elementary schools are involved in this project. It's new to students 6-15 with special needs who have an intellectual impairment in the moderate to severe range. It focuses on life skills and helping students be as autonomous as possible
- The draft consultation document entitled Evaluation of Student Learning Policy dated October 30, 2017 will be distributed to the consultative partners of the Lester B. Pearson School Board during the week of November 1st, 2017, with responses returned to the Secretariat no later than January 19, 2018, for consideration

#### **7.4 Special Needs Parent Commissioner Report (Angela Berryman)**

See full report in kit

Correspondences received from LBPSB parents to Angela

- Concerns regarding receiving IEPS in mid-October; feelings that it should go out sooner to allow parents more time to provide feedback and suggest changes.
- Comments that the IEP should go out with the interim report card.
- Concerns regarding the content of IEPS - parents seeking clarification on “what is normal” with regards to what is listed under various parts of the IEP
- Parents asking for clarification on how to tell if a subject is modified
- parents seeking clarification on what constitutes a home communication as listed on the IEP
- Concerns on if/how they can challenge what is on the IEP
- concerns regarding stigma associated with children receiving special supports and or with a particular diagnosis

#### **7.5 Parents’ Committee (Donnalynn Rainey)**

Meeting summary report can be found here:

[http://parents.lbpsb.qc.ca/Portals/cpctest/PC\\_Meeting\\_Summary\\_Report-20171102.pdf](http://parents.lbpsb.qc.ca/Portals/cpctest/PC_Meeting_Summary_Report-20171102.pdf)

There was also an additional special meeting following the resignation of the Council Chair.

[http://parents.lbpsb.qc.ca/Portals/cpctest/Special\\_PC\\_Meeting\\_Summary\\_Report-20171109.pdf](http://parents.lbpsb.qc.ca/Portals/cpctest/Special_PC_Meeting_Summary_Report-20171109.pdf)

The next meeting will be in December.

#### **7.6 Programs & Services Committee (Geneviève Raymond-Parent )**

It was recommended by the programs and services committee to no longer submit the SNAC MSR report directly to them as has been done in past years.

#### **7.7 P.T.U. (Arlene Tennant)**

If a teacher has a concern about a student how is it taken care of?

Teachers are able to bring concerns about students to the resource meetings. Some students have such meetings once per week, others twice per week. They discuss as a group if a child is to be evaluated and begin the process.

#### **7.8 P.A.S.A. (Brigitte Valois)**

Absent.

Email sent to Chair indicating that high schools are planning something in replacement of mini-day. It will not be the same board wide with ped days. It will be organized locally.

## **7.9 Professionals P.E.P. (Maureen Hunt)**

Absent

## **7.10 I.A.S.S. (Robert Gilmartin)**

October 30 information session for integration aides at Lakeside with Sandra Gluth. AGM will be held next week, presentation by Dr. (Michael Kerr) on safe humor. Elections were held for various committees and Robert was appointed to be the I.A.S.S. representative on SNAC.

## **7.11 Treasurer's Report (Randi Spanier)**

Absent

- Chair submitted an updated spreadsheet in the kit
- \$70 that was earmarked to send two members to the conference was not used
- Committee agreed to spend up to \$40 on snacks for our meetings per month.
- It was recommended for January meeting to have earmarked places to spend our budget so we focus on spending wisely. Angela offered to look into previous years to help guide the spending.

## **7.12 Communication Liaison's Report (Jennifer DiMarco)**

There have been 345 main page hits and 26 webcast hits since our last meeting in October.

- Emails regarding communication with the school about an IEP for a child that has a diagnosis:
  - Can parents provide input into the IEP?
  - Are parents able to request an in person IEP meeting?
  - Are parents able to bring outside professionals currently working with the child into the IEP meeting?
- SNAC was asked if we would ever consider doing a presentation on IEPs at a specific school to put on by the home and school as a parent event.
- Update: The student who lost an aide (from last month) SNAC was informed that the school got another aide

## **8.0 Correspondence**

Spectrum Productions is hosting its 8th annual screening gala on November 19. It is work from over 60 youth on the autism spectrum who were involved in their summer camp. A selection from the 90 short films created will be screened at this family-friendly event along with food, drinks and a silent auction. This unique screening gives you a glimpse into the creativity and talent of these young filmmakers. <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/spectrum-productions-8th-annual-screening-and-gala-tickets-37729185008#>



## **9.0 Varia**

Geneviève Raymond-Parent has volunteered to take the minutes for the January and February meetings.

The budget presentation part of the January meeting will be closed due to confidentiality. When we have a presentation we will meet a half hour ahead at 6:30pm to allow enough time for the presentations and questions.

## **10.0 Questions from the Public**

None

## **11.0 Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Rob, seconded by Kathy. Motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:46pm

## **Next Meeting Dates:**

### **Monday December 11th, 2017 \*Special Meeting\***

Evaluation of Student Learning Policy Consultation meeting 6:30pm in room 219/221

### **Wednesday January 17th, 2018 (6:30 pm) room 219/221**

Mme France D'Aoust, Director of Financial Services, will have a budget presentation