



Wednesday March 27, 2019

Me. Geneviève Dugré  
Secretary General  
Lester B. Pearson School Board  
1925 Brookdale Avenue  
Dorval, QC H9P 2Y7

**Subject: Budget Consultation**

Dear Me. Dugré,

In regard to the Budget Consultation, the Special Needs Advisory Committee (SNAC) is pleased to have the opportunity to provide input.

**Question 1:**

**What is your relationship to the Lester B. Pearson School Board?**

School Board Committee - Special Needs Advisory Committee (SNAC)

**Question 2:**

**Do you have any suggestions regarding objectives, principles or criteria used to govern the allocation of funds?**

- Increase the priority of inclusion of the growing number of students with special needs throughout the school board and allocate more funds accordingly
- Ensure that funds are made available to allow for the inclusion of students with special needs in extra-curricular activities and field trips
- Considering a student with special needs will be in every school, continue to put funds towards sensitivity training of all students and staff so successful inclusion and acceptance can take place
- In the event of school closures / mergers ensure that there are enough funds allocated to fully support the students with special needs in this transition. Change is difficult for all children, but especially so for those with special needs



### **Question 3:**

**To help us further support our students' success, in your opinion, which of the following resources and programs are essential to supporting high levels of student achievement?**

Answers in order of importance for SNAC:

#### **1. Staff Training:**

Invest in the professional development of the people who are working directly with our students. Give staff the tools and the training that they need to be able to manage the classrooms. Our goal with inclusion should be a quality education for all. It is not necessarily specialized programs that are going to make that happen. It is the people on the front lines, our teachers and staff, that with the right support and training, have the power to make a difference in student achievement. What is most important is ensuring that staff, at all levels, are prepared to support the philosophy of a quality education for all.

#### **2. Integration of Technology: for differentiated learning**

Ensure that students have access to technology and that staff are trained and willing to use it in their classrooms. Technology can be used to level the playing field for students with special needs and should be considered an invaluable tool for helping students reach their potential. Invest in online interactive software that will support students not just through practice but through remedial intervention and make it available to all students not just those who are deemed in need for all subjects

#### **3. Early Literacy Intervention**

The earlier, the better. Provide students with intervention that is motivating, enjoyable, and will eventually help to build their self-esteem as a learner.

#### **4. Special Education programming: more inclusive programming**

Create more inclusive classrooms, where students of all needs and abilities are able to learn from one another. Promote collaboration and diversity in classrooms.

#### **5. Experiential Learning**

Learning through “doing” has the potential to reach a greater number of students than traditional “rote” learning.

#### **6. Renewed Math Strategy**

Incorporate more technology as needed and find new ways to get students engaged in math.

#### **7. French programming**

Provide opportunities to help students gain the confidence to use the skills that they acquire in the French language in a real world setting.



**Question 4:**

**We want to share news with you. Please indicate the methods that the Lester B Pearson School Board may use to best communicate with you.**

Answers in order of importance for SNAC:

1. Direct Email - **best way to communicate**
2. School Website
3. School Board Website
4. Facebook
5. Webcast School Board Meetings
6. Twitter

Other: It is important to be aware that some families are not technology driven and do not have email or social media. Please consider the option of bringing back the telephone calls which would also support those families without computers.

**Question 5:**

**The Fusion Parental Portal ( <https://fusion.lbpsb.qc.ca/login> ) continues to grow, providing online access to parents and students. Currently the portal provides student report cards, re-registration options, cafeteria menus, transportation information and online payment for accommodation and courtesy busing. What additional options would you like to see added to Fusion?**

SNAC would like the fusion portal to include:

- Individualized Education Plans (IEP) on the fusion portal; including the required monthly communication from the school - Digitize the IEPs with the goal of making them collaborative documents and allowing parents to more easily share them with others who may be supporting the student
- Emergency medical forms
- Graduation pathways
- Link to the list of allowable accommodations for ministry exams
- Payment of school fees
- Tell them from me school summary report
- Add a link to the complaint examination procedure
- Link the current phone directory tab in the portal to the school specific email contact list and regional director



**Question 6:**

**The school boards priority is to maintain buildings in the best condition that is possible within the budgets provided by the Ministry of Education. If there are surplus funds available please choose the school and/or centre building component that you believe requires the most service, maintenance or replacement.**

Answer in order of importance for SNAC:

1. **Interior upgrade:**
  - wheelchair accessibility including barrier free washrooms
  - functional elevators
  - ensure air conditioning or some form of additional cooling options are available
  - unisex bathrooms for transgender students in all schools
2. **Grounds maintenance:** adapted playground equipment options for students with special needs
3. **Classroom furniture:** with alternative seating options for all types of students and learners. For example, standing tables, wobble chairs, exercise balls etc.
4. **Other:** sensory rooms and club energy programs
5. **Lighting:** sensory friendly lighting in classrooms

**Question 7: Other Comments or Suggestions:**

- Provide teachers with the flexibility to truly evaluate student learning through a vast array of means/tools.
- Allocate more resources to reduce anxiety and stress in students
- Invest in teaching study and organization skills in elementary and high school so that they can develop necessary life skills

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this consultation.

Respectfully,

Jennifer DiMarco - Chair  
Special Needs Advisory Committee, 2018-2019  
snac.lbpsb.qc.ca