



Wednesday April 17, 2019

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

Subject: Major School Change Consultation Policy

Dear Me. Dugré,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this consultation. We'd like to highlight a few points that we feel would impact all students, but particularly those with special needs:

1. Closure of a school
 - This is obviously a difficult situation for any student, parent or staff member to live through but it is especially hard for children with special needs. Transitions are extremely difficult for these children and having to start over, somewhere new, can be challenging. The timing of the notice has shortened (18 months to 12 months) so we would like to recommend that the board pay particular attention to the special needs population at the school that is closing and ensure that additional resources are put into place to support their transition. SNAC would also recommend that parents of students in the affected school be informed as early as possible (email, ERMS) so that they have the necessary time to work with the team at the school to develop and implement a transition plan for their child.



2. Changes to the level of instruction provided by a school and/or changes to cycles or parts of cycles of the level of instruction of a school
 - Parents or guardians with children starting at a new school may not be aware that the school they registered their child in may be changed before the beginning of the school year. In particular, a parent of a child with special needs may have registered their child at a particular school based on its size and/or program. We should not leave them vulnerable for a “surprise” when the school year begins and it may be too late to make alternative arrangements. SNAC recommends that communication be sent to any new parents/guardians with children starting at a school affected by a major school change.

On page 2 of the policy it lists the three ways in which the public notice will be published:

SNAC recommends that in addition to these three methods, the administration of the school(s) being directly affected should send an email to the parents / guardians of the children attending the school(s) in question. This would increase the chance that all families directly affected would have the opportunity to participate in the process if they were so inclined.

Respectfully,

Jennifer DiMarco - Chair
Special Needs Advisory Committee, 2018-2019
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