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Special Needs Advisory Committee Lester B. Pearson School Board

Minutes of the Meeting – January 16, 2019 Held at Lester B. Pearson School Board 1925 Brookdale, Dorval

In Attendance:

Tracy Bieszez,, Leeann Blondin, Lauren Broad, Jennifer DiMarco, Cindy Finn, Robert Gilmartin, Evelyne Hornblower, Maureen Hunt, Franca Kesic, Lisa Mancini, Danny Olivenstein, Julia Orlando, Lindsay Weisbloom

Regrets: Andrea Altman-Levy, Kathy Robinson, Randi Spanier, Angela Berryman, Sheila Moody

No Reply: Jacqueline Marien, Nadine Van Elslande

Secretary: Evelyne Hornblower

Observers: 3 members of the public were in attendance

Jennifer DiMarco called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

1.0 Confirmation of Quorum: Quorum was reached

(quorum is considered 9 or half the voting members as per the internal rules)

2.0 Additions to Agenda:

2.1 Approval of Agenda:

MOTION to approve by Lisa, seconded by Lindsay

MOTION carried by unanimous vote

3.0 Minutes Approvals

3.1 Corrections to Minutes of November 21, 2018

Correct Nadine name in attendance/regrets
Correct 7.10 to the minutes (AGM and 900 attendees / 1700)
Cindy will make changes and addition to the power point

3.2 Approval of Minutes of November 21, 2018

MOTION to approve by Lisa, seconded by Lauren
MOTION carried by unanimous vote

4.0 Questions from the Public:

Question 1: Is there currently representation at the board specific for the needs of children on IEP in Sport Etudes programs, and what is the change you can make to these?

Responses: We have representatives from different schools and we can make recommendations, however we do not have power to directly make changes to a certain/specific system. We are an advisory committee, advise commissioners with respect to special needs.

Question 2: Open houses are coming up, if there were questions on the IEP, is there additional information that could be broadcast to parents or individuals?

Response: SNAC is always very excited when we are invited to a school open house to have a table or distribute or materials. We have an IEP resource kit and SNAC pamphlet. We are somewhat restricted, as we need to be invited into the schools, keeping in mind that open houses are the school's opportunity to showcase all their offerings, not simply their programs for students with special needs. We often have a table near resource, but have also been set up in the gym next to the home and school or governing board tables. If our volunteers are not available, we have literature that can be brought and distributed through the resource staff.

5.0 Business Arising

5.1 Budget Consultation: Response due March 29, 2019 (Jen)

Discussion: closed meeting next month with budget presentation

This is the first consultation that we were asked to participate in this year. We are having a budget presentation at our next meeting - on February 20th (6:30 start). One of the recommendations is that next month we close meeting to public in order to concentrate on the budget.

Do we have any suggestions for the allowances and allocations? Special needs advisory committee often brings up responses. Read last year and typical responses. We do what we can within the means that we have, any ideas to bring forth is appreciated. Looking for big ideas, as to how to better allocate available funds. If there is more money available , where do we think it should be spent, alternatively when not enough funds are available, where do we believe we should cut resources with the least impact.

A vote was carried in order to close next month's meeting to SNAC members only in order to concentrate on our budget presentation and consultation response which was approved by unanimous vote.

5.2 Results of Survey of Priority List Items for 2018-2019 Committee Update (Jen) Discussion: Topic and Date selection for Parent Information Evening Spring 2019

Results are in a spreadsheet in the kit
Subcommittee for parent information evening
possible topics / speakers

Top choices:

1. Parent information workshop is top choice for many
2. Effective ways of communicating with parents of students with special needs
3. List of extra-curricular activities specific to students with special needs
4. Extra training for sensitivity for daycare staff, bus drivers as well as regular staff

Would like to discuss the parent information workshop evening.
Are there any topics or speakers?

Question 1: How many workshops are done every year?

Response: We aim 2, usually have 1

Question 2: How is it broadcast to the public?

Response: We create a flyer for the event and email it to our email list as well as facebook. We share with the larger parents committee who then shares it at the governing board level at their schools. We also send the flyer via our PASA rep to all the principals asking them to forward to their school population. We also have it posted on the SNAC website and the mainpage of the LBPSB website.

Topic idea: The different pathways available in high school.

Discussion: The school board does an information evening to parents on the WOTP (Work Oriented Training Pathway). Although everyone is welcome to attend, those parents of students on that pathway are invited directly to come and learn. Perhaps this should be opened earlier so parents of students in cycle 3, grade 5 and 6 can learn earlier.

Topic idea: Workshop for parents for the adaptive tools available to LBPSB.

Discussion: We need to be careful about the available tools as each school works differently based on their individual population.

Topic idea: Discussion for the communication between parents and professionals

Topic Idea: Anxiety - mental health support for both the students and the parents

Discussion: Would like to focus on tips and how to reduce anxiety at exam time, and anxiety from the parents and how to deal with it within the school.

Tracy shared that teachers received a presentation on January 15th from Carrie Carson, Zimera King of the centre of excellence for mental health. It was very professional and focused on anxiety and anxiety disorder, what you should and should not do.

Cindy will reach out on SNAC's behalf to Carrie Carson and Zimera King at the centre of excellence for mental health to see if they would be willing to collaborate with us for this parent information evening. We are looking to provide tools for parents to cope with the anxiety remembering the focus be special needs related. We would provide them with compensation for their time through our budget.

It is possible that the timeframe for the workshop could be accelerated if they are available. We will target April and see their availability. April 9th or 11th will be recommendation - Cindy to check the boardroom availability also.

Subcommittee will be requested by email (Jen will send it out)

5.3 Human Rights Recommendation Follow Up (Angela)

Angela was absent, will be tabled until a future meeting

5.4 Elementary School Open Houses - IEP Resource Kits (Jen/Lauren)

https://boardsite.lbpsb.qc.ca/Modules/FileManagement/files/Root/Documents/Oh_Elem_Rev.pdf

IEP kits and pamphlets to be sent to the school. If table is requested please inform committee so that it can be planned for as we volunteer our time

6.0 Reports/Questions for the following committees

6.1 SNAC meeting Summary Report to Parents' Committee and Council (Jen)

Here is the meeting summary report for November 2018:

<http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/extra/img/278SNACMeetingNovember212018MSRFINAL.pdf>

Report is out on the website, governing boards have access directly.

6.2 Administration (Cindy)

1. A number of administrative changes came into effect January 7th:
 - a. Carmela Di Iorio, principal at Terry Fox, following the retirement of Antoinetta Rampone
 - b. Laurence Assouline, principal at Sherbrooke Jr.
 - c. John Torunian, principal at LCCHS for the period January 7-June 30, 2019 following the temporary leave of Jennifer Kurta
 - d. Jane Preston, vice-principal at Beurling
 - e. Sarah Newton, vice-principal at John Rennie
 - f. Christie Brown, assistant centre director at PACC-Vocational
 - g. Nancy Potvin, vice-principal at Macdonald HS
2. The Board Budget consultation for the 2019-2020 budget has gone out. Responses are due no later than March 29, 2019.
3. The school board's annual report for 2017-18 is in the final stages of preparation and will be deposited shortly.
4. Student Services is preparing documentation intended for the Ministry of Education regarding the sample of students with special needs whose codes are to be verified for 2018-19.
5. Student Services and Educational Services are making the final preparations for professional development sessions that will be offered on Feb. 8, 2019. Staff will have the option of signing up for various workshops taking place that day at various locations. Student Services is doing a special session with bus drivers regarding positive behavior, in line with our safe school initiatives.

6. With registration for 2019-2020 quickly approaching, many elementary schools are holding open house events between January 11-25th. Consult the board website for specific details.

Question: Will daycare training happen as well?

Response: Not typically (they are open on PED days), and upon request can be done however very difficult to coordinate.

6.3 Council of Commissioners (Danny)

Student Commissioner Report

Question of the Month: What is the future of e-learning at the Board?

- a. They are looking initially at e-learning for courses for extra credits and not for core courses.

We are the only school board with commissioners, questions were for e-learning, it is in the beginning phases, will offer great possibilities to support greater variety of learning and teachings. When they go to Cegep and University e-learning will occur, and they want to bring this up in High School to be proactive.

1. Facilities & Security Committee Meeting

- a. **Five Year Plan** Y. Knysh made a presentation to the Committee about the five year plan we have been working on since 2017. As of now, almost 95% of our buildings have been inspected to the recent MEES standard. We now have a very good picture of the condition of our plant. Current priorities for capital work include:
 - Preventive work to ensure safety of the buildings
 - Classroom security locks
 - Further building improvements to improve indoor air quality
 - Further fire safety improvements
 - Washroom renovations
 - Water saving measures and plumbing upgrades
 - Replacement of ceiling and upgrade of lighting to LED
 - Replacement of paved surfaces, traffic safety where required
 - Gym floor replacementThe Committee will be presented with further updates as the plan is prepared and finalized. Right now the five-year plan is being reviewed by the Regions to provide input and integrate the higher-priority suggestions from the governing boards. The Committee will also visit, as part of their regular meetings, the schools where major projects are potentially planned in the future. For the upcoming year, MEES provides us with \$30 Million of capital funding for asset renewal. MEES' objective is to have all school buildings to be in good/satisfactory condition before 2030. We expect to meet this objective ahead of time.

- b. **Environment Canada - Severe Weather Alerts** B. Côté informed the Committee that Environment Canada is looking to implement new weather vigilance bulletins in case of severe weather alerts. B. Côté reviewed the different levels of weather reports as well as the new one to be piloted by Environment Canada. It is hoped that these new tool will be of help in the case of the decision making processes of the Board regarding severe weather conditions. The new tool will be helpful in the early stages of the decision making processes of the Board regarding severe weather conditions.

2. Intercultural Advisory Committee

- a. We are still working on what activities the IAC could organize to counter hate and racism.
- b. A draft website for IAC has been built and we hope to have it up early in the new year.
- c. The IAC is looking at the CAQ potentially prohibiting the wearing of religious symbols by government employees and is working on a recommendation for the issue.
- d. The IAC is looking at the EMSB History expert's response to the Secondary 3 and Secondary 4 History curriculum, and is working on a recommendation for the issue. It might take years to resolve and make a text as most History texts are essentially guides and references.

3. International Committee

The committee was also informed (reminded) that all revenues from the International Department are directed toward integration aids in order to enhance the education of our students with special and particular needs.

Question: Do all the schools have carbon monoxide detectors as is currently the law.

Response: That is the question that Danny will bring up next facilities committee meeting

6.4 Parent Commissioner - Special Needs (Angela)

No report submitted. Angela was absent.

6.5 Parent's Committee (Jen/Lisa)

December meeting summary report in kit 26 of 48 schools attended.
January meeting was cancelled

6.6 Programs & Services Committee (Kathy / Sheila)

Jennifer did reach out to the chair regarding the alternate position. The chair responded via email it would be beneficial for both members to attend where possible

Sheila and Kathy both attended the last meeting

6.7 Pearson Teachers Union PTU (Tracy)

- a. Term 1 parent-teacher conferences were held in all schools
- b. November 29th and 30th, 2018 were board-wide ped days. Teachers attended subject-specific conferences on November 28th and on November 29th, along with teachers from the Sir Wilfred Laurier School board attended an Educational technology conference CCI (Create, collaborate and Innovate) hosted by Pierrefonds Comprehensive High School. Some of the many workshops presented included; Robotics, coding, entrepreneurship grants and virtual reality in WOTP classrooms. A powerful keynote speech on Digital Learning in the classroom was given by Darren Kuropatwa.
- c. Teachers, staff and students enjoyed a re-invigorating 2-week holiday break. Batteries are re-charged and ready to go :)
- d. The Quebec Government has produced an online consultation for school fees that staff, teachers and parents are being encouraged to fill out.

<http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/parents-and-guardians/references/consultation-on-school-fees/>

- e. PTU reps will be given copies of the SNAC resource kit to take to their schools to evaluate and provide feedback on.

6.8 Pearson Association of School Administrators PASA (Lindsay Weisbloom)

Nothing to report

6.9 Professionals PEP (Maureen Hunt)

Nothing to report

6.10 Independent Association of Support Staff (Rob Gilmartin)

November 30th had an amazing workshop, Dr. David Shaw (McGill University) Understanding behavior with learning disabilities.
Was very appreciated by all attendees.

6.11 Treasurer's Report

SNAC Budget Update (Lauren)

See report in the meeting kit

Just about 100\$ over last year's report, about on par.

6.12 Communication Liaison Report (Jen/Sheila)

Since November there have been 460 hits to the mainpage and hits to the 42 webcast pages.

Quite a few emails in November as well as phone calls as they started IEP meetings or were about to have them

Question: One of the parents wants to know more about the french exemption for High School.

Response: (Cindy) This is something that has to be brought up by the school team, no restrictions are automatic, it has to be despite all efforts taken, they decide to apply for the exemption. This could apply to any child and a case has to be built in order to get the exemption. If a child is modified on anything else, they can't even apply for French exemption. The idea is to help a child get a diploma. It is specific to children doing well except for French as a Second language. They may still have to do the exam and then prove that it is too hard for them. The student has to do all they can, and you must prove your case.

Question: How to change class to another teacher with better understanding of special needs / diagnosis

Response: Always approach the school principal (When in doubt for any situation, address the principal).

Question: Diagnosed in elementary and now in High School, how long is the waiting time for the psychologist re-assessment. WOTP is being recommended and are requesting if they can get a re-assessment.

Response: Would not prioritize this unless school team initiates it.

7.0 Correspondence

See flyers in kit for more information

- a. Autism Speaks Walk June 9
- b. Winter Programs beginning: PEERS Program, Children Social Emotional Skills Group, ADHD Skills Group courses
- c. Delicious without Gluten Cupcakes Local company from DDO Available at Costco until March
- d. Quebec Government Consultation on School Fees : Response due by January 25
<http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/parents-and-guardians/references/consultation-on-school-fees/>

There was a discussion about whether we share the information we receive to broadcast to the public. The issue is that any information we share seems to be endorsed by the committee. The discussion to have a disclaimer above to ensure that there are no legal actions are taken against SNAC for information that is broadcasted (in good faith) to the public. We have always had the disclaimer on our website at the bottom. We will make it more visible at the top also.

8.0 Varia

Inspirations Magazine supports all of Montreal's special needs and great information is available in the magazine, tend to have at least 1 LBPSB connection on the magazine.

9.0 Questions from the Public:

Question: When can last meetings presentation be available on the website

Response: It will be available on the website by the end of the month. Jennifer will share the link once it is posted.

<http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/extra/img/279SNACPresentationbyDr.CindyFinnNovember2018.pdf>

10.0 Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn the meeting by Rob, seconded by Tracy

MOTION carried by unanimous vote

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 PM

Next Meeting:

Wednesday February 20th, 2019, 6:30 pm in room 106 . *Special Budget Presentation by Mme France D'Aoust, Director of Financial Resources