

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

**Minutes of the Meeting – February 20, 2019
Held at Lester B. Pearson School Board
1925 Brookdale, Dorval**

In Attendance:

Andrea Altman-Levy, Tracy Bieszcz, Angela Berryman, Leeann Blondin, Lauren Broad, Jennifer DiMarco, Cindy Finn, Robert Gilmartin, Evelyne Hornblower, Maureen Hunt, Sheila Moody, Danny Olivenstein, Kathy Robinson, Randi Spanier, Nadine Van Elslande

Regrets: Franca Kesic, Lisa Mancini, Lindsay Weisbloom, Julia Orlando

No Reply: Jacqueline Marien

Secretary: Evelyne Hornblower

Observers: No members of the public were in attendance as it was a closed meeting

Jennifer DiMarco called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM

1.0 Budget Presentation: Mme France D’Aoust Director of Financial Services

School Board Funding

Budget preparation was presented the following questions were brought up:

Question: Spend 7 million more, where does this come from?

Response: Next year will be cleaner. A portion was calculated from the teacher envelope.

Question: Every year we make recommendation, how to track them?

Response: Once answers brought, they try to take the recommendations as much as possible, but there is not much room to manoeuvre. All consultation responses are posted, all committees weigh in and they try to see what is the most re-occurring, tabulated as the highest points. They assess to see what costs are fixed and then they see what they can do with discretionary spending.

4.0 Minutes Approvals

4.1 Corrections to Minutes of January 16, 2019

none

4.2 Approval of Minutes of January 16, 2019

MOTION to approve by Lauren, seconded by Rob

MOTION carried by unanimous vote

5.0 Business Arising

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

Closed meeting

Need to start looking at the allocation when mergers are going to arise (need additional support for transitioning)

Question: Will they have less money with merging?

In theory they would not lose any of the funds, and need to have additional resources to support the transition. Resources are put in place to help in the transition.

If there is going to be earlier school (4yr old Kindergarten)

Additional support will be required. Currently 2 schools on this school board have started earlier (K4). May be problematic for the overall programming an equipment and infrastructure. This move should be adequately funded.

Question: Inclusion in extra school activities (not just having them in the class) The intent is to integrate them holistically within the activities, for outings or other. There are some kids that are automatically excluded. Extra-curricular, who will fund this.

Question: Is there increased sensitivity training for students in the school? Is there additional training for the students?

Response: (Maureen) Using the "Don't laugh at me" discussion that is used with schools, at operation. This is often in the plan.

Question: For the third item could look at prioritizing them? Jen will send a survey to get this done

Question: Emails, School Website, there is something that needs to be noted for public with no access to the technology. They lose out. Make it aware that not all individuals have access to technology even in 2019.

Question: Place the IEP on the Fusion portal. Need to get these backs from the client, still primarily paper.

5.2 Parent Information Evening Subcommittee Update (Jen)

The date is set, April 3rd, 2019, 7 pm.

Topic will be Stress vs Anxiety Disorders. Speakers are lined up. The topic address stress in children with disabilities and anxiety as well as parent's stress and reactions. How to best support our anxious children and yourself as a parent. Speakers are all part of the Center of excellence for Mental Health.

We need to find a title. The questions from the speakers are for how to diffuse the information, subcommittee to see the parent point of view. Assess whether 6pm or 7om are the right times to start.

Potential Titles discussed. Agreed upon...

Understanding the influence of stress and anxiety in our children and ourselves...

Jen will send it to the speakers for their final approval of the poster

5.3 Discussion Riverdale School Closing (Angela/Sheila)

There are special needs programs in that school, and this school is closing. Sheila is on the governing board, and they had a meeting the day that this was announced. The board members were in shock and were worried about the school closing. Initial plan was that the teachers were to be told the morning and the kids and parents were to be announced afterwards. However, this was on the news prior to the school start on the same day. People are wondering why no petitions. It is going to happen, the uncertainty is very hard for the kids, and needs to be addressed appropriately. All kids are very worried. Some of the items worried about is whether they will have access to the different activities. A lot of the kids are having trouble understanding what will happen as they feel a loss of identity. Merger committee is set up and they will bring back the information to all parties. They are trying to determine all the logistics and programs (plenty of questions are arising).

Question: When will they visit the new school?

Response: They are meant to start the transition as soon as possible, the good news is that they are kids from the same community, they will try to let them go and orient them ahead of time.

Question: How long will they be supporting the transition.

Response: Been looking at all the possibilities, and this is not worked out yet

Good people are involved in the committee, and they have representation for Special needs which is a very positive point, there will be someone on site for the transition. One of the teacher reps is a resource teacher and can assist children in item that are stressing the kids the most. A major concern is that the school that is going to change (both schools will lose their current identity).

For PC it is hard to understand what the change will be. Looking at the heritage of both. When the story first broke out, it was Riverdale is closing, no talk about

the loss of identity of the merger. This was handled poorly. Many small high schools and need to look at the closing and merging in time.

They have taken a fair bit of heat, the last of which was seating the building. Student services has had many meetings and they do have a plan of action and support for all the kids as for some it is really hard to understand what is happening.

As a positive (Tracy) for the first time they feel the board is listening and having discussions on a regular basis and they are getting proper responses for the transition of the children. Good to see the inter-principal communication.

Question: Is there a merit to writing a letter to request courses of actions?

Response: OK with writing a letter, so long as the positive points are also stated and addressed to the committee and addressed to the school board.

This will be a special situation, there will be items not accounted for. New resources will have to be implemented. There are significant amounts of kids with special needs.

Question : Letter now or wait and see how it develops?

Response : Wait until the next meeting for the current developments

5.4 Human Rights Recommendation Follow up (Angela)

Human Rights recommendation: February 2019

There is never really enough money for evaluations.

Recommendations for adequate funding

Ensure that they provide appropriate funds for all services?

Are there enough funds at this time? No. but we need to understand that the overall data was taken from a sampling. It is not always as pertinent for all school boards. There are no restrictions for the therapists as LBPSB is inclusive. Not sure when the recommendations are made and exactly what they are based on. Not sure how to follow recommendations if they are not specific to the board. Not sure that it is a reasonable recommendation to ensure a certain percentage.

Continuing to send the message to have more access to resources, there seems to be a disconnect between the schools and the board. There must be a solution to get around the fund issues. Examples of the field trips and other activities. We need to have the discussion. If we are not the voice pressuring then we will never get the available funding and or resources, or fundraisings, there are solutions if we work together. Access to education. School boards will offer the support. Sometimes they will need the help.

There are a lot of stories that the issues are problematic, and schools and teachers are not all on board with different strategies to the schools.

5.5 Richard Lavoie Conference hosted by the Montreal Centre for Learning Disabilities - MCLD

Vote to have SNAC members attend

2 seminars (65\$ per individual, 115\$ for parent couple) the main seminars look at:
Behavioral Strategies that Don't Work with Struggling Kids...and Some that Do
Understanding the Social Side of Learning Disorders: From Isolation to Acceptance

He makes you see the issues from the child perspective.
SNAC voted OK to use funds from the budget to send 3 members:

Evelyne, Lauren, Jen
Send bill to Lauren

6.0 Reports/Questions for the following committees

6.1 SNAC meeting Summary Report to Parents' Committee and Council (Jen) The summary report in the kit sent in the kit

6.2 Administration (Cindy)

- On January 22, a joint session organized by LBPSB and the West-Island CIUSSS was held for parents of incoming children with special needs. The focus on the evening was preparing for school entry. This session touched on the registration process, organization of services for students with special needs, and the partnership LBPSB and this CIUSSS have developed over the years.
- All 9 English school boards in the province have embarked on a staff mental health and wellbeing initiative. This initiative spans several years and includes sessions aimed at Human Resources personnel as well as in school and board administrators. A steering committee for LBPSB personnel has been struck and their first meeting was held on January 30th. This work complements the initiatives already in place to support student and staff wellness.
- February 8 was a pedagogical day for the entire LBPSB community. Workshops were offered by Student Services and Educational Services on a range of topics including bullying prevention, social-emotional learning, sex education, literacy, and deep learning.
- The Annual Education Conference hosted by the Leadership Committee for English Education in Quebec took place Feb. 11-12 in Laval. The theme this year was Wellbeing, Being well. Over 120 delegates from Lester B. Pearson attended this conference which featured several keynote speakers and breakout sessions related to the theme of physical and mental health.

- Re-registration of returning students and registration for new students for the 19-20 school year has begun. Student Services has a process in place to begin tracking the needs of students who will require supports for the upcoming school year. The staffing and budget building process has also begun, with meetings taking place among various departments.
- All departments have been very busy with the temporary relocation of students from Riverview to Verdun/Beurling and the plans to merge the Riverdale and PCHS communities.
- The Allocation of Resources Committee held a meeting on Jan. 21. The next meeting is scheduled for Feb. 25th.

Professional development, a lot of time on the PC committee, there were a couple of moves because of flooding in Verdun, this was very sad (whole school closed).

6.3 Council of Commissioners (Danny)

Riverdale was discussed, LBPSB is the only school board with student commissioners. Students give some great reports.

Question of the month: What are the thought on the bill to remove all religious symbols? Interesting to see the student perspective.

Please see the full report in the kit

Executive Report

In response to a question from a member of the public concerning Carbon Monoxide detectors, C. Heffernan reported that ten of our schools/centres are heated with electricity and thus do not require CO detectors. It has been decided to immediately install brand new inexpensive CO detectors in all other schools/centres – even those that already have them – and follow this up with the eventual installation of permanent CO detectors in those schools/centres which would be hooked up to the intrusion alarm system.

Educational services Report

- On November 12th, we invited 3 high schools to visit the Bill Hogarth School in Markham, Toronto. The 3 high schools were: Mac High, John Rennie and Westwood Jr. The principals and 3 teachers from each school joined us. We had the opportunity to see in action a Deep Learning secondary school. The 6Cs were prevalent in all areas of the curriculum. We had the opportunity to meet with various teachers and discuss about the implementation of the 6Cs in all subject

matters. Our teachers truly enjoyed the visit and were inspired by the Deep Learning approach. As a result of this visit, a team from Macdonald High also visited the Bill Hogarth school on December 11-12. February 25th, ESD will give a workshop to all secondary schools teams (principal + 3 teachers), in order to launch it in all high schools.

Student Services Report

- The work that began last year in our high schools to address stigma in relation to mental health continues this school year. A working group known as ASIT (Anti-stigma Initiative Team) comprised of SSD guidance counsellors, the ESD arts consultant, members of the Centre of Excellence for Mental Health, and Stephanie Stever (SSD coordinator) has planned a series of activities to prevent and reduce stigma associated with mental health problems and disorders. ASIT is working with a community organization (jack.org) who will visit high schools to talk to senior high school students to raise awareness about mental health. The first “Jack talk” was held on November 19 at John Rennie HS. Future talks are set for other LBPSB schools as well as the Central Students’ Committee.
- Student Services continues to support schools with their safe and caring school initiatives. Two recent activities are of note:
 - In mid-November, principals were invited to submit project funding requests aimed at fostering a positive school climate and addressing anti-violence/antibullying. These projects are supported by ministry measure 15030 s to create initiatives for students, staff as well as parents. Examples of past projects organized by schools include Pink Shirt Day, Virtues program implementation, and LOVE (leave out violence) activities.
 - Under the leadership of Assistant Director Marie-Eve Claude, Student Services as been granted funds through the ministry-funded Evidence Based Project to support schools interested in sustaining or improving a positive school climate. his funding will enable the team of health promotion/prevention professionals in student Services to use a collaborative planning process with school teams to use data, identify priorities, and implement actions that support best practices in the area of violence prevention and health promotion. Three schools will be involved in this project (one elementary school on island, one elementary school off-island, and one secondary school).

Continuing / Vocational Education Report

- P. Pedrosa reported on the Doing Is Believing Tour. Grade 7 students will be visiting the center closest to them. This visit will take place on April 2nd and 3rd. We will be using the transportation funds from Career Fair which was cancelled, to bus students if necessary.

6.4 Parent Commissioner - Special Needs (Angela)

Angela has hyperlinked the presentation for the video on the report from January Council meeting, refer to the linked report. Many of the items discussed were already in the previous summary from the council of commissioners.

Some highlight were discussed further at our meeting such as the question of wellness and positive school climate. Including the importance of a good workspace for proper mental state.

6.5 Parent's Committee (Jen/Lisa)

Jen did not attend, and neither did Lisa our alternate, Angela was there, kind enough to speak on SNAC behalf for the report. A special needs committee is looking to be set up through EPCA and meet likely 4 times per year. More details to come from PC.

6.6 Programs & Services Committee (Kathy)

Meeting was canceled, and last one attended, she asked about the extracurricular activities and the new policy. They are meant to get back to highlight what was changed.

Kathy says that the policy has changed. Forms were supposed to be in the Feb meeting and they will be discussed further.

6.7 Pearson Teachers Union PTU (Tracy)

Workshops were offered February 8th for the board on the ped day. Topics included bullying, literacy and deep learning, etc.

PTU delegates and executive attended a mental health and wellness conference, information obtained is to be shared with staff members.

Elections are being held for a new PTU President as Heidi Yetman was acclaimed as QPAT President.

Staff (Teachers, resource teachers, Special ed. Techs and principals) at 20- plus schools provided feedback on the I.E.P Resource kit.

Overall, a very useful document. Feedback provided included positive points and recommendations.

Recommendations were discussed as they provide positive feedback and the teachers love the idea of the document and had never seen it in the past.

However, the following items were deemed required:

To have it in French, lot's of bilingual programs. All individuals were on the same board, acronyms to be changed. Adaptive and modified should be elaborated on.

A list of outside services should also be available. High School and elementary needs should be differentiated.

At High Schools, 200 IEPs are given and often only 50 get back signed appropriately. It is important for the IEP's to be sent back signed to the school. Tons of feedback was very constructive. Principals have gotten involved to send out the comments from the teachers, the idea of the diffusion must be discussed. Students from elementary to high school to have a transition meeting is a topic to elaborate on.

6.8 Pearson Association of School Administrators PASA (Lindsay Weisbloom)

Regrets for today

6.9 Professionals PEP (Maureen Hunt)

Executives going to a seminar focused on wellness this week.

6.10 Independent Association of Support Staff (Rob Gilmartin)

Support staff have met on the 8th, 15th, and to meet the 22nd for the Health and wellness presentations given.

6.11 Treasurer's Report SNAC Budget Update (Lauren)

see report in the meeting kit

Update the date.

Money to spend.

6.12 Communication Liaison Report (Jen/Sheila)

Since January there have been 313 hits to the main page and 34 hits to the webcast page. Cindy's presentation is now posted on the webcast page.

7.0 Correspondence

Care centre (non-profit organisation). If can not keep the program running there is nowhere for them to go. They have a fundraising dinner. Digital copy is available.

8.0 Varia

9.0 Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn the meeting by Rob, seconded by Kathy

MOTION carried by unanimous vote

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM

Next Meeting: Wednesday March 20th at 7 pm