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Special Needs Advisory Committee Lester B. Pearson School Board

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting – January 20, 2021 Held at Lester B. Pearson School Board 1925 Brookdale, Dorval

In Attendance: Laurence Assouline, Lauren Broad, Alexandra Desbiens-Leighton, Jennifer DiMarco, Dyana Gampel, Christina George, Robert Gilmartin, Evelyne Hornblower, Randal Howarth, Franca Kesic, Susana Lazaro, Lisa Mancini, Danny Olivenstein, Kiley Philp, Kathy Robinson, Randi Spanier, Stéphanie Stever, Victoria Stuhec, Michelle Wilson, Randall Howarth

Regrets: Sheila Moody, Nora Salvaggio, Monique Thirlwell

No Reply: none

Recording Secretary: Evelyne Hornblower

Observers: 3 members of the public were in attendance

Jennifer DiMarco called the virtual meeting to order at 6:30 pm

1.0 Confirmation of Quorum & Welcome of New Members: Quorum was reached

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

2.0 Approval of Agenda:

MOTION to approve agenda by Kathy, seconded by Lauren

MOTION carried by unanimous vote

3.0 Minutes Approvals:

3.1 Corrections to the Minutes of October 21, 2020 N/A

3.2 Approval of Minutes of October 21, 2020

MOTION to approve by Kiley, seconded by Michelle

MOTION carried by unanimous vote.

4.0 Questions from the public

Q1: Can you choose the school that your child can attend? Register at the school you want?

R1: Should register at the zoned school, however depending on the needs of the child, there may be a better school for the child's needs which they may help you transfer to. This can also affect your option for busing.

Q2: For busing how does this work?

R2: If out of zone busing not guaranteed. There is a small possibility through the empty bus program if there is room.

5.0 Business Arising

5.1 COVID - LBPSB Update (Stephanie)

More and more bubbles were not contaminated prior to December 16th, the number of cases in general in the provinces was very high. There was a 2 week isolation period (extending until January 11). Notice for cases was still in effect and schools had to monitor the status of positive cases in the classrooms. There is an automated system in place to send notifications out to parents. The format of the letters have been standardised for all in terms of content and message. On the west island, the numbers are very well managed and transmission seems to be mitigated with current health and safety measures in effect. In terms of additional measures, the type of masks and length and guidelines to wear were modified. High schools have started this week. Grades 7-9 are full time at school, grades 10-11 are splitting time 1 day virtual 1 day at school.

In elementary schools children in grades 5 and 6 are mandated to wear the masks full time in the school. Teams are adapting with the measures.

Guidelines were sent out to everyone on the new measures for COVID measures. There are no longer any waiting periods for the testing of COVID, do not wait 24hr to get tested. Other changes are that if one person is symptomatic then all households must wait until a proven negative test is given. Number of masks used in a day can go up to 4000 a day with the measures. The recycling is for 2000 masks, how is it treated and how is this managed. Currently trying to find solutions to the situation.

Mr. Roberge stated last week that tutoring measures and support for mental health and air quality testing will take place. CO2 monitoring will take place. Focusing on essential knowledge will be in effect and the ministerial exams are eliminated this year. Potential change in the percentage in terms 1 and 2. The percentages will change to favour students. IEPs and date for the actual term one. Access to virtual technology has been available to students. The Ministry has stated that there is enough availability for all people for access to virtual resources.

Virtual open houses are happening and fairs to be available virtually. Anyone intrigued by the career fair on Feb 2nd is invited to go to the fair virtually.

Q1: The government exams are cancelled will final exams still happen?

R1: Final exams are still in effect. They are not cancelled. Grade 6, 10 and 11 ministry exams are cancelled.

Q2: Currently hearing that across the board the grades are going down, is this the case for LBPSB?

R2: This was not stated yet, however well benign is an issue across the board for children.

Q3: If there is a case of a child with COVID, will the bubble close or not if there is a case.

R3: Currently the bubble will close even with the additional measures to all.

Q4: At a governing board meeting last night at a high school there was talk about the masks, the question was that the procedural masks do not fit some of the sec 1 and 2s Kids are using them on top of their masks, and many kids are doubling up, what will they do?

R4: Currently kids are doubling them up, and the board is trying to order smaller sized masks, and the ministry is also meant to be sending these (not received yet).

Q5: For Minister Roberge potentially affecting the waits for the mental health component. How efficiently will they be looking at the health issues.

R5: There is no answer at the moment.

Q6: Rumours of March break cancelled, is this true?

R6: At this moment no. Subject to change at any time, up to the government not LBPSB.

5.2 Resignation of SNAC Member - Tracy Bieszcz PTU (Jen)

PTU is still represented by Christina George

SNAC Chair wishes to thank Tracy for her years of dedication to SNAC, answering many of the parent questions and always providing the teachers perspective on our work.

5.3 Budget Consultation - response due March 31 (Jen)

The council of commissioners has sent out the budget consultation for feedback. Thank you to those members who have already submitted some feedback. We have time to work on our response as it is due at the end of March. Not looking for the response today but this will be voted on in the March meeting. New finance director started this week, format will be looked at as a presentation. Presentation of LBPSB students with special needs touching on budget to follow next month.

When looking at addendum C, think about these for the responses required next month.

The response this year will not be a submitted letter, rather a google form. All governing boards as well as SNAC and the parents committee are expected to respond. Individual parents are

also welcome to respond. The link to the Google Form is <https://boardsite.lbpsb.qc.ca/internal/budget-consultation#>

5.4 I.E.P. Pamphlet Draft (Jen/Susana)

A large thank you to Susana for drafting a wonderful one page pamphlet of our I.E.P. resource kit. The document is in the draft stages, please look over and send comments over.

Idea is to clarify the main points and have a condensed version and make it simple for parents new to an I.E.P. to understand. Took the kit and simplified the language for the masses and placed the most important items forth. All items can be modified appropriately. The goal is to help others with the knowledge of the I.E.P. and understanding acronyms and knowledge gaps for everyday use.

Committee can look over the comments and get feedback to the chair in the coming weeks.

Q1: Is the format the correct format considering that virtual seems to be a reality right now.

R1: Formats can be done in different formats. (paper vs virtual)

6.0 Reports/Questions for the following committees

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

The summary report was sent in the kit and is available on our website under external reports <http://snac.lbpsb.qc.ca/eng/ExternalReports/page.asp>

Posted on the website and sent to SNAC Members when it is ready. Reps on the parents committee also share on basecamp for PC.

6.2 Administration (Stéphanie)

No written report submitted

6.3 Council of Commissioners (Danny)

Reports were sent out as 2 were done in December. There is a deficit of almost 8 million dollars. The reason for the deficit is mostly for COVID and lack of payback from the government. Currently are in discussions with the government in order to get the money back.

Air purifiers, one school board in QC has finalised, and that administration is LBPSB. One of the reasons that this was achievable is because this is still a school board. None of the current Centre de Service have them, the Minister is currently questioning if these are truly useful even if Harvard, CDC, WHO all state how important they are.

Please go and vote to remain a School Board.

Q1: Do you know if the Centre de Services are upset about the Minister's decision to stall the air purifiers?

R1: Yes there is concern from the teachers in the Centre de services, however nothing official to note.

Q2: Reading in the paper that when they were purchased (500 000\$) that the board may not be paid back, do we know if they will be? Also did we pay less than EMSB is there a reason?

R2: As there are more naturally ventilated schools they needed more devices to purify the rooms.

6.4 Parent Commissioner - Special Needs (Susana)

As a new parent commissioner was caught off guard to answer during the meetings. The official report is not in as they are meant to be officialized until after the meetings.

Two reports will be sent and a clarification about the virtual night will be sent directly. Moving forward they will get the official report for all that we do ahead of the meeting and ensure that they will be done.

Danny states to ensure to take the essential information from the meetings and the reports should be condensed to essential information for them to address. The budget consultation report should be promptly sent to the Commissioners.

6.5 Parent's Committee (Lisa / Dyana)

Report in Kit

Not much to report other than COVID was discussed and evolution around COVID.

Discussed for the 1500\$ for food to be swapped for a restaurant for a 30\$/person gift card. Both the January meeting as well as the subcommittee meetings were cancelled with short notice.

A PC parent rep named Sarah has brought up a lot of improvements for the French promotion of LBPSB, and they have more virtual presence. There is a communications subcommittee on basecamp for PC, they have a newsletter coming up SNAC would appreciate having a voice on the newsletter. Susana has posted on basecamp on behalf of SNAC asking to be included. Lisa or Dyana to follow up also.

6.6 Treasurer's report (Lauren)

Treasurer's report in kit

\$2000 to spend this year.

We have spent \$109.97 on the facebook boosting of the Dr Hénault Presentation.

At the October meeting we had decided to reallocate funds for promotions for publicity, and there is a 600 \$ budget allocated for this. These should be spent sooner than later. The I.E.P. resource kit post was also boosted and in 24 hr there have been over 75 direct links and more messages from parents have been brought forth.

Future Expenditures

As per the request of a few parent members: Jen is looking at hiring someone for a virtual training to be a better public speaker / ability to run a meeting / deal with upset parents as part of an expenditure. Someone will have to do the research on public speaking - someone suggested Toastmasters? Lisa will reach out to a contact.

?? Do we have someone internally at the board that does this? Stephanie suggested that Geneviève Dugré would be a good resource for the process of items to vote upon and how the meeting conducts. Jen will reach out to Genevieve to see if she is interested and available.

Conferences

The Amy Laurent Conference has been rescheduled for online in April. If you are interested in attending and have SNAC reimburse you, please write Jen. She will send out the conference information soon.

Future Meetings and/ or end of Year Dinner

Discussion to provide gift cards to SNAC members for the remaining meetings or for the year end dinner? Uber eats gift cards are simple. Discussion - members preferred to support local businesses and not lose money to Uber. Discussion to continue online and voting next month.

Thank You Cards for Resigned SNAC Members this Year

Thank you cards? Would this be something people who are interested in for past SNAC members who have resigned this year for various reasons. Currently there are 3 members that we would send cards to.

Motion to buy 3 greeting cards and 3 postage stamps

MOTION to approve by Lauren, seconded by Kristina.

MOTION carried by unanimous vote.

If you have any other suggestions, please let us know.

6.7 Equity and Inclusion Task Force (Lisa)

Taking a little bit of a difference route, the current issues are within the policies and execution. They would like to see different terminology and appropriate terminology for the policies. Would like all staff and support staff to have training.

Would like to have Special needs training mandatory for all staff and frequency of training over the years. Looking at different ways to uphold the policies of the equity and inclusion within the

school board. There are now children with special needs in the official videos of LBPSB. And budget recommendations were also discussed.

The letter from LBPSB (Dr Lashley) requesting real life testimonies to be shared in order to be addressed by the equity and inclusion task force.

Comment: Getting a personalised response back for all comments are very appreciated. There is someone taking time to respond to those who have responded. Susana would like to thank them.

Q1: I work within a special program, and the students with special needs are taking the bus. a driver stated that none of the drivers have any intervention training for. Is this something that can be looked at by the task force?

R1: Please send the comments in as all comments are taken into considerations and are responded to.

6.8 Programs & Services Committee (Kathy / Dyana)

no report in kit

Have there been any meetings? No.

Meetings are held on the 1st Monday of the month . Next meeting is February 1 at 5:30

The chair this year is Angela Berryman

SNAC reps requested invitations

6.9 Pearson Teachers Union PTU (Christina)

Motivational speaker talked about making the unmanageable manageable, was inspiring and reminded all to take it one step at a time and go with the flow and take time for yourselves.

Some students were not comfortable with the zoom, reassuring parents that if their child would get 1 on 1 resources this would not have stopped during the zoom.

Term 1 and I.E.P.'s are still aligning for the end of the month.

Q1: Will virtual copies be in effect next year?

R1: Still a priority, however first I.E.P. needs to be signed.

Comment: Child found that he had better support online than in person with COVID health measures.

Another comment was that the students felt they really got to know the teachers a little more.

On Monday 25th, there are workshops available and there is a training on math on that date. The teachers are getting a lot of workshops. The board is very supportive and that has been helpful.

The learn quebec site is there for additional resources, and there is free tutoring, they raised his grades 30-40% grades, on learn quebec. (Only teach online). Free tutoring available for every subject.

6.10 Pearson Association of School Administrators PASA (Laurence and Alexandra)

No report

6.11 Professionals PEP (Victoria / Monique / Randal)

Working as usual, as busy as ever and already working on next year. One parent comment concerning the math, all grades for math have plummeted everywhere. Everything is ongoing despite COVID. A little scary to start back but phenomenal to see the kids again.

6.12 Independent Association of Support Staff (Rob)

Students were thrilled to come back, a lot of additional cleaning was happening. It is a hard situation for all, and additional shout out to the daycare workers to be stated (Thank you).

6.12 Communication Liaison Report (Jen / Sheila)

Since the October meeting, there have been 815 hits to the main page and 89 hits to the webcast page. Today there have been multiple emails received.

Emails: My son came home with an I.E.P. in his school bag, we were never given notice, and were surprised from the school response as they didn't realise that the child was struggling requiring I.E.P. They are requesting a transfer of schools based on the school's response.

Response from SNAC is to respond to the parent in order to help the parents

6.13 Social Media Subcommittee (Susana)

Report in kit

455 people have liked the page, up 95.

We are touching a lot of people through the FB page. Invested 100 \$ on the Dr. Henault Presentation and 4252 people were reached. Because of this boost there were a lot more people reached.

People enjoy the positive messages on the pages.

One of the main concerns that we had were negative comments, and at this point we have not had any.

A lot of LBPSB schools have started following. Can we add the SNAC email? Yes it should be added.

6.14 WIAIH (Franca Kesic)

Rolling with the punches with COVID, all groups are taking place virtually and a new group started second Tuesday. There are more groups coming up.

Planning in the process for info sessions to speak to members of WIAIH and parents.

Support for the different families are being given, and different groups outside of the West Island are reaching out.

Q1: Decisions for Summer daycamps?

R1: Staffing and daycamps are a big challenge, much of the staff are worried about coming into work. Hoping to have some camps, depends on the progress.

7.0 Correspondence

SNAC Chair's Letter to the Council of Commissioners

Parenting in the Pandemic Workshop Series - Centre of Excellence for Mental Health and LEARN Quebec This is a free online monthly workshop.

Next session is Tuesday February 17th - Understanding the impact of loss on our kids

To register visit <http://learnquebec.ca/impact>

Also past sessions are posted online <https://web-sites.lbpsb.qc.ca/cemh/Webinars-Recordings>

The following centre is offering multiple online sessions most have costs, others are free:
West Island Neuropsychology and Counseling Centre Winter Online

Doug the EPCA rep from PC emailed that EPCA is updating their website and will include a link to SNAC.

8.0 Varia

NO questions from the public

9.0 Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn the meeting by Rob, seconded by Kathy

MOTION carried by unanimous vote

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 PM

Next Meeting:

Wednesday February 17 2021 at 6:30pm on Google Meet *Special Presentation