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“Student Transportation” Consultation: SNAC reviewed and approved a response for the “Student Transportation” Consultation. The new proposed transportation policy made no mention of students with Special Needs, so many suggestions were made in the SNAC response to the consultation. It was agreed by the committee that the Policy needs to provide some high level guidelines and criteria for eligibility to transportation services for students with special needs. Some of the provisions that SNAC is asking to be included in the new policy are as follows:

- Students with Special Needs (the description of these students are more detailed in the consultation response) are eligible for transportation, notwithstanding the distance between the home and the student’s school.
- Students with Special Needs are eligible for one of a number of transportation options at no cost to the student, including wheelchair-accessible buses, smaller busses with less students or an individual minivan, depending on the need of the individual student.
- Transportation to school (as described in the points above) must be provided for Special Needs students participating in a WOTP (work-oriented training pathways) program, notwithstanding the distance between the home and the student’s school.
- Students with Special Needs will be provided with transportation services so they can attend field trips and cultural excursions.

It has been noted by SNAC that many transportation accommodations are already provided by the School Board to students with Special Needs even though they are not included in the current policy. Ideally, however, including general guidelines in the Policy would benefit the LBPSB Special Needs population.


Update: SNAC Funding Request to Council of Commissioners: SNAC received a formal response from Suanne Stein Day regarding the request to increase the SNAC budget for 2013-2014 (letter sent February 3rd, 2014). The request was denied, however it was noted that SNAC had made a similar recommendation in the recent “budget” consultation, which will be taken under consideration by Council, and if approved, would apply to next year (2014-2015). Ms. Stein Day acknowledged the importance of SNAC and stated that the committee would have the school board’s support for the funding of special projects.

Administration Report: This is a very busy time of year for administration. Most notably to SNAC, a new high school IEP template is in development to provide more options and drop down menus in the IEP, similar to those available at the elementary school level template. In addition, 95% of the special needs dossiers submitted to MELS for validation (with a direct impact on funding) were accepted. The MELS validation process itself is very arduous and provides little gain to the school board.

Council Report: The reinstatement of the June 23rd year end date was discussed.

CPC Report: School board elections will be held in November 2014, where the number of commissioners will be reduced by half. There will be an increase in parent commissioners (currently there is 1 elementary and 1 high school parent commissioner, but this will be doubled to also include 1 ad hoc parent commissioner and 1 SNAC representative parent commissioner).

EPCA and the SNAC Website: SNAC was very pleased to hear that the provincial-level English Parents Committee Association (EPCA) has singled out the LBPSB SNAC website as a great example, with content that is very helpful to the Special Needs Community. As such, EPCA requested permission to link to the LBPSB SNAC website so that other English school board SNACs throughout Quebec could emulate our website. SNAC unanimously and enthusiastically approved the request.

 <p>The logo for the Special Needs Advisory Committee (SNAC) features a group of colorful human figures in various colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) standing in a line. Above them, the acronym 'SNAC' is written in large, bold, black letters. Below the figures, the text 'Special Needs Advisory Committee' is written in a smaller font. To the left of the figures, there is a small circular logo with the text 'Lester B. Pearson School Board' and 'Commission scolaire Lester B. Pearson'.</p>	<p>SNAC Report to CPC and Education Committees From SNAC Meeting April 23, 2014 Page 2 of 2</p>
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Education Committee Report: A synopsis of the Guidance and Transitions Presentations was provided highlighting the important role that Guidance Counsellors play at the high school level and outlining the successes of the Transitions program. Updates on the status of the both the Draft of the Arts and Culture in Education Policy, and the Home Schooling Policy were provided.

Professionals Report: Many staff members are in the process of conducting observation visits to daycares and preschools of special needs kids who have registered with the LBPSB for the fall of 2014.

Advancing With Autism Workshop: Three SNAC members attended the *Advancing with Autism* conference on March 30th, 2014 and a detailed report is available on the SNAC website. The overall theme was that kids with autism have many unique gifts and talents and we need to foster their strengths and not give up hope on them.

Upcoming Business—SNAC AGM and First Meeting Dates for 2014-2015: It was established that the SNAC AGM be held on September 17th, 2014 and that the first two SNAC meetings be held on October 1st and October 22nd. After October the meeting schedule would be the 3rd Wednesday of every month with the exception of December and ending after the May 2015 meeting. In order to reduce the workload for October it was decided that the October 1st meeting would be primarily a brainstorming session and no reports will be discussed.

As in previous years, it was decided that SNAC will advertise the AGM by putting up a couple of posters in each of the schools. A discussion of the effectiveness of the posters ensued and it was agreed that, considering there are few alternatives, this is the best way for SNAC to make itself known to new parents. SNAC will also prepare a final edition of the SNAC Chat Newsletter to highlight the AGM. The SNAC representatives to PASA will remind school level Administrators to kindly post the AGM posters in the month of June, and email a PDF version to their parent populations next September.

Upcoming Business—“Home Schooling Policy” Consultation: SNAC will be preparing a response for the “Home Schooling Policy” consultation. It was agreed that some parents home school their children specifically because their children have special needs and therefore the committee will work on providing feedback.

Upcoming Business—Annual Report: It was requested that any suggestions for SNAC activities and priorities for next year’s committee be included in the Annual Report. The Report will be discussed and approved at the final meeting in May.

Questions from the Public: A parent expressed that in certain cases, it would be beneficial to more clearly indicate on a student’s report card that although they may have received good grades, if they are following an IEP with an adapted program, those results cannot be directly compared to the class average of his/her peers. In this particular case, the parent was unaware that the student was performing at a level significantly lower than other students, because he had been receiving good grades.

Next Meeting: The next SNAC meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 21st, 2014 at 7pm at the school board. This will be the final SNAC meeting for this school year.

Respectfully submitted,

Brett Hillgartner, Secretary

Sandra Buckingham, Chairperson

Special Needs Advisory Committee 2013-2014