



Minutes of the sixth (6th) meeting of the 2014-2015 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) held on Tuesday, June 9th, 2015 in the Board Room at the SWLSB Administrative Centre, 235 Montée Lesage, Rosemère, Québec

Members present: Evan Caminis, Pamala Cripton, Maria Garliaris, Lisa Loveland, Jennifer Perry, Patricia Sasso, Marianne Sassen, Yolanta Wiktorczyk, Parents; Brian Benoit, Teachers; Elaine Sassen, Alternate Teacher; Jack Fitch, SEPB577;

Also present were Fred Greschner, Assistant Director General; Tina Korb, Director of Educational Services; Silvia Patella, Assistant Director of Complementary Services;

Regrets: Janet Sallie, Audrey Kannon, Carla Tosti, Gina Persechino, Emilio Migliozi, Sébastien Joly

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m.

1. Additions to & Approval of the Agenda

Add. 6.4 Coalition

Add under Varia: Housekeeping

Lisa Loveland MOVED THAT the agenda is approved as presented. Seconded by Yolanta Wiktorczyk.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

2. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on May 4th, 2015

Jennifer Perry MOVED THAT the minutes of May 4th, 2015 are approved with minor corrections. Seconded by Marianne Sassen

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

3. Question Period

4. Business Arising

4.1 Allocation of resources for Special Needs

The Chair thanked Mr. Greschner for bringing this presentation to SEAC.

Mr. Greschner started by explaining that one of the reasons it has been difficult to come back to SEAC with resources is because the budget parameters from the ministry have not been given within the time frame that could be presented with accurate figures. Once the new school year begins, they are busy staffing school. He presented and explained a projected portrait of what will be allocated for special needs for next year. It should be noted that the SWLSB puts approximately \$1,000,000 extra from their operating budget into special education, than the ministry allocates, in order to maintain quality for our students. Mr. Greschner explained the Special Technician positions – although they are all Special Education Technicians, some work with behavioral issues only, hence the name Behavior Technician. Having said this, the board is getting away from the term Behavior Technician.

A financial document was distributed to members and Mr. Greschner asked that it be returned before leaving the meeting.

In response to a question from Marianne Sassen, in order to inject more money into special education, the Board takes it from other budget lines within their operating budget. To date this extra money has been maintained and no cuts have been announced at this time.



The entente/inter board agreement figures are not available until the fall. These are the funds that are given to students who we cannot service in our Board. There are very few inter board /entente agreements and we are funded at 100% for these students from the ministry. There is no cost to the Board for these students. The only financial obligation for the Board is the transportation for the students who we have ententes with other schools.

In response to a question from Jennifer Perry, the board has created a resource teachers network under the guidance of the Complementary Services Department, where they meet and get ongoing learning and training. Mr. Greschner explained that the resource teachers have demonstrated that they have the experience or they have a special education background in their studies.

The Chairperson noted that in the special needs budget there is nothing allocated for assistive technology and oversized classrooms.

Many of our schools get a bulk of hours for special needs in order to give them to at risk students who cannot get codes. 21% of the SWLSB population has special needs.

In the Diversified Pathways, the number of students per classroom is allocated according to the teacher's collective agreement.

Jack Fitch commented that most people do not realize what the role of an attendant is and cautions members that before offering recommendations for this class of employment, understand what the role of these employees is.

In the fall, the validation process is so tedious and mobilizes all services – the bureaucratic time spent is huge and everyone has voiced their concerns. Previously there was a direction regionale (middle man) so when there was a grey zone on a case they had these people to discuss it with. Now there is no middle man and all cases go directly to the ministry. The results have been a significant decrease in assigning codes to all the school boards.

Mr. Greschner mentioned that the SEAC is a consultative committee, so when anything related to special education is being consulted with the parity committee, the Board will come to SEAC for recommendations. The Chairperson explained to members what SEAC's mandate is when it comes to the allocation of services and suggested that it needs to be discussed via e-mail to members and recommendations will be offered to the Board before June 30th. A survey will be sent out to members asking what their recommendations are and these will be forwarded to the Board. Keep in mind that where you want to add services, you must take away from another without touching on essential services to students. Mrs. Korb went on to say that the Board has a responsibility to certain employees, so it is not always feasible to take away some jobs to give to others. Most employees have security of employment.

The Chairperson would like members to give consideration to what is not being funded in terms of allocations of resources for special needs. A lot of students transitioning into Voc. Ed are not being serviced. Mrs. Korb responded that the youth sector and adult sector are very different. There is no funding for the Voc Ed services, so be advised that the only way to support the adult service is to take away from the youth. Although the Board agrees, the reality is that the adult sector is not funded. ESD is working hard on the high school pathways in order to be able to support them all to the age of 21. If they are on the correct path, they can succeed in the youth sector. Silvia Patella went on to say that there is a consultant that has a 40% task working with the adult sector. The adult sector guidance counselor attends youth sector meetings in order to build that bridge.



Jack Fitch would like to share the “Partners in Education” booklet with the SEAC. Mr. Greschner will send it to the Chairperson.

4.2 I.E.P. Toolkit

Thank you to everyone involved in preparing this toolkit. 3000 copies were printed. The Chairperson would like these toolkits distributed to schools in time for the fall IEP meeting.

Mr. Greschner responded that this should be done through ESD/CSD and they will find the best way. This committee should not be sending e-mails to principals; it needs to be done through the management of the school board. Mrs. Korb went on to say that the committee can trust that the department will send them out to the schools with a covering letter as it is confidential information as to how many IEP’s are within each school. It will be done through the internal courier. These toolkits are for all students in the board who have IEP’s with some held in reserve for new students.

The committee recommends that these toolkits be handed out by a certain timeline and would like this reported back to them once they are distributed. A suggestion was to bring them to the school level special needs committee to be distributed.

Mrs. Korb will ask the principals what they feel would be a good timeline for distribution of the kits. She will let the committee know what they decide. The WOTP students will be asked to assemble them in the fall for distribution.

This toolkit will also be available on the website.

Patricia Sasso MOVED THAT the meeting is extended to 9:30. Seconded by Jennifer Perry.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

5. Reports

5.1 Chairs Report

In members packages.

5.2 CSD Report

- Mrs. Korb had a presentation on programs at the secondary level but asked that the presentation be tabled to the next meeting due to the late hour.
- ESD is trying to disentangle all of the misconceptions and ensure that students do not fall through the cracks.
- Working on the transitioning from elementary to high and on.
- Maintaining students in an inclusive environment with regular support.
- All special needs students are looked at individually.
- The number of students per class is weighted by code. These classes will be maintained, but not grown.

5.3 Treasurers Report

As presented.

5.4 Other Reports (*discuss for 2015-2016*)

The Chairperson mentioned that possibly for next year, teachers and support staff members could offer a report at the meetings.

6. New Business

6.1 SEAC Letter to Minister Blais

The Chairperson has prepared an English and French letter to be sent to Minister Blais from the SEAC.

Lisa Loveland MOVED THAT the Chairperson is mandated to send a letter with their concerns on the budget compressions for special needs to Minister Blais on behalf of the SEAC. Seconded by Jennifer Perry.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

6.2 SEAC/Parent letter(s) to MNA

SEAC will use the standard letter that the PC is sending out to MNA's. SEAC is not permitted to distribute these letters to parents on school grounds.

6.3 Rep to PC other than Parent Commissioner (2015-2016)

Members need to think of this for next year as a new member could be sitting at the PC table as a delegate in order to have two votes from SEAC. At the first meeting in 2015 school year a delegate will be voted from SEAC to sit on PC.

6.4 Coalition

The Chairperson spoke about the discussions at the meeting of the **CP/PC-CCSEHDAA de Montreal and Laval**. This group has invited PC Chairs and Vice-Chairs, SEAC Chairs and Special Needs Parent Commissioners in attendance either as members or as observers. Their objective is to denounce the cuts from the government. The Chairperson has been sitting as observer and reported that at a council meeting Jennifer Maccarone, the Chair recommended that she resign from this coalition as she is a Commissioner.

The PC voted not to be a member of this committee but to remain as an observer as they believe the committee uses aggressive tactics. These boards did not comply with the cuts years ago and are not fighting the same issues that our Board is. Too many major players in education are not interested in joining this coalition and the Director General recommends we stay with recognized groups. As a school board we will manage it our way and maintain what we already have.

Mr. Greschner cautioned that this committee is not permitted to designate anyone to this committee as it is an advisory committee to the management table. He will check into it the legalities of it and get back to the committee. Mrs. Korb went on to say that she was at the Parents Committee and many members of the PC who sit on many different committees are adamant that this school board not be a voting member on this committee. They are ok with someone being an observer but do not want to be associated with a coalition that has a certain agenda and has ignored the budget constraints in the past.

The Chair of SEAC recommends in the meantime, she will contact the coalition and let them know that she is withdrawing from it.

Jack Fitch MOVED THAT the Chairperson will withdraw the SEAC from the coalition. Seconded by Lisa Loveland.

This motion was CARRIED with the following division:

For: 7
Abstain: 3

In response to a question from Jennifer Perry, she may attend the coalition meetings as an observing parent, but not on behalf of the SEAC.



7. Varia

Housekeeping tabled to next meeting.

8. Question Period

Brian Benoit asked if members are aware of the cuts that the government is proposing to special needs. He went on to say that this committee has done a great job this year.

Mr. Greschner congratulates the committee on the IEP Toolkit.

Lisa Loveland brought forth a question from parents asking what the role of the Special Needs Parent Commissioner is. The Chairperson responded that even she is not clear of her role yet, but would be happy to speak to anyone about it.

9. Adjournment

Next meeting is September 15, 2015

Patricia Sasso MOVED THAT meeting is adjourned at 9:55. Seconded by Jennifer Perry.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

Minutes approved _____, 2015

Chairperson _____ Secretary _____

Respectfully submitted by:
Susan O'Keeffe, Recording Secretary