



**Consultation on the
Reorganization of
Laval High Schools
2015-2016**

March 27 to June 3, 2014

**Minutes of the Public Consultation Meeting on the
Reorganization of Laval High Schools 2015-2016
Meeting Senior Students | April 29, 2014
Held at the SWLSB Administrative Centre**

A meeting on the Consultation on the Reorganization of Laval High Schools 2015-2016 was held in the cafeteria of the Administrative Centre of the SWLSB at 235 Montée Lesage in Rosmère on Monday, April 24, 2014 with students of the Laval senior schools.

Present: Commissioners Nick Milas, Chairman; Elio Lattanzio, Commissioner; Stephanie Vucko, Director General; Eileen Kelly, Assistant Director General with 18 students from Laval Liberty and Laurier Senior High Schools.

Opening Remarks

Mr. Milas and Ms. Vucko welcomed the students and thanked them for their presence. Before the meeting, asked the students to buddy with a student from the other school.

Ms. Vucko gave the students a summary of the way a school board functions, the decision process, Council's role and the overall operations. She reminded students that the consultation document was available on our web site and provided some history as to the compulsory transfers and how Council gave her the mandate to find a solution to this matter. Laval is growing and so is our student population. The Board examined exchanging schools with *Commission scolaire de Laval*, but being in the same situation as we are, that solution was not viable. The real solution would be building a new school in either Laval East or West, and this can take many years to negotiate. Council wants to ensure there is sufficient room in Laval for all students to attend an English high school, hence the restructure.

Questions and discussions with the students

- A summary of phase was given. In phase 1, the students and staff will be moving buildings. The 4 high schools in Laval, will remain the same, but with a different address. Rather than going to 2323, boul. Daniel Johnson, Laurier Senior students will go to 2300, boul. du Souvenir. In a nutshell, in phase 1, nothing changes except for the address of two schools: LSHS and LJHS
- As for dress codes, these are school driven decisions, hence the school administration and Governing Board decides if there will be a dress code or not. Students expressed concern about one school having a dress code and not the other, They worry this is not an ideal situation as it will not keep students united and may also increase bullying. The dress code will separate the students as they will be easily identifiable by school. On the other hand, another student added that for supervision, the dress code might facilitate the task and make it easier to identify students with their dress code. Ms. Vucko suggested students go to their Student Council who can then approach the Governing Board and address their issues so the best decision can be taken. Students need to decide the issues they want to mobilize for.
- Students asked about a wider variety of programs for the 2014-2015 school year. Ms. Vucko explained that student enrollment determines how many programs and concentrations can be offered. If we don't have enough students, we cannot open a program. It would not be fiscally responsible. She added that one of the benefits of Phase 2 is having more students, hence, justifying a wider-range of programs.
- LLHS has a football program; LSHS has a rugby program for girls, what will happen in the timetabling if both programs are maintained. Ms. Vucko informed the students that logistics are being looked at by the administrators to ensure that all programs fit in a schedule. Mr. Milas added that with the buildings being so close together, facilities can be shared if needed.
- Students asked if there would be enough labs to accommodate all students. Ms. Vucko reassured them that this is a priority. There will be enough lab space and lab time for everyone and in the coming years, the School Board will be working on revamping the labs of all of its schools across the 3L so they meet 21st century standards.

- A question was raised as to the two phase implementation, rather than just one. The advantage of doing this change in a 2-phase process is that it allows the School Board to spend the necessary funds one year at a time. We have a 21st century vision for all of our schools and are doing pilot projects in some schools that may be implemented.
- Some students had concerns about bullying. They mentioned that although they never witness any bullying, they know it happens. Ms. Vucko defined what bullying was and informed the students about the new law (Bill 56) in effect since January 2014. School boards have an obligation to ensure that all schools have an Anti-bullying Anti-Violence plan. She reminded students on the importance of telling an adult when students suspect, hear or see bullying-type incidents and not remain silent. It is key that students inform their school Principal or Vice-Principal or a trusted adult if they have specific concerns about bullying.
- A student mentioned that the concern is the thought of coming face to face with a bully. Maybe the person has changed but, the worry is still there. Kids getting bullied are afraid to tell an adult. A student from Laurier Senior asked Laval Liberty students what the state of bullying was at their school. A student responded that there is not a big issue at LLHS.

He added that at LSHS it is the same. Bullying happens behind closed doors or online at home, and that's the problem. Another student went on to add, that so much can be done to prevent bullying and that in the end it's the students who can put a stop to it. The Vice-Principal reassured the students that the administration of both senior high schools are already collaborating and intervening in cases they are aware of.

One student indicated that in one case, the administration was very involved in resolving a bullying issue that was happening but at one point just stopped intervening. Ms. Vucko suggested that the student go back to the administrator who may have thought the problem was resolved, when in fact it was not. A student asked what the School Board was planning on doing to further prevent bullying. Ms. Vucko mentioned that meetings will be taking place in the spring to this effect. Safety and security is a priority and the middle school program will allow for students to have easy access to one specific teacher. Mr. Milas reminded the students that they are in the front line, and need to report any bullying issues they suspect or are aware of.

- Students asked how the lunch period would be worked out between the two senior schools. Ms. Kelly responded that it will be a staggered lunch hour.
- Questions were asked as to the sharing of common spaces. Ms. Kelly responded that dedicated classrooms will be shared such as the library, cafeteria, gym, field and labs. Lockers will be in the specific section of each school. A student asked if the lockers would be shared. At this point we do not know. It will be decided in August.
- Students have some concerns as to the supervision during recess and lunch periods. Ms. Kelly reassured students that all adults have the legal obligation to intervene when need be, it doesn't matter for which school they work for. Ms. Vucko reassured the students that the cameras all are functioning and checked on a regular basis.
- Students asked if they would have the opportunity to work with the leadership students of the other school. Ms. Vucko specified that the school administration will ensure leadership students have time to meet together and collaborate together.
- Students raised questions as to the organization of their prom. Ms. Kelly replied that the prom committee organizes the prom and next year will be no different. Students can choose to do one graduation for both schools, or each their own. That is a school-based decision.
- A question was raised as to what would be moved and what would stay in the current building. Ms. Vucko responded that this was decided in consultation with school teams. An assessment of what needs to be moved and what can stay was conducted. Directors have visited both schools and an exhaustive inventory list has been prepared.
- Students asked if they could fuse the sports teams, seeing as the two schools would be located in the same building. Ms. Vucko reminded students that in phase one, there will still be 4 schools. A student asked if the concentration teams could be combined. The response was that in phase 1 they would not be combined, but extra-curricular activities could be organized.
- Concerns were raised as to additional STL busses outside of the morning peak periods. Students were invited to contact the STL, or visit their website for the schedules as many other options are available to them. The School Organization department will send these schedules to the schools.
- A student asked if the music lab from the Daniel-Johnson would be moved and the response was, yes it will.

- Students asked if the events that were traditionally held in each school could be maintained next year such as the Blue and Gold and the annual Fashion Show. Again, this is a school based decision and there is no reason why they would not be maintained.
- As to the name of the school, once a model is chosen, a policy will need to be put in place as to how to proceed.

Closure of Meeting

Mr. Milas and Ms. Vucko thanked the students for their active participation and reminded them to not let anything fester. Any concerns should be address with the principal. If need be, students can address concerns to the Chairman, through the Secretary General.

Mr. Milas commended the students for their dedication and for being ambassadors and wished them luck in their exams.

The support of students is important in this change process. Ms. Vucko reiterated to stick to the facts and not hear-say.

One student thanked, on behalf of all students present, the board for listening to them and for hearing their concerns. He said they were very appreciative of this and congratulated the board for the openness.

Students were invited to have some snacks before heading back on the bus.

END TIME: 11:00 a.m.