

Minutes of the FOURTH (4th) meeting of the 2018-2019 Sir Wilfrid Laurier Parents Committee held on Thursday February 7th, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. in the Boardroom of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board, 235 Montée Lesage, Rosemère, Québec.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dalia Ceron Gonzalez	Franklin Hill Elementary	Lisa Cipriani	McCaig Elementary
Soha Morsi	Genesis Elementary	Lannie Richard	Mountainview Elementary
Charbel Mourad	Hillcrest Academy	Frank D'Onofrio	Pinewood Elementary
Richard Alary	Joliette High	Carla Tosti	Rosemere High
Adam Garonce	Jules Verne Elementary	Effie Kontakos	Souvenir Elementary
Adam Gordon	Lake of Two Mountains High	Christine Flynn	St. Jude Elementary
Tara Anderson	Laurentia Elementary	Steve Ceccolini	St. Paul Elementary
Don Beverly	Laurentian Regional High	Billie Chasiotis	Terry Fox Elementary
Tony Beliotis	Laval Junior Academy	Nathalie Codner	Twin Oaks Elementary
Douglas Howarth	Laval Senior Academy	Laura Orzea	SEAC Representative

ALSO PRESENT: Gaëlle Absolonne Director General; Richard Greschner, Director of Human Resources; Stephanie Krenn, Director of Corporate Affairs/Secretary General; Paolo Galati, Chairperson; Melissa Wall, Bob Pellerin, Commissioners

ABSENT: Arundel Elementary, Crestview Elementary, Grenville Elementary, John F Kennedy Elementary, Joliette Elementary, Laurentian Elementary, Morin Heights Elementary, Our Lady of Peace Elementary, Pierre E. Trudeau Elementary, Rawdon Elementary, St. Vincent Elementary, Ste-Adele Elementary, Ste-Agathe Academy

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Additions to agenda:

- 6.8 Facebook page
- 7.1 Carbon monoxide detectors in schools
- 7.2 STL Bus Transportation for students
- 7.3 School Fees
- 7.4 School Nurse

PC20190207-01 Lake of Two Mountains High MOVED THAT the agenda be accepted with additions. Seconded by Mountainview Elementary.

Carried **UNANIMOUSLY**

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of December 7, 2018

PC20190207-02 St. Jude Elementary MOVED THAT the minutes of December 7, 2018 be accepted as presented. Seconded by Laval Senior Academy.

This motion was CARRIED on the following division:

For: Franklin Hill Elem, Hillcrest Acad, Jules Verne Elem, Lake of Two Mountains High, Laurentia Elem, Laurentian Regional High, Laval Senior Acad, McCaig Elem, Mountainview Elem, Pinewood Elem, Rosemere High, Souvenir Elem, St Jude Elem, Twin Oaks Elem, SEAC

Abstain: Genesis Elem, Joliette High, St. Paul Elem, Terry Fox Elem

3. QUESTION PERIOD

On this Teacher Appreciation week, members say thank you to all the SWLSB staff.

4. BUSINESS ARISING

4.1 Deed of Establishment & Three-Year Plan – e-vote

PC20190114 Carla Tosti MOVED THAT the SWLSB Parents Committee approves the Consultation – Deeds of Establishment for 2019-2020 & the 2019-2022 Three-Year Plan for the Allocation & Destination of Immovables as presented.

This motion was CARRIED on the following division:

For: Hillcrest Acad, Lake of Two Mountains High, McCaig Elem, Mountainview Elem, Pierre E. Trudeau Elem, Pinewood Elem, Rosemere High, St Jude Elem, St Paul Elem, St. Vincent Elem, Twin Oaks Elem

Abstain: Laurentia Elem, Terry Fox Elem

4.2 Consultation – School Calendars 2019-2020 - e-vote

WHEREAS Mountainview, Franklin Hill and McCaig recommend changing the date of the beginning of the school year to the last Thursday of August 2019. (Comments from parents are that it puts them in a situation where they have to find a place for their children for those two extra days, since all summer camps are over since mid-August. Comment from teachers is that they enjoy the progressive aspect of the return to school. Children are less attentive when they come back from a long summer break and having a 2-day week, then a 3-day weekend followed by a four-day week was ideal. This would maximize attendance and avoid breaking parents work schedules/vacation.)

WHEREAS Franklin Hill recommends that a pedagogical day to be moved to September 13, 2019. (Resource re-evaluation occurs two weeks after the start of the school year, on a pedagogical day. With the presented school calendar, the first pedagogical day is planned to be at the end of the third school week, and thus too far for resource evaluation and implicates a delay in adequate implementation.)

WHEREAS Franklin Hill, Laval Junior Academy and Pinewood recommends putting November 1 as a pedagogical day, to implement a similar tradition as in the French School Boards instead of October 28. (School attendance tends to be extremely low post Halloween day, October 31 and noticeable tiredness in children affects November 1 greatly. This way, students would avoid curricular penalties.)

WHEREAS Laval Junior Academy recommends having May 15 (ped day) and May 18 as pedagogical days instead of May 18 and May 22 (ped day); (In the past few years, there has been a three day week by placing a board wide ped day the Friday on the same week as the Victoria Day Monday. In the past, the ped day used to be placed the Friday before, extending the long weekend. Having a holiday and a ped day in the same week does not make sense.)

WHEREAS Mountainview, Franklin Hill and McCaig recommend changing the end of the year date to June 19, 2020; (Both parents and teachers are not happy with this change. Parents comment that some of them use this period for vacation from work, and it would be impossible in this scenario for them to leave if children have school. Teachers believe that classes will not be full, and the children that are there will not be very attentive. It seems those days would be wasted if placed there. This would maximize attendance and avoid breaking parents work schedules/vacation during the last week, since day camps are not operational.)

PC20190119 Carla Tosti MOVED THAT the SWLSB Parents Committee approves the Consultation on School Calendars 2019-2020 with the Parents Committee recommendations.

This motion was CARRIED on the following division:

For: Franklin Hill Elem., McCaig Elem, Mountainview Elem, Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elem, Pinewood Elem, Rosemere High, St Jude Elem, SEAC

Abstain: Joliette High, Lake of Two Mountains High, Laurentia Elem, Laval Senior Academy, Terry Fox Elem

4.3 School Calendars 2019-2020 – Feedback (presentation by Mr. Richard Greschner, Director of Human Resources)

Mr. Greschner explained that he tried to accommodate the recommendations that the Parents Committee made, however, for these reasons they could not be retained.

- School start date change – in the teacher's collective agreement it states that teachers must have three ped days prior to the start of school. They give four because one is a board wide compulsory professional development session. It also states that teachers cannot start work prior to August 24 and that is a Saturday. So given that teachers can only start on August 26, giving them the required four ped days, would make students start on Friday, August 30 and that did not seem effective.
- The September 20 ped day is being used for training sessions for new teachers. Some of the teachers are not hired until after school starts so they may not be able to attend the training on September 13.

- Moving October 28 to November 1 – This was brought up in a management meeting. Unfortunately, for next school year a common PED day with the Lester B Pearson school board has already been established for professional development. In the future, they will try to accommodate the November 1 request.
- May 15 – previously there was a ped day on the Friday, followed by the Victoria day holiday. This year the last day of exams is on May 15 and May 22 is being used as a board wide ped day for marking these exams. Should members wish, May 22 could be changed to May 29 as the ped day.
- June 19 cannot be used as the last day of school as it does not respect the 200 days of work.

4.4 Quebec High School History books

The Director General verified with Mr. Geoff Hipps, the Director of Pedagogical Services on the comment of EMSB hiring external resources to look at the history textbook content.

Mr. Hipps is the Chair of the DEEN committee (Directors of Educational services) and this committee has mandated a subcommittee to look at the book. She went on to say that in the Anglophone community, the teachers do not teach to the book, they teach to the program. The book is only one tool. They use many supplemental resources. More specifically the SWLSB consultants gave them a lot of supplemental material in order to help them if anything is missing from our textbooks. We do not feel that our students are missing anything.

4.5 Training for GB Chairs regarding the Educational Project

The Director General will look into this further.

On March 25 there is a GB training on school budget and school fees.

She went on to say that the principals have been given guidelines and a timeline as to what is expected for their educational project in order that they be submitted by the end of June.

She will send the document with the timeline for the educational project to the Chairperson to send to members.

The Chairperson went on to say it is important for members to know what the role of the parents is when it comes to the educational project.

4.6 January 21 Town Hall

Laval Junior Academy entered the meeting at 8:49 pm

A Town Hall was held at Laval Senior Academy. The Director General explained to members the reason. In December, a parent came to Council with 18 questions. One was why the board could not provide transportation from Laval to Rosemere High. In order to address the concerns, Council decided to hold a town hall to address worries about the two high schools in Laval. Providing transportation to RHS will not fix the problem. They wanted to know why parents did not want to send their kids to the Laval schools.

The purpose of the evening:

- Communicate up to date information about the high schools
- Answer questions from the parents
- Group parents together to brainstorm and come up with solutions

Once it became clear that there would be no transportation to RHS, about 1/3 of the parents left the session before the brainstorming part and were not satisfied with the evening.

Questions that were asked to parents during the brainstorming were:

- What was their hope to see at LSA
- What was their biggest concern

An external company was hired to moderate the evening in order to provide a neutral party for parents to speak freely. Once their report is ready, it will be posted on the website.

The Director General went on to say that it is important to note that Laval Senior Academy has a 94% success rate.

She explained the challenges of transportation in our school board. We have a large territory and we must respect the budget given. Should we choose to put extra buses to get students from Laval, other regions would expect the same thing. If money were used for this, it would be taken from other services for students.

St. Paul left the meeting at 9:01 p.m.

In response to a comment from Genesis Elementary, taxpayer money was not used to pay for the town hall meeting. The funds used were from the profits from our Service aux Entreprises. Our board is fortunate to have this service to businesses. It generates extra profits that we can reinject into our community.

In response to a question from Terry Fox, it is the law that the board is not allowed to charge parents for transportation. If parents want to get together and hire a private transporter to bring their kids to other schools they can, but the school board is not allowed to do it.

4.7 Chair Handbook

The handbook is coming along.

4.8 GB information uniformity

Parents committee would like the board to ask the school administrators to put the names of the governing board members on their websites. The Director General explained that every school handles their own website by using staff from their school.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Consultation – Policy on Safe and Caring Schools and Centres

Mrs. Stephanie Krenn was here to present the origins and the timeline for the consultation for the policy on safe and caring schools and centres.

- Members noted that Appendix 1 was not included in the consultation. Ms. Krenn will be sure that members and governing boards receive it.
- The deadline to respond to the consultation is March 8. Parents Committee should come up with one suggestion as a group and not list what individual schools want. They will be doing this consultation for their own individual schools as a governing board. It is important that ALL schools send back a response, even if your school is ok with everything.
- In response to a question from Laval Senior, the board is responsible anywhere where students or employees are on their property.
- In response to a question from Hillcrest Academy, governing boards and parents committee are generally consulted on all community policies.
- Laurentian Regional said that half of his governing board did not think that this policy was necessary given that there are already policies on anti-bullying, proper code of conducts etc. in place.
- McCaig responded that it is hard to vote on something that came with no guidelines as there is no context to follow. In the future, perhaps it could be explained to parents in a preamble what the guidelines are.
- In response to a question from Franklin Hill, it will be posted on the website in order for the whole community to see it once it has been ratified at Council. There will be a plan in order that it is shared.
- Members are asked to send their comments to the Chairperson and she will collate them and send them in. Please send them to her by February 15.

E-vote February 28, 2019

WHEREAS in 6.1.6, PC suggests the removal of the word supports. It should simply read "Promote positive behavior and character education;"

WHEREAS in the Appendix I, PC suggests the removal of the mention of Appendix II as there is still a note in Preventative practices bullet points (Restorative approach).

PC20190228 Carla Tosti MOVED THAT the SWLSB Parents Committee approves the Consultation on Policy on Safe and Caring Schools and Centres with the Parents Committee Recommendations.

This motion was carried **UNANIMOUSLY**

5.1 Discussion on the school board's policy and handling of situations concerning racism.

Twin Oaks was concerned about the article in the news on McCaig Elementary. She would like to know how the board rectifies situations that are ongoing.

The Director General responded that students are not taught at school to discriminate. Schools educate the students with through curriculum, assemblies, guest speakers, activities, etc. She went on to say that some of the information that was in the paper was inaccurate but because it involves minors, it cannot be shared. In this situation, there were two students involved and both of them were at fault and received the education necessary so that it hopefully will not happen again.

5.2 Parent Commissioner Elementary School

Charbel Mourad appreciates the opportunity PC gave him to serve as the elementary parents committee, but he is resigning his position. He found it challenging in terms of time commitment, as he is busy in his work and has young children. He went on to thank the commissioners and wishes them much success in the future, and is happy he will remain on Parents Committee

The committee thanks Charbel for his commitment, albeit short term.

The Chairperson only found out this afternoon and she would like to give the opportunity to all members to have the chance to submit their names for the position. A special meeting will be held Wednesday February 13 at 6:30 p.m. in order to vote in a new parent commissioner. Anyone who is not available to attend can call in by phone.

Paolo Galati and Bob Pellerin spoke about the role and time commitment of the parent commissioner.

6. REPORTS

6.1 School Board's Report

- The Director General will send members her PowerPoint presentation. (she will forward this to the Chairperson to send to members)
- Teacher appreciation week was this week
- February 4 we were at a job fair for new teachers at McGill university
- Hooked on school days is next week.
- February 25 information session at LSA and LJA on sport études. We are the only schools north of Montreal that have this program, approved by the ministry. The various sports associations will be present at the information session.
- Going to a staff recruiting in Laval for support staff and caretakers.
- March 21 there will be 5 à 7 for recruiting of future administrators.

In response to a question from St Jude, the bank of French educators is low. This is a challenge felt throughout all school boards. We are looking at different ways to recruit. Our challenge is that our territory is very large. Substitute teachers are also difficult to find.

In response to a question from LSA, it varies from person to person as to how long it takes to get a permanent teaching position.

6.2 Chair's Report

In members package.

6.3 Treasurer's Report

In members package.

No reserved amount in awards and medals.

700\$ should be reserved for awards and medals.

6.4 Parent Commissioner's Report

In members package.

6.5 RCP-3L Report

6.5.1 Parents Committee resolution regarding the possible abolition of School Boards

There is a meeting this Saturday.

Does this committee want to prepare a resolution? PC was waiting to hear the position of the EPCA on this.

6.6 SEAC Report

In members package.

The committee is looking at developing ways to get more members onto SEAC, at least one parent per school.

PC would like to see one member on every governing board as a parent of a child with special needs. This parent could then go onto SEAC if they want. Governing boards could also invite a parent with a special needs child to sit on governing board as a non-voting member. The Chairperson would like the Director General to send a notice to principals to ask their parents if someone would like to sit on GB as a non-voting member.

Suggestion to each member of PC is to add SEAC as a standing item on their GB agenda every month.

Information about SEAC should be put into the Kindergarten orientation package.

SEAC workshop on February 19 – Topic: Work-life balance, self-care and resilience

6.7 EPCA (English Parents Committee Association)

In members package.

Waiting for comments from all PCs on their opinion of abolishing school boards. A round table of comments was done with members.

- One government running schools does not work – need school boards
- Keep control of our own English schools.
- How do they think that schools will function. It will be chaos.
- School boards are closer to their population – need school boards
- Need a plan in order to convince them it is a bad idea
- Want to know what the plan is once the boards are abolished. If it is decentralized to schools it will give more pressure to the principals and staff of the schools.
- Stand as a community and protect our rights as an English school board

Paolo Galati mentioned to members that this week two representatives from the QESBA presented a brief at the commission parlementaire. He will send the chairperson the link to the presentation so that members can watch it.

6.7.1 Parents Committee resolution regarding religious symbols in the workplace

EPCA is encouraging all Parents' Committees to take a stance on this very important topic. Remembering that prohibiting the wearing of religious symbols is an infringement on the fundamental rights of the individual as listed in Section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Section 3 of the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.

The chairperson will prepare a resolution to e-mail to members to vote on.

EPCA is putting together a special needs committee and is asking every PC member to send two members to participate. Laura SEAC will be one of them.

6.8 Face Book Page

McCaig Elementary asked that parents remind their friends that they have a page and ask them to like it. Please send any initiatives along that you would like to see on the page.

7. VARIA

7.1 Carbon monoxide/dioxide detectors in schools

Do we have these in our schools? Who verifies them, and how often?

The Director General responded that since the accident at a school in another board they have received various communications from the ministry. The Director of Material resources assured the ministry that:

- We have detectors on everything that needs it
- Every two years they are calibrated
- Yearly memo sent to schools to calibrate the detectors
- Everything that is required from the ministry we conform with.

In response to a request from St. Jude elementary, Paolo Galati will verify with Mr. Dionne if we could get detectors in every classroom.

7.2 STL Bus Transportation for students

Buses frequently crowded and often late.

The Director General responded that we have a good relationship with STL. If there is a need for it, they will increase the fleet of the buses. There is a fluctuation in bus taking and when it is required they do increase the amount of buses. Due to the weather, there have been frequent late buses, but that is out of our control. The weather is a challenge. There is a link to tracking your bus through STL. If they are late on a day when conditions are good, it is important for parents to call the transportation department or the STL.

GB20190207-03 Laval Junior Academy MOVED THAT the meeting be extended 30 minutes. Seconded by Laval Senior Academy.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

7.3 School Fees

Laval Senior Academy enquired on an update on school fees and what kind of guidance schools will get for September 2019.

The Director General guided member to go onto the website www.swlauriersb.qc.ca where there is a button with all of the information on the class action suit. We are using a service to prepare the cheques for parents and they should be going out before the end of June. The financial impact for our board 2.4 million. Anyone who does not cash their cheques in 180 days, the residuals will go back to our school board.

There is a school fees committee that includes administrators and directors from different departments. The invoicing is done through GPI and all invoices are verified by the secretary general before they go out to be sure they are in conformity. Directives

have gone out to administrators with a guideline that gives them the do's and the don'ts of charging school fees. There are also supply lists guidelines.

The school fees policy has been revised to meet the MEES directives and will go out for consultation next month. From the guidelines there is a list for the supply lists being given to parents. For the most part, schools respect the guidelines for school lists. There were more problems with the supply lists as there were many variances in each school.

Looking at having a data bank of standardized supplies to be sure that everyone is asking for the same things. Anything they are not allowed to ask for will not be in this data bank. This could take a couple of years to perfect.

7.4 School Nurse

Why don't we have school nurse? There are school nurses but they are not under our jurisdiction – they are with CISSS. The Director General will find out how often the school nurse visits schools. There are staff in schools trained in first aid. There should be someone there who can do a preliminary assessment of a student before calling parents.

Hillcrest Academy mentioned that there is a "what should you do" guide from the CISSS at CSSMI. Could we get our hands on a copy of it?

7.5 E-vote February 14, 2019 - Opposition to the prohibition of wearing religious symbols

WHEREAS the SWLSB is strongly committed to human rights and anti-discrimination.

WHEREAS the SWLSB is responsible for ensuring that all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. It believes that no individual should be a target of discriminatory behavior and/or exclusion.

WHEREAS it is the responsibility of all members of the SWLSB, including the SWL Parents' Committee, to uphold the values inherent in the Canadian Human Rights Act and The Civil Code of Quebec.

WHEREAS SWLSB promotes a school environment that is welcoming and free of stigma and discrimination for all individuals to express themselves and live authentically.

WHEREAS the selection and evaluation of teachers and support staff, and the work that they do in the classroom, should be solely based on merit.

WE, the SWL Parents' Committee, express our firm disagreement with the prohibition of the wearing of religious symbols by government employees and civil servants, which is an infringement on the fundamental rights of the individual as listed in Section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Section 3 of the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.

PC20190214 Carla Tosti MOVED THAT the SWLSB Parents' Committee approve the resolution on the Opposition to the prohibition of wearing religious symbols.

This motion was CARRIED on the following division:

For: Hillcrest Acad, Lake of Two Mountains High, Laurentia Elem, Laval Junior Acad, Laval Senior Acad, McCaig Elem, Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elem, Pinewood Elem, Rosemere High, St Jude Elem, St. Vincent Elem, Ste-Adèle Elem, Terry Fox Elem, Twin Oaks Elem, SEAC

Against: Mountainview Elem, St-Paul Elem

Abstain: Jules Verne Elem

8. QUESTION PERIOD

9. ADJOURNMENT

Next meeting – March 14, 2019

PC20190207-04 Mountainview Elementary MOVED THAT the meeting be closed at 10:39 p.m. Seconded by St Jude Elementary

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

Minutes approved _____, 2019

Chairperson

Secretary

Respectfully submitted by:
Susan O'Keeffe, Recording Secretary