



**Minutes of the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) meeting of the 2014-2015 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) held on Monday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 in the Board Room at the SWLSB Administrative Centre, 235 Montée Lesage, Rosemère, Québec**

**Members present:** Evan Caminis, Pamala Cripton, Jennifer Perry, Patricia Sasso, Marianne Sassen, Yolanta Wiktorczyk, Lisa Loveland, Parents; Brian Benoit, Elaine Sassen, Teachers

**Also present were** Tina Korb, Director of Educational Services; Silvia Patella, Assistant Director of Complementary Services

**Regrets:** Maria Garliaris, Janet Sallie, Mario Lisio, Audrey Kannon, Sébastien Joly, Jack Fitch

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The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

**1. Additions to & Approval of the Agenda**

Add 4.1 Nomination and election of Treasurer

Brian Benoit MOVED THAT the agenda is approved as presented. Seconded by Marianne Sassen

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

**2. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014**

Brian Benoit MOVED THAT the minutes of December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014 are approved as presented. Seconded by Jennifer Perry

For: 6  
Abstain: 3

**3. Chairs Report**

Sent to members in packages.

**4. Business Arising**

**4.1 Nomination and election of Treasurer**

Due to the resignation of Rose Renzo the position of Treasurer is open.

Lisa Loveland MOVED THAT she will take over the position of Treasurer. Seconded by Brian Benoit.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

Due to this resignation, Marianne Sassen will take over the regular position and Carla Tosti moves up to first parent alternate.

**4.2 Special Needs Commissioner/ SEAC Chair**

The Chairperson reported that there seems to be some perceived conflict if she remains Chair of SEAC in addition to her role as Special Needs Parent Commissioner. It has since however come to her attention that she is allowed to wear both hats. There are already some other SEAC Chairs and Vice Chairs who are also the Special Needs Commissioner to their Board. She went on to say that after verifying, that there is nothing in the Education Act that says she cannot do both. The members have been informed of this perceived conflict of interest and are in agreement that Pamala will remain as the Chair.

Elaine Sassen MOVED THAT the SEAC is in favor of Pamala Cripton remaining as the Chairperson of SEAC in addition to her role as Special Needs Parent Commissioner. Seconded by Jennifer Perry.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

#### 4.2 SEAC/CSD Parent Workshops/Conference (& Survey Results)

At the beginning of January, I forwarded to you all a copy of the results of the Survey that was sent out to the parent population in December. To summarize, most people preferred Wednesdays, Most people **preferred Laval** as the location and the **top topics** for workshops were:

- Brain training
- Homework trips
- Anxiety and depression
- Violence and Bullying
- Reading and language difficulties

The idea is to offer a buffet style conference where there can be 6-8 topics that parents can choose from.  
6:30-7:45 for first session | Health break | 8:00 to 9:15 for second session

The original conference date of April 23<sup>rd</sup> will be changed to Wednesday April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Ms. Korb noted that there is a Council meeting that night. The Chairperson responded that in the past they have held conferences without Directors there and since Wednesday nights were the popular nights as indicated in the survey, they would go ahead with that date.

The Chairperson spoke with Josee Cote the Principal of Laval Liberty High School and she confirmed that the school would be available to us on that date. And we could even have the Auditorium at our disposal if we want to have all parents gather there for a quick intro & orientation and then if we have a speaker or topic that draws a larger number of parents it can be used for the presentation.

She went on to say that in the past, the turnout was less than it could have been and suggested that we should try and line up our speakers as soon as possible and send out the online registration. We have the money to cover printing costs, and like in previous years a hard copy registration form will be sent out to each student. Mrs. Korb suggested that to be environmentally correct, any literature should be prepared and sent out via e-mail. She suggested that posters could be put up in schools. A registration form will be e-mailed to all parents with the description of workshops that will be available. The chairperson can then bring the poster to the Parents Committee to be given to the parent delegate to be brought back to their schools and hung up for advertising. The committee would like a paper copy sent out to each child in the school board. The Chairperson will collate them by school and give them to each Parents Committee delegate to bring back to their schools to be distributed. There is a PC meeting on March 12<sup>th</sup>.

She will also have them ask their schools to advertise in their weekly or monthly newsletters and to send out a reminder notice.

The Chairperson has already been in touch with David Schipper the Director of the Strategic Learning Center. This is the Center that really pioneered the concept of Brain Training. Patricia Sasso had a good experience with HOPE. David Schipper is available on that date and he is willing to provide us with the workshop free of charge. Since this was our lead topic of interest, perhaps he could use the auditorium or offer several different workshops in different classes. Apparently there are different Brain Training Programs such as Fast Forward Language and the Cellfield Reading Intervention Program.

Ms. Patella and Ms. Korb would like to see what they will speak about first. Anything presented needs to be solidly researched before speaking to parents so that we are not giving them false information. Parents feel just the awareness about these groups might be interesting just so they have options.

The Chairperson will forward all of the information she has about the groups who do Brain Training to the members. She will also get in touch with HOPE. Once the information is ok, she will send out an e-vote as this is time sensitive.

Silvia Patella has contacted the Centre of excellence for language – She is available on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Parents would like this information offered to the elementary and secondary if this is possible. The Centre of Excellence for Mental Health will be able to give an answer by February 13<sup>th</sup>. CSD is looking for a topic from members. Someone from McGill is looking at the whole notion around homophobia. This would fit into the violence and bullying. Silvia thinks there may be a cost for this one. The members would like someone to



speak on anxiety and depression as well. Silvia will ask the person if they would be willing to do two sessions, one for elementary and one for high school. Some additional ideas are:

- Homework tips – Phelishia Hudson and Patricia Panifili gave a great presentation on homework tips.
- Family Resource centre, Kerry Goldberg – mental health, anxiety and depression, homework tips – gives great conferences.

It is important to know how many sessions will be offered in each time slot – the committee is thinking there will be 6 to 8 people per time slot for the 2 sessions. The Chairperson would like to create a subcommittee for the smaller details. Marianne Sassen, Lisa Loveland, Yolanta Wiktorczyk and Pamala Cripton will be on the subcommittee. The presenters will be listed on the brochure. The committee would like the presenters confirmed by the end of February.

Pamala mentioned that 2000\$ has been committed from Parents Committee, they will decide how they would like to spend it by the next meeting. Yolanta would like a presenter and speaker more specific to addressing the special needs population. Some suggested topics were:

- How to work the system with a child with special needs?
- Liaising with schools and the social services – how to bring them together.

Complementary Services will look to see who they can get. They will brainstorm with consultants and will send them to the chairperson who will then send a complete list to the members to choose through survey monkey.

Members are encouraged to e-mail topics to CSD and indicate if they can find anyone to present.

#### **4.3 SEAC Special Needs Policy Review (Identification Cont'd)**

The chairperson would like some clarification and direction on how to proceed and asked Tina Korb if it is anticipated that the Board will be reviewing the Policy this year as she heard that it may be on hold or postponed. Since our last meeting, Marianne Sassen scoured the policies and forwarded to me her ideas and her notes. She proposed the idea of dividing the components into mini committees to help us proceed more efficiently and effectively. The Chairperson noted the document that was included in member's packages as it speaks to the mandated role of policy review. SEAC will still continue to analyze the policy and continue with the revision.

The intent is that the Educational policies committee will be looking at this policy sometime this year, Ms. Korb is just not sure when. There are changes being made from the government level to special needs students; however members will move forward working on this policy. The policy must reflect the law from the education act. Anything that is lacking in our policy could be suggested for review. Once the policy has been reviewed, the procedures will be looked at again.

#### **4.4 SEAC Logo**

Draft logos were handed out to members and the committee chose the hand logo.

The committee thanks Jennifer Perry for her work.

#### **4.5 Official Committee Makeup**

The Chairperson is reviewing the official composition of the SEAC. She has emailed Johanne Brabant, Secretary General to get clarification. In the current official makeup of the committee, there is no provision for a commissioner representative to sit at this table. The committee has the option of inviting a Commissioner to a meeting as needed. In response to a question from Yolanta Wiktorczyk, Ms. Korb will enquire if there are any commissioners presently who have a special needs child. According to the SWLSB Council Document Ref# 980401-0104 the official composition of SEAC is:

- 9 parent representatives
- Up to 9 parent alternates
- 2 representatives of the teachers designated by the association
- 1 representative of the non-teaching professional staff designated by their association
- 1 representative of the support staff designated by their association
- 2 representatives of the bodies which provides services to the students concerned designated by the Council of Commissioners
- 2 principals designated by the Director General
- The Director General or his/her representative



There seems to be some confusion on who can sit as the 2 representatives of the bodies which provides services to the students. Ms. Korb will get clarification on this.

## 5. Reports

### 5.1 CSD Report

The Engage All Conference for school board employees will be held on February 13<sup>th</sup> at Rosemere High. The theme is to engage learners. There will be 10 sessions, three times in the morning. Each session is 75 minutes and there are 25 per group. There are about 270 participants with 21 speakers. Teachers, administrators, special needs technicians and attendants are invited.

Some of the topics that will be addressed are, anti-bullying anti violence, new IEP's, preventing tantrums, visual schedules, DYP process, promotion and prevention for drugs, TIP behavior, beyond medication.

All of the presenters are employees from within the Board.

The committee would like to know how they can get more employees to attend these conferences. Ms. Korb responded that it is to no one's benefit to force adults to attend professional development sessions. Those who attend, attend because they really want to be there. A survey will be sent out to those who attended in a month to see what they are using from the conference, and in addition what was their AHA moment. She went on to say that professional development is given to Principals and teachers on an ongoing basis either here or within the schools.

Ms. Korb gave a draft presentation on a form teachers will be using on Differentiation and environmental strategies for students including steps to be considered before considering instructional modification.

### 5.2 Financial Report

Ms. Korb spoke about past practices with carrying over surpluses. Historically they were carried over as a practice, however, the board was in deficit and each carry over budget with a surplus was clawed back to balance the budget. Budgets are yearly budgets and the money should be spent in the current year.

The chairperson responded that this was done without warning, and the money that was there was earmarked for a bigger conference this year. SEAC parents did not claim their mileage in order to use this money for what they had it earmarked for. In addition why wasn't the Parents Committee budget clawed back.

### 5.3 Support Staff Union Report

## 6. New Business

### 6.1 Provincial Inter board SEAC Summit

The Chairperson has organized a meeting of all the Provinces English speaking SEAC Committees. The goal of this event is to touch base with one another as well as to share information and strategies and to develop a method of presenting a united voice when dealing with the larger issues that impact our Special Needs Population (like budget cuts) Each of the Boards attending asked their committee what topics they would like to see added to the agenda for this event. Is there is anything that this committee feels should be discussed at this meeting? Please send your responses to the Chairperson by e-mail

Elaine Sassen MOVED THAT the balance of the agenda is tabled until the next meeting. Seconded by Lisa Loveland.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

### 6.2 Clarification of SEAC Mandated Role & association with PC (their role & Responsibility)

## 7. Varia

## 8. Question Period



**9. Adjournment**

Next meeting is March 30<sup>th</sup>.

Elaine Sassen MOVED THAT meeting is adjourned. Seconded by Lisa Loveland.

**Carried UNANIMOUSLY**

Minutes approved \_\_\_\_\_, 2015

Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Respectfully submitted by:  
Susan O'Keeffe, Recording Secretary