



Minutes of the fifth (5th) meeting of the 2015-2016 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) held on Tuesday, February 23, 2016 in the Board Room at the SWLSB Administrative Centre, 235 Montée Lesage, Rosemère, Québec

Members present: Pamala Crompton, Marianne Sassen, Patricia Sasso, Carla Tosti, Parents; Brian Benoit, Teacher; Chuck Chagnon, Bessie Tsatoumas, Principals; Kate Baldwin, Support Staff; Deb Kellman, Special Education Consultant

Also present were: Silvia Patella, DG Representative; Peter MacLaurin, Commissioner; Marianne Girard, Alternate Support Staff

Regrets: Evan Caminis, Elaine Sassen, Yolanta Wiktorczyk, Lisa Loveland, Tammie Marlin

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

1. Additions, changes & Approval of the Agenda

Table 4.2 - Action plan and timeline

Add: Graduation rates - information

Brian Benoit MOVED THAT the agenda is approved with changes. Seconded by Patricia Sasso.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

2. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on January 26th, 2016

Carla Tosti MOVED THAT the minutes of January 26th, 2016 are approved. Seconded by Deb Kellman.

This motion was CARRIED on the following division:

For: 6

Abstain: 3

3. Question Period

No questions.

4. Business Arising

4.1 Interboard agreements | Detailed information concerning the ententes.

When a school board is unable to provide services to a student, the parents may send their child to one of the specialty schools that the board has ententes with. SEAC should be consulted on these ententes.

Thank you to Silvia for putting together the entente agreement details that are in members packages. Monies for these ententes come from the government under mesure 30120-83. Going forward a summary of ententes will be presented to SEAC prior to the board signing the agreements.

When parents want their child, (rather than be recommended) to go to any of these specialized schools CSD calls the principal to ask if this child should go. Should the principal advise CSD that the child is doing well in their school but the parent insists, a limited entente is signed. This means there is no transportation and no funding for their child. If CSD recognizes that a child would do better at a special school, SWLSB signs an entente and transportation is provided.

SWLSB does not have ententes with Vanguard as our school board is able to service these students. All 3L regions do not have ententes with Vanguard. Our board has ongoing training and works to supply all the needs of any student whose parent might want to send them to Vanguard. There has been much more focused discussion on training for teachers to teach these students. The technology is happening so fast and the training of these teachers is going as fast as can be done.



Silvia will enquire why the 3L does not sign ententes with Vanguard. Deb went on to say that Vanguard is a school that focuses on education and does not offer all of the specialty services or life lessons that any of the other special schools offer. The only difference from our board is that the school offers smaller class ratios for these students.

Parents feel that children are better off at Vanguard because the entire class is catered to the child with special needs, whereas in a regular setting, they get lost within all of the other students. They went on to say that if the school board is offering ways to teach these students it needs to be communicated to the parents.

CSD is in the process of working on ententes for next school year. Silvia will bring information for SEAC to consult on. Most of the information received tonight – chances are the students will stay where they are. More information will come.

In response to a question from Brian, the only students being home tutored are students who have medical reasons to be off. This is a separate category that SEAC needs to be advised on.

In the cases of students in Lanaudière and upper Laurentians, we service these students with the money we have, no extra is given. We use the services in those areas to service these students. In addition, some schools have started using the VCN units to service these students.

Silvia ended by stating that the documents provided are confidential and members should not share them with anyone.

4.2 Goals & Objectives

Summary

Pamala prepared a summary document on the goals and objectives discussed at a prior meeting where small groups brainstormed. This document is in members packages.

The school board special needs policy is being reviewed presently. The initial work is being done and then it will go out for consultation. This will hopefully be concluded this year.

Within the special needs policy, it makes reference to the handbook of procedures – will this handbook be revised and be part of the policy going forward. Silvia responded that they are looking at ways to make it more user friendly. They would like to be able to refer to the policy and the procedures in one document.

In response to a question from Pamala, all school level personnel involved in the special needs have been given documents to fill out and the information will be hopefully be available sometime in April on what the financial resources being allocated are. The document that was prepared last year by SEAC was looked at and some of the suggestions given are being considered.

Silvia cautioned the committee that to advise on the implementation of an IEP is a delicate and confidential subject. It is important that the parent go through all the proper channels before going to SEAC. CSD will always try to fix the bridge between parents and the school. The mandate is that a parent “may” come to SEAC. CSD feels that this should be done at the school level with all of the various teams working together as these are the people who know the students the best. Silvia encouraged Pamala to always try to get parents to work with CSD rather than bringing to SEAC.

CSD does not endorse external support groups to parents. They are told to check the order of psychologists for a specialist. Social services and Medical centres in Laval have lists of resources. SEAC would like to know if CSD can create a list of specialists, with a disclaimer, that can be available to parents.

Action Plan and Timeline - tabled

5. Reports

5.1 Chairs Report

In packages.

The committee discussed the graduation rates in reference to the lack of tracking of special needs students.

Deb went on to say that an exit interview process is starting to be used to find out why some students are not graduating.

5.2 School Board Report

The IEP toolkit information has been translated into French. Silvia is proofreading it and will bring it to the committee once that is done.

5.3 CSD Report

Once the new Director of CSD steps in, Silvia will enquire if there will be any workshops done this spring.

5.4 Treasurers Report

A reminder to please fill in mileage forms.

5.5 PC Delegate Report

In packages.

6. New Business

6.1 PACE

A description of this program is in member's packages.

Members enquired if there is something that SWLSB could do by partnering with a CEGEP.

Carla Tosti enquired if there could be an information session for parents of students with special needs and IEP's on what the students can do once they are ready to apply to CEGEP. Silvia responded that this could be a good topic for a spring conference. Parents should shop for post-secondary education in secondary 4 rather than wait until secondary 5. This way they can review all options and are prepared once their child gets to secondary 5. This topic will be added to the SEAC goals and objectives.

Carla Tosti MOVED THAT the meeting is extended to 9:13 p.m. Seconded by Brian Benoit.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

7. Correspondence

An application for a new SEAC member will be going to the parents committee at their next meeting.

There is still room for 1 more delegate and 9 alternates.

A small discussion was held on the success rates of girls vs boys.



8. **Question Period**

9. **Adjournment**

Next meeting is March 29, 2016

Brian Benoit MOVED THAT meeting is adjourned at 9:14 pm. Seconded by Carla Tosti

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

Minutes approved _____, 2016

Chairperson _____ Secretary _____

Respectfully submitted by:
Susan O'Keeffe, Recording Secretary