

Minutes of the eighth (8th) meeting of the 2008-2009 Sir Wilfrid Laurier Parents Committee held on Thursday May 7th, 2009 at 19:30 in the Boardroom of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board, 235 Montee Lesage, Rosemere, Quebec.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ronald Cole	ARUNDEL ELEMENTARY	Mario De Sousa	MOTHER TERESA JR HIGH
Silvana Di Medio	CRESTVIEW ELEMENTARY	Lisa Chartier	OUR LADY OF PEACE ELEM
Violet Selby	GRENVILLE ELEMENTARY	Kathleen Thompson	PIERRE E TRUDEAU ELEM
Patricia Saputo	HILLCREST ACADEMY	Pablo Carrera	SOUVENIR ELEMENTARY
Jannifer Maccarone	JOHN F KENNEDY ELEM	Guy Gagnon	ST JUDE ELEMENTARY
Dean Dugas	JOLIETTE ELEMENTARY	Roberto Bomba	ST PAUL ELEMENTARY
Laurent Courion	JULES VERNE ELEMENTARY	Angelo Grasso	ST VINCENT ELEM
Andrew Sproule	LAURENTIA ELEMENTARY	Danielle Gareau	SAINTE-AGATHE ACADEMY
Jennifer Boudreault	LAURENTIAN ELEM	Chantal Pelletier	TWIN OAKS
Guy Goffredo	LAVAL JR HIGH		
Serge Duval	MCCAIG ELEMENTARY		
Andy Simon	MORIN HEIGHTS ELEM		

ALSO PRESENT:

ABSENT: Franklin Hill elem, Genesis elem, Joliette high, Lake of Two Mountains high, Laurentian Regional high, Laval Liberty high, Mountainview elem, Pinewood elem, Rawdon elem, Rosemere high, Ste-Adele elem, Terry Fox elem, SEAC

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 19:35 hrs

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 5.6 ESC Meeting May 3rd update
- 5.7 3rd GB Training Session
- 8.1 Transportation
- 8.2 Recovery plan budget cuts
- 8.3 Zoning

PC20090507-01 Souvenir Elementary MOVED THAT the agenda is accepted with the noted additions. Seconded by Pierre E Trudeau Elementary.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF April 2nd, 2009

PC20090507-02 St. Vincent Elementary MOVED THAT the minutes of March 12th, 2009 are accepted as presented. Seconded by Laval Jr High.

This motion was CARRIED on the following division:

For: Joliette elem, Laurentian elem, Morin Heights elem, Mother Teresa Jr high, Our Lady of Peace elem, Pierre E Trudeau elem, Souvenir elem, St Jude elem, St Paul elem, St. Vincent elem, Ste-Agathe Acad.

Abstain: Arundel elem, Grenville elem, Hillcrest Acad, Jules Verne elem, Laurier Sr. high, John F. Kennedy elem, Crestview elem, Twin Oaks elem

3. CHAIRPERSON'S Report

The Chairperson attended a meeting on April 3rd, 2009 sponsored by Mme. Courschene on how to promote high schools and encourage children to stay in schools. Comparisons of French and English school boards were discussed. SWLSB has a 15% less dropout rate than the French school boards. English school boards fared better than French school boards across Quebec for dropout rate.

May 3rd, 2009 the Chairperson attended an English Services Committee meeting for the FCPQ (see motion in 5.6).

Laval Jr. High entered the meeting at 19:41 hrs

4. QUESTION Period

No questions

5. BUSINESS Arising

5.1 Election Parent Alternate Members to SEAC

Please continue to ask parents to join this committee.

5.2 PC Action Plan: update on Communication Pamphlet

Document is 95% ready and will be given to Guy Goffredo to format and then brought back to this committee to review. Anne-Marie Lepage will put in the proper phone extensions. It will be distributed in September when school starts.

5.3 Enriched/Talented & Gifted Committee update

The board asked the schools to give to ESD the numbers of children that would fit into the gifted category from grades 5-6-7. These grades are being targeted because the program is being looked at to begin in the 2010-2011 school year for grade 6-7 & 8. These students should show high academics and social involvement. From there ESD will look to the next direction as to the logistics of this program and at how many schools. The children, who are eligible, will take an exam, interview, and portfolio and will have a letter of recommendation from the teacher or principal. Ideally there should be these programs in all high schools, but if there are not enough for a school to host this type of program then transportation will be at the cost to parents. There will also be a cost to be in the program. Transportation issue discussion ensued; some members felt that underprivileged children who are gifted should not be penalized because their parents can not provide transportation for them.

5.4 Consultation – Promotion or Arts & Culture in SWL Schools

The arts are now a graduating requirement in high schools. Financial aspects are an issue, who will provide the funding for schools who do not have the materials to implement this. Some schools do not have adequate musical instruments but would like a music program. It was suggested that schools could fundraise for these instruments however they feel if this arts program is a requirement to graduate that the MELS and/or the school board should finance this.

Laurentia Elementary entered the meeting at 19:57 hrs.

PC20090507-03 Our Lady of Peace Elementary MOVED THAT the Parents Committee likes the concept of this policy, but is concerned on where the money will come from to fund and implement these programs as well as the qualified teachers to teach them. Seconded by St Jude Elementary.

This motion was CARRIED on the following division:

For: Arundel elem, Crestview elem, Grenville elem, Hillcrest acad, John F Kennedy elem, Joliette elem, Jules Verne elem, Laval jr high, Laurentian elem, Morin Heights elem, Mother Teresa Jr high, Our Lady of Peace elem, Pierre E Trudeau elem, Souvenir elem, St Jude elem, St Paul elem, St Vincent elem, Ste-Agathe acad, Twin Oaks elem
Abstain: Laurentia elem, Laurier Sr. High

5.5 Consultation – Deeds and Three-year Plan

St Jude has an entente with the Ville but the school has not been able to see the document.

Pierre E. Trudeau would like to know if the maximum building capacity has changed. She was directed to call George Paquette. The committee questions what a polyvalent room is. This is a multi-purpose room used for many activities.

MTJH enquired as to the rental policy. They would like to know what their entente with the Ville is because they would like to be able to rent the space and keep the money for other activities, but are limited because the town uses it.

McCaig Elementary entered the meeting at 20:18 hrs

PC20080506-04 Laurentian Elementary MOVED THAT the deeds of establishment and three year plans are accepted as presented. Seconded by Laurentia Elementary.

This motion was CARRIED on the following division:

For: Arundel elem, Crestview elem, Grenville elem, Hillcrest acad, John F Kennedy elem, Joliette elem, Jules Verne elem, Laurentia elem, Laurier Sr. high, Laval jr high, Laurentian elem, Morin Heights elem, Mother Teresa Jr high, Our Lady of Peace elem, Pierre E Trudeau elem, Souvenir elem, St Jude elem, St Paul elem, St Vincent elem, Ste-Agathe acad, Twin Oaks elem
Abstain: McCaig elem

5.6 ESC Meeting May 3, 2009

Silvana Di Medio and Nathalie Riley (SEAC) attended this meeting. As discussed previously at this committee, the English sector of the FCPQ needs were not being addressed and now with their own federation, they can have a direct link to the MELS.

Extract from the minutes of the English Services Committee meeting, May 3, 2009:

New Anglophone Parents' Network

Where as to date, five (5) of nine (9) English Parents' Committees (PC's) (55,6 %) have resolved to communicate their disaffiliation from the Quebec Federation of Parents' Committees (QFPC) on May 31, 2009;

Where as the English school boards of these five (5) PC's include 57 747 students registered out of a provincial total of 97 928 students (59 %);

Where as two (2) of nine (9) English PC's (22.2 %) with 9 % of English students have not disclosed their intentions regarding their position with the QFPC;

*Where as the English Services Committee (ESC) is determined to represent and support **all** the english PC's;*

Where as the English sector has always had the intent to manage their own activities and budget (ref. "1986 Entente");

*Where as the majority of English PC's have resolved to form a new English parents' committees association in order to represent and support **all** English PC's*

*Be it resolved that Jacques Thériault with the support of Nathalie Riley have been mandated to present the request that **all** operational resources, for **all** English PC's, be allocated to the new English parents' committees association for management thereof.*

*Moved by: R. Ledoux , Seconded by: C. Carosello
5 For, 1 Against, 1 Abstention*

CARRIED

(This vote represents the seven (7) PC's present at the meeting)

Lester B. Pearson school board has decided not to disaffiliate.

5.7 Third Governing Board training session

Marie Claude Drouin is asking members what they would like as the next governing board training session. Ideas ranged from: before the general assembly at the school, send out a notice explaining what the governing board is and ask parents to fill out a form saying why they would like to be on the governing board and why. How can schools encourage parents to join GB. What to do to close off the year, the transfer over and how to prepare an annual report. How general assemblies are run. The committee is looking around the end of May for a date. The committee would like the GB sessions held earlier in the school year. Many members are curious about what the difference between PPO and Home and School is.

6. NEW BUSINESS

None

7. REPORTS

7.1 School Board's report

No one from the Directorate was able to attend the meeting tonight but Mme.Lepage called the Chairperson with a couple of items:

The original calendar for the 2009-2010 year was accepted as presented and will be going as is with no changes. Our comments were received.

In the near future Silvana has been invited to attend a couple of sessions reviewing the safety and security focus sessions. These sessions will be on the guiding principles on how safety and security can be enhanced. All stakeholders from the school board will be invited to these meetings.

7.2 Treasurers report

Gift cards will be ordered from Chapters for \$25.00/each. Genesis and Ste Agathe have not responded with their name yet. They have been advised by e-mail that the names are needed by this Friday or they cannot be included in the prizes.

Batshaw/Mountainview would like to give this award to a deserving grade 9-10 student as they do not have a graduating class this year. The committee feels this is a graduating award and precedence could be set where another school could ask for a special favour, so at this time the committee cannot support this request. In the event that there is a graduating class an award will be presented.

7.3 Parent Commissioners report

We had a presentation on the Career Exploration Labs. We were shown a graphic designs module which was able to produce mouse pads (simple activity). The student would be able to completely design the graphics as well as the layout and then mirror image and transfer it onto a t-shirt, mouse pad, cap etc.). The modules have between 8-10 different activities and they are all of different degrees of complication. The Inauguration will take place on May 25th, 2009.

Governing Board workshops were held on March 31st. There were 40 people in attendance. These workshops will be an annual event in order for all GB members to be informed and aware of their role as members.

Educational Services was thanked for their efforts and the work done to support the Genesis community. It was a team effort and we were commended by staff, teachers, and even the Media noted that our Board was quick to intervene and had a package ready to go and assist where needed.

Special Needs students. We asked for 174 new codes and we received 97% acceptance from Government.

Letter to a student from Laval Liberty. The student went to the Bell science fair. She has been asked/chosen to go to the National Science fair. The School Board is going to pay the fee of over 600\$. We wish her good luck in the competition.

Organigram (organizational chart) was presented and approved at Council. It is available for viewing on the website.

The Assignments and transfers of in-school administrators were discussed and all the school communities were deliberated and concerns and positives were mentioned. The assignments needed to be in by May 1, 2009 and was passed as presented. This was not an easy decision and all aspects were looked at.

Lobster Fest is June 11, 2009. The funds raised will be going for the citizenship bursaries given every year to the elementary schools, high schools and Adult and Vocational Training, as well as the exploration labs.

The question of parent commissioner changes re the new Bill 88. Nothing will be done regarding commissioners and parent commissioners until the next municipal elections.

BUDGET PARAMETERS: MELS is imposing a spending limit of 10% of school boards surpluses. This is a huge concern for the school boards. They have issued a formal complaint to the MELS. As well if the school boards should spend more than 10% then MELS requires a recovery plan. SWLSB has a similar arrangement with its schools but it's more flexible than the one MELS has with the school boards:

- 1) limited to 3 years – MELS has no limit on this new measure
- 2) amount limited to 20% of school surpluses – MELS limits school board surplus spending to 10%
- 3) the arrangement was negotiated with the schools – MELS is imposing it on the school board
- 4) the 20% limit is for the sum of all school surpluses, which allows some schools to go over as long as the net is not more than 20% - MELS is a limit of 10% for each school board

MELS points out that the Min of Finance wanted MELS to reclaim all school board surpluses – this new measure is a compromise with Min of Finance. The new measure does not have an immediate impact for SWLSB – it's in a deficit for the next 4 fiscal years. This measure came is the result that under new government accounting rules, all school board and health institutions deficits/surpluses will now be included in the Quebec government balance sheet. This is supposed to come into effect on June 30th.

7.4 RCP-3L report

No report

7.5 SEAC report

No report

8. VARIA

8.1 Transportation- Hillcrest Academy

An incident at Hillcrest brought to their attention that written in the transportation policy it states parents are responsible to make sure their children are safely on and off the school bus up to grade 2. The transportation manual says that the bus driver cannot let a child off the bus without a parent present if they are in kindergarten. Hillcrest would like the parent's committee support on a motion where they are asking for the transportation manual to say that the driver should not let the child off the bus if they are Kindergarten and cycle 1. Lisa Chartier will bring this issue to School Organization committee right away.

8.2 Recovery Plan – Budget cuts

Joliette Elementary is upset that the library hours and secretarial duties in his school are cut. The MELS has been pumping money into libraries and now schools are left with no librarian and the teachers are left the responsibility of taking care of the library.

Morin Heights reported that the recovery plan was not supposed to affect services to students. Taking away the librarian in a school is taking away services and he believes this is dishonest as the PC was assured that services to children would not be cut. He went on to say that the irony is that Morin Heights is being given a brand new library but there will be no librarian in it.

Ste-Adèle has a brand new library and now has no librarian.

Several members pointed out that the money spent on creating a new position in HR should have been kept and used to keep the librarians in the schools. Lisa responded that the position was created in HR because if it had not been then the payroll part of HR would have been downloaded on the schools which would have caused the need to hire more secretarial staff at the schools and that would have been more costly than having one position in the board.

Silvana encouraged all members to attend the next council meeting on May 20th. Please submit your question 24 hours before the meeting in order for your question to be read at the first question period and not once the vote has been taken.

Whereas it was promised by the School Board, when the recovery plan was presented that services to children would not be cut;

Whereas the MELS has been injecting money for the past three years into the libraries, closing them would be a step backwards;

Whereas the school board in its financial recovery plan stated that “in doing so we concentrated in preserving the quality of education that has always been the hallmark of our board”. The Parents Committee feels we have been misled;

PC20090507-05 Pierre E. Trudeau Elementary MOVED THAT the Parents Committee strongly objects to the cuts in schools that have an impact on the quality of services to children, including but not limited to librarians, secretarial, caretaking, etc. Seconded by Joliette Elementary.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

8.3 Zoning at Sainte Agathe

The delegate reported that areas of Ste-Marguerite and l’Esterel are zoned for LRHS and they are closer to Saite-Agathe. Zoning has been looked at for this area. Lisa responded that according to the new laws, one year of consultation must be done from grade 1-11. If there will be rezoning, they will start consultation June 30th for a school calendar year having open discussions with all stakeholders and a decision would be taken by the next June 30th.

Members of the Parents Committee are disappointed that once again no member from the Directorate was present at the meeting tonight.

9. QUESTION Period

The following comment was made from a parent in the audience: “touching libraries in an English community is touchy because there are not many places that English books can be had”. It is important to keep English libraries open.

St Jude is upset because they are losing their Principal.

Transportation advisory committee meeting is this month. E-mail Guy Goffredo if you have any issues you would like him to bring up.

10. CLOSURE of meeting

Next meeting June 4th, 2009

PC20090507-06 Souvenir Elementary MOVED THAT the meeting is adjourned at 22:16 hrs. Seconded by Our Lady of Peace Elementary.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted by:
Susan O’Keeffe, Recording Secretary

Minutes approved _____, 2009

Chairperson _____ Secretary _____