

Minutes of the first (1st) meeting of the 2009-2010 Sir Wilfrid Laurier Parents Committee held on Thursday October 1st, 2009 at 19:30hrs in the Boardroom of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board, 235 Montee Lesage, Rosemere, Quebec.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ronald Cole	ARUNDEL ELEMENTARY	Andrew Simon	MORIN HEIGHTS ELEM
Silvana Di Medio	CRESTVIEW ELEMENTARY	Angelo Grasso	MOTHER TERESA JR HIGH
Francois-Pierre Gaudet	FRANKLIN HILL ELEM	Lisa Chartier	OUR LADY OF PEACE ELEM
Roger Desormeaux	GENESIS ELEMENTARY	Anne Marie Regimbal	PIERRE E TRUDEAU ELEM
Violet Selby	GRENVILLE ELEMENTARY	Amber Lawrence	RAWDON ELEM & MIDDLE
Patricia Saputo	HILLCREST ACADEMY	Kathleen Thompson	ROSEMERE HIGH
Jennifer Maccarone	JOHN F KENNEDY ELEM	Pablo Carrera	SOUVENIR ELEMENTARY
Dean Dugas	JOLIETTE ELEMENTARY	Guy Gagnon	ST JUDE ELEMENTARY
Helena Muir	JOLIETTE HIGH	Roberto Bomba	ST PAUL ELEMENTARY
Andrew Sproule	LAURENTIA ELEM	Felicia Schiro	ST VINCENT ELEMENTARY
Jennifer Boudreault	LAURENTIAN ELEMENTARY	Vivianne Cliche	STE ADELE ELEM
Stephen Clark	LAURENTIAN REGIONAL	Dania Daneau	STE-AGATHE ACADEMY
Natasha Fontes	LAURIER ST HIGH	Antoinette Noviello	TERRY FOX ELEM
Morton Jaquays	LAVAL JR HIGH	Chantal Pelletier	TWIN OAKS ELEMENTARY
John Colotouros	LAVAL LIBERTY HIGH		
Serge Duval	MCCAIG ELEMENTARY		

ALSO PRESENT: Anne-Marie Lepage, Director General; Steve Bletas, Chairman of the Council of Commissioners, Gaëlle Absolonne, Assistant Director, CDC Laurier, John Bastone, Technician CDC Laurier, Steve Mitchell, Mario Di Domenico, Commissioners, Parents

ABSENT: Jules Verne elem, Lake of Two Mountains High, Mountainview elem, Pinewood elem, SEAC

The Director General called the meeting to order at 19:33 hrs

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Add: Varia – Bus safety training

Add: Update on Budget cuts – will be handled in Director General's Report

PC20091001-01 Rosemère High MOVED THAT the agenda is accepted with additions. Seconded by Joliette Elementary.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

2. ELECTIONS

2.1 Procedures

Anne Marie Lepage will be Chairperson of elections.

While ballots were being prepared Mme Lepage spoke about the recovery plan.

The majority of parents were in favour of St. Paul Elementary's suggestion that the vote will be by secret ballot. (5 abstentions)

2.2 Nomination of Chairperson or Elections and Scrutineers

It was nominated by Crestview Elementary and all parents were in favour that Mario Di Domenico and Steve Mitchell act as scrutineers

2.3 Election of Chairperson

Our Lady of Peace Elementary nominated Silvana DiMedio of Crestview Elementary – accepts

McCaig Elementary nominated Pablo Carrera of Souvenir Elementary – gratefully declines

Congratulations Silvana DiMedio, Crestview Elementary

2.4 Election of Vice-Chairperson

Crestview Elementary nominates Lisa Chartier of Our Lady of Peace Elementary – gratefully declines
 Our Lady of Peace nominates Pablo Carrera of Souvenir Elementary – accepts
 Congratulations Pablo Carrera, Souvenir Elementary

2.5 Election of Secretary

Rosemère High nominates Chantal Pelletier of Twin Oaks Elementary – accepts
 Congratulations Chantal Pelletier, Twin Oaks Elementary

2.6 Election of Treasurer

John F Kennedy Elementary nominates Patricia Saputo of Hillcrest Academy – accepts
 Congratulations Patricia Saputo, Hillcrest Academy

2.7 Election of Parent Commissioner – Elementary

Lisa Chartier went over what the duties of a Parent Commissioner are
 Mother Teresa Jr High nominates Lisa Chartier of Our Lady of Peace Elementary – accepts
 Congratulations Lisa Chartier, Our Lady of Peace Elementary

2.8 Election of Parent Commissioner – High School

Proxy nomination received by Luc Samson of Rosemère High
 Joliette Elementary nominates Helena Muir of Joliette High - accepts
 St Paul Elementary nominates Angelo Grasso of Mother Teresa Jr High – accepts
 Congratulations Angelo Grasso, MTJH

PC20091001-02 Our Lady of Peace Elementary MOVED THAT the ballots be destroyed. Seconded by Laval Jr High

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

2.9 Election of Representative to 3L

The 3L is the regional group of 8 school boards in the Laurentides, Laval, Lanaudière regions.
 Helena Muir, Joliette High nominates herself
 Joliette High nominates Andy Simon, Morin Heights Elementary – gratefully declines
 Amber Lawrence, Rawdon Elementary and Middle nominates herself
 Morton Jacquays, Laval Jr High nominates himself
 Congratulations Helena Muir, Amber Lawrence and Morton Jacquays

2.10 Nomination to Advisory Committee on Transportation

Amber Lawrence, Rawdon Elementary & Middle nominates herself
 McCaig Elementary nominates Roberto Bomba of St Paul Elementary - accepts
 Congratulations Roberta Bomba, St Paul Elementary

PC20091001-03 Souvenir Elementary MOVED THAT the ballots be destroyed. Seconded by Laval Jr High

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

2.11 Nomination to Advisory Committee on SEAC

This is a committee made up of 9 members and 9 alternates. 5 new members are needed this year. The criteria to be on this committee are that you must have a child with special needs. The following parents put their name forward:

Ste Adèle Elementary – Susan Tiereny
 St Paul Elementary – Kimberly Leclerc
 John F Kennedy Elementary - Jennifer Maccarone
 St Paul Elementary – Sylvie Battisti

PC20091001-04 Rosemère High MOVED THAT the above four parents are named as members of the SEAC for the years 2009-2010/2010-2011. Seconded by Mother Teresa Jr High

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

Please go back to your GB and ask if there are parents who are interested in sitting on this committee. There is room for 1 delegate for 2 years and 9 alternate members.

Mme. Lepage will remind the Principals to give the pamphlets prepared by the SEAC to the parents who could qualify for this committee.

2.12 Election of Recording Secretary

PC20091001-05 Rosemère High MOVED THAT Susan O’Keeffe be engaged as Recording Secretary of the Parents Committee for the 2009-2010 school year at a rate of \$70.00 per meeting plus \$10.00 for every half hour after 22:00hrs. Seconded by Our Lady of Peace Elementary.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

3. INTRODUCTIONS

A round table was held so that the committee could introduce themselves

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF June 4th, 2009

PC20091001-06 Our Lady of Peace Elementary MOVED THAT the minutes of June 4th, 2009 are accepted as presented. Seconded by Laval Liberty.

This motion was CARRIED on the following division:

For: Crestview elem, Grenville elem, Hillcrest acad, Jennifer Maccarone, Joliette high, Laurentia elem, Mother Teresa jr high, Our Lady of Peace elem, Rosemere high, Souvenir elem, St Jude elem, St. Paul elem, Twin Oaks elem

Abstain: Arundel elem, Franklin Hill elem, Genesis elem, Joliette elem, Laurentian elem, Laurentian Regional high, Laurier Sr. high, Laval Jr. high, Laval liberty high, McCaig elem, Morin Heights elem, PE Trudeau, Rawdon elem, St Vincent elem, Ste-Adele elem, Ste-Agathe acad, Terry Fox elem

5. PRESENTATION

Career Exploration Labs – Gaëlle Absolonne & Johnny Bastone

Welcome to Gaëlle and Johnny who are here to give a presentation on the Vocational Exploration Lab located at CDC Pont Viau. A package with information was distributed to all members. Please take the time to view the DVD and pass on the information to your Governing Boards. This lab is open to all high schools. Secondary 3 students are targeted this year and each school will get one free bus to the lab. For all other grades, the lab is free but transportation is not provided. The lab houses 32 students and they work in groups of 2. There are 16 different labs. This lab is completely financed by corporations. No money from MELS was injected into this.

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Date, Time and Place of meetings

Meetings for the 2009-2010 Parents Committee will be held on Thursday, October 1, 2009, November 5th, December 3rd, 2009, January 7th, February 4th, March 11th, April 1st, May 6th, and June 3rd, 2010 at 19:30 hrs. at the Administrative center located at 235 Montée Lesage, Rosemère, Quebec.

PC20091001-07 Mother Teresa Jr High MOVED THAT the meetings are as listed above. Seconded by Our Lady of Peace Elementary.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

6.2 Governing Board Training Sessions Dates

The first session will be October 19th on how the GB functions and will touch on the responsibility of the Parents Committee. Invitations are on their way – other dates will be in February and April 2010. These will be held at the CLC at Laval Liberty and at LRHS. A suggestion was made to include PPO and Home & School in the first meeting. All members, new and old are encouraged to attend. Bill 88 stipulates that GB needs professional development so it is a good idea to be there. Administrators and staff members on GB are encouraged to attend.

6.3 PC Internal rules of procedure 2009-2010

Included in package, please read the rules and come back prepared to discuss and make suggestions at the next meeting.

6.4 PC Internal Financial policy 2009-2010

Included in package, please read and come back prepared to discuss and make suggestions at the next meeting.

6.5 Fall 2009 Chairman's Focus Session

On October 23-24, 2009 a focus session on communications and communicating on different levels will be held at the Administrative Center. Members of all stakeholders and of our school board community are invited. Six members of Parents committee are invited to attend. The theme is "Enhancing Communication channels." A Facilitator has been hired to lead this focus session.

If you would like to attend this session, you must attend both days. You cannot attend just one. Friday is a full day and Saturday is until mid afternoon.

PC20091001-08 St Jude Elementary MOVED THAT Silvana DiMedio, Crestview Elementary; Lisa Chartier, Our Lady of Peace Elementary; Angelo Grasso, Mother Teresa Jr high; Kathleen Thompson, Rosemère High; Violet Selby, Grenville Elementary; Patricia Saputo, Hillcrest Academy; and Helena Muir, Joliette High will be attending the Focus Session on October 23-24, 2009. Seconded by Laval Jr. High

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

7. BUSINESS ARISING**7.1 Update – "Who do I talk to" pamphlet**

Last year the Action Plan committee in a few meetings put together a pamphlet on "Who do I talk to." This pamphlet was tweaked by Maxeen Jolin of the CPRC committee. It will go to the CPRC standing committee to be passed this month and will come back to this committee next month. It will be available on line as well as a paper document for all schools. One idea is to put it into the student's agenda next year. Special thanks to Guy Goffredo of Laval Jr High on his company's initiative in helping to get this pamphlet together.

8. REPORTS**6.2 Chairpersons Annual Report**

Included in packages

6.3 School Board's Report

Mme Anne Marie Lepage distributed a package "Learn in the fast Lane" on the accelerated learning program. A new offer of service committed to begin September 2010. This program will be housed at Mother Teresa Jr. High. This program is designed for high achievers. It will be available to 60 students per grade. It will begin in Sec 1 & 2 and continue in future years building up to Sec 5. This program is a very comprehensive program and it will be developed this year with the teachers to be implemented next year. The aim is to have an orientation committee of the parents of these students to use their wisdom as a sounding board to advise and develop programs during the year. There will be fees associated with this program.

There are professional development sessions for teachers for elementary schools to help students develop to their potential in the younger grades.

In response to a question from St Jude, no one will be turned away for financial reasons. If they fill all the requirements and have no money, a discussion will take place at the school level and a decision would be made in conjunction with the school.

In response to a question from Morin Heights, this program will be offered in Laval first and see how it goes. From the expertise developed there, northern locations may be looked at in later years. It is a question of volume in the northern regions. Arundel would like this to be kept in consideration as there are children who could benefit in those areas as well.

In response to a question from Laval Liberty, this program will not take away from the existing teachers. The recall program for teachers takes place earlier in the board now, so we can secure all staff before the end of the school year so that they are in place at the beginning of the year. Mme Lepage does not see any staffing problems for this program.

In response to a question from Souvenir elementary, if a student does not maintain this high level of academics, they will get the support that they need but there may be occasions that for certain students it is in their best interest to be removed from the program. This will be on a case by case basis. For students that follow through to graduation the CEGEPS and universities can tell by their course codes that the children have followed an accelerated program.

In response to a question from JHS, the Work Oriented Training path is offered in all high schools. Mme Lepage went on to explain that this cannot be offered in each high school because they need to develop the expertise on this program. Start small to build on.

This year, Mme Lepage's objective under communication, is that there will be a parent bulletin four times a year from the school board with information that will be valuable to parents and showcase our schools achievements. These will be paper copies sent to the school. It will also be available on the website. A monthly bulletin was initiated for all employees this year so that information flows more readily and the board has the opportunity to have an official voice.

The Respect and Responsibility guiding principles were adopted by council and these large signs were distributed to all schools. These are visible in all schools and several activities will be held to within their schools to promote these principles.

In response to a question from Joliette Elementary school, fundraising is not to be used for staffing.

Morin Heights commented that he was surprised that the commissioners voted in favour of the cutbacks and wants to know if there is a mechanism in place to measure the impact of the cuts at schools. Mme Lepage responded that the School Board is providing support to schools where libraries were reduced. There are no mechanisms in place to measure this.

In response to a question from Hillcrest, businesses do not have a choice on what school board to pay their taxes to. These are called neutrals and are paid to the French Boards however our school board gets a share based on student numbers.

An e-mail distributed by a parent at Laurentia Elementary that addressed the parent body is that there was poor communication from the school board in regards to the budget cuts. McCaig Elementary is curious to know why there was not more consultation with the Governing Boards before cuts were made. He believes that the debate could have been cut down if everyone had a clearer understanding that it was not waste or overspending that put the board in this deficit. A lot of money was spent on special needs for students and we spent more than they were allocated. He went on to say that, collectively we should work together on a more intelligent approach to get more money from the MELS instead of against the school board.

Mr. Bletas responded that one option that was mentioned last year was to close the smaller schools, and in order to keep them open, it was necessary to have cuts. It is not easy for commissioners to make these kinds of decisions, but in order to be able to keep them open, cuts needed to be made. The services in the libraries are still there, the libraries were not closed. Principals in all schools were given the choice of keeping the hours for the secretaries or cutting the library hours.

Mme Lepage responded that the board has been making choices for the past 9 years. Our board is growing and each time a new building is opened, it costs more money. We have had a lot of new schools and this is a heavy burden over a short period of time. In previous years, in the smaller schools the secretaries were increased to full time where they were only part time in the past. Each small school has its own Principal now instead of part time. There were a lot of things put into schools at that time, so when the school board went into deficit, it was difficult for all involved to make these changes. At the time the decisions were made, Mme Lepage apologizes for not being here at a meeting to explain the changes better. As far as the caretaking staff, if they are sick for a full day they are replaced. The history of absenteeism in caretaking is high, and the cost to replace them is high, so they are only replaced half time. This measure was lifted during the H1N1 situation in the spring, but was reinstated when schools opened in August but will be re-evaluated if the H1N1 flares up again.

In response to a comment by Rawdon Elementary, Mme Lepage will bring more information about volunteers working in libraries next month.

Mr. Bletas wants to make it clear that commissioners struggle to make difficult decisions and it is not done in the instant that the vote is taken. It is hours of behind closed doors discussing every option.

6.4 Treasurer's Report

To all members, please read the internal financial policy. There are certain expenses that are able to be claimed. Please fill out the expense sheets and you will be reimbursed. These claims must be submitted no later than three months. The mileage rate is the same rate as what the school board rate is.

6.5 Parents Commissioners' Report

- Fall focus session – October 23-24, 2009
- Attending High school graduations is a role of the Parents Commissioners
- Overcrowding at some Laval schools. A new school was acquired on Dagenais and Labelle and four schools – JFK, Souvenir, Twin Oaks and Terry Fox are looking at rezoning. A new school in the St Vincent area was acquired so there will be some rezoning there as well. Consultation has begun. One option for the St Vincent community is to make an annex, where the grades are split into two schools.

6.6 RCP-3L Report

Pamphlets distributed – convention on November 14th at Cure Antoine Labelle. Different workshops are offered. If anyone is interested in attending please see this pamphlet for information.

6.7 SEAC Report

No report

9. VARIA

Bus Safety courses - St Jude reported that the bus training timing is in November for children and he finds this late. Perhaps these sessions should be held sooner. The equipment they are using is toys and perhaps they should be using real busses. Other schools reported that they are using real busses. He should call school organization department and speak to someone concerning this.

Sessions with PC/Commissioners - Steve Mitchell has suggested that if the parents committee would be interested in having discussions with commissioners they could hold a question/answer informal exchange. There would be one in the late fall and one in late winter or early spring. These sessions would be held in the evening. He would like commissioners to see where parents are coming from and what parents concerns are. Lisa went on to say that this is a great opportunity to let them know where parents concerns are with children. Some commissioners are not aware of things that happen in schools until they are brought up at a meeting. Lisa went on to say that Commissioners have meeting after meeting on some subjects and debate hours on hours before decisions are made.

All of the schools have the packages for the accelerated program if anyone is interested. They are also on line.

Silvana will send documents to members on what the roles and responsibilities of GB and PC are.

PC20091001-09 Our Lady of Peace **MOVED THAT** at 22:35 hrs, the meeting is extended until 22:45hrs. Seconded by Pierre E Trudeau Elementary.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

Morin Heights reminded members that the school board said that no services to children would be cut. The parents committee lay back because of this information that no services would be cut, but there were cuts in the library, he feels misled.

8. QUESTION Period

The parent in the audience of St Vincent wants to know what kind of powers GB's have. What is the strategic plan on the rezoning? They seem to rezone all the time. The committee entered into a lengthy discussion on the growing population and the granting of new schools, and what the impact on rezoning is. Parents are frustrated with rezoning.

The general consensus is that we need to get involved before the action takes place.

10. CLOSURE OF MEETING

PC20091001-10 Laval Liberty High MOVED THAT the meeting closed at 22: 50 hrs. Seconded by Rawdon Elementary.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted by:
Susan O'Keefe, Recording Secretary

Minutes approved _____, 2009

Chairperson _____ Secretary _____