



Minutes of the fourth (4th) meeting of the 2015-2016 Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) held on Tuesday, January 26, 2016 in the Board Room at the SWLSB Administrative Centre, 235 Montée Lesage, Rosemère, Québec

Members present: Evan Caminis, Pamala Cripton, Patricia Sasso, Carla Tosti, Yolanta Wiktorczyk, Parents; Brian Benoit, Elementary Teacher; Tammie Marlin, Chuck Chagnon, Principals; Deb Kellman, Special Education Consultant;

Also present were: Fred Greschner, Interim Director General; Silvia Patella, DG Representative; Peter MacLaurin, Commissioner

Regrets: Elaine Sassen, Lisa Loveland, Marianne Sassen

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

1. Additions to & Approval of the Agenda

Table 4.1 Goals and Objectives

Table 6.2 PACE Program

Add 6.3 Information regarding ententes

Brian Benoit MOVED THAT the agenda is approved with changes. Seconded by Carla Tosti.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

2. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on December 8th, 2015

Yolanta Wiktorczyk MOVED THAT the minutes of December 8th, 2015 are approved. Seconded by Patricia Sasso.

This motion was CARRIED on the following division:

For: 7

Abstain: 2

3. Question Period

4. Business Arising

4.1 SEAC Goals & Objectives 2015-2016

Tabled

4.2 Update on Recommendations to MEESR & GB

At the last meeting the Chair presented the members with an organizational chart recommended by the Quebec English Special Education Commissioners (QESEC) that suggested a change to the Education Acts current structure by creating a Special Needs Parent Committee with representatives from each school, parallel to the current Parents Committee. In light of Bill 86, QESEC is waiting to hear back from all of the English boards on that issue before finalizing how to incorporate this item into their recommendations to the MEESR. It has been forwarded however, that SEAC voted to approve this governance recommendation to the MEESR.

The recommendation pertaining to the item where at the annual general assembly, schools will have the optional additional position established on governing boards for a parent of a student with an IEP, this vote is contingent upon the approval of the Secretary General. The Chair has not had an update on this yet.

5. Reports

5.1 Chairs Report

Bill 86

Last month, the Quebec Government tabled Bill 86. It is presented as:

“An Act to modify the organization and governance of school boards to give schools a greater say in decision-making and ensure parents' presence within each school board's decision-making body.”

The response to this restructuring of the School Boards has been met with strong opposition from both the Francophone and Anglophone Communities. While it appears to address certain issues such as increasing the role of parents at the School Board level, there are other elements of the Bill that in actuality may have the opposite effect. The English Parents Committee will have an opportunity to present a brief at the National Assembly on February 18th, 2016 and has solicited the input from the members of the parent committees. As the Special Education Advisory Committee to the SWLSB we are expected to provide our analyses and feedback on this matter.

I.E.P's

The development, implementation and evaluation of the Individual Education Plan at both the Elementary and High School levels continues to be a concern for parents of children with special needs. I recently forwarded my concerns to the Chair of the Council of Commissioners, Jennifer Maccarone in the hopes that it could be addressed in a more concrete way at either Council or the Pedagogical Committee meetings scheduled this year.

5.2 School Board Report

Happy New Year!

- The annual Community breakfast at RHS for the Children's Wish Foundation was a huge success. A record \$15,710 was raised for the wish child.
- The school board is getting a lot more exposure and recognition with the Homophobia project. It has received many grants from various organizations. Both versions of the documentation are available on the website. A French teacher on the committee will present the program at FIPF in Belgium. The English team will present at Concordia University and at the LCEEQ conference.
- Pamala would like to follow up with the Secretary General on how specifically SEAC could get their role clarified on the implementation of the IEP. Mr. Greschner responded that it is a work in progress and they are in talks about revising it through the policy revision. There are certain stipulations that must be followed through the collective agreement on establishment of the IEP. Management trying to find alignment on this and there is some progress. It is on alert and both ESD and CSD are working diligently at providing a portrait to both commissioners and SEAC.
- The board is moving forward with a recommendation for a replacement of the position of the Director of CSD very soon.

5.3 CSD Report

No report.

Pamala has asked that moving forward can CSD please provide some updates or highlights of things that are happening in the department. In response to her request to share the document explaining the role of the attendant and special education technician, Deb Kellman responded that this document is not a policy and the department is not comfortable putting it on the website. Pamala enquired if a more general document could be created for parents to see some of the guidelines of the document in an effort to make it clearer to them what exactly these positions involve. Deb will be happy to do it once she has the go ahead from the new Director of the department.

In a follow-up question, Pamala asked if there has been any talk about a spring workshop for parents. As this is not the role for SEAC, is CSD working on this. Silvia Patella responded that because of negotiations on all levels this year, things of this nature have been put on the side. It would take a lot of thought and work to see if it could be done in this short period of time. Pamala asked if it could be one speaker for all parents rather than several. Silvia went on to say that the feedback is that parents who attend this conference really prefer the workshop model where there are many topics.

5.4 Treasurers Report

As presented by Evan Caminis.



The invoice for the printing has been resolved.

Some expense reports were forwarded directly to CSD. Members are asked to give Evan or Yolanta these sheets prior to them going to CSD.

5.5 PC Delegate Report

The current SEAC PC delegate resigned so Pamala is now the delegate.

At December's meeting she did not stay for the entire evening so does not have a report.

Carla Tosti has prepared a report from December's meeting and will e-mail it to Pamala to share with members.

On January 12th, a special guest speaker, Honorable Marlene Jennings was present at a special PC meeting.

Members are encouraged to take the time to watch all of the links that were sent to you on this topic.

6. New Business

6.1 Bill 86

All documents pertaining to this were e-mailed to members in order to provide feedback to the EPCA on Bill 86.

The government is attempting to remove control from school boards and putting it in the hands of the government. It is very important that everyone fill out the form letter and mail it to their member of the National Assembly. There are a lot of powers that will be given back to the government if this bill passes. The Chairperson of the School Board is doing a great job trying to pull us all together.

The committee entered a detailed discussion on the articles in this document and the questions from the EPCA. Pamala will prepare a summary document with all of the responses and forward it to the members for their approval.

WHEREAS draft BILL 86: An Act to modify the organization and governance of School Boards, was introduced at the National Assembly of Québec on December 4th, 2015;

WHEREAS Section 23 of the Canadian Constitution confers minority language education rights;

WHEREAS Mahe v. Alberta 1990 clearly defines that minority language groups have the right to manage and control their education system and facilities;

WHEREAS the English schools are the fundamental hub of the English speaking communities they serve;

WHEREAS the Jennings Report: the Election System Study Panel 2015, makes excellent recommendations to the Minister including allowing parent Commissioners the right to vote;

WHEREAS Bill 86 would confer all powers over English School Boards to the Minister of Education – which is unconstitutional;

WHEREAS English School Boards across the province boast some of the best success rates in the province;

WHEREAS the English community takes its responsibility to control and manage its schools very seriously;

WHEREAS the Government of Quebec has offered no reason to validate the changes proposed in draft Bill 86;

It was moved by Brian Benoit and resolved that the SWLSB Special Education Advisory Committee and seconded by Yolanta Wiktorczyk to:



1. Reject Bill 86: An Act to modify the organization and governance of school boards;
2. Demand that the Government of Quebec acknowledge its duty to support and respect the constitutional rights of Anglophone Quebecers;
3. Demand that the Government of Quebec formally withdraw draft Bill 86.

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

6.2 PACE

Tabled

6.3 Information regarding ententes

Tabled

7. Correspondence

8. Question Period

9. Adjournment

Next meeting is February 23, 2016

Brian Benoit MOVED THAT meeting is adjourned at 9:34 pm. Seconded by Carla Tosti

Carried UNANIMOUSLY

Minutes approved _____, 2016

Chairperson _____ Secretary _____

Respectfully submitted by:
Susan O'Keeffe, Recording Secretary