



Lester B. Pearson High School
11 575 P.M. Favier, Montreal North, QC H1G 6E5
Tel: 514.328.4442

GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, January 12, 2016

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Library

Attendees:

Geraldine Anania

Benny Berneti

Joe Biunno

Catherine Clarabut

Grace Fanelli

Casey Gagné

Angelo Gallo

*Daina Fonicolo**

Demetrios Giannacopoulos

Sandra Greco

Renée Hardy

Paul Karpontinis

Natasha Krsteski

Stephania Mambro

Melissa Mastromonaco

Franco Mazzariello

*Cristina Mignacca**

Carmen Nicolas

Marisa Papillo

Rosanna Verrillo

Eric Ward

Mauro Zampini

Welcome:

Benny Berneti welcomed everyone to the special Governing Board meeting regarding Bill 86. A special mention was made to welcome Mrs. Nicolas as new interim principal and to Mr. Giannacopoulos as new VP.

Mrs. Nicolas wished everyone well for the new year and a toast was made to celebrate a successful 2016.

Mr. Giannacopoulos said a few words and introduced himself to the group.

Agenda for the Special Meeting:

Mrs. Nicolas explained the logistics of the meeting and presented the two documents that would be discussed and then motioned for approval by the Governing Board.

Salient Points Regarding Bill 86:

Mrs. Nicolas presented numerous important points regarding Bill 86 in order for the Governing Board members to clearly understand the issues regarding the proposed Bill 86. These points highlighted the many issues that were outlined in the document package that was sent out to each member prior to the special meeting.

Group Discussion:

Paul Karpontinis began by mentioning that the Staff Council met and unanimously voted to reject Bill 86.

All members had a chance to voice their opinions and concerns regarding the proposed Bill 86.

Resolution Against Bill 86:

The following resolution was proposed for approval by the Lester B. Pearson High School Governing Board regarding the draft Bill 86.

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 4, 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 Education 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 the 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 Québec has offered no reason to validate the changes proposed in draft Bill 86.

The Governing Board members were asked to consider all the above points and then collectively move and resolve to:

1. Reject Bill 86: An Act to modify the organization and governance of school boards;
2. Demand that the Government of Québec acknowledge its duty to support and respect the constitutional rights of Anglophone Québécois;

3. Demand that the Government of Québec formally withdraw draft Bill 86.

Grace Fanelli motioned to approve the resolution and Casey Gagné seconded the motion. A vote was cast and 18 out of the 18 voting members present resolved that the Governing Board of Lester B. Pearson High School will stand behind the three above points. The resolution was signed by Benny Berneti and a copy will be sent to the EMSB.

Letter to Minister of Education:

A draft letter was circulated to the group addressed to François Blais, Minister of Education, Higher Education and Research. Stephania Mambro explained the following:

- Mrs. Nicolas would like the Governing Board to approve that the letter be sent out to the Lester B. Pearson High School parent body with an explicative accompanying message;
- the letter can be signed by any EMSB taxpayer;
- the letter expresses the taxpayer's concern with the plan to modify the organization and governance of school boards as outline in draft Bill 86;
- the letter states that we take our responsibility to control and manage our English school system in Québec very seriously and that it is our right under the Canadian Constitution;
- the letter insists that as a minority language citizen of Québec, it is our right to freely and fairly elect our board representative without government interference;
- the letter requests that Mr. Blais and the Liberal Party of Québec withdraw Bill 86.

Melissa Mastromonaco motioned to approve the above-noted request and Frank Mazzariello seconded the motion. A vote was cast and 18 out of the 18 voting members present unanimously approved.

EMSB School Taxes/Electoral List:

Stephania Mambro mentioned the details regarding payment of school taxes to the EMSB instead of the French school boards and importance of remaining on the English electoral list. You can find the form that can be forwarded to friends and family attached to the minutes.

Adjournment:

Casey Gagné motioned to adjourn the special meeting and Paul Karpontinis seconded the motion. Everyone was in favour.