

Willingdon Governing Board

Virtual meeting via Zoom

August 27, 2020, 6 pm

Attendance: Nick Batzios, Lara Belinsky, Maya Doughan, Aurora Flewwelling-Skup, Matt Follett, Monique Imbeau, Eric Lamoureux, Candice Madden, Cornélia Mandoiu, Kristin McNeill, Karen Negrete, Carmen Nicolas, Cynthia Quarrie, Lucas Reindler and Kathleen Usher.

Guest: Dr. Annick Gauthier (parent and medical consultant for Willingdon's Covid-19 Task Force)

Regrets: Mark Ellinger (technical difficulty in admitting him to Zoom meeting), Gabriel Latino, Steve Spetsieris and Joseph Lalla.

I. Motion to approve the agenda

Monique moves to approve, Lara seconds. Motion passes.

II. Motion to table the minutes

Cynthia moves to approve. Lara seconds. Motion passes.

III. Motion to make Dr. Annick Gauthier an official speaker.

Lara moves to approve, Nick seconds. Motion passes.

IV. Business arising

- a) Carmen explains the re-entry plan. She thanked the GB and Home and School for their support. "We are in this together," she said, and that her decision-making was also coming from being a parent herself.
  - o What's become clear in dealing with school re-entry is that there are many different opinions, beliefs and tolerances. Kindness, compassion, listening to each other are important during these times. Carmen said she is open to hearing ideas, concerns. They are doing what they can. The point of this meeting was to touch base and provide the avenue to speak on behalf of other parents.
  - o Dr. Annick Gauthier (MDCM, PhD, CCFP, Assistant Professor (Clinical), Department of Family Medicine, McGill University, Family Physician, Kateri Memorial Hospital Centre and St Mary's Family Medicine Centre, Medical Advisor for Kahnawake COVID-19 Task Force) was invited to join in her role as a medical expert. Carmen said they read all documentation issued by the MEES, EMSB and CNESST, and those guidelines are included in the directives issued by Willingdon.
  - o Willingdon is highly recommending the wearing of masks for everyone in the corridors and staircases, but it cannot force it. For K. to Grade 4 students, it's the parents' decision what to ask their child to do.

- b) Eric: At the Aug. 11 GB virtual meeting, the issue of masks was explored. The participants at that meeting felt it should be strongly recommended, though the concern around peer pressure and ostracism was also brought up.
- Aurora: what happens with the parent who wants their kid to wear a mask – can this be supported at school? Without putting pressure, can the student be reminded? Kathleen: They want to create an atmosphere and culture where wearing a mask is a normal thing to do. Promoting the idea that wearing a mask is “a good decision.”
  - Lucas: Can we address the **list of questions sent to Carmen August 16**; and while the back-to-school plan was fine, can there be more discussion about online learning, given the probability that schools will be shut down? Kathleen: First few weeks will be spent getting kids used to platforms to be used for online learning. There’s a move to make all homework go to Google Classroom; Meet-the-teacher will be on Google Meet (to get parents accustomed to it); Mozaik will be up and running as the prime teacher-parent platform and replaces the now defunct paper agenda. “The plan is to be as prepared for distance learning as possible.” No more ClassDojo and Zoom.
- c) Lucas: But will there a doc to explain more fully the **online learning**? Could include information such as “how to” for log in and to inform parents of specific platforms to be used, perhaps also a simple video tutorial for parents to get their kids online.
- Carmen: Year-long distance learning is available for students with medical exemptions. This will be initiated by the EMSB. These students will part of this “online school.” But if one classroom needs to quarantine, they have 24 hours to make a plan. Google Meet was the chosen tool at Willingdon. Also, in September, they will teach the kids how to use their email addresses. This will be more challenging with the K-Gr. 2 students because of reading and writing skills. In school, there will continue to be writing activities, and other activities will be done electronically. Physical hardware that had been loaned out in the spring will now need to be collected and brought back for use in the classroom. Gr. 4-6 were using computers regularly and are prepared for it. Carmen explained the logistics of the computer usage at both campuses.
  - She reminded the meeting that the hours of distance learning is available in the MEES documentation.
- d) The floor was opened to **medically related questions for Dr. Gauthier**. Kathleen: Students should bring in 2 masks. How long are they effective? Dr. Gauthier: A two-ply cotton masks can be used as long as it’s not moist or visibly dirty. This is why packing two masks has been recommended: one for the morning, one for the afternoon. They should not be stored in a plastic bag. Attaching them to a lanyard is a good idea.
- Monique: Could she speak to a directive issued by MEES as to what K. and Grade 1 teachers should do after handling a child in distress? Dr. Gauthier: If there are many tears or other fluids, teacher should change their shirt. Lots of hand-washing should be the norm. Wearing of gowns is not recommended.
  - Matt: With **social distancing** required, does it make sense what is to be expected in the classroom? Dr. Gauthier: The data is saying kids under 12

transmit minimally. That's one reason they're saying have full classrooms. Parents can ask kids to wear masks. Create an inclusive and loving culture to achieve this.

- She also mentioned, there is an online **symptom checker** but advises that parents check the symptom checker in the document.
- Aurora: what should be the **regular protocol** when kids return home from school? Dr. Gauthier: take shoes off and wash hands.
- Kathleen: A question about **fomite transmission** and papers handed in. Should these be left for 24 hours? What about the sharing of things like magnifying glasses? Dr. Gauthier: Papers can be stacked together, nothing more. But students should use their own pens, etc. One idea for sharing objects is to put one kid in charge of cleaning them.
- Karen: There is some confusion around runny nose and fever, and how parents should interpret **symptoms**. Dr. Gauthier: A Town Hall could help answer these types of questions, so that people can feel confident when an outbreak occurs.
- Monique: There is much **sharing of toys and games** in the younger grades. How should this be handled? Dr. Gauthier: If something gets wet, it needs to be cleaned or thrown out.
- Cynthia: What is the **difference between the aerosol and the droplet**? Dr. Gauthier: These are on a spectrum. Much more of a droplet is Covid. The majority of transmission is within 2 metres. Quebec has become better at reducing transmission because of the measures in place. We can encourage kids to wear masks, create an environment of washing hands and get the message out to the community.
- Eric: What about **air filters**? Dr. Gauthier: Problem would be if you couldn't open windows. They should always be open. She suggests researching "INSPQ+maternelle."
- Kathleen: What are the guidelines on **outdoor play**. The school hopes kids can run around, and it will be hard to police who they play with. Dr. Gauthier: It's not so much contamination on the play structure but playing close to each other. Kids need to be encouraged to stay within their class for outdoor play. Show what the space should look like. Use Xs, etc.
- Monique: Is it no **singing** because of the aerosols? Dr. Gauthier: Outdoor singing would be okay.
- Lara: **Team sports and sweating**. In some sports, kids get close, e.g. fighting for possession of the ball. Dr. Gauthier: There should be a focus on drills instead of competing. What works for the space.
- Nick: A kid has their own **recorder or another instrument** they use for percussion. Is that okay? Dr. Gauthier: INSPQ should be referred to in the case of wind instruments. Spit would be the problem.
- Matt: back to **physical distancing** and looking at Berlin's school situation (schools had to shut down). Dr. Gauthier: She wants to see physical distancing, masking and hand-washing. Write to your MNA and say what you want as parents.

- e) The floor opened back up to general discussion (medically related questions ended).  
**Town Hall.** Eric: Should we be organizing a FAQ and/or a Town Hall? Kathleen: Does a Town Hall make sense given school starts Aug. 31? Cynthia: Town Hall is good because some won't read the documents and still have questions. They may feel comfortable asking them at a Town Hall. Carmen: This should have happened before. Proposed that we see how things go and do one if needed, perhaps at Meet-the-Teachers. The decided upon method of informing was the Return-to-School plan PDF. A Town Hall feels like it might be unmanageable (how do you handle open questions?). Aurora: Bringing the school families together would help to create the culture and community-building to promote the practise of safety and hygiene, like helping kids create habits as they go out the door. Karen: Most immediate concern would be kids starting school and providing a quick run-down of the symptom screening tool.
- f) Cynthia: **Kids staying home.** i) Assuming kids will be kept home when displaying symptoms, how does curriculum work in that case? ii) absenteeism: how is it tracked, and do parents get penalized? What is the process? Carmen: Kids at home in quarantine will receive the distance learning through their homeroom teacher or another teacher. But, if a parent keeps a child at home without the exemption or they are not in quarantine, the school has to report to authorities and there is no distance learning. Carmen also explained the official homeschooling process, and the protocol when a child gets sick at school and the role of Santé Publique. In terms of communications, every week a reminder gets sent out about the importance of self assessment.
- g) Lucas: Message to others: you have to accept the uncertainty. Thinks Town Hall will degenerate into something unhelpful. But there are other tools: regular comms, Q&A. Some things can be filtered. Offered help with communications.
- h) Matt: How can we reduce the **transmission rate? Recess protocols? Outdoor teaching?** Kathleen: Space, among other logistics, is the issue. It's not off on the table. Carmen: Santé Publique determines whether a classroom needs to be shut vis-à-vis # of positive cases (not the school nor school board).
- i) Aurora: Will someone direct the people traffic at start of school?
- j) Eric: Question from a parent: Distance learning with an approved doctor's note. And Homeschooling. Carmen: School board does the homeschooling through a "Virtual School" for those with exemptions. Kids are connected with a specific school.

V. Lara moved to extend the meeting until 9 pm. This was seconded by Kathleen.

VI. Further business arising

- a) Kathleen: Info is coming in about **outdoor classrooms**. These will be held outdoors with specialists and for recesses. It's impossible to get the teachers outdoors for all classes.
- b) Eric: Advocated for communications but not for Town Hall. Nick: "This is the time to move forward and play by ear." Aurora: Could help with the questions. Carmen: We could use Dr. Gauthier's answers from this meeting. Perhaps she would be willing to answer some on video. Lucas: Expressed concern for her responding to questions outside of school's scope, that is commenting on protocols for Covid response, what is a

symptom (other than repeating what's in the government and EMSB documents.)

Carmen: A weekly email communication will be sent to parents. We can gauge after that if more is needed.

c) Carmen: On Sept. 10 **new Governing Board** will be voted in. General assembly will be held virtually. Waiting for EMSB to advise if Bill 40 passes, then certain things take place.

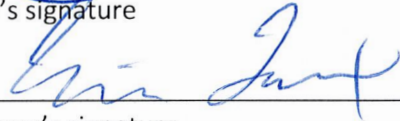
d) Eric recommends that **alternate voting members** continue to form part of the GB.

VII. Aurora moves to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kristin McNeill.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's signature



\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson's signature

## Appendix A – Willingdon School Governing Board – Internal Guidelines

### Willingdon School Governing Board- Internal Guidelines

All Governing Board members and the school principal and vice-principal will:

Before meetings:

- Circulate documents, including minutes and agendas, to be deliberated on at a meeting at least five days before the scheduled meeting, failing which consideration of the issue will be tabbed.
- Prepare by reviewing carefully documents and correspondence duly circulated in advanced

At meetings:

- Arrive on time
- Attend regularly
- Entertain questions to the Board and agenda items only when these have been submitted at least 48 hours before the scheduled meeting
- Follow the scheduled agenda
- Speak in turn and wait to be called on by the Chair before speaking
- Address the Chair when intervening in the discussion.
- Keep interventions relevant, objective, concise and non-redundant to facilitate effective and efficient discussions and decision-making
- Express opinions freely and respectfully
- Respect the right of non-members to intervene during the period reserved for questions

Following meetings:

- Support Governing Board decisions taken, regardless of one's personal view

General rules:

- Meetings will end at 8:15. A motion must be passed and approved in order for the meeting to be extended.