



June 17, 2019

From: Parents' Committee of the Lester B. Pearson School Board
To: Governing Board Chairs
Re: School Annual General Assembly of Parents

Dear outgoing GB Chair,

As outgoing Chair of your school's Governing Board, it is your responsibility to plan and hold your school's Annual General Assembly (AGA). As the AGA is a parents' meeting, you may ask your parent rep or another parent to take your place should you be unable to facilitate. If no parent is available, the task falls to the principal.

The AGA should be scheduled with your principal. According to the Education Act, it must take place before **September 30, 2019**, or your GB will dissolve and all powers will return to the principal.

Important! At the AGA, the following items **must** be voted by the parent body:

- approval of minutes from last year's AGA
- election of Governing Board parent members to available positions
- election of substitutes (optional) to available positions
- election of a Parent Representative and an Alternate Parent Representative to LBPSB Parents' Committee (from existing or newly elected GB parent members)
- the decision whether or not to form a PPO, and, if formed, the naming the members

In addition, the AGA is an opportune time to present your GB Annual Report.

This kit contains items intended to assist you with each of the tasks mentioned above. These items include the following templates that can be further modified to meet your school's needs:

- Sample invitation to attend the AGA at your school
- Sample nomination form for a seat on your Governing Board (optional, but useful to be sent home for parents interested in GB)
- Sample Agenda
- Sample Ballots
- A list of what should be included in your GB annual report
- Explanation of roles and responsibilities for GB parents
- AGA Frequently Asked Questions and answers
- Further clarification regarding changes to GB composition with the implementation of Law 105 (2016)

Editable Microsoft Word versions of the templates have been posted on the Parents' Committee website (parents.lbpsb.qc.ca) for your convenience.

Introduction and Invitation to the 2019-2020 Parents' Committee

The Parents' Committee (PC) is comprised of a Parent Representative (Rep) and an Alternate Parent Representative (Alt) from each school within the LBPSB. The Reps and Alts are thus able to participate in the highest parent advisory body at the LBPSB. They are also automatic members of the PC standing sub-committee that corresponds with their school (Elementary East, Elementary West, or High School). The Parent Rep and Alternate are cordially invited to attend the **LBPSB Parents' Committee AGA** where they will receive more detailed information.

The **LBPSB Parents' Committee AGA** will take place on:

**Thursday, Sept 26th, 2019 at 19:00
School Board Head Office
1925 Brookdale Ave, Dorval**

Please ensure that the newly elected Rep **and** Alternate Rep are available to attend this and subsequent meetings. Parents' Committee meetings usually fall on the first Thursday of the month, with an additional standing subcommittee meeting usually falling on the third Thursday of every other month (starting in October), but the schedules will be finalized by those committees after the AGA.

If you have any further questions regarding your AGA, the PC, or anything else, please do not hesitate to contact me (pc-chair@lbpearson.ca) or post a question in the GB Chairs AGA conversation located on Basecamp, a PC-sponsored online discussion forum which allows GB Chairs to communicate with other GB Chairs and parent volunteers (see the attached FAQs for details if you are not already on Basecamp).

More info can also be found online at parents.lbpsb.qc.ca and www.lbpsb.qc.ca under the "Governing Board" heading.

I wish you a relaxing summer and a wonderfully smooth AGA in the fall!

Sincerely,



Shane Ross
Chair, Parents' Committee
Lester B. Pearson School Board

SAMPLE AGA INVITATION TO AGA

Replace highlighted areas with relevant info, delete blue writing, and distribute

All Parents and Legal Guardians of
<Your School Name> students are
cordially invited to attend the Annual General Assembly of Parents

Date: <designated date>

Time: <designated time>

Place: <Location, such as "St-Anthony's Gymnasium">

What happens at the Annual General Assembly (AGA)?

- ✓ You will be presented the Governing Board's Annual Report.
- ✓ You will elect parents to the Governing Board for 2-year terms.
- ✓ You will elect parents to serve as substitute Governing Board members, the number of which must not exceed the total number of parent members.
- ✓ You will elect, from amongst the Governing Board parent members, a Parent Representative and an Alternate Parent Representative to the LBPSB Parents' Committee.
- ✓ You will help decide whether or not to form a Parent Participation Organization (PPO) for the year.

Governing Board

What is a Governing Board?

Every public school in Quebec has a Governing Board (GB). They are responsible for issues involving school life, the annual budget and the development of school policies. They are also the primary consultative bodies for School Board policies.

In addition to parents, our GB consists of <insert number> staff and <insert number> students (*applicable to high schools*) who are voting members, elected from and by their constituents. Two community representatives and the principal (or designate) have voice, but no vote. Monthly meetings are usually held <insert dates, i.e., on the second Tuesday of each month>.

Number of parents who are in their 2nd year on GB: <insert number>

Number of parent seats to be filled this year: <insert number>

Term of office: 2 years

How Do I Join Governing Board?

Complete & submit the Nomination form to me or to the school office by **<designated deadline date>** OR attend the AGA and present yourself in person by giving a 2-minute talk about yourself and the reasons for your candidacy (preferred).

Members of the Governing Board will be elected by secret ballot.

Parent Participation Organization

The PPO provides a forum for parents to share ideas. Its role is to promote the collaboration of parents in developing, implementing, and evaluating the school's educational projects. They may advise the parent members of the Governing Board or can be consulted by them on any matter. The number and schedule of meetings will be determined by the PPO.

A school can have both a PPO and a Home & School Association. The Home & School group generally focusses on fund-raising activities and organizing special events, whereas the PPO focuses on educational issues that foster student success.

Parents who attend the Annual General Assembly will decide whether to establish and declare a school-level Parent Participation Organization (PPO). If the parents decide to establish a PPO, the parent members must be elected and named during the AGA.

Number of parent seats to be filled: to be determined

Term of office: 1 year

Please consider running for a position on these important committees!

Attend the Annual General Assembly meeting to elect the parents that you feel best speak for you on school issues.

Thank you!

<Name of GB Chair>

GB Chair, **<Your School Name>**

Contact information

SAMPLE NOMINATION FORM

Replace highlighted areas with relevant info, delete blue writing, and distribute

**<YOUR SCHOOL NAME> - NOMINATION FORM
ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
<DATE OF AGA>**

To the Attention of Parents and Legal Guardians of students who are interested in joining the school Governing Board or Parent Participation Organization.

Please complete this form and return to the School Office on or before **<deadline date>**.

NOTE: The election of Parents' Committee Representatives will also take place at the Annual General Assembly of Parents.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Telephone numbers: _____

Children in the school:

Name: _____ Grade: _____

Name: _____ Grade: _____

Name: _____ Grade: _____

NOTE: Candidates may be asked to present a 1- or 2-minute biography in person during the meeting. It might include some of the following information:

- Reasons for your interest in GB
- Experience working with schools
- Related experience
- Ideas you would like to see discussed for **<Your school name>**

Alternatively, please attach your biography to this form, and it will be presented on your behalf. Please be aware that parents who do not present themselves in person typically have a lesser chance of being elected.

I declare my candidacy as:

a Parent Representative on Governing Board

a Parent Substitute on Governing Board

Signature _____

SAMPLE AGA AGENDA

Replace highlighted areas with relevant info, delete blue writing, and distribute

<Your School Name>
Annual General Assembly of Parents
<Date of AGA>
Agenda

1. Opening & Welcome
2. Naming of AGA Secretary (motion)
3. Approval of Agenda (motion)
4. Approval of Minutes of last year's Annual General Assembly of Parents (motion)
5. A Word from the Principal
6. Role and Function of Governing Board, Parents' Committee, SNAC and PPO
7. Election Procedure
8. Nomination of Elections Officials: President & secretary of election, ballot counters
9. Governing Board
 - 9.1. Introduction of current members (those in 2nd year of their term)
 - 9.2. Election of new Governing Board Parent Representatives
 - 9.3. Presentation of Annual Report (during ballot counting)
 - 9.4. Naming of new Governing Board Parent Representatives
 - 9.5. Election of substitutes
10. Parents' Committee
 - 10.1. Parents' Committee Representative's Annual Report
 - 10.2. Election of Parent Representative
 - 10.3. Election of Alternate Parent Representative
11. School-based Parent Participation Organization (PPO)
 - 11.1. Presentation of Annual Report (*if applicable*)
 - 11.2. Formation and naming of PPO (motion)
 - 11.3. Election of new PPO members (*if motion is approved*)
12. Destruction of Ballots (motion)
13. Dates of first meetings
14. Adjournment

SUGGESTED OUTLINE for Annual Report from Governing Board

At the end of the school year, the GB chair is required to present an annual report to the community outlining the activities of the Governing Board for that year. This report should include:

- Names of the Governing Board members (including all parents, staff, students, community reps)
- Dates, time and place of the meetings that took place
- Who compiled the minutes and where people can find them (e.g., website, school office)
- Consultations addressed
- General activities of Governing Board (field trips and fundraising approved)
- Presentations given (if any)
- Recommendations & Plan of Action for the coming year

Roles and Responsibilities of Elected GB Parents

This page should be distributed with the invitation so parents know what is expected of each position

Parent Representatives to Governing Board (GB)

Parents are elected to represent their parent body at GB, to make decisions on behalf of all children at their school. Even if parents have specific issues, they are asked to set them aside and vote according to the best interests of all children. Voting is a privilege and abstentions should be avoided unless there is a conflict of interest.

Parent Substitutes to Governing Board (GB)

Parents are elected to represent their parent body at GB in the absence of a Parent Representative. When acting in the place of a Parent Representative, the Substitute has the full rights and responsibilities afforded therein.

Parent Representative to the LBPSB Parents' Committee (PC)

The Parent Rep to the PC is elected by the entire parent body **at the AGA** from amongst GB parent reps. The PC parent rep represents all the parents of his/her school and attends regular monthly meetings at the School Board (usually the first Thursday of each month). Parents Reps are automatically members of the Parents' Committee, and they may further be elected to various LBPSB committees (Education, Facilities, Transportation, Intercultural, etc.), to EPCA (the English Parents' Committee Association), or to represent parents at Council as a Commissioner Representing the Parents' Committee. Parent Reps are expected to report back to the parents of their schools.

Alternate Parent Representative to the LBPSB Parents' Committee (PC)

This parent also represents all parents of their school and is a member of the LBPSB Parents' Committee. Voting is relegated to the alternate at PC meetings **only** in the absence of the Parent Rep. Alternates may also be elected to represent parents at select LBPSB committees and as EPCA directors and to participate in the subcommittees of the PC.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PARENTS

When should the Annual General Assembly of Parents (AGA) be held?

The AGA must be held prior to September 30th. Some schools hold it in conjunction with other school events in order to maximize parent participation.

Who prepares and runs the AGA?

The outgoing Chair of the Governing Board calls the AGA by written/email notice. If the Chair is not available to run the meeting, the outgoing Parent Representative or other knowledgeable parent fills in. The Chair may call upon help from the Parent Rep, Governing Board parent members, PPO Chair, etc., to help organize this important event. In the absence of a parent, the Principal calls, prepares, and runs the AGA.

Who runs the elections?

The parents in attendance must approve the Election Official(s) who will run the election and count the ballots during the election. Ideally, the latter would not be a parent or staff member of the school, but rather a School Board Commissioner or Community Representative.

Does the Parent Representative to the Parents' Committee have to be elected at the AGA or can we defer that to our first Governing Board meeting?

The Parents' Committee Representative must be elected at the AGA, as per the Quebec Education Act. Every parent of a child in the school who attends the Annual General Assembly is entitled to cast votes for the Parent Representative and the Alternate. The Parent Rep and Alternate speak on behalf of all the parents in the school. As such, it is not the decision of the Governing Board to elect them.

If there aren't any parents on the Governing Board who are willing to take on the role of the Parent Representative to the Parents' Committee, can we elect a parent at large or have two Governing Board parents share the job?

By law, the Parent Representative and Alternate must both be members of the Governing Board. One parent is elected to the position of Parent Representative, and one parent is elected to the position of Alternate. Both positions have a 1-year term. Those two parents can, however, share the duties and the meetings, and the Alternate is entitled to vote at the Parents' Committee meetings when the Parent Rep is absent.

Our current Parent Representative to the Parents' Committee just completed the first year of their term as a Commissioner Representing the Parents' Committee. Do they need to be re-elected to GB or as Parent Rep?

The term of Commissioner Representing the Parents' Committee is two years. If they have completed their term on GB, they are automatically renewed for another year on GB and are automatically the Parent Representative for the next year. Consequently, one fewer position is up for election on GB.

Is it OK if we are unable to fill all the seats available for parents on our Governing Board? Can we leave them vacant or should we ask the school board to reduce the numbers?

Absolutely not. It is incumbent upon the parents to fill all parent positions that are up for election on Governing Board by September 30th. **If they don't, the Governing Board cannot operate and all of its functions and powers are given to the Principal.** If a Governing Board would like to change its composition (either by increasing or decreasing the number of parents/staff), a resolution requesting this must be sent to the School Board in the spring, in response to the GB Composition Consultation. Communication with parents (as outlined in this document), and encouragement by current GB members, will help ensure success in recruiting interested parents for Governing Board.

A parent left the school and has vacated his position on GB. How do we fill that position?

Any vacated position, be it a day or a year after the election, does not have to be filled at the AGA. The parents on GB determine amongst themselves how to replace that parent until the end of the 2-year mandate. GB internal rules may outline how and when this should be done.

Can a “graduating” parent be elected to GB, knowing that the position will be vacated after only one year?

Yes. Procedure to replace that parent (see above) is then followed.

What is the difference between a PPO and a Home and School?

As per the Quebec Education Act, a PPO, composed of parent members, may be formed within your school by all parents present at the AGA. The PPO's role is to promote the collaboration of parents in developing, implementing and evaluating the school's educational project. They may advise the parent members of the Governing Board, or can be consulted by the Governing Board on any matters of concern.

A Home and School Association is an independent, incorporated, not-for-profit, volunteer organization also dedicated to enhancing the school experience, usually by fundraising. The membership is open to anyone in the community, regardless of whether they are a parent. More information on Home and School can be found at <http://www.qfhsa.org>

We have always wanted to establish a Parent Participation Organization (PPO) but some parents at our school say it's not necessary because we have a Home and School. Whose decision is it to form a PPO?

Schools can have both a PPO and a Home and School Association. The decision to form a PPO rests solely with the parents who attend the AGA in the fall. A motion is put forth to establish a PPO, a vote takes place, and if approved, members are elected and a name is given to the PPO.

Changes to GB elections with the implementation of Law 105 (2016)

Governing Board Substitutes to Be Elected at Your AGA

Bill 105, implemented in 2016, has stipulated that all GB members may have substitutes to replace absent members for every meeting. At your school's AGA, you should elect a substitute for each parent position on GB. The teachers, staff, and students will also be able to select substitutes. The law is very vague about how to do this and how the substitutes will contribute to GB, so your GB will need to address these issues and amend its Internal Rules accordingly. Below are some questions and suggestions.

Why should we have substitutes?

Substitutes are useful to ensure that the parent voice is not diminished due to an absence.

Can substitutes be recruited any time?

No. Substitutes **must** be elected at the AGA.

Are substitutes required for a GB to exist?

No. As per the Education Act, elections for substitute positions should be held. This should be done after the elections of GB members at the AGA. Should any of the substitute positions not be filled, the GB can still function.

Does each GB member have their own specific substitute?

No. The law does not require that each member have a specific substitute, only that the number of substitutes does not exceed the number of members. Any parent substitute can fill in for any parent member, and any teacher substitute can replace any teacher member, etc.

Can a substitute act as chair for a meeting?

Yes, a parent substitute may act as a chair.

Can a substitute be elected as PC Parent Rep or Alternate?

No. The substitute is not an official member of the GB.

Suggested practices

Are substitutes considered members of the GB?

They are not members of the GB, *per se*, but can vote in the absence of a GB member. They should be welcome and encouraged to attend all GB meetings, to be available should their voting services be required. If not required, they sit as members of the public. Between meetings, they have no voting privileges.

Do substitutes get added to the GB email distribution list?

The law does not require it, but substitutes would be most effective if they received all relevant material on an ongoing basis.

How does the GB decide which substitutes get used if there are absences?

That is up to individual GBs. It could be on a rotating basis, on the first to respond to a request for a substitute, etc.. This topic should be addressed in the GB's Internal Rules.

Are substitute members' expenses covered by the GB budget?

Yes, if they are at a meeting replacing an absent member, regardless of whether or not they are needed to meet quorum. Remember that a substitute is there to ensure that the full parental voice is heard, not simply to meet quorum.

How long is the term of a substitute?

The law does not state a length of term. This is a matter for your GB to decide. It would probably be best for the term to be a year so that substitutes are eligible to run for GB the following year, should they desire to do so.