

**PARENTS' COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**THURSDAY, May 7, 2020**  
**7:00 P.M., ONLINE**  
**1925 BROOKDALE AVENUE**



**AGENDA**

Please login to assist us in starting on time.

1. (7:00) Call to Order
2. Word from the Chair
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. QESBA's Position on the Reopening
5. **Reopening of LBPSB School Amid the Covid-19 Pandemic**
6. EPCA
7. Questions from the Public
8. Adjournment

**Parents` Committee ONLINE MEETING  
THURSDAY, May 7, 2020  
Lester B. Pearson School Board  
1925 Brookdale Avenue, Dorval**

1. Call to Order  
S. Ross called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Quorum was established with 37 members out of 46 LBPSB schools and SNAC being represented.
2. Word from the Chair  
S. Ross noted that this was the first public online PC meeting. It was mentioned that the logistics and features of Zoom would be highlighted.  
He explained that during the meeting he might select different features within the chat options.  
He then advised participants that during the Q and A participants could select the "raise your hand" option. He asked everyone to refrain from posing questions during the presentation but emphasized that after each presentation PC members would have the opportunity to ask question, and additionally, there would be an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions later on.  
S. Ross asserted that the objective of this meeting was to facilitate a partnership between parents of the LBPSB and the Administration.  
He noted that during the course of meeting, several individuals would be disseminating very important information. It was emphasized that the most relevant information would be given and pointed out that the LBPSB Administration has sent out various emails to parents, and the Director General had recently posted a video regarding the reopening of schools.  
S. Ross mentioned that the PC had sent out a request for parents within the School Board to send in their questions regarding the current situation, and reported that 100 question were received. He indicated that there would not be sufficient time to answer each of the questions submitted during the meeting.  
It was noted that at some point, the PC would attempt to post the answers to all question submitted.  
S. Ross went on to discuss the items on the agenda for the evening. LBPSB Chairman N. Burke would be speaking about QESBA's position on the reopening, then Assistant Director General T. Rhymes would speak about the reopening of LBPSB and the Covid 19 Pandemic, and EPCA Directors J. Valenti and G Piggins would speak about EPCA (English Parents' Committee Association), a lobbying arm for parents within the English community
3. Approval of Agenda  
S. Ross called for approval of the agenda. It was moved by B. Tremellen that the agenda be approved. The motion was seconded by G. Piggins and was carried unanimously.
4. QESBA's Position on the Reopening  
S. Ross invited LBPSB Chair N. Burke to speak to QESBA's (Quebec English School Board Association) position on the reopening.  
N. Burke mentioned that he is the Vice President of QESBA. He indicated that both LBPSB Council and QESBA are monitoring the situation. He pointed out that QESBA took a position to ensure a smooth transition and to intervene on a political level regarding both the timing of reopening of schools as well as safety concerns surrounding the reopening.  
N. Burke underlined the fact that some school boards are more local, while others are rural, with the LBPSB being more urban- all living different realities. He noted that QESBA felt it was important to intervene as the only elected officials left due to the adoption of Bill 40.  
QESBA acted in the interest of schools. They maintained that schools reserved the right not to open at this time if they felt they were not ready.  
In the interim, schools canvassed parents, and got organized. At his time, the LBPSB is ready to open on May 19<sup>th</sup>. The Eastern Townships School Board indicated that they required an additional two days and that got politically spun.  
N. Burke pointed out that the Association of Administrator's in the French system agreed with QESBA and said that they would delay the reopening of any school which was not ready.  
QESBA has been discussing the current situation and has been expressing their concerns to the Ministry regarding the situation in the Mascouche area as well as the expectation that Secondary students will need to meet certain requirements by the end of the year.  
N. Burke praised LBPSB Administration for the great job being done to organize the schools. He noted that although minimal, it is important that parents are aware of the risks.  
It was emphasized that there are legitimate concerns regarding how all High School students will complete their year. There is an uneven playing field with rural areas for example not having the advantage of reliable connectivity to the internet.

N. Burke emphasized some announcements were only made very recently and that the original assumption was that there was to be no formal instruction or evaluations. He then invited parents to email him with any concerns that they had adding that their input will aid Council and the QESBA moving forward.

S. Ross then requested that participants hold their questions until later.

## 5. Reopening of LBPSB Schools Amid the Covid-19 Pandemic

S. Ross invited T. Rhymes to speak to this item on the agenda. T. Rhymes expressed his appreciation to everyone for their patience and understanding as these are unprecedented times.

He underscored the fact that the Administration has continued to keep safety in mind.

He pointed out that there are 4 different theaters to consider, which he would elaborate on later- Adult Ed, Voc Ed, Elementary, and Secondary.

T. Rhymes emphasized that the School Board is not completely in charge of the roll out of the reopening as they have to follow the directives of the Ministry.

He would go on to discuss the expectations and contingencies, all prefaced by the fact that the School Board has been planning for an eventual reopening. It was emphasized that both a short-term and long-term vision were being mapped out in order to try to anticipate what the expectations would be.

T. Rhymes underscored the fact that over the course of the past couple of months, various delays have been announced with the latest being a delay in reopening, now scheduled for May 25<sup>th</sup>. He noted that the delay was a public health decision funneled through the Ministry.

The situation is very fluid and things could change at any moment. For example, the day before this meeting there was a shift in the message from the government as to which age group is most at risk. These decisions implicate staffing and the School Board had to change staffing plans.

T. Rhymes highlighted the four theatres that were mentioned earlier. He noted that there were four different plans stemming from four different directives.

### 1. Adult Ed

- Learning has to move to distance learning with contact from the teachers
- At the Adult Ed level, evaluations are mandatory and students must therefore take exams
- The School Board has the go ahead and begin exams as of May 25
- This is imperative as students need to obtain their pre-requisites

### 2. Vocational Education (Voc Ed)

- Distance learning is taking place
- Many Voc Ed programs follow specific sequencing and plans have been made to re-orient
- Lab work and Stage placements are difficult at the moment
- Some students enrolled in the Health programs were granted Stage placement in CHSLDs and some teachers were co-opted to CHSLDs
- As of the time of this meeting, the government is permitting access to labs with only a 50% capacity as of May 19, allowing the practical side of learning to continue
- It is not yet clear if this access will be granted on that date or delayed until May 25 with the recent announcement of the delay for reopening of schools and centers in the Montreal area. The School Board is waiting for a clear directive

### 3. Elementary

- The reopening of Elementary school has been logistically challenging with a great deal of anxiety attached to it
- Mitigating factors coming into play present challenges but the schools are getting ready
- With the directive that a maximum of 15 students per classroom are permitted, principals are looking at configurations in their schools
- Principals have been communicating with the School Board and depending on the size of the classroom, between 8 and 15 students will fit while following the physical distancing guidelines of 2 meters of space between students
- It is clear that schools will not be able to operate as they did in March with all of the safety measures being put into place
- A preliminary survey went out at the end of April to try to determine which students will be returning
- As the numbers come in, principals are sharing those numbers with teachers so they can set up their classrooms
- A long list of protocols have to be put into place
- Schools have made sure to place decals on their floors to assist students with physical distancing and there is an adequate amount of soap and hand sanitizer in each school
- The School Board had secured gloves and masks and 50 medical quality masks have been sent to each school as well as some re-usable and disposable visors

- The School Board is confident in the amount of supplies it has secured
- In Schools, lines have been painted to indicate physical distancing guidelines
- Regular hand washing schedules are being created
- Double caretaking schedules have been put into place with increased washroom and classroom cleaning
- The School Board has not been advised to take the temperatures of students and staff but some no touch thermometers have been ordered
- All employees have to be asked each day how they are feeling

#### Academics

- A Committee has been established to look at academics and pedagogy during this time
- There will be a focus on wellness and readiness to learn, considering that students may be experiencing some anxiety or trauma
- Teachers will regularly check in with their students to determine if they are experiencing any anxiety
- In terms of academics, the focus will be on project based learning allowing students to concentrate on topics that most interest them
- The expectation is not to try to catch up on all of the lost time, but to try to help students get excited about learning and to get them back into some type of routine
- Daycare services will be available before and after school, although so far, subscriptions have been low
- It is prohibited for anyone other than students and staff to enter school buildings. No volunteers, visitors or outside professionals will be permitted.
- Directives of public health are to be respected and if there happens to be an outbreak in a school, measures must be taken to do contact tracing as easily as possible

#### 4. Secondary

- The delay in reopening Elementary Schools has no impact on High Schools
- Directives have changed- schools have had direct contact with students for approximately 4 -5 weeks
- Within 2-3 days of the closure of schools in March, High School teachers were initially frustrated that they could not engage in learning with students
- Recently students have been allowed to retrieve their belongings in a controlled manner
- Teachers will begin to have expectations of students for work which can be evaluated
- As of May 19, there will be schedules sent out
- Clarification was just received stating that students in Secondary 1, 2 and 3 will be evaluated on a pass/fail grade with a degree of evaluative flexibility
- Students in Secondary 4 and 5 will be graded, with their results going on their transcripts to be sent to CEGEPS if applicable
- Ministry directives have stated that there will be numeric marks given for Secondary 4 and 5 students who will be afforded the opportunity to improve their marks

S. Ross then thanked T. Rhymes for being an advocate for the PC and for keeping everyone informed.

The Chair noted that several members of the Advisory had some questions regarding the reopening.

**Q.** Can you please give us an overview of the busing situation with respect to distancing measures, monitoring etc...?

**A.** Transportation will be made available but there are certain challenges as the School Board does not own the buses but contracts the service from various transportation companies. 35-40% of bus drivers are 60 years and over. As of the day of this meeting, now those that are 60 years of age and up are not prohibited from working. Following the directives, the capacity on each school bus will go down from 72 students per bus to 12 students- (ie. One student per seat -every 2<sup>nd</sup> seat with the seat in front and in back of the child remaining empty. Bus routes are being redrawn based on parental needs. Many parents may wish to drive their children to school when possible.

The expectation is that students will practice physical distancing on the bus.

Every Friday a survey will go out regarding attendance and the need for busing. The Transportation companies say that they will have enough drivers.

**Q.** Have there been discussions about how to ensure that students are in fact following physical distancing? Will there be any disciplinary measures?

**A.** All attempts will be made to re-educate any student who does not respect the rules. Similar to any circumstance, if a student does not follow the rules, the School Board can remove the right for the student to be able to access busing.

- Q.** Is there a hard and fast requirement regarding busing needs or is it flexible?
- A.** The School Board must plan and is therefore hoping that parents respect the fact that the School Board needs prior notice in order to be able to comply with public health directives. However, extenuating circumstances may be taken into consideration.
- Q.** Several parents have been asking about the PPE teachers will be provided in the classrooms. Will there be any PPE for students?
- A.** So far, there have been no directives for the mandatory wearing of protective gear. The School Board is not advising teachers to wear gloves. The school environment will be sanitized on a regular basis and no one will be sharing materials. Any member of the staff may wear a mask if they wish. Schools have special Emergency PPE kits available if necessary including visors, gowns and gloves in the event that physical distancing is not possible. Proper hygiene and physical distancing will be practiced at all times.
- Q.** If a child coughs, will they automatically be isolated? What happens if a child falls in the school yard?
- A.** In the normal course of the school day, children fall. Protocols have been established that in the event that a child gets hurt, a staff member will put on protective gear. Staff will use their judgment and monitor students. If a child has a combination of symptoms they will be watched closely. Every school will have an isolation room. In the event that a student has several symptoms, the student and a staff member would have to stay in the isolation room until such time as a parent arrives to pick the student up.
- Q.** Since the School Board seems to have plenty of masks, should each student be asked to wear one?
- A.** If a parent wants to send a student with a mask, that is their choice but the School Board has not been advised by public health that it is necessary.
- Q.** Are parents being asked to take their child's temperature?
- A.** No, they have not. Parents need to be vigilant. If their child is sick they should stay at home.
- Q.** Will teachers and students be tested? Will bus drivers be tested?
- A.** There is no requirement for teachers, students or bus drivers to be tested.
- Q.** What happens when a student exhibits symptoms?
- A.** If a student is symptomatic, the parents are called and public health is notified. Public health is regional and will investigate cases in their region. When the first case in the School Board was reported back in March, public health investigated and did contact tracing.
- Q.** Young children will have a hard time distancing. What consequences will be put in place if they have difficulty respecting the 2 meter distance?
- A.** Kids are kids and schools will do the best they can to encourage them to listen. Everyone has to adapt to the new normal. There is a huge parental role to play. Parents should explain to their children what physical distancing means. School will not look like it did before. Students will have to be explained what the expectations are.

*At this point in the meeting, S. Ross noted that as a point of order, a motion to extend the meeting would be required.*

It was moved by S. Warren to extend the meeting by 30 minutes in order to adjourn at 9:30pm. The motion was seconded by B. Tremellen and was carried unanimously.

S. Ross noted that in the extra 30-minute period, more questions would be answered, an update from EPCA would be given and the public would have an opportunity to ask questions.

- Q.** Can you please speak to online pedagogy for students who do not return to school?
- A.** Logistically, it is not easy as it is not known how many students will be attending. Learning kits were sent out and will continue to be augmented. The objective is to have a teacher who will not be physically present in school reach out to students virtually. Online classes are not feasible; however teachers will support students with phone calls and reach out by video conferencing. It is felt that there is no real benefit in setting up a camera in a class where students could watch from home.
- Q.** Feedback is that there are a lot of inconsistencies. Some teachers are holding Zoom meetings twice per week, some students are being contacted every two weeks. Holding a virtual class for six hours a day might be too much but maybe one hour per day would be good. Could more be done?
- A.** The School Board was given a different mandate prior to this meeting. Now the directives are such that teachers can now report to work. Until now, we did not have permission for staff to enter buildings. Moving forward, you may see a more direct line between principals and teachers.
- Q.** With regards to Emergency PPE, will Integration Aides and one on one support staff be given PPE?
- A.** Principals are in discussions about this issue.
- Q.** How will IEPs be managed with students going back? Things might change. IEPs might change. How do we serve both the students with special needs who come to school and those who remain at home?
- A.** The SSD team has been great. We can't provide the same services as in person, but discussion are taking place to help students with special needs.
- Q.** Is there an understanding that some students are now employed as essential workers?
- A.** Teachers are somewhat aware of that. Teachers in high school will have some office hours in order to be able to connect with students. Teachers want to be able to help students.

**Q.** Given that students have had a lot of time off, what happens to them next year in terms of missed material. What about summer school?

**A.** This is a question that needs to be answered by the Ministry. What is the expectation? What is the plan for students to catch up? In the fall, they will refresh their knowledge and learn the material that is imperative for them to learn. Teachers are acutely aware that there is some very important knowledge that students need to learn. As far as summer school goes, this is an ongoing conversation. At this time there are no plans to extend the school year. The School Board has been planning for summer school.

**Q.** What about reimbursements for fundraising initiatives? School fees?

**A.** The School Board has not crossed that bridge yet. There are some issues regarding school trips, insurance etc... Parents will be credited and refunded. The School Board takes the funds for school trips and pays the travel agents or organizers who then pay the hotel and travel costs.

**Q.** Given that it is Mental Health week, the Premier made reference to reopening schools due to mental health needs. What are the needs that will be supported? Does the school Board have access to FSSTT?

**A.** We are reaching out to those students and families that need help and families who have contacted the School Board to say they need help. The School Board has prioritized the social and emotional needs of students upon reopening. These are a top priority and will remain so through August.

## 6. EPCA

S. Ross introduced the two EPCA Directors representing the LBPSB PC - J. Valenti and G. Piggins who presented EPCA's position on the reopening of schools.

J. Valenti expressed thanks to parents for their participation in the meeting as well as Assistant Director General T. Rhymes.

He highlighted the following points:

- Those involved with EPCA have expressed the same issues that are being discussed at this PC meeting
- President of EPCA has been in regular contact with the Ministry who has listened to some parental concerns, including those relating to students with special needs
- EPCA has requested a delay in the implementation of plans regarding Bill 40 – (Abolishment of School Boards in favor of Service Centers) citing issues with the organization of elections given the current pandemic. The government has expressed that things will move ahead with the original timeline.
- EPCA sent out a survey regarding the reopening of schools with many responses coming back. Some parents expressed the importance of having a choice to send their children back to school

J. Valenti informed PC members that parents should be aware that not all schools have organized virtual GB meetings.

S. Ross mentioned that GB meetings must be public. The logistics of holding in-person GB meetings taking physical distancing into account is just not possible.

Recently however, new directives received from the LBPSB Secretary General stated that GB's in fact can hold a virtual meeting and can put forth responses to consultations and carry on with the usual GB mandate. S. Ross emphasized that therefore GBs should proceed with holding virtual meetings. He encouraged Reps/Alts to contact their GB chairs. Moving forward he, along with the Advisory will put together a timeline.

Discussions took place regarding the dissemination of the invitation for this particular meeting. It had been sent to PC Reps, but not sent out centrally through the schools.

S. Ross then invited participations to ask questions:

**Q.** Can you speak in more detail regarding EPCAs plans for the future?

**A.** It is definite that there are expected to be no changes regarding Bill 40 and its timeline for the implementation within the English system. The French School Boards have already been abolished. It was noted that sometimes a centralized authority is important, especially during a pandemic.

## 7. Questions from the Public

The public had been invited to submit their questions in advance. T. Rhymes graciously responded with the most up to date information.

**Q.** How will Elementary students pass their grades?

**A.** The Education Minister sent an update the day of this meeting affirming that the Term 1 and Term 2 results of Elementary school students will be taken into consideration. In addition, judgment and consideration of teachers, along with the school team will be taken into account with regards to student placement for next year. Each decision will be a local one with guidance from the SB.

**Q.** Were half days considered as an option?

**A.** Half days were a contingency that the School Board prepared for, but it was necessary to wait for a directive from the Ministry. Ultimately, the Ministry chose not to go this route.

**Q.** Given the greatly increased demands for custodial staff during this pandemic, has there been any consideration for wage increases?

**A.** Anything to do with wages falls under Unions.

**Q.** Can you provide any information regarding the directive for teachers to provide online classes? Was there any directive given?

**A.** Teachers were encouraged to keep in contact with students and send out learning kits to them. It is a local decision as to how that would look. The School Board advised schools to follow a certain framework.

**Q.** Given that there are some vulnerable students, what are the strategies to be used regarding meal programs?

**A.** The School Board has the go-ahead to re-engage certain programs for those who need it, but public health guidelines must be followed at all times.

**Q.** Going forward what will online learning for Elementary students look like?

**A.** Teachers who are not engaged with students in the school will reach out virtually to them. There is no expectation for some sort of distance classes at the Elementary level. Ministry directives state that teachers have permission to discuss with students the material that is being worked on.

S. Ross then indicated that there were four additional questions and that two of them would be answered during the meeting with the remaining two questions to be answered at a later date.

He thanked the PC, guests, the LBPSB Chair and the Assistant Director General, the CRPCs and, Commissioner Judy Kelley. S. Ross expressed his appreciation T. Rhymes for answering questions.

He emphasized to all parents that the PC was there for them and invited parents to consult the PC website at:

<http://parents.lbpsb.qc.ca/>

**Q.** Given that the teachers will be doing work with Elementary School students in the school, would it be possible to get those same worksheets sent home for those who will not be going back this year?

**A.** At the School Board, discussions surrounding this topic have come up. This might be a possibility but there are no guarantees. The challenge is that from week to week, we do not know how many students we will have. If a larger number of students attend, we will have to see. There are many variables.

**Q.** In closing, you asked parents to speak to their children. What can parents say to their children to help them prepare?

**A.** The School Board has the intention to send out a letter to parents to speak to their children prior to the re-opening of schools. This is not an easy conversation to have.

T. Rhymes expressed his thanks to parents for participating in the meeting.

S. Ross noted that 3 of the 4 CRPCs were participating in the meeting, as the 4<sup>th</sup> CRPC was dealing with health issues (unrelated to Covid-19).

8. Adjournment

S. Ross adjourned the meeting at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by  
Barbara Schnider  
Recording Secretary

<b>Attendance Report</b>		
<b>Member School</b>	<b>Parent Rep Present</b>	<b>Alternate Rep Present</b>
Allion	Shiana Warren	Valerie Beaudet
Beacon Hill		
*Beaconsfield	Ovidiu Burlec	
*Beechwood	Diandra Yoselewk	
Beurling Academy	Jay Taube	
*Birchwood	Derek Kenny	
*Children's World	Susan Mintzberg	
*Christmas Park	Cassandra Bazos	
*Clearpoint	Marc Lucke	
*Dorset		
Dorval		
*Edgewater	Sherry Lee Dawson	
*Evergreen		
*Forest Hill Jr	Tanja Minisini	
Forest Hill Sr	Tanja Minisini	
John Rennie	Shane Ross	Mike Wilson
Kingsdale		Greg Piggins
Lakeside Academy	Helene Charbonneau	
*Lasalle Community Comprehensive	Sonya Fiocco	
Lasalle Jr	Shonda Giddens	
*LasalleSr	Christopher Eaton	
Lindsay Place	Melanie D'Lima	
MacDonald		Kristoffer de Forest
*Maple Grove	Ashley McLellan	
Margaret Manson	Nadia Iacino	Mark Michel
*Mount Pleasant		
Pierre Elliott Trudeau	Julie Faucher	Mike Klaiman
Pierrefonds Community	Greg Piggins	Marcus Hamaker
Riverview	Ariana Winn	Linda Dalterio
Sherbrooke Academy Jr.	Joseph Valenti	
*Sherbrooke Academy Sr.	Scott Henderson	
*Springdale		
St. Anthony	Shane Ross	
St. Charles	Jason Doan	Steve Orenbach
*St. Edmund	Shauna Spear	
St. John Fisher Jr		Nadia Lalawd
St. John Fisher Sr	Sarah Campeau	Christina Forest
St. Patrick	Doug Bentley	
St. Thomas	Sharad Bhargava	Phil Caetano
*Sunshine Academy		
Terry Fox	Brenda Tremellen	
Verdun	John Ranger	
Westpark	Alaina Gross	Michelle Sternszus
Westwood Jr	Tanja Minisini	
Westwood Sr		
Wilder Penfield		
SNAC	Lisa Mancini	
CRPC Designated by SNAC	Angela Berryman	

**Other distinguished attendees:**

Thomas Rhymes (Administration)  
 Noel Burke (Chair, LBPSB Council of Commissioners)

Jennifer DiMarco (Chair, Special Needs Advisory Committee)  
 Judith Kelly (LBPSB Council of Commissioners)  
**37/46 Member Schools + SNAC Represented**