



Cedarcrest Elementary School
1505 Muir, St-Laurent, QC H4L 4T1
Tel: (514) 744-2614



Commission scolaire English-Montréal
English Montreal School Board

CEDARCREST SCHOOL
Governing Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday November 10, 2020

Attendees:

Maria Arfanis, Maria Argyriou, Raymond Ayas, Lorraine Belanger Karen Der, Lydia Kansou, Sandy Milonas, Tia Nicholls, Georgia Stamatopoulos, Helene Zereik, Elena Zervas

Absentees:

None

1. WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Welcomes and opening remarks for the second meeting of the 2020-2021 academic year from chair Tia Nicholls. The meeting was held via Microsoft Teams.

2. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Members asked to add drinking water (6h), lockers 6(i), and the revised daycare handbook (6j) to the Agenda.

Motion to add these items to the Agenda was put forth by Helene Zereik and seconded by Lorraine Belanger. The motion to add these items to today's Agenda was carried.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Motion to adopt today's Agenda as amended was put forth by Helene Zereik and seconded by Lydia Kansou. The motion to adopt today's Agenda as amended was carried.

4. REVIEW OF THE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 6, 2020

Member Raymond Ayas noted that the Minutes list him as the Parent Committee Representative instead of Helene Zereik.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the October 6, 2020 Meeting Minutes as amended was put forth by Tia Nicholls and seconded by Lorraine Belanger. The motion to approve the October 6, 2020 Meeting Minutes as amended was carried.

6. BUSINESS ISSUES

a. Revised Reporting Session

- As per Ministry directives, due to this year's unique circumstances, teachers will issue only two report cards this year. The first report card will be issued on January 22nd and the second report card will be issued on June 23rd.
- This will give teachers more time to focus on their students' learning.
- The school year will be split into 2 terms instead of 3. Each term will count for 50% of the final mark.

b. Revised School Calendar

- The parent-teacher conference scheduled for November 26 is still in effect.
- However, due to the revised reporting session, the Term 2 parent-teacher conference will now take place on April 22nd instead of February 25th. The PED days associated with the Term 2 parent-teacher conference are now April 22nd and April 23rd.
- The school calendar remains status quo until the Christmas holidays but will fluctuate after January 4th with the addition of 3 other pedagogical days (below).

c. Additional 3 Pedagogical Days

- As per a recent Ministry directive, there will be 3 additional pedagogical days added to the school calendar for training workshops for the teachers.
- Two of the pedagogical days will be assigned by the Board and the third will be chosen by Cedarcrest.

d. Grade 6 Hoodies

- The Principal reported that due to the huge increase in sanitation expenses i.e. soap, disinfectants, paper towels etc., there is no budget surplus.
- Members asked if Cedarcrest would be reimbursed for these Covid related expenses by the Board or Ministry. The Principal said at the moment they are not being reimbursed.
- The quotes for the pullover hoodies is \$29 and the zipper hoodie is \$35. Once the school pays for the Graduation hoodies, there will be few funds left over for the yearbook and Graduation party.
- The Principal noted that consequently there will have to be some sort of cost sharing with parents for the Graduation.
- Staff member and Graduation Committee member Sandy Milonas noted that from her experience, parents, staff and students have always pulled together to raise the necessary funds.
- Chair Tia Nicholls remarked that there may be some pushback from parents about paying for Graduation this year since in the last few years, parents were not asked to contribute to Graduation. The Principal noted that in previous years there was a budget for Graduation. Furthermore, Cedarcrest can no longer charge for certain school fees which has further restricted its budget.
- Graduation and its funding fluctuates year to year. In some years, there are not enough parent volunteers to organize and fundraise. As such a standard or benchmark for Graduation should be set. If parents have to pay, they should pay every year and not only in some years. Students should have a standardized Graduation concept and format that does not vary from year to year. For example, it should not be a fancy banquet hall one year and pizza takeout in the school gym in another year.
- As for the yearbook, Ms. Gianna quoted a cost price of \$5 per yearbook at the last Home and School Meeting. It is very plausible to recoup most of the yearbook expenditures by selling the yearbook to all students instead of only the Grade 6 classes.

e. Air Purifying System

- At the last Home and School Meeting in October, a parent who is also a Lauren Hill teacher enquired about what it would take for Cedarcrest to acquire air purifiers. She had researched the subject and had communicated with other schools who were in the process of implementing air purification systems.
- The Principal contacted the Material Resources Department on this subject. The Board at this moment will not be paying for any air purifiers.
- The Board has stipulated that if a school wants to purchase them, it has to be funded by Governing Board i.e. Home and School. Even then, the school would have to follow stringent guidelines. They have to use a Board certified electrical engineer to assess and verify the electrical panel. This assessment report alone costs \$3,150 and does not include any necessary repair or upgrade to the electrical system. Home and School would have to buy the Board approved purifiers and filters. Home and School would have to pay for the electrical system upgrade, the setup of the purifiers, the future maintenance of the filters and any utility bills associated with the running of the air purification system.
- Cedarcrest Home and School doesn't think it will have the money to fund such a project nor maintain such a system.
- Parent member Lydia Kansou enquired if there is a Plan B if an air purification system is not feasible.
- The Principal responded that the only thing they can do is keep the windows open all day and when it is winter to open the windows at recess when the students are outside. Staff member Sandy Milonas noted that the windows freeze shut during the winter and cannot be opened.
- The Board suggests that if any Home and Schools are exploring purchasing air purifiers, they should delay for now since guidelines or policies may change very shortly.
- The Lester B. Pearson school board is already moving towards implementing air purifiers in their older schools. Santé Publique is also currently studying this issue. Therefore, Governing Board will table this issue for a later date since it will have to wait for more information from the Ministry and the Board.

f. 2019-2020 Safe School Action Plan

- The Safe School Action Plan outlines the measures for preventing and responding to acts of bullying and violence.
- Many of the measures proposed in the plan could not be implemented due to the school closure last March.
- From the data collected from the 'Tell Them From Me' Survey, 88% of Cedarcrest students feel a strong sentiment of belonging among the student population compared to the national average of 70%.

Motion to approve the 2019-2020 Safe School Action Plan was put forth by Lydia Kansou and seconded by Georgia Stamatopoulos. The motion to approve the 2019-2020 Safe School Action Plan was carried.

g. Establishing Future Governing Board Meeting Dates

- The future Governing Board Meeting Dates for this academic year will be December 8th, February 9th, March 16th, April 13th, May 11th and June 8th.

h. Drinking Water

- Parent member Helene Zereik asked if students could refill their water bottles at the water fountain.
- The Principal noted that per current safety guidelines, a teacher or caretaker would have to supervise and disinfect the water dispenser button after each usage.
- Staff member Sandy Milonas noted that a lot of instruction time is already being lost to the multiple handwashing routines throughout the day.
- Staff member Lorraine Belanger added that she had been informed that her classroom sink water is safe after running for 5 minutes. Her routine is that after a student washes his hands, he can fill re-fill his water bottle at that moment.
- The new water fountains comply with Health Canada safety guidelines but the Principal will follow up with the Board to confirm that the classroom sinks also comply.

i. Lockers

- The lockers are open. The current routine is for the students to remove their boots or outdoor shoes outside their classrooms and put on their indoor shoes inside the classroom. Students take turns afterwards to put their coats into their lockers.
- Parent members remarked that once there is snow and puddles in the hallways, students will be walking around in wet dirty socks throughout the day. They asked if it was possible for students to remove their coats and boots at their individual lockers if they all wore masks.
- The Principal responded that at the moment it is not feasible due to the staggered entry in the mornings. The hallways will be too busy and students will end up congregating with the classrooms across the hall.
- This issue of the lockers and changing in and out of winter gear can be brought up at Staff Council.

j. Additions to the Daycare Handbook

- Ms. Stamatopoulos reported that the Daycare Handbook for this academic year had to be revised to reflect the new regulations implemented due to Covid.
- The Daycare Handbook now stipulates that the Extra Curricular Activities (ECA) offered by external educators cannot happen until further notice. ECA will be administered by daycare staff.
- There is no outside field trips on PED days until further notice.
- As approved at the last Governing Board meeting, only regular registered day care students can attend Daycare on PED days.
- Any student asked to self-isolate will be credited the days they are not using Daycare.
- Parents cannot enter the school building to drop off or pick up the students. At pickup, the children will be brought to the Daycare exit.
- As per Ministry directives, parents are asked to monitor and evaluate their children's health before bringing them to school and daycare.

Motion to approve the revised Daycare Handbook was put forth by Maria Arfanis and seconded by Lydia Kansou. The motion to approve the revised Daycare Handbook was carried.

7. REPORTS

a. Principal's Report: Elena Zervas

- The Principal will bring up the business issues of the locker situation and refilling water at the fountain or sink to Staff Council.

b. Teacher's Report: Maria Arfanis

- On behalf of the Teachers, Ms. Arfanis thanked Home and School for the Welcome Back Fun Day, Halloween and Teacher's Wish List.

c. Commissioner's Report

- There was no Commissioner Report.

d. Parent Committee Report: Helene Zereik

- Most schools represented at the Parent Committee meeting are concerned about air purification as discussed in the business issues.
- There is concern about school enrolment in the east side of Montreal.
- At the Parent Committee Meeting, Ms. Zereik brought up the issue of water quality in the schools and feels that we need to be more pro-active in following up with this issue and the condition of the pipes in the schools.

e. Daycare Report: Georgia Stamatopoulos

- There was no daycare report to present; things are going well at Daycare.

f. Home and School Report: Tia Nicholls

- This year, Home and School did not want to limit teachers to Indigo for the wish list. They were told to order whatever they needed for their specific classrooms to promote safety, well-being and learning during this pandemic. For example, teachers asked for extra copies of novels to avoid book sharing, storage solutions for the classrooms, more yoga balls and noise cancelling ear muffs.
- For the Welcome Back / Fun Day, Home and School paid for individually packaged waffle breakfasts from Allo Mon Coco for students and staff.

- For Halloween, Home and School sponsored the popular school-wide Bingo Game and treated students to individual packs of 'Bad Monkey' popcorn and chips.
- Home and School is working on ideas for Christmas. Ideas include decorating stockings, virtual Santa greeting, and the school-wide intercom Bingo Games. Again, to support local community businesses, Home and School is thinking of treating the students to individually packaged Christmas cookies.

8. QUESTION PERIOD

There were no questions raised.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of Governing Board is scheduled for **Tuesday December 8, 2020 at 6:30** via Microsoft Teams.

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 PM.

Minutes By: Karen Der