

St. Patrick Governing Board Annual Report 2014-2015

Governing Board (GB) had a very busy 2014-2015. Along with the usual consultations the St. Pat's GB also saw the launch of the Major School Change in April, with a brief due in October of 2015.

Membership:

Voting Members:

John Bateman, Parent Representative, Second Year of two year term;
Mike Besner, Parent Representative, First Year of Two year term, chair 2014-2015;
Niru Bhola, Teacher Representative
Marc Blanchard, Parent Representative, First year of two year term;
Carol McRae, Teacher Representative
Dave Patterson, Teacher Representative
Lori Pompeo, Staff Representative
Tom Samolis, Parent Representative, Second year of two year term, Region 1 representative, CPC representative, Facilities Committee;
Veronica Ticknor, Parent Representative, First year of two year term; and
Mary Vassiliakis, Daycare Representative

Non-voting members:

Wayne Clifford, Commissioner;
Michael Rabinovitch, Principal, ex-officio; and
(empty), Community Representative

Meeting Dates:

September 11
October 7
November 4
December 2
February 3
March 10
April 14
May 5
June 2

Consultations:

Like every year the GB was responsible for either submitting a brief or feedback for numerous consultations for the school board. The regular process for the consultations would be a

consultation launch, followed by discussion at a GB meeting. Then either a brief would be written and submitted to the appropriate person at the school board, or feedback would be sent to the Region meeting, and then CPC, via the parent representative. Our representative this year was Tom Samolis. Likewise certain issues would be brought to our GB table from Regions and CPC.

Lester B. Pearson Budget
Enrollment Criteria
Principal Criteria
Homeschooling
Three Year Plan of Allocation
Governing Board Composition
Bylaws 1 and 1E
The Major School Change (in progress into 2015-2106)

Financial Reports:

In December GB approved the financial and daycare reports submitted by the principal, M. Rabinovitch for 2013-2014. At that time proposed budgets were also submitted for 2014-2015. At the June meeting 2014-2015 reports were approved.

Of special note in terms of the daycare budget is the impact recent budgets will have for parents who make use of daycare on pedagogical days. In the past two years there was a holiday for extra fees for ped. day activities as there was a budget surplus. The surplus had accumulated from the parents using the daycare services, and the decision was made at GB to return the money to the people who had created the surplus by providing the free field trips from January to June in 2013 and 2014.

Revising this year's numbers the accumulated surplus has been spent, although the charge for field trips has remained as \$7.30 per child plus \$13 per family, even though this has caused a deficit situation (there is legacy money to take care of the deficit). As of 2015-2016 field trips will be charged according to the actual fee of the trip. Discussions continue as to how this will affect parents, but it is possible this may lead to a system where certain students are on a field trip while others stay at the school.

Meetings:

One of the concerns this year's governing board had while approving various items that find their way to the agenda is the increasing costs associated with school fees, extra-curricular activities, and field trips.

Last year, 2013-2014, there was an increase in school fees to \$65 per child. Even with this increase St.Pat's was very much at the bottom end of the scale for school fees. For the 2015-2016 school year GB has once again approved for an increase to student fees. However, this increase will not be the same for every grade. As of next year expenses will be itemized by

grade level. In order to tackle some areas within the Student Success Plan there will be an increase in the use of workbooks. The cost of these workbooks will be included in the description of the fees associated at each grade level. The actual fees per level will not be increasing, however, the workbooks will lead to an overall increase in fees.

There are organizations that request permission to come into the school and offer various services, either for lunch times or pedagogical days. At GB we noticed that these costs seemed to be increasing at a cost which exceeded inflation, and in fact seemed quite arbitrary.

We have negotiated with Pierre Pleau for those parents who choose to have their children sign up for Tae Kwon Do to hold the price at this year's level for at least one more more year.

Any organization which enters the school to offer an activity has been previously approved by the school board. This includes those organizations which provide services on ped days for daycare children.

Of note is the increase in email voting for the approval of field trips. The St. Pat's GB has a process where field trips to be approved come to the table as part of the agenda, are proposed including cost, ratio, and grade level. As part of the discussion we can get further details about the proposal: leaving time, return time, what other activities has the grade level done and at what cost to parents, plus any other concerns.

As a tangible example of this when we discussed the daycare field trip for June 5 going to Parc Safari GB made it clear that the water play areas and pools would be inaccessible for our students.

As mentioned above part of the approval process is the possibility of having a trip approved by email, with a ratification vote at the next meeting. Although convenient it does not allow for the same amount of discussion about the trip, as that part of the process is awkward through an email message. This year approximately one field trip per month was voted on through an email exchange. Meetings should remain the preferred method of approving field trips, with an email vote being an exception.

What's Ahead?

Already 2015-2016 promises to be a busy year. The Major School Change consultation will be ongoing until October 31, 2015. The Commissioners promise to release the results of the MSC at their December meeting. The impact for St. Pat's is unknown at this time, as we are still in the consultation process.

Next year we will continue to have the numerous consultations we see every year, plus there will be revisions of some outdated policies.

Not yet mentioned, but very important and acting as a thread which impacts many decisions are the budget cutbacks at the school board level which do have an impact at individual schools. Always part of the discussion are how do we, at LBPSB, continue to offer the service of numerous professionals, continue to assist students with special needs, and staff libraries in the face of increasing budget cutbacks?

Respectfully Submitted,
Mike Besner