

Contents

Wednesday June 8 th , 2016	2
Wednesday May 11 th , 2016	11
Wednesday April 13 th , 2016	24
Wednesday February 10 th , 2016	32
Wednesday January 13 th , 2016	37
Wednesday December 16 th , 2015	42
Wednesday October 14 th , 2015	49
Wednesday September 23 rd , 2015	56

Wednesday June 8th, 2016

Attendance: Nancy Richer, Sylvia Aviles, Troy Cornford, Laurent Lapointe, Tina Truffa, Sylvie Léger, Martin Paquin, Heather Meehan, , Paul Nagy, Sheila Shanahan, Derric Chandler, Kathy Arseneault

Absent: Vanessa Della Vallee, Krista McLeod

1. Verification of Quorum

- Sufficient

2. Approval of Minutes – May 11th, 2016

- Approved

3. Approval of Agenda

- Zain picture, raised by Mr Cornford
- Capital budgets, raised by Ms Richer
- Daycare surpluses, raised by Mr Lapointe
- Cafeteria menu, raised by Ms Alviles
- Approved

4. Public Question Period

- No one present

5. School and Governing Board Operations

i. School Operating Budget for 2016-2017

- See the budget list.
- Not much of note. It is similar to last year, with a few adjustments
- The budget is not set in stone, the school has flexibility to move funds from one area to another, if the need arises
- Those listed as “N/A” (homework grant, technology, wellness, educational capital allocation) have not yet been confirmed. We usually get those details at the start of the school year
- Approved

ii. PPO Account – Fundraising Money

- There is \$5,525.60 left, but we still have expenses left
- Once spent, we will have nothing left
- Those to which we have already voted in the past and approved:
 - \$1,600 for graduation
 - \$500 raised at Bingo for ALD
- Need to vote:
 - \$697.70 goes to the playground fund and will be used to buy either one or

- two tents, for when the school has outdoor activities
 - Approved
- \$1,277.90 for the Fun Day BBQ. This was raised at the Bingo night. If not all used, the remainder will be put in a trust fund for next year
 - Approved
- \$500 for start-up costs for next year
 - Approved
- \$200 to donate to Children’s Wish Foundation
 - Approved
- \$500 discretionary fund for the school/principal
 - Approved
- \$200 towards the Generations (breakfast) program
 - Approved
- \$50 towards scholastics
 - Approved
- If there is money left over, because funds not all needed, it would be put in a trust fund
 - Approved
- Because of some difficulty figuring out what was voted for and approved, we will assign a treasurer for next year.
- Mr Nagy is tentatively assigned this task

iii. *Annual GB Report*

- Every year, we need to prepare an annual report of the items raised and debated at the GB.
- Ms Truffa is handling this.
- She sent us a copy for our review
- It will be voted on next September

iv. *Zain Bardai*

- Mr Cornford obtained a picture of Zain from the family
- He will look into getting a plaque of it

v. *Capital Budget*

- This is for our information only. Every year, the schools must make their large capital budget requests of the school board
- Ms Richer will submit for the following:
 - Create a wall between the library and the resource room (estimated cost: \$5K)
 - Needs kids to be able to get help in silence and confidentially

- Paint lines in the yard (\$2K)
- Additional parking spaces – extend the parking lot (\$55K)
- Lockers, hooks for lockers, book-holders for hallways and daycare
- Paint parking spaces in the front area (\$2K)
 - Mr Nagy raises objections to the cost of \$2K for this. It seems high to charge \$2K to paint some lines
 - Ms Richer says it may be because of the template required to make the painted lines
 - Can it be borrowed from another school that has purchased it ?
 - Apparently not.
 - Many objections added: The cost seems excessive. A few years back, Mr Nagy, Mr Cornford and Mr Seltman painted lines in the school yard and it cost a \$100-\$200 in paint and they did the work. \$2K is very high.
 - Ms Truffa will raise this high cost at the Parent Committee and ask for details of how some projects that seem so simple can be so expensive

vi. *Daycare Surpluses*

- After our last meeting, Mr Lapointe asked Ms Mcleod for details of how daycare money could be spent early in the year, creating a deficit.
- Ms Mcleod explained that in some schools, the principal may spend money from daycare funds before the needs of the daycare are met and before we know if there will be a surplus or how much of one
- This can create deficits
- As mentioned at the last meeting, this may be the cause for raising the daycare fees at the other schools
- Mr Lapointe expresses deep concern about this and does not want it happening at Harmony.
- We are very fortunate at Harmony to have Ms Mcleod at our school, who has done a magnificent budgeting job
- We have also been lucky to have principals who have been conscious not spend unearned money from the daycare
- But we do not want to have it happen here, if ever the principal or daycare managers change
- In the past four years, the daycare at Harmony has had surpluses of \$10K (this paid for the Kindergarten set), \$10K (this paid for a teacher “dream” list for whatever they wanted), \$10K (this paid for the new yard’s fence) and this year of \$32K (which will pay for more school yard items)
- Already, parents sending their kids to daycare represent less than 1/3 of the kids at the school but they are the ones who are essentially paying for all these items that benefit the entire school community
- The cost of funding school-wide projects is balanced unevenly against daycare parents
- It would be very unfair if there was a situation in which the principal would spend daycare money that has not yet been raised, create a deficit and ask the daycare to raise their fees to offset the cost.
- It has not happened to date, fortunately, but Mr Lapointe proposes a motion

saying the daycare funds cannot be touched by the principal until May-or-June, when it is ascertained with certainty whether or not the daycare is in surplus or not, and by how much

- Ms Truffa suggests we should raise this in September and vote on it then, and maybe on an annual basis, so that it is not forgotten and it is clear to the principal and school at the start of each year
- It will be added to the items for the September GB meeting.

vii. *Cafeteria Menu*

- Usually, we go over the cafeteria menus at the last GB meeting of the year in order for the GB to approve it
- We have not received the menu this year
- Ms Richer says she monitors the food served, but did not obtain the menu for us to vote on. She was unaware we did
- We will want to review the menu. Perhaps get it for the September GB meeting
- Has the agenda gone to printing, because if the agenda has gone to printing, may be problematic to have it in the agenda and then the GB vetoes some items
- It is not likely gone to printing yet
- We should consider not adding it to the agenda if not voted on.
- Ms Richer will obtain the cafeteria menu and email it to us for a proxy vote and discussion
- As an aside, Ms Truffa says that the parent committee confirmed that if the cafeteria goes off menu, the GB has the authority to stop them

6. Liaison with Stakeholders

i. *Principal's Report*

- *Bingo:*
 - Great event. She was very happy with it
 - She had a long talk with Zain Bardai's parents. She is pleased that Tammy continues to have the PPO raise funds for ALD
- *Citizenship Award*
 - Two of our kids were elected by the school board for the citizenship award, along with one of our mothers
- *Buddy's Ice Cream Contest*
 - We came in second. Mary Gardner won.
 - There is some sentiment that the rules are not fair because the prize is based on total ice creams sold, rather than a pro-rata basis
 - On a pro-rate basis, Harmony would have won
 - We will still be buying from them for the ice cream sold at the school's fun Day
- Track and Field
 - Ms Richer says we did great at track and field.

- The kids were well-behaved

ii. Daycare

- There are 80 kids going to the June 10 ped day: Laser Tag
- The daycare has such a large surplus that it will be paying for the kids that day
- They went to Funtropolis in May. The daycare paid for that outing as well

- Ms Arsenault would like to mention what a great job Ms Mcleod does with both the kids and handling all the financing. She is truly a great manager. We are very fortunate.

iii. School Council – Teacher Requests

- None

iv. Parent Participation Organization – fundraisers / school activities

- PPO is looking at selling popcorn next year, rather than chocolate
- People enjoyed the Cadbury's chocolate, but we could not return extra chocolate, so there was a risk taken by the school
- Also decided to try something different so as not to compete with other schools, hence the popcorn
- The PPO is targeting an October sales period
- Mr Lapointe asks how big the bags are because parents are the ones selling these to colleagues. If they are inconvenient to carry, many parents may not want to lug them around, sales may falter, etc.
- The bags are popped, they might take up a fair amount of room
- The PPO is still debating the idea. They will continue to evaluate it.

v. Parent Committee Report – updates

- *Cafeteria*
 - *See earlier*

- *Email:*
 - *See email received:*
 - **Update on Bill 86** - Various school boards and school groups presented their opinions to the Minister of Education. They were expecting a revised version in less than a month. They said it would be too late to implement anything for the next school year. The latest news is that they will not be implementing Bill 86. They may make some minor changes to the system but nothing major as was anticipated.

Privacy Issues - Parents had issues with Karla Holmolka living in the Chateauguay area and with her family attending a NFSB school. Under Quebec law, the school board must provide an education to anyone within their boundaries. They are not allowed to deny education to anyone. They are also obliged to respect the privacy of all citizens. The school board provided counsellors / psychologists to answer questions from parents and

to help them discuss the issue with their children. They were also available to speak to students if they were worried or scared.

Social Media - Mike Helm stated that no standardized regulation will come from the school board. They feel that schools have different wants and needs. Some schools like to post pictures / events on Facebook and Twitter. etc. Other schools do not want to post anything at all. It would be too difficult for them to enforce a policy. Mike Helm stated that schools protect themselves by asking parents to fill out a consent form for photos / internet posting at the beginning of the year. Prior to events they make announcements regarding photo taking and the rule for "not posting" without permission from all families in the photo. Request that parents remove photos that were posted without permission. If parents continue to take and post pictures without permission they will no longer be allowed to take photos.

Technology - School Boards were given large grants to initiate the use of technology many years ago. Since then they have received smaller sums by the Ministry to update older equipment. With constant changes at the Ministry this dossier seems to have been ignored. (Particularly this year with Bill 86 being the main topic.) The school board receives a lump sum and is expected to divide the monies among their schools based on needs and numbers. No windfall is expected in the near future for improvements. Other schools have fundraised (CVR did a Star Wars movie night) to get money. We must decide if this is something we want to do. It was asked if we could rent equipment from companies. Mike Helm said it could be looked into but it has never been done by the school board.

Major School Change Policy (Overcrowding) - This dossier has been reopened. A few years ago they put in changes quickly that would affect the least number of families. Mercier / Ste. Martine students moved from Mary Gardner to Harmony. In the next two years it is expected that Mary Gardner and Harmony will surpass their capacities. (Due to families moving into the areas. Mercier is still being developed and young families are moving in.) Next year the school board will look at all the numbers / big picture. Using the Beauregarde system they plan on looking at a longer term solution. The system lets them know which neighborhoods have room for new homes, young families etc. Helps them to anticipate future students. The school board is also lobbying to get a special needs school built to help students who previously were bussed into town. Some other students may opt to go there which will change numbers in the schools. This is a long process and has to go through many committees for consultation (GB, PC, and the Council of Commissioners) prior to anything happening. It is unfortunate but possible however that families previously affected will be affected again. New schools, class sizes, and the way students fall within the various grades will all need to be taken into account. Nothing will change in the coming school year. When changes are implemented they are expected to be for a minimum of ten years.

- *Overcrowding at Harmony*
 - Next year, we will be 2 students under capacity. It will be tight
 - We will be full the following year, by school board estimates
 - The school board is looking at options
 - Nobody at harmony wants to lose the library or music room
 - The school board is currently trying to get a facility built for special needs kids.
 - If built, this may result in kids transferring there
 - Parents would be given the choice of integration to the special needs school or a regular school, if the special-needs schools is built

 - The issue for the overcrowding at Harmony is the transfer of kids from Mercier to us
 - Mercier is growing fast
 - The school board essentially put in place a band aid solution two years ago by transferring Mercier children to Harmony
 - It looks like a new set of school lines will be needed, but the school board wants to do it right this time.
 - They will perform a study and the projection will be over ten years. Once this is received, they will reevaluate school boundaries
 - The study is expected to take one to two years to complete
 - They are looking at the entire school board in this study

 - Mr Cornford suggests just building the second floor on Harmony
 - The government will not pay for this very expensive exercise if other solutions are available. That would be a last resort
 - Ms Truffa will nonetheless ask at the Parent Committee about the possibility of adding a second floor

7. Adjournment time: 8.30PM

Action Items:

Item	Responsible	Due date
Ms Truffa will raise the high cost of certain capital projects at the Parent Committee and ask for details of how some projects that seem so simple can be so expensive	Ms Truffa	September or October meeting
Raise Motion that principal, school or daycare cannot spend daycare money on projects unrelated to the daily running of	Mr Lapointe	September meeting

the daycare until May or June, when it is confirmed that there is a surplus and how much		
Ms Richer will obtain the cafeteria menu and email it to us for a proxy vote approval and/or discussion	Ms Richer	Before the end of the school year
Ms Truffa will ask at the Parent Committee about the possibility of adding a second floor to Harmony	Ms Truffa	September or October meeting
Because of some difficulty figuring out what was voted for and approved, we will assign a treasurer for next year. Mr Nagy is tentatively assigned this task	GB	September meeting

Signatures:

Principal: Ms Richer: _____

Governing Board Chair: Ms Truffa: _____

Wednesday May 11th, 2016

Attendance: Nancy Richer, Sylvia Aviles, Troy Cornford, Laurent Lapointe, Tina Truffa, Krista McLeod, Sylvie Léger, Martin Paquin, Heather Meehan, , Paul Nagy, Sheila Shanahan

Absent: Vanessa Della Vallee, Derric Chandler, Kathy Arseneault

1. Verification of Quorum

- Sufficient

2. Approval of Minutes – February 10th, 2016 and April 13th, 2016

- February: corrections made. Approved
- April: Approved

3. Approval of Agenda

- School organization raised by Mr Paquin
- Grade 1 field trip, raised by Mr Nagy
- Junk food in cafeteria, raised by Mr Nagy
- Approved

4. Public Question Period

- No one present

5. School and Governing Board Operations

i. Parlement Écolier – visitor Fany Petropolous

- Every year, there is a parlement national des écoliers at the National Assembly. The goal is to help kids understand what goes into making laws and to familiarize them with the political process.
- This year is the 20th parlement écoliers.
- Each year, schools across Quebec propose laws to be debated during this annual event. Among over a 100 proposals, only three laws are selected each year
- This year, Harmony's grade 6 proposed law was accepted: "La Culture Maraichère"
- The school's proposal was to set up bacs throughout schools in Québec to help students understand the growing process: from the quality of the dirt, to the growing and cultivation of vegetables, fruits and flowers all the way to the distribution to the market and the public and to our kitchen table, thus sensitizing students and the public to the importance of responsible consumption
- The students in grade 6 had to select who would present the law in the National Assembly and would therefore be representing them and the school. In voting, they selected Fany Petroplulos
- The school was very fortunate to be represented by someone so mature and poised.

- She did the school very proud.
- She acted as representative of Brome-Missisquoi and presented the law to the parlement écolier on May 6th and played a central role in this year's parlement. She was the godmother of the law.
 - Her role was to steer the law through the National Assembly and the Committee
 - It is a role with a great deal of responsibility: She had to debate, negotiate, moderate and defend the law amongst her fellow student deputies from across Quebec. It required a lot of strategic thinking and interpersonal skills
 - She was joined in Quebec by three other student parliamentarians:
 - Kayla Stewart, depute of Laviolette
 - Malika Prigent, depute of Jean-Lesage
 - Kalynda Lajoie, depute of Laval-Des-Rapides
 - The GB was shown videos of her presentation of the law. To a person, the GB was wowed ! She was poised, mature, thoughtful, respectful and professional in her presentation.
 - Fany told us it was a great learning experience.
 - She was very nervous but she had practiced long and hard with her classmates: Mock National Assembly meetings were set up by Mme Tetrault.
 - The grade 6 class simulated the National Assembly and Committee settings and debated the pros and cons of the law so as to prepare Fany and her colleagues for the day.
 - They attempted to ensure that every situation was practiced and every counter-argument brought to light, so that when Fany would be in session, she would be as prepared as possible.
 - The whole exercise was a beautiful example of teamwork.

 - While there, Fany met deputies and was able to converse with them and make connections
 - She visited their offices and got some real insight into what a deputy does and how they work
 - It helped her to really understand the law-making process

 - On a personal note, she also said the experience helped to build her self-confidence.
 - There is a lot of fear to overcome when speaking and defending ones ideas in a room with 125 other people, all while the cameras and public watch. This experience made her recognize she could overcome her nervousness and fear and accomplish something truly remarkable.
 - The whole process helped her other more-subtle ways as well, such as building her vocabulary. There are many terms she learned throughout the process

 - All in all, she is justly very proud of herself, and the school is very proud and thankful to her for representing herself, her class, her school and the whole community so well.
 - The Governing Board would also like to thank the grade 6 class for working so hard on the writing of the law as well as for all the work in the simulations to help prepare Fany. Thank you !

ii. Student Coalition – visitors Skye Paoloni and Alexandre Vézina

- Alexandre Vézina and Skye Paoloni are members of the student coalition
- The student coalition is a group of students from each of the NFSB school. They come together to brainstorm ideas to improve the school
- There is one grade 5 and one grade 6 student from each school at the coalition
- They try to propose ideas and create awareness of them in their schools
- This year, they worked hard on the pillars of Responsibility and Kindness
- They participated in creating posters throughout the school, they helped in the autism awareness, they worked on the book sale and other activities
- Essentially, a lot of the good things that we as parents hear about and that our kids are so excited about – these are the kids that work behind the scenes to organize and implement them.
- Alexandre is the representative for grade 5 and Skye is the representative for grade 6.

- When asked what they learned by doing this, Skye and Alexandre spoke of many new skills they learned and others they improved: It definitely helped their listening skills. It's important to hear your peers and understand their concerns to help advance issues and ideas that would address them.
- By extension, it also allowed them to develop leadership and negotiation skills – trying to get people to work in groups and all focused on the same issue.

- Skye hopes that she could join the student coalition when she goes into high school, while Alexandre would like to be the grade 6 representative next year.
- The GB is very proud of their work and greatly appreciates all they have contributed to the school. What they do plays a major role in making Harmony such a good school.
- We wish both of them luck next year ! Thank-you Alexandre and Skye !

iii. Red Cross Fundraiser

- A parent recently contacted Ms Richer about fires occurring in fort McMurray
- The parent has family there and would like to propose that the school raise funds for the Red Cross in support of Fort McMurray
- Ms Richer suggests that we could perhaps have a jersey day where each kid brings in \$1
- Then in the classrooms, the teachers can take a bit of time to explain the tragedy and how this impacts people, as well as what Fort McMurray is to Canada

- Troy reminds people that we had someone whose house burned down here in Chateauguay and who lost everything
- He also notes that another child in our school lost his father in a fire in Mercier
- We should consider two things:
 - We asked for donations, but did not raise money for this family.
 - Likewise, this may bring up hard and difficult memories for the children
- He suggests that, perhaps, we should focus on tragedies closer to home before raising money for places far away
- It is pointed out that the Red Cross does get involved in situations across the country and were even involved in the house fire here in Chateauguay
- Perhaps we could alter the purpose of the fund-raising and say it is for the Red

Cross, not necessarily for Fort McMurray. This way, the funds raised go to help those who help in all such tragedies

- Motion to approve the fundraising: unanimously approved
 - Ms Richer and Troy will meet to look at the wording of the fundraising, so that it is appropriate and acceptable.
 - As a type of fundraising, Mr Paquin suggests perhaps linking it to the energy cubes: for example: give \$0.05 for every cube of energy up to a max of \$10 or \$5 or whatever. This way it encourages kids to get outside and do activities, while raising the funds
 - Ms Richer says the actual fundraising activity will be decided later, but we will look at different options, including this one
 - As a side-note: In light of the recent tragedies in Chateauguay affecting members of our school community, psychologists were brought into the school to talk to staff and help them understand how to deal with the children of these tragedies, as well as to be available for the kids and any child who needed to talk about it
- iv. *Supply Lists and Levy Fees*
- We have agreed to have bureau en gros have a copy of our supply lists so that parents can order it through them online and just go pick it up
 - The school gets nothing from this, it's just a service to make it easier for parents
 - The levy fees are the same across the NFSB schools. It's \$48
 - The school is still waiting on the cost of the various workbooks. They should be the same price for all schools
 - On the supply lists, there will be no requests for Kleenex or hand sanitizers. It is against the law to add them.
 - That said, teachers may suggest during the orientation that parents get them, as they do serve a purpose
 - Brand names on the supply list will only be recommendations, and not requirements
 - The lists will be similar to last year
 - The total cost is not yet known
 - Motion to approve supply lists: approved unanimously
- v. *Chocolate Bar Funds / Spending*
- We need to decide where to spend the funds raised
 - Those that need to go in trust need to do so now and not too late in the year. The board wants us to assign them soon
 - The current funds remaining is not known. The PPO will get back to us on that by next meeting
 - We need to ensure we spend the raised funds where we said we would

- Last year, the PPO did donate some of the funds and would like to do the same again this year. The two causes were: Generation (breakfast program) and Autism Awareness
 - They will also need start-up funds for next year (for chocolate fundraiser, parade at beginning of year, etc.)
 - Likely, we will want to mimic what was done last year. Last year, the PPO used the funds as follows:
 - School garden: \$200
 - Autism: \$200
 - Prizes for Fun Night: \$1,000
 - Fun Day: \$1,000
 - Generations (breakfast program): \$200
 - Gift cards and start-up: \$1,500
 - Spirit Day: \$1,500
 - School Yard fund: \$2,000
 - The PPO will let us know what funds remain, what they need and where they would ideally like to see the remainder be assigned
 - Because of the time constraints in getting this decided, it will be sent to us via email and a proxy vote will be necessary
- vi. *Emergency Preparedness*
- There has been no lock-down of late
 - There will be a surprise fire drill in the coming week
 - The time will not be announced ahead of time to the staff
 - The goal is to evaluate how the students and staff react when the alarm goes off unexpectedly

6. Liaison with Stakeholders

i. *Principal's Report*

Banquet for Retirements and Years of Service

- Mme Léger celebrated 20 years of teaching. She is an example for her profession ! Félicitations !
- Mme Dubois and Ms Cathy Kennedy announced their retirements. We thank them for their contributions to all our kids' education ! Thank-you and enjoy every minute of your retirements !

School Yard

- We will be making improvements to our school yard this year
- We are looking at buying soccer nets for the new yard, as well as painting lines on the grass
- PPO funds will be used to pay for them
- We also want to create sitting areas near the garden, and add benches around the yard, with flower holders. A tree would also be planted near the garden
- We also want to add an area for a long jump
- The basketball hoops will also be changed

- We are getting a quote for these
- These latter items will be paid for from the daycare surplus
- In addition, the school board will be paying to fix the fence

Proposed Project for Recesses

- The school is looking at ways to better organize recesses and the lunch recess
- Several teachers and Ms Richer visited a school that had implemented a form of organized play areas during recesses
- The goal is to get kids who are less socially adept and perhaps less disciplined and help get them into organized play.
- These kids tend to be isolated from more socially-adept children and find themselves gravitating to other kids with similar difficulties. They then feed off each other and develop unhealthy social habits
- The goal is to have several organized play areas, so that kids can choose a game, which will be supervised by an adult. These kids can then learn and develop better skills and maybe be better integrated socially
- There will be many games and the children will be able to choose where to go. Some kids with behavioral issues may be encouraged to join specific games
- This will not take more supervisors than the current set-up and may even be easier to monitor as the current set-up has kids running off in all directions. It can often be a challenge to keep an eye on everything.
- For the time being, it is only in the exploratory stage. More developments to come as it is investigated and studied further.

Tell Them From Me

- Ms Richer will email us the report. She was unaware how this was dealt with in the past with regards to the GB.
- The report revealed a few interesting items:
 - Our kids' physical activity is lower than the norm
 - We have fewer victims of bullying than the norm
- Members of the GB can review at their leisure once the report is received. If we have any questions or concerns, we can raise them at the next GB meeting

Kids Expected Next Year

- Ms Richer says the number of kids expected next year will be 289 kids or so. The numbers are not final yet. We may hit 300.
- She will have the number of classes per grade next meeting. They should be final then.

ii. Daycare

Last Week of June

- A survey was passed out to parents to see if the daycare was needed for the last week of June
- Sufficient parents intend to register their kids, so the daycare will be open

Ped Day, May 20th

- Will be going to FunTropolis

Surplus:

- We ran a surplus this year. The funds will be allocated to the school yard upgrades.

Costs Increases for Ped Days

- Ms Richer met with the board and was asked to raise the cost for parents of the ped days
- The government funding leaves a gap of \$16 per child for ped days. The school has always charged the same rate for ped days as regular days: \$8,10.
- The other schools were also asked to raise their ped day rates, right now they are at \$8.10.
- The other daycares in the board are all running in deficit, except for Harmony.
- The board feels it looks bad for us to be charging less than the other schools, so they want Harmony to raise the price to \$15 for ped days
- Mr Lapointe points out that the daycare has had a \$10K surplus in every year he has been on the board. What is our current surplus: \$32,000
- Mr Lapointe asks why we are in surplus while other schools are in deficit: Can't say with certainty. It could be that other school have just a couple of kids over the ratio of educators to kids, requiring the other daycares to hire an extra educator, it could be because the budget money was spent too early in the year, or it can be a management issue. It is unknown
- Mme Léger suggests it is abominable, in her view, to double the price of ped days when it is not financially necessary for the daycare to do so
- Another parent comments that it appears the request has come to us to try and hide the poor management of other daycares by having us increase our price to put us all at the same rate.
- Mr Lapointe asks what will happen if we increase our rates – will our surplus increase or are we expected to hand the money over to fund the deficits of the other schools: The money is ours. The surplus will increase, all things being equal.
- Mr Lapointe expresses that he feels that Harmony's parents should not pay if it is not financially required. The daycare is not a for-profit organization. Had we been in deficit, there would be justification. But in this instance, he would have trouble justifying it to other parents in daycare.
- Motion to increase the cost of ped days to \$15: Declined unanimously with one abstention
- Motion to keep the rate at \$8,10 per day for ped days: Approved unanimously with one abstention

Costs Increases for Late Registrations

- The board has asked Ms McLeod to raise the daycare fees for parents registering after September 30th.
- The way the government funding works is that it takes a snapshot of the full time registrations in daycare on September 30th. Subsidies are then distributed based on these numbers
- If someone registers after September 30th, they are funded as sporadics.
- At Harmony, we charged the full time rate even if they registered after September 30th.

- The Board would like Harmony to start charging the higher sporadic rate, which is \$5 for the morning and \$10 for the afternoon.
- Mr Lapointe asks what are the reasons parents are registering after September 30th: It is now known. We do not ask the question or keep stats.
- Ms Truffa suggests that it can often be due to a change in schools towards Harmony, the parents get or change jobs, which forces them to need the daycare services.
- These appear to be situations that the more vulnerable parents will find themselves in.
- Mr Paquin suggests that there may also be disorganized parents doing this or parents that decide to register late for flimsier reasons. We should not subsidize these parents.
- How many such cases do we have a year in this situation: it ranges, between 10 and 20.
- Motion to raise the costs to that of the sporadics for parents registering their kids on a full-time basis after September 30th: Declined, but with 3 parent abstentions, which means we do not have a majority of parents and the vote is not valid
- Mr Lapointe asks if it is possible to vote officially to raise the price, but give Ms McLeod discretionary power to charge the lower rate if the reason is justifiable and the finances continue to allow it
- Tina says this is not allowed. We have to have one size fits all.
- Mr Lapointe then suggests that we vote to keep the rate as is this year (2016-2017), but collect data on the reasons for the late registrations. Then next year, we would have the information needed to make a more enlightened decision.
- Mr Nagy also acknowledges that he is ill at ease making a decision where there is no data on the reasons for the late registrations. He finds it hard to take a position in such circumstances.
- Second motion to raise the costs to that of the sporadics for parents registering their kids on a full-time basis after September 30th: Declined, this time with only 2 parent abstentions. The motion is therefore valid and the vote is to decline. The rate will remain the same for the coming year (2016-2017)
- Ms McLeod will attempt as best possible to gather the reasons for late registrations in the coming year.

Set Rules to Require a Minimum of 15 students for the daycare to be open

- This does not actually impact Harmony, but the board would like us to officially set the rule that the daycare requires a minimum of 15 students to open.
- Harmony always has well-over this amount, so it does not impact us
- Approved unanimously

iii. *School Council / Teacher Requests*

Grade 2 field trip to the Centrale Hydro-Electrique, June 21

- It is free to enter and we received a subsidy for the bus, so the whole trip is free of cost
- Approved unanimously

Grade 3 and ¾, May 31st

- Going to Cepsum at the Université de Montréal
- It is a sports center with a load of activities: gym, olympic-size pool, trampoline,

- tennis, badminton, skating and others
- The cost is not yet confirmed, but it will be under \$25 for sure.
- Approved unanimously

Grade 5 Field Trip:

- We are running very late in the meeting (note: the minutes are not in the chronological order that they were discussed)
- The details of the field trip will be emailed to us
- The GB nonetheless approves the field trip unanimously

iv. Parent Participation Organization – Fundraisers / school activities

- The minutes are not in the same order as the discussions that took place, as often subjects were interspersed among other items on the agenda.
- As such, by the time we got to this item, it was well past our normal ending time
- Mr Lapointe motioned to have the details of this item emailed to the GB and if anything requires urgent discussion or votes, it can be done via email. Otherwise, it can wait to next meeting. We vote to adjourn.
- The details of this item will be emailed to us by Ms Truffa or the PPO, if not already discussed in other items.
- Approved unanimously

v. Parent’s Committee Report – Updates

- We also did not get to this item, so it falls within the adjournment motion of the preceding item
- The details will be emailed to us by Ms Truffa, if not already discussed in other items.

7. Varia

i. School Organization, raised by Mr Paquin

Moving the Library

- We have discussed the issue of class space in the school on several occasions.
- With the school growing, we have less and less room
- Mr Paquin asks: do the solutions for space come only from the school board, or can we as a GB make suggestions ?
- Suggestions are always possible. They can be debated in the GB and then transmitted to the board
- Mr Paquin suggests moving the library to the center of the school and then using the library as classrooms
- The general set-up of the building and supporting pillars would make it a feasible option. It would also be considerably cheaper than adding a second floor.
- It is suggested that we would have to ensure it conforms to building laws.
- Mr Paquin thinks it would
- Ms Richer suggests that Mr Paquin get us a quote. We can then evaluate the costs and decide if we want to present it to the board
- Mr Paquin will get or prepare a quote

Preschools in St-Willibrord and Centennial Park Schools

- Sylvia says that while we are on the subject of space, she is aware that both St-Willibrord and CPS have preschools. The preschools use classrooms.
- Although a preschool has value, the primary purpose of the school is to cater to school-age kids, so from K to grade 6
- Before Harmony starts eliminating our library or music class, why not eliminate the preschools there and have those classrooms used in some capacity to liberate our school
- Ms Truffa says it is a good point. She will raise it at the Parent Committee

ii. *Cafeteria Junk Food, raised by Mr Nagy*

- Mr Nagy has noticed the appearance of junk food in our cafeteria. Kids seem to be able to purchase popsicles, chips, and other unhealthy foods. Why?
- Ms Richer says that the cafeteria unilaterally installed a junk food dispenser. When she spoke to the cafeteria staff about it, she was informed that it was approved by the cafeteria services
- Ms Richer does not like it there, but before she has it removed, she wants to ensure she is completely within her right to do so
- Mr Nagy notes that in the past, the GB voted to promote healthy foods. We also evaluated, modified and then voted on the cafeteria menu. He does not understand how they can go against it.
- Ms Richer notes that the school board also has a healthy food policy.
- Troy notes that kids like the food and his kids were quite happy when they were able to purchase these types of food
- It is counter-argued that the school should be promoting health foods, not junk
- Troy counters that we sell junk food at our events and they are important money-makers
- Mr Paquin counters that at those events, the parents are there to allow their kids to purchase the items or not. At school, parents are unable to enforce their preference, so it is left to the schools to ensure they are eating healthy. The baseline to respect in the absence of the parents should be a healthy choice
- Troy suggests that we ask the student council to take a position on it. This is their school. They should have a choice.
- It is countered that it is not to the kids to decide, as this is related to how parents want to raise their kids. Schools are required to ensure a healthy environment
- Ms Truffa will check the Health Policy and get back to us
- Ms Richer will verify what authority cafeteria services have to unilaterally decide to sell junk food in our schools and get back to us
- The discussion is tabled to next meeting, when we have more information.

iii. *Grade One Field Trip and Costs for Volunteers, raised by Mr Nagy*

- Mr Nagy says that for the grade 1 science fair, parent volunteers were asked to get there on their own. Why?
- There is no place on the bus. There are three grade 3 classes, and with the teachers, these fill the buses, so there is no room left for the volunteers, unfortunately
- This means parents have to pay their own parking, which can come to \$20, in addition to gas.

- In addition to the costs to parents, Mr Nagy feels this is also unsafe. If the bus breaks down and there are 48 kids and only two teachers, it is unsafe. There is not enough adults to kids. Parent should be on the bus
- An extra bus would cost \$400, making the trip prohibitively expensive
- Ms Stuebs suggests that the PPO can contribute to the costs of the parents' parking and driving. This has been done in the past.
- The PPO can set up a float for these situations
- Ms Richer says parents can keep their receipts and submit them to her for reimbursement
- The teachers will need to inform the volunteers of this arrangement
- Ms Richer says the principal has a discretionary fund. It would come from there.
- Mr Lapointe asks who supplies the discretionary fund and what amount is it? The PPO provides it and it is \$500
- What about other events? Would they fall into this arrangement?
- Mr Paquin suggests we should have a discretionary fund established every year for these specific situations
- Sheila says that, usually, the price of volunteers is included in the cost of the field trip
- In this instance, the bus is different. In this case, we have three classes and the adult-to-student is 1 to 8, so this overloads one bus, but not by enough to make a second bus cost efficient. This is why parents were asked to find their own way there
- Troy suggests we should still be able to price it in
- He suggests that teachers should do the best they can to price in volunteers, in whatever mode of transport they require, so taking into account capacity, parking, entrance fees and all other incidental costs when setting the per child cost of the field trip
- Motion to include the cost of volunteers in the cost of the field trips.
- Approved unanimously
- The discussion with regards to increasing the principal's discretionary fund or setting aside a specific fund for volunteers is tabled to a later meeting

8. Adjournment time: 8.50PM (note: see adjournment motion under section 6 iv)

Action Items:

Item	Responsible	Due date
Ms Richer and Troy will meet to look at the wording of the Red Cross fundraising, so that it is appropriate and acceptable.	Ms Truffa and Troy	Done. The fundraising wording went out.
The PPO will let us know what funds remain from this year's fundraisers, what they need and where they would ideally like to see the remainder be assigned Because of the time constraints	Ms Stuebs and Ms Truffa	Done. Discussed at the June GB Meeting

in getting this decided, it will be sent to us via email and a proxy vote will be necessary to approve spending		
Ms Richer will email us the Tell Them From Me Report	Ms Richer	Done. Emailed out to the GB on May 18th.
Ms Richer will advise us of the number of classes per grade at next meeting.	Ms Richer	Done. Emailed to us after the June meeting.
Ms McLeod will attempt as best possible to gather the reasons for late registrations in the coming year.	Ms McLeod	Will be done - 2016-2017 school year
The details of the grade 5 field trip will be emailed to us	Ms Richer / School Council	Done. Received and voted on by email.
Because the May GB meeting ran late and was adjourned prior to finishing up all items, the details of the PPO fundraisers will be emailed to us by Ms Truffa or the PPO, if not already all discussed in other items.	PPO and Ms Truffa	Done. Tina emailed us her report.
Because the May GB meeting ran late and was adjourned prior to finishing up all items, the details of the Parent Committee Report and Ms Truffa's action items from the May meeting will be emailed to us by Ms Truffa, if not already discussed in other items.	Ms Truffa	Done. Tina emailed us her report.
Mr Paquin will get a quote with regards to modifying the placement of the library and adding a couple of classrooms.	Mr. Paquin	Undetermined
Ms Truffa will discuss the issue of preschools in St-Willibrord and CPS at the Parent	Ms Truffa	Incomplete - June

Committee		
Ms Truffa will check the Health Policy and get back to us Ms Richer will verify what authority cafeteria services have to unilaterally decide to sell junk food in our schools and get back to us	Ms Truffa and Ms Richer	Done. See discussion in the June minutes.

Signatures:

Principal: Ms Richer: _____

Governing Board Chair: Ms Truffa: _____

Wednesday April 13th, 2016

Attendance: Nancy Richer, Sylvia Aviles, Troy Cornford, Laurent Lapointe, Tina Truffa, Krista McLeod, Kathy Arseneault, Sylvie Léger, Martin Paquin, Derric Chandler, Heather Meehan, Vanessa Della Vallee, Paul Nagy, Sheila Shanahan

Absent: None

1. Verification of Quorum

- Sufficient

2. Approval of Minutes – February 10th, 2016

- Error in varia: Mr Nagy to send revision to Mr Lapointe. They will be updated for the next meeting. We can approve then.

3. Approval of Agenda

- Update on K-classes and the classrooms issue. Will be handled under the Parent Committee section
- Approved

4. Public Question Period

- No one present

5. School and Governing Board Operations

i. *Rules of Conduct and Safety*

- This is the blurb at the beginning of the agenda
- We made a few changes, but overall, not much has been changed
- We would like it translated into French. This will not be done for next year, but it is one of our goals. We are a bilingual school, so it should be in both languages.
- We made a few changes:
 - Passport system section was removed. Not relevant anymore.
 - We used to be specific in the list of electronics not allowed. We changed it to be more general, as technology is constantly changing. This allows us to capture it all.
 - We added that the Harmony t-shirt is recommended for gym
 - Daycare price has been updated. Dates updated
 - Minutes of homework time adapted to a 6-day week
 - We are reviewing the safety language to move from “don’t” to “do”, from negative to positive. We want to encourage good behavior.
- These are all minor. The general messages remain.

- Raised by Mr. Cornford: Social media at school events
- We are allowed to take videos and pics for personal use, but we are forbidden from posting it online
- This was supposed to be a board-directed wording. Have we received it ? The current text is the school's
- A digital committee was supposed to standardize the text, but we have not heard back yet.
- Ms Truffa will take this issue to the parent committee. Ms Richer will take it to the board. They will get back to the GB at the following meeting
- Mr Cornford also suggested we post the Rules of Conduct in the school so they are visible to all. Kids might then read them
- We want to finalize them first, translate them, and once all that is done, we will look into making a poster of them and having them posted
- We would try to target having the Rules of Conduct finalized by bullying week. The posting would coincide well with the activities of that week.
- We would also want the student coalition involved in this. It's important to have students involved.
- Anti-Bullying Day is February 22nd, 2017. An assembly could be planned for that day. It could also be linked to the Pillar of Caring.
- On a sidenote, the student coalition will present a PowerPoint presentation on the "Tell Them From Us" survey
- Rules of Conduct approved unanimously.

ii. *Review of the Budget*

- In short, we are on target
- The technology budget has just over \$7K in it
- The school is meeting the tech team to evaluate and understand the school's needs
- We will also transfer the daycare surplus to the tech budget
- We are likewise waiting for a comeback on our grant requests
- There are many needs: audio wires, equipment for the assembly, 27 mac books, 3 smart boards
- These items are paid for through the school budget
- Question: Why is it not coming from the school board's budget ?
- These types of budgetary issues were decentralized. It gave the schools more decision-making power. It allows them to spend the money in such a way as to meet their specific needs
- Aren't smart-boards mandatory teaching material ? If so, the school board should pay
- Ms Richer will look into this.
- Tine will likewise check with the Parent committee who should pay for the smart boards and distribution of financial responsibilities on the tech front
- It should be noted, we are not getting everything on our tech needs list. We are

- establishing our needs and we will then prioritize the items
- Technology is very useful and helps greatly to advance the educational process, but it also requires continued and ongoing investment
- Suggestion from Mr Cornford: Instead of disallowing kids from bringing tech to school, we should perhaps flip the concept and ask them to bring it so it can be used for educational purposes. This would reduce the school's costs.
- We could ask parents to sign waiver in case of theft.
- This has been tried in other schools and it creates other issues: theft issue remains major, there is bandwidth problems, the ipads remain a distraction - hard to control what every kid is doing on their pads at all times, etc.
- Suggestion from Mr Paquin: Could we find a supplier that would rent ipads to us, this way the technology would always be up to date. We would eliminate this concern and cost.
- Ms Truffa will look into it. Ms Truffa will bring the tech subject to the parent committee
- However, if such companies exists, we would need to evaluate the cost as the company would also seek to maximize profit so it would need to be seen if this is the most cost-efficient approach in the long term.
- Finishing up with the budget update, all looks OK. The photocopy budget will need to be increased, but the remainder looks good.
- In May, we need to approve next year's budget.
- Ms Richer will get back to us then

iii. Governing Board Composition

- Every year, we need to review the Governing Board Composition
- Currently, there are 7 parents, 3 teachers, 2 staff, 1 daycare, 1 principal and we are allowed to include 2 non-voting community members
- Do we want to keep the make-up the same ?
- Mr Cornford suggests adding another parent to have a better transition every year. This way, 4 parents would be voted in every year, rather than the current 3 and 4 on alternating years
- Mr Chandler: He does not believe this is relevant as the same people are voted in year after year anyway. The transition is smooth as a result.
- Perhaps we could set aside a spot for the parent of a special needs child, so their views and needs would be adequately represented ?
- Any parent can represent a special needs child. We are supposed to act as representatives of the school population
- Other schools range from 4 to 9 parents. It varies based on school size.
- Motion to keep as is
- Approved. One member votes against.

iv. Review of MESA

- The school is currently working on the MESA
- The members of the MESA committee have met a few times
- On the 29th (a ped day), they will work on it

- They will present the updated version to teachers on April 18th
- The goal is to require less data-gathering. They are aiming to find items that can be accurately and easily monitored
- The members of the MESA committee are Ms Shanahan, Marie-Clause and Ms Richer

6. Liaison with Stakeholder

i. *Principal's Report*

- *Black History Month*
 - It was educational and fun.
 - Very well done
- Physical Education Health Fair
 - Was done in the gym at night.
 - Well done. A lot of great presentations
- Students Going to Québec on May 5th and 6th
 - Our Projet de Loi was selected. Our kids will present it at the National Assembly
 - It is about Growing Vegetables ("La Terre Mère"). It will be a debate
 - The child speaker will be from Harmony
- Autism Awareness Day
 - It was OK.
 - We forgot to send the email to advise the kids to wear the autism colors
 - A video was presented to the kids
 - The autism walk is in May. Information will be sent out then
- Green Apple Cart
 - Grocery stores charge money to have plastic bags
 - Many grocery stores actually give this money to the schools
 - Super C gave us \$1,000
 - The money will go to our teaching company
- New Teacher
 - Dana McDonald. She teaches grades 4 and 5
 - She was a student teacher
 - She is hard-working and has lots of energy
 - We are happy to have her

ii. *Daycare*

- April 18th is a ped day
- We will have Little Ray's Reptiles and a magician
- There is also one ped day in May and one in June
- A survey was handed out to see how many parents would like us open during the last week of June.

iii. *School Council – Teacher Requests*

- *Grade 1 Field Trip*
 - Going to the Centre de La Science in Montreal on May 19th
 - Cost is \$20 a child
 - The theme is Africa
 - There will be an IMAX movie
 - Approved unanimously

iv. *Parent Participation Organization – Fundraisers / School Activities*

- Ms Stuebs is presenting
- *Dance:*
 - Raised \$1,135.96. It will be used for grad purposes
 - Ms Della Vallee will see what her needs are
 - If there is money left over, it will be put in a fund for future grads
 - Question: Does this amount include the initial \$500 to start the organizing ?
 - No - We raised \$1635.96, but deducted back our \$500.
 - It was agreed the \$500 would go to the cause as well.
 - Therefore, \$1,635.96 will go to the grad.
 - This same concept applies to the May Bingo.
- *May 27th Bingo:*
 - This year, the silent auction is committed to ALD research.
 - The Bingo money goes to Fun Day
 - In future years, the PPO would like to raise funds for:
 - Silent Auction: ALD research and children's wish foundation
 - Bingo: Fun Day
 - However, at the last meeting, the GB voted to keep having the silent auction for ALD research, while Bardai's siblings are still in the school
 - ALD is here for two more years
 - Suggestion: Perhaps we can see how much we raise this year. If the numbers go down, it is an indication that the school population is not interested in the cause. We could then consider splitting the funds to increase funding. But we first need to see how much we raise and draw conclusions thereafter
- *Extra Budget for Volunteer Meals:*
 - We have many volunteers at PPO-organized events.
 - Could we have a \$50 budget on Bingo night to buy pizza for the volunteers ?
 - Approved
- *Fun Day*
 - Buddy's ice cream is organizing a school celebrity scoop competition among the schools
 - Each school would get one school night between 6PM and 8.30PM.
 - The school that sells the most ice creams would get ice cream for their Fun Day
 - Harmony is just working on the details, but we will participate

- The school will back to us with the date
 - Once we have the dates and info, we will need to vote by proxy to approve
 - UPDATE: Proxy vote approved unanimously on April 17th, 2016.
 - *Chocolate fundraiser*
 - We are starting to look at next year's chocolate fundraiser
 - We might have the option to sell flavored popcorn ("bad monkee")
 - The PPO will get back to us
 - They would sell us a bag for \$2 each and we would ask the kids to sell them for \$4
 - Before deciding, we need to see the size of the bag, determine how cumbersome it is to carry around, etc.
- v. *Parent Committee Report*
 - Enrollment Update
 - We wanted the projected enrolment at Harmony
 - Capacity of the school: 320 kids
 - Projected 2017-2018: 324 kids
 - Projected 2018-2019: 349 kids
 - The Board is looking at the numbers
 - We are running out of space. We are already using the cafeteria.
 - We do not want to lose our music room and program
 - The projected enrolment for MGS is 356 in 2017-2018 and 374 in 2017-2018. Their capacity is 408.
 - Question: Does Harmony's capacity include the music room and library ?
 - It does not include the library, but it does include music, so the music room is likely at risk
 - The capacity also does not account for the new teacher-to-student ratio
 - Mr Nagy asked for an update from the board. Ms Richer had no update for Mr Nagy and the GB. She indicated that she had overlooked the request about speaking to the board regarding trying to ease the space situation.
 - Question: What can the GB do to help losing classrooms ?
 - Ms Richer will get back to us next month with numbers and expected classes for the coming year. For now, they are not finalized
 - We need data in order to appropriately address these issues
 - Question: Can we be proactive – survey parents, attend board meetings and raise our concerns, etc. ?
 - No, we really need numbers. We cannot risk creating concern in the community without proof that it will occur.
 - Ms Richer will get back to us with the numbers and we will look into our options at the next GB meeting.

7. Varia

- i. *Zain Bardai, raised by Mr Cornford*
 - Suggests that we should have a picture of Zain outside the gym
 - This should first be discussed with the parents.

- Mr Cornford will discuss with them and get back to us at a later time.

ii. *Items for the May GB Meeting*

- Mr Nagy requested that the upcoming class size situation be added to the agenda for the next meeting, allowing Ms Richer to provide an update from her board committee meeting.

8. Adjournment Time: 8.15PM

Action Items:

Item	Responsible	Due date / Response
Minutes in error. Correction Required. Mr Nagy to send Mr Lapointe revision.	Mr Nagy and Mr Lapointe	(May) the minutes have been corrected and approved
Look into getting an update on wording about digital media at school events.	Ms Truffa and Ms Richer	May / The May meeting ran late. Response to be emailed to us by Tina
Verification with Parent Committee and School Board about who is responsible for paying for smart boards: School or School Board.	Ms Truffa and Ms Richer	Done. See May 18th email from Tina. Reproduced in the June minutes.
Verify with Parent Committee what other schools do about their tech needs. Is anyone aware of companies that would rent technology to schools	Ms Truffa	Done. See May 18th email from Tina. Reproduced in the June minutes.
Need figures on the number of students and classrooms next year and how this will impact our school	Ms Richer	Done. Overcrowding discussed in the June meeting. See minutes.
Discuss with parents of Zain Bardai about setting up a picture of him near the gym	Mr Cornford	Done. See June minutes.
Add class size situation to May meeting.	Ms Truffa	Done. See June minutes on overcrowding at Harmony.

Signatures:

Principal: Ms Richer: _____

Governing Board Chair: Ms Truffa: _____

Wednesday February 10th, 2016

Attendance: Nancy Richer, Sylvia Aviles, Troy Cornford, Laurent Lapointe, Ms Truffa Truffa, Krista McLeod, Kathy Arseneault, Sylvie Léger, Martin Paquin, Derric Chandler, Heather Meehan, Vanessa Della Vallee, Paul Nagy

Absent: Sheila Shanahan

1. Verification of Quorum

- Sufficient

2. Approval of Minutes – January 13th, 2016

- Approved

3. Approval of Agenda

- K-Registration – extra school space: this will be addressed under the principal's report
- Update on Transparency and GOAL 7
- Approved

4. Public Question Period

- No one present

5. School and Governing Board Operations

i. Bill 86

- *There is a new education minister – M. Pierre Moreau*
- *The school received an update from Mr Buttars*
- *He says we'll have to see what Mr Moreau has planned on bill 86.*
- He is sick at the moment, so everyone is waiting for his return to see what his intentions are
- Prior to this, the parent commissioners were trying to organize a petition to mobilize parents against bill 86
- The petition is on hold for now – until we see what Mr Moreau intends to do
- The petition may come back to life – we'll wait and see
- The parent commission also set up a facebook page to provide information on bill 86
- The page will be linked to the NFSB website
- If there is news before the next GB meeting, we will receive an update via email

ii. Follow-up on the school budget – PPO Account

- Ms Stuebs is not here – she is under the weather
- There is not 17K in the PPO account
- We were provided with a list of all spending – see the list

- At the end of the year, there should be \$2,427.95 remaining
- Every item will need to be GB-approved, normally
- The following items need to be approved:

Dance (March 18th):

- The dance is to raise funds for graduation.
- The PPO puts in funds initially, but it raises more funds than that put in
- Unclear as to whether the \$500 is then reimbursed to the PPO or not.
- We will be advised of this at the next GB meeting.
- Approved

Bingo (May 27th):

- We need \$500 for start-up costs, such as food and prizes
- The funds raised will go to ALD and the technology fund
- Question: Will we always be raising funds for ALD ?
- We will keep raising funds while Zain's brother and sister are still in the school
- Afterwards, we can consider raising funds for another cause
- Question: As with the dance, will the \$500 initial start-up cost be reimbursed to the PPO ?
- We will be advised at the next meeting. It is unclear.

iii. *Rules of Conduct and Safety*

- These are the rules at the beginning of the agenda, which dictate and explain proper and accepted behavior.
- These will be reviewed with the school council, then they will come to the GB in March
- They need to be approved by April
- Mr Chandler suggests that, rather than wait for beginning of the next school year to make them available to the parents (in the agenda), we can provide parents with the rules of conduct at the end of the school year, so it may be read over the summer
- The start of the school year is very busy for parents, so it is unlikely many parents read them. If provided at the end of the prior school year, there is a better chance they will be read at some point
- Nancy will put them on the school website and the school will send a note to parents asking them to familiarize themselves with it over the summer
- Hopefully, this will get more parents to read them.

6. Liaison with Stakeholders

i. *Principal's Report*

- Kindergarten in 2016-2017:
 - There are 41 kids registered so far
 - Nancy submitted these numbers to the school board to see how many classes are needed
 - It's looking like the Ks and the Grade 1s may need 3 teachers each
 - But we won't know for sure until we get a response from the school board

- Sometimes the school board tries to go with fewer teachers, then adjusts later – as done this year
 - Question: What happens if the school gets too big
 - The board is aware of the size issue with MGS and Harmony
 - Ms Truffa asked for exact numbers and raised the issue of room with the Parent Committee
 - We are waiting for the numbers and the response
 - They may rezone to get all schools to full capacity before extending a school's size
 - Question: A couple of years back, there was the issue of natives getting accreditation on the reserve, so some kids may return there for their schooling. What happened on this issue ?
 - It looks like they did not get accreditation or decided not to proceed further
 - Question: Do parents on the GB board want to lose the music room or cafeteria ? No one does
 - Ms Truffa will wait for the response on the numbers and get back to us, so we can discuss based on concrete numbers
- Howick GB Training:
 - There was the GB training in Howick, whose main goal was to explain bill 86 to the school community
 - It was very encouraging to see so many people there
 - For now, we wait to see what Mr moreau has planned and take it from there
- Electronic Payment of Levy Fees:
 - Pilot project to allow parents to pay the levy fees electronically
 - We will continue to pay the levy fees at the beginning of the school year, but we will now be able to pay them online
 - Harmony is one of the few schools on this project
- Help for Kids with Special Needs:
 - We have someone coming in three days a week to help kids with particular needs
- Dynamic Students:
 - Mrs Richer is happy with the leadership shown by kids in the dynamic program
- Extracurricular Activities:
 - The extracurricular activities have started anew.
 - There is a lot of dedication to our kids
 - Mrs Richer feels she has a fabulous staff
- Technology:
 - Mrs Richer wants technology to become more of an issue on the GB

- We would like it up-to-date in school
 - The school has 25 laptops that will die soon
 - We need to brainstorm on how to get our technology up-to-date
 - Maybe give more money to technology
 - Proposal: Perhaps buy cheaper tablets
 - There is a cost versus quality issue here. There is a debate to be had.
 - Also need to consider compatibility with the required programs
 - IT will play an important role in any decision taken with regards to technology
 - There are also warranty issues
 - Cathy:
 - Our secretary, Cathy, is on compassionate leave
 - Her husband is in palliative care at home
 - Our prayers are with her
- ii. *Daycare*
 - February 19th: Daycare is closed
 - March break: Daycare closed
 - March 11th: Field trip to the circus school (ped day)
- iii. *School Council – Teacher Requests*
 - Ms Descombes’ Maple Syrup Sale
 - It is a fundraiser for music equipment
 - 1 bottle = \$7.75
 - 8 bottles = \$54
 - Maple butter = \$6.75
 - Pick up is April 18th
 - All proceeds go to the music program at the school
 - There is a prize if a class sells 150 bottles (a pizza party)
 - Question: Will the proceeds be monitored to ensure everything is properly spent at the right place ?
 - Yes, Ms Descombes always submits receipts
 - This is always overseen by the school
 - The GB would like to see the report on funds raised and their spending
 - Of course - The school aims for transparency
 - Ms Graham Winter Carnival for February 24th
 - The kids would go to Fernand Séguin Park for sliding, cross-country skiing and walking
 - The buses to get there and back cost \$345, but would be paid for by the school
 - Cross country skiing for grades 3 to 6 would be \$7 each
 - All kids in grades 1 to 6 would go. The Ks would not. It is hectic and they would be too young in such an environment

- Walking in snow shoes is free
- The kids go in shifts
- Approved

iv. *Parents' Committee Report*

- They discussed bill 86. See earlier notes
- They discussed and consulted about the 2016-2017 calendar

7. Varia

i. *Transparency and update on GOAL 7, raised by Mr Nagy*

- Kindergarten in 2016-2017:
 - Mr Nagy inquired to Ms Richer as to the number of K students registered to determine whether the school can expect 3 K-classes in Sept 2016
 - Ms Richer responded that there are in fact approx 41 children registered and that Harmony is looking at 3 kindergarten class for the fall session.
 - Mr Nagy raised a concern about space in the school and requested Ms Richer to speak to the NFSB board about acquiring a prefab or mobile classroom for the fall.
 - Mr Nagy commented that having 3 K's - 3 Gr-1 classes has led to using the cafeteria as art & dance classes, As a parent representative Mr Nagy feels this is not a conducive learning environment for the children nor a working environment for teaching staff.
 - Mr Nagy shared that as a result of the large K group, we're looking at the following case for the fall (3xK's; 3xGr-1's and 3xGr-2s), Mr Nagy then stated that he as a parent rep, would not want the Library further cannibalized nor give up the music room as a result of the boards inaction.
 - Mr Nagy surveyed the parent reps. present who indicated that they agreed with him.
 - Mr Nagy asked Ms Richer to meet with the board or have an appropriate school board member join the March GB meeting.
 - Mr Nagy asked Ms Richer to have an update asap, because the longer we wait, the closer we get to the end of the year risking the visibility and inaction of this important subject.
 - Ms Richer indicated she understood and that she will raise this during her next board committee meeting.

8. Adjournment time: 7.40PM

Signatures:

Principal: Ms Richer: _____

Governing Board Chair: Ms Truffa: _____

Wednesday January 13th, 2016

Attendance: Nancy Richer, Sylvia Aviles, Troy Cornford, Laurent Lapointe, Sheila Shanahan, Ms Truffa Truffa, Krista McLeod, Kathy Arseneault, Sylvie Léger, Martin Paquin, Derric Chandler, Heather Meehan, Vanessa Della Vallee, Paul Nagy

Guest: Tammy Stuebs

1. Verification of Quorum

- Sufficient

2. Approval of Minutes – December 16th, 2015

- Approved

3. Approval of Agenda

- Mr. Lapointe adds Parent Participation in Kids' education
- Mr. Cornford adds emails
- Mr. Nagy adds School board versus Governing Board
- At next meeting, Mr. Nagy would like to add Capital Projects
- Approved

4. Public Question Period

- No one present

5. School and Governing Board Operations

i. Bill 86 – Mr. Buzz Gibbs

- Mr Gibbs was supposed to come talk to us about Bill 86, but he was unable to make it.
- Ms. Richer will give us an overview of the proposed bill
- There will be an information session on January 26th on Bill 86 in Howick where more detailed information will be provided
- It is not law yet, so changes are possible
- But if it becomes law, within 15 days of adoption, we would need to set up a provisional school council
- It would change the school commission to a non-elected body
- But 'school council' is not the correct term, as the school council is actually the principal and the teachers
- This new council would be made up of parents, community members, staff, teachers and principals
- It would have:
 - 6 parents

- 2 principals
 - 1 teacher
 - 1 non-teaching professional
 - 6 community representatives
 - 1 director general with no voting privileges
- This would be the same structure for all school boards, regardless of size
- They would be there for 3-year terms
- The principals and teacher would be elected by their peers
- The Governing Board would also change – it would present and adopt motions rather than just approving them, so it would get more power
- The role of the principal in schools would also likely change – it appears as it would become more of an administrative role, rather than the current pedagogic one
- This is just a quick summary. More info will be provided at the January 26th Governing Board Training session in Howick
- A lawyer will be there to explain Bill 86
- Currently, the school commission has a lot of power
- They would lose much of it
- The Quebec education system has an 84.7% success rate – one of the highest in the world. Why change it ?
- It is suggested that everyone try to attend the GB training session in Howick to learn more. They should also read Bill 86

ii. *Governing Board Budget*

- *We have a \$250 budget*
- *In response to a question at the last meeting, it is confirmed that the Zain Bardai scholarship budget comes entirely from the GB donation*
- *It is decided to give:*
 - *Zain Bardai Scholarship: \$100*
 - *Graduation: \$100*
 - *Teacher Appreciation day: \$50*
- *Approved*

iii. *Follow-Up on School Budget – PPO Account*

- We had asked to validate the numbers, but it will require a bit more time
- Ms Stuebs is present to represent the PPO
- Ms Stuebs spoke to Ms Reid and the PPO funds in the account were not reduced by the cost of the purchase of the chocolates and a few other expenses, so the amount is overstated
- At the end of the year, the remainder will be \$0
- All is tracked well, but if required, we will be more detailed going forward, to be safe.
- All funds raised are spent in and for the school: breakfast program, parade day, etc.
- On a go-forward basis, for each event, we will specify what the money raised will be used for. So if parents want to participate, they know what it is for
- PPO will also try to ensure that the GB gets requests for funds ahead of time, for the required approvals.

- iv. *Capital Projects Update*
 - Still waiting on an update
 - Some things were done – the fence had little repairs done
 - Will advise once we hear back

- v. *Rules of Conduct and Safety*
 - This is what goes at the beginning of the agenda
 - It is being worked on and will be raised in the February GB meeting

6. School and Governing Board Operations

- i. *Principal's Report*
 - Extracurricular activities are back !
 - Apart from that, nothing to report

- ii. *Daycare*
 - February 8th: Ped Day – Mad Science will be visiting

- iii. *School Council – Teacher Requests*
 - Entrepreneur day:
 - Grade 6 – February 12th at Billings
 - Free, but we collect \$5 for lunch, there will be busing there and back
 - Approved

 - Wee day:
 - Grade 6 – at Théâtre St-Denis
 - Free, kids will need to bring a lunch
 - Approved

 - Sticker Sale for Graduation:
 - Cost will be \$1 per sticker
 - Approved

 - Cycle Three trip to Ottawa:
 - May 12-13
 - Last year it cost \$210
 - This year, we do not have the final cost, but expect it to be in the same range
 - There will be a ratio of 1 adult to 8 kids

- They will sleep at Algonquin college
 - Some of the activities: Rideau Hall visit, museum of civilization, museum of aviation, museum of Parliament, etc.
 - Two buses needed
 - Approved
- Grade 2 - Biodome:
 - Trip to the Biodome on March 15th
 - Will visit the habitats of different animals
 - Kids will leave early and be back for 3PM
 - Bus is \$200 and the tickets cost \$300
 - So, it will come to \$15 per kid
 - Approved
- iv. *Parent's Committee*
 - The next Parent committee meeting is next week
 - Ms Truffa hopes most of the parents will be able to attend the January 26th session to learn more about Bill 86

7. Varia

i. *Parent Participation*

- At the beginning of the school year, Mr. Lapointe had raised the issue of trying to get parents to take a more active role in their kids' education
- The hope is to improve student results by encouraging more parent involvement and hopefully help kids establish good learning habits
- He would like the school to keep reminding parents –like an advertising campaign: repeat simple messages with simple arguments over and over again, in the newsletter and during parent-teacher meetings and at the beginning of the year
- If we say it often enough, it may stick for some
- He offers to write the notes in the newsletter and will forward to Ms. Richer for her review
- No vote on it, but no objections. We will proceed
- Mr. Lapointe will send an email write-up for the next newsletter

ii. *Number of emails received*

- Mr. Cornford says the school is sending out too many emails with only very little importance to parents
- It is diluting the parent's attention, so when important emails come through, they risk being ignored
- Perhaps we can reduce the number of emails sent, or maybe send one email a week with the lesser-importance matters (i.e. dentist message, etc.). Perhaps also just put them in the monthly newsletter ?
- Ms. Richer says some emails have to go out right away – they are time-sensitive and

mandated by the school commission or school board

iii. School board versus Governing board

- Mr. Nagy says that with Bill 86 coming up and the seeming need to oppose it, there needs to be more transparency and communication between the governing Boards of the schools and the school board
- There seems to be a lack of alignment between the two
- The government will hand down directives to the school board, who cascades the information down until it gets to the governing board
- As Governing Boards, we should try to get more involved and open better communication lines with the school boards in order to effectively build an opposition to bill 86
- At Ms. Truffa's meetings with the parent commissions, she gets information there and does bring it back to us
- If big items are raised, she is mandated to bring it back to the GB to discuss and get our input, which she does
- The principals of each school also participate regularly in a meeting – called "Goal 7" – which is a meeting with Mr Buttars and other members of the school board to get updated and made aware of various important matters coming up
- Mr. Nagy is suggesting more interactive functional meetings to work together.
- Harmony is an involved school, but others may not be. The school board should be more proactive to get all schools involved.

8. Adjournment Time: 7.45PM

Signatures:

Principal: Ms Richer: _____

Governing Board Chair: Ms Truffa: _____

Wednesday December 16th, 2015

Attendance: Nancy Richer, Sylvia Aviles, Troy Cornford, Laurent Lapointe, Sheila Shanahan, Ms Truffa Truffa, Krista McLeod, Kathy Arseneault, Sylvie Léger, Martin Paquin, Derric Chandler, Heather Meehan

Absent: Vanessa Della Vallee, Paul Nagy

1. Verification of Quorum

- Sufficient

2. Approval of Minutes – October 14th, 2015

- For future GB minutes, must use Mr or Ms and last name only.
- Approved

3. Approval of Agenda

- Mr Chandler adds classroom option
- Mr Chandler adds school website
- Mr Chandler add cancellation policy of GB
- Mr Chandler adds PPO representation
- Mr Paquin adds morning drop-off area
- Mr Lapointe adds pressure tactics.
- Ms Richer announces that she was just notified by the union that the pressure tactics will end. There is an agreement in principal, so no more pressure tactics as of today. Does Mr Lapointe still want the pressure tactics on the agenda ?
- No, it is no longer required. Mr Lapointe withdraws it.
- Approved

4. Public Question Period

- No one present

5. School and Governing Board Operations

i. Governing Board Budget

- The GB gets \$250 a year
- In the past, it has been donated to Teacher Appreciation Day, the Zain Bardai scholarship and Free the Children
- Ms Truffa reminds us that technically, we are not supposed to donate it, but we are not prevented from doing so
- The issue is that if we donate it and the government finds out, they may withdraw it. For us, this is not an issue, but in other schools, it really is needed by some GB members to obtain babysitting services etc. and be able to attend GB meetings. It would be disappointing for those who need it to lose it.

- Ms Shanahan suggests giving the GB funds to Volunteer day, as this way, all students would benefit
- Ms Richer asks what the Zain Bardai Scholarship is
- Zain Bardai is a former student who passed away from ALS. A scholarship was established in his name to go to a graduating student whose academic scores warrant it and whose financial situation would benefit from it. The money goes to purchasing school supplies
- What is the process of awarding the scholarship ? It is unclear.
- She will get clarification from a grade 6 teacher, who helps in the awarding
- In the past, we gave \$100 to the Zain Bardai scholarship
- This discussion is tabled to next meeting, once we have the facts clarified

ii. MESA:

- This is the document that outlines the academic goals and the tools used to attain them.
- Last year, the goals were scaled back to have fewer, but ensure they were achieved
- Nothing has changed this year
- This MESA is for 2014-2018 period
- There is a caveat in Bill 86, which will be voted on in March 2016
- All that has been done will be reviewed
- Buzz (our school commission representative) will come to a later GB meeting to explain Bill 86 to us
- So, the educational project (MESA) may change due to this law
- Our main goal is student success
- All our goals have shown improvement
- So, if we approve this, we are sending the message to the government that we want to keep MESA as is, since it is working
- Approved as is

iii. Approval of Time Allocation for Compulsory Subjects

- This is the time allocated to each school subject. See sheet.
- Some amounts of time are required by law, so we cannot change or reduce them
- We can tweak other items
- Essentially, it is the same time allocations as the previous year
- During discussions, Ms Richer says we have to teach two arts courses
- At Harmony, we want music and visual arts, and some dance
- Keep as is.
- Approved

iv. Follow-Up on School Budget

- This is just an update on the school's budget
- So far, we are on budget. All is as expected
- There are some questions about the PPO funds: what does it include ? What happened to funds in past years ? Can funds there be carried forward ?
- Ms Richer will validate, clarify and get back to us

- She also advises us that she regularly asks for grants and will continue to do so

- v. *PPO proposal for spending the funds raised*
 - The PPPO has submitted suggestions on where they want the PPO-raised funds spent
 - They provided a list. Movie Day is not included (see below – proxy vote)
 - This changes their numbers

 - Side Discussion: Elf day and La Guerre des Tuques
 - Why was Elf day postponed to a later date ?
 - It was pushed off because it was determined the original date would be a good learning day. The school last day before Christmas is Tuesday. Elf day was initially scheduled for Friday, but if we did it then, the kids would already be too excited on Monday and Tuesday for those to be effective learning days, so we would also be writing off the Friday as a learning day. It was thus decided to postpone Elf day to Monday so teachers can teach on the Friday. This seemed wise, especially given how we have already lost a few days due to the rotating strikes.
 - Then a staff member decided that it would be a good cultural experience for kids to see La Guerre des Tuques – a French classic that has been remade as a cartoon. So this was proposed for Tuesday. By proxy vote, the GB allowed this to be paid for from funds raised in the chocolate sales
 - It was all done in a short time and very chaotically
 - Mr Paquin asks why the Ks and grade 1s cannot go to the Guerre des Tuques (only proposed for grade 2 and up)
 - Teachers felt that the level of French was too high for most Ks and grade 1s.
 - Mr Paquin argues that it is a cartoon movie – kids can get it by sitting and staring.
 - He points out that the decision to exclude the Ks and grade 1s caused a lot of frustration among parents
 - It seems the Ks and grade 1s are often excluded. In this case, the Ks and grade 1s also sold chocolates, so it feels very unfair that they do not benefit from their efforts. Many parents suggested they would not sell chocolates in the future.
 - Mr Paquin says he felt rushed by the proxy vote and voted against his feelings. He felt this was not fair to Ks and grade 1s
 - A few parents on the GB agree. In the future, we need to avoid rushing things like this
 - Mr Chandler also points out that, by law, before any fundraising is done, we have to know exactly where the money is intended to go and it has to go there.
 - If it is not spent for that purpose, it is required to return the funds to the parents. There is a risk of lawsuit.
 - In this context, paying for the movie is not right
 - In the future, we need to be very careful.

- At the January PPO meeting, Ms Richer will establish a calendar of upcoming subjects and events to be held this year
- This way, everything can be discussed in a timely manner while allowing for an adequate exchange
- The PPO does do all the legwork on fundraising and organizing activities. However, the final decision on the spending of the funds does come to the GB
- The GB will definitely ask and consider their opinion on where to spend the money, but in the end, it is not the PPO's decision. It belongs to the GB to vote on proposals

- On the PPO list, there is money for X-mas items. Was this already spent – before the GB voted ?
- It was. We will have to vote to approve
- The gift cards on the list are from the prior year
- The dance is also a fund-raiser, so although we spend money, it is a form of investment as the money will be recouped
- The PPO will be advised not to spend money before it is approved by the GB
- It is suggested that we need more representation from the PPO to be better aligned with them
- The funds on the list are also an approximation. The PPO tend to err on the side of caution, to avoid unpleasant surprises at the end of the year
- Vote on the funds for the X-Max Tombola: approved to spend \$600
- Vote on the food baskets: approved to spend \$200

6. Liaison with Stakeholders

i. Principal's Report

- Lockdown:
 - It went well. The kids were quiet
- Remembrance day:
 - Also went well
 - It was principally organized by two students
 - Our federal representative, Brenda Shanahan, was present

ii. Daycare

- There will be a ped day on January 6th.: PJ day. 75 kids are enrolled
- December 4th: It was the X-Mas party. There were 83 kids
- In January 2016, the cost of daycare is increasing from \$8 a day to \$8.10

iii. School Council – Teacher Requests

- Proxy Vote: Elf Day
 - GB asked to approve the holding of Elf Day on Monday, December 21st.
 - Approved on December 7th by email

- Proxy Vote: La guerre des Tuques
 - GB asked to vote on allowing kids in grades 2 to 6 to walk to the local theater and see the movie « La Guerre des Tuques ». Cost is \$2,040, paid for through PPO funds. Date: Tuesday December 22nd.
 - Approved on December 7th by email
 - Mathieu Pronovost: Grade 1 proposal
 - Mathieu would like to propose a pizza party / PJ day on Tuesday, December 22nd, while all the other kids are at the movie
 - He would like \$142 to cover the cost of pizza and drinks
 - Mr Chandler suggests taking the money from the PPO funds
 - Ms Arsenault suggests also giving money to the Ks, as they will be having a rice crispy day. She suspects the K teachers were going to pay for the necessary items themselves. The PPO should pay.
 - It is suggested we approve both and send a note to Ks and grade 1 parents to say it is approved and paid for by the PPO, so that we offset the movie debacle with this.
 - It is also suggested to give \$200 to the Ks and \$200 to the grade 1s, so they can all have a generous pizza day, while the other kids are seeing la Guerre des Tuques
 - Approved
- iv. *Parent Participation Organization – fundraisers / school activities*
- The PPO would like us to keep \$500 at the end of the year, so it can be used the following year to establish their activities.
 - We will wait to see what funds they have (see subject under school budget)
- v. *Parent’s Committee Report*
- The GB training was cancelled. It was not clear how many people were going to attend, so they cancelled it and will reschedule for a later date.
 - They had wanted to talk about the mergers and the school boards at this session
 - They are now targeting January as the time to have the training session. Ms Truffa will keep us apprised of any developments

7. Varia

- i. *Classroom: Subject raised by Mr Chandler.*
- *If we still need room, can we eliminate the cafeteria rather than a class used for arts or otherwise ?*
 - *Kids could eat in the gym. We can then create two classrooms out of the cafeteria*
 - *Ms Shanahan says the gym is often used during lunch hour by other grades*
 - *It’s also noted that spilling food on the gym floor can ruin the floor. Gym floors are actually quite expensive and need to be maintained*

- *The cafeteria is also used by the community – such as dance on weekends and some evenings*
 - *Sports activities also occur at lunch, so gym is used for that as well*
 - *Why not eat in the classrooms then ?*
 - *This creates a risk of odor issues, insect infestation, filth and not enough monitors to watch all the classrooms*
 - *We will start by seeing what our expected future student numbers are. Are we expected to grow to an extent that classroom space is a risk ? Once we have this, we will look at options*
- ii. School Website: Subject raised by Mr Chandler.*
- *The new website looks nice, but it has not been updated recently.*
 - *Perhaps we can add the newsletters and calendars there and refer parents to the site.*
 - *If regularly updated, it can be a nice complement to the school communications and community building*
 - *Ms Richer says she needs help updating it. It's not as easy as hoped. She will look into it.*
- iii. GB Cancellation: Subject raised by Mr Chandler.*
- *What is the policy on the cancellation of GB meetings ? Who has the authority to cancel them ?*
 - *The last meeting was cancelled because there were few subjects and there was a strike day.*
 - *The principal and the Chair, in conjunction, can decide to cancel a GB meeting*
- iv. PPO Representation: Subject raised by Mr Chandler.*
- *Discussed earlier. See Side Subject under "PPO proposal for spending the funds raised"*
- v. Morning Drop-off Area: Subject raised by Mr Paquin.*
- *There continues to be some chaos at the morning drop-off areas. Parents are parking right in front of the gate. Some are not carefully looking before moving. There are risks there*
 - *Can we add two orange cones to cut-off a safe zone for kids to enter in the morning ?*
 - *Ms Richer agrees – she would like a no parking zone right there*
 - *Mr Lapointe asks about the city, as they were supposed to send engineers to survey the entrance and make proposals*
 - *Ms Richer says they came and reported that everything works beautifully – they see no issues. She, and all of us, are very surprised.*
 - *Mr Cornford suggests putting a no parking sign on the gate at the entrance to make it clear to parents not to park. It can be removed after the morning rush.*
 - *Mr Lapointe suggests we also have some education involved, so we should hand out*

notes to parents in the morning to explain that this will be a no parking zone and why

- We can do all this after the holidays
- Proposal to place cones at the gate, buy and add two “no parking” signs on the gate and pass out notes to the parents in the morning
- Approved

8. Adjournment: 8.19PM

Signatures:

Principal: Ms Richer: _____

Governing Board Chair: Ms Truffa: _____

Wednesday October 14th, 2015

Attendance: Nancy Richer, Sylvia Aviles, Troy Cornford, Laurent Lapointe, Sheila Shanahan, Ms Truffa Truffa, Krista McLeod, Kathy Arseneault, Sylvie Léger, Martin Paquin, Paul Nagy, Derric Chandler, Heather Meehan

Absent: Vanessa Della Vallee

1. Verification of Quorum

- Sufficient

2. Approval of Minutes – September 23rd, 2015

- Need to add a line for the principal and the Chair's signature to future minutes
- Approved

3. Approval of Agenda

- Laurent adds Computer Lab
- Laurent adds monthly newsletter note to parents
- Martin adds school microwave
- Ms Truffa adds chocolate funds wish-list
- Approved

4. Public Question Period

- No one present

5. School and Governing Board Operations

i. Governing Board – Rules of Conduct

- See the rules of conduct.
- They are the same as previous years
- Approved

ii. Annual Report, 2014-2015

- See the annual report created by Ms Truffa
- It summarizes the main discussions and decisions of last year
- Approved

iii. Emergency Preparedness Plan

- There is no emergency preparedness plan document
- Nancy met with the people responsible and went through everything

Fire Drill

- There was a fire drill performed
- It was not perfect. The kids did not get out as fast as expected
- The shutting of windows slowed things down
- Mr Boyle, the person responsible from the school board, said the drill went OK
- In general, it should take 1 minute and 25 seconds to clear the school
- The fire drill was done without the fire department.
- They will come another time for a drill

Lockdown

- There will be a lockdown in November, but the exact date is not yet set
- We are waiting to know the strike dates from the teachers before deciding on our lockdown date
- It will occur at 10AM
- A letter will be sent to the parents to advise them beforehand
- The cinema is our emergency meeting point. In theory, buses would take the kids there, if ever needed. In practice, it will likely be more chaotic and decisions will be taken on the spot

- All staff take the drills very seriously. They count the kids and make sure everyone is accounted for
- Nancy also did a mini test with the Ks, to get them prepared
- Generally, the Ks are startled when these drills occur, so they need extra practice

Transmission of News of Incident

- In case of an incident, we would likely have to rely on the news
- The school board would have access to parent emails and their phone numbers. In theory, they would contact the parents
- In practice, that may take time as there will be other priorities. The police and fire fighters will take control of the scene.
- Most parents will likely first hear of an incident through the news or a call from someone involved (kids etc.)
- In theory, we should contact the school board for information, in case of an incident, but again, this may not work smoothly in practice
- Perhaps we can ask the principal of another school to send out a mass notification to parents (via email or instant message to phone list) – i.e. Brian Seltman at Billings ?
- Nancy will look into this and get back to us

Cinema as Meeting Point

- Do we have access to the cinema ?
- Nancy will check and get back to us
- Troy says we should make contact with the cinema owner, get his number and contact information in case we need it and to be sure we're all on the same page
- Nancy says the owner should be aware and that there should even be a signed "entente". She will check for it
- Martin offers to accompany Nancy to meet the cinema owner. Nancy agrees.

iv. *Governing Board Budget*

- The budget for the governing board is \$250
- We need to start thinking about what we want to do with it
- It is intended for the GB members to use for babysitters and taxis to get to meetings, coffee for the meetings, etc.
- Traditionally, we have donated it: ALD, graduation, Free the Children, Teacher Appreciation Day and other such things
- We will need to vote on this at the next meeting

v. *Capital Projects Requests*

- Nancy notes that the entrance has not been painted in a while, so this might be a consideration
- Last year, we requested new and repaired lockers and to fix the fence
- Nancy will make requests this year
- For the teachers, replacing and adding lockers is the priority. They waste time on locker issues every day, so fixing them would help them
- The fence is also an issue – it needs repairing
- Troy suggests that extending the parking lot should be on the list. Nancy spoke to Walter Cordeli about that and it would cost \$20K
- She will meet with the person responsible for capital requests, Walter Cordeli, to discuss. She will get back to us with the details of the conversation

6. Liaison with Stakeholders

i. *Principal's Report*

Computer Lab

- We were given an extra teacher for grade 1, which means we will have 3 classes
- Nancy brought in Mike Helm (her boss). Nancy felt we did not need an extra teacher, but Mike felt we did
- For the classroom, Nancy would have preferred a mobile classroom, but Mike said that the computer lab would have to go first
- We can only bring in mobile units once all classrooms are used
- Nancy met the staff to discuss
- We did not want to get rid of music or the library. That left only the computer lab
- Many of the computers were no longer very good
- So, the computer lab was selected to be removed and taken over by a grade one class
- It was a difficult decision
- As a result, a new grade one class is there, taught by a new teacher – Mathieu Prevost.
- There are now three grade one classes, with 14,15 and 15 kids in each class

- What about building an extension to the school ?
- Technically, Harmony was built to allow a second floor, but we cannot consider an

- extension (ignoring cost issues) until all schools in the region were filled to capacity
- Before we get there, there would be realignments of school population areas, so it is unlikely we will get an extension in the near or medium term
- What about kids that ask for exemptions to come to Harmony ? Are these kids making us too big, causing us to lose our computer lab ?
- Ms Truffa says that, generally, the exemptions all even out between school
- Several schools do not have a computer lab. They use a portable lab in its place, with tablets and portable computers
- We do have ipads, but we need to work on wifi expansion
- Also, the ipads are old and the technology is obsolete, so they no longer work as well
- Derric suggests that seems wrong. Even the oldest ipads are supported by apple. He believes that maybe the IOS updates have not been done and this is why they may not work as well.
- Sheila asks if he can come in to see. Derric and Sheila will arrange to look at the ipads.

Communication of the Addition of New Grade 1 Class

- Martin's kids are in grade 1
- He says no parent is against having a third grade 1 class
- However, the communication of this major change was lacking and poorly done
- There was no advance notice, no class list, nothing. Kids just came to school and were moved to a new class with a new teacher
- This frustrated a lot of parents. They would have liked to have prepared their kids for this big change
- Nancy says it was the school board that did it this way. She got very little notice of the change

Grade 3 Change of classroom

- Derric adds that there was similarly no notice given for the grade 3 change of classrooms, nor that the computer lab had been dismantled.
- We found out from our kids
- The school should do a better job of communicating information that will change the setting and schedule of our kids

Battle of Chateauguay (race)

- Ms Graham prepared the kids and did a great job
- Our school won the banner
- A lot of parents came and were very supportive

Information about the GB in the newsletter

- Paul would like to add a blurb in the newsletter to say what the GB does and who is part of it
- He hopes to encourage parents to call or email us if there is anything that concerns them
- He would like to give our contact info
- Troy and others are not comfortable giving our contact information

- Laurent suggests that, perhaps, we can create a generic email address and parent concerns can be sent there
- Nancy suggest creating an email address with NFSB. When anything comes in, she would forward it to us all

ii. Daycare

- The first two ped days (hip hop and laser quest) went well
- We have another ped day on November 9th: Dynamix will be coming. 70 kids are signed up

iii. School Council

- Nothing to report

iv. Teacher Initiatives and Requests

- Dynamix is set to begin in November
- We cannot plan anything for the time being, due to the teacher pressure tactics
- Dynamix is a leadership program
- Last year, there were 25 kids involved
- It is for grades 5 and 6
- Vanessa can give us more information at the next meeting
- Kids do miss class time for the dynamix program, so the GB must approve it
- Even though all the details are not confirmed, the GB approves the dynamix program for this year. We are well familiar with it from years past.

v. Parent Participation Organization – Fundraisers and School Activities

Chocolate Fundraiser

- We are currently collecting the unsold boxes of chocolate and counting the funds raised

Halloween

- The PPO is planning the Halloween festivities
- There will be 13 stations
- Still looking for volunteers

X-Mas

- The discussions have begun.
- They are thinking of ideas for activities

Remembrance Day

- The PPO will be helping with Remembrance day as well

vi. Parent Committee Report

- No meeting as of yet

7. Varia

i. *Computer lab – Reflex*

- Most of the discussion was addressed in the principal's report
- Laurent says that the school assigns reflex math (online site) to learn the basic addition/subtraction and multiplication/division skills. How many kids do not have computers at home and depended on the computer lab for this basic learning? What happens to them?
- There are some kids who have no access to a computer or internet
- The school will try to get some computers or tablets up and running, to help these kids
- However, for the time being, they will use cue cards to learn, as we did when we were young. No choice.

ii. *Monthly Newsletter*

- The October newsletter did not include a note to encourage parents to help their kids with their studies
- Laurent offers to write something up and send it to Nancy for the November newsletter.
- Nancy says she was working on something for the November newsletter. She suggests her and Laurent get together to write something up

iii. *Chocolate fundraiser Wish-List*

- At the Battle of Chateaugay race, many schools had tents to keep the kids dry
- For Harmony, Nancy brought hers
- The school should have their own tent
- We should consider getting one with the funds raised

iv. *Cafeteria Microwave*

- Martin wonders why we do not have a microwave for the kids
- Cathy says they cause huge line-ups, so many kids would still be waiting to heat their food when the bell rings
- The lunch monitors also cannot monitor them in addition to everything else.
- There are many risks with microwaves: frozen foods take very long to heat, some kids may put utensils in the microwave, etc.
- Harmony used to have them ages ago and we got rid of them because of all the trouble they caused

v. *Safety Zone*

- Martin suggest putting a note in the newsletter asking parents to be brief when they drop their kids off in the morning
- He says many parents park their car and linger for a long time, clogging up the road

for a long distance.

- This subject was discussed a great deal last year. Do we know what the city plans to do ?
- Laurent says he spoke to Lucie Larberge, our district councillor
- The city hired an engineering firm to look at the particular issues of each school and determine the best plan of action for each
- Before implementing anything, they will discuss with the principal
- Lucie said that for our area, the issue is the parents who linger. The solutions are likely painted steps on the street accompanied by signage to show where kids can cross and a no parking zone to empty the area directly in front of the school yard
- That said, she will not be the one making the suggestions. The engineering firm will make their proposals.

8. Adjournment time: 7.50PM

Signatures:

Principal: Nancy Richer: _____

Governing Board Chair: Ms Truffa Truffa: _____

Wednesday September 23rd, 2015

Attendance: Nancy Richer, Sylvia Aviles, Troy Cornford, Laurent Lapointe, Sheila Shanahan, Ms Truffa Truffa, Krista McLeod, Kathy Arseneault, Sylvie Léger, Martin Paquin, Paul Nagy, Vanessa Della Valle, Heather, Derric Chandler

Absent: N/A

1. Verification of Quorum

- Sufficient

2. Approval of Minutes – June 10th, 2015

- Approved

3. Approval of Agenda

- Paul adds Governing Board Communications
- Laurent adds Newsletter suggestion for Parent participation in their kids' education

4. Public Question Period

- No one present

5. School and Governing Board Operations

i. Election of Chair and other positions

- Chair: Ms Truffa Truffa
- Vice-Chair: Paul Nagy
- Secretary: Laurent Lapointe

ii. Principal Criteria

- Same criteria as in past years
- Approved

iii. Chocolate Bar Sale

- It will be starting soon
- The chocolates arrive Wednesday
- There will be one box per family
- Troy asks if we can receive one box per child
- Yes, there are more boxes available and he can write to request one per child
- Nancy says the reason that only one goes to each family is that the school does not want to impose too much on a single family, so they limit it

- Derric asks why we switched suppliers
- We switched because with the new provider, the chocolates are nut-free. They also have a bigger profit-margin for the school
- The new supplier is De La Montagne
- If they do not sell well, we will return to Cadbury

- iv. *Meeting Dates for the GB*
- The GB meetings will be at 6:30PM on each of the following Wednesdays:
 - September 23rd (today)
 - October 14th
 - November 11th
 - December 9th
 - January 13th
 - February 10th
 - March 16th
 - April 13th
 - May 11th
 - June 8th

6. School Update and Principal Report

- i. *Kindergarten*
- We have 46 kindergarten kids this year
 - There are three classes
 - The school is growing
- ii. *New Teachers*
- We have several new teachers: Lisa Hutchins, Dominique Lavigne and Elisabeth Lafarre
 - There are 15 homeroom teachers
 - We have one art teacher, one music and one physical education teacher
 - We have 5 daycare educators
 - There are 3 attendants, 2 techs, 1 evening caretaker, 1 secretary and 2 noon-time supervisors
 - The 2 cafeteria ladies are new. They are great. They are warm with the kids and try to engage with them. It is a big improvement on last year
- iii. *Curriculum Night*
- We had a good turnout
 - Buzz, our local commissioner, came and was there to answer any questions
 - Nancy says she feels warmly welcomed
 - Overall, the evening went well
 - The teachers explained how their respective classes will work: homework, schedules, websites and communications
 - Vanessa did workshops with the parents that came. The parents brainstormed on how to help their kids succeed at school. Excellent idea !

 - Sylvia suggests that, next year, it be made clear that parents can attend any of the sessions for their kids' grades.
 - With more than one kid and the sessions at the same time, the note seemed to imply we could not attend the other session
 - The teachers said they could have, but indeed, it was not made clear on the note sent home

- Nancy says she will correct for next year
- The GB elections seemed to puzzle the parents
- She would like us to be more present, so people know what is going on and know they can participate or ask us questions

iv. Student Council / Soccer Field

- The field is there, but there are no nets
- Nancy would like to get the kids involved in obtaining the nets
- There is now a student council, so she will get them to be responsible to some level in obtaining and deciding on the soccer nets
- This will get them directly involved in something that will have an important impact on the school. It will be empowering and an excellent experience
- The student council starts next week

- The nets will not be cheap. The cost is generally in the range of \$7,000
- The nets have to be secured down and this is expensive
- Sheila asks if nets are really necessary. From what she sees, the kids just play what they want. They use their imagination. If they do play soccer, they seem to be able to decide on nets without actually having nets
- If we really want nets, we can get cheap plastic nets.
- Why limit kids to using the field only for soccer ?
- Derric says that we should try contacting the city. Perhaps they have old nets that they no longer need and would be willing to part with them cheaply

- How is the new yard accessed ?
- The link is locked. It is opened at recess and lunch.

- Nancy also says the land there is bumpy, so she may ask the company who did it to come back and repair
- No company did it. We just fenced off the area and put in a garden. The land was not touched. It was just cut.

- The garden is growing well. The aim is to have one pumpkin per class

- There is also the student coalition

- Each student wrote a note about themselves. Two were chosen. They will go to the school board for the coalition

v. Field Trip

- Nothing for now.

vi. Parent Committee Member

- We need to elect someone from the GB to be the parent committee member
- This person goes to Howick every month to represent the school
- Ms Truffa has been our representative for the past three years
- More parents can attend, but the school only gets one vote

- Most items raised there are brought back to the school for consultation before a vote is held
- Ms Truffa is elected. Paul is elected back-up.

7. Liaison with Stakeholders

i. Principal's Report

- The school is growing.
- We have the following number of kids per grade:
 - Kindergarten = 46 kids and three classes
 - Grade 1: 45 kids
 - Grade 2: 39 kids
 - Grade 3: 39 kids
 - Grade 4: 35 kids
 - Grade 5: 39 kids
 - Grade 6: 51 kids
- We will soon have to find solutions to insufficient classrooms.

ii. Daycare:

- We will have 141 regular kids this year
- There are also 29 sporadics
- Last year, we had 110 kids
- We have 5 educators
- First ped days are coming up: October 5th and 6th
- October 5th will be Hip Hop
- October 6th will be laser quest
- Did we get enough volunteers (1 per 8 kids) ?
- We are missing one volunteer, but Krista is working hard and expects to find someone

iii. School Council

- Nothing to Report

iv. Teacher Initiatives / requests

- None

v. Parent Participation Organisation – fundraisers and school activities

- The PPO will help with the Terry Fox run
- They will bring snacks and help out

- The school t-shirts are arriving Friday. The PPO will help hand them out.

8. Varia

i. Governing Board Communications

- Paul was surprised at the muted reaction to the GB board and the elections on curriculum night
- People did not seem aware of what it was or what they do
- He suggests we should make ourselves better known

- We can add a section to the monthly newsletter, so parents know they can communicate with us
- We can perhaps also add a note of introduction, saying who we are and what grades our kids are in – making us more accessible
- Nancy says that technically, any parent can ask to see the GB minutes or annual report, but few people know that
- By saying who we are in the newsletter and adding a few details and our email addresses, it might make the GB more approachable and put us more in touch with the school community and the issues that concern them.

ii. *Trying to Encourage Parents to Participate in their Kid's Education Via the Monthly Newsletter*

- Laurent would like to find a way to try and get more parents involved in their kid's education
- Brian often said that by grade 3, if a kid was not at level in math, reading and other subjects, they were statistically less successful for the remainder of their education.
- It was key to catch them before the end of grade 3
- Laurent agrees, but believes it is not the kids we need to catch, but the parents.
- A Kindergartener, grade 1, 2 or 3 kid will not self-motivate or learn on their own. It is the parents that will help them, get them disciplined for school work and teach them good academic habits.
- Judging by grade averages he sees in report cards, it is hard to believe that all parents are participating actively in their kids' education.
- He says we should try to reach this group
- He suggests a regular note in the newsletter, sending out regular emails with quick and easy-to-read notes trying to encourage parents to help their kids
- Nancy says she agrees
- Sheila agrees this is an important issue, but the problem is that these parents ignore entreaties to get more involved. We can try, but they are most likely to ignore the message
- Laurent says that it will very likely not do much, but if we start the message and repeat, it may influence some to get involved or others to be more involved over time. It's worth trying
- Martin says that he likes the reader papers he gets with books that require the parent to sign, acknowledging that they have read the book with their child. This enforces their participation
- Perhaps other similar things can go out with all homework ?
- Derric says that there are many parents that sign it blindly or don't sign at all.
- He reads with kids at school and sees that many of these are not signed or sometimes when they are, the child clearly has not read with a parent.
- Sheila says volunteer parents who come in to read with kids (as Derric does) are invaluable. These volunteers contribute greatly to the education of many kids, even if they only come in for a little bit each week
- Some kids only get the chance to read with an adult with these volunteers
- Martin suggests we need clearer messages to get volunteers and how to become one
- Teachers do send out emails at the start of the school year requesting volunteers. The emails will likely go out in the coming weeks, depending on the teacher

- Laurent suggests that Cathy send out a mass email asking for volunteers and explaining how to become one
- Volunteers need to go through a police check
- The hope would be to get a bank of volunteers.
- We will look into it.

9. Adjournment time: 7.31PM