Major School Change
A Consultation for
Sustaining and Enhancing Services

2016-2017

Response Cover Sheet

Sherwood Forest Elementary
Name of Responding School/Centre or Individual

Governing Board
Name of Consultative Group

Joanne MacInnis
Signature

Governing Board Chair
Title

☐ I/We have read the documentation, but have chosen not to submit a response

☒ I/We would like to be heard at the Public Hearings in November 2015
☐ I/We do not wish to be heard at the Public Hearings in November 2015
October 29, 2015

Council of Commissioners

Lester B. Pearson School Board

1925 Brookdale Avenue

Dorval, QC

H9P 2Y7

Subject : Governing Board Brief : Major School Change 2016-2017

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of the Sherwood Forest Elementary School Governing Board, I would like to thank the School Board for considering the opinion of our school community on Major School Change for the 2016-2017 school year. We have outlined below the recommendations of our Governing Board that we believe will best fulfill the learning needs of the students in our community.

Executive Summary

Within this brief, we have aspired to address the following concerns of the LBPSB:

- Reduction of Transportation costs
- Optimal use of facilities (i.e. adult education at empty school sites, continuing education, work/study programs, international students, vocational education, community elementary schools)
- Providing additional services to recently relocated families
- Divisiveness and competition between schools within the LBPSB
- Resolving issues with integration of children with special needs
- Streamlined administration of a single elementary school program
- Longevity of school enrollment at community schools
- Staffing (English teacher surplus)
The Governing Board is recommending the creation of the Sherwood Forest Elementary School site as a community school, offering the Early French Immersion program, beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, serving students living in zones 46, 47, and 48.

In addition, we are recommending that all Elementary schools in the LBPSB run as community schools, offering the Early French Immersion Program to students eligible for English education in the LBPSB.

Background

Currently, Sherwood Forest Elementary School offers the 50/50 Bilingual Model. We recognize the strengths of this model, as many parents believe that both languages should be taught at the same time. While one could make the case that the 50/50 model is perhaps more academically challenging because the children are learning two languages at once, we have seen decreasing enrollment at our school on an annual basis, while enrollment at our community Early French Immersion School has increased.

We are therefore recommending that Sherwood Forest Elementary School should not continue to offer the 50/50 Bilingual Model program. As residents of Quebec, we recognize the importance of immersing our students in the knowledge and appreciation of the French culture and language at an early age, enabling them to live and thrive in Quebec. A Governing Board-led, school-wide parent survey indicated that our community wants more French, while still being able to educate their children at LBPSB schools. This is one reason why we are recommending the Early French Immersion model for our community.

In recommending the Early French Immersion model for our community, we are also recommending the creation of a community school at the Sherwood Forest Elementary School site. The Sherwood Forest Elementary School site has the capacity to hold most students in the current zones 46, 47, and 48. Should the board be in the position to re-draw these zones, we believe that all students living in close proximity to the school will be able to attend the Sherwood Forest Elementary School site in the 2016-2017 school year.

Furthermore, we are recommending that this model, the Early French Immersion community school, be applied not only in our community, but throughout LBPSB elementary schools. The increased competition between schools has become an unhealthy divide within communities. With a community school model, the LPBSB would be able to focus on a single marketing strategy, while the schools could focus solely on delivery of the “MELS progression of learning”.

The creation of a community school at the Sherwood Forest Elementary School site would also decrease the number of school buses required to service our community, given that buses currently transport children of our community to at least two different local schools. We believe the return to the concept of the community school model will create minimal disruption to the education of the students in our community, as well as in others.
We are also recommending the creation of a new program to support relocated families integrating into Quebec and more specifically the Montreal area and LBPSB. We see many families that relocate to the Sherwood Forest community, that have never been exposed to French in their children's curriculum. We would like to create a program designed to support these students and by extension, these families, to integrate and accelerate their adoption of both English and French.

In addition, we are recommending the Early French Immersion model for our school because we have reached the tipping point given the percentage of children with special needs registering at the school. Bilingual program schools have considerably more integration aide hours assigned weekly than the local Early French Immersion schools. We believe in inclusion wholeheartedly, as much as we believe in community schools. We believe all children should attend their local elementary school, regardless of the program being offered. We believe that this is the only way to equitably share resources.

Furthermore, a board wide Community School model, only offering the Early French Immersion program, will allow for a better distribution of teacher resources across the LBPSB elementary school community. This will specifically address the current number of excess English teachers across the board.

It is for these main reasons that we are recommending the creation of Sherwood Forest Elementary School as a community school offering the Early French Immersion Program, serving students in zones 46, 47, and 48 beginning in the 2016-2017 school year.

**Infrastructure**

Sherwood Forest Elementary School has been well maintained since undergoing extensive renovation during the Major School Change of 2005-2006. The 2-storey school features wide hallways, a dedicated daycare area, new windows and doors, new ventilation system, and a motion sensitive lighting system throughout the building.

To ensure the opportunity for a well-rounded elementary school education including the Arts, Technology, and Physical Education, the school contains a music room that is well equipped with a variety of well maintained instruments, a technology room, SMART Boards in every classroom, a complete computer lab, an oversized gymnasium with stage, and a large outdoor space and park attached to the school grounds.

The infrastructure at Sherwood Forest Elementary School is in superb condition to act as a Community School offering the Early French Immersion program to students in Zones 46, 47, and 48, starting in the 2016/2017 school year.

We recognize that the creation of community schools will leave some LBPSB buildings vacant. We recommend that these buildings be repurposed to provide additional facilities for adult
education, continuing education, work/study programs, international students, vocational education, and perhaps a specialized school for students with particular special needs.

Summary

In conclusion, the Governing Board of Sherwood Forest Elementary School is recommending the creation of the Sherwood Forest Elementary School site as a **community school**, offering the **Early French Immersion program**, beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, serving students living in **zones 46, 47, and 48**. This recommendation is based on the following:

- the parents of the local community prefer to enroll their children in Early French Immersion programs at LBPSB, based on current enrollment and a Governing Board community survey
- the Sherwood Forest Elementary School site has the capacity to hold most students in the current Zones 46, 47, and 48, and reduce bussing
- the Early Immersion Community School Model will allow for better distribution of resources across the LBPSB elementary school community, and allow for true integration of special needs students into our schools
- the Sherwood Forest Elementary School site is in superb condition, requiring minimal updates in the planning horizon, and is well equipped to provide a well rounded education for its students, including the Arts, Technology, and Physical Education.

Once again, I would like to thank the School Board for considering the opinion of our school community on Major School Change for the 2016-2017 school year. Should you have any questions about our recommendations, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Joanne MacInnis

Chairperson, Sherwood Forest Elementary School Governing Board

*On behalf of the Sherwood Forest Elementary School Governing Board and Staff*