



Wednesday March 24, 2021

Me. Geneviève Dugré
Lester B. Pearson School Board
1925 Brookdale Avenue
Dorval, QC H9P 2Y7
consultations@lbpsb.qc.ca

Subject: Budget Consultation 2021

PLEASE NOTE:

The online google form provided on the website does not allow for extra commentary to all the questions. In addition to submitting our response through your google form as requested <https://boardsite.lbpsb.qc.ca/internal/budget-consultation#> , we will also be submitting this approved email version. This also allows SNAC to have the approved copy posted on our website for the public to view.

Dear Me. Dugré,

In regard to the Budget Consultation, the Special Needs Advisory Committee (SNAC) is pleased to have the opportunity to provide input.

Question 1: What is your relationship to the Lester B. Pearson School Board?

School Board Committee - Special Needs Advisory Committee (SNAC)

Question 2:

Do you have any suggestions regarding objectives, principles or criteria used to govern the allocation of funds?

- Given our current reality of the COVID-19 pandemic, SNAC would recommend that an allocation of funds be made available in order to meet both the physical and emotional well being of school staff, students and their families. For the emotional well being consider providing a helpline that both students and staff can have access to
- Considering the increasing number of students with special needs enrolled in LBPSB allocate funds to ensure the inclusive philosophy is upheld by all schools in the board. This includes allocating funds to provide support for students on I.E.P.s in enriched programs as well as they can often be overlooked



- Ensure that funds are made available to allow for the inclusion of students with special needs in extra-curricular activities and field trips including the transportation to these activities as well as support at the activities
- Considering a student with special needs will be in every school, continue to put funds towards sensitivity training of all students and staff so successful inclusion and acceptance can take place. Training for all staff - including permanent and replacement staff - including lunch monitors and bus drivers
- In the event of school closures / mergers ensure that there are enough funds allocated to fully support the students with special needs in this transition. Adequate transportation which includes a maximum amount of time children with special needs should be on the school bus. Change is difficult for all children, but especially so for those with special needs. School visits to see the new school layout and meet key teachers and support staff is highly encouraged

Question 3:

To help us further support our students' success, in your opinion, which of the following resources and programs are essential to supporting high levels of student achievement? Please select all that apply

Answers in order of importance for SNAC:

1. Staff Training:

Invest in the professional development of the people who are working directly with our students, permanent and replacement staff alike. Give staff the tools and the training that they need to be able to manage the classrooms. Our goal with inclusion should be a quality education for all. It is not necessarily specialized programs that are going to make that happen. It is the people on the front lines, our teachers and staff, that with the right support and training, have the power to make a difference in student achievement. What is most important is ensuring that staff, at all levels, full time and part time, are prepared to support the philosophy of a quality education for all. An example of this is the Integration Aide Handbook. It was last updated in 2014. Also, may we request that all students on an I.E.P. be provided with information on the Special Needs Advisory Committee and be guided towards our I.E.P. resource kit and website. Paper copies are available through student services as well as the electronic copies online via our website. This will assist the parents in their knowledge of what an I.E.P. is and how this can help their child increase success and confidence in their academics. It will also help to foster a collaborative relationship between the staff and parents of students with special needs.



2. Integration of Technology: for differentiated learning

Ensure that students have access to technology and that staff are trained and willing to use it in their classrooms. Technology can be used to level the playing field for students with special needs and should be considered an invaluable tool for helping students reach their potential. Invest in online interactive software that will support students not just through practice but through remedial intervention and make it available to all students not just those who are deemed in need for all subjects. Continue to invest in e-learning classes for secondary school students for credit. The online learning academy due to COVID has proved to be extremely successful for many students - utilize that expertise and continue to add future course offerings

3. Early Literacy Intervention

The earlier, the better. Provide students with interventions that are motivating, enjoyable, and will eventually help to build their self-esteem as a learner.

The Orton-Gillingham approach is a direct, explicit, multisensory, structured, sequential, diagnostic, and prescriptive way to teach literacy when reading, writing, and spelling does not come easily to students. Given its recognized effectiveness, we would like cycle 1 staff in an increasing number of schools to be trained in this method and be ready and able to implement it when teaching their students. We believe that if they are given access to this more inclusive literacy intervention fewer students will fall behind, thus fewer students will require additional literacy resource support down the line.

4. Special Education programming: more inclusive programming

Create more inclusive classrooms, where students of all needs and abilities are able to learn from one another. Promote collaboration, respect and diversity in classrooms.

5. Experiential Learning

Learning through “doing” has the potential to reach a greater number of students than traditional “rote” learning.

6. Renewed Math Strategy

Incorporate more technology as needed and find new ways to get students engaged in math. Invest in online visual teaching supports such as math help services for all students

7. French programming

Provide opportunities to help students gain the confidence to use the skills that they acquire in the French language in a real world setting



Question 4:

The school board's priority is to maintain buildings in the best condition that is possible within the budgets provided by the Ministry of Education. If there are surplus funds available please choose the school and centre building component that you believe requires the most service, maintenance or replacement.

Answer in order of importance for SNAC:

1. **Classroom furniture:** with alternative seating options for all types of students and learners. For example standing tables / desks, wobble chairs, exercise balls, bouncy bands, tennis balls on chairs, desk cycle, stationary bike under the desk etc.
2. **Other:** sensory friendly spaces or a dedicated sensory friendly rooms
3. **Interior upgrade:** wheelchair accessibility, unisex bathrooms for transgender students
4. **Flooring, Painting, Lighting:** sensory friendly lighting in classrooms
5. **Grounds maintenance, exterior work:** adapted playground equipment options for students with special needs

May we recommend that you look at this award winning book:

<https://www.routledge.com/Designing-for-Autism-Spectrum-Disorders-1st-Edition/Gaines-Bourne-Pearson-Kleibrink/p/book/9780415725279>

Question 5: In light of upcoming budget compressions, do you have suggestions for cost savings throughout the board?

none

Question 6: Other Comments or Suggestions

Provide teachers with the flexibility to truly evaluate student learning through a vast array of means/tools.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this consultation.

Respectfully,

Jennifer DiMarco - Chair

Special Needs Advisory Committee, 2020-2021

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

www.facebook.com/specialneedsadvisorycommittee/