

**PROVINCE OF QUÉBEC**  
**Western Québec School Board**

Minutes of the **Special Meeting of the Council of Commissioners** held on November 15, 2012 at the Western Québec School Board, 15 rue Katimavik, Gatineau, Québec, at 6:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Brunke, Chiasson, Daly, Davidson, Garbutt, Gunn, Guy, Lanyi, O'Brien, Perry, Shea (by video-conference), Taylor, Wilson and Young, Parent Commissioners Gibbons and Komm

**Personnel:**

Director of Human Resources and Technology, M. Dubeau  
Director of Education, M. Lothian  
Director of Buildings, Equipment and Transportation, C. O'Shea  
Assistant Director of Student Services, B. Burn

**REGRETS:** Commissioners Dexter, Hendry, Larivière, McCrank and Polson

The Director General, Paul Lamoureux, Assistant Director General/Director of Education, Adult Education and Vocational Training, R. Ahern and the Director of Legal Services/Secretary General, R. Vézina were also present.

**Call to Order**

The Chairman, Commissioner Chiasson, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**Public Participation**

The following persons spoke on the issue of school closures/relocation for their respective schools:

-Nancy Hall, Chair of St-Michael's High School Governing Board and Erika Lefebvre, Parent Representative on St-Michael's High School Governing Board, made a presentation in favor of keeping St-Michael's High School open and asked that the consultation process begin after the Christmas Holidays.

-Colette Canavan, St-Michaels Community member, made a presentation asking that St-Michael's High School remain open. She handed in a petition supporting her position signed by approximately 50 people.

-Albert Armstrong, Mayor of Shawville, spoke on behalf of the Municipality requesting that French programming be brought back to Dr. S. E. McDowell School and that the school remain in its present location.

-Diana Desabrais, Member of the Pontiac High School Governing Board and Parent, spoke in favor of maintaining Dr. S. E. McDowell School in its present location and asked that additional French delivery be offered gradually in both schools as of next year.

-Heidi Ardern, Chair of Dr. S. E. McDowell Governing Board, asked for additional time to allow the school and community to consider other options and solutions. She informed Council of the content of resolutions passed by the Dr. S. E. McDowell School Governing Board.

-Rev. Mavis Brownlee, Rector for the Parish of Clarendon in Shawville, stated that she deplored the lack of transparency and communication between the board and the community and that there was a need for a French Immersion program at Dr. S.E. McDowell School.

-Greg Graham, Councillor for the Municipality of Bristol, representative of the Pontiac Tourism Association, Business owner and parent of student at McDowell, spoke against moving Dr. S. E. McDowell School, and for the need for bilingual citizens and employees in the Pontiac.

- Jayme Hines-Findlay, parent, stated that his family would move to Ontario were Dr. S. E. McDowell School to move as proposed.
- Diana Thomas, mother, stated that she was planning for her child to attend Dr. S. E. McDowell School next year but that her child will not if the proposed move were to occur.
- Sheri Tremblay, mother, stated that she would be sending her young child to the French system if more French is not offered at Dr. S. E. McDowell School.
- Samuel James Low, parent, stated that he was opposed to the proposed move and requested that a longer consultation take place. He stated his view that the move would in fact be a closure and that Policy C-25 should be followed.
- Jennifer Dale, mother of children enrolled in both Dr. S.E. McDowell and Pontiac High Schools spoke against the proposed move and in favor of increased French delivery.
- John Armstrong, member of Council for the Municipality of Clarendon, read a resolution passed by the Municipality in October 2012, asking that French Immersion be brought back to Dr. S. E. McDowell School and that every effort be made to maintain the school in its current location.
- Ginger Finan, Business Coordinator - Pontiac Chamber of Commerce and parent of 3 children attending Dr. S. E. McDowell School pleaded in favor of maintaining the school in its current location and for a French Immersion program to be implemented. She raised 2 concerns: - reduced gym time for students and closure of the Welding program.
- Mike Guitard, Pro-Mayor, Municipality of Thorne, asked that the WQSB elected officials look for solutions to keep Dr. S. E. McDowell School in its current location and give the population more time.
- Tammy Bretzlaff, parent of a young child with severe allergies expressed her fears if her child were to attend school in the same building as a high school.
- Greg Hayes, parent, also speaking on behalf of his wife Kristine Thibeault, stated that they were sending their children to the French school system because they wanted their children to be functionally French by Grade 6. They requested the implementation of a French Immersion program at Dr. S. E. McDowell School.
- Chris Judd, former president of the Québec Farmers' Association, spoke in favor of implementing a French Immersion program at Dr. S. E. McDowell School.
- Dan Egan, parent and small business owner, stated that he wants his children to be bilingual and is therefore currently sending them to the French school. He will send his 2 year old daughter to Dr. S. E. McDowell School if French Immersion is offered. He stated that others would do the same.
- Scott Judd spoke about costs involved in relocating and of lost revenue caused by children attending other schools. He asked that all work together to find solutions.
- Terry Campbell, President – Shawville Lions Club and business owner stated that Dr. S. E. McDowell was the most important institution in Shawville, that the school was the determining factor in his and his wife's decision to move back to Shawville, and asked that the school not be moved.
- Kenneth Pack, Shawville business owner, Vice President of the S.A.D.C. Pontiac asked that Dr. S. E. McDowell School remain open in its current location.
- Julie Dubeau, business owner and parent of 2 children, one of which suffers from Cerebral Palsy, asked that a French Immersion program be implemented at Dr. S. E. McDowell School and that it remain in its current location.
- Kaara Brown-Richardson, parent of children attending both Dr. S. E. McDowell School and Pontiac High School expressed her concerns relative to the sharing of facilities, including the library and gymnasium.
- Krystal Boutin, graduate of both Dr. S. E. McDowell and Pontiac High schools, current Business student, stressed the importance of bringing more French to both schools.

**C-12/13-96**

### **Approval of Agenda**

IT WAS MOVED by Commissioner Wilson that the Agenda be approved as presented.

Carried unanimously

**C-12/13-97****Request for delay in consultation Dr. S. E. McDowell**

IT WAS MOVED by Commissioner Taylor that Council send the consultation documents relating to Dr. S.E. McDowell Elementary School back to the Planning and Review Committee in order to give the school community an additional year to consider other alternatives, including the possibility of implementing a French-Immersion program at Dr. S. E. McDowell Elementary School, with a view of maintaining this school at its current location, and that the implementation by administration of motion C-12/13-50 be suspended until further instruction is given by Council.

For: 4

Against: 9

Motion defeated

**C-12/13-98****Proposed Change to Dr. S. E. McDowell School's Deed of Establishment Consultation Documents**

IT WAS MOVED by Commissioner O'Brien that Council acknowledge receipt of, and approve the consultation documents relating to the proposed change to Dr. S. E. McDowell School's Deed of Establishment.

For: 9

Against: 4

Motion carried

**C-12/13-99****Consultation Timeline (Dr. S. E. McDowell)**

IT WAS MOVED by Commissioner Davidson that Council establish a timeline as follows for the consultations relating to the proposed change to Dr. S. E. McDowell School's Deed of Establishment:

- Public notice of consultation meetings and consultation letters to schools' Governing Boards and to Parents' Committee to be sent by November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012;
- First public consultation meeting to be held at Dr. S. E. McDowell School at 7:00 p.m. on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013;
- Second consultation meeting to be held on March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013;
- Planning and Review Committee to present its final report and recommendations to Council at the Council Meeting to be held on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013;
- Council's final decision will be announced at the May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013 Council meeting.

Carried unanimously

**C-12/13-100****Proposed Closure of St-Michael's High School Consultation Documents**

IT WAS MOVED by Commissioner Guy that Council acknowledge receipt of, and approve the consultation documents relating to the proposed closure of St-Michael's High School.

Carried unanimously

**C-12/13-101****Consultation Timeline (St-Michael's High School)**

IT WAS MOVED by Commissioner Lanyi that Council establish a timeline as follows for the consultations relating to the proposed closure of St-Michael's High School:

- Public notice of consultation meetings to be sent by January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013;
- First public consultation meeting to be held at the Community Hall on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013;
- Second consultation meeting to be held on Wednesday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013;
- Planning and Review Committee to present its final report and recommendations to Council at the Council Meeting to be held on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013;
- If Planning and Review Committee recommends closure, a date will then be set for a Special Meeting of Council convened for the purpose of making a final decision.

Carried unanimously

It was agreed that Agenda item # 7, the presentation by Transportation on the Review of Aylmer Sector School Boundaries, will be made at a special meeting of the Planning and Review Committee to be held November 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.. As a reminder, all Commissioners are invited to attend.

**C-12/13-102****Adjournment**

IT WAS MOVED by Commissioner O'Brien that the meeting be adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

RV/nb