



**JOHN RENNIE HIGH SCHOOL
GOVERNING BOARD**

Minutes of Meeting 2022-2023 #8

17 May 2023

Meeting held in person in the school library

Parent Reps: C. Veillette, C. Chabot, C. Boyarchuk, D. Bensimon, E. Schultz.

Staff Reps: A. Sayfy, A. Cooper, K. Pellegrino, M. Fuga, R. Lobaton, S. Ashraf (substitute for L. Brabant), S. Sievers, S. Vann

Administration: E-M Durand, J. Armstrong, J. Kurta, M. Larocque

Student Reps: G. Grenier-McDermott

Community Rep: M. Venturino

Commissioner: Absent

Public: No Public in Attendance

Secretary: Absent

Regrets: A. Saunders, C. Santaguida, K. Leonard, L. Brabant, R. Santamaria, S. Legore, S. Day, W. Kogan.

1. Call to Order/Verification of Quorum/Territorial Acknowledgement

- D. Bensimon called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m.
- Territorial land acknowledgement was recited by D. Bensimon.

2. Approval of the agenda

22-23-48: The agenda was approved unanimously, via a motion from C. Veillette & seconded by R. Lobaton.

3. Approval of the minutes from the last meeting

22-23-49: The minutes from 19 April 2023 were approved via a motion from A. Cooper & seconded by S. Vann. Two abstentions were noted, having been absent from the previous meeting.

4. Question Period

- No public was present therefore no questions were asked.

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

- None

6. Consultations

- D. Bensimon informed the meeting of a new consultation regarding the Three-Year Plan of Allocation and Destination of Immovables 2023-2026. This plan outlines the current use and enrolment of each school that is part of the Lester B. Pearson school board. It also indicates expected enrolment for each of the next 3 school years. The forecast for John Rennie High School (JRHS) shows declining enrolment from the current 1322 students to the 1215 expected for the 2025-2026 school year. It was mentioned that the capacity listed for each establishment (1650 for JRHS) was a function of the square footage of the school, so would not change unless the size of the building was changed. There was no feedback that GB participants wished to relay to the board regarding this consultation, so D. Bensimon indicated that he would respond to the consultation saying that the plan was discussed and that it was met with approval.

7. New Business

- **Educational Project Annual Report 2021-22:** the [annual report](#) for this project was presented. The Educational Project is a strategic tool through which an educational institution can define its policy orientations, priority actions and expected results and inform its community in this regard, with a view to ensuring educational success for all students regardless of age. The results of the school are compared to averages across Canada. It was noted that JRHS scored worse than the national average in terms of wellness. This was surmised to be at least partially a result of the death of Lucas Gaudet, a JRHS student, in February 2022, which deeply affected many students and staff.

8. Fundraisers

- None

9. Field Trips

- 20 June 2023: Outing to La Ronde (grades 7,8)

- Destination: La Ronde
- Transportation: School bus
- Cost to student: \$63
- 176 students and 16 adults are expected to participate

22-23-50: The above-mentioned field trip was approved unanimously, via a motion from C. Veillette & seconded by R. Lobaton.

10. Reports

- a. **Principal:** The principal report was presented and is available on the [shared drive](#).
- b. **Staff:** It was mentioned that the end of the school year is quickly approaching and that a school carnival is planned for 7 June 2023. The recently held Leadership Camp was a success and generated interest in the Leadership program. There were a number of recent field trips, including a grade 7 trip to Old Montréal, a grade 8 to Québec City and a grade 10 trip to Ottawa.
- c. **Students:** Preparation for final exams is underway. The recently held play, "Murder on the Orient Express" was a success and many positive comments were received, especially for the set décor.
- d. **Representative for the LBPSB Parents Committee:** at the most recent meeting, held last week, much of the discussion was about transportation for off-island students. It has become longer because of construction on the Pont de l'Île-aux-Tourtes.
- e. **Commissioner:** No report was presented, as the commissioner was absent. The meeting was informed that a summary of the most recent meeting of the Council of Commissioners was available on the [shared drive](#).

11. Correspondence

- a. D. Bensimon informed the meeting that an email from the school board was received stating that "The government issued a directive on April 19, 2023, effective immediately, that states that no space in school/centres can be used, in fact or in appearance, for religious practices such as overt prayer or other similar practices. As with all government directives, the LBSPB will comply."

- b. D. Bensimon informed the meeting that the latest edition of Pearson News is available at <http://pearsonnews.ca>.

12. Varia

- **Update from Dress Code Subcommittee:**

- Before presenting the results of a survey sent to stakeholders, D. Bensimon thanked J. Armstrong for her leadership, organisation and dedication to this topic and for all of her hard work over the last many months. The members of the dress code subcommittee were thanked for their work and involvement over the last several months.
- D. Bensimon reminded the meeting that voting members are regular parent representatives, staff representatives and students for a maximum of 18 people, of which 14 were present. The chairperson has a deciding vote, when the vote is evenly divided. The chair is free to vote for or against the motion regardless of the way he or she voted previously.
- The meeting was also reminded that every decision of the GB must be made in the best interests of the students, according to section 64 of the Québec Education Act. Section 71 of the Education Act states that GB members must act with honesty and loyalty in the interest of the school, the parents, the school staff, the School Board and the community.
- J. Armstrong presented the results of the survey to the meeting. The survey showed a large majority of students opposed to the idea of a mandatory school top, while a large majority of staff members were in favour. The parents who responded were split, with nearly as many for as against. It was noted that 27% of potential responders answered the survey, including 37% of the potential number of students.
- Those in favour cited school pride, safety and ease of clothing choice as their top reasons. Those against cited loss of self-expression, comfort and cost as their top reasons.
- The meeting was informed that following a degradation in the environment of the school in the 2021-22 school year because of policing the dress code of the school, it was decided to not enforce a dress code in 2022-2023 (with the exception of a rule forbidding hats and hoods). This led to some students coming

dressed in clothing that was judged to be inappropriate. There is a desire to improve morale and the environment in the school by not having conflicts around clothing on a regular basis.

- Since Beaconsfield High School recently implemented mandatory dress wear, it was asked if they had consulted stakeholders before doing so. They had not, and although the dress wear was initially met with opposition by a vocal minority, it is now firmly established at the school without further controversy.
- Some GB members expressed support for the idea of mandatory dress wear at the school for safety reasons (easy identification of students of the school) and a sense of belonging. Other members stated that dress wear had never been needed in the past and should not be implemented because of problems caused by a minority of students.
- The idea of having "dress-down" days was presented to the meeting and this is something that will be considered for the next school year. If such a change is to be implemented, it will have to be presented to the GB for approval, since it involves modifying the dress code of the school.
- It was suggested that, regardless of the outcome of a vote on mandatory dress wear, there be a moratorium on the topic for the next 5 years, so as to avoid revisiting the topic on too frequent a basis.
- A motion to approve the implementation of a mandatory school top to be worn by JRHS students during the school day starting in the 2023-2024 school year was moved by E. Schultz and seconded by M. Fuga. 10 members were in favour of the motion, while 3 members were against. 1 member abstained from voting. (**Motion 22-23-51**).

13. Date & Location of Next Meeting

- The next governing board meeting will be taking place on Wednesday, 14 June 2023 @ 6:45 p.m. in person in the school library.

14. Adjournment

- **22-23-52:** A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by C. Veillette at 8:41 p.m. & was passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Dov Bensimon, Chair, John Rennie Governing Board

Approved _____

J. Kurta, Principal

Approved _____

D. Bensimon, Governing Board Chair