

**February 12, 2015**  
**PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board **Parent Involvement Committee** was held on Thursday, February 12, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. in the Cambridge Room at the Education Centre, 51 Ardel Avenue, Kitchener, with the following members in attendance:

Trustees: K. Smith, K. Woodcock

Board Staff: K. Graham, M.L. Mackie (for J. Bryant), R. Noonan, K. O'Reilly

Committee Members: G. Anderson, K. AuCoin, J. Magazine, J. Ortiz, C. Rose (Co-Chair), H. Shalan, J. Stevens, L. Tremble (Co-Chair)

Community Member: A. Hynes

Other Staff in Attendance: E. Burns, P. Rubenschuh re Director's Report

Regrets: J. Bryant, S. Lawrence, A. Sumner

**CALL TO ORDER**

Committee Co-Chair L. Tremble called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

1. Moved by J. Magazine, seconded by A. Hynes:

**That the agenda of the February 12, 2015, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved.**

-Carried-

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

2. Moved by J. Magazine, seconded by K. AuCoin:

**That the minutes of the December 2, 2014, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved.**

-Carried-

**IMMIGRANT FAMILIES AND PARENT ENGAGEMENT**

H. Shalan shared challenges experienced by immigrant parents and the barriers that inhibit their involvement in their children's education. These barriers extend beyond language, religion and culture and include other challenges that are not unique to new immigrants.

Hend shared examples of successful clubs that are running at Southridge and Sunnyside Public Schools. A question was raised as to whether there are similar programs at other schools and the potential for collaboration between schools. In terms of "who is responsible for providing immigrants with the information they need", responsibility is shared by newcomers trying to learn the system and teachers/administration helping them to understand. An invaluable source of help and information comes from other immigrants sharing their experiences and working collaboratively with other/newer immigrants.

The possibility of forming a subcommittee to provide assistance to immigrants is under discussion,

and the opportunity to collaborate with settlement workers to help address the needs of immigrants is being pursued by H. Shalan and J. Magazine.

### **DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

M.L. Mackie, as J. Bryant's designate, provided a brief update on the launch of You Tube in schools. In response to a question as to whether administration had been directed to inform parents that You Tube would be available in schools, M.L. Mackie will inquire and provide a response.

P. Rubenschuh provided an update on the current state of Safe, Caring, Inclusive School (SCIS) teams and initiatives underway across the Board. It is an implementation continuum and there are gaps between schools; some teams are very active, some are just getting started, and others are having difficulty securing commitment.

It is also important to note that initiatives may not be highlighted but are nevertheless ongoing, and sometimes it is hard to make the connection to the SCIS work. Teams may be called different names; for example, at Eastwood, it's called CIS. It fulfills the mandate, however, they have customized their initiatives to make them work for their school environment.

An administrative focus group met January 28, 2015 to address gaps and to work with the administration at schools that do not have a functioning team in place to help move them forward. There is a session scheduled March 11 to reach out to schools that have not been able to get started. Teams are encouraged to keep their action plans "skinny", in terms of focus, scale and impact. We need to create connections between schools with common issues/concerns. We do not have the resources to support all the strategies.

Survey responses help to determine strategies. We are data rich but analysis poor and struggle with what to do with the data and how to make it meaningful to schools in terms of next steps. We are looking outside the Board for help; to a provincial group – MISA (Managing Information for Student Achievement) as well as looking at other larger systems with research departments to learn from their experiences and to universities as well. We need evidence-based strategies – initiatives known to have an impact, which are few and far between. The challenge then is to provide training and development to keep them current and sustain them. The reality is we can't support every strategy, nor does it fit in every school.

### **PIC CHAIRS' REPORT**

C. Rose advised that all promotional materials, for both PIC and WRAPSC, are now available (brochures, business cards, posters and pop-up banners). Monitoring of the Twitter account is ongoing, work continues on the resource section of the PIC website and J. Stephens is developing a PIC PowerPoint template.

Building on previous discussions and the presentation made by H. Shalan earlier this evening, L. Tremble suggested that a subcommittee be formed to develop workshops and other initiatives that would help newcomers.

3. Moved by G. Anderson, seconded by J. Ortiz:

**That the Parent Involvement Committee strike a subcommittee to address the barriers to immigrant parental involvement in their child(ren)'s education.**

-Carried-

L. Tremble attended the Early Learning Symposium at Conestoga College on February 4, 2015, hosted by the University of Toronto Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development. The symposium highlighted the findings of the Schools at the Centre study exploring the impact Full-Day Kindergarten and Extended Day Programs had on educators, families and early years' administrators. To view the full report, [click here](#).

L. Tremble advised the date for the first CODE Workshop (Building Healthy Relationships) is scheduled for the end of February at Lackner Woods. Parents will work on a resilience-related case study and activity developed by Sara Westbrook.

The People for Education report entitled: Parent Involvement Committees: Supporting Links between Ontario's School Boards and Ontario's Parents contains interesting recommendations and suggestions for PICs. Time did not allow for discussion, however, members were encouraged to bring forward items of interest for future agendas. To access the report, [click here](#).

Work continues on the Policies and Procedures Tip Sheet for parents. L. Tremble distributed a copy of the work completed thus far and requested member feedback.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

On behalf of the Treasurer, C. Rose provided a summary of the activity in each of the accounts:

1. Director's Account: a balance of \$6,623.29 remains. Further deductions are pending related to registration and travel expenses for the Annual Safe Schools conference.
2. PIC Central Account: a balance of \$7,641.98 remains. Further deductions pending for Welcome Centre translations.
3. With respect to the PIC Event in April, approximately 40% of the PRO Grant budget (\$13,500) will be used for guest speakers. There have been no charges against this account as yet.

### **TRUSTEE'S REPORT**

Trustee K. Smith, through L. Tremble and C. Rose, received input regarding Policies 6008 and 6009, which she then shared with the trustees. The Trustees are updating the Strategic Plan that identifies longer-term priorities, outcomes and strategic directions for the whole Board. K. Smith will request committee member input at the next meeting on March 3, 2015.

K. Smith encouraged members to review the [2014 Director's Annual Report](#). The report contains highlights of what students and staff have achieved.

At the Committee of the Whole Meeting held on February 9, 2015, the motion to look into the cost of webcasting Board meetings was defeated. Research showed that the cost was prohibitive in relation to the small number of people who actually tuned in to watch.

K. AuCoin raised the point that "governance" of the Parent Involvement Committee would be a good item for a future agenda. In light of work that was done over the summer to redefine the terms of reference, it would be good practice to review and reflect on committee governance at this point. Establishing standing committees and ad hoc committees could be discussed at the same time. It was also suggested that a best practice be established for committee members to have the opportunity provide input on matters that are represented as being the position of PIC

Members were encouraged to consult the [website](#) for a list of Board Policies that are scheduled for review. Further discussion is required to determine how PIC will handle policy revisions going forward.

## **WRAPSC UPDATE**

The topic of discussion at the February 3, 2015 WRAPSC meeting was Math. Guest speakers included: Donna Kotsopoulos from Wilfrid Laurier University with the “Top Ten Ways to Help Your Child to Succeed” in math; and Ed Enns from Learning Services who provided an overview of how math has changed and how it is being taught today. Feedback from this event, and the January 13, 2015 meeting, where the topic “challenges of Communication between teachers, parents and schools” was discussed, has been overwhelmingly positive.

## **SAFE, CARING AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS (SCIS) UPDATE**

J. Magazine continues to work on an electronic forum - a communication tool for parents. It is currently in the hands of M. Deacon and J. Bryant. The March 11, 2015 event referred to by P. Rubenschuh will be a panel discussion. Output from the discussions will help guide next steps. The event is being held in the St. Clements Room, from 7:00-9:00 p.m. All are welcome.

With regard to the School of the Day feature on the website, S. Lawrence contacted each of the schools who were highlighted to inquire if the SCIS team was involved or if there as a particular problem that led to the event. She was unable to receive answers to her questions. M.L. Mackie advised that the feature is new and meant to showcase good news events and activities that are going on in our schools. M.L. Mackie will share the feedback from members with M. Deacon.

## **FUTURE CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION/REPORTS FROM CONFERENCE ATTENDEES**

*Safe Schools Conference – February 24, 2015*

J. Magazine and K. Graham will attend this conference on behalf of PIC.

*PIC Symposium – April 24-25, 2015*

L. Tremble and C. Rose will attend this Ministry event. Expenses will be covered by the Ministry.

## **NEW/ONGOING INITIATIVES**

*PIC Family Event – April 18, 2015*

C. Rose advised that all sessions and speakers are confirmed and registration is open as of Friday, February 6th. Instructions on how to distribute event flyers to schools will be provided to A. Sumner.

A. Hynes is exploring alternative avenues to promote the event. Communitech has a community website where the flyer can be posted free-of-charge, as does The Record. WRAPSC is promoting the event through Facebook. Members were asked to email A. Hynes with any other suggestions.

Members asked if the link to the PIC event could be kept on the front page of the website for a period of time, similar to the location of the BIPSA. This question will be referred to M. Deacon.

Additional help is still required to coordinate volunteers and refreshments and to assist on the day of the event. C. Rose asked anyone interested to see her at the end of the meeting or to email her. G. Anderson raised the question of funding for transportation. This question was deferred, however, until the March 3, 2015 meeting.

## **PIC Town Hall Subcommittee Report**

J. Ortiz advised the sessions will be called *PIC Town Hall with Director John Bryant*. Three sessions will be offered three evenings in November, each being held in a Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo high school. A tentative agenda is as follows:

6:30-7:00 p.m.      Networking/Refreshments

7:00-8:00 p.m.      PIC and WRAPSC presentations with time for Q&A

8:00-9:00 p.m.      Breakout sessions (between 5 and 8)

### Distribution of PIC Promotional Materials

L. Tremble advised that two brochures and one poster will be sent to each school, along with a letter of introduction requesting that one brochure be shared with school council and one with staff. An electronic version will be available on the PIC website and posted on each school website. Remaining brochures will be handed out in person at the April event, or when speaking with someone who expresses an interest.

### FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. C. Harold, Waterloo Region Public Health: Parent-Child Survey re Human Development and Sexual Health – on hold until the pilot is completed and results are analyzed
2. B. Adams, Principal, re Ken Leithwood “Hand in Hand” Parent Engagement Project (March 3 or May 26)
3. M. Deacon, Executive Officer, Communications and Engagement (March 3)
4. N. Voll – Community Centre worker, Parent Engagement & Role of the Community (March 3)
5. F. Musse, Settlement Worker – Understanding the Needs of Newcomers (May 26)
6. Other PIC Organizations and How They Operate (May 26) - which ties in with the People for Education report and L. Tremble and C. Rose will have attended the PIC symposium in April
7. Laura Morelli from Public Health re: alcohol abuse. Recommendation came from P. Rubenschuh. L. Tremble and C. Rose to inquire about presentation content and provide information to members for consideration
8. Review of policies and procedures

### DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, March 3, 2015

6:30 p.m.

Cambridge Room, Education Centre

### ADJOURNMENT

4. Moved by J. Ortiz and seconded by J. Magazine:

**That the Parent Involvement Committee Meeting be adjourned.**

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.