

May 24, 2016
PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board **Parent Involvement Committee** was held on Tuesday, May 24, 2016, 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

Board Staff: J. Bryant, K. Graham, K. O'Reilly

Committee Members: G. Anderson, K. Au Coin, K. Gettliffe, J. Jackson, J. Magazine, J. Ortiz, C. Rose (Co-Chair), H. Shalan, L. Tremble (Co-Chair)

Regrets: A. Hynes, K. Singh Rana

Other Staff in Attendance: E. Burns, S. Carter, M. Deacon

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Co-Chair C. Rose called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Moved by J. Jackson, seconded by H. Shalan:

That the agenda of the May 24, 2016, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved.

-Carried-

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2. Moved by J. Magazine, seconded by J. Ortiz:

That the minutes of the March 8, 2016, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved.

-Carried-

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

J. Bryant welcomed M. Deacon, Superintendent, Communication & Engagement and Suzanne Carter, Programmer Analyst, IT Services. A copy of M. Deacon's presentation, entitled Engagement – Our Work Continues, is attached to these minutes.

The presentation was built following consultation with many sectors to define engagement in our system. We have reframed our culture: trust + service + relationships = improved student achievement and well-being. We recognize the interdependence between wellness and student success – you can't have one without the other.

A clarification of what Parent Engagement is, in the WRDSB, was provided: parents providing a positive learning environment at home, working with children to support what they learn in school, encouraging a love of learning, parents having productive conversations/communication between the staff and home, and parents feeling welcome, respected and valued by the school community as partners in learning. Our guiding principle: parent/family engagement is essential to the success and continuous improvement of our students.

The work by Ken Leithwood supports this showing that home and school co-produce learning and that this collaboration improves student learning; over 50% of student achievement and success can be influenced outside of the school day. How can we influence the learning culture at home? Research confirms that parent engagement improves when parents/families feel they have the skills to make meaningful contributions to the school's efforts and when they believe both the school staff and their own children value their participation in the school. Parent engagement that is focused on student learning has the greatest impact on student achievement. This signals a change in thinking from "how to get more parents into the school to how can we support them at home?" It also poses a number of questions for reflection and the need for more probing conversations to help us to get there and with more frequency and the need for strategies to help facilitate parent engagement focused on student learning.

Trustee Smith provided a brief update regarding the work underway on the new Strategic Plan. It is scheduled for presentation to the trustees at a Committee of the Whole Meeting on June 20, 2016, and if approved, will be ratified at the June 27, 2016, Board Meeting. The plan has three strategic priorities and there are goals for each one. It will be launched at the System Leaders' Meeting on August 31, 2016. Work will continue over the summer and consultation with our external stakeholders will take place in the fall.

DOCTORAL THESIS PRESENTATION

PIC Member H. Shalan presented her doctoral thesis: "Uncovering the Processes and Consequences of Arab Immigrant Parental Involvement in Their Children's Education: Bridging Cultural Differences". The presentation highlighted the many barriers immigrants face in addition to the obvious language and cultural differences. Parents want to feel connected to their child's education and want to be able to support them to reach their full potential. Immigrant parents are often frustrated by a perceived lack of a defined curriculum or resources available to help support student learning. Barriers to parental involvement: language initially, distraction/busy, lack of time, displacement, and they don't know the system or how it works. Immigrant parents are encouraged to help bridge the cultural differences by seeking ways to enhance school culture sensitivity and opportunities for parent voice.

CONSENT AGENDA

Reports include: Trustee, WRAPSC, Policy Review (P1007, P3004, P4001, P4002, P4007, G200, P6004, P6007, P6002, P4020), Conference Reports: Canadian Safe Schools Network Conference and Summit on Children & Youth Mental Health, TEDxKitchenerED.

3. Moved by J. Magazine, seconded by J. Ortiz:

That the Consent Agenda of the May 24, 2016, Parent Involvement Committee meeting, be approved.

-Carried-

TREASURER REPORT

G. Anderson provided the remaining balances in the Director's and in the PIC Central accounts. There are still some outstanding expenses related to the PIC-WRAPSC Parent Event on April 16, 2016 that need to be processed before the final reconciliation and report back to the Ministry can be submitted.

CO-CHAIRS' REPORT

L. Tremble and C. Rose had the opportunity to attend the May 13th Strategic Planning session as part of the collaborative consultation process for developing the plan.

Trustee K. Smith, J. Jackson and L. Tremble attended the TEDxKitchenerED session on May 14th. Their reports are part of the Consent Agenda and the materials obtained are being shared through PIC and WRAPSC.

4. Moved by G. Anderson, seconded by J. Magazine:

That an amount of no more than \$90 be allocated to reimburse J. Jackson and L. Tremble for the \$45 registration cost incurred to attend the Ted Talk be approved.

-Carried-

The 2017 Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant for the one-day parent event will be submitted by L. Tremble on May 25, 2016. The amount of the grant is \$25K and the conference is scheduled for April 8, 2017.

This year's PIC Symposium for Co-chairs, sponsored by the Ministry, conflicted with the parent event so L. Tremble and C. Rose were unable to attend. The materials and resources provided have been requested and will be shared once received.

J. Magazine submitted a proposal (attached) for the Town Hall meetings with a working title of "Exploring Effective Engagement Practices" or "Strengthening Engagement". After discussion, it was agreed to wait until the new Strategic Plan is in place and regroup in the fall.

L. Tremble and C. Rose will be working on supplementing the PIC/WRAPSC brochures with more information regarding subcommittees, membership opportunities, etc. This information will be sent out to each school, via inter-office mail, the first week of September.

5. Moved by J. Jackson, seconded by K. Gettliffe:

That an amount of up to \$300 be allocated for the printing of the additional resource (cover letter) to be sent to each school prior to the first School Council Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

The PIC Year-End Wrap-up meeting is scheduled for June 9th, at 6:30 p.m., at Proof Restaurant in the Delta Hotel, Waterloo.

K. Singh Rana has moved back to India with his family. He has resigned his one year-term which was ending at the end of September. This vacancy will be filled as part of the fall membership campaign rather than running two application processes.

The dates for the 2016-17 WRAPSC meetings are: October 4, 2016, November 1, 2016, January 10, 2017, February 7, 2017, April 4, 2017 and May 2, 2017.

PIC SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Immigrant Engagement (IES) - the next subcommittee meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2016. At the last PIC meeting, H. Shalan shared the group dual language books (Arabic and English), developed for Arabic speaking families. There are 5 different books. The books provide four benefits:

- Children can practice reading in both English and Arabic
- Parents can develop their English reading by seeing the English and Arabic print
- Engagement of parents in their children's learning by reading these books at home together

- Mental health support for parents and children as each book relates to wellness for themselves and for their children.

Books have been printed for schools with highest need. The cost for these books was \$1401.31 – 75 copies of 4 different books, 85 copies of another. If the same amount of books were printed again, then all schools would have a copy. With an investment of up to \$2800, PIC could ensure that all schools in our board have access to these books.

6. Moved by J. Magazine, seconded by K. Gettliffe:

That an amount of \$2800 be allocated to fund the printing of dual language books (Arabic and English) be approved.

-Carried-

S. Newmaster will look into the possibility of translating these books into other languages in 2016-17.

Safe, Caring Inclusive Schools (SCIS)

J. Magazine provided an update on the SCIS Orientation package she is working on, which will consist of the following 3 documents:

- Very brief overview of the role of SCIS teams
- An orientation package to be used by all team members to provide support for team activities
- Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (BPIP) development guide (has been deferred and will be explored further later in the school year)

The plan is to release the information to teams in the fall. Documents would be available on line with each school receiving one copy of the orientation package and three or four copies of the overview document.

The subcommittee also proposed the creation of an information pamphlet for parents regarding SCIS initiatives, hopefully for release in the fall. The estimated cost to cover 2000 copies of the pamphlet, including design/graphics, translation to 7 languages and printing – would be approximately \$2700.

5. Moved by J. Ortiz, seconded by K. Gettliffe:

That an amount of up to \$7000 be allocated to fund the materials related to the SCIS Orientation Packages and the SCIS pamphlets for parent initiatives be approved.

-Carried-

PIC-WRAPSC Parent Event - J. Jackson shared her report, which can also be found on the PIC website. All presentations were scribed and will be shared on the PIC website, along with a copy of the handouts provided. Jordan has been invited to provide an update of the event at the Board Meeting on June 27, 2016.

Governance Subcommittee

K. Au Coin advised that the group has met twice since the last PIC meeting on March 8, 2016. They decided they would not be executing changes to the Bylaws but focusing on the Terms of Reference instead. After some discussion, members did not feel they could vote to adopt the revised Terms of Reference (dated May 17, 2016 and attached to this meeting's agenda) and agreed to defer the vote following additional discussion at the September meeting.

The Governance Subcommittee also requested the support of PIC members in undertaking a process of the review of the broader WRAPSC/PIC structure which would include inviting 3-4 WRAPSC steering committee members to join the PIC Governance Subcommittee for this purpose. Members agreed they were open to this suggestion.

Membership Subcommittee

L. Tremble advised that two more members (one staff member and one parent) are required to help with the review process in the fall. Since both J. Magazine and C. Rose will be at the end of their terms and will need to re-apply, they will not be involved in the application process going forward. Help is needed to review applications, contact references and conduct the interviews. Those interested in helping were asked to contact L. Tremble. There will be an information session held for applicants before the September meeting and anyone wishing to can remain and observe the meeting. Please contact L. Tremble as soon as possible if your term is ending and you are not planning on re-applying/returning.

The membership application went live today and was pushed out through the main news feed and to school sites, WRAPSC Facebook, gmail, and Twitter.

The Elementary Principal rep vacancy has been filled by Jennifer Crits, Prueter PS. Jennifer will start her term at the September 27, 2016 meeting.

NEW/ONGOING INITIATIVES

PIC Budget Allocation of Funds

Discussion ensued about the use of remaining PIC funding and how best it could be directed to help finance other initiatives.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. S. Small, OK2BME (Sept)
2. ESL or ELL Worker – Pathways to Education (Fall 2016)

J. Bryant to contact Matthew Gerard to request a follow-up presentation in September regarding the results of the budget consultation process conducted in the spring and to show where input was used.

Members were encouraged to forward any ideas for future speakers or topics to the Co-chairs.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING & 2016-17 MEETING SCHEDULE:

All meetings start at 6:30 and will be held in the Cambridge Room, Education Centre.

Tuesday, September 27, 2016	Tuesday, January 31, 2017
Tuesday, November 8, 2016	Tuesday, March 7, 2017
Tuesday, December 6, 2016	Tuesday, May 23, 2017

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parent Involvement Committee Meeting be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.