

**March 31, 2015**  
**PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board **Parent Involvement Committee** was held on Tuesday, March 31, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board 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. AuCoin, J. Ortiz, H. Shalan, J. Stevens, A. Sumner, L. Tremble (Co-Chair)

Community Member: A. Hynes

Other Staff in Attendance: E. Burns

Regrets: J. Magazine, R. Noonan, C. Rose (Co-Chair)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Committee Co-Chair L. Tremble called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. L. Tremble advised members that S. Lawrence had resigned.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

1. Moved by A. Sumner, seconded by A. Hynes:

**That the agenda of the March 31, 2015, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved.**

-Carried-

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

2. Moved by J. Ortiz, seconded by A. Hynes:

**That the minutes of the February 12, 2015, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved as amended.**

-Carried-

**WRDSB MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY and safeTALK**

B. Ward provided an overview of the Board's Mental Health Strategy, with the focus on promoting well-being and socio-emotional learning. A copy of her presentation is attached.

B. Ward posed a question to PIC members about the possibility of training parents to be safeTALK trainers in order to train other parents. The "trainer training" involves two 8-hour days in order to deliver the 3-hour course. B. Ward has criteria to share and would appreciate PIC members' help on how to select potential trainers, approach them and support them. This would be a collaborative effort with Education Council on behalf of Family of Schools' Superintendents and Administrators.

Members were in favour of the suggestion and will await further information from B. Ward and, in the meantime, look into the possibility of applying for a grant to cover the cost of training.

## DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

B. Adams was unable to attend due to illness. Her presentation regarding Ken Leithwood's work: "Hand in Hand" Parent Engagement Project will be rescheduled in the fall.

J. Bryant spoke briefly on the subject advising that the Board continues with the work related to Ken Leithwood's research. Productive working relationships involve collaboration and engagement strategies – we are the only board that has connected the two; recognizing the importance of working with families in support of student learning and achievement. There are pilot schools working with the Ken Leithwood feedback and through his research we are seeing a shift in focus: how can we support parents at home? In terms of student achievement and engagement, responsibility is split between school and home. By working together, our students will benefit.

Funding has been provided through the [Council of Ontario Directors of Education](#) (CODE) to support this initiative. The best way to get to know a child better is to work with the parent. Our EQAO results have plateaued. With increased parent engagement and by helping parents support their child at home, we are confident we will see an improvement in achievement.

## PIC CHAIRS' REPORT

L. Tremble advised that the PIC/WRAPSC event materials should be out in schools in time for the PIC Event.

L. Tremble was contacted by Laura Morelli from Public Health re alcohol and substance abuse and misuse. This has been added to the WRAPSC list of future agenda ideas and resources will be shared on the PIC website.

Discussion ensued about the establishment of a Membership Subcommittee. Currently, there is one vacancy to fill. The Subcommittee would be responsible for updating the application form and to looking at ways of promoting the opportunity. The PIC Bylaws suggest replacing departing members as soon as possible. Consensus was reached to create a Subcommittee with the intention they could provide a report at the next meeting, May 26, 2015. Starting the membership drive process earlier will give people more time to consider the opportunity and to hopefully generate more interest. Committee volunteers: K. AuCoin, J. Stephens, G. Anderson, J. Ortiz and K. Smith as a non-voting member.

3. Moved by J. Ortiz, seconded by A. Hynes:

**That a standing Membership Subcommittee be struck to review and uphold the integrity of the membership of the Parent Involvement Committee, effective March 31, 2015.**

-Carried-

This is L. Tremble's and G. Anderson's last year; all other parents in the middle of a 2-year term. Please let L. Tremble know if there are any issues with serving the remainder of your term. This request applies to Community Rep and Board Staff members as well.

Multiple resources have been received: from People For Education ([www.peopleforeducation.ca](http://www.peopleforeducation.ca)) resources including tip sheet on Solving Problems in School, available in 15 languages, from the Ministry re the new Foundations for a Healthy School resource ([www.Ontario.ca/healthyschools](http://www.Ontario.ca/healthyschools)) , Canadian Foundation for Economic Education ([www.talkwithourkidsaboutmoney.com](http://www.talkwithourkidsaboutmoney.com)) and COPA is looking for young people and adults who support them to interview for a toolkit on youth engagement, contact is [tuval.copa@gmail.com](mailto:tuval.copa@gmail.com).

There was no WRAPSC report this evening as their next meeting is scheduled for April 7, 2015.

The Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant submission deadline is May 19, 2015. A group of volunteers is needed to complete the application. As the timeline is tight, the group agreed that another one-day event would be the basis of the request to carry on with the momentum. A. Sumner has been able to consolidate notes with regard to the planning required to host the PIC Event. This will be an invaluable resource for planning future events. Another suggestion would be to partner with the Waterloo Catholic District School Board to create a larger, more diverse event.

H. Shalan and A. Sumner volunteered to help C. Rose with the application. Once written, the proposal will be circulated to the group prior to submission.

H. Shalan volunteered to analyze the feedback from the April 18, 2015 PIC Event and present findings at the next meeting in May.

4. Moved by A. Hynes, seconded by A. Sumner:

**That a standing Subcommittee for Grant Writing be struck, effective March 31, 2015.**

-Carried-

L. Tremble and C. Rose will seek out the WCDSB PIC Chairs at the PIC Co-Chair event on April 24-15, 2015, to discuss the opportunity of hosting a joint Parent Event next year.

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

A. Sumner provided a summary of the activity in each of the accounts:

1. Director's Account: a balance of \$5,808.18 remains.
2. PIC Central Account: a balance of \$6,858.51 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 advised that the policy regarding extreme temperatures has been deferred and will be reviewed in the next month or so. Comments from both sides are being considered, however, interesting to note there were more positive than negative comments received. The zoning for Chicopee Hills has been approved by City Council. K. Smith has received the consultants' report regarding secondary school boundaries and will share the report with committee members. Trustees will meet in the fall to work on the strategic plan.

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

The update provided by J. Magazine was attached to the meeting agenda. J. Magazine continues to update the SCIS section on the PIC website.

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

*Safe Schools Conference – February 24, 2015*

J. Magazine and K. Graham attended this conference on behalf of PIC and their notes were attached to the meeting agenda.

*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**

So far, 236 people have registered; hoping for 400 attendees as last year's attendance was just shy of 350. The sessions on Raising Money Smart Kids and Social Intelligence are very popular. Both have been moved to larger rooms to accommodate more people and a wait-list has been established. Members asked if the link to the PIC Event could be kept on the front page of the website for the duration leading up to the event, similar to the location of the BIPSA. This request will be referred to M. Deacon.

### **PIC Town Hall Subcommittee Report**

J. Ortiz advised the dates and the locations of the three Town Hall sessions have been finalized. The Subcommittee requested an allocation of funds in order to cover expenses associated with these meetings. The funds will be sourced from the PIC Director's Account.

5. Moved by G. Anderson, seconded by A. Sumner:

**That a sum, no greater than \$2000, be allocated to the PIC Town Hall Subcommittee, to cover expenses related to the three 2015 PIC Town Hall Meetings with Director Bryant.**

-Carried-

### **Newcomer/Immigrant Assistance Subcommittee Update**

H. Shalan advised that the members voted to change the name of the subcommittee to "Engaging Newcomer Parents". This group has met twice and notes from their meetings are attached. The plan is for initiatives to start in September. Budget needs will be discussed at the next PIC meeting on May 26, 2015.

### **PIC Review of Board Policies and Procedures**

Until such time as a formal process can be determined, member feedback on any Board policies should be funnelled to L. Tremble who will give it to K. Smith for discussion at the Board table. This is an interim solution as the process for engaging input is relatively new and currently being developed. Depending on the policy, those requiring group discussion, for example, School Councils, can be added as future agenda items, and others can be reviewed as part of an email discussion.

## **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

1. M. Deacon, Executive Officer, Communications and Engagement (May 26)
2. N. Voll, Parent Engagement & Role of the Community (May 26)
3. Other PIC Organizations and How They Operate (May 26)
4. People for Education PIC Report Review (May 26)
5. F. Musse, Settlement Worker – Understanding the Needs of Newcomers (Sept.)
6. Betti Adams, Principal, re Ken Leithwood's Research Re Parent Engagement Project (Sept.)
7. J. Woolley, System Administrator re Alternative Programs/Expulsion Process (Oct.)

## **MEETING DATES FOR 2015-16**

The list of meeting dates for 2015-16 is attached.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

Tuesday, May 26, 2015 @ 6:30 p.m., Cambridge Room, Education Centre

**ADJOURNMENT**

6. Moved by J. Ortiz and seconded by A.Sumner:

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

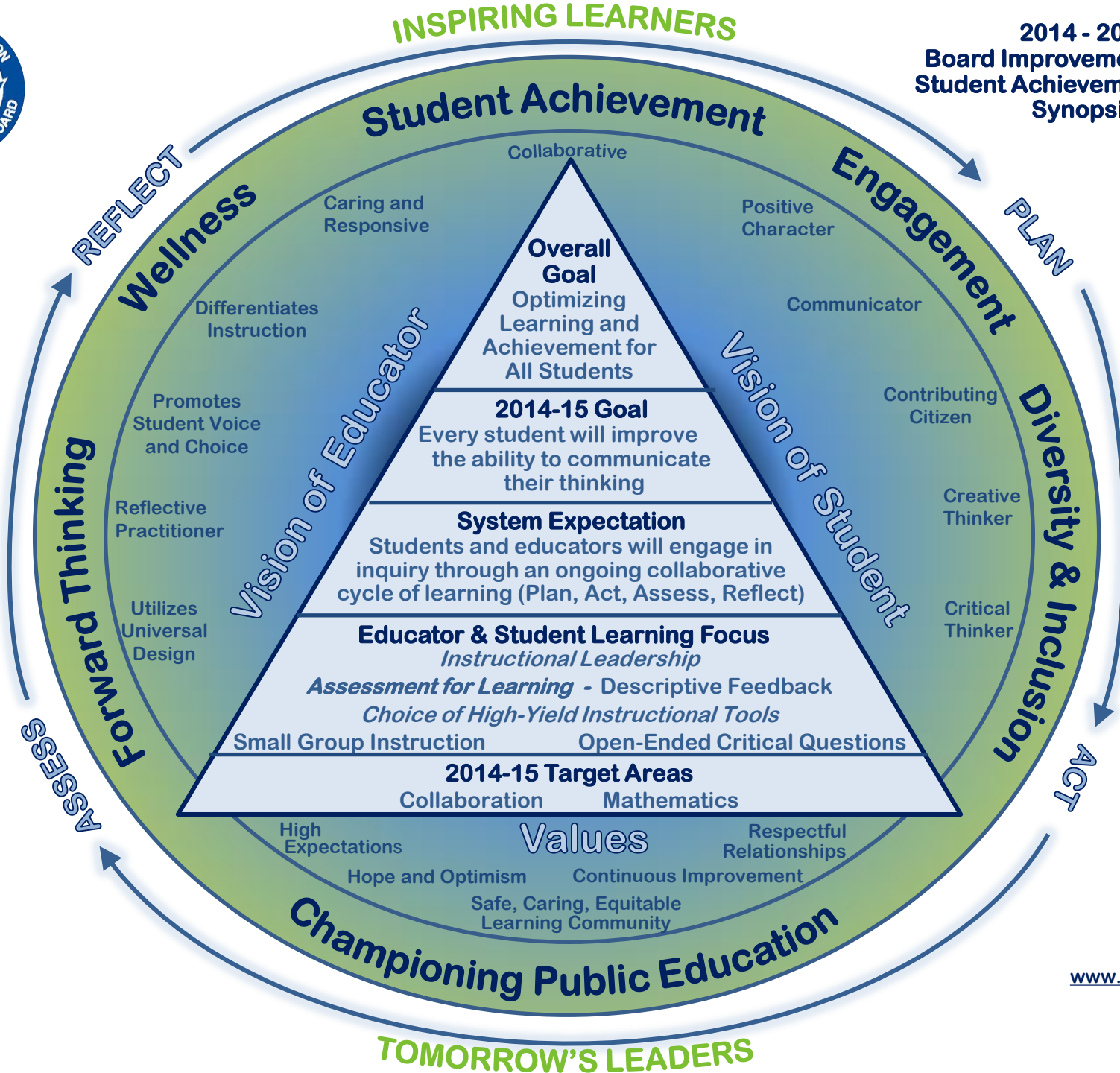
-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

# Mental Health Strategy: An Overview and Update



April 2015

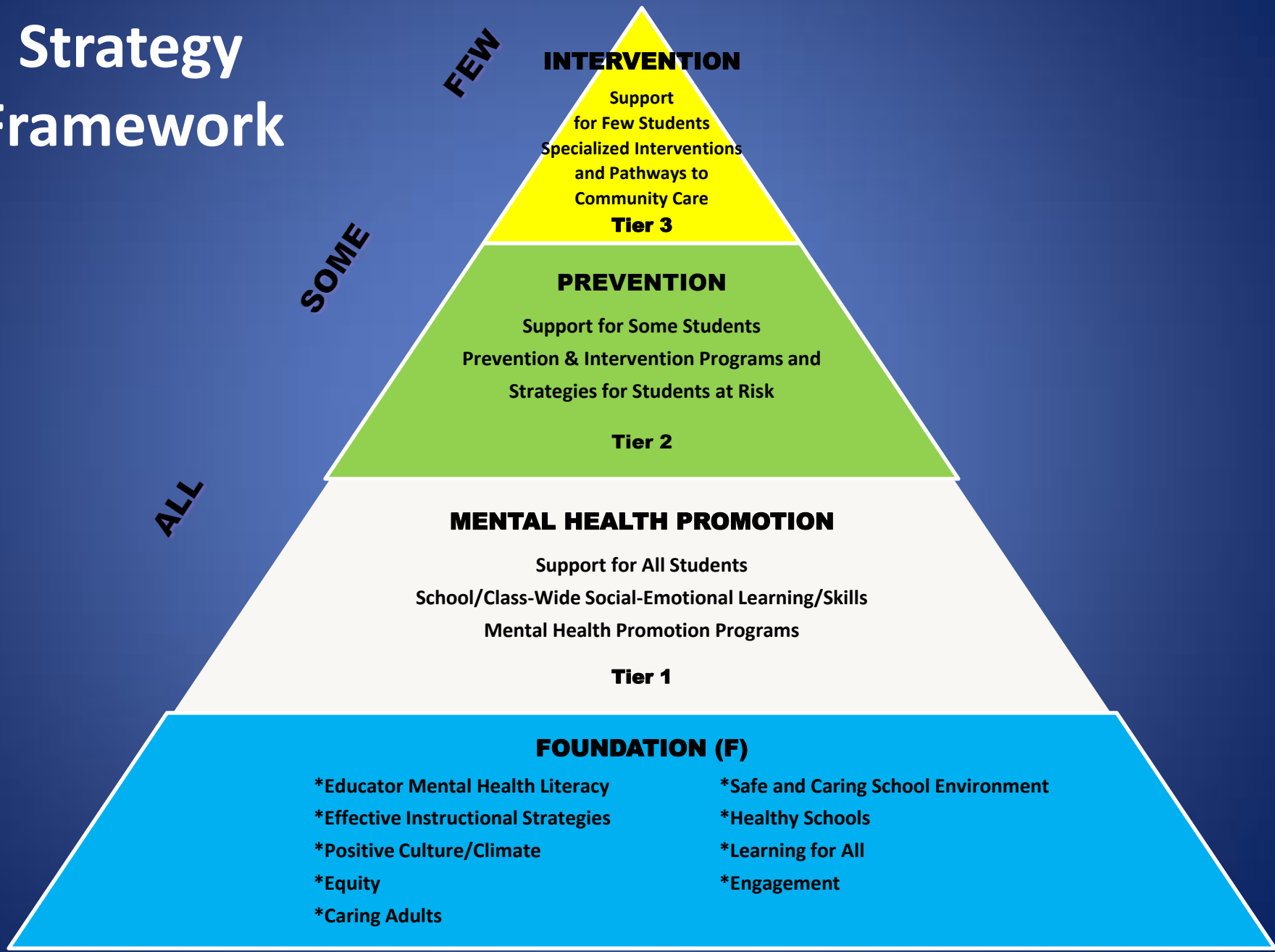


# OVERVIEW OF THE MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTIONS STRATEGY - FIRST 3 YEARS

THEMES	<p><b>Provide fast access to high quality service</b></p> <p>Kids and families will know where to go to get what they need and services will be available to respond in a timely way.</p>	<p><b>Identify and intervene in kids' mental health needs early</b></p> <p>Professionals in community-based child and youth mental health agencies and teachers will learn how to identify and respond to the mental health needs of kids.</p>	<p><b>Close critical service gaps for vulnerable kids, kids in key transitions, and those in remote communities</b></p> <p>Kids will receive the type of specialized service they need and it will be culturally appropriate</p>			
INDICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced child and youth suicides/suicide attempts</li> <li>• Educational progress (EQAO)</li> <li>• Fewer school suspensions and/or expulsions</li> <li>• Higher graduation rates</li> <li>• More professionals trained to identify kids' mental health needs</li> <li>• Higher parent satisfaction in services received</li> <li>• Decrease in severity of mental health issues through treatment</li> <li>• Decrease in inpatient admission rates for child and youth mental health</li> <li>• Fewer hospital (ER) admissions and readmissions for child and youth mental health</li> <li>• Reduced Wait Times</li> </ul>					
INITIATIVES	<p>Improve public access to service information</p>	<p>Pilot Family Support Navigator model Y1 pilot</p>	<p>Implement Working Together for Kids' Mental Health</p>	<p>Implement standardized tools for outcomes and needs assessment</p>	<p>Enhance and expand Telepsychiatry model and services</p>	<p>Provide support at key transition points</p>
<p>Funding to increase supply of child and youth mental health professionals</p>	<p>Increase Youth Mental Health Court Workers</p>	<p>Amend education curriculum to cover mental health promotion and address stigma</p>	<p>Develop K-12 resource guide for educators</p>	<p>Hire new Aboriginal workers Implement Aboriginal Mental Health Worker Training Program</p>	<p>Improve service coordination for high needs kids, youth and families</p>	
<p>Reduce wait times for service, revise service contracting, standards, and reporting</p>	<p>Outcomes, indicators and development of scorecard</p>	<p>Implement school mental health ASSIST program &amp; mental health literacy provincially</p>	<p>Provide designated mental health workers in schools</p>	<p>Expand inpatient/outpatient services for child and youth eating disorders</p>	<p>Hire Nurse Practitioners for eating disorders program</p>	
		<p>Implement Mental Health Leaders in selected School Boards</p>	<p>Provide nurses in schools to support mental health services</p>	<p>Create 18 service collaboratives</p>	<p>Strategy Evaluation</p>	



# Mental Health Strategy Framework



# Tiered Support in Systems of Care



# WRDSB Mental Health Strategy

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## Tier 3 Intervention

- Increase collaboration with community services to create better pathways
- Review existing board and community based interventions in schools to ensure student mental health needs are met

## Tier 2 Prevention

- Implement a prevention strategy for suicide ideation and self injury

## Tier 1 Promotion

- Review and select classroom-wide social emotional learning strategies to build student resilience
- Create Professional Development for staff on mental wellness and signs of mental health 'problems'

# Implementation

## **Wellness and Mental Health Steering Committee**

Oversees a system-wide, coordinated and comprehensive effort to support student and staff wellness and support a tiered and timely response to issues of mental health

## **Wellness and Mental Health Working Committees**

Working Committees developed in relation to the Mental Health Strategy Priorities

Responsible for creating the implementation plan and mobilizing action (within proper authority and procedure)

## **Wellness and Mental Health Advisory Committee**

Provides consultation to Working and Steering Committees and provides consultation and feedback on the mental health strategy implementation action plan

# Implement a prevention strategy for suicide ideation and self-injury

- Administrative Procedure has been developed and implemented
- Collaborative relationships with community partners
- SafeTALK and ASIST training to key WRDSB staff



# Review and select classroom wide social emotional learning (SEL) programs to build student resilience

- Implementing bullying prevention and healthy relationship building programs in conjunction with Safe, Caring and Inclusive Schools
- Implementation of Transition to Independence System (TIP)
- Working committee establishing other SEL strategies



## Create professional development for Board staff/teachers on mental wellness and signs of mental health problems

- Establishing collaborative relationships with unions and mental health “experts” in our system for the delivery and implementation related to this strategy
- Delivered numerous presentations to WRDSB staff on student wellness, mental health, and building resilience



Review existing Board and community based interventions/services in schools to ensure student mental health needs are met

- Review of Community services in schools
- MOU's created and signed.
- Establishing relationships with key community services and community centres for further system and community collaboration





Increase collaboration with community services in order to create better pathways, including information about access criteria and how to make referrals

- A resource guide is being developed to assist school staff with accessing information on community resources to create better pathways for students and families to these resources.



# Questions? Comments?



Barbara Ward, WRDSB  
Mental Health Lead  
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## PIC SUBCOMMITTEE – ENGAGING NEWCOMER PARENTS

Attending: Hend, Wanda, Joe, Jill, Kim, Kathi,

Consider what the role of PIC is - does this committee fit within the PIC Mandate and purpose

- goals for the subcommittee
- what problem are we trying to solve?
- what do we want to accomplish
- workshops for new Canadians
- define what the issue really is?
- more beneficial to find out percentage of immigrants within each school this might be a good place to start
- bigger problem is being new to the system
- we have information about what schools have more immigrants and refugees
- do you deal with the basic questions or do you deal with issues at a higher level
- focus on the problem
- how do we attract the immigrants and refugees to the school system
- what are the needs
- if we start with basics - we can build on them
- learn to build trust, understanding
- settlement worker to bring to this committee? someone from Multicultural Centre, Langs Farm
- there is a document on line for education from the settlement workers organization
- we should not acknowledge the difference between refugees and immigrants
- concentrate our efforts in connecting people with the education system
- how do you make a difference in your students life - how do you work with them at home
- how can a message about getting more involved with your students when there is no trust or no idea
- helping schools with a model to communicate with parents
- if the role of PIC is to engage parents - how do we engage all parents
- start with asking questions of parents - what do you need to know? what do you need to help your students
- Make a Difference was a hands on experience
- look a making the sessions very hands on - don't provide information, information
- it may be important to use a simplified message
- don't assume you know what their needs are
- do you start by surveying - then move onto creating a way to provide service to these parents
- if they can access it directly at the schools
- watch a video and then get questions after that
- Together for a Better Start is used for kids starting schools

## **What is our Goal – Each attendee listed their goal for this committee**

- 1) Immigrant parents attend school council
- 2) immigrant parents understand Canadian educational system
- 3) immigrant parents become mediators to learn about their children's education
- 4) provide resources and information to newcomers (for all grades) to ease their transition into the education system
- 5) develop a model to assist newcomers to learn what they can do at home to assist their child's learning
- 6) increase home - school connection that increases parent capacity and confidence with their child's learning
- 7) educate parents to navigate the Canadian School System

## **Consider Train the Trainer – one idea to consider**

- run the workshop for a family of schools
- do we do the workshop in English or in another language
- if we do not do it in another language - are we wasting our time
- because we are delivering critical information we should not do it in English
- should this be provided in community centres or in schools
- a survey to ask people what they need
- if you go through schools you are likely to get more involvement
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## **What Goals**

- model for how you navigate the school system
- how do you communicate and get your student involved
- run two workshops only - navigate and getting students involved
- some of the community centres are already running English classes in Kitchener

## **What Should We Consider – whatever we do**

- education is organic
- each year, people have new needs, new issues to learn about
- examples to explain what things mean
- use plain language
- acronyms are used way to much
- no context
- immigrants don't necessarily know the difference between education here and in their home country
- consider a prototype that could be used for years to come
- do we have workshops for any parents, not just specifically for newcomers
- school councils are not always the right place for parents
- how to we help parents to understand that all opinions are important

- find models that work and engage families
- immigrants don't necessarily attend school events – why?

### **How Do We Engage Parents**

- educate parents to navigate the system
- not just newcomer parents are not engaged - many parents are not connected in with the system
- transition for schools in the Early Years centre
- going to school 101 - should PIC be a topic that is included in this orientation??
- consider planning with Early Years

### **Ideas to Revisit**

Train the Trainer?

Family of Schools to attend - do a program per Family of Schools

Educate parents so that they understand the school system in Ontario

Use video tape of school council to allow parents to know that they can attend and be part of the council

What are we doing to prepare School Council Chairs to Chair meetings

**Next Meeting:** 1 -3 p.m. on the 19th of March for the next meeting in the Conestoga Room.

## PIC SUBCOMMITTEE- ENGAGING NEWCOMER PARENTS MINUTES

March 19<sup>th</sup>, Conestoga room, Educational Centre, Waterloo Region District School Board

Attending: Deepa, Natasha, Jill, Joe, and Hend

Regret: Kathi, Kim, and Wanda

### **To determine our focus, some questions have been asked as follows.**

- Deepa, is what we are doing, going to overlap with any of the board activities regarding parental engagement?
  - o Most of the board activities focus on parents in general, not very specific to immigrant or newcomer parents.
  - o The Leadership program a few years ago was independent of PIC.
  - o In addition, the Equity and Inclusive office tries to engage parents who are not included in schools.
- Natasha, based on your position, how you could help in this initiative?
  - o Connection could be made between schools and a neighborhood association to deliver a certain program that immigrant parents need.

### **Ideas to promote immigrant parental involvement in their children's education**

- Recruit some immigrants, who may not have difficulties to communicate in English, from different cultures and train them at the board about the Ontario educational system. Then invite them to attend a session of PIC, for example as a practical practice. Then those immigrants will be ambassadors for other immigrants to learn more about their children's school system.
  - o Pros: having people from different culture(s) is a good idea
  - o Immigrants trust people who know, therefore, immigrants approaching immigrants from the same/similar cultures would be helpful to build trust
  - o Cons: the board is not a good place for such meetings
  - o Immigrants need to be connected with their children's school and school personnel

- Pilot project: choosing one school, a certain community, provides different workshops. If there is a success, replicate the project in different places. The following are some considerations:
  - o Build trust is the key
  - o Build relationship
  - o Bring parents with teachers and other school personnel
  - o Having an immigrant parent from another school as a translator may be a good idea
  - o Understanding how immigrants want to engage in their children's education (building a recognition of parental engagement)
  - o Understanding parents' need of engagement and how does this affect their children success.

#### **How to start this pilot project?**

- Determining which school has more immigrants, Deepa will get back to us regarding this issue
- Determining which community serves this school

#### **What to consider in the workshops?**

- Learning about immigrants first, they will learn about us (educational system, Canadian way, etc.)
- Immigrants feel there is no ability to bring their past; allow them to bring their experience.
- If we continue to practice the assumption of "immigrants should do what we do", they will not come.
- Develop a model and go to school with some resources
- Parents should receive personal invitation(s) from their children's teachers.
- Immigrant children could feel they have two identities; one at school and the other one at home. We should provide parents and teachers with information to reduce this gap.

**Next step:**

- **Looking for schools that reflect both ethical and racial differences**
- **We need help from the Board staff to help us to determine such schools**
- **We need to know which schools are willing to participate. Deepa will know that by asking Sharon Newmaster.**
- **If the determined school exists in the area of Natasha's work, Natasha will help to connect us with some resources**
- **Looking for topics or area(s) that we need to cover in the workshops**
- **The previous leadership program is a good place to start finding these topics or categories**
- **YMCA provides some workshops to immigrants; Natasha will email us with these workshops.**
- **The starting of such initiative will be in September 2015.**

**Next meeting To be determined.**



**PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE (PIC)**  
**MEETING DATES FOR 2015-2016**

1. **Tuesday, September 29, 2015**  
6:30 p.m.  
Cambridge Room

2. **Tuesday, October 27, 2015**  
6:30 p.m.  
Cambridge Room

3. **Tuesday, December 8, 2015**  
6:30 p.m.  
Cambridge Room

4. **Tuesday, March 8, 2016**  
6:30 p.m.  
Cambridge Room

5. **Tuesday, May 24, 2016**  
6:30 p.m.  
Cambridge Room

**Please note, an additional meeting in late January may also be added.**