

December 5, 2017
PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board **Parent Involvement Committee** was held on Tuesday, December 5, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. in the Cambridge Room at the Education Centre, 51 Ardel Avenue, Kitchener, with the following members in attendance:

Trustee: K. Smith

Committee Members: G. Anderson, J. Coutts, S. Cranston, J. Crits, B. Davidson, Y. El Rayani, K. Gettliffe, B. Hutzal (Co-Chair), S. Robertson, L. Tremble, K. Tucker-Petrick,

Regrets: R. Barnett-Cowan, M. Jenkins, A. Keep

Absent: A. Christiansen, K. Wagner

Other Staff in Attendance: J. Bryant, S. Lomax, N. Manning, L. Read, K. Sonnenberg

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Moved by S. Cranston, seconded by S. Robertson:

That the agenda of the December 5, 2017, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved.

-Carried-

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2. Moved by L. Tremble, seconded by J. Coutts:

That the minutes of the November 8, 2017, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved as amended.

-Carried-

Guest Speaker - A Sider, SEAC chairperson, representative of Parents for Children's Mental Health and a family engagement specialist, provided a powerpoint presentation "Insight into family engagement".

When families are engaged, the outcome for everyone is better, including staff. Benefits of engagement include;

- decreased parenting stress
- enhanced psychological wellbeing of parents
- family management - skills and functioning
- break down barriers - reduces stigma re mental health
- Get better and more data when it comes to evaluation - impacts future changes in services

Defining family engagement - what is a family? Can be very different and can comprise many different people and emotions. Brings a parent lens to what is happening with students.

A.Sider shared examples of her own family life and how working with her children's school as partners benefited everyone. Provided a handout and explanation on Hart's Ladder.

Director J. Bryant expressed his thanks on a great presentation. He explained how parent engagement is crucial to the board's strategic plan (math, grad rates, student and staff well-being). Based on his personal experiences as a special education teacher and principal in the school system, he has learned that parents know their children best. The development of the whole child is important in providing a sense of self, spirit and equity; however systemic barriers get in the way of engagement. He cited the introduction of 650 Syrian refugees in last 6 months into our community and how it provided a great learning experience in the area of family engagement. The Parent Reaching Out Grant has helped to provide a forum for family engagement.

S. Lomax, Coordinating Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being, agreed with the importance of the relationship between the teacher and family and how that affects staff wellbeing as well. The challenge is to engage those families who aren't comfortable in connecting with the school. A better use of technology, i.e., tools like google classroom, has been useful in helping to overcome the challenge of communicating with this particular group.

L. Read, Coordinating Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being, declared that we've come along way on the journey on parent engagement in comparison to how we used to deal with these kinds of issues. It takes empathy, the ability to build relationships and there is vulnerability on both sides. The strategic planning process was a bit of a consultative process in the past but we are trying to, as a system, go up the ladder and start to engage students, staff and parents.

N. Manning, Communications Manager stated that PIC's new parent blog is a valuable forum. Much of what we do in communications is still in the early stages and the department continues to work through things. There is a need to think of parents and students first and this will aid the board in moving up the ladder.

B. Hutzal thanked A. Sider and staff for coming and participating in the presentation. He asked members to consolidate their notes and bring them to the January meeting for discussion.

TREASURER REPORT

G. Anderson reported no change in the financial reports from the last meeting. If there are any expenses incurred while attending the Making Connections Conference, please submit them to K. Sonnenberg as soon as possible.

TRUSTEE REPORT

K. Smith - There will be a sod turning ceremony for the new Janet Metcalfe PS on January 23, 2018. At next Monday's Committee of the Whole meeting, there will be a discussion around development area school assignments (secondary) and a boundary study regarding the Fischer-Hallman area. Two motions will be presented at Monday's meeting. The first deals with implementing two year round schools, one in Kitchener, one in Cambridge. The second will deal with reviewing the structure of secondary schools and how they are filling the needs of students, going forward.

B. Davidson commented that there are implications in the broader community when it comes to having a school open all year and asked if the community will be involved in this process. K. Smith indicated that it will be discussed.

The Ministry has extended invitations to the public to provide input into education assessment. The November 28 tweet on PIC's twitter account will have more information. The Equity and Inclusion group met and continues to look for ways to be more engaged. Deepa Ahluwalia has organized multicultural meetings with racialized teaches to encourage them to take on more leadership roles. K.

Smith's experience is that the Muslim and Chinese communities invite trustees to participate in cultural events. Making connections with diverse communities continues to be important.

G. Anderson mentioned that there have been commercials on television regarding Vista Hills.

N Manning explained that these commercials are a result of a government program, Build Ontario, and the school was used as one example. The WRDSB has not been involved in nor endorses this commercial.

CO-CHAIRS REPORT - B. Hutzal

L. Tremble has written the latest blog on [Parent Posts](#) titled "How Parents can get Involved". If you would like to write a blog post, B. Hutzal can provide topics or email him with your ideas. Stephanie Longeway in Communications can also assist you. B. Hutzal will attend the Feb. 6th WRAPSC meeting to promote the blog and to encourage interested writers to contact him.

A volunteer to manage the PIC twitter account is still needed.

M. Jenkins attended the Clemens Mill Remembrance Day ceremony.

B. Hutzal attended the Lift for Inclusion event at Glencairn PS.

The communications department has designed a new PIC banner. The cost to produce this will be approximately \$200 and the department will match the funds provided by PIC. The plan is to have two banners produced, one for PIC, one for WRAPSC.

3. Moved by J. Coutts, seconded by S. Robertson:

That the amount of \$250 be approved to fund two banners for PIC and WRAPSC.

-Carried-

Notes taken at the People for Education Conference will be consolidated and presented at the next meeting. L. Tremble participated in the online parent expo. Her notes were included in the agenda package.

L. Tremble also attended the Long Term Accommodation Plan working group. Although she was the only parent representative in the group, all recommendations of where the board should be in ten years in respect to planning were similar with all groups.

J. Coutts presented some information regarding PIC to IB parents at school. They seemed very interested and excited about PIC. She will direct them to tweets and website.

There is a PIC orientation session planned for January 11, 2018. This is an opportunity for everyone to ask/answer questions about PIC.

Thank you J. Critts for recommending a teacher representative for PIC. Kim Freeman will attend the next meeting. B. Hutzal recognized K. Freeman as the new teacher representative on PIC.

French Immersion Ad Hoc Committee- L. Tremble and B. Hutzal are non-french immersion parents and K. Gettliffe and M. Jenkins are french immersion parents on the committee. Updates will be provided at future meetings.

Please let R. Barnett-Cowan know if you are aware of anyone speaking on the topic of Well-Being. SCIS is looking to establish a speaker list. She'll send out an email about this.

A discussion ensued regarding [Policy 4020](#) Naming and Renaming of Board Facilities. It was noted there was no parent representation on the committee that named the new Janet Metcalfe PS. N. Manning explained that, in this case, the committee was established very early in the process. There was still a boundary review going on, no school council yet, the principal was just announced. Parent interest and community involvement was captured through the name nomination process. If

an existing school was being renamed, the parent council would be involved. The policy does not require the board to always have parent representation. A suggestion was made for future consideration to approach feeder schools for input.

4. Moved by L. Tremble, seconded by S. Cranston:

That Trustee Smith approach the board to review Policy 4020, in particular, to include two (2) parents on the naming committee and to change the wording of “school advisory council” to something more applicable.

-Carried-

K. Smith will report at next meeting regarding the progress of this motion. She stated that this will not affect the naming of Janet Metcalfe PS.

B. Hutzal circulated the contact information sheet to complete and also encouraged members to take the new PIC business cards.

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Moved by L Tremble, seconded by Y. El Rayani:

That the Consent Agenda of the December 5, 2017, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved.

-Carried-

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

WRAPSC as per agenda package

Membership Report - as per agenda package

PRO Grant Parent Event - Two Co-Chairs were announced: J. Coutts and L. Tremble. The first meeting will be Thursday, December 7 to start planning. PRO parent event sign up sheet passed around again. Would like 100 % participation please. B. Hutzal will follow up with absent members.

Sub-Committee volunteer sign up sheets passed around again. B. Hutzal would like to finalize these and send out to members.

SCIS – no changes.

Governance Report- S. Cranston informed members that two meetings are planned before PIC’s January meeting to review bylaws and terms of reference. Four meetings will be held prior to the summer break.

POLICY REVIEW

6. Moved by L. Tremble , seconded by K. Gettliffe :

That the recommended changes to the following Board Policies: 1004 Harassment, 1009 Violence in the Workplace, 1002 Occupational Health and Safety, as summarized by B. Hutzal, be provided to Trustee Smith to bring forward for discussion at the Board table.

-Carried-

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. WRDSB Budget Presentation - M. Gerard
2. Emotional Intelligence
3. Financial Literacy for Students
4. Detailed review of P2002 Partnerships
5. Food 4 Kids
6. Carizon
7. Parent Engagement Discussion (Jan 30)

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, January 30, 2017, 6:30 p.m., Cambridge Room

QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD

L. Tremble explained that once terms of reference/bylaws are re-written, if passed, September will be the first meeting of the 2018-19 school year. It will be a better schedule but note that this year will be short one meeting.

If there are any topics you would like to see covered at the January 11 PIC orientation meeting, please email S. Cranston.

S. Robertson inquired about the process of policy review. B. Hutzal and L. Tremble provided an explanation. K. Smith said that the board is running behind on policy review and the plan is to work on the process so that groups have more advanced notice to discuss policies that may impact parents/students. B. Hutzal suggested that this could be a future discussion item as there is a need for a feedback loop.

ADJOURNMENT

7. Moved by L. Tremble , seconded by K. Gettliffe:

That the Parent Involvement Committee Meeting be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.