

SEPTEMBER 24, 2013
PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board Parent Involvement Committee was held on Tuesday, September 24, 2013, at 6:30 p.m. in the Cambridge Room at the Education Centre, 51 Ardelt Avenue in Kitchener with the following members in attendance:

Trustee: K. Smith.

Board Staff: J. Bryant, D. Duncan-Peacock, J. Fairhall and K. O'Reilly were in attendance.

Waterloo Region Assembly of Public School Councils (WRAPSC) Parent Representatives: A. Allen, (Chair), C. Gillis Bilton, J. Davies, K. Deml, J. Magazine and L. Tremble were in attendance. M.J. Stinson did not attend.

Community Representative: A. Hynes.

Other Staff in Attendance: E. Roberts.

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chairperson A. Allen, called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Regrets from M.J. Stinson were conveyed. New committee members, Director of Education, John Bryant and committee member, Jill Magazine were introduced and welcomed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

That the agenda of the September 24, 2013, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved.

-Carried-

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2. Moved by L. Tremble, seconded by A. Hynes:

That the minutes of the June 4, 2013, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved as amended.

-Carried-

Amendment: J. Davies was in attendance at the June 4, 2013, meeting.

2013-2014 FAMILY EVENT(S)

A. Allen announced that the Ministry of Education approved a \$10,000 grant to the Parent Involvement Committee towards holding a parent engagement activity in 2013-2014. A handout was distributed showing amounts that may be spent on various components of the event as identified by the Ministry.

SEPTEMBER 24, 2013
PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

Members discussed options for parent engagement activities including the holding and format of a full-day event.

3. Moved by A. Hynes, seconded by C. Gillis Bilton:

That a parent event be organized by a sub-committee of the Parent Involvement Committee at a date to be determined during the 2013-2014 school year and at a cost limit of \$10,000.

-Carried-

Members further discussed polling parents via an on-line survey tool concerning topics of interest and regarding a preferred format of the event. Members who are interested in serving on a sub-committee to review survey responses in planning the event were asked to forward their names to A. Allen.

PIC WEBSITE

Management of the PIC website, and means of promoting the Parent Involvement Committee and engagement events, including workshops and activities held by individual school councils were raised. Currently, L. Tremble submits content for updating to E. Roberts in the Director's Office. Options for posting and communicating school council activities and events were discussed. It was noted that Ministry of Education grants may be available to support an external PIC website with interactive forums. Members suggested a link, or 'button' linked to the Parent Involvement Committee website be placed on all school websites. L. Tremble will arrange to meet with WRDSB Communications/Information Technology Service representatives and E. Roberts, to further discuss management of the PIC website, and options for promoting the committee and school council events.

SAFE AND SECURE SCHOOLS

A memo from committee member J. Magazine concerning Safe and Secure School policies was circulated with the meeting agenda. Concerns were expressed that the WRDSB may not be meeting provincial policy and legal expectations in this area. J. Bryant indicated that staff are continuing to work on the implementation of Safe and Secure School policies and future training will take place.

PIC BYLAW REVIEW – BYLAWS 5 AND 6

A. Allen distributed an excerpt from the Ministry of Education Practical Handbook for PIC members, as well as a copy of the Parent Involvement Committee Draft Bylaws 5 and 6, related to committee membership and membership terms. The Bylaws were reviewed and edited. An updated copy of Draft Bylaws 5 and 6 will be brought back for approval at the next meeting. A. Allen also distributed a summary of the make-up of other provincial PIC committees comparing

the number of committee members, frequency of meetings, topics addressed by the committees and means of communication with parents and the community as information.

PIC BUDGET UPDATE

A. Allen reported that there is an expenditure balance of \$6331.74 in the PIC budget. The current available balance is \$3,556.90. In addition, the committee will receive an annual allocation of \$5000 in the fall from the Ministry of Education.

In addition, as previously discussed, the Ministry of Education has approved a grant of \$10,000 for a parent engagement event to be held during 2013-2014.

Committee funds may be used to support educational activities, and the attendance at conferences by members of the committee. Funds may also be used for other activities aimed at furthering parent engagement. In the past, funds have been spent on translating school documentation from English to other languages. K. Smith will provide an update at a future meeting with regards to the status of documentation translation.

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

Upcoming conferences of potential interest to committee members were discussed, as well as allocation of funds in support of individuals to attend these conferences. The People for Education 17th Annual Conference will be held on Saturday, November 2, 2013, at the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management. The Summit on Children and Youth Mental Health conference will be held April 3-4, 2014 at the Allstream Centre in Toronto.

4. Moved by K. Deml, seconded by J. Magazine:

That the Parent Involvement Committee approve sending up to eight people, providing funding for registration and expenses, including mileage to the People for Education Conference in Toronto on November 2, 2013.

-Carried-

WATERLOO REGION ASSEMBLY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL COUNCILS UPDATE

L. Tremble provided an overview of WRAPSC attendance trends advising that attendance had increased overall. There was an average of 37 people in attendance per meeting and the average number of schools participating per meeting was 32. Attendance from Cambridge schools was up from 18% over the previous year. In Kitchener, attendance increased 31% and Waterloo 50% over last year. Attendance from townships and other areas increased 26%. In total 66 of 121 (54%) of schools in the WRDSB had representation at one or more meetings.

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

J. Bryant stated he was honoured to be back in Waterloo working as Director of Education. He stated the need for strong community partnerships emphasizing the importance of engagement from all stakeholders in the system, especially that of parents and students.

Communications Department: The department is currently undergoing an organizational review. Details, including direction with regard to a Communications contact for PIC will be provided upon conclusion of the review.

The Board is undertaking a system fiscal review to identify opportunities to reduce costs by implementing operational efficiencies and optimizing resources to address budget pressures. The Board must identify a minimum of \$4.6M in operational savings. A change to bell times is being looked at in an aim to reduce transportation costs. Consultation with families and the community will occur.

Grades 3 and 6 students across the province participated during the EQAO assessments of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics. The WRDSB maintained previous increases in Primary and Junior Reading and Writing. Gains were not seen in Mathematics achievement. Student participation and additional information on the EQAO assessments can be found on the Board's website.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Future agenda items were discussed.

OTHER BUSINESS

K. Deml and M.J. Stinson will be retiring from their membership on WRAPSC and PIC at the end of their current terms in October 2013. Appreciation was expressed for the contributions and involvement on these committees and sub-committees.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

Future meeting dates were discussed. Conflicts exist with holding a meeting on the evening of the second Tuesday in June. It was decided that the spring meeting would be moved to Tuesday, May 27, 2014.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, December 3, 2013
Cambridge Room, Education Centre
6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

5. Moved by A. Hynes and seconded by C. Gillis Bilton:

That the Parent Involvement Committee meeting be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.