

March 2, 2021
PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board **Parent Involvement Committee** was held on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at 6:30 pm virtually on zoom, with the following members in attendance:

Trustees: L. Tremble

Board Staff: D. Ballantyne, J. Bryant, M. Gerard, D. Lane, D. Liebermann, S. McCrae, H. McKinna, C. Newton, L. Read, P. Rubenschuh, T. Sargeant, S. Shadaan

Committee Members: M. Bond, E. Campbell, B. Daniel, Z. Gent, H. Holmes, M. Jenkins, C. Laughren, R. Shaheen, N. Sheen, C. Smith, C. Ugwuogo, T. Webster, J. Wright

Absent:

Guests: A. Allen, C. Franklin, R. McQuail, A. Pharoah, A. Plouffe, Melissa

Region of Waterloo, Public Health: H. Elliott, J. Johal, S. Pandit

Call to Order

Committee Co-Chair M. Bond called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

Introduction of New Members

M. Bond welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Approval of Agenda

1. Moved by H. Holmes, seconded by E. Campbell:

That the agenda of the March 2, 2021, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved.

-Carried-

Approval of Minutes

2. Moved by J. Wright, seconded by M. Jenkins:

That the minutes of the January 26, 2021, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved.

-Carried-

Director's Update: Director J. Bryant

Coordinating Superintendent of Business Services & Treasurer of the Board, M. Gerard - PRO Grant Update

Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard provided an update on Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grants for School Council and Regional Projects.

- 48 School Council Funding applications and 2 Regional PRO Grant Funding applications were received.
- PRO Grant Evaluation Committee met to review the applications and approved the following:
 - PRO Grant Funding for 46 School Council projects \$20,305
 - PRO Grant Funding for 1 Regional Project at \$10,000. Additional funding of \$2500 was provided for incorporating an additional speaker from the second regional grant application, for a total of \$12,500 PRO Grant Funding for Regional Project.

Many great PRO Grant initiatives taking place around the region, thanked parents/guardians and PIC for their involvement, engagement and advocacy, especially during these virtual times.

Superintendent of Achievement and Well-Being, P. Rubenschuh, Senior Manager of Research, D. Liebermann, Research Strategist, D. Lane - 2021 Student Census Presentation

Director Bryant thanked Superintendent P. Rubenschuh, members of our research team of Senior Manager of Research, D. Liebermann, Research Strategist, D. Lane for joining us tonight to discuss the 2021 Student Census.

P. Rubenschuh explained the board is working through the Equity and Indigenous Action Plan, which has four key components: School and Classroom Practices, Leadership, Governance and Human Resource Practices, Data Collection, Integration and Reporting, and Organizational Culture Change. This evening they are speaking to Data Collection, Integration and Reporting.

The board has previously completed a Workforce census and the second part of the data collection is voluntary demographic data collection specific to students, specifically their social identities protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code. Demographic data enables us to verify, measure, address and monitor gaps and systemic disparities that are affecting students opportunities and outcomes. Includes: access to programs, academic achievement, suspensions, expulsions, exclusions and enhancing graduation rates.

Anti Racism Data Standards were introduced in 2018 and the government issued a directive under the Anti Racism Act to provide consistent collection of race based data by significant public service organizations such as Child Welfare, Justice sectors and Education.

Dana Liebermann shared the Student Census was originally planned for spring 2020, and will now launch on March 31, 2021.

Dave Lane presented the [Students Count, Each and Every One, WRDSB Student Census presentation](#)

Dave shared the student census is an ambitious task that's being undertaken across the province. The board has previously completed a workforce census and has taken learnings from it and applied them to the student census.

The census will be distributed via email, it is confidential and all of the questions are voluntary, but not anonymous. For students in K-Gr. 3 parents/guardians will be responding on their behalf, students in grades 4-12 will be able to complete it in school or during distance learning, with the assistance of staff or independently.

Purpose is to allow us to have the information we need to meaningfully be able to understand, identify, target differences and gaps that students may be experiencing or some of the outcome gaps that may be present within our board based on student identities.

It is authorized by the Ministry of Education, and advocated for by the Anti Racism Directorate through the Anti Racism Act and for many years by the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Privacy is a crucial component and the board employs best practices to ensure family's and student's privacy is protected, inclusive in language and approach. The reporting of census results will be summarized in groups to ensure no individual student information is shared.

Census Questions

Q. Will grade 4 students be asked about their socio-economic status?

A. The questions are social-determinant of health questions, ex. food security, learning environment, access to opportunities, extra curricular activities, etc...

Q. Can you explain the acronyms IPRC, ELL, etc..

A. IPRC: Identification, Placement and Review Committee; ELL: English Language Learners

Q. If there is a safety issue/report of negligence, how will that be addressed?

A. Researchers will be reviewing the material and any concerns will be addressed according to the board's safety protocols.

Q. Is the survey ethics board approved?

A. The board holds itself accountable to the same standards we hold for all others conducting research in the WRDSB and we follow the Tri-council guidelines and use it as the framework for our ethical protocols.

Q. Can parents exempt their child from completing the census?

A. Yes, parents can exempt their child. They families can inform school in advance and students can opt out of the whole questionnaire or any questions throughout the census.

Q. If using Student Identification Number, does this information go in the student's file?

A. The emails sent out will be linked to Student Identification Number. The files will be separate and they will create an independent linking document that allows the two sets of information to be linked together offline, not within the Ontario student information system and then create an anonymous document by which research will be doing their analysis. The protocols that are being applied are stringent with respect to privacy legislation and data standards as well as the Education Act.

Q. What is the expected response rate for the census?

A. We cannot predict the response rate. It is our goal to communicate this strongly to staff and families.

Region of Waterloo Public Health Presentation, J. Johal, Lead Manager COVID-19 Case and Contact Management

Director Bryant and Associate Director Read welcomed and thanked the Region of Waterloo Public Health for coming to the PIC meeting. ROW Public Health has been our close partners since last March and we appreciate all of the work they do with us to ensure our schools are safe places for our students, staff and the community.

Jessie Johal, Lead Manager COVID-19 Case and Contact Management at the Region of Waterloo Public Health, thanked the school board, parents, students and community and for their efforts to help stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community.

For most up-to-date information please go to Region of Waterloo Public Health website: [2019 Novel Coronavirus](#) and specifically [School Resources for COVID-19](#).

J. Johal outlined new and recent changes from the past two weeks

- Most significant change, is change in screening questions and how the tools has changed
- Screening changes: Staff, students and children with any new symptoms of COVID-19, as indicated in the school and child care screening tool, even those with only one of those one symptom must stay home until:
 - receives a negative CV-19 test result
 - or receives an alternate diagnoses by health care professional
 - or it has been 10 days since their symptom onset and symptoms have resolved
 - all asymptomatic household contacts of symptomatic individuals are required to quarantine until the symptomatic household member:
 - receives a negative test result
 - receives an alternative diagnoses by health care professional
 - for the household if there's no testing done, they would need to self-isolate for 14 days after the symptom onset and when the child started to self-isolate
- Considering any case coming to us as a Variant of Concern (VOC) and treating it as such
 - enhanced contact tracing is required for all cases
 - anyone who is symptomatic and who is a high risk contact, we are initiating contacts, a presumptive case is being treated the same as a confirmed case
- Using a different risk assessment for staff and testing at day 7 for asymptomatic high risk contact.
- If your child receives a letter they are a high risk contact and they are asymptomatic and waiting for the 7 day to get testing done, we advise the contacts and household to stay at home except for essential reasons, work, school, essential errands, etc..
- PDF document is attached outlining [PIC Questions and ROW Public Health Answers](#)

Trustee Report, Trustee L. Tremble

Trustee Tremble shared the Trustee Report was included in the agenda package.

Is the board considering intentional recruiting of indigenous trustees? Trustee Tremble confirmed

this hasn't been specifically discussed at the Board but it is on the radar. If additional Trustees were to be added Policy would have to be reviewed.

For the Director position, is the board looking at hiring those with lived experiences? Is there a way to bring forward that concern or inform that process?

Trustee Tremble confirmed this is definitely on the board's radar in terms of Director search and hiring in general at the Senior level to recruit racialized staff at every level. There is going to be a consultation piece for the Director's search to reach out to stakeholders for qualities, attributes, descriptions people are looking for. Trustee Tremble will ensure PIC is informed about this process.

Treasurer's Report

E. Campbell presented the Financial report. There were no questions. Full summary on PRO Grant Event expenditures will be presented at our May 18 meeting.

Co-Chair Report

Co-Chair M. Bond shared the Co-Chair Report was included in the agenda package.

M. Bond informed the committee there is an opportunity to go to the 2021 Children's Mental Health Symposium (conferences come out of the Director's Account).

Motion to approve funds for four to six members to Children's Mental Health Symposium for approx. \$1,200 and that the attendees will share information if permitted with PIC.

3. Moved by M. Jenkins and seconded by C. Laughren.

That \$1,200 in funding for the 2021 Children's Mental Health Symposium be approved.

-Carried-

M. Bond to confirm parents participating with H. McKinna by Thursday March 4, 2021 to secure early bird registration rate.

Consent Agenda

Motion to approve Consent Agenda

4. Moved by E. Campbell and seconded by R. Shaheen

That the Consent Agenda be approved.

-Carried-

New Business

M. Bond welcomed Angel Sider - from the Mental Health Advisory Committee. Angela also represents Parents for Children's Mental Health and sits on SEAC. An update was provided on

the MHAC discussion about the wrdsb.ca website.

A few workshops have been provided for parents/guardians on Parenting Essentials, Parenting your Anxious Child, etc.. and they are wondering how to make those resources easy to find for parents on wrdsb.ca website and would appreciate input from PIC.

- People are feeling isolated with the current COVID situation and it can be difficult to access to resources
- Important for parents to find these resources, how do we let people know what is there, make it easy to find and the best way to get the word out
- Scott Miller and Barb Ward - sub committee - how do we move this forward
- Asking PIC to take a look at website, navigate, find resources and have a broader discussion after sub-committee has met
- Let us know what parents are looking for? What do they need? How do we make it easy? Focusing on “two clicks”.
- Please let Angela know if there’s anything else to consider.
- C. Laughren offered to speak to the Mental Health Advisory Committee regarding her own personal experience with a school and the resources and the mental health community.

Subcommittee Reports

Immigrant Engagement

Rozina Shaheen provided a brief overview of the Immigrant Engagement Project Proposal.

- Start a pilot project in March with three schools from Kitchener, Cambridge and Waterloo regarding immigrant engagement, schools chosen based on immigrant population
- Principal, staff member and school parent council member(s) would be involved at each of the three sites with support from PIC members Rozina, Nisha and Mandi
- Create a peer support group for parents that are interested - monthly connect through school, visit school council meeting to engage in their schools to connect with each other and support each other - April
- Create a video on benefits of immigrant engagement and success stories - May
- Create a tool kit for parents’ engagement - May
- Celebration event and project evaluation - June
- Support needed from the school board for the project and to produce the video is needed and if it’s successful we’ll have a celebration event and if it’s success
- School contacts at these schools can be ambassador for future school immigrant engagement projects

5. Moved by M. Bond and seconded by C. Smith.

That a motion to vote by email on an amount of funds if the project can move forward prior to the next PIC meeting on May 18, 2021.

-Carried-

E. Campbell clarified it is not a motion is not to approve an open ended amount of funds.

Regional PRO Grant Event Report

B. Daniel, provided an update on the Regional PRO Grant Event.

- Approval to proceed with funding, securing speakers, plan is April 6-10, 2021.
- Secured 4 speakers and working on the other two.
- Added an additional speaker as requested by PRO Grant Evaluation Committee.
- Working with the Comms team and are grateful for their support. They're working on updating website, posters and all promotional items.
- Aiming to send out a "Save the Date" week of March 8th
- Comms team and PIC Communications leads are having weekly meetings.

Policy Review

- Links to Policies coming up for review were included in the agenda.
- Please email Mandi or Beth if you have any thoughts/feedback.

Group Discussion Questions

There were no questions.

New Business / Future Agenda Items

No new business or future agenda items were discussed.

Next PIC Meeting

To be held virtually, Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

Sub Committee Dates - April 8, May 13, 2021

Adjournment

6. Moved by E.Campbell,, seconded by Beth Daniel.

That the Parent Involvement Committee meeting be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 pm.