

June 9, 2020
PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board **Parent Involvement Committee** was held on Tuesday, June 9 at 7:00 p.m., virtually, with the following members in attendance:

Trustees: S. Piatkowski, K. Smith, J. Weston

Board Staff: J. Bryant, J. Crits, M. Gerard, L. Read, K. Sonnenberg, M. Weinert

Committee Members: M. Bond, J. Brown-Jowett, K. Gettliffe, J. Greener, H. Holmes, C. Smith, C. Ugwuogo, J. Wright

Community Rep: B. Davidson

Regrets: A. Plouffe

Guests: A. Allen, E. Campbell

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair M. Bond called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Moved by M. Bond, no objections.

That the agenda of the June 9, 2020 Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved.

-Carried-

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2. Moved by M. Bond, no objections.

That the minutes of the March 3, 2020, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved.

-Carried-

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Director J. Bryant thanked staff and trustees for the great work they are doing during these difficult and unprecedented times. He encouraged PIC members to access the archived board meetings on YouTube.

Some questions were forwarded to Coordinating Council ahead of the meeting tonight so they could address them.

- i) Summer Programs – Associate Director L. Read provided a brief overview on

the available summer learning programs. The board is offering these programs to 50% more students and has doubled the amount of schools that are participating. The focus on these programs will be on the key foundational skills of literacy and mathematics. Please refer to the attached document accompanying the minutes – *PIC Info Elementary and Secondary Summer School* for more information.

At the elementary level, acceptance to these programs is usually initiated by classroom teachers, SERTS or guidance counsellors, however, parents should reach out to their schools if they are interested in having their children attend.

Coordinating Superintendent of Business and Financial Services, M. Gerard, stated that we are currently looking at what the child care/summer camp operations are going to look like and hopes to get public messaging out soon.

- ii) Thought Exchange Survey – L. Read informed that a new survey will be offered to the community (parents, students, staff) in an effort to continue the thought exchange summary. The survey will focus on what is most important as we think about reopening in September and will be available in many languages. Hard copies of the survey will also be distributed to families that have not electronically engaged with us. We are making every effort to reach out to the community and we encourage PIC members to connect with their networks to complete this survey. Some questions/concerns were raised by members regarding Google Meets, the continuation of virtual learning and parent input. L. Read encouraged feedback like this and said that this can be communicated through the survey next week.
- iii) Update on Distance Learning Survey – L. Read shared that this survey was very valuable in the information it provided. Three key themes emerged and have been shared on the Board website. Parents want more access to synchronous learning, families appreciate the focus on student well-being, relationships and connections and the importance of on-going feedback.
- iv) School Reopening – J. Bryant addressed the question of school reopening. We still don't know what it is going to look like. The Ministry of Education is diligently working on providing a template to assist boards in reopening and is working with many groups, (Department of Labour, unions, educational partners, CODE) to develop different scenarios. The Department of Public Health has not given the green light on school reopening yet. We also have a committee at the WRDSB looking at different scenarios so that we can be prepared when the Ministry communicates their plans.
- v) ZOOM Educational Licence – M. Gerard informed members that the WRDSB operates in a Google environment so we should rely on the existing tools that we have available to us, such as Google Hangouts. More details will be provided at a later date.
- vi) Financial Supports by PIC for Thought Exchange platform – From a financial

perspective, monies in PIC's budget would be better spent on other parent engagement initiatives rather than on supporting this platform. It would require going through a meaningful process to deploy this at a school and would not happen quickly. Our Research department is working through this.

TREASURER REPORT – This report is included in the agenda package.

PIC PRO Grants – M. Gerard updated members on the PIC PRO grants. The Ministry will likely not provide us with any carry over of funds this year so schools should continue to provide their final report on any funds that were spent.

If any expenses were made towards the parent event, which did not take place due to COVID-19, these should also be included in the final report.

TRUSTEE REPORT - This report is included in the agenda package.

Trustee Weston reported an additional item to her report. A Trustee vacancy has been filled and Laurie Tremble was appointed to the position. She will be sworn in on June 25, 2020.

Meeting minutes are posted to the Board website once they are approved by the committee, then the board of trustees. This is why it may take some time to see them.

CO - CHAIR REPORT – This report is included in the agenda package.

The Ministry of Education ran a teleconference which included stakeholders, PIC members, parents, board staff and teachers asking for feedback. Once this report arrives, M. Bond will forward it to members.

The Ministry asked for feedback on school reopening. WRAPSC has written a letter and M. Bond has offered to send a letter on behalf of PIC. Contact M. Bond if you can provide additional feedback. She will have a draft of the letter sent to members in a week.

M. Bond thanked the PIC members who will not be returning for their hard work – K. Gettliffe, J. Crits, A. Plouffe, J. Brown-Jowett, W. Alsabagh. B. Davidson, Community Rep, was thanked for his work during the last many years.

The annual report will be sent by the end of June.

Membership will continue to work on the handbook.

Work on bylaws will continue with a goal of having this completed by the end of next year.

Contact M. Bond if you would like to volunteer to be responsible to PIC's facebook/twitter account and/or the Parent Blog.

Discussions

H. Holmes thanked M. Bond for her leadership. She would like to see more discussion at PIC meetings. She suggested that sub-committee reports be sent out in advance of

the meetings so less time is spent at the meeting going over them and that questions be forwarded to staff in advance of the meetings.

C. Ugwuogo suggested that should meetings continue to be held virtually, an effort be made to connect members with the tools they require to be supported at the meetings, i.e. laptops.

J. Greener discussed some transitional issues that parents and students will face. She will forward some suggestions around mental health to members and staff.

Members shared positive experiences during the last few months and all feel supported by the schools and the teachers.

Coordinating Superintendent of Human Resource Services, M. Weinert, updated members on the current labour situation. All unions representing employees at the board have central agreements with the Crown. We are starting to hear from local unions to set up meetings during June.

A reminder that PIC orientation will be on September 15 and the first meeting will be September 29.

When sending an email regarding PIC business, please include “PIC” as the first word in the subject line.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Carizon
- Bullying – what is WRDSB Policy
- Removal of School Resource Officers
- Anti Racism training for PIC members/parents
- French Immersion

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, September 29, 2020, 6:30 pm, Cambridge Room.

ADJOURNMENT

3. Motion by M. Bond, no objections.

That the Parent Involvement Committee Meeting be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.