

December 1, 2020
PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board **Parent Involvement Committee** was held on Tuesday, December 1, at 6:30 pm virtually on zoom, with the following members in attendance:

Trustees: J. Weston, S. Piatkowski

Board Staff: D. Ballantyne, J. Bryant, M. Gerard, H. McKinna, L. Read, M. Weinert

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

Regrets: R. Shaheen

Absent: N. Sheen

Guests: A. Allen

Call to Order

Committee Co-Chair M. Bond called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

Formation of PIC Committee

M. Bond brought forward the names of eight new parent members. The following new members of the 2020-2021 Parent Involvement Committee are acclaimed:

- Eian Campbell
- Beth Daniel
- Laurie Detta
- Zac Gent
- Christina Laughren
- Nisha Sheen
- Tammy Webster
- Chiazor Ugwuogo

D. Ballantyne has volunteered to be the Secondary Vice-Principal representative.

WRDSB Staff Positions still to filled: Elementary Principal / Vice Principal, Elementary Teacher, Secondary Teacher

PIC Committee members and Staff each provided a quick introduction of themselves.

Elections/Acclaiming of Executive Positions

Beth Daniel is acclaimed as Co-Chair of PIC

Eian Campbell is acclaimed as Treasurer of PIC

Approval of Agenda

1. Moved by E. Campbell, seconded by C. Laughren:

That the agenda of the December 1, 2020, Parent Involvement Committee meeting be approved.

-Carried-

Approval of Minutes

2. Moved by C. Ugwuogo seconded by C. Smith:

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

-Carried-

Director's Update, Director J. Bryant, Associate Director L. Read, Co-ordinating Superintendent M. Weinert, Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard

Director Bryant began by sharing the senior team's gratitude to our parents, students and staff. Staff, students, families have had to deal with many challenges and pressures. They appreciate the patience parents have had and the adjustments they have made during this unprecedented and challenging time. It is recognized when parent engagement is strong, student's can often achieve greater success. Parent involvement is key and as we continue to learn from this pandemic experience in both distance and in-person learning, many parents have been working closely with their children.

Working closely with PIC will help us to provide feedback and we are here to listen and learn what you are hearing in the community. We want to share ideas and hear your feedback. The board is fortunate one of the key researchers in the province, D. Liebermann, PhD as the Senior Manager of the Research and Evidenced Based Practice Department.

Associate Director Read shared how the board gathers information. Clear and transparent communication is one of our most important principles. It is important, communication is a two way format and we must continue to reach out to staff, students and parents/guardians.

The Exchanging Ideas Survey was completed in June to seek feedback on Distance Learning and also what mattered most as we prepared to open schools in September.

Most recently we launched Let's Connect, seeking input from students, staff, parents and guardians. We are in the process of consolidating feedback we received, we will bring to the Board Meeting on December 14, 2020.

Coordinating Superintendent Weinert shared how staffing a school is complex in the best of times and even more so during the pandemic. This year there are multiple formats for school, In-Person, Distance Learning using technology, and Distance Learning not using technology. The board must work within parameters established by the Ministry of Education and in the collective agreements, such as class size. In August, based on the Ministry announcements regarding school format in September, we had to pivot and change staff and student classroom assignments and make staff accommodations. We continue to

have set dates for families to change their student's mode of learning and from a Human Resources perspective, it takes approximately 6 weeks to move through this process. It is complex and takes considerable time on everyone's part, Human Resources, Learning Services, Finance, and as a team we want to minimize disruption and provide the best outcome possible for students and staff.

Coordinating Superintendent Gerard, shared how the board is funded from the Ministry of Education based on the number of students attending the board, with Grants for Student Needs (GSNs). There have been budget pressures and uncertainty with labour disruptions and COVID-19. We are fortunate we are a growth board and we have historically had a balanced budget, this has helped us to meet the changing needs of the system.

All information needed to form a budget was not available until July and the budget was passed in early to mid-August. There are cost pressures from running two sets of schools - In Person and Distance Learning. Boards are in a precarious position as we navigate staffing needs. The Ministry of Education has supplied some money to support remote learning and additional due to entering the red zone, but not enough and we are entering into some deficit spending. The ever shifting landscape has created some challenges for the finance team in determining board revenues versus what we can spend and what we need to spend. Custodial Staff focus on ensuring the appropriate amount of custodial workers on a daily basis and performing additional maintenance as required and supplying PPE budget for students and staff.

Transportation needs have increased to support physical distancing

Facilities - Schools: 105 Elementary, 16 Secondary, 2 Alternative Education sites

We are fortunate, all of our buildings are in good standing. We have completed an audit of all of our buildings. The focus is on upgrading HVAC, new filters, updates to building automation systems or portable units in the classroom, where needed based on the building audits.

We have been greatly aided by our Health and Safety Department connecting with various government ministries: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Health and our local Region of Waterloo Public Health Department.

Question and Answer Period

3. Moved by C. Laughren and seconded by E. Campbell

That a Question and Answer period be added to the agenda prior to the adjournment of the meeting.

-Carried-

PRO Grant Presentation/Update, Co-ordinating Superintendent M. Gerard

Co-ordinating Superintendent M. Gerard supports PIC with PRO Grant and PIC budget. There have been no changes to the PRO Grants program since 2019-2020. The Ministry of Education moved to a new PRO Grant model in 2019-2020. The main changes were money was cut and shift in responsibility from the Ministry to the school board. The focus is on parent engagement, specifically on removing barriers that may prevent parents and families from participating and engaging in their children's learning. \$36,000 has been provided to support the 2020-2021 PRO Grant (very close to what we received in 2019-2020).

List of WRDSB Guiding principles established in 2019-2020:

- Maintain support for the Regional PRO Event

- Support as many schools as possible with the funding available
- Focus on schools that need our support the most (Social Economic Indicators)
- Partnerships with nearby schools/feeder schools
- Provide a range of funding to schools (\$250 - \$500)

2020-2021 WRDSB PRO Grant Timelines:

- December 15, 2020, PRO Grant application process distributed to schools
- February 5, 2021, PRO Grant applications due (follow-up with reminder after winter break)
- February 22, 2021, Successful applicants notified
- June 15, 2021, School reports due to Board
- July 15, 2021, Board report due to Ministry

Evaluation of Pro Grant Fund Submissions will be completed with assistance from the following representatives:

- Parent Involvement Committee (2)
- Special Education Advisory Committee (2)
- Equity and Indigenous Advisory Group (2)
- Trustee (1) staff

Questions/Comments:

- Concerns about the initial deadlines shared being too soon with the upcoming holidays, so the timelines were adjusted in the meeting as noted above.
- How to hold an event given the current Public Health guidelines due to COVID and how to include Distance Learning students. Opportunity to engage Distance Learning students through Regional PRO Grant event.
- From a Secondary perspective would help to know what quads 3 & 4 will look like
- How are we engaging Principals in the process

Coordinating Superintendent Gerard confirmed the following:

- Application will provide references of good examples and unique ideas for events to help to determine what to do at the school level
- Principals are engaged in the process and supportive of PRO Grants
- We will have to have a flexible model to effectively use the funds
- Application will include information on eligible and ineligible spending of funds. Will clarify if funds can be used retroactively.
- Opportunity to include Distance Learning students in the Regional event
- Timeline for two parent reps before December 18, 2020, if interested please email Mandi Bond
- Yes the PRO Grant presentation can be shared with WRAPSC

Trustee Report, Trustee J. Weston

Trustee Weston shared the Trustee Report was included in the agenda package. There were no questions.

Trustee Piatkowsky provided an update on the two newly established Ad Hoc Committees, the SRO Committee and the School Naming Committee.

School Resource Officer Ad Hoc: Trustees Piatowski, Ramsay & Meissner.

There will be a public call for the SRO Committee for three representatives of each of students and parents/guardians. They welcome members of PIC applying or please share with anyone you think

may be interested.

Naming Committee Ad Hoc: Trustees Woodcock, Millar & Herring.

For the Naming Committee a google form will be distributed to PIC members to be shared with any interested parties and completed by Monday, December 7, 2020, if interested in volunteering for the committee.

Please let Mandi and Beth know as well so we all know who is involved in which committee and we can get updates.

PIC Member Volunteers for Committees

Mandi and Heather are preparing a document for the Drive with the Committee meeting information, including: what committees are available, who is on them, spots to be filled and when they meet, are they paused, restarting, etc...

Co-Chair Report

Co-Chair M. Bond shared the Trustee Report was included in the agenda package. There were no questions.

Consent Agenda

4. Moved by E. Campbell and seconded by Z. Gent

That the Consent Agenda be approved.

-Carried-

Policy Review

- P2005 Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Support the policy is not easy to read, may want to consider reading level they are written at to make them more accessible to all reading levels
- P1010 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities, AODA- is also written at a very high level, consider changing this to make it more accessible to all reading levels. Where is the school board on that journey? Coordinating Superintendent Gerard confirmed the WRDSB is in progress for 2021 AODA Compliance
- P2011 Sun Safety and Shading, when suggesting hats with brims, etc..know that not all families have the resources to afford to buy these, can the board look into how to make this equitable
- Request for Administrative Procedures that are referenced in policies to be hyper linked
- All in favour of passing along PIC feedback to trustees

Discussion Groups

PIC Committee members spit up into breakout rooms. Each breakout room will email a summary of their group's discussion to Co-Chair M. Bond and B. Daniel. Beth and Mandi will amalgamate themes from the breakout rooms and this can be discussed at the next meeting.

New Business / Future Agenda Items

No new business or future agenda items were suggested. If you think of any at a later date, please email Mandi and/or Beth.

Mandi confirmed she will have new members added to the PIC Drive by Friday, December 4, 2020.

Next Meeting

To be held virtually, Tuesday January 26, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

Sub Committee Date - December 15, 2020 - Mandi and Beth will send an email with times of different subcommittee meetings.

Question and Answer Period

Do the cleaning protocols used by the WRDSB come from the Ministry of Education or are they developed by the Board?

Coordinating Superintendent Gerard confirmed cleaning protocols are developed by the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education in consultation and local Public Health units and schools boards, and they are adopted and implemented at our local school board.

Adjournment

Mandi Bond Adjourned the meeting at 9:03 pm.