

A meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board **Parent Involvement Committee (PIC)** was held on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 virtually on zoom, with the following members in attendance:

Trustees: M. Radlein

Board Staff: S. Miller, M. Newlands, R. Di Martino

Committee Members: D. Annable, J. Araujo, H. Avni-Peleg, H. Brar, S. Datta, S. Goel, T. Gonzalez, N. Hydal-Khan, J. Lawrie, J. Lee, W. Lin, L. Lovelace, L. Miller, A. Mohammad, L. Munroe-Onsen, S. Variath

Regrets: S. Awan, D. Bandekar, A. Dabas

Guests: S. Heroux, S. Nanda, R. Sawhney

### **Appointment of Co-Chairs and Clarification of PIC Membership**

- M. Newlands would like to Appoint our co chairs for 2023-2024 PIC Meetings
- Jackie Araujo and Laura Lovelace
- Michelle asked if there are any objections. Since there are no objections congratulations to Jackie and Laura

### **Approval of Agenda - Michelle Newlands**

- M. Newlands has approved the agenda for tonight's PIC meeting

### **Approval of Minutes from May 16, 2023 - Chair**

- J. Araujo asked the committee to approve the minutes. J. Lawrie approved the minutes and D. Annable seconded the motion.

### **Affirmation of Returning Members - Appointment & Approval of 2023-2024 PIC - Membership Chair**

- J. Araujo wanted to begin by clarifying the Roles and Responsibilities of PIC members and prepared this [presentation](#).
- The purpose of PIC is to support, encourage, and enhance caregiver engagement in the WRDSB in an effort to improve student achievement.

- As a committee, our work includes communicating with the WRDSB staff here today by sharing advice gathered through our discussions with our school councils, caregiver community, and subcommittee work. This could look like ensuring PIC members are present at their school council meetings with an agenda line for sharing PIC updates, or attending WRAPSC meetings to share information with the wider school council community.
- In addition to providing advice to board staff and connecting with school councils, the role of the PIC is to come up with strategies and action plans that the board might use to reach and connect with caregivers, with the goal of improving student achievement. This might look like the planning of community events, or suggesting topics for educational opportunities and webinars hosted by the WRDSB.
- Finally, and perhaps most importantly, members of the PIC should work to identify barriers that exist in connection to caregiver involvement, and work as a committee to reduce any barriers. We will work with the WRDSB to create a welcoming environment for all learners in the WRDSB and their caring adults. This may look like advising in the allocation of PIC funds, including the approval and promotion of PRO Grants in the WRDSB.
- I hope this has provided a scope of our duties as members of the 2023/2024 PIC.
- J. Lawrie is excited about the PIC membership committee. We had 25 applicants this year and added 13 new members with the school board. J. Lawrie we will be doing introductions with our PIC members this evening. M. Newlands approved all the new members.
- S. Heroux, WRAPSC did speak briefly about the role of WRAPSC and explained we make parent engagement a large focus to make sure parent concerns are addressed.
- M. Newlands is pleased to be a part of this group and would like to thank this group for working through the weekend.
- T. Radlein mentioned she is the Trustee Representative for PIC and is really pleased to be back this year. T. Radlein welcomed the new members and returning members
- S. Miller thanked J. Arajo, L. Lovelace & J. Lawrie for their commitment to making sure we got things in place for tonight's meeting. It is greatly appreciated

## **6:50 pm      Round Table Introductions of 023-2023 PIC Membership &**

### **WRAPSC Role**

- Members introduced themselves in an alphabetical order including why they are interested in being a part of PIC.

## **7:10 pm      Trustee Report - Trustee M. Radlein, Trustee Estoesta (Alternate)**

- M. Radlein shared she has a very short report for this evening's meeting. Two things that were discussed at the June Board meeting. We appointed two new trustees, Trustee Estoesta and Trustee Meissner. We mourned the death of Trustee F. Meissner. In addition the ad hoc committee has been formed.

**Amendment -A. Mohammad- More details are needed for the ad-hoc committee. In addition, the ad-hoc committee has been formed to establish and implement an Indoor Air Quality policy.**

**7:20 pm      Treasurer Report - Treasurer, J. Lawrie**

J. Lawrie mentioned she is the Treasurer of PIC and hopes this is the first time in three years we can utilize these funds. J. Lawrie is happy to announce the 2023-24 PIC allocation has been transferred to each school's School Council GL account. A memo to Administrators will be sent in the next few days regarding this information. The Central Parent Engagement Funds are a total of \$11,447 and the PIC Funds are a total of \$5,000. In the past years principals have been confused regarding these funds so hopefully this year communication is clear on how schools can utilize these funds. There will be a committee that will be discussing PRO Grant and you will learn more about that soon.

**7:25 pm      Staff Update-Leadership Team- Director, Associate Director or Executive Officer**

S. Miller shared this [presentation](#) with the PIC committee. S. Miller explained the board is paying attention to Engagement Strategies which includes Transforming Education, Transforming Education through Engagement, Family and Caregiver Engagement and Community Engagement. Information will be available on our board website on how we are supporting families which will include an equitable outcome. The board is focusing on strengthening connections and increasing student engagement. Our hope is to be transparent to families and stakeholders. We also like to include student voices in our work. WRAPSC and PIC are working together to ensure we are engaging parent communities. We are also looking to improve our EQAO scores. With the pandemic there has been a learning loss. We continue to focus and strive to meet this year's literacy plan. Our action plan will be shared on Monday, October 30, 2023 Board Meeting which include Improvement and Equity Plan, Multi Year Literacy Plan, Math Achievement and Action Plan, continued focus on Destreaming and single streaming of Secondary Courses. We are really excited about many things this year.

**7:45 pm      PRO Grant Discussion and Reflection**

J. Araujo explained PRO Grant (Parent Reaching Out Grant). The PRO Grant provides funding for the school boards to work with their PIC and student councils to support projects and school initiatives. In the past some schools may have missed out on this opportunity and we would like to make this item a priority.

**7:50 pm      Sub Committees Members Assignment**

J. Araujo explained PIC requires subcommittees for the following groups. Members are more than welcome to serve on more than one subcommittee. We would like members to sign up for subcommittees by the end of the month. The subcommittees are listed below:

- **Governance – reviewing our PIC bylaws and ensuring, compliance/relevance**
- **Membership – running the membership process and mentoring new members**
- **Policy Review- reviewing board and ministry policies as required**
- **PRO Grant Events – organizing our annual parent engagement event**
- **SCIS – Safe, Caring, and Inclusive Schools – supporting schools in creating positive school climates**
- **New Immigrant Engagement – supporting newcomers integration into our education system and community**

#### **8:00 pm Question Period**

A question period has been opened for any additional information.

- Q. How can we access his slides from tonight's meeting? A. An email will be sent to the committee.
- Q. Will all work and board plans be available for parents? A. Yes we will be sharing the math plan with the Trustees at the next Board meeting.
- Q. Is ProGrant something PIC created or is it based on an application process? A. ProGrant is an application process. Many schools didn't know how to access these funds last year. Our goal this year is to assist schools and encourage them to utilize these funds.
- Q. What is the difference between PIC and ProGrant? A. PIC is to enhance the function of this committee and invest these funds in the community and student engagement. ProGrant is professional learning in which we will try to communicate and be clear about how to give something to each project to each school. There is a total of \$62,500 for ProGrant this year. There are very few applications that were not approved last year. Moving forward this year we are making it a goal to reach all schools and reach out to the schools who are not submitting applications.
- Q. Was the new immigrant sub committee running last year? A. When looking at this type of committee we are looking at partnering with settlement workers and getting an understanding of what newcomers really need. Who are our community leaders and how they can assist families who are not being served.
- Q. What are the Board's plans for a job fair in the future. A. Our last job fair was well attended. A number of connections were made and people were interested in IT,

Educational Assistant, Human Resources and Teacher positions. This is something we would look at doing again.

- S. Heroes, WRAPSC mentioned the January 9 WRAPSC meeting will be centered around ProGrant. If your subcommittee is ready to go please let me know as you are able to present at our January 9th meeting. In addition if anyone is interested in participating in WRAPSC please let me know and I can add you to our WRAPSC mailing list.

### **8:30 pm      Closing Remarks**

- J. Araujo thanked everyone for attending this evening's PIC meeting. A special thank you to M. Newlands for her incredible leadership and patience. Thank you to J. Lawrie and L. Lovelace for getting this committee up and running.
- L. Lovelace stated it is great to see enthusiasm in this group. It will be great to get our subcommittees going by our next PIC meeting on December 6, 2023.

The Parent Involvement Committee meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.