

LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

February 8, 2010

Sarnia and Chatham Education Centres (Video Conference)

Present: Gayle Stucke, Director of Education; Carmen McGregor, Chair; Steve McNamara, Colonel Cameron; Tracey Machan, King George (S); Marian Redford, Gregory Drive; Wende Badder, John McGregor S.S.; Judy Krall, Lambton Central Collegiate V.I.; Kathy Gabriel, Lansdowne; Tim Houle, North Lambton S.S.; Lynn LeFaive, P. E. McGibbon; Verna Ferencik, Tilbury District H.S.

Regrets: Jane Bryce, Vice-Chair; Charlene Parks, Indian Creek; Heather Simpson, Ridgetown Public School

Welcome

- Wende Badder welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- Congratulations were extended to Marian Redford on her recent adoption. Marion shared stories on her recent trip to South Africa.

Business Arising from the Meeting of January 11, 2010

Draft Guidelines for Attendance at Out of District Workshops

- The draft guidelines dealing with the selection process and approval for attendance at regional parent involvement workshops were reviewed.
- Comments were shared. It was clarified that expenses incurred would be paid through the PIC Budget.
- PIC approved the guidelines which will be added to the current Terms of Reference.

GroupWise Access

- Senior Administration discussed the request for PIC members and individual School Council Chairs to have access to a Board GroupWise e-mail account.
- It was suggested that it would be beneficial for all school council members to have access to the e-mail account; however this would involve the sharing of passwords which is not recommended.
- It was agreed that PIC members will be provided with a GroupWise e-mail account now using the standard address format.
- One GroupWise account will be set up for each school council in September using a general address such as NLSS School Council@lkdsb.net.
- **Sue will follow up with the Manager of IT regarding the set up of e-mail accounts for PIC members.**

Planning for April 15 District School Council Chairs Meeting

- Principals have received training around Bill 157 and will provide training for staff in their schools.
- Gayle proposed moving the annual budget presentation to the May PIC meeting and having a presentation on Bill 157 - Keeping Our Kids Safe at the April 15 District School Council meeting that would include break-out networking sessions.

- Members of the school community wishing to hear detailed information on the budget development process are welcome to attend Public Board meetings.
- PIC members will also provide an update on the past year and outline the nomination process for the Parent Involvement Committee.
- Gayle will present Director's highlights to showcase good things happening in schools. This might encourage other schools to share good news stories. Gayle will share with Principals that good news items will be shared at the District School Council meeting as well as at Board meetings. PIC members will also share information with the School Council Chairs of their family of schools.
- It was recommended that information also be provided on successful PRO (Parents Reaching Out) Grant project proposals. It was noted that sample submissions are included in the School Council Guide.
- **Sue will follow up with the Ministry as to when schools can expect announcements regarding PRO Grant approval and when information on the 2010-11 application process will be sent to Boards.**
- **A draft District School Council Chairs agenda will be sent to members of PIC.**

Ministry PIC Symposium

- In December the Minister of Education sent an invitation to PIC Chairs to attend the first annual PIC Symposium to be held in Toronto on April 16, 2010.
- Further details about the PIC Symposium have yet to be received.
- It was noted that Leona Dombrowsky was appointed as the new Minister of Education and that the PIC Symposium was initiated under the leadership of former Minister Kathleen Wynne.

Director's Update – Gayle Stucke School Year Calendar

- Background information was shared on the consultation process with the coterminous board in developing the school year calendar. This year a one-day problem was identified. The suggestion was to hold a PA Day for staff the week prior to the Labour Day weekend with students returning to school on September 7 following Labour Day.
- The purpose of PA Days is to build capacity. Per the collective agreement, two of the elementary PA Days need to be scheduled around the reporting timelines. PA Days have typically been scheduled on the last day of the secondary exam schedules in January and June. The transportation cost to schedule separate PA Days for elementary and secondary schools is approximately \$100,000. PIC members supported scheduling the PA Days on the same days.
- Input was requested on holding consultation sessions in the spring of 2010 for a modified calendar (Christmas Break) for the 2011-12 School Year Calendar. PIC is supportive of a modified calendar but agreed the March 1 deadline does not allow adequate time for consultation for the coming school year. It was recommended that information be shared on the school year calendar at the April 15 District School Council meeting.

Accommodation Review

- The third Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) meeting for the Petrolia Area has taken place. The Petrolia study is unique as it relates to overcrowding in Petrolia schools and available space in the nearby rural school. Options put forth for consideration include changing boundaries and having some Petrolia students attend Lambton Centennial School; identifying a single all French Immersion School in Petrolia; maintaining the status quo by putting additions on at both Hillcrest and

Queen Elizabeth II Schools; or building one new school on the Queen Elizabeth site. The next ARC meeting will be held on March 4 at Lambton Centennial,

- The Ridgeway and Dresden Accommodation Reviews are to identify options to address low enrolment; specifically in the secondary schools. Members of the Ridgeway and Dresden ARCS took part in an eLearning workshop and were invited to participate in field trips to Goderich to visit JK to Gr. 6 and Gr. 7 to 12 Schools.
- The third Dresden Area meeting will be held at Dawn-Euphemia School on February 10. A Save the School Delegation will give a presentation at the meeting.
- It was clarified that the mandate of the Accommodation Review Committees is to identify issues and put forth possible solutions but ultimately Administration will make recommendations to Board to vote on based on what is best for all students in the system.
- Process is key to ensure adequate consultation.

French Immersion Review

- At the last FI Review meeting it was agreed not to consolidate programs totally. With full-time learning for four and five year olds being introduced there is not adequate space.
- The Board learned last week that the Ministry of Education is conducting a provincial French Immersion Review and are looking at entry points in Gr. 1, 4 or 7.
- The FI Review Committee will submit a report to Board on February 9 advising that they will continue planning into next year until further information is received from the Ministry.

Kindergarten Registration

- Kindergarten registration was delayed this year due to the implementation of ELP. Registration will be held on February 22 and 23.
- Principals and secretaries are being reminded to provide an opportunity at registration for families of Aboriginal heritage to self-identify. Current families can self-identify at any time.

Sharing Best Practices

- Wende Badder shared copies of the student published newsletter "The McGregor Growl".
- The School Council was looking at ways to improve literacy and numeracy. There is competitiveness among schools in the area and often the school would receive negative press. The School Council was approached to assist in identifying solutions.
- It was felt that publishing a newsletter would highlight positive news within the school community and showcase areas that make the school unique. The School Council was approved for a PRO Grant to fund the project. The student run paper was created to communicate with students, parents and members of the school community. Staff advisors assist students. Participation enhances creative writing skills and attracts those interested in photography. Students critique and edit articles and the two staff advisors review the final draft. The final draft then goes to School Administration and the School Council for review. One hundred copies are printed in newspaper format on a monthly basis. On-line copies are available and hard copies are sold for 25 cents. Students distribute hard copies to offices and businesses in the community. When new copies are delivered, any old copies are removed.
- The paper has opened up an avenue for communication with parents and interaction with students. The school hopes to continue publication of the newsletter even if they are not approved for another PRO Grant.
- It was clarified that consent for the use of student images etc. is obtained annually through student option sheets.

- **At the next meeting Marian Redford will speak to a best practice at Gregory Drive relating to the collection and sharing of information within the school community. She will share an example for discussion prior to the March 22 meeting.**

Other Business/Future Agenda Items

- Tracey and Wende nominated Gayle for the Premier's Award for Teaching Excellence under the Life Time Achievement Category. Gayle thanked members of PIC for the nomination.
- A retirement open house for the Director is being planned for June 18 at the Oaks Inn in Wallaceburg. Members of the Parent Involvement Committee will be invited to attend.
- Co-Chair Wende Badder stated that Gayle inspires passion in education, continues to builds on successes, and that the success in Lambton Kent is due in part to her ability to lead us through difficult times. The Director's leadership of senior administrators, principals, teachers, support staff, students and trustees was acknowledged. Members of PIC thanked Gayle for the work she carries out each day to support student achievement.
- Discussion took place on whether PIC has achieved the goals they set out to attain this year. It was felt that the 2009-2010 PIC Committee has succeeded in achieving the goals outlined in the Terms of Reference. The October 24 Workshop and development of the School Council Guide were two key parent engagement initiatives and both were very well received.

Next Meeting

- The next meeting is scheduled on March 22, 2010 via video conference from the Sarnia and Chatham Education Centres beginning at 6:30 p.m.
- Input was requested on the need to hold a meeting in March. Possible agenda topics were put forth.
- **Members of PIC supported cancelling the March 22 meeting.**
- **The next meeting will be held on May 8 in Sarnia. Gayle and the Co-chairs will review agenda items.**

Adjournment: 8:12 p.m.

Sue Fraser, Recording Secretary