

LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

May 10, 2010

Sarnia Education Centre – Board Room

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

Regrets: Heather Simpson, Ridgetown Public School

Welcome

- Tracey Machan welcomed everyone to the final PIC meeting of the school year.
- Gayle Stucke introduced incoming Director of Education, Jim Costello.

Business Arising from the Meeting of February 8, 2010

- Groupwise addresses have been issued to PIC members.
- The 2010-2011 School Year Calendar has been approved. Teaching staff will participate in a PA Day on Thursday, September 2 prior to Labour Day. The first day of school for students will be Tuesday, September 7. **Principals will be asked to include an update on the calendar in school newsletters.** Consultation would need to take place to submit a modified calendar to alter the Christmas break. Timelines did not allow for consultation to modify the 2010 Christmas Break. Traditionally the Christmas Break is set for full week periods. This year students will be off a week prior to Christmas.
- Wende expressed appreciation to Director Gayle Stucke on behalf of PIC and the entire school community for her leadership, perseverance, mentorship and the time spent with each individual stressing the importance of education and student achievement. She shared a quote from Michael J. Fox's book "A Funny Thing Happened to Me on the Way to the Future". Members of the Parent Involvement Committee presented Gayle with a gift of appreciation and extended well wishes for her retirement. Director Stucke thanked PIC members and expressed how fortunate she was to have the opportunity to work with such a dedicated, committed group.

Feedback from April 15 District School Council Chairs Meeting

- Feedback was shared on the need to have a more interactive session and an opportunity for networking.
- It was suggested that in future perhaps an opportunity could be provided for school teams to participate in meetings/workshops that would include other school council members who may not be the chair.

Nominations and Selections for PIC

- A summary was shared outlining PIC membership and nominees for 2010-2011. There was an additional nomination for a third elementary representative in Chatham-Kent. There is no representation for a secondary representative for rural Chatham-Kent.
- In future it is hoped that there will be Aboriginal representation on PIC

- **There was support for allowing the third Chatham-Kent elementary representative from McNaughton to be on the Committee.**
- PIC members will continue to solicit a secondary representative for rural Chatham-Kent.
- Members of the committee acknowledged the work and support of the PIC Secretary.

Budget Update

- Superintendent of Business, Ron Andruchow spoke to the budget development process and gave a presentation on the 2010-2011 grant revenues.
- An overview was provided on per-pupil funding.
- 2010-2011 GSN (Grants for Student Needs) highlights were shared.
- The LKDSB will see an enrolment decline of approximately 500 students. Overall the Board will not see a huge funding increase as enrolment adjustments must be taken into account.
- It was clarified that the HST is suppose to be cost neutral to school boards. Boards will receive a large rebate on taxes.
- Temporary constraint measures within the GSN were explained.
- The 1% reduction in transportation funding will force the Board to adhere to the Transportation policy and will limit the number of courtesy seats available for 2010-11 and 2011-12.
- The following Education Programs will be transferred into the GSN: School Effectiveness Framework; Ontario Focused Intervention Partnership; Specialist High Skills Major; and the Special Education Behaviour Expertise Amount (BEA).
- **PIC members would like more information on Specialist High Skills Major courses and agreed this would be a good topic of discussion at a fall meeting.**
- Variances to the Pupil Foundation Grant were highlighted by grant category.
- An overview was provided on structural reforms to the Special Equipment Amount (SEA).
- Information was provided on changes to the following grants: Special Education Grant; Learning Opportunities Grant; First Nations, Métis & Inuit Grant, Language Grant, Safe School Grant, Program Enhancement Grant, Declining Enrolment Grant and Community Use of Schools Grant.
- Deadline dates for budget submission reports were noted. Enrolment count dates are at the end of March and October.
- **A copy of the 2010-2011 Budget presentation will be included with the minutes.**

Updates – PIC Co-Chairs

Ministry Parent Involvement Committee Symposium

- Wende Badder, Tracey Machan and Lynn LeFaive attended the Provincial Parent Involvement Committee Chairs Symposium hosted by the Ministry of Education on April 16.
- A summary was e-mailed to members of PIC. Information on 2010-2011 Parent Reaching Out Grants has gone out to schools. PRO Grant submissions are due June 11, 2010 and must be submitted electronically. It was noted that PRO Grant applications meeting the criteria of the program are approved for full or partial funding. There is not a limit on the number of projects approved for each Board as previously thought. Grant restrictions were noted. Schools are encouraged to research other PRO Grants that have been approved and to go onto the Ministry website for further information. All schools are encouraged to apply and should go online to obtain a password and begin the process to “save a spot”. Schools can go back in and complete the full application at a later date.
- There is no specification for the use of the \$500 per school allocation provided the funding is used to promote/increase parent engagement.
- Ideas for LKDSB from discussions at the provincial networking session were shared.
- The Symposium also provided information on healthy schools, safe schools and the Early Learning Program.

- PIC members were reminded at the symposium that they don't always represent the voice of all parents and that they should not make assumptions about the broader school community without surveying parents in the community.
- Zubeda Vahed was the moderator for the day and an amazing speaker.

Ontario Healthy Schools Coalition Forum – School Connectedness: Providing a Sense of Belonging

- PIC Co-Chair Wende Badder attended the 9th annual Ontario Healthy Schools Coalition Forum in London on May 6 and 7.
- Attendees included representatives from health related and education organizations, parents and students. Dr. Anthony Card, provided tips and suggestions on how to implement approaches to increase school and community health. A.A. Wright School was mentioned as one best practice example on how to transform a culture in a school.
- Wende spoke to the various break-out sessions she attended.
- Wende will also be attending the London Regional Aboriginal Educational Symposium in Ridgeway on May 11 and 12. The Symposium is entitled "Understanding the Past to Build the Future". **Wende will share a summary with PIC members.**
- Gayle commented on the enthusiasm of the reports and stressed the importance of getting new PIC members to attend regional symposiums.

A written summary and some resources from the conferences were distributed.

Regional Conference – From Rhetoric to Reality, How Engaged Parents Close the Achievement Gap for Students

- PIC Co-Chair Tracey Machan along with members of the King George VI (Sarnia) School Council attended the April 24 London Regional Conference – From Rhetoric to Reality, How Engaged Parents Close the Achievement Gap for Students.
- The session was a train the trainer model on media violence and offered ideas on getting people to network. It is hoped that in future networking opportunities can be arranged with the Parent Involvement Committee of the SCCDSB.
- Information was provided on a bullying program offered by the Red Cross.
- **Tracey Machan will forward information to PIC members.**

Director's Update – Gayle Stucke Sex Education Curriculum

- An update was shared regarding the controversial proposed new sex education component of the Health and Physical Education curriculum.
- The proposed new Physical Education and Health curriculum is not significantly different from the current curriculum except for the human sexuality components. It was stressed that there needs to be consultation when the topic is explicit and of a sensitive nature.
- Directors and Superintendents were not aware of the changes until the media flurry. Had Senior Administration been consulted minor modifications would have been proposed. As a result of the strong push back by parents the Premier pulled the curriculum which speaks to the parent voice.
- Reaction to the proposed curriculum changes varied based on family culture. One controversial area is alternate lifestyles and gender issues.
- The Ministry will ensure that next time there is consultation. The rest of the Physical Education and Health curriculum has been updated.

Orientation Process

- The LKDSB Parent Involvement Committee will see significant turnover next year. Orientation will be key for new members. Tracey and Wende offered to be available in a resource capacity for PIC and School Councils to assist with this transition.
- There was support for holding a shorter “meet and greet” style meeting in June. Resource material will be provided to new members.
- It was recommended that name tags be provided at the June and September PIC meetings.
- Gayle will notify the principals of new members accepted and request contact information.
- **Future agenda items for next year will be identified at the June meeting (Revised Health and Physical Education Curriculum, Secondary High Skills Major) in addition to goal setting. PIC Co-Chairs will be elected at the June meeting.**

Sharing Best Practices – Sharing Information with the School Community

- Marian Redford shared information on how information is shared within the Gregory Drive school community.
- A copy of the School Council financial summary was shared outlining the Council’s revenue and expenses.
- Information was shared on the Helping Hands in Action grant available through Spectra Energy and Union Gas. **It was suggested that grants/fundraising could be a future agenda topic.**
- A copy of the School Council Annual Report was provided outlining activities over the year.
- Other successful means of communication at the school include monthly newsletters, thermometers indicating where the school is related to a project goal, bulletin boards, signage outside the school advertising events, and school council branding/logo items.
- Examples of other best practices were shared. Parent surveys are a useful means of collecting volunteer data and identifying areas of interest. **PIC will look at setting up a survey next year.**

Other Business/Future Agenda Items

- PRO Grant applications must be submitted to the Ministry by June 11, 2010.
- An e-mail was shared from People for Education lobbying the Minister of Education on the Health and Physical Education curriculum.
- The local health units want to consult with PIC and School Councils on the Nutrition Policy/Guidelines and are proposing three meeting dates in October in Sarnia, Chatham and Wallaceburg. Staff and parent representatives from both the Lambton Kent District School Board and St. Clair Catholic District School Board are invited to attend.
- Information on the new School Food and Beverage Policy can be viewed on the Ministry of Education website – www.edu.gov.on.ca.
- Concern was raised that there are currently no opportunities for parents on school council who are not the Chair or on PIC. **The need to expand opportunities will be discussed at a future meeting.**
- On behalf of the Co-Chairs Tracey thanked members of PIC for their work over the past year. A special thank you was extended to those PIC members not returning.

Next Meeting

- **The next meeting will be held on June 14 at 6:30 p.m. at the Chatham Regional Office.**

Adjournment: 9:00

Sue Fraser, Recording Secretary