

# LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

September 20, 2010

Sarnia Education Centre

**Present:** Jim Costello, Director of Education; Jane Bryce, Vice-Chair; Nikki Chateaufeuf, Colonel Cameron; Kelly Steeves, King George (S); Kathy Gabriel, Lansdowne  
Tim Houle, North Lambton S.S.; Lynn LeFaive, Sarnia Collegiate Institute (SCITS)

**Regrets:** Carmen McGregor, Chair; Marian Redford, Gregory Drive; Shelley MacDonald, Harwich Raleigh; Lianne McDowell, McNaughton;

### Welcome and Introductions - Lynn LeFaive

- PIC Co-Chair Lynn LeFaive welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- Members introduced themselves and shared information on their involvement within the school community.

### Business Arising from the Meeting of June 14, 2010

- The June 14 minutes were approved.

### Equity and Inclusion Update – Superintendent of Education, Dave Doey

- Jim introduced Superintendent of Education, Dave Doey who has been a Superintendent for the past 7 years. His prior area of responsibility was Student Success. His portfolio now includes Special Education, Safe Schools, Aboriginal Education and Equity and Inclusive Education.
- The draft policy and regulation Equity and Inclusive Education were provided. The draft documents were presented to Trustees on September 14 and will go to Board for final approval on September 28.
- Since June, six community consultation meetings have taken place with our partners in the north and south representing various stakeholder groups. The term “disability” was changed to “ability” as recommended by our community collaborators.
- The documents are based on templates designed with input from the Ministry of Education, The Ontario Human Rights Commission and legal experts. The draft policy or belief statement ensures the principles of equity and inclusion are integrated in all we do. The regulations set out the rules or expectations by which we act on the policy. The regulations address eight areas of focus and outline the responsibilities of the Board and the Principal. The eight areas of focus are: Board Policies, Programs, Guidelines and Practices; Shared and Committed Leadership; School-Community Relationships; Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment Practices; Religious Accommodation; School Climate and the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment; Professional Learning; and Accountability and Transparency.
- All other policies and regulations are reviewed on a cyclical basis and will be modified as needed to reflect the principles of equity and inclusion.
- The Board meets monthly with the four First Nations which aligns with assessment practices.
- Guidelines for religious accommodation are in the development stages.
- School climate and the prevention of discrimination and harassment support students with special education needs through progressive discipline. These practices are good for some but beneficial to all.

- An opportunity was provided for questions and answers. PIC members questioned why the Ministry did not publish documents and mandate all boards to follow. Superintendent Doey explained that the Ministry of Education sets out the framework for Boards through policy and memoranda, however responsibilities for implementation is the responsibility of the local school board to reflect local needs.
- Principals will be provided with reference material and resources to roll out. Equity and Inclusive Education will also be discussed at the school level. Creating successful outcomes for every student is the goal.
- The question was raised whether it needs to be more explicit that schools with a First Nations population have representation on the School Council to reflect diversity. It was noted that the School Council Regulations state that “It is expected that the membership of the Council will reflect the diversity of the school community. In defining a school membership, considerations may include such aspects as geography, language, cultural, ethnic, economic, business, demographics, seniors or school boundaries. An alternative would be to have a First Nations community member on the School Council if there were no parent volunteers.
- **Input on the Equity and Inclusive Education documents can be sent to Superintendent Dave Doey or to the Director’s office.**

#### October 14 District School Council Chairs Meeting/Workshop

- Over the past couple of years we have tried to hold a fall workshop for school council representatives in October and a second District School Council Chairs’ meeting in April. As timelines are tight to organize an October workshop PIC supported organizing a larger workshop in April and holding the District School Council Chair’s meeting in October.
- It was suggested that Annie Kidder of People for Education would be a dynamic speaker for the April workshop. Discussion took place on holding two evening presentations, one in the north and one in the south and possibly opening up the event to all parents and the coterminous board. **Sue will contact People for Education and report back.**
- Input was requested on the agenda for the October District School Council Chairs. PIC members supported inviting the new Aboriginal Liaison to be the keynote speaker for the meeting. The second half of the meeting would be break-out sessions where family of schools can discuss what is being done in their schools around equity and inclusion and what is being done to welcome and engage parents. Feedback was shared on possible dates in October. It was agreed that the meeting will be held later than the original date of October 14. **Sue will contact LCCVI staff regarding available dates. Principals will be expected to attend the October meeting with their Chair. Jim will speak to Principals.**

#### Director’s Update – Jim Costello

##### Entry Plan

- Copies of the Director’s Entry Plan were distributed and reviewed. The purpose is to have an organized plan to enter into the new position. The Entry Plan is posted on the Board website and was shared with the local media. The intent is to raise the profile of the Director of Education and to put a face on public education.
- The Director provided an overview of the meetings held to date with Trustees, Senior Administration, former Director Gayle Stucke and the Director of the St. Clair Catholic DSB. He outlined future plans to meet with various employee groups, unions, members of the community, media, local politicians, and committees of the Board. He explained that the Board is involved in partnerships with the St. Clair Catholic DSB and the Municipalities through CLASS and CKLAG.

- An update was provided on the recommendations coming from the Petrolia, Dresden and Ridgeway Accommodation Reviews. A Transition Committee will be established to ensure a smooth implementation to the reorganization and consolidation of schools in Ridgeway. Community Consultations meetings will be held in Petrolia in the fall in conjunction with the French Immersion District Review.
- In order to be visible in the system the Director is visiting two schools per week.
- Focus Group interviews will be held with all employee groups. Trustee and staff interviews have focused on three questions: What are you most proud of? What do you feel we can improve upon? What should the Director of Education be paying attention to? The answer given most to the question what are you most proud of has been the staff of the LKDSB.
- Results from Entry Plan interviews will be shared with the new Board of Trustees at a strategic planning session in January.
- A Director's Bulletin or newsletter is being developed to communicate with Trustees and School Administrators in between Board meetings. The bulletin will also be posted on the website.
- Investigation is taking place to provide an opportunity twice per year for central office staff to shadow school staff in order to raise awareness.
- Input on the Entry Plan is welcome.

#### Ministry Documents

- The Ministry of Education is expanding their efforts to support parent engagement in Ontario through Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools and the newly amended Regulation 612 O.Reg.330/10: School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees (PICS).
- **Sue will forward information from the Ministry.**
- The Board's current School Council Policy and Regulation will be revised to include requirements relating to PIC. The draft documents will be brought to PIC for input.

#### Parent Complaint

- Jim explained that policies and regulations are approved by the Board of Trustees and that administrative procedures are internal documents for principals, vice-principals and other staff.
- The procedures "Parental Complaint (Formal) About an Employee outline the steps the principal should follow to handle a formal complaint. The procedures are part of the Board's cyclical review. Input is welcome.
- Parent Communication Guidelines – Conflict Resolution that set out the steps a parent should to take to address a concern at the school are posted on the Board website.

#### Nutrition Guidelines

- Community Consultation meetings related to the new School Food and Beverage Policy will be held in the spring.
- Information on the policy was presented at the April School Council Chairs meeting.
- The School Food and Beverage Policy is to be implemented for September 2011. The Directors of the LKDSB and the SCCDSB and the Medical Officers of Health will be meeting to develop local policy documents. The local Health Units will have input.
- A copy of the School Food and Beverage Policy Quick Reference Guide was provided for information.
- It was noted that the Nutrition Programs in schools are already following the guidelines.

### Family of Schools

- Regrettably two members of the 2010-2011 Parent Involvement Committee had to resign.
- **Jim will speak to Principals regarding the need for PIC representatives in the south, specifically rural Kent and secondary schools in Chatham.**
- **Sue will revise the current family of schools groupings and re-send to PIC members.**

### Groupwise E-Mail Accounts

- Last year Groupwise e-mail accounts were set up for members of PIC.
- This year one email account has been set up for each school council. **Sue will forward information to Principals to share with their School Council Chairs, along with instructions for accessing GroupWise.**

### Other Business

- Chatham-Kent Children's Safety Village gave a presentation to Board at the September 14 meeting. School-aged students and teachers from across the district have attended the presentation at the Safety Village in Blenheim.
- Information packages were distributed.
- The Safety Village is looking for donations. It was felt that the best avenue is for them to go through School Councils or Home and School Councils to fundraise.
- Suggestions for future agenda topics or presentations included: Bridges out of Poverty and a Transportation presentation.

### Next Meeting

- The next PIC meeting will be held on November 8 at the Chatham Education Centre, beginning at 6:30 p.m.
- Lynn thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Adjournment: 8:53 p.m.

Sue Fraser, Recording Secretary