

# LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

June 12, 2006

Sarnia Education Centre

**Present:** Gayle Stucke, Director of Education; Jane Bryce, Chair; Peggy Johnson, Winston Churchill; Judy Krall, Alexander Mackenzie S.S.; Ron MacDougall, Lambton Central Collegiate and Vocational Institute; Tracey Machan, King George (S); Dave Macko, Ridgeview Moravian; Marie Marcy Smids, Rosedale; Steve McNamara, Colonel Cameron; Tracy Perron, Northern Collegiate Institute & Vocational School; Jo-Anne Snow, John N. Given

**Regrets:** Scott McKinlay, Vice-Chair, Helene Puchnatyj, Tilbury District High School

### Welcome and Introductory Remarks

- Copies of the Chatham-Kent Lambton Administrators Group (CKLAG) Annual Report 2005 were shared for information. Background information was provided on the public organization consortium. The purpose of CKLAG is to reduce costs and to avoid duplication wherever possible for local taxpayers.
- Director Gayle Stucke welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Lambton Kent District School Board's Parent Involvement Committee. Gayle introduced Jane Bryce, Chair of the Board. Members of the Committee introduced themselves and shared information on their interest in serving on the Parent Involvement Committee.
- The Director stressed the importance of partnerships between school/board staff and parents and shared the history on her experience working with Parent Advisory Committees prior to the Ministry mandating School Councils.
- Contact information was provided to share among Parent Involvement Committee members.

### Lambton Kent District School Board's Parent Involvement Committee

#### Mandate of the Committee

- Copies of the Ministry of Education memorandum on the implementation of the Ontario Parent Involvement Policy were included in the agenda package. The purpose of the Ministry initiative is to open communication and provide a direct link between school board staff, trustees and parents to improve student achievement.
- The Director explained that the first meeting was intended as an organizational meeting for the 2006-2007 Committee.

#### Committee Membership

- The Director of Education reviewed the selection process for members of the Parent Involvement Committee. Random selection was carried out ensuring that there was representation of rural and urban, elementary and secondary school councils in Sarnia Lambton and Chatham-Kent. It was noted that the membership of the Committee also provides representation of students in specialized programs such Special Education, French, and Native Second Language.

- A vote may be held in April 2007 to elect new members for the 2007-2008 Parent Involvement Committee. It is hoped that the entire Committee does not turn over in 2007-2008 and that some members remain on the Committee beyond one school year.

### Meeting Format/Agenda Setting

- Agenda items should be forward to Sue Fraser, Administrative Assistant to the Director of Education. Sue can be reached via e-mail at [frasersu@lkdsb.net](mailto:frasersu@lkdsb.net) or at 519-336-1500 Ext. 401.
- Discussion took place on the number of meetings to be held per year, meeting location, length and time of meetings. **It was recommended that meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. with an end time no later than 9:00 p.m.**
- District School Council Chair meetings are held in October and April each year at Lambton Central Collegiate Vocational Institute and Wallaceburg District Secondary School. **It was recommended that Parent Involvement Committee meetings be held on September 11, November 6 and February 5. A decision will be made on a May meeting date at the February meeting. The September meeting will be held at the Chatham Regional Office. The February meeting will be held via video conference from the Sarnia Education Centre and the Chatham Regional Education Centre. Maps for meeting locations will be included in agenda packages.**
- **The Parent Involvement Committee supported the recommendations.**
- It was noted that other School Council members and/or the public are welcome to attend Parent Involvement Committee meetings; however only members of the committee will participate in discussions.
- **Committee members agreed that light refreshments are suitable for meetings.**
- **Members of the Parent Involvement Committee will contact one of the Co-Chairs with agenda items. The Co-Chairs will work together with Sue Fraser to coordinate meeting agendas.**
- Examples of possible agenda items were reviewed. (i.e. Health Unit consent around student immunization) **Agendas and a record of action from each meeting will be forwarded to Principals to share with their School Council Chairs. Committee members consented to providing their contact information through Principals to School Council Chairs in order for them to bring forward agenda items to the Committee Members representing their respective areas.**

### School Council Budgets

#### School

- As outlined in the Ministry of Education memorandum of March 3, 2006 \$500 was allocated to each school to be spent prior to the end of the current school year. The funding can be spent on any items or resources that will improve parent involvement in the school community. **Schools are to report expenditures in their Year End Financial Report.**

### Central Committee

- New base funding was also provided to school boards to support the work of the Parent Involvement Committee. Each board received an allocation of \$5,000 plus \$0.17 per student to operate the Committee and enhance activities to encourage parent involvement. **Members will receive kilometrage from the central committee account. Expense reports will be provided at the September meeting.**

## People for Education

- Correspondence from Annie Kidder, Executive Director of the People for Education was provided for information. The letter outlined services provided by the organization to assist school councils and parent involvement committees.
- The Director noted that People for Education is not an official council for school boards, but is an independent organization of Ontario parents operating out of Toronto. The parent-led organization is a large, powerful group that has lobbied the government on a number of educational issues such as rural schools and special education.

## Provincial Political Landscape

- The Director indicated that there has been tremendous change in education with the current liberal government. Premier Dalton McGuinty, former Minister of Education, Gerard Kennedy and newly appointed Minister of Education, Sandra Pupatello are pro-public education and committed to working with school boards.
- Bill 78 has just passed final reading. The Bill provides more power to the Minister of Education; mandates the establishment of Parent Involvement Committees; provides larger honorariums to elected Trustees; provides a stronger voice to Student Trustees; introduces the New Teacher Induction Program; mandates a reduction in primary class sizes; and sets out targets for improved student achievement and increased graduation rates and provides funding to support local school boards to ensure these targets are met.
- Research and data needs to be behind decisions made at the Board and school level to improve student achievement.
- The mandate of the Parent Involvement Committee will be to focus on student achievement and how to support and engage parents to become involved to improve student learning. All stakeholders need to work to ensure all students succeed without making excuses as to why students are not succeeding.
- The Committee and School Councils need to focus on how to assist the Board to quantify the benefit of smaller class sizes. Principals, the Board and the Minister of Education welcome good news success stories. Board staff will be required to provide the Ministry of Education with hard data around student performance. Concern was raised over the impact the reduction in primary class sizes will have on students in Grades 4 to 8. Proactive options could include a letter from the Parent Involvement Committee, lobbying through People for Education, or contacting local MPP's or School Board Trustees.
- On June 12 the Ministry of Education released the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) Technical Paper. Based on reductions to the declining enrolment grant, cutbacks will be needed despite the announcement that the Board will receive a 1.2% or \$2.5M increase in funding for 2006-2007. Budget updates will be provided at Public Board meetings on June 13 at the Chatham Regional Office and on June 27 at the Sarnia Education Centre. Funding from the Ministry of Education is targeted to various categories. The Board is once again facing a decline in enrolment and will be looking at areas for reduction.
- Correspondence from Sarnia-Lambton Rebound was shared requesting an opportunity to present information on "Drug Proof Your Kids" an adult drug awareness program. Gayle Stucke explained that Rebound offers alternate programs for suspended students. The Director will respond to Rebound asking organizers to provide additional information for a possible presentation at a future meeting.

- Members of the Parent Involvement Committee outlined concerns related to the need for standardized practices around the selection of class valedictorians, pediculosis, and a shortage of school textbooks and resources. **Gayle Stucke will follow up regarding the shortage of textbooks and resources. The Director stressed that the mandate of the Committee is to discuss district issues versus individual school issues and to work together to help students be successful by encouraging parent involvement.**
- The Ministry of Education will be asking all school boards to develop a formal dispute resolution process for parents.

#### Selection of Chair

- Interested members were asked to put their name forth for Chair of the Parent Involvement Committee. Volunteers were Judy Krall, School Council Chair of Alexander Mackenzie S.S.; Steve McNamara, School Council Chair of Colonel Cameron School; and Joanne Snow, School Council Chair of John N. Given.
- Chair Jane Bryce distributed and collected the ballots. Ballots were counted and a tie vote was recorded.
- **The Committee supported Jo-Anne Snow and Judy Krall as being Co-Chairs of the 2006-2007 Lambton Kent District School Board Parent Involvement Committee.**

The Director urged members to contact herself and/or Jane Bryce to discuss issues.

Gayle's can be reached via e-mail at [stuckega@lkdsb.net](mailto:stuckega@lkdsb.net) or by phone 519-336-1500 Ext. 297.

Jane Bryce can be reached at [bryceja@lkdsb.net](mailto:bryceja@lkdsb.net) or by phone 529-899-2619.

#### Other Business/Future Agenda Items

- Lambton Kent District School Board website and possible link to Parent Involvement Committee and school websites.
- What can we do to increase parental involvement at the school and district level? Tracy Perron will share information from a Canadian study on the reluctance of immigrant/refugee families in becoming involved at the school level. Resources available to provide student and parent support will be discussed.
- OPSBA's (Ontario Public School Boards' Association) Education Today is an informative magazine focusing on education issues in Ontario's public education system. Sue will look into obtaining a subscription for Committee members.
- Plans for the October School Council Chairs' meeting will be discussed. Agenda topics could include a follow up to the Capital Plan surveys completed by schools and a presentation on At-Risk initiatives.

Adjournment: 8:59 p.m.

Sue Fraser, Recording Secretary