

LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

February 4, 2008

Sarnia and Chatham Education Centres
(Via Video Conference)

Present: Gayle Stucke, Director of Education; Scott McKinlay, Chair; Carmen McGregor, Vice-Chair; Judy Krall, Alexander Mackenzie S.S.; Steve McNamara, Colonel Cameron; Lynn LeFaive, Johnston Memorial; Tracey Machan, King George (S); Tammy St. Louis, Kinnwood Central; Tim Houle, North Lambton S.S.; Dave Macko, Ridgeview Moravian; Peggy Johnson, Winston Churchill; Sue Fraser, Recording Secretary

Regrets: Joanne Snow, John N. Given

Guests: Pam Graham, Principal Secondee - Special Education
Tim DeActis, Principal Secondee - Alternative and Continuing Education

Welcome

- Peggy Johnson welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- Peggy introduced Scott McKinlay as the new Chair of the Board and Carmen McGregor who was elected as Vice-Chair.
- Superintendent of Education, Dave Doey was unable to attend the meeting. Gayle provided background information on the implementation of Bill 212 legislation - Progressive Discipline and School Safety. Parent Involvement Committee members Tracey Machan and Tim Houle and Trustees Carmen McGregor and Ruth Ann Dodman attended the Ministry of Education in-service session on Bill 212. In-service has also been provided to all principals. Gayle introduced Pam Graham, Principal of Special Education and Tim DeActis, Principal of Alternative and Continuing Education who provided an overview of the Bill 212 legislation.

Implementation of Bill 212 – Progressive Discipline and School Safety

- Bill 212 an Act to amend the Education Act in respect of behaviour, discipline and safety was implemented on February 1, 2008.
- The legislation focuses on 5 components: Code of Conduct; Progressive Discipline; Bullying; Suspension and Expulsion.
- Code of conduct requirements set out expectations for behaviour for all members of the school community and apply to behaviour on and off of school property.
- The Lambton Kent District School Board has practiced progressive discipline for a number of years. Progressive discipline is non-punitive; provides early and ongoing interventions, supports, and consequences; incorporates strategies to promote positive behaviour; takes into consideration for special education and/or disabilities related need and ensures consistency with expectations outlined in the IEP. Factors to be considered before deciding to utilize a progressive discipline approach to address inappropriate behaviour were noted. Mitigating factors include whether the pupil has the ability to control his or her behaviour; whether the pupil has the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his or her behaviour; and whether the pupil's continuing presence in the school does or does not create an unacceptable risk to the safety of any

other individual at the school. Other factors to be considered: the pupil's academic, discipline and personal history; and whether other progressive discipline has been attempted with the pupil, and if so, the progressive discipline approach(es) that has/have been attempted and whether or not they were successful; whether the infraction was related to any harassment; the impact the discipline will have on the pupil's future education; the pupil's age; whether the behaviour was attributed to special education or disability related needs; and whether or not the pupil's continuing presence at the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of anyone at the school.

- The Ministry of Education definition states that "Bullying is typically a form of repeated; persistent, and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be know to cause) fear and distress and / or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a perceived power imbalance." This definition forms the basis of the Board's policy, regulations and administrative procedures on bullying. Each school is required to develop a School Bullying Plan that defines bullying; outlines prevention strategies; intervention strategies and training for students and staff. The plan must be clearly communicated to the entire school community. The plan will be reviewed each year and revised every three years as needed. A school climate survey will be completed annually to determine appropriate next steps. The School Bullying Plan will become part of the School Improvement plan.
- Changes to legislation regarding suspension and expulsion were outlined. Teachers no longer have the authority to suspend. All suspensions are now discretionary. Depending on the length of the suspension, school work, alternative programs, and academic and non-academic supports will be provided. Where a student is suspended beyond 10 days academic and counseling support must be provided.
- Principals no longer have the authority to expel, but may recommend expulsion to a committee of trustees. The decision to expel results in placement in another school, or placement in an alternative program.
- Previously strict discipline programs were established at 15 boards in the province, which were not accessible to many boards. Alternate programs have been in place within the Board for many years. Bill 212 provides funding to enhance these programs.
- Clarification was provided on the timelines around expulsion. The Principal would place a student on suspension for 20 days pending an investigation for review. The Suspension/Expulsion Review Committee consists of the Chair, Vice-Chair and a Trustee from the north and south part of the district. Parents are informed that a suspension or expulsion can be appealed.
- Students can no longer be suspended for truancy or habitual lateness; however they can be suspended for negative behaviour impacting the tone of the school.
- The process for arranging alternative programs was outlined. Alternative program staff works closely with the school to provide opportunities and supports to assist students.
- Tribes is an effective strategy used in many schools to create a culture of respect. Tribes training is offered to interested school staff but is not mandatory.
- Cyber-bullying will now be addressed under Bill 212.

Business Arising

Communication between the Parent Involvement Committee and School Councils (Follow Up)

- Updates were shared on the status of PIC members contacting school council chairs within their family of schools. The need to identify terms and conditions and focus of the Parent Involvement Committee was stressed in order to articulate the purpose of the Committee to school councils

- The Website Sub-Committee has not met to date. Discussion took place on the purpose of the website. The purpose of PIC is to be a resource and voice for school councils. The website should be a tool for school councils to access information and to assist in increasing parent engagement.
- Judy Krall and Tracey Machan will meet within the next three weeks to condense the feedback obtained at Dr. Boulton's workshop. The summary will then be shared with principals and school councils and will be posted on the PIC website.
- Input was requested for the April 17 School Council Chairs' Meeting. Representatives from the Sarnia Lambton and Chatham-Kent Health Units will give a 15-minute presentation outlining nutrition guidelines. Representatives would address individual school councils. The Superintendent of Business will speak to and obtain input on the 2008-09 Budget. Parents are also welcome to attend Public Board Meetings. PIC members will then facilitate breakout discussion with their assigned family of schools to obtain input on what they feel the role of PIC should be and how PIC can assist them in increasing the effectiveness of their school councils. Gayle will work with PIC Co-Chairs to develop a survey for the break-out sessions. It was suggested that a standard introductory letter be developed to go to school council chairs. PIC members will contact school council chairs closer to the meeting date to personally invite them to attend the April 17 meeting. Gayle, Judy and Peggy will meet to finalize the agenda for the School Council Chairs' Meeting.
- A strategic planning session will be held on March 31 in Chatham to develop a mission statement and strategic plan for the Parent Involvement Committee. The meeting will be held from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Gayle will arrange for a facilitator to oversee the process. The vision will then be shared at the April 17 School Council Chairs' Meeting. April 21 will be the tentative date for a follow up meeting if needed at the call of the Chairs.

Director's Update

- This year _ schools were approved for Parent Reaching Out Grants. The total PRO Grant is \$13,833. The Ministry was to notify approved schools last week. A summary of approved project proposals was shared.
- The following Ministry resource documents were distributed for information:
- An update was provided on the testing and monitoring of the odour problem at Hillcrest.

Other Business/Future Agenda Items

- Co-Chair Peggy Johnson will draft a thank you letter to former Board Chair Jane Bryce to acknowledge her role with the Parent Involvement Committee.
- Draft Pandemic Planning Administrative Procedures were shared.

Adjournment: 8:57 p.m.

Sue Fraser, Recording Secretary