

LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Minutes of Meeting of the Director of Education and Trustees with School Council Chairs

Thursday, April 15, 2010
L.C.C.V.I.

Present:

Elementary Schools: A. A. Wright, Bosanquet Central, Bright's Grove, Cathcart, Colonel Cameron, D.A. Gordon, Dawn-Euphemia, Dresden Area, East Lambton, Errol Village, Grand Bend, Gregory Drive, H. W. Burgess, Hanna Memorial, Harwich-Raleigh, Hillcrest, Indian Creek Road, John N. Given, King George VI (Chatham), King George VI (Sarnia), Kinnwood Central, Lansdowne, McNaughton Avenue, Merlin Area, P. E. McGibbon, Queen Elizabeth II (Chatham), Queen Elizabeth II (Petrolia), Queen Elizabeth II (Sarnia), Ridgetown Public, Ridgeview Moravian, Riverview Central, Sir John Moore, South Plympton/Wyoming, W. J. Baird.

Secondary Schools: Alexander Mackenzie S.S., Chatham-Kent S.S., John McGregor S.S., Lambton Central C.V.I., Lambton-Kent Composite School, Northern Collegiate, Ridgetown District H.S., Sarnia Collegiate I. & T.S.

Regrets: Aberarder Central, Bridgeview, Brigden, Brooke Central, Confederation Central, Errol Road, High Park, Lakeroad, Lambton Centennial, London Road, Mooretown Courtright, Rosedale, Tecumseh, Thamesville Area, Tilbury Area, Victor Lauriston, Wheatley Area, Winston Churchill, Zone Central, Blenheim District H.S., North Lambton S.S, St. Clair S.S., Tilbury District H.S., Wallaceburg District S. S.

Staff: Gayle Stucke, Director of Education
Dave Doey and Bert Phillips, Superintendents of Education
Allan Davies and Jim Morton, Principals
Gary Girardi, Vice-Principal

Trustees: Jane Bryce, Vice-Chair

Administrative
Assistant/Recorder: Sue Fraser

Welcome and Greetings from the Board

Principal Phil Warner introduced Parent Involvement Committee Co-Chairs Tracey Machan and Wende Badder.

Tracey and Wende introduced Jane Bryce, Vice Chair of the Board.

The Vice-Chair indicated that Chair, Carmen McGregor sends regrets as she was unable to attend the meeting. Jane Bryce thanked School Council Chairs for their commitment and dedication to what the Lambton Kent District School Board values most which is continued improved achievement of students within the public school system. She stated that this couldn't be achieved without the involvement of school councils.

Welcome / Update from PIC Co-Chairs

Parent Involvement Committee Co-Chairs Tracey Machan and Wende Badder welcomed School Council Chairs to the annual spring meeting. Wende thanked Vice-Chair Bryce for bringing greetings on behalf of the Board of Trustees and for her attendance and participation at PIC meetings. She stressed that we are fortunate in our district to have a Board and Administration that are very inclusive, open and appreciative of the efforts of parents.

The Director's update was moved to the end of the agenda as Mrs. Stucke had another commitment.

Wende Badder emphasized how much she values working with Tracey Machan in the role of Co-Chair and to Tracey's dedicated work to promote parent engagement in education. She thanked Tracey on behalf of the entire Parent Involvement Committee for her efforts.

The Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) represents parents as partners in education. The Committee is pleased to be part of the broader education community. Wende introduced this year's PIC members: Judy Krall, Lynn LeFaive, Steve McNamara, Charlene Parks, Marion Redford, Jane Bryce and Sue Fraser. Other members of PIC are Gayle Stucke, Carmen McGregor, Kathy Gabriel, Tim Houle and Verna Ferencik.

In December 2005 the Ministry of Education implemented the Ontario Parent Involvement Policy requiring boards to establish parent involvement committees. The Lambton Kent District School Board is in the forefront of being a board that embraces parent involvement. Tracey Machan, Wende Badder and Lynn LeFaive are attending the provincial PIC Symposium in Toronto on April 16.

The Parent Involvement Committee Terms of Reference were reviewed. It was noted that the agendas and minutes of PIC meetings are posted on the website. School Council Chairs were reminded of their responsibility to keep records of council meetings as each school is required to submit an Annual School Council report to the Director.

Tracey Machan highlighted the accomplishments of the Parent Involvement Committee over the past year. The Committee organized and hosted the Parents as Partners Workshop on October 24. A School Council Guide was developed by PIC to provide information to assist school in establishing and operating effective school councils. The binder includes information on Board policies, regulations and procedures, Ministry guidelines for school councils, information related to PIC, funding and grant information, and other parent resources and website links. School Council Chairs were reminded to pass the binder on to the incoming School Council Chair if they are not returning in 2010-2011. PIC would appreciate feedback on the use and benefit of the Guide. The Parent Involvement Committee provided consultation on a number of education initiatives including the 2010-2011 School Year Calendar, the French Immersion Review and the Accommodation Review process. PIC will provide input on the 2010-2011 Budget at the May 10 meeting. Members shared best practices and success stories at each meeting. Many members had the opportunity to attend provincial and regional workshops on behalf of PIC.

It was noted that the PIC Co-Chairs set the agendas for PIC meetings in consultation with the Director of Education. School Council Chairs were urged to forward system issues they would like addressed at PIC meetings.

Ministry of Education – School Food and Beverage Policy – Bert Phills

Superintendent of Education Bert Phills spoke to Ministry PPM 150: The School Food and Beverage Policy. A copy of the Policy was provided for information. The Policy will have a greater impact on secondary schools but will impact all schools.

The Government is committed to making schools healthier places to be so students can reach their full potential. There is a need for action due to the rising rate of childhood obesity. The obesity rate is almost 28% resulting in medical costs of \$1.6M annually. The connection is the amount of time children spend in schools and that almost one third of their daily food intake is during school hours. There is a close link between health and success in school. We need to be role models and send a message by having schools provide nutritional food and beverages and promoting healthy lifestyles.

The School and Beverage Policy applies to all publicly funded schools, both elementary and secondary. The Ministry of Education has charged school boards with the responsibility of fully implementing the policy by September 2011. The policy will be phased in over the next school year. The Policy will be presented to Principals and Vice-Principals in May. Key areas of the Policy were reviewed. The purpose of the policy is to set out nutrition standards for food and beverages sold in publicly funded schools in Ontario. Exemptions will apply for special event days. Schools will be permitted to hold up to ten special event days on which food and beverages sold in schools would be exempt from the nutrition standards outlined in the policy. It will be up to principals and administrators to ensure compliance. Boards will be required to attest that they are in compliance however we are unsure at this point of the process.

Wende Badder thanked Bert Phills for his update. She introduced Dave Doey, Superintendent of Education.

The Newest in Safe Schools – What Parents Need to Know – Dave Doey

Dave Doey introduced Allan Davies, Jim Morton and Gary Girardi, an outstanding group of Principals and Vice-Principals who are part of the Board Team who have developed resources and training on Safe Schools, Character Development and Equity and Inclusion. Principal Peggy Blair is also a part of the team but was unable to attend the meeting. All of these areas are key to student achievement and students are counting on us to continue our work to ensure they have a safe, caring, learning environment where they feel valued and are given the opportunity to be appreciated in a host of ways. Student success is gauged in all of these areas.

The Equity and Inclusion initiative was launched a year ago and involves a four-year implementation phase. By September boards are required to have guidelines for religious accommodation and a policy on equity and inclusion in place. Larger boards have led the way in the province.

Jim Morton gave a presentation entitled “Human Rights and Education” which focused on the Ontario Human Rights Code. The human rights, equity and safe school components all align perfectly with our fundamental task of student achievement. The Ontario Human Rights Code has the power to supersede all other legislation. Boards have a duty to accommodate and to ensure that discrimination and harassment is not tolerated. The key is to communicate and to listen to the needs of the community and respond.

Information was shared on the development of a Religious Accommodation Guideline.

School Council Chairs took part in the “Flower Power Activity” where they were asked to identify what they see when they enter a school that demonstrates an equitable and inclusive environment and what they would like to see.

Gary Girardi and Jim Morton provided an overview on the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy - Reach Every Student. Equity and inclusion ties all the other initiatives together.

Gary Girardi presented information on the requirements of Bill 157 – Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act. In December 2004, the government appointed a Safe Schools Action Team.

The mandate of the Team was reviewed. Bill 157 came into force in February 2010. Mandatory reporting requirements under Bill 157 were outlined. **Additional information is available on the Ministry of Education website.**

A copy of the presentations will be included with the minutes.

Wende Badder thanked Dave Doey and the team of administrators for their informative presentations.

Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant Project Proposals

Karen Phipps the School Council Chair of Hanna Memorial School provided an overview of the schools Parent Reaching Out Grant Project – “School Skills to Help your Child Succeed”. The School Council was successful in obtaining the full grant amount of \$1000. The project proposal was for two parent workshops. “Helping Out with Homework” which focussed on Math was held in February and “Anti-Bullying Strategies” is planned for May. The workshops were/will be facilitated by the Learning Disabilities Association of Lambton County, Community Police Services and resident staff experts.

Jane Lawton and Susan Kelner, School Council Chairs from Ridgeview Moravian and Ridgetown District High School provided an overview of their joint PRO Grant submission. Both schools were approved for the full funding amount of \$1,000. The two schools will host an open educational event for parents and community members. The event will include a workshop presented by the People for Education, a newly created environmental/farming educational display “FarmzOnWheelz” developed by the Ontario Farm Animal Council/Ontario Science Centre. The display highlights career opportunities and identifies issues in the agriculture and environmental field.

Tracey Machan announced that this would be Gayle’s last District School Council Chairs’ meeting as she is retiring on June 30, 2010. Members of PIC and School Councils will miss working with Gayle as she is a strong advocate for parent engagement.

Director’s Highlights

Gayle thanked everyone indicating that this school year has been full of “lots of lasts”. The Director thanked Principals and School Council Chairs for attending the meeting as this reinforces their commitment that parent involvement in school is important.

Director Stucke shared a PowerPoint presentation highlighting good things happening in our schools. Students and staff were featured participating in various activities such as: fundraising events for Haiti; supporting the local food bank; taking part in the Heart and Stroke Soup Luncheon; promoting healthy eating habits; reading programs; Olympic events; Literacy Day, and Kindergarten registration. Special Education Coordinator, Denise Emery was shown receiving provincial recognition for her leadership role with the Ministry’s Autism Spectrum Disorder Project and her overall commitment to special education. Schools were urged to forward good news items to Penny Daniels, the Board’s Community Partnerships Officer.

In conclusion Gayle quoted her motto as Director - “Meeting Challenges Sharing Success Together”.

Co-Chair Wende Badder thanked everyone for attending the meeting and the staff of LCCVI for use of the facilities.

Next Meeting - The next meeting will take place in the fall with the date to be confirmed.

Sue Fraser, Recording Secretary