

LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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

Thursday, April 16, 2009
L.C.C.V.I.

Present:

- Elementary Schools: A. A. Wright, Bridgeview, Bright's Grove, Brooke Central, Cathcart, Colonel Cameron, Dawn-Euphemia, Dresden Area, Errol Road, Errol Village, Grand Bend, Gregory Drive, H. W. Burgess, Hanna Memorial, John N. Given, Johnston Memorial, King George VI (Sarnia), Kinnwood Central, McNaughton Avenue, Mooretown Courtright, Queen Elizabeth II (Sarnia), Ridgetown Public, Ridgeview Moravian, Riverview Central, Rosedale, Winston Churchill, Zone Central
- Secondary Schools: Alexander Mackenzie S.S., Chatham-Kent S.S., John McGregor S.S., Lambton Central C.V.I., North Lambton S.S, Ridgetown District H.S., Tilbury District H.S., Wallaceburg District S. S.
- Regrets: Aberarder Central, Bosanquet Central, Brigden, Confederation Central, D.A. Gordon, Devine Street, East Lambton, Harwich-Raleigh, High Park, Hillcrest, Indian Creek Road, King George VI (Chatham), Lakeroad, Lambton Centennial, Lansdowne, London Road, Merlin Area, Queen Elizabeth II (Chatham), Queen Elizabeth II (Petrolia), Sir John Moore, South Plympton/Wyoming, Tecumseh, Thamesville Area, Tilbury Area, Victor Lauriston, W. J. Baird, Wheatley Area, , Blenheim District H.S., Lambton-Kent Composite School, Northern Collegiate, Sarnia Collegiate I. & T.S., St. Clair S.S.
- Staff: Gayle Stucke, Director of Education
Ron Andruchow, Superintendent of Business
Pam Bradshaw, Principal
Sandra Perkins, Principal
- Trustees: Scott McKinlay, Chair, Jane Bryce, Isabell Carter, Jim Townsend, Trustees

Administrative

Assistant/Recorder: Sue Fraser

Welcome and Greetings from the Board

Principal Phil Warner introduced the Chair of the Board, Scott McKinlay.

The Chair thanked School Council Chairs for attending the meeting and for the work they do to support student achievement. He introduced Trustees Isabell Carter and Jim Townsend.

Trustee McKinlay shared information on the Drive Away Hunger project sponsored by Farm Credit Canada. The event will be held the second week in October with information to schools by the end of August.

Director Gayle Stucke introduced the Board's New Superintendent of Education Bert Phills who was formerly the Principal of LCCVI.

Welcome / Update from PIC Co-Chairs

The Director then introduced Parent Involvement Committee Co-Chairs Tracey Machan and Peggy Johnson. **They reminded School Council Chairs and Principals that names of School Council Chairs interested in serving on the central Parent Involvement Committee should be submitted to the Director's Office (Gayle or Sue) by April 30.**

This year one of PIC's projects included the creation of a binder outlining best practices for school councils. It is hoped that the binder will be completed for distribution in the fall. PIC funds were used to sponsor the very successful Media Violence Workshop held in October. Once again funds will also be donated towards the purchase of books for the Kindergarten registration package. PIC is sponsoring a Suicide Prevention Workshop on April 30. Each secondary school will send a team of two students and a guidance counsellor to the presentation and take back information to their schools.

Peggy Johnston indicated that she has been on PIC since it began three years ago and has come to the end of her term with the committee. She encouraged individuals to submit their names through their School Council and Principal for nomination to serve on the Parent Involvement Committee. She outlined the personal and professional development opportunities she has gained through her role on PIC.

Director's Update

The Director noted that those involved in education are looking ahead to what has to be completed by the end of the school year. Overall it has been a good year. She reflected on the past year's accomplishment and challenges. On a sad note we lost three students in the past month. Good things continue to take place to support student learning. Every third Board meeting a presentation called "Director's Highlights" is shared that focuses on good things happening across the district. **Schools were asked to submit good new stories to the Director's office.** A copy of the presentation is shared with schools featured following the Board meeting.

Board staff is pleased with the gains we have made in student achievement. There continues to be a strong focus on literacy and numeracy initiatives across the district. Grade 10 students just completed the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test which is part of the graduation requirement. As part of the Ministry's direction the Board is also focusing on safe school initiatives and character development.

The Director spoke to how far school and parent councils have come over the years. In the past home and school associations were mainly fundraising groups for playground equipment or field trips. They did not have much to do with what went on in the classroom. Schools Councils as mandated by the Ministry of Education have become an advisory group to the principals and school staff. Although they do not have a vote they provide valuable input on a number of educational issues. The Director will be presenting a workshop to Vice-Principals entitled "Beyond the Hotdog" stressing that the role of parent leaders goes beyond fundraising. What movement in student achievement we would see if every parent was involved in their child's education. School councils have promoted this message and the Ministry of Education is promoting this message at the provincial level.

The Ministry of Education School Information Finder website began with good intentions to be open and transparent; however the school profile component has had some negative feedback due to the potential to compare or rank schools. The Board does not support the ranking of schools.

The Director closed by reading a poem written by a Gr. 5 student from the Greater Toronto Area entitled "What School is Really Like". She thanked Parents, Administrators and Trustees for what they do every day to make schools "palaces" for our children.

2009-2010 Budget Development – Ron Andruchow

Director Stucke introduced Superintendent of Business, Ron Andruchow to present information on the 2009-2010 Budget and also Sandra Perkins, Principal of Queen Elizabeth II School in Sarnia and Pam Bradshaw Principal of John McGregor S.S. to present information on school budgets.

Superintendent Andruchow presented information on the 2009-10 Grants for Student Needs, funding enhancements and grant cost saving measures. All school boards are required to submit a balanced budget to the Ministry of Education by June 30 each year. A copy of the presentation is included with the minutes.

Elementary School Budget Presentation – Sandra Perkins

An overview was provided on an average elementary school budget and how funding is rolled out in cooperation with school councils. A copy of the presentation is included with the minutes of the meeting.

Secondary School Budget Presentation – Pam Bradshaw

Information was shared on the various sources of funding including public and non-public funds. A copy of the budget presentation is included with the minutes.

Gayle Stucke thanked the Superintendent of Business and the Principals for their informative presentations.

Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant Project Proposals

She advised that information packages were available which provided a summary of the LKDSB Parent Reaching Out Grants approved for the 2008-2009 school year. Project proposals were submitted for various initiatives, many with a theme of literacy and numeracy, but all tied to increasing parent involvement. Three members of PIC provided an overview of their successful project submissions. Copies of these approved projects were also included in the package to assist school councils with the application process to apply for future grants.

Heather Simpson of Ridgetown Public Elementary School presented information on their schools PRO project “Family Literacy Night. The school was disappointed with its EQAO results and they wanted to encourage parents to become more involved in their child’s learning to empower students for EQAO. They applied for project funding to bring in a power guest speaker by the name of Dez Sargeant who presented to students and staff during the day and then to parents in the evening. Heather invited School Council Chairs to contact her for further information.

Dave Macko of Ridgeview Moravian School provided an overview of the Carousel Workshop offered two years ago at the school. In order to provide interesting and valuable information to parents the school council arranged for Board and community staff to present four sessions. Chatham-Kent Police Services gave a presentation on internet safety and cyber bullying. LDAO and specialist teachers provided information on “homework help” and how to be more effective helping students at home. Special Education staff gave a presentation on IEPs and the IPRC process. The fourth session focused on “technology in the classroom”.

To ensure the event was a success the school rented a sign to advertise the information night; School Council members volunteered to make chili and pizzas were brought in; and childcare was available to allow parents to attend. Feedback from the event was excellent.

Judy Krall the School Council Chair of Alexander Mackenzie shared information on the school’s projects from the past three years. The first year the School Council was successful in obtaining a PRO grant for the Bridges Project which was a series of workshop that coincided with School Council meetings. The project was a bridge between the School Council, families and the educational community.

Workshops were offered on Student Success initiatives offered at the school; a presentation called “Closing the Gaps” where a resource person from the Amethyst School discussed the challenges related to social skills; and Rebound staff spoke to parents about drug proofing their children.

Funds received through the PRO grant in year two were used to hold workshops that coincided with Gr. 9 Orientation Day. Workshops were offered on bullying; school code of conduct; programs and supports available through the Resource Department; and a report card presentation to help parents better understand the reporting process.

This year the school received a grant for a project called “Parental Involvement with LD (Learning Disabled) Children. Judy stressed that Parent Reaching Out grants are a great opportunity through the Ministry of Education to help increase parental involvement.

Break-Out Sessions by PIC Family of School Groupings

At 8:15 guests adjourned to break-out sessions organized by PIC family of school groupings.

Discussions at the break-outs sessions centered around four questions:

How has your school council supported student achievement over the last year?

What is an accomplishment you are most proud of this year?

What is the biggest challenge or issue your school has faced this year?

What advice do you have for PIC as we move forward?

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

Sue Fraser, Recording Secretary