

Lambton Kent District School Board

Parent Involvement Committee

February 8, 2021—6:30 p.m.

Via Teams

Present:

John Howitt, Director of Education; Ruth Ann Dodman, Trustee; Bonnie Gotelaer, Recorder; Angie Baresich, Brooke Central; Tracy Pound, Errol Village; Melinda Hazen, High Park; Melissa Hewitt, Queen Elizabeth II Sarnia; Jennifer Whiteye, Naahii Ridge; Karen Slater, Sir John Moore; Nancy Simon, Chatham-Kent S.S.; Alexandra Smith, Great Lakes Secondary School; Jacqueline Dick, John McGregor S.S.; Tracey Machan, Northern Collegiate/Virtual Learning High School; Martina Jackson, Lambton Public Health ; Stacey Elson, Human Resources Officer

Regrets: Nicole Hopper, Marian McEwan, Annette Schliehauf

Welcome- Director of Education John Howitt / PIC Co-Chair Tracey Machan.

- Co-Chair Tracey Machan welcomed everyone to the meeting. Director Howitt introduced Stacey Elson to the Committee.

Business Arising from the Meeting of November 30, 2020

- Minutes approved with no additions.

Director's Update

- School Reopening
 - Director Howitt indicated a visual difference to students in this return to face to face learning today is the order from the Ministry of Labour that staff wear face shields when they are not able to be distanced by 2 metres from students. Students from Grade 1-12 are required to wear face masks at school and on busses, with the confirmation the pre-screener completed by the secondary students. All staff in schools and the board offices also complete the pre-screener. Students are being encouraged to not congregate in groups such as using playground after school. The Medical Officer of Health did not support the use of masks by Kindergarten students with the decision that they would touch too many surfaces with their masks. The Stay-at-Home order has been extended until February 15, 2021. Question regarding masks at recess with getting damp. LKDSB follows the provincial guidelines and masks are to be worn at recess. If the student is involved in vigorous play, e.g. basketball, masks can be removed.

- School Climate Survey
 - Director Howitt noted questions were kept similar to the last School Climate Survey.

- ThoughtExchange Follow Up
 - Next school year is in process of being planned as Secondary Calendars need to be in place for course selection. Feedback from families has been welcomed in indicating things being done differently that parents would like to continue such as IPRC meetings moving to a virtual meeting. This has allowed for more parental participation.
Feedback from families regarding having a virtual school in the future as a program choice for parents has been requested. Thoughtexchange results indicated parents were not in favour of a virtual school. Due to a technical error, the link and other communications have not reached the Virtual School families. Virtual School families have been receiving communications via their principal. A separate survey will be sent to the families. The Thoughtexchange may not be accurate due to these issues.
Question regarding extracurriculars and can they be offered to those in the Virtual School.
Director Howitt indicated in the past, a school that is very small and teams are not available in that school, they would be offered to be on a team in a close, neighboring school. This would not work during cohorting but could be reviewed to allow Virtual Schools could have that opportunity.

- Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)
 - This Literacy Test is a provincial exam which is a graduation requirement written in the spring of Grade 10. If not successful, the student can retry or enroll in an equivalent OSSLT course. With the cancellation of the exam last spring, the requirement was waived for the students affected. This fall, the OSSLT had been removed as a requirement for the grade twelves although these students were identified in sufficient time to help them meet the requirement. The students in Grades 10 and 11 will be able to complete a field test and if successful, will count as the requirement. If they do not pass, it does not count against them. The field test must be face to face.
Tracey Machan expressed concern there could be a lot of students without the option and advantages of trials and workshops before writing as well as the disadvantages to the Virtual School students.

- PRO Grant
 - All schools will be asked to reapply with applications due March 12 at noon. Volunteers to review are Karen Slater, Melissa Hewitt, Melinda Hazen, and Tracey Machan.

- Other Business/Future Agenda Items

The continuing of March Break has been subject to questions and rumors. Our students have continued to learn at home as they would in school indicating both staff and students would welcome a break. Public Health will be responsible to make the decision on proceeding/cancelling the break. Contacting local MP would be a parent's best avenue to voice opinions. Adjustments would be made accordingly to the Quadmester model should the break be changed.

Question regarding whether LKDSB has considered moving towards eBooks in the future. There has been no conclusion on this but have been working away from using textbooks. Textbooks can be costly as they need a refresh after periods of time.

OFSAA has canceled their events for the remainder of the school year. Graduations will follow Public Health Guidelines.

Future Agenda:
PRO Grant Rollout
Celebration Stories
Best Strategies and Practices Sharing
Snapshots of Excellence

- Meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.