

LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

December 7, 2015

Sarnia and Chatham Education Centres (Video Conference)

Present: Jim Costello, Director of Education; Shannon Sasseville, Trustee; Cherie Whitsitt, Alexander Mackenzie S.S.; Dan Chauvin, Chatham-Kent S.S.; Kelly-Lynn Musico, Northern Collegiate; Kristen Schrie, High Park; Alexandra Smith, P.E. McGibbon; Melissa Hewitt, Queen Elizabeth II Sarnia; Jessica McCracken, Tilbury Area P.S.; Annette Schleihauf, Zone Central; Martina Jackson, Lambton Public Health; Jenelle Arnew, Chatham-Kent Public Health

Regrets: Ruth Ann Dodman, Trustee; Angie Baresich, Brooke Central; Michelle Beimers, East Lambton; Sheila Rogerson, Errol Road; Karen Green Williams, Gregory Drive.

Welcome and Introductions – Dan Chauvin / Jim Costello

- Dan Chauvin welcomed everyone to the meeting and members introduced themselves.
- Director Costello introduced Trustee Shannon Sasseville who is replacing Jack Fletcher. He explained the annual Board Organization meeting process. Shannon will sit on PIC for the next year along with Ruth Ann Dodman.

Board and School Websites – Chris Marvell, Manager of IT

- Background information was shared on the IT Strategic Plan which includes the Board's overall infrastructure upgrade. The Board is looking at replacing the Board and all school websites to make them more dynamic and easier to manage. Input is being sought from school and Board staff as well as parent and student representatives.
- The Scholantis product has been recommended for the upgrade. The feed from the Board website will be able to go on school sites. The website will reformat itself to adjust to size to view on any device. Facebook and Twitter feeds can be added to school sites. There will also be an option for a collaboration area on the website.
- Input will be sought from stakeholder groups via survey. Survey questions will be – What do you like about the websites currently? What do you dislike? What features should be removed? What features should be added? Chris would like to work with a PIC contact(s) to get the survey out to all School Council Chairs and then perhaps meet to discuss input. Feedback will then be shared with the web designer. The survey will be shared with other stakeholder groups in January with a 2-3 week window to respond. The goal is to have the upgrades completed by September 2016 or December 2016 in the event of a delay.
- **Chris will forward Sue messaging and the survey link to share with PIC and with Principals to share with their parents/school councils. Chris will also post the survey on the Board website.**
- Data will be obtained via survey monkey. It was clarified that the preference will be for individuals to identify themselves so that follow up can occur.
- **Alexandra and Jessica volunteered to be the PIC contacts. PIC members will share information with their respective school councils.**
Members were encouraged to review other websites for ideas.

Business Arising from the Meeting of October 5, 2015

- Jim spoke to Taf Lounsbury, Superintendent of Early Years/Elementary Program regarding the inquiry around therapy supports not being provided in schools until Grade 1.
- Currently, Pathways (in the north) and The Children's Treatment Centre (in the south) are responsible for speech and language supports from the age of 0 to 6 yrs. There has been recognition at the ministry level regarding how many transitions families and children have to make when receiving support for their children with special needs. The ministry has requested that each county submit a plan to meet the requirements in the new Special Needs Strategy for students aged 0 to 21. This will eliminate the current restrictions around who is responsible for age groups and allow for a seamless transition.

- When FDK first started, the treatment centres in our counties were given money to pilot a delivery model in the schools, and it worked very well but it was too expensive for the ministry to sustain once the FDK initiative expanded to more schools.
- It was clarified that it is not that we don't allow Speech and Language support in our FDK classrooms, but rather the issue is as a result of restrictions by the ministries. Along with every county in Ontario, we have submitted a proposal to try to alleviate the problem.
- **Jim will confirm with James Clark his availability to present school athletic information at the February 1 PIC meeting.**
- School Councils can set up private Facebook and Twitter accounts but are encouraged to work with their principal. Social media expertise varies by school.

Report on People for Education's "Making Connections Conference"

- Kelly-Lynn, Karen, Kristen, Michelle and Jessica attended the November conference in Toronto.
- Feedback was positive and the event was well attended.
- Keynote speaker Dr. Alan Sears spoke on the topic "Community Engagement Learning" and the importance of citizenship. It was suggested that he be considered as the speaker for the April District School Council/Parent Evening.
- Other sessions attended included "Building Student Engagement", "Building Better Report Cards", "Beyond Standardized Testing" and "Help Children Fall in Love with Nature".
- Jim clarified that the regular parent teacher interview process will resume in February when provincial report cards are issued. As a result of the timeline between an agreement being reached with ETFO and the agreement being ratified, teachers are permitted to initiate parent teacher interviews for this fall only. ETFO's direction is for interviews to be arranged for students who are struggling.

Director's Update – Jim Costello

Pupil Accommodation Update

- The November 2015 Pupil Accommodation Report is posted on the Board website under Pupil Accommodation.
- The Report contains a series of recommendations based on declining enrolment/demographics and funding based on the impact of grant reductions. The Report outlines a multi-year, 8-phase plan to consolidate sites. Only two recommendations were brought forward along with Initial Staff Reports to commence ARCs in January. Director Costello explained the changes as a result of the new Ministry Pupil Accommodation Guidelines.
- The Board approved proceeding with the first two phases of the eight phase plan which involves the establishment of an Accommodation Review Committee for Sarnia Collegiate Institute and Technical School and St. Clair Secondary School to study the Initial Staff Report recommendation for consolidation of Sarnia Collegiate Institute and Technical School and St. Clair Secondary School into one school on the St. Clair Secondary School site and the establishment of an Accommodation Review Committee for South Plympton Public School and Wyoming Public School to study the Initial Staff Report recommendation for consolidation of South Plympton Public School and Wyoming Public School into one school at the Wyoming Public School Site.
- PIC Members were encouraged to download the report and review the data around finance and demographics. The Board is at a 70/30 capacity/vacancy rate. We have capacity for 31,504 in our schools. In 2015 there are 22,337 students which results in 9,167 empty pupil spaces. In 2020 that number of empty spaces is projected to increase to 10,024 and in 2025 that number increases to 10,575 empty capacity spaces.
- The Board will lose approximately \$4M in the Top Up Funding grant over the next three years. The Ministry changed the criteria for the Enhanced Top Up funding. Elementary schools must be at least 10 km away from the next closest school of the Board. Secondary schools must be at least 20 km away from the next closest secondary school of the Board. Under the old formula the LKDSB received funding for 47 elementary and 13 secondary schools. Under the new formula the LKDSB will receive funding for 11 elementary and 3 secondary schools.

- Information was shared on the average age of schools. The average age in Ontario is 38 years and the LKDSB secondary school average age is 46 years and LKDSB elementary school average age is 51 years.
- Recommendations around school closures and consolidations are not an indictment of schools or staff but rather about the age of buildings, declining enrolment, grant reductions and the cost of keeping older sites running. The LKDSB's enrolment decline is 9 times the rate of the province.
- The Ministry has introduced a School Capital Consolidation incentive for boards to apply for funding if they consolidate two or more schools into one. Consolidated sites can be newly built or renovated.
- The Facility Condition Index (FCI) are facilities management benchmarks provided to school boards by the Ministry that measures the condition of a building versus the cost to build new.
- Other phases of the Pupil Accommodation Report identify options for K-12 schools in Blenheim, Forest and Dresden.
- Meeting timelines for the SCITS/SCSS and South Plympton/Wyoming ARCs were outlined. The ARCs will make recommendations to Senior Administration who will develop a final report to the Board of Trustees to vote on in April. ARCs will be conducted over the next 3-5 years. The multi-phase Pupil Accommodation Report was developed to reduce the level of anxiety by naming school communities early. Timelines have not been set for the remaining phases and recommendations can be changed should new data be presented.
- Jim asked PIC members, if questioned, to refer parents/community members to the Pupil Accommodation Report on the website.

Syrian Refugees

- Of the 6 million people in Syria, 3.6 million are under the age of 18.
- The revised federal government plan specifies that 25,000 Syrian refugees will be identified by December 31, 2015, with a target of 10,000 arriving at this time, and the remainder by the end of February 2016. Approximately 10,000 Syrian refugees are expected to come to Ontario— with a large majority of them expected to arrive in Toronto or the GTA, as well as London, Kitchener-Waterloo, Ottawa, Windsor and Hamilton.
- Pre-screening has started in Jordan. The majority of refugees will initially be placed on military bases. Refugees are being admitted to Canada with “permanent resident” status.
- The Ministry of Education and CODE are working closely with school boards to ensure adequate supports are in place.
- We anticipate that LKDSB will begin welcoming Syrian Refugee families in the near future. A memo has been shared with principals outlining Ministry direction in regards to registration requirements for these students.

CODE Parent Engagement Document

- CODE recently published the Parent Engagement document for use in Ontario schools and as a resource for parent groups – “Inspiring Your Child to Learn and Love Math”.
- Six copies of the resource were sent to every elementary school in the province with a copy to be shared with the School Council/PIC Chairs. Copies were made available for PIC members to review.

Canadian Parents for French Resource

- Canadian Parents for French (Ontario) has introduced French Street, a new searchable database of French program enrichment opportunities for French Second Language (FSL) students. Commissioned by the Ministry of Education CPF developed French Street to support the goals in the Ministry's “A Framework for FSL in Ontario Schools” and specifically to support student engagement in French to Gr. 12 and enrich the FSL classroom environment. A notice was sent PIC Chairs via the Director's Office. The resource can be accessed via FrenchStreet.ca.

Planning for April District School Council Event

- PIC supported investigating Barbara Coloroso, Dr. Alan Sears or David Bouchard.
- It was recommended that the presentation be offered both in Sarnia and Chatham.
- Options were put forth to offer a session for teachers and parents and to look at partnering with the Board's Special Education Department; the St. Clair Catholic DSB or another outside agency (i.e. United Way, public health or mental health).
- Other suggestions included highlighting what is going on in schools or offering activity based exercises or networking opportunities. Webcast or Adobe Connect would provide increased access to presentations. A fall topic could include a follow up exercise with schools re the spring topic.
- Chat boards for school councils would provide a forum to ask or share questions (i.e. fundraisers etc.). Schools have inquired about quarter auctions however the Lottery and Gaming Commission deem this as a form of gambling.
- **Jim and Sue will come up with dates for the April School Council/Parent Evening and availability of speakers. Information will be communicated via email or Jim and Sue will meet with the PIC Co-Chairs. Jim will talk to the Director of the SCCDSB re co-hosting an event.**

Future Meeting Dates

- The next meeting will be held on Monday, February 1, 2016 via video conference, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Other Business/Future Agenda Items

- Ellie Fraser, the Board's new Mental Health Lead has put together a Mental Health Strategy Input Questionnaire and is seeking input from the Parent Involvement Committee.
- Sue will contact Ellie regarding presenting at the February 1 PIC meeting and will forward the questionnaire to PIC members in advance.

Adjournment: 8:22 p.m.

Sue Fraser, Recording Secretary