

LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

February 1, 2016

Sarnia and Chatham Education Centres (Video Conference)

Present:

Jim Costello, Director of Education; Ruth Ann Dodman, Trustee; Dan Chauvin, Chatham-Kent S.S.; Kelly-Lynn Musico, Northern Collegiate; Angie Baresich, Brooke Central; Sheila Rogerson, Errol Road; Karen Green Williams, Gregory Drive; 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

Regrets: Shannon Sasseville, Trustee; Cherie Whitsitt, Alexander Mackenzie S.S.; Michelle Beimers, East Lambton; Jenelle Arnew, Chatham-Kent Public Health;

Welcome and Introductions – Kelly-Lynn Musico

- Kelly-Lynn welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- She introduced James Clarke, Secondary Teacher and LKSSAA Coordinator.

LKSSAA Participation Numbers – James Clarke, LKSSAA Coordinator

- James Clarke presented the following information from the Lambton Kent Secondary School Athletic Association: participation numbers for fall, winter and spring athletic activities for the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 to date; yearly season totals and yearly totals from 2013-2014 to 2015-2016; number of athletes participating in sports for each school, by district, based on FTE (full time equivalent); and total participation numbers from 2013-2014 to 2015-2016.
- A total of 18 secondary schools from the Lambton Kent District School Board, St. Clair Catholic District School Board, the French Language Public and Catholic Boards and Chatham Christian High School are members of LKSSAA.
- An average of 35% of students (3 year span) participate in school sports – approximately 50% with multi-sport athletes. The FTE enrolment has dropped an average of 4% for each of the last 3 years; however total number of athletes has remained approximately the same each year - between 5800-5900. Amalgamation of the Chatham and Lambton Athletic Associations has contributed to participation levels remaining status quo. Schools classifications (A, AA, AAA) based on FTE enrolment allows teams to compete against schools of similar size.
- Concern was raised that some schools were unable to field teams this year; specifically junior football. It was clarified that a process is in place to allow outside coaches to assist; however staff representatives are required to be involved in sanctioned sports. While acknowledging that co-curricular activities play an important part in the educational experience; coaching is voluntary and schools cannot be staffed based on coaching expertise and willingness to participate. In response to the question as to whether students of smaller schools can play on another school's team; it was clarified that there are strict transfer/eligibility rules in place for OFSAA sanctioned sports. The school team would have to approve the student(s) from another school participating as if approved the entire team would be ineligible to move on to the next level of competition (i.e. SWOSSAA or OFSAA). PIC members noted that the potential of consolidating SCITS and SCSS could allow for increased co-curricular opportunities for students.
- The LKSSAA website allows parents and the media access to scoring updates. Event scores are updated by 9 p.m. each day.
- PIC members thanked James for his informative presentation.

Mental Health Strategy Update – Ellie Fraser, Mental Health Lead

- As an introduction to the mental health update, a video made by Kelly-Lynn's daughter was shared. The video represents girls from grades 9 to 12 and is a recreation of the video "Try" by Colbi Collat. The message is "self-love" aimed at females and it is hoped that the video can be used in self-esteem workshops.

- Kelly-Lynn introduced Ellie Fraser, Mental Health Lead for the LKDSB.
- Ellie provided background information on the 2012-2015 Mental Health Strategy which focused on 8 strategic objectives: increasing mental health awareness; developing a Suicide Prevention Protocol; mapping out Pathways to Supports; strengthening community partnerships; building mental health literacy; enhancing mental health expertise; reviewing and extending strategies for family engagement; and developing and implementing evidence-based programming.
- The 2015-2016 Strategy includes the development of the Suicide Risk Management Protocol that will involve prevention, intervention and postvention. The working group is in the early phase of the roll out of intervention protocols
- “Making Sense of Mental Health” an after school learning series is being offered in partnership with the SCCDSB – two per month, one in the north and one in the south.
- The Be Safe App is a free download to access mental health supports and services.
- The Board continues to enhance our community partnerships. Information was shared on the Ride Don’t Hide event and the Reaching Out “Making Sense of Mental Health” presentation.
- In order to take stock and update the Board’s Mental Health Strategy, Ellie is asking the following 4 questions of key stakeholder groups: What are you passionate about regarding mental health in schools? What are the major mental health concerns at LKDSB? What have we done well? Where could we do better? **Sue will forward the questionnaire template to PIC members to provide input.**
- Going forward we are looking at how to improve the delivery of mental health services and communication so students, staff and parents know where to seek supports.
- Members of PIC recommended providing parents with “similar language” to use at home so parents can be proactive. Parents asked that information be sent home before “lockdown” drills are held as this can cause anxiety in some children. **Ellie Fraser will speak to Superintendent Gary Girardi re the Safe Schools Committee developing common language for lockdown drills.**
- Information was requested re overall family mental health supports. The Schools and Communities in Partnership program (SCIP) is a partnership between St. Clair Child and Youth Services, Chatham Kent Children’s Services, the Lambton Kent DSB and the St. Clair Catholic DSB. The program provides mental health interventions to families whose children have been identified as experiencing adjustment difficulties in schools.
- PIC members thanked Ellie for sharing the 2015-2016 Mental Health Strategy Updates.

Business Arising from the Meeting of December 7, 2015

- The IT Survey was shared with PIC members to share with their school councils and was also posted on the website. Input from stakeholder groups is being compiled and will be used to identify areas for improvement for the Board and school websites.

Director’s Update – Jim Costello

Additional PA Day April 15, 2016

- As a result of provincial negotiations with teachers’ unions in the fall, school boards in Ontario were directed by the Ministry of Education to add an additional Professional Activity Day to the 2015-2016 School Year Calendar. For the Lambton Kent District School Board, the extra Professional Activity Day will fall on **Friday, April 15, 2016**. This has been communicated to parents and the community. April 15 is the date chosen by most boards in the region.

Proposed 2016-2017 Modified School Year Calendar

- Unions and Board staff are proposing a modified calendar from what was recommended by the Ministry of Education for the 2016-2017 School Year Calendar. A modified calendar needs to be submitted to the Ministry for approval by March 1.
- The proposal is for students to attend school until December 23 with a return date of January 9 (as opposed to December 16, returning January 2 per the current MOE calendar).
- Members of PIC agreed that having classes end on December 16 is a long time for students to be off before Christmas. One option put forth was to have the break run from Wednesday to Wednesday however split weeks can be problematic for other employment sectors and daycare providers.

- The question was asked whether December 23 could be a PA Day. Director Costello explained the importance of PA Days and that scheduling on the day before a holiday would not be as meaningful.
- **PIC supported either the Wednesday to Wednesday option or the modified proposal for the last day of school to be December 23.**

Pupil Accommodation Update

- Director Costello shared an update following the initial meetings of the two Pupil Accommodation Review Committees.
- The first Public Sarnia South Secondary Schools ARC meeting was held on January 13, 2016 at St. Clair Secondary School (SCSS). Kristin Schrie is on this committee as the School Council Chair of SCSS. The surrounding community of SCITS voiced concern over what the loss will mean for residents and business as well as the loss of the institution itself. The Mayor of Sarnia forwarded a letter to Council asking for an investigation into an economic analysis of what will occur should either school close. Both SCITS and SCSS are at half capacity and the schools are only 3 km apart. The Board has asked for \$14M from the Ministry but if funding is not approved the Board can still consolidate schools. The next meeting will be held on March 8 at SCITS. Tours of SCSS and SCITS are being arranged for ARC members.
- The first Public Wyoming Area Schools ARC Meeting took place on January 19, 2016 at Wyoming Public School. Concern was expressed over the timeline of the consolidation of the two schools and how students from both schools would be accommodated. The second Public Wyoming Area Schools Committee Meeting will be held on March 23, 2016 at South-Plympton.
- Both Accommodation Review Committees expressed concerns that final accommodation recommendations are to be presented to the Board prior to receiving decisions from the Ministry on funding applications. Director Costello spoke to the financial and grant funding challenges facing the LKDSB as a result of the change in the Ministry Funding Formula.
- Information including questions from the public is posted on the Pupil Accommodation website.
- Questions were raised around legacy donations. Director Costello explained that the Ministry is open to community partners but that donations would need to be sizeable and annualized as opposed to a one-time payment. Comments were also shared around options for a community hub.

Syrian New Comers

- Regular updates are provided by the Ministry on the number of Syrian new comers arriving in Ontario. The Ministry has moved away from the use of the term refugee.
- To date 9 students have been registered at schools within the LKDSB. Arrival of these students is very emotional and Senior Administration is very proud of how welcoming our school communities have been. The Board's English Language Learner (ELL) staff is providing supports to new students.
- The Ministry in partnership with the federal government will be providing resources and funding supports required to successfully integrate Syrian newcomers into our education system.

Volunteer and Volunteer Driver Policy and Regulations

- At the January 26, 2016 Board Meeting Trustees approved changes to the Volunteer and Volunteer Driver Policy and Regulations that require higher standards for Vulnerable Sector Criminal Background Checks (CBCs). Changes are aimed at protection of students and reducing risk. Initially it was the Parent Involvement Committee that encouraged movement for all volunteers to have a Criminal Background Check.
- Changes will not be implemented until September 2016 to allow principals time to communicate with their volunteers and implement new requirements.
- Some concerns were raised regarding equity issues and the potential impact on parent engagement.
- **The revised requirements for Volunteers and Volunteer Drivers will be reviewed at the May 16 PIC meeting.**

Planning for May Collaborative Parent Event District

- LKDSB will partner with the SCCDSB to offer a collaborative event with Dr. Jean Clinton on May 2 and 3. The LKDSB will host a parent/community presentation at St. Clair Secondary School on the evening of May 2. The SCCDSB will host a parent/community event on the evening of May 3 at Ursuline College in Chatham. Principals from both boards will have the opportunity to hear Dr. Clinton on the morning of May 3. Costs will be split between the two boards and we will work with SCCDSB to promote the presentations. Further details to follow.
- Special Education staff will share information with community agencies. PIC members will work through Principals and School Council Chairs and perhaps distribute flyers.
Sue will communicate next steps following consultation with organizers from the SCCDSB.
- Jim spoke with the Director of the SCCDSB who proposed the two boards submit a joint PRO Grant proposal for next year. Jim suggested that perhaps Kelly-Lynn, Dan, Sue and himself could meet with Director Dan Parr and their PIC Co-Chairs to brainstorm regarding a big name speaker for the joint proposal. **Sue will investigate timelines for PRO Grants/approvals.**

Future Meeting Dates

- The next meeting will be held on Monday, May 16, 2016 at 5:45 p.m. at the Sarnia Education Centre. The Superintendent of Business will present information on the 2016-2017 Budget for input. The Volunteer and Volunteer Driver Policy and Regulations will be reviewed.

Other Business/Future Agenda Items

- On February 18, St. Clair S. S. is hosting *Changes and Choices: Empowering Youth and Their Families for the Journey Ahead*. Speakers are Ellie Fraser, Mental Health Lead for the LKDSB and Charlene Mahon, Professor of Psychology, Lambton College. Costs are funded through a Parents Reaching Out Grant. All parents are welcome to attend.
- Clarification was requested on how school capacity rates are determined. Director Costello explained that capacity rates are determined by the Ministry of Education based on square footage. Barager software and OnSIS are used to project enrolment data.
- Ontario College of Teachers is hosting the *Inspiring Public Confidence* Conference on May 26-27 at the Chelsea Hotel in Toronto. Registration timelines were noted. **Members interested in attending to contact Sue.**

Adjournment: 8:45 pm.