

LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

October 5, 2015

Sarnia Education Centre

Present:

Jim Costello, Director of Education; Ruth Ann Dodman, Trustee;
Cherie Whitsitt, Alexander Mackenzie S.S.; Dan Chauvin, Chatham-Kent S.S.;
Kelly-Lynn Musico, Northern Collegiate; Angie Baresich, Brooke Central; Michelle Beimers,
East Lambton; 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; Jenelle Arnew, Chatham-Kent Public Health

Regrets: Jack Fletcher, Trustee; Tim Houle; North Lambton S.S.;

Welcome and Introductions – Kelly-Lynn Musico / Jim Costello

- Kelly-Lynn Musico welcomed everyone to the first PIC meeting of the school year.
- Members introduced themselves and a special welcome was extended to new members joining the Committee.
- Jim explained that under the By-Laws, the Parent Involvement Committee has two Co-Chairs. Only members serving a two year term are eligible to serve as Co-Chair. Terms are staggered, allowing for the election of one new Co-Chair each year. Kelly-Lynn is starting her second year of a two year term. Karen just completed her two-year term as PIC Co-Chair. The two Trustee representatives will provide the Board with updates from PIC meetings.
- He outlined the format of PIC meetings, noting that the Committee typically meets 4-5 times per year. The first and last meetings of the year are held face to face, with the remainder of meetings held via video conference from the Sarnia and Chatham Education Centres. The first meeting of the year is held in Chatham and the final meeting is held in Sarnia.

Purpose of PIC/By-Laws – Jim Costello

- Parent Involvement Committees are legislated by the Ministry of Education under Ontario Regulation 612/00. Under the Regulation, PICs are required to have by-laws in place.
- The LKDSB PIC By-Laws were distributed with the agenda package. The Director reviewed the purpose of PIC as set out in the By-Laws. It was stressed that PIC is not a forum for parents to raise single school issues but rather to look at a system perspective and what is best for all school communities.
- Terms of membership for parent members of the Committee are for one or two years. Terms are staggered so that parent positions become available each year. Candidates are to indicate whether they would like to serve on the Committee for a one or two year term.
- The role of the PIC Co-Chair was reviewed. Terms are also staggered so that one of the two positions is open at the beginning of each school year. Only a parent who is beginning a two-year term is eligible to stand for the position of Co-Chair.
- Nominations and the vote for the second Co-Chair position will be held at the end of the meeting.

Business Arising from the Meeting of May 25, 2015

- Jim was to speak to the Director of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board regarding a shared presentation opportunity. Dan Parr investigated and found no record of David Bouchard presenting at the SCCDSB.
- Karen provided background information on author and literacy advocate, David Bouchard who was a speaker at last year's Ministry PIC Symposium. She will look back in her notes for his contact information should PIC wish to contract him for a future engagement.

Director's Update – Jim Costello

- Jim explained that he typically provides an update at PIC meetings to inform/update the Committee of items of interest to parents and the school community.
- He encouraged members to download the LKDSB on the Go App and to access the LKDSB website.

Technology Enriched Learning Plan (TELP)

- An overview of the evolution and implementation of the LKDSB Technology Enriched Learning Plan (TELP) was presented last year. TELP was introduced following 4 years of pilot projects – mobile technology.
- The Board is in the second year of a three year plan. Last year was the preparation year where training was provided for Grade 7 teaching staff. This year 1,400 iPad minis were rolled out to Gr. 7 students. Providing all students with the same device allows for equity for all students in Gr. 7.
- This year training will be provided for Gr. 8 teachers to prepare for the 1,400 Gr. 7 students going into Gr. 8 next year. Next year training will be provided to Gr. 9 teachers to prepare for incoming students.
- EQAO is also moving to an electronic delivery format.
- LKDSB is one of three boards in the province providing one to one iPads and is the only board allowing students to take the devices home. Powerful presentations demonstrating increased student engagement have been made to PIC and at a district School Council Chairs evening.
- The focus is on mobile technology and not a specific device; however Apple is often the device of choice.
- A TELP Q/A document is posted on the LKDSB website.
- The Ministry of Education provided a technology grant to school boards. This amount almost covered the cost of purchasing the devices.

Ombudsman / Public Concerns

- Effective September 1, 2015, the Ombudsman is empowered to investigate and resolve complaints about school boards. This will not change how we treat our student, staff and parents or the way in which we operate our schools.
- LKDSB Policy and Regulation *Public Concerns* were shared with the agenda package.
- As per past practice, all attempts should be made to resolve an issue at the closest level – person closest to the issue. The Regulations outline the process that should be followed to resolve a school related issue.
- The Board has not been contacted by the Ombudsman as yet regarding a complaint.
- The question was raised as to whether timelines are tied to the communication process. Timelines are not set out in the Public Concerns regulations. If a parent has not heard back from the person contacted within 24-48 hours they should proceed to the next level in the communication process.

Labour Update

- Jim provided an update on the status of provincial bargaining.
- He explained the tri-partied bargaining structure involving the Unions, OPSBA and the Crown or government. The Crown and OPSBA are aligned. The government provides funding to school boards who in turn hire staff and oversee the use of funding.
- Jim explained the new two tiered bargaining process where there is a provincial tier and a local second tier bargaining level. Bargaining can take place simultaneously at both levels; however each level deals with different items in the collective agreement. Monetary items are dealt with at the provincial level and non-monetary items are addressed at the local level.
- OSSTF reached a provincial agreement before Labour Day which was ratified by both the union and OPSBA. Locally we are just finishing up bargaining with OSSTF and are hoping for good news.

- ETFO is in Stage 3 of sanctions. A list of job actions are posted on the ETFO website. Administration is still hearing good things from parents that students are enjoying school. The Board is proud of its teachers who continue to do their job. A provincial deal was not reached and Stage 4 took effect on October 1. This stage could involve rotating strikes; however we are not privy to what this will look like. ETFO bargaining resumed October 5 and 6. Principals are working very hard to minimize the impact of sanctions in schools and they are focusing on student safety and learning.
- An update was provided on the status of CUPE negotiations. CUPE represents secretaries, custodians, Education Assistants and Early Childhood Educators. Effective September 29 CUPE started Phase 2 work to rule provincially. A CUPE Bulletin outlined different job actions for each employee group. Educational Assistants have been directed to only supervise their assigned students. They have been directed to withdraw from general supervision. This has been difficult to manage at some schools.
- Directors speak regularly with the MOE and OPSBA. The solution is at the provincial bargaining table. Input was sought on the best means to communicate with parents and the public. PIC supported the Director putting out an electronic statement to parents/public advising that the bargaining situation cannot be controlled locally. Information can be posted on the LKDSB website. Principals can be asked to share the electronic communication with parents via the means that best suits individual schools.
- The Board's Volunteer policy and regulations are being revised. The level of risk will be removed and all volunteers will be required to provide a criminal background check. The issue of equity was raised as not all volunteers can afford. PIC members proposed using part of the \$500 School PRO Grant or even a portion of central PIC funds to cover costs where needed. Administration is looking at requiring a CBC that will be good for 5 years and having volunteers sign an annual Offence Declaration for the 4 years in between. It was noted that the health units are pushing for municipalities to cover the cost of CBCs for volunteers.

PIC Update – Sue Fraser

Budget

- The balance from the 2014-15 PIC Central Budget is \$1,604.15. The funding for 2015-16 for the central PIC is \$8,332.00. There may also be some unspent school PRO funding that could get rolled into the central PIC account.
- A copy of the financial summary will be shared once finalized.

PRO Grant Update

- Sixteen of our schools were approved for 2015-16 Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grants. A total of \$14,525 in funding was approved for projects focusing on Supporting Learning at Home; Bullying Prevention; Well Being, Healthy Living and Family Fitness; Social Media Tools for Parents; Technology and Learning Commons; Math and Literacy.
- In addition Sarnia-Lambton Rebound is a successful recipient of a Regional PRO Grant. They will receive \$7,500 towards a *Coming Back Together* community engagement forum. The event will provide an opportunity to build and strengthen families, with specific focus on helping youth in care as well as support for mental health and wellness. Rebound has been offered free use of SCITS for the one day event.

Planning for District School Council Event

- Typically two district school council events are held, one in the fall and one in spring. Last fall an open forum network session was held in the fall. In April, Sherry Campbell spoke on the topic of *Raising Resilient Children*.
- David Bouchard costs are \$4,500 speaker fee plus travel from Victoria B.C. He could present for one or maybe two full days – speak to staff if requested in one session and to parents during a second session.
- It was agreed that with work to rule, it may be difficult to plan a fall session. PIC supported holding one larger even in April – perhaps two presentations, one north and one south. Another option would be to look at partnering with the SCCDSB.

- **PIC members were asked to forward Sue the names of possible presenters or presentation topics. She will compile a list and share with PIC.**

Election of Second PIC Co-Chair for 2015-2016 and Terms of Membership

- It was reiterated that Co-Chairs must be willing to serve a two year term.
- Dan Chauvin put his name forward for the second position of PIC Co-Chair. Dan will assume the role of PIC Co-Chair for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017. Congratulations were extended to him.
- There were no volunteers for the position of Treasurer. Melissa Hewitt will continue in the role.

Upcoming Events

- People for Education's "Making Connections" Conference is being held on Saturday, November 7 at the University of Toronto.
- **Sue shared the link with PIC members. Parent members were asked to notify Sue as soon as possible if they wish to attend.** Kelly-Lynn, Karen, Jessica, Michelle and Kristen expressed interest in attending the conference.

Future Meeting Dates

- The next meeting will be held on Monday, December 7 via video conference, beginning at 6:30 p.m.
- February 1 at 6:30 p.m. via video conference.
- Final meeting - May 16 at 5:45 p.m. in Sarnia.

Other Business/Future Agenda Items

- Martina questioned why FDK students don't have access to therapy services at the school level as supports are not available until Grade 1. **Jim will investigate.**
- Kelly-Lynn spoke to the importance of intramural school sports for children from a physical health and mental health perspective. Concerns were shared that some school teams are folding as many small and rural schools are unable to field teams. Jim spoke to the amalgamation of the athletic associations in the north and south part of the district. He noted that coaches/volunteers give their time on a volunteer basis and that the Board cannot mandate the offering of intramural sports. PIC can promote or advocate for increased physical activity in schools. **PIC supported Jim asking James Clarke to present school athletic information/participation numbers at a future PIC meeting.**
- A Special Board Meeting is scheduled on October 6 where the Board's Capital Plan will be presented. A multi-year accommodation report will be unveiled in November.
- The revised Health and Physical Education curriculum is typically not taught until spring.
- **The question was asked whether school councils can set up private Facebook pages or Twitter accounts. School councils can set up their own private pages as a means of communicating with parents but should continue to work with their principal.**

Adjournment: 9:05 pm

Sue Fraser, Recording Secretary