

LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

October 15, 2018

Chatham Regional Education Centre

Present:

Jim Costello, Director of Education; Ruth Ann Dodman, Trustee; Sue Fraser, Recorder; Nancy Simon, Chatham Kent S.S.; Alexandra Smith, Great Lakes S.S.; Tracey Travis; John McGregor S.S.; Jaime Rea, Bright's Grove; Angie Baresich, Brooke Central; Tracy Pound, Cathcart; Kristen Schrie, High Park; Jennifer Whiteye, Naahii Ridge; Melissa Hewitt, Queen Elizabeth II Sarnia; Anne Patterson, Thamesville Area; Annette Schleichauf, Zone Central; Lisa Tetrault, Chatham-Kent Public Health

Regrets:

Miranda Mitchell, Alexander Mackenzie S.S; Sharon Chapman, King George VI (S); Representative from Lambton Public Health.

Welcome and Introductions – Alexandra Smith

- Co-Chair Alexandra Smith welcomed everyone to the first Parent Involvement Committee meeting of the school year and thanked members for their time and commitment.
- Members introduced themselves and a special welcome was extended to new parent representatives joining the Committee.
- As per the PIC By-Laws employees of the Board may serve as parent members of the Committee but they must inform the Committee of their employment at the first meeting they attend. Jaime Rea informed PIC that she is an Occasional Teacher with the Board. Tracey Travis also noted that she is employed as an Educational Assistant.

Purpose of PIC/By-laws – Jim Costello

- Jim thanked members for their willingness to serve on the LKDSB Parent Involvement Committee. 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.
- The LKDSB PIC By-laws were distributed with the agenda package and are posted on the PIC link. The purpose and goal of PIC were reviewed as set out in the By-laws.
- By-laws regarding membership were highlighted. Members include 10-15 parents representing both elementary and secondary schools within the geographic regions of the Board as well as specialized program areas including First Nations, French Immersion and Special Education. The term for parent members is one or two years.
- The LKDSB PIC has two Community representatives. Presently representatives are from Sarnia Lambton and Chatham Kent Public Health Units. The term for community members is for one year; however, an individual may serve up to three consecutive terms.
- It had been recommended that a member of the Board's Indigenous Liaison Committee (ILC) be invited to sit on PIC as a third community representative. A parent from Aamjiwnaang expressed interest in attending as a parent member but was unable to attend the initial meeting.
Sue will follow up with Superintendent Lane regarding an ILC member joining as a committee representative.
- Lisa Tetreault represents Chatham-Kent Public Health. Lambton Public Health is in the process of naming a representative for the year. The health units partner with the Board in the areas of dental and optometric screening and they provide resources in many of areas, including cannabis. (It was noted that recreational use of cannabis becomes legal in Canada on October 17.)
- Parent and Community representatives are voting members of PIC while the Director and Trustee representatives are not. The Director and Trustee representatives provide the Board with updates from PIC meetings and will bring forward parental input or concerns as needed.

- Director Costello reminded members that PIC is not a forum for single school issues or individual agendas. School specific items should be addressed at the school level and concerns should be handled as outlined in the Board's Public Concerns regulations.
- Administration wants to hear from PIC members on the issues that they feel are important and on issues brought forward from school councils. Input or comments can be sent to Sue or Jim.

Business Arising from the Meeting of May 14, 2018

School Cash Online

- School Cash Online (KEV) has been rolled out to all schools however some have been slower to adopt.
- Issues with implementation of the online cash system were discussed. Items that parents wish to pay for through KEV in the secondary panel are not always on the system. It was recommended that the school council speak with the school principal to expand the use of KEV. Other schools feel that KEV is not user friendly. An example was shared on errors tracking pizza orders where parents paid, and student did not get pizza. Parents are required to re-enter cheque/bank information each time they need to load cash as it appears that information is not stored. Other schools have had positive experiences using the cashless system.
- Feedback was shared on the need for KEV to be more customizable.
- **Jim will share School Cash Online (KEV) concerns with the Superintendent of Business.**
- New members spoke to the cashless systems used at Alberta school boards (RyCor Solutions and School-Day). The systems allowed for payment via credit card. It was noted that KEV has this feature however it has not yet been activated by the Board.

School Climate Survey

- Katie Colameco, the Board's new Mental Health Lead is working with Superintendent Girardi on development of the 2019 School Climate Survey. They are in the process of forming a working group to assist them in determining the questions for the 2019 climate survey. The first meeting will be on October 24 from 12 to 3 p.m. in the Video Conference Rooms of the Sarnia and Chatham Education Centres. They would like a volunteer from PIC to be part of the working group.
- **Nancy Simon from CKSS volunteered. Sue will provide her contact information to the Mental Health Lead.**
- Jim provided background information and outlined the purpose of the School Climate Survey. Tentative timelines were shared. It is hoped that the survey will go out to schools, staff and parents the first two weeks of April.
- The Mental Health Lead will be invited to attend the November PIC meeting to provide additional information and answer questions regarding the Climate Survey.

Director's Update – Jim Costello

Retirement / Process to Hire New Director

- Jim shared that he will be retiring from his position as Director of Education on July 31, 2019. He is completing his ninth year as Director and has spent 33 years in education.
- He outlined the process to hire a new Director. The process will take approximately 6 months.
- The Municipal election will take place on October 22 at which time School Board Trustees are elected for a four-year term. Trustees will be sworn in at the Board's Organizational meeting on December 3. The current Board will remain in power until then.
- The current Board will start the process to replace the Director, but the new Board will make the selection to hire the Director.
- Jim hopes to introduce the new Director at the May PIC meeting.
- PIC members extended their congratulations to Director Costello on his upcoming retirement.

New Government

- Under the new government it is anticipated that there will be some funding cuts made in the areas of education and health care.
- The government is conducting a line by line audit of Ministry of Education expenditures. They are looking to reform the GSN process and the allocation of funding.

- Project or EPO funding has been frozen and not released pending review.
- OPHEA (Ontario Physical and Health Education Association) will no longer receive government funding.
- Most Directors have only worked under a Liberal government. The Conservative lens is focused on fiscal responsibility and efficiencies. The government's focus is also on Math and increasing grad rates. Additional Special Education funding has been allocated which is targeted for Autism.
- Pupil Accommodations Guidelines (PARG) were amended in 2018. The moratorium on new consolidations has been extended.
- The LKDSB is proceeding with the consolidation in Forest to build a K to 12 school because it was approved by the Ministry prior to the moratorium. Other phases identified in the Board's accommodation plan are on hold (South Kent Secondary, Sarnia Elementary Schools, Corunna/Mooretown and Dresden Area). Community input has been gathered through Thought Exchange for the Sarnia Elementary and South Kent Secondary consolidations.
- The government launched a consultation process to gather input on education reform. These consultations will allow parents, students, educators, business/industry leaders and interested people and groups from across the province to voice their opinions related to Ontario's education system. The online submission form can be accessed at fortheparents.ca. Submissions can also be sent to the ministry by emailing fortheparents@ontario.ca. Input can be provided on the website until December 15.
- Parents Bill of Rights will be a discussion topic in future.

PIC Update – Sue Fraser

Budget

- The 2017-2018 Budget Summary was included in the agenda package. The summary will be posted on the LKDSB website.
- The central PIC budget for 2018-19 is \$8,583.00.
- Each school received \$500 to be used to enhance parent engagement.

PRO Grant Update

- The government is currently reviewing all Ministry programs across Ontario. Approval of 2018-2019 PRO Grant applications is therefore on hold.

Election of PIC Chair for 2017-18 and Terms of Membership

- Director Costello reiterated that under the By-laws, the Parent Involvement Committee has two Co-chairs and that only members serving a two-year term are eligible to serve as Co-chair.
- Terms of membership for parent members of the Committee are for one or two years. New parent members confirmed that they would like to serve on the committee for a two-year term.
- Many members will be completing their second year of their two-year term. Others have served for multiple terms. New members are brought on each year.
- Under the By-laws PIC shall elect a parent member to serve as Treasurer. The term of office shall be for two years. Alexandra Smith just completed her second year. The Treasurer works with Sue to review and confirm the financial summary which is posted on the website annual.
- Responsibilities of the Co-chairs were reviewed. Co-chairs take turns chairing meetings; work with Sue and Jim to provide input into setting the agenda; and assist with coordinating and bringing greetings at school council/parent events on behalf of PIC. All members report back to their school councils as members of PIC.
- Jaime volunteered to serve as PIC Co-Chair for the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 term. Next year a new Co-Chair will be elected to replace Alexandra.
- Angie volunteered to be Treasurer.
- Congratulations were extended to Jaime and Angie.

Event Planning

- Each year the Parent Involvement Committee organizes and hosts a spring event for school councils/parents. Past speakers and event themes were highlighted (mental health, resiliency, cyber safety etc.)
- A recommendation was made to investigate Marian Small, author and consultant for improved Mathematics Education. This would align with the Ministry's focus on math fundamentals.
- It was suggested that parent representatives attending the district event be asked to take information back to their schools. It was also suggested that area schools be encouraged to attend events.
- Discussion took place on how to enhance parent engagement. Most parents rely on social media and follow the LKDSB and staff on Twitter.
- It was recommended that the event focus align with Ministry initiatives and that perhaps two sessions be offered, one in the north and one in the south.
- **PIC members were asked to give some thought to topics of interest for discussion at the next meeting and to email suggestions to Sue or Jim.**

Upcoming Events

- People for Education's "Making Connections" Conference is being held on Saturday, November 10 in Toronto.
- Parents Engaged in Education is hosting a School Council Training Symposium on Saturday, November 3 in Scarborough.
- Information was previously shared with PIC members. **Interested members to message Sue.**

Future Meeting Dates

- The next meeting will be held on Monday, November 26 via video conference from the Sarnia and Chatham Education Centres, beginning at 6:30 p.m.
- February 4, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. via video conference.
- The final meeting of the school year will be held on May 13, 2019 in the Board Room of the Sarnia Education Centre beginning at 5:45 p.m. Superintendent of Business McKay will provide an overview of the 2019-2020 Budget.

Other Business/Future Agenda Items

- Organization of a spring parent event will be discussed at the November meeting.
- Sue will invite Katie Colameco, the Board's Mental Health Lead to attend the November meeting to speak to the School Climate Survey.

Adjournment: 8:05 pm

Sue Fraser, Recording Secretary