

LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

May 13, 2019
Sarnia Education Centre
Board Room

Present:

Jim Costello, Director of Education, Lareina Rising, Trustee, Sue Fraser, Recorder;
Nancy Simon, Chatham Kent S.S.; Alexandra Smith, Great Lakes S.S.; Tracey Travis; John McGregor S.S.;
Jamie Rea, Bright's Grove; Angie Baresich, Brooke Central Tracy Pound, Cathcart; Kristen Schrie, High Park;
Sharon Chapman, King George VI (S); Annette Schleihauf, Zone Central;
Lisa Tetrault, Chatham-Kent Public Health, Donna Schmidtmeier, Lambton Public Health

Regrets:

Ruth Ann Dodman, Trustee; Miranda Mitchell, Alexander Mackenzie S.S; Melissa Hewitt, Queen Elizabeth II Sarnia;
Jennifer Whiteye, Naahii Ridge; Anne Patterson, Thamesville Area

Welcome – Jaime Rea

- Co-Chair Jaime Rea welcomed everyone to the final Parent Involvement Committee meeting of the school year and introduced Trustee Lareina Rising and Superintendent of Business, Brian McKay.

Budget Information Session – Brian McKay, Superintendent of Business

- Superintendent McKay indicated that the Ministry of Education's financial reporting page was opened on May 10; however, we have not received the technical paper containing specific budget details for the LKDSB. It is hoped that boards will receive technical papers by the end of May.
- Superintendent McKay presented a draft budget overview focusing on changes to the budget and the potential impact to the Board for the coming school year.
- The two main areas that will impact the 2019-2020 Budget will be declining enrolment and pressure on the Pupil Foundation Grant.
- The Board anticipates an enrolment decline of 339 next year, with 175 fewer students projected in elementary and 164 in secondary. As the Board is funded at about \$12,300 per student, this equates to a reduction of \$3.4M. The enrolment decline will result in a reduction to the teacher complement and other school supports.
- Several school board staff have been declared redundant as funding is still unknown, and dates to notify staff are defined in collective agreements.
- Preliminary projections of the GSN funding changes and impact to the LKDSB were reviewed. (A copy of the presentation is attached.)
- Superintendent McKay explained the Attrition Protection Funding which is available for up to four years to assist boards with staffing changes due to increased class sizes and eLearning.
- Normally the Revenue Forecast by Grant Summary is reviewed; however, funding cannot be confirmed until the technical paper is released.
- The 2019-20 Budget will see an overall reduction due to declining enrolment; reductions in the Pupil Foundation Grant; and removal of the Local Priorities Fund.
- Director Costello noted that a total of 111 teachers were declared redundant (59 secondary and 52 elementary). Attrition funding will allow the Board to recall some teaching staff.
- The increase in secondary class size from 22 to 28 will result in a loss of course offerings in secondary schools. This will have a significant impact on smaller rural schools. In schools with fewer than 300 students, it will be difficult to develop timetables.
- Central bargaining is set to begin.
- The moratorium placed on school closures/consolidations two years ago has not been lifted. The Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline was to be released in May or June however boards have yet to receive information.
- The Ministry consultation regarding the impact of funding changes for school boards closes on May 31. All Boards are submitting a template to show the impact on course offerings. PIC members expressed concern over the changes to class sizes and the requirements for eLearning courses. Students have different learning styles and need support. Many will not be successful in achieving eLearning credits. Director Costello noted that boards have not received information regarding eLearning courses. The government indicated that improvements will be made to broadband. The LKDSB is currently part of an eLearning consortium.

Alexandra will start an email for PIC members to comment on their concerns and will send to Sue to compile data. PIC input will be incorporated into the LKDSB submission to the Ministry. Jim will share the Board submission with PIC Co-Chairs.

- School consolidations are needed. The Board has 4 consolidation plans yet to pursue. Thought Exchange surveys have been done on two of the four, including the 4 into 1 secondary school consolidation in South Kent and City of Sarnia elementary schools. If the moratorium is lifted, the Board would look at these two accommodation reviews first. The Board of Trustees would approve the order in which they would take place and then proceed with the public consultation process.
- The Ministry supported the grant application for the Forest K to 12 school consolidation. The Board continues to search for a parcel of land that meets all Ministry criteria. Larger class sizes will impact the space design of schools going forward. Once we break ground, construction of the new school would take approximately 2 years.
- As of April 30, all trade unions are without a current contract. September is still the target date to move students to the new Great Lakes Secondary School site. The existing building will be ready for September, but the addition will not.
- It was clarified that students can attend any secondary school if there is space and parents are able to provide transportation. Secondary schools promote and market their schools. In the elementary panel, students are required to attend the home school within the assigned boundary.

Business Arising from the Meeting of February 4, 2019

- Jim is in the process of formulating a response to the Ministry re efficiencies. PIC members emailed their input.
- Changes to the Technology Enriched Learning Plan (TELP) will be implemented for September. The pilot is being discontinued for current Grade 7 students and incoming Gr. 7 students.
- A communication will be going out to schools shortly. Students who are not using their assigned iPads will be encouraged to turn them in to be redeployed. Classroom sets will be available for teachers to sign out. Feedback shows that older students want a keyboard and prefer laptops or Chromebooks.

May 22 and 23 Parent Evenings – “Healthy Relationships”

- A summary of the evening format was sent out with the agenda.
- Plans for the two parent evenings were reviewed.
- Keynote speaker, Marianne Vardalos will present for 45 min (6:30 to approx.7:15). Attendees will have the option to attend two of three breakout/carousel sessions offered. Presenters will give two back to back 30-minute sessions.
- Alexandra will introduce and thank the keynote speaker at the Sarnia session on May 22.
- Angie volunteered to do the introduction and thank you in Chatham on May 23. Nancy will also help that evening.

Director's Update – Jim Costello

- John Howitt has been hired as the new Director of Education to replace Jim effective August 1, 2019. They have scheduled 5 days before the end of July to work on the transition process. Mr. Howitt has met the staff at the Sarnia and Chatham Education Centres and has spoken to all Principals and Managers. He is aware of the Parent Involvement Committee. The incoming Director has been a Superintendent with the Greater Essex County District School Board for the past 10 years and oversees information technology and elementary teacher matters.
- Senior Administration is working on budget development and staffing for the remainder of the school year. Boards are required to present a balanced budget for approval by the end of June. Boards are permitted to pull 1% from reserves to assist in balancing the budget and avoiding a deficit situation.
- Jim thanked members of the Parent Involvement Committee for their kindness and commitment during his time as Director. He thanked committee members for the input and feedback they have provided on system initiatives. PIC feedback is often shared at Board and Executive Council meetings. Jim thanked everyone and wished them well.

PIC Planning for 2017-2018 – Membership

- Sue will be reviewing membership terms for current members and looking at areas in need of representation.
- Tracey Travis will be stepping down from PIC at the end of the school year.

Other Business/Future Agenda Items

- King George VI Sarnia is hosting “Mindful Mike” on Thursday, May 16 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
- Clarification was requested on whether schools are required to print hard copy planners to communicate school code of conduct. It was felt that not all teachers use the planners and often parents don’t read them. Environmental concerns were shared. Director Costello confirmed that there is no Board policy on the use of planners and that this is a school-based decision. He will raise concerns at Executive Council. It was noted that many schools are already developing planners for next year.
- Alexandra thanks Director Costello for his dedication, openness to listen and share information with PIC. She wished him well in his retirement on behalf of the Committee.

Next Meeting

- Tentative date - Monday, October 7, 2019 at the Chatham Regional Education Centre at 6:30 p.m. Sue will confirm the date with incoming Director Howitt.
- Remaining dates for 2019-20 will be set at the October meeting.

Adjournment:

Sue Fraser, Recording Secretary