

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – October 5, 2023

Roll Call:

Members:	Staff:
V. Wood, Co-Chair and Sydenham HS S. Bradley, Co-Chair (outgoing) 2SLGTBQIA+ Focus Group M. Glassford G. Monajemi Amherstview PS S. Coleman, Amherst Island PS S. Black, Bath PS M. Rickey, Bayridge PS M. Hudson, Calvin Park PS/LCVI T. MacDonald, Centennial PS M. Chapman, Ernestown SS C. Wither, Frontenac SS A. Anthony, J.R. Henderson PS Sherri-Ann, Loughborough PS C. Innocente, Maple ES M. Foster, Module de l'Acadie J. Kehoe, Molly Brant ES M. Richmond, Odessa PS M. Carrier, Perth Road PS B. Lowes, Polson Park PS J. Jodoin, Rideau PS S. Gratto, Storrington PS K. Mennie, Welborne Ave PS L. Kaminer, Winston Churchill PS C. Glavin, W.J. Holsgrove PS	K. Burra, Director of Education P. Gollogly, Assoc. Superintendent M. Christopher, IT
Trustees:	Recorder:
B. Godkin	E. Smith, Administrative Assistant
Guests:	
A. Flores, KEYS	

1. Call to Order

Co-Chair Wood called the meeting to order at 6pm.

Co-Chair Wood welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided the Acknowledgement of Territory. “We recognize that The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee. We acknowledge their enduring presence on this land, as well as the presence of Métis, Inuit, and other First Nations from across Turtle Island. We honour their cultures and celebrate their commitment to this land.”

2. Adoption of Agenda

Adopted.

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest declared.

4. Approval of Minutes

May 2023 minutes were approved by consensus.

5. Delegation/Presentation

Krishna Burra, Director of Education, delivered a presentation on new legislation that was passed and put into place in the spring: Bill 98 The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, 2023. This legislation is significant and large in scale, with several aspects still under consultation and details yet to be released.

The Act sets achievement priorities for the province and outlines a vision for the current government. It has been somewhat delayed due to the pandemic that began in the winter of 2020. One key area already in place is the focus on transparency, such as publishing PA day activities on board websites two weeks in advance. The Act also embeds three priorities expected to be in all board strategic plans:

1. Achievement of learning outcomes in core academic skills
2. Preparation of students for future success
3. Student engagement and well-being

These have been areas of focus for school boards for a long time, but the Act provides an additional focus. Boards will receive a new student achievement plan populated with data from 2020 to 2023, which will be displayed on board websites. This data, particularly in the area of achievement of learning outcomes in core academic skills, is not new and has been tracked for a long time.

Director further discussed an accelerated apprenticeship pathway announced by the government last year. This pathway allows students to enter after the end of grade 10, having completed their core

academic required courses in grades 9 and 10. The details of this pathway, particularly for students moving into grades 11 and 12, are still to be clarified.

The speaker also mentions the tracking of students graduating, which has been done for some time. A new metric is introduced to track the number of credits students are taking in grade 11 in science and in grade 12 in science or math. This is to understand how many students are choosing these elective courses, as there is a need for more professionals in STEM fields. The economy needs more people in sectors like trades, computer science, and cybersecurity.

The new mental health curriculum will be released this fall for implementation in January 2024.

Director suggested that the government is interested in understanding how many students are aware of certain supports before receiving curriculum in grades 7 and 8, and how this awareness increases after they've gone through grades 7 and 8 and are taking the grade 9 math EQAO or grade 10 secondary school literacy test. The new Student Achievement Plan will be universal across Ontario, with possibly a few other measures based on the census that all boards had to complete last year. The Board is waiting for more details on whether there are specific things they need to include or if they have some choice. However, the eleven measures discussed are universal across all boards.

Director Burra invited questions. The presentation will be shared with PIC Chairs.

Student Achievement Report will be released in six to seven weeks.

Director Burra provided an overview of the feedback received from Round 1 of Consultation on the LDSB Strategic Plan. Draft Mission and Vision will be sent out in coming weeks for feedback, after which LDSB will prepare a new multi-year strategic plan with the Trustees.

Director Burra informed that there is a significant food security issue in schools, demand for food in schools is high due to rising food prices. The Food Sharing Project may request School Councils to see if you they were actually willing to support a petition that would then be going to the federal government about creation of a national food program. Co-Chair Wood informed that the Food Sharing Project representative will be a guest at the next PIC meeting in November.

Other updates provided by Director Burra were related to staffing challenges particularly during October and November months. The Board is launching a campaign in schools for students for grades 4-12 as well as for all staff, so that people can understand what the Ontario Human Rights Code is and what that means, and how to use the existing complaint tool. LDSB Interim Policy 13 on Delegations and Submissions (Interim Policy 13) changed and Trustees and LDBS are seeing feedback on those changes. Feedback will be presented to the Trustees in December. Finally, the Director shared that the Board is looking at potential contingencies in relation to a Totality Eclipse which is taking place around 3:20PM in Napanee, Kingston and southern parts of L&A and South Frontenac on April, 8, 2024. One option is to shift the PA Day from April 12 to April 8; the other is to adjust the school day by 80-90 minutes. Decision should be coming mid/end of November.

Director Burra invited questions.

6. Reports for Information

6.1 Co-Chairs Update

Co-Chair Wood recognized that September 30th was Truth and Reconciliation Day and voiced her appreciation and respect to the residential school survivors and Indigenous cultures to raise awareness of Indigenous presence and land rights and everyday life for ourselves.

Co-Chair Wood welcomed everyone, introduced herself and reminded of what is the purpose of Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and its relation to School Councils. She reminded that PIC meetings are scheduled for November 16, 2023, February 8, April 4 and May 2, 2024. PIC Committee also uses Facebook and X (former Twitter) for information sharing.

On October 4 we are honouring and acknowledging Remembrance Day, Women's History, Islamic History, Learning Disability Awareness, ADHD Awareness, Dyslexia Awareness and Hispanic Latina-American Month.

Workshop will be organized for School Council Chairs. School Council year-end report should have been sent to Erduana Smith end of last school years.

Co-Chair (exiting) Bradley discussed a committee that met to address concerns related to student mental health and neurodivergence, which refers to individuals whose brains function differently than the norm. This could include students with ADHD or chronic mental health issues. The committee identified service navigation as a key concern and discussed the need for social gatherings to facilitate connections.

The principal of education services, Blackburn, was brought in for a second review to provide his perspective. While some of the concerns were brought to the Board, it was not in an official capacity. Co-Chair (exiting) Bradley emphasized the importance of having a space to address these concerns, as many people feel isolated in their struggles.

There is a lack of knowledge about the board's obligations and available resources, leading to a sense of helplessness among parents.

Co-Chair (exiting) Bradley is committed to finding a solution and encourages others to get involved. She also highlighted the importance of the human rights tool, particularly for children who are disabled under the definition of the OHRC, regardless of whether they have a formal diagnosis or an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

6.2 Trustee Update

Trustee Godkin discussed LDSB Interim Policy 13, informed that the deadline for feedback was extended and urged everyone to provide the feedback.

Trustee Godkin also mentioned focus on poverty, special needs, LGBTQ+ issues, and racial diversity over the past five years of his service. He further discussed the crisis of food insecurity and housing, and the impact of poverty on children in the system. He urged for suggestions and ideas to address these issues.

Trustee Godkin thanked everyone for finding time to attend the meeting.

6.3 Board Update

Associate Superintendent Gollogly introduced herself and informed that parent engagement is her portfolio. Noting that Director Burra provided an update.

6.4 Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC) – none at this time.

6.5 2SLGTBQIA+ Focus Group

The Focus Group has been active four years. It is for caregivers of 2SLGTBQIA+ students, for members of the community. The goal of the group is to do what they can to promote, encourage, maintain safe inclusive, supportive schools. The group meets online every second Tuesday of the month.

7. Reports for action - None at this time.

8. Unfinished Business - None at this time.

9. New Business

9.1 Motion to elect a PIC Co-Chair was seconded. Melanie Glassford was elected as a new PIC Co-Chair. Co-Chair Wood thanked S. Bradley for her contribution.

9.2 S. Bradley informed us that KEYS is a new Community Representative and welcomed them to the PIC meeting.

9.3 Co-Chair Wood provided an updated on PRO funding (noting the switch from grants to funding model) to support school boards in initiatives that address local parenting needs and remove barriers that prevent parents from fully engaging in their children's learning and educational progress. The funding is not intended for student support, arts, gift cards, fundraising events, donations, or field trips, but rather for parent engagement activities.

The application for this funding has a due date of December 10th, funding must be spent by May 24th with the report deadline of May 31st. Based on feedback from the school councils, it was decided that the PRO funding committee would review applications on a rolling basis which would hopefully make funding available sooner rather than later. A concern was expressed that this approach would not make it equitable for all because some schools are not represented at the PIC meeting and would not be aware of the funding being available. It was clarified that information on application process will be sent at the same time to all Administrators and School Councils.

The total funding available is \$30,000, which could potentially cover 30 schools with \$1,000 each. Last year, only 50% of the available funding was used.

10. Correspondence

Letters were sent out on food sharing topic and were part of the PIC Agenda package.

11. Next Meeting

Thursday, November 4, 2023 at 6:00pm.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 p.m.