



**Parent Involvement Committee Minutes
Education Centre
September 28, 2015 – 6:30 p.m.**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Kirsty Sinclair, Co-Chair, Sturgeon Creek Alternative Program Council; Ralph Hill, Trustee; Heather Campbell, Director of Education; Leslie Danielson, Fort Frances High School Council; Kendall Olsen, Principal Representative; Tara Jerry, Parent Representative, Crossroads School Council; Lonna Oster, Community Representative, Northwestern Health Unit, North Words; Wendy Kabel, Community Representative, Zaagi-idiwin Aboriginal Headstart Program; Kelly McFayden, JW Walker, Parent Representative; Steve Sinclair, Sturgeon Creek Alternative School Council; Bridget McGinnis, Co-Chair, Crossroads School Council;

REGRETS: Janice Gagne, Robert Moore School Council; Owen Johnston, Secondary Teacher Representative; Darryl Gannon, Atikokan High School Council; Angela Mainville, Community Representative, Seven Generations Education Institute; Sharla MacKinnon, Elementary Teacher Representative; Char Bliss, Parent Representative, J.W. Walker School

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Sandra Ward, Recording Secretary; Sarah Irwin-Gardner, Mental Health Leader

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Bridget McGinnis at 6:30 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Wendy Kabel and seconded by Lonna Oster to approve the agenda. All were in favour.

3. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

There was no disclosure of conflict of interest.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the May 12, 2015 meeting were reviewed and no changes were noted. A motion was made by Leslie Danielson and seconded by Kelly McFayden to approve the minutes as distributed.

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

a) 2014-2015 Annual Report

The Annual Report was included in the package and reviewed by the Committee members. It was noted that the report was presented by Trustee, Ralph Hill, at the September Board meeting.

b) Review 2014-2015 Annual School Council Reports

Annual Reports from all the School Councils were included in the package for Committee members to review.



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c) Symposium Invitation – Canadian Parents for French

The Canadian Parent for French Symposium on French as a Second Language is being held in Toronto on Saturday October 24, 2015. Parent Involvement Committee representatives are invited to attend. The Co-chairs are not available to attend, and no other Committee members expressed interest in attending.

6. New Business

a) Presentation – Mental Health Strategy – Sarah Irwin-Gardner

Sarah Irwin-Gardner, Rainy River District School Board Mental Health Leader gave a presentation regarding child and youth mental health strategy. The strategy now in its third year. Training for staff has been an important component of the program, with Mental Health First Aid, SafeTALK training, and ASIST training provided for staff. Each school has a staff member that has volunteered to be a Mental Health Champion as well as a safe space for students. The Rainy River District School Board has a contract with Kenora Rainy River Child and Family Services for counselling services. Last year there were 126 referrals and families have been taking advantage of the resources that are available.

The purpose of the presentation was to seek input from the Parent Involvement Committee regarding how to best engage parents. There was discussion and feedback on ways to collaborate with parents, as well as questions regarding confidentiality and where information is kept. Ideas from the Committee on how to enhance mental health literacy, or knowledge, of parents and families so they have the tools they need to support their kids included the following:

- Post the directory of resources and programs available on the Board website;
- Inform parents of the Mental Health Champions;
- Present to School Councils. Sarah Irwin-Gardner is available to attend School Council meetings;
- Provide interactive information evening sessions with separate events for different age groups.

b) Review of Mandate, By-Laws and Recruitment

Committee members were asked if they intend to serve another term by contacting the Director of Education or Sandra Ward to confirm their intentions. A Recruitment Sub-Committee to include Heather Campbell, Kirsty Sinclair and Lonna Oster was formed. Current members not in attendance will be called, school councils will be contacted.

The Committee agreed that a recruitment sub-committee should be formed at the last meeting of the school year to ensure new members are in place early in the fall.

c) PRO Grant Program 2015-2016

The Director of Education announced that a PRO Grant has been awarded in the amount of \$20,000. Family STEAM nights/events will be held in schools/communities across the District. The project will engage parents of pre-school to Grade 8 children through participation in fun,



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educational activities that develop and extend science, technology, engineering, arts and math learning at home. When the new Parent Involvement Committee is in place, the Committee will help facilitate these events along with School Councils that wish to participate. It was recommended that these events take place in the spring.

7. Correspondence

a) 2015-2016 – PIC Budget

The budget for this year is \$5,387.00. This will cover metrage, travel, babysitting services, a School Council information session and the newsletter costs.

b) Invitation to Dr. Kiti Freier Randall Presentation

An invitation was shared with the Committee, to attend an evening presentation on October 1, 2015 on the topic of “Raising Resilient children: What Parents and Communities Need to Know”.

c) Egale Canada Information Session

The Rainy River District School Board in conjunction with Egale Canada is hosting a Parent and Community Agency Information Session on October 7, 2015. Committee members are welcome to attend.

d) Draft Fall PIC Newsletter

The draft newsletter was handed out for review and input. Items that could be included are time management strategies and what parents can do if they feel their child might have special needs.

There was discussion about when and how to distribute the newsletter. The newsletter could be posted on school websites and as part of a Synervoice message directing parents to the school website. Later in the fall, it could be handed out to students to take home.

8. Director’s Update

Heather Campbell, Director of Education, reported as follows:

- An additional 400 iPads and 400 Chrome Books were deployed to the schools over the summer.
- Wireless access has been increased across the District.
- Work continues on integrating technology into the learning environment.
- Archery kits were purchased for all schools.
- Some new school furniture was purchased and there are Bistro tables in the entrances of the schools.
- New gym mats were purchased.
- Trustees approved funds to refresh playground equipment from the Board Surplus. High Schools and Mine Centre School were the focus for this past summer. Planning for remaining elementary schools will take place this year with work being done during the summer of 2016.

Heather Campbell
Director of Education



Dianne McCormack
Chair

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There was discussion regarding School Council Handbooks and providing an evening training session for School Council members. It would be beneficial to provide a refresher session in early November, paid for by the Parent Involvement Committee. The Director of Education will ask Principals to inform their School Councils and parents that may be interested in joining School Council, that support and training will be available and to ask for areas of need for further training. The timing for this will be discussed at the next meeting. It was suggested that this item going forward, should also be on the agenda the last meeting of the school year.

9. Next Meeting

A Doodle Poll will be sent out with possible dates for the next meeting. Once it is determined which date will provide quorum, a confirmation email will be sent for the date.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.