

District School Council / Parent Involvement Committee Meeting

Thursday, December 3, 2015 7 p.m.

Lindsay Education Centre – 300 County Road 36, Lindsay

Haliburton County Education Centre – 12 Vintage Crescent, Minden

Muskoka Education Centre – 1271 Cedar Lane, Bracebridge

MEETING NOTES

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

Patricia Wark – Muskoka Area Chair

2. **Update from the Director of Education**

Director of Education – Larry Hope

Director Hope provided an update on the labour situation in TLDSB schools:

- We are in a much better place than we were 6 weeks ago when the DSC-PIC last met.
- As part of the new collective bargaining act there needs to be local and central agreements. We have managed to have settled agreements with elementary permanent and occasional teachers. We also reached a local agreement with our CUPE staff which means our EAs, custodians, and office, clerical, and technical staff are back to working as normal. Things have taken off with a flurry and are back on track in our elementary schools.
- We are in a very different place with our secondary teachers although the work currently being struck in TLDSB secondary schools is not affecting students very much. Local talks with our secondary union OSSTF, have broken off and we do not have any meetings scheduled. The OSSTF concerns are around leaves and teacher performance appraisals.
- We also do not have a contract with OSSTF support staff – which includes our psychology, speech and language pathologists, and school counsellors. We also do not have a contract with our Early Childhood Educators – this is more a matter of timing based how on much our local ETFO (the union for our ECE staff) can manage at this time. There is no job action by these staff members.
- As part of our recovery we have been very clear to our schools that we are not going to try to make up meetings and training opportunities that were lost – this would not be fair to our students and to our staff. We are resuming the schedule of events and activities. There is one exception – we will be making sure that every school still has the opportunity to have their grade 6 students go to the Yearley Outdoor Education Centre.
- Plans for the Trillium Lakelands Arts Camp (TLAC) are continuing.
- Schools that have received Program Enhancement funding are starting to take off their projects.

3. **Parent Resources for Students with Special Needs**

Katherine MacIver – Superintendent of Specialized Services and Safe and Accepting Schools

Superintendent MacIver provided an overview of some of the parent resources available to parents.

- Special Education SEAC – working to make this committee transparent and available. School Councils are encouraged to have a look at the [SEAC webpage](http://tldsb.ca/special-education-advisory-committee/) on the TLDSB website which provides information about the members of the SEAC, some resources, and information <http://tldsb.ca/special-education-advisory-committee/>.

- Parent Resources – there are several information sheets for parents that are available for download. These sheets will be a tooled in a variety of ways - for parents searching on the board website, but also for principals and teachers to download and print for parents with specific concerns:
 - [Support in our Schools for your Child with Behavioural Concerns](#)
 - [Support in our Schools for Your Child with Autism](#)
 - [Support in our Schools for Your Child with a Learning Disability](#)
 - [Support in our Schools for Your Child with a Developmental Disability](#)
- On the special education page on the board website, there is a link to the Special Education Plan. <http://tldsbc.ca/programs/special-education/> There are 21 sections in the plan but the department is looking at making each section parent-friendly.
- The Specialized Services Department plans to continue to develop resources for specific needs as well as a Special Education Handbook for Parents which is actually a Ministry of Education mandated requirement for school boards. There are plans in place to help parents to advocate for their children – this will include training on accessibility and technology using iPads for students to support learning in the classroom.

4. Updates for School Councils

- Parent Engagement Fund – reminder to spend and report on \$500 grant.
- Board Parent Engagement Fund – each year the DSC-PIC is provided with \$8000 for parent engagement initiatives. So far this year the funding has been used for:
 - i. Kids Club videos
 - ii. Registration and expenses for 2 school council chairs to attend the People for Education conference in November
 - iii. Some funding towards the ACE Your Money financial literacy event for parents and students that took place at FFSS in October
 - iv. Some funding for the Take Me Outside to Learn October family outdoor event
 Suggestion that the DSC-PIC consider funding the development of a video series on topics that would be of interest and helpful to parents.
- PRO grants – reminder to spend and report PRO grant fund.
- Parent Communication – review of current social media and web stats and trends in TLDSB, update on new Health and Physical Education curriculum and webpage, and reminder about upcoming Kindergarten Registration in January and Grade 9 information nights in January and February.

5. Site Discussion

City of Kawartha Lakes

- Helping parents of students with special needs:
 - i. Discussion on integrating students with special needs in a secondary setting and beyond.
 - ii. Discussion on transition planning for all students with an Individual Education Plan.

- Ideas for Parent Engagement Fund:
 - i. Videos – idea topics include how to use technical equipment and programs – Google Drive (maybe adapt current staff video for parents), links to Feed All Four videos already created, financial literacy.

Muskoka

- Helping parents of students with special needs:
 - i. Discussion on importance for advocating for parents with children with special needs. Helping them know how to navigate and find resources.
 - ii. Concern over stigma attached to special needs.
 - iii. Vast majority of technology provided for student use is iPad based. Apps for skill building, voice to text and scribing.
 - iv. Larry also shared that student consultations are currently taking place. Learning that simple things such as students not having to carry the black bag with the equipment in it, helps to take away stigma.
- Ideas for Parent Engagement Fund:
 - i. School \$500 fund – it was suggested that a list of examples be circulated to school councils.
 - ii. Board Parent Engagement Fund – need a technology focus – a resource to share out but not a video as they get out-dated too quickly. Want something more parent/child interactive. Group suggested an app. Suggestion to check out Jason Dorsey on YouTube – as specialist in millennials.
- Open discussion - The Town of Bracebridge Environmental Advisory Committee is looking to host a one day community bike/walk to school event that highlights the benefits of physical activity while raising awareness about building a more bike friendly community. Date to be in May, 2016.

District Chairs 2015-2016:

City of Kawartha Lakes	Frank Arnold	705-439-3299	frank@fpps.ca
Haliburton County	Judi Paul	705-457-2950	judi.paul@tldsb.on.ca
District of Muskoka	Patricia Wark	705-637-0413	pbwark@hotmail.com

2015-2016 Meetings:

Thursday, February 25, 2016
 Thursday, May 5, 2016