

District School Council / Parent Involvement Committee Meeting

Thursday, November 28, 2013 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

M E E T I N G N O T E S

1. Welcome and Introductions

Frank Arnold – City of Kawartha Lakes DSC-PIC Chair

2. Update from the Director of Education

a. Yearley Outdoor Education Centre

- i. We have run into some difficulty running our grade 6 overnight program – we received notification earlier in the year about a sex offender who had been released and was living within the vicinity of the centre. We felt uncomfortable running the programs.*
- ii. The individual was re-arrested in late September and so programming has been running except during hunting season. This individual has been remanded in custody until December 17 which is his next court date.*
- iii. We have been investigating other possibilities within the District – all the providers we've investigated want to run their own programming which is not the model we are looking for.*

b. Lockdown procedures and school safety

- i. This is ongoing work for us and we recently took emergency preparedness plans to trustees to board for approval.*
- ii. We continue to work with police services, schools, and a number of others across the system who are experts on Lockdown procedures.*
- iii. Elementary and secondary principals received professional development on Lockdown, Hold and Secure, and other crisis situations.*
- iv. We work closely with police services that are experienced at these things to ensure that we are doing the best things possible.*
- v. Individual school councils should talk with their principals because each school develops their own plan that is unique to the needs of the school.*

c. Follow up to Ministry of Education Community Consultation (7 questions)

- i. School councils were asked to consider the questions from the ministry – there was excellent feedback from school conversations.*
- ii. We submitted nearly 100 pages of feedback from all sources to the Ministry.*
- iii. We have kept a copy of this information because it is great foundational work for us when we review our own strategic plan.*
- iv. Items that were highlighted by all those who contributed included:*
 - 1. Importance of life skills, resiliency*
 - 2. deal with the whole child – not just literacy and math*

3. *community partners need to be engaged to have greater impact on children's well-being*
4. *smaller class sizes, more staff, guidance counsellors in elementary schools*
5. *wide open communication with home, school, and community*
6. *accessibility of services for children is important*
7. *adjust the curriculum so that when full day kindergarten students have a revised curriculum when they enter grade 1*
8. *have good parent resources available so that sustained help is supported*
9. *every student is unique so we need to teach to strengths and reach out to meet their interests and respect learning styles*
10. *ensure that technology is current, up to date*
11. *help children understand appropriate use, time, and place for technology*
12. *equity – making sure that all students have access to similar kinds of technology*
13. *relationships are important – lots of time is spent by children using technology*
14. *students with special needs need to have the very best technology*
15. *school system cannot do it alone, agencies can't do it alone, school-agency partnerships are critical to the success of children*
16. *make sure that everyone knows what is available out there – increase awareness*
17. *there needs to be some consideration for corporate partners for schools and school boards*
18. *we all need to be less territorial – we need to be sure we are in this for the best interest for kids*

d. **Funding review by Ministry of Education**

- i. *School board efficiencies and modernization consultation – being done through the trustee associations, Directors of Education council, as well as others*
- ii. *Looking at key areas for input – underutilized and small schools, declining enrolment supports, how to work better together, ebooks and eLearning, new technology, getting balance right between boards and ministry, what kinds of things need to happen to move forward*
- iii. *This is about saving money – they are right now gathering data*
- iv. *School boards have been given a lot of support to keep small schools open despite the continuing decline in enrolment*
- v. *Ministry is wanting us to look at sharing arrangements with co-terminus school boards (TLDSB co-terminus boards are the Catholic school boards in Muskoka and in Peterborough)*

3. **Healthy Active Living in TLDSB**

Dave Lyons – Healthy Active Living Consultant

- *Director of Education introduced Dave Lyons by providing a background for this new role of Healthy Active Living consultant with the board*

- *Dave provided an overview of his role and the importance of healthy living and the impact regular exercise can have on the brain and learning.*
4. Parent Engagement in Ontario – information and resources from Ministry of Education
Catherine Shedden – Director’s Office and Communications Manager
- *Information was shared from the Ministry of Education and focused on the following resources available to schools and school councils:*
 - [Making Meals Meaningful – Unicef Canada](#)
 - [Parents in Partnership – A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools](#)
 - [Making a Difference – A Practical Handbook for Parent Involvement Committee Members](#)
 - [Planning Parent Engagement – a Guidebook for Parents and Schools](#)
 - [We All Belong – with the Capsule Family members](#)
 - [School Administrator’s Guide to Parent Engagement](#)
 - [Tips and Tools for Parents](#)
5. Site Discussions

City of Kawartha Lakes Area

- a. *Is Healthy Active Living a provincial initiative – could a PRO grant assist with this: this is a TLDSB initiative, but a PRO grant can always augment a good program*
- b. *how do schools fund-raise – food is a always a good choice*
- c. *would like to have permission from all school council chairs to share contact information*
- d. *all school council members were invited to attend a workshop at FFSS which is about Barriers to Parent Engagement. One of the objectives is to determine how to plan a regional event that engages the type of parent that needs to attend Monday, December 2nd at 7:15 p.m. in the FFSS library*
- e. *how do we get representation from every school to come to District School Council meetings*
 - *consider teleconference, video conference*
 - *perhaps we should ask why people are not coming*
 - *“Is there anything we could be doing differently to encourage you to attend?”*
 - *“Did you know you can send someone else from the council ?“*
 - *Maybe principals could be encouraged to come with their chair*
 - *“Bring a buddy”*
 - *Perhaps a Monday might encourage a different turn-out*

Muskoka Area

- a. *One query regarding whether there is funding available at the board level to help with bussing costs to ensure Muskoka Students get to regional/zone sporting events, such as track and field in the spring; particularly smaller rural schools, who often find it difficult to get students to these events due to cost of transporting students to sites where events are held; subsidy needed for our rural schools so that kids can participate*
- b. *List of Resources - Chairs are looking forward to receiving links to those cited in presentation.*
- c. *Parent Engagement Regional Event – Significant time spent discussing possibilities for our region ~ one idea was guest speaker, Dr. Karyn and her “Dare to Dream” presentation. Some concern regarding actual cost, and how many parents would travel from Gravenhurst / Huntsville*

- / Watt/Glen Orchard to central location in our region to hear a presentation. (agreement that parent turn-out at events is not always as we would hope)*
- d. Further discussion on how to best reach and engage parents ~ idea to provide them with details on how to source resources, for example, in their own area ~ perhaps provide link on TLDSB website or a stick that could be given to each family ~ ie. how to source mental health assistance, bullying information, healthy living ideas, virtual tour of a school in our region and in each room, lists of resources that might be sought...*
 - e. More time is required to solidify our ideas so an additional meeting for our site and school chairs has been set for Thursday, January 16th at 7 p.m. with location to be confirmed. School chairs will go back to their respective schools to seek further input from parents.*

Haliburton Area

- a. Site discussion centred around holding a 'hands-on' Math night as this would address the lower math scores and can be a very motivating topic for parent engagement.*

District Chairs 2013-2014:

City of Kawartha Lakes	Frank Arnold	705-439-3299	frankandanke@xplornet.ca
Haliburton County	Judi Paul	705-457-2950	judi.paul@tlidsb.on.ca
District of Muskoka	Laurie Campbell	705-765-7239	lakejoebuilders@rogers.com

2013-2014 Meetings:

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Thursday, May 1, 2014