

District School Council / Parent Involvement Committee Meeting

Thursday, March 22, 2018 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

Haliburton area DSC-PIC Co-Chairs, Jenn Sharpe and Sam Itani, welcomed everyone to the meeting at each of the video conference sites and via teleconference.

2. Update from the Director of Education

Director of Education, Larry Hope, shared information including:

- Parent forums have taken place in each area of the board. Themes and topics included:
 - mental health and well-being. Overall well-being seems to be a high priority, supporting the whole child and that programs in our schools and communities help
 - spreading the support and programming across the entire spectrum of our student body - including students with special needs, gifted, and everything in between
 - arts are valued - lots about music, expressive arts
 - lots about the notion of bullying and student behaviour in classrooms being distracted
 - perception that there are concerns around parents not stepping up - this is not true but the perception needs to be addressed
 - value of suspensions
 - transition from grade 8 to grade 9 - do everything we can to help with this
 - summary: 1) it's okay for all of us to have high expectations for each other - high expectations of our staff, of our students, and of our parents 2) communication - full and complete communication between all parties is critical
- Also visiting a group of students in each of the secondary schools
- Long Term Accommodation Plans - historically we look each year at each school to see where we are in each area. Currently we are in a holding pattern. We are waiting on the Ministry of Education while they review

the process in Ontario including the development of new guidelines. We anticipate this will take 1 or more years. Our current recommendation is that everything on hold - there are no schools currently identified for reviews.

- This summer the board is doing about \$23,000,000 of work in our schools Please be patient with us as we try to make your schools the best they can be

3. Mental Health Supports for Students

District Manager of Mental Health Services, Cheryl Roffe, shared information about the mental health supports available to students. She introduced the behaviour triangle used by schools to help target supports for students to help foster positive mental, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual health and well-being.

- The green zone at the bottom of the triangle provides universal supports for all students. Examples include:
 - classroom community agreements
 - week of kindness and wellness
 - mindfulness, brain breaks, classroom circles
- The yellow zone in the middle of the triangle provides targeted supports to some students. Examples include:
 - Positive behavior supports
 - School intervention team planning
 - Mindful Martial Arts
- the red zone at the top of the triangle where intensive supports are provided to a few students who require targeted interventions and practices. Examples include:
 - Collaborative and ProActive Solutions (CaPS)
 - Violence Risk Threat Assessment
 - Formal Restorative Circles

[Mental Health Presentation](#)

School Council members are welcome to contact Cheryl at cheryl.roffe@tldsbc.on.ca or 1-888-526-5552 ext 22122

4. Policy and Procedure Review

- [BD-2008 District School Council / Parent Involvement Committee](#)
- [OP-6106 School Councils](#)

A copy of the draft revisions to our DSC-PIC policy and procedure and our School Council policy and procedure was sent out to all school council chairs for review. Thank you for the feedback we have received so far. The link to these documents is in the agenda for this meeting which is online on the

TLDSB website. We are asking for any feedback by Friday, March 23, 2018 so that it can be ready to take to the trustees for their approval at their April 10, 2018 meeting.

5. **Updates for School Councils**

Muskoka area DSC-PIC Chair, Debbie Marling shared a parent and students panel idea for school councils to consider. The Muskoka area discussion last time, as well as continued discussion at the BMLSS school council meeting, centred around ideas of different types of parent rules and protocols. Questions such as, when children should be doing chores, how to prepare kids who are going away to college or university, are topical for parents. Consideration needs to be made on how we have this conversation with parents. An idea that could be explored is hosting parent panels as an information gathering option. An example could be a parent panel for grade 8 to grade 9 transition, starting kindergarten. There could also be student panels where recent graduates come and speak to grade 12 students about what they wished they had known about starting post-secondary school. Grade 9 students could go and speak with grade 8 students about the experience of entering high school.

District Manager of Corporate Communications, Catherine Shedden, shared upcoming events and opportunities for school councils.

a. **Parent Presentation - Dr. Alex Russell**

Dr. Alex Russell will be coming to speak to parents on May 23rd at IE Weldon Secondary School and on May 24th at the Muskoka Education Centre. Dr. Russell is a clinical psychologist in Toronto. He provides assessments and psychotherapy to children and adults. He has addressed many parent and counsellor groups over the years and is intimately familiar with the culture of the school system and the relationship that parents, teachers and counsellors share in regard to the children we are raising. You'll find he offers a fresh perspective on raising children that is reassuringly familiar and strikingly sensible. The heart of his message is that children learn through the experience of non-catastrophic, painful failure and it is through the process of these failures that they mature into resilient, resourceful and emotionally balanced individuals. Parents need to see failing - whether it's a test, a course, or a tryout for a team as a normal part of growing up and not a sign of parental incompetence.

[Sample presentation](#)

b. Parent Engagement Fund/Parents Reaching Out grants for Schools and District

It's time for school councils to start thinking about submitting applications for a Parents Reaching Out Grant. A link to application information is currently on the [TLDSB website](#). Through this link you will find videos of various PRO grant-funded projects - lots of ideas to stir up your own council creativity!

c. Parent Communication

- The TLDSB app has been created and is currently at the Apple App Store and Google Play stores - we're just waiting for them to release it for download. Once this happens we would like our school council chairs to Beta test the app - as soon as we have the app we will send you a message asking you to download the app to your device - use it for a couple of days and then give us your feedback. We'll make the changes we can from that feedback and then it will be ready to launch out to the system. Very exciting!
- We produce Parent Engagement Tips each month and we hope you can use these as part of your school parent engagement efforts. They are available in the [Parent Resource Toolbox](#) section of the TLDSB website and we post them on Peachjar. We work with our police and health unit partners to develop these and we also try to make sure that the topics are of interest and important for right now. For instance, in February there is some information about sexting, alcohol, mental health, and character development.
- We send information to school council chairs through a service called Mailchimp - this helps us to send engaging information that is easy to read, we can easily add document links and videos for you to use at school council and other parent meetings. It also gives us analytics and we can see that on average less than 40% of our school council chairs open the newsletter. This might be because it is caught in junk mail or a spam folder. You might want to check this if you have not been receiving the DSC-PIC newsletter. All newsletters are archived on the DSC-PIC page of the website.

d. Ministry Symposium April 20 and 21st

- deadline to let us know if you would like to attend the PIC Symposium is April 6, 2018

- TLDSB can send the DSC-PIC chairs plus 4 parents. Preference will be for parents who have not attended in the past.

6. Site Discussions

Kawartha Lakes Area Site Discussion

- a. Mental wellness in our schools
 - would be nice to have some information about mental health supports that might attract parents
 - Cheryl can help to organize a mental health first aid and as long as the 15 hours is covered within a month, this could take place in the evenings over 4 weeks
 - there is a mental health lead in every school - this person has
 - Grant will send out an email to school council to find out about interest in a mental health first aid course for parents
 - b. Parent events
 - would be nice to offer a healthy snack
 - ask people to bring a travel mug
 - could have a snack time after the speaker is finished
 - door prizes -
 - ability to pre register without a computer
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Muskoka Area Site Discussion

- a. Mental wellness in our schools
 - How do we get this information to parents/ families?
 - How do we connect students/ families to SSAC's?
 - Suggestion - At BMLSS one of the first Council meetings each school year we invite the SSAC to discuss services offered, successes of the program, and who & how to get help if your student needs help. Muskoka Group along with SSAC Rep felt this might be helpful as the promotion would become word of mouth which is still the best form of communication.
 - Also concern over other forms of promotion not working.....What can we do?

b. Dr. Alex Russell

- Muskoka Group is very excited about Dr. Russell's Presentation.
- Our group strongly feels that the Dr. Alex Russell should be its own presentation and separate from the parent panels.
- Patricia Wark is going to arrange a coffee donation for the Dr. Russel presentation in Muskoka from Camp Muskoka. The group was going to work on quick snacks through donations and go back to their schools and ask what contributions they can make towards food/ snacks for the event.
- As for free tickets – the success for the BMLSS Dr. Greg Wells Presentation with people needing a ticket to enter might be a way to ensure attendance. However additional conversations on the cost vs attendance should be discussed.

c. Parent & Student Panels

- The continued discussion of parent events. Group Discussed Parent Panels.
- Everyone felt the parent panels are a fantastic idea. Hopefully this is a way to provide information to parents/ families that don't normally get the info. Kid panels to get information to kids my reduce stress for kids. Important in these times.
- Group felt this should be recommended board wide however each school (or group of smaller schools) should plan their parent panels to what best fits with their own school needs
- Muskoka would like to highlight parent panels "What you Need to Know" for:
 - Kindergarten
 - Grade 6 - moving to those intermediate grades, expenses, trips, etc...
 - Grade 8 -for the big jump to grade nine, parent nerves, course selections and pathway needs to know.
 - Grade 12 – another big jump to post secondary, maybe include some of the information that colleges and universities share to their parents.
- Muskoka would also like to see student panels "What you Need to Know" for:
 - Grade 8
 - Grade 12 – steps to post secondary
 - Grade 12 – steps in the prep for the working world when post secondary is over.

d. Open Discussion

- Discussions for future or to include in the parent panels navigating the tldsb website.

- We also suggest that a very short “Navigate the Website” be presented at the beginning to the Dr. Alex Russel presentation – captive audience.
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Haliburton Area Site Discussion

a. Mental Wellness in our schools

- kids now know we are way past the stigma “stuff” - it’s about coping. We need to communicate far better as to what is available for support.
- Parent question - where do I go to get help? Parents can reach out to their child’s school and ask there as to what is available.
- School councils can reach out to parents and let them know that their voice can be heard.
- How do we let parents know what we are doing to support mental health? It is more important that parents know where to go rather than know what is available.
- Jessica said - It is so great that parents and students are being trained in mental health eg) Safe Talks.
- Elephant in the Room Program - high school students are now doing this and Nicole Mee said that the goal is to get grade 8 students involved in this program -started in December at HHSS
- Larry recommends that people go on Twitter and follow our board, Cheryl Roffe, schools, etc. there are many great links and articles on Twitter.

b. Parent Events

- Some parents thought that students should talk to students and parents should talk to parents - especially when it comes to going to post-secondary institutions. (Parent /student informal panels)

c. Open Discussion

- Policy and procedures for school councils - review - in Haliburton they are looking to keep everything clear and tight. Councils can forward their thoughts to the board if they come up with more.
- Wilberforce/Cardiff - Indigenous event for students and families - from PRO grant - Elaine claims that it looks overwhelming but it is worth going through, and is not that difficult

2017-2018 Meetings

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Thursday, January 18, 2018

Thursday, March 22, 2018

Thursday, May 10, 2018

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