

District School Council / Parent Involvement Committee Meeting

Thursday, March 21, 2019 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

Debbie Marling, Muskoka Chair

2. Update from the Director of Education

Larry Hope – Director of Education

- **Government update**

- **Elementary class size:** No changes to early learning or primary class size cap. Minor changes for junior/intermediate classes. Currently funded at a rate of 23.84:1 We already work with a district average for the past 4-6 years of 24.5, so you should not see significant changes in the junior/intermediate classrooms.
- **Secondary class size:** Some changes coming to secondary class sizes. We do have local language in our secondary collective agreements about class sizes which is what we will continue to follow. We go by averages, not caps, in TLDSB
- **eLearning:** All students beginning in 2020-2021 will take one elearning online course per year. [TLDSB has a large elearning platform](#) with more than 2000 credits being earned at any given moment and more than 250 TLDSB students taking courses. Our platform extends beyond TLDSB to all around the world. We may be the only jurisdiction that could offer courses from grade 9-12. There is a difference between voluntary and mandatory participation. We believe there will be some flexibility built in where there can be some exceptions. We will look closely at this as we learn more. We are not being asked to change the delivery of eLearning in TLDSB at this time, including the staffing allocations and offerings.
- **Ban on cell phones in classrooms:** We have left this to teachers to determine if they want to allow cell phones in classrooms. Many parents have spoken out about cell phones being a distraction in classrooms when being used for social media, etc. However, they can be wonderful learning devices and we will continue to support this approach in TLDSB. We are not concerned about an all-out ban — the government language allows for cell phone use for positive

purposes. We have some classrooms where they are not allowed, some where they are used sometimes or often for teaching opportunities

- **Some things we do not know much about include:** Central office support (ie. teachers and others who work alongside teachers to assist in classroom programs), library, guidance. We think we will see more once the budget is delivered in April. There are many time-bound deadlines that we need to adhere to which is our focus at the moment. We have been assured that there is some attrition protection which is intended to help school boards avoid layoffs of classroom teaching staff.
- **Mathematics:** Back to basics approach by the government. There has been a disconnect in the balance that we need in our approach to mathematics. We are certain that we will now find greater balance — we do not have the curriculum yet, but we know there will be some changes when we begin the next school year. In TLDSB, we started a significant shift early in the school year called “Scope and Sequence” which outlines when certain items need to be taught at what grade level. We’ve had a mid-year grade 6 math assessment to help understand where our students are at at this time.
- **Health and Physical Education Curriculum:** (Referred to by the media as the “sex ed curriculum.”) Many of the items that were causing concern because they were no longer being covered, will now be covered.
- **Accommodation Reviews:** we did not release a revised accommodation review this year as we have no sense from the government of any direction or timeline on this. The consultation around the templates that are to accompany the guidelines needs to take place prior to boards receiving any updated information.

3. Google Drive Folder for TLDSB School Council Chairs

Debbie Marling, Muskoka Chair

- A Google Drive folder was introduced for School Council Chairs.
- DSC-PIC chairs will invite area school council chairs to access documents and share information through this avenue.

4. Harmony Movement Plans

Debbie Marling - Kawartha Lakes Chair

- Harmony Movement will be presenting at the next DSC-PIC meeting.
- Topic will be on Unconscious Bias.
- Grant Boudreau and Debbie Marling attended a presentation by Harmony Movement at the Minister’s Symposium last year — and wanted to see if the presentation could be duplicated for parents in TLDSB.
- At the May 9th meeting, all members of school council and other parents will be invited to attend this session — invitation will be coming soon and parents will need to sign up.

- Rima Dib from Harmony Movement will be the presenter — [a short excerpt from one of her presentations](#) was shown at the meeting

5. Updates for School Councils

Catherine Shedden – District Manager of Corporate Communications

- Parents Reaching Out (PRO) grants for Schools and District
 - Be sure to spend your PRO grant money by the end of June, and complete the final report using this online form: https://education.factorial.ca/s_Login.jsp
 - We do not yet have any information about grants for next year. If and when we do receive information, we will pass it along to schools.

6. Site Discussion

- TLDSB School Council Chairs Google Drive
- Area Planning for Harmony Movement at May 9th DSC-PIC
- Open Discussion

Kawartha Lakes Area Site Discussion

TLDSB School Council Chairs Google Drive

- Need a narrative to explain how this works.
- Would like to have an opportunity for chairs to bring their device to a DSC-PIC meeting to learn more about the TLDSB School Council Chairs Google Drive (guest network login required).
- Would like something about how to chair a meeting, how to deal with challenging situations.
- Harmony Movement May 9th
 - Refreshments: water in water cooler, granola bars.
 - Feed All Four stickers, pops, etc. or some other swag.
- School Council Meeting Challenges
 - Repetitive discussions that come up over and over again.
 - “Other business” at the end of the agenda becomes a bit of an issue — sometimes a parent shows up with their own agenda item.
 - Quorum is difficult to gain — lots come to first meetings and then attendance dwindles.
 - Are DSC-PIC minutes a standard item on every school council meeting agenda?
 - Helps to have a firm end time for a meeting; also a time limit for items.
 - Not a lot of coaching for the position of school council chair.
- Very difficult to find music teachers

Haliburton Area Site Discussion

TLDSB School Council Chairs Google Drive

- The Chairs would like to look at what the Drive contains to be able to offer more constructive feedback.
- They felt this will be a great resource for themselves and future chairs.
- Wondered about the time it might take to keep current events up to date and whether past events would stay in the folder or moved elsewhere.

Area Planning for Harmony Movement

- SBES and JDH have a PRO Grant "Wellness" event scheduled for the same evening — wonder about offering the presentation close to those schools to catch a few more people.
- Would like to see RSVP numbers to help decide on location and refreshments etc.
- An overall interest in the topic.

ELearning

- Comments on how long Elearning has been around — appears to be a good alternative for some.
- Concern raised about support with Elearning and what will happen with teacher numbers.

Muskoka Area Site Discussion

TLDSB School Council Chairs Google Drive

- Muskoka Chairs Love the idea! Very Positive!
- Open Discussions of chairs having access to the drive or if each school council can have their own file to put their notes, minutes, projects, etc.... Additionally, from each School council Google Drive the DIS-PIC could post in the DIS-PIC Google Drive?
- Or if someone does an all search.
- Chairs/co-chairs in attendance will give constant feedback on wishes, suggestions, contributions and concerns.
- All Questions to board for approval?
- Chair are also asking their level of access or contribution accessibility. Discussions of the 3 levels of access involved with Google Drive and that yes they would be able to share documents with their councils. Might be in a read only format but yes and they would be able to download documents to use.
- Very excited for the tool to be used for sharing information.

Area Planning for Harmony Movement at May 9th DSC-PIC

- The group is interested in the Harmony Movement attendance. Chairs asked questions to Debbie about the group and the session she attended at the 2018 Ministers Parent Symposium.
- The group would like current information to be shared and posted on the Google Drive to help promote this presentation. They feel a sign up is the perfect way to know numbers of attendees. Light refreshments would be a great addition.
- Muskoka hopes to have YouTube videos to share with their councils to attract people. Additional word of mouth will help.
- Concern with transportation to those schools who have trouble getting to meetings for distance and cost.
- Concern over possible child care!

Open Discussions

- The discussion continued with regards to far away schools that are part of the Muskoka Region and possible travel coverage or those who cannot make it who are 1.5 hrs away sit on call and attend in person maybe once during the year? Possible to drive and meet up with another group that are half way and car pool.
- The shared communication – Google Drive a good start.
- Maybe meeting more often during the year but in the possibility of topic specific conference calls.
- There were some councils who are very happy with the communication and the direction of the DIS-PIC group. Some had no idea that this group existed until this school year so our push for communication is working.

2018-2019 DSC-PIC Meetings

Thursday, November 8, 2018 Thursday, January 17, 2019
Thursday, March 21, 2019 Thursday, May 9, 2019

District Chairs 2018-2019:

City of Kawartha Lakes	Grant Boudrault	705-786-3937	eyespydogs@bell.net
Haliburton County	Sam Itani	705-457-7407	sam_itani@hotmail.com
	Jenn Sharp	705-457-6564	jennsharp2@gmail.com
District of Muskoka	Debbie Marling	705-641-0944	marlingfam@gmail.com