

**Upper Grand District School Board  
Parent Involvement Committee  
Minutes of Meeting on Monday March 30, 2015**

**In Attendance**

**Parents:** Sara Dick, Kathy Watts, Wendy Bauman, Vikki Brown, Lorrie Wren, Rosemond Anim-Somuah, Barb White, Mollie Loughran, Darren Hale, Katie Lamarre, Bruno Lamarre, Michelle Watterson, Maureen Oesch, Shon Scott-Clark, Heather Janes, Rene Chumbly, Cindy Gibson, Deb Drake, Kathryn Selves, Megan Taylor (remote),

**Board Personnel:** Martha Rogers, Brent McDonald, Martha MacNeil, Mark Bailey, Barb White, Linda Busutill, Andrea Higgins

**Community Member:** Heather Bailey

**Guest Speaker:** Linda Benallick, Superintendent of Education and Cheryl VanOotegham, Principal of Program

**Regrets:** Tammy Flemming (Speaker for Board Strategic Plan team)

**Minutes Written by:** Wendy Bauman

**Welcome and Introductions**

- Welcome to all extended, and all present introduced themselves.
- Approval of Agenda: Heather Janes, Mollie Loughran
- Approval of Previous Minutes: Maureen Oesch, Mollie Loughran

**Board Strategic Plan: Linda Benallick, Cheryl Van Ootegham**

- 3 yr plan 2010-2013 needed to be revised
- **vision:** Lead, Learn, Inspire... Together
- **mission:** develop student learning skills, foster achievement and well-being, create positive and inclusive environment
- **guiding principles:** learning with confidence, learning through collaboration, inspiring all voices
- committees, survey of stakeholders - all aligned
- **goals:** achieving excellence, ensuring equity of access and opportunity, promoting well-being, enhancing public confidence
- goals align with *Achieving Excellence* document by Ministry of Education
- goals align with *Foundations for a Healthy School* document by Ministry of Education
- now: input is needed for collaboration
- mission vision, goals of board --> board improvement plan for student achievement (BIPSA) --> school improvement plan for student achievement (SIPSA)
- thus Board Strategic Plan aligns with Ministry and with BIPSA and SIPSAs across Board
- Activity: groups of three - using BIPSA and copy of Strategic direction, reflect on the goals established in the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan and Operational Plan; provide input and feedback - Also, how do you feel about change from "energizing staff" to "promoting well-being"
- Next Steps: collate data share with Martha Rogers, determine follow-up with respect to communication, finalize plan

## Minds in Motion: Joanne Smyth

- runs Minds in Motion Learning Centre in Guelph (<http://mindsinmotion1.ca>), Brain Gym consultant, previously an elementary teacher
- works with children with diagnosed challenges, especially reading
- noticed that athletic children have difficulty with focus, self-regulation, auditory processing, visual processing - seemed to be a connection
- Brain Gym works for anyone of any age (baby to elderly)
- Brain Gym
  - under umbrella of educational kinesiology
  - developed by Paul Dennison - noticed that certain movements help kids with their learning
  - 26 movements - from vision therapy, yoga, dance, early developmental stages info
  - neural plasticity
- physical skills of learning: Right and Left hemispheres, in stress the non-dominant hemisphere shuts down and we become "one-sided" and not accessing full brain; more time we spend in one-sided state, the more stuck we become. eg. child stuck in decoding (L-brain) and not taking in meaning or word patterns
- stress: different for different kids - back part of brain takes over, not much in frontal cortex (thinking part) - kids get stuck in this back brain stressed state
- Brain Gym - through movements, you activate all parts of the brain
- Foundational skills (primitive reflexes - automatic motor responses, physical skills, visual processing, etc.) for learning need to be solid for academic skills to develop eg. primitive reflexes may be retained (aren't integrated) or can re-emerge - interferes with learning
- BG is one way to support development of these physical skills of learning
- BG helps kids to notice and be aware of their behaviours so that they can then change these behaviours
- "Learning Loop": some things are automatic (e.g. ride a bike) and we can layer those skills and 2-3 at once; other things require us to stop and think and we can only do one of those things at a time. If you are out of the loop, you feel anxious, confused, angry, frustrated, etc. Empowers children to self-regulate and develop executive function skills - out of loop? then need to make a change/ do something and come back to the activity - e.g. Brain Gym
- Brain Gym "allows learning to flow through my brain", "helps me to concentrate", "helps me to get on track and makes me not sad"
- BG Activity: Positive, Active, Clear, Energetic (PACE)
  - Energetic - sipping water
  - Clear - brain buttons - one hand massage under collar bones, other hand on tummy, eyes relax, switch hands
  - Active - cross crawl - stimulates vestibular system (sense of balance) - opposite hand and leg movements - activate R and L hemispheres
  - Positive - hook ups - cross arms in front, clasp hands, and pull under towards chest, cross feet; fingers press together/ twirl fingers
- BG Activity - move head side-to-side - massage outer ear, rolling them back - now have greater range of motion of head side-to-side
- movement based learning program - beneficial for all
- appropriate for classroom setting - e.g. before a math instruction to get kids back into the game
- some similarities to Occupational Therapy activities
- Handout provided re PACE
- recommended book: *Smart Moves* by Carla Hannaford

- website: Brain Gym International ([www.braingym.org](http://www.braingym.org))
- Joanne provides workshops that includes Brain Gym activities (PRO Grant opportunity)
- Joanne also has full-day workshop: Switched on Learning - for parents and teachers (PRO Grant opportunity)
- Joanne also tutors and works with seniors (especially with dementia)

## Chairs' Report

- PRO Grants for 2015 - 2016
  - submission deadline is **Tues May 19th**
  - Co-Chairs are happy to help with those who would like guidance or ideas
  - still focussing on math strategies
  - can group schools together and combine monies
  - work with Ministry Initiatives and your school's SIPSA
- Dufferin parent support network - free parenting workshops - [www.dpsn.ca](http://www.dpsn.ca)
- People for Education - new pupil accommodation guideline for school closings; upcoming events (website)
- Guelph youth music centre - Do Re Mi Music In-School Education Programs interactive music program - \$125 for school workshop Gr 1-8, also JK/SK workshop - and ties in with Medieval Madness curriculum (Gr 4) - [www.gyymc.ca/programs.html](http://www.gyymc.ca/programs.html)
- PIC website has list of PRO Grants received by schools this year
- John McCrae had a presentation about children and anxiety - Dr. Nicole Brown - how parents can help their kids
- John McCrae also had a math night
- Reminder: A Gazillion is Not a Number event on Thurs April 16th at King George - Dr. Lynda Cogan - **RSVP to Lynne McInnis by Tues Apr 7** - part of a PRO Grant - parents only (Thurs. Apr 16<sup>th</sup> Dr. Lynda Colgan- Math Presentation – King George PS 72 Lemon Street, Guelph 5:30-8:00pm)
- PIC Event - **Chris D'souza** guest speaker about inequity/inclusivity - **please RSVP by April 7th** - in Fergus - hoping for one Admin, a teacher, a SC Member and additional parent - may have room for 5th or 6th - break-out sessions after (Thursday April 30<sup>th</sup> PIC Spring Event, Centre Wellington District High School, Fergus 4:00pm – 8:00pm)

## Treasurer's Report

- spent \$50 since last meeting

## Communication, Questions, New Business, and Final Remarks

- Thurs. Apr 16<sup>th</sup> Dr. Lynda Colgan- Math Presentation – King George PS 72 Lemon Street, Guelph 5:30-8:00pm
- Thursday April 30<sup>th</sup> PIC Spring Event, Centre Wellington District High School, Fergus 4:00pm – 8:00pm
- Math event at Mono Amaranth school - teachers and SC put on a math night for their families - student led and kids explained the math - paid for by PRO Grant - also had weekly math activities leading up to the event - a lot of staff involved - two staff in each of 5 rooms
- Linda Busutill - SEAC (Special Education Advisory Council) - wondering if we can work more collaboratively together - combine calendars
- Maureen - Ross Green is coming to JF Ross on Thurs Apr 9 (7-8:30pm) about collaborative problem solving - author of *Explosive Children* - no registration required

- Child and Youth Mental Health Week beginning of May - "SUPER" Social connection, Uplifting emotions, Personal health and well-being, Emotional calming, Resilient thinking - package coming to all schools with activities for each day of May 4 to 8, elementary to secondary
- Rick Mercer was at Ross for winning the "Spread the Net" Challenge.
- Rick Mercer was at Skills Canada
- Mitchell Woods Math Night, April 28th, 6-8 teacher led

**Next meeting: Monday, May 25th, 2015 at 6:45pm, 500 Victoria Rd., Board Office, Guelph**