

# Upper Grand District School Board

## Parent Involvement Committee

### February Minutes (Feb.24, 2014)

**In Attendance:** **Parents:** Martha MacNeil, Kay Elford, Maureen Oesch, Lloyd Phillipps, Rosemond Anim-Somuah, Axy Leighl, Sonya McNabb, Mollie Loughran, Tim Russell, Sarah Dales, Andrea Brown **Board Personnel:** Martha Rogers, Brent McDonald, Marty Fairbairn, Jeni Vaughan, Ann Charles, Darren Hale **Guest Speaker:** Dr. Lynn Woodford **Regrets:** Kathy Watts, Megan Taylor, Heather Bailey, Heather Janes, Andrea Higgins, Deb Drake, Kris Sturgeon, Wendy Bauman, Jen MacLeod

#### **Welcome & introductions**

- Welcome extended to all and introductions were made.
- Approval of agenda.
- Feb. 3 minutes not approved. It was noted that there had been discussion/concern about the IB Math not being taught at the High Level. Upon clarification with Heather Buck, the IB co-ordinator, we know that there are 3 levels of Math: HL (Higher Level) SL (Standard level) SSL (Studies Level.) Staff are trained to teach whatever level the students choose. This may become an issue if not enough students choose a level/subject. If a student wants to study at the higher level will he/she be able to if there are not enough students? Will the Higher levels be encouraged? Parent expressed strong opinion that HL Math is very important. Minutes will be amended to include parent concern regarding math in IB program.

#### **Board/Ministry Report**

- There will be a Digital Open House on Saturday March 22, 2014 at King George PS 72 Lemon St. Guelph 9am-12:30pm. Open House will feature displays and brief workshops on how students are using technology to learn. Visit [www.ugdsb.on.ca/digitalsaturday](http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/digitalsaturday) for more information. Childcare available for children ages 3-7. (Pre-register for childcare.)
- School Councils are being asked to give input on Principal Leadership at their schools. In the event of administrative change what qualities would be valued in a Principal? Etc. Each school should have received this form.

**Guest speaker: Dr. Lynn Woodford: UGDSB Mental Health Lead**

- The mission of the Mental Health & Addiction Strategy Pillars:
  - \* promote system awareness of mental health needs, supports and services
  - \* build capacity among students, staff & parents to promote positive student mental health
  - \* collaborate with community partners to provide coordinated timely appropriate support for students and their families
- Vision:
  - \* Provide a comprehensive mental health & addiction strategy for all students
- Values/ Commitments:
  - \* students need support & guidance from caring adults in their families, at schools & in their communities,
  - \* ensuring positive student mental health is a shared responsibility
- Extremely important to have community Collaboration
- Some websites that can provide further information:
  - <http://smh-assist.ca/school-leaders/> ( Leading Mentally Healthy Schools: A resource for School Admin.)
  - <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/supportingminds.pdf> (Supporting Minds: An educators' guide to promoting students' mental health and well being)
  - <http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca/documents/res-building-a-better-school-environment-for-youth-with-mental-health-and-addiction-issues.pdf> (CMHO Youth Action Committee)
  - <http://www.kidshelpphone.ca/teens/home/splash.aspx> (Kids Help Phone and web counselling for youth under 20, free, 24/7)
  - <http://mindyourmind.ca/> (mind your Mind)
  - <http://www.sioutreach.org/> (SiOS collaboration between the U f G & McGill gives info@ self injury)
  - <http://www.ementalhealth.ca/> (eMental Health)
  - <http://www.hincksdellcrest.org/ABC/Welcome> (ABCs of mental health)
  - <http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca> (Children's Mental Health Ontario)
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- Dr. Woodford ended her presentation reminding us all that we need to take care of ourselves. As parents, teachers, educators etc. we need to be healthy so that we can role model and take care of the children.
- In the discussion that followed the presentation:
- It was suggested that to get the message/info out to kids it needs to be available to them via their current social media.

- Will there be resources/training available for parents?
- Is there a way for parents to have support one on one? (Dr. Woodford suggested talking to Family Drs. & local agencies.) If people can become connected their resiliency increases.
- Survey across the board showed that the biggest issues/concerns are around 1. Anxiety and 2. Addictions
- Addictions go beyond drugs and alcohol and can include things like electronic & video game addictions.
- Are addictions coping strategies for other issues?
- Is there resources/training for teachers to recognize signs in all children including High Achievers & Perfectionists?
- Healthy practices need to be embedded early in the curriculum
- It is important for children to have experiences where they don't do well so they can learn how to cope
- Parents want to know that their child is SAFE and Comfortable and in a Balanced environment.
- Suggested to gather & share real life stories for presentations

### **Chair's Report**

- Changes to the PIC and School Council Policies have been updated on the Board website
- Instead of a SC survey People 4 Education are going to have a PIC survey instead. Martha is looking for PIC members to help her fill out this survey
- Martha and Axy have fulfilled their 2 year term as co chairs for the PIC. Asking PIC members to consider being part of the executive for next year. Positions to fill include: Co chairs, communications lead, secretary and treasurer
- Spring Event will be held Thursday April 24<sup>th</sup> at College Heights
- Martha looking for (sent sheet around) for volunteers to help with both organizing and helping on the day of the event.

### **Budget items**

No change

### **Communications**

- Rosemond shared results of the PIC member survey
- 12 people responded
- It was done through survey monkey and showed that:
- Members have been part of School Councils from 6months-4 years
- Things people like about the PIC : it is welcoming, presentations are informative
- PIC parents would like the opportunity to learn more about the Board. It was suggested that The Director of Education, Superintendents, trustees, give a presentation on their roles. **Action - Ask Martha, Brent & Marty to present**
- Suggested that there be more networking time - Action - this has been implemented; 6:45 -7pm social time before each meeting
- Suggested parents would like more info on technology - Action - Digital Open House on March 22
- What should PIC tweet about? Could there be a tweeting tutorial at the next meeting?
- 41 followers on twitter
- Is Skype an option for people who can't make meetings?

### Open Discussion

- Kay thanked the PIC members that sent feedback regarding PA days. Do parents prefer Monday or Friday? Results are very mixed depending on personal situations, ability to get time off work, secure daycare etc.
- Noted that most Stat holidays are on Mondays so Friday PA days are a nice change
- Comments will be taken back to the Calendar committee which will be meeting Thursday March 6th

Next Meeting: March 24th