

PIC Evening Meeting - May 30, 2016

7PM - start

In attendance:

Debbie Bush
Sue Shaw
Kathryn Selves
Nicole Clark
Brent MacDonald
Martha McNeil
Nancy Angevine Sands - Keynote Speaker
Darren Hale - Principal
Paul Smith
Karen Dobson
Kathleen Thompson
Kathy Watt
Martha Rogers

Martha Rogers opening remarks:

- began with a quick commentary on the budget; including some upcoming information regarding key areas in terms of the information that is reported in the news (Halton Head of PIC; Ms. Amos losing \$18.6 million in Spec Ed).
- There was some concern that this was actually a zero sum offset with reductions but this is not the case
- There have never been a large number of EAs added.
- There were several teachers that will be added for Spec Ed.
- Enrolments are dropping for secondary with the bubble (approx 80) and is offset by the increase in the international students.
- New school: building is on schedule and ready to open for Sept 2016
- Name change: Couling Crescent → Ecole Guelph Lake

Approval of tonight's Agenda: Kathryn Selves

Nancy Angevine-Sands, Keynote Speaker

Former elementary school teacher, PIAC from TO, trained with big names at Harvard and Baltimore. Big Equal Step is company that has started with parent support and advisory.

Key parts for schools and parents:

#4. Engagement.

Why do we do it?

Students? Schools? Meetings?

A: for the students and for the achievement

#3. Family Engagement (includes beyond the parents)

Dr. Goodall (England) recommends an equal partnership between school and family

What does this look like?

Parents have dreams that their kids will achieve beyond themselves

All parents have the capacity to support their child's learning

Equal and equitable partnerships between home and school, use the 4C's:

Capability

Connections

Cognition

Confidence

School staff can lead school councils in ways that they could connect with the parents - and would include parents

#2. Be welcoming and have a welcoming environment where:

- Greet every parent
- Create meaningful links with staff; parent to staff. Welcome and introduce staff at meetings
- Have variety of ways to volunteer
- Survey the parents annually
- Celebrate successes

HOW? Establish a welcoming committee

Need to value diversity - find the leaders in the various communities to shed some light to how best to reach members

Limit edu-babble so make conversation accessible so that all can participate

HOW? Outreach committee

#1. Support Home Learning

- Schools need to think about how schools can assist in making the learning accessible for home to assist with their child's education.

HOW? Create a parent room (part of the library?) where parents can come together and to meet. Can add value to the school

Promote 2-Way Communication

- Contact parents at least once a term. Too much information can lead to ignoring e-mails
- Go beyond feedback as feedback is one-sided. Ask, "What do you think?"
- Promote councils and events. Advertise what you are doing since this will lead to

HOW? Try social media (with rules: moderation is important; suggest a Chair OR have approval required first)

Also - use the top most commonly spoken languages in your schools (may need to use translation services).

Relationships

Honour and value all of the key players: the *parent's child, and the teacher's student.*

HOW: When working with the SIP try to ensure that all parties are part of the process - have the staff work on the curriculum and have the parents assist with the Parent Engagement ideas)

Move the SIP to be due in January in order for the school to have the information be able to have input from parents. Have the parents choose 1 or 2 options from the

Empowerment/ Engagement

Hard to reach parents???

Apathy is NOT the reason as supported in research

Dr. Steve Constantino - The degree to which families are empowered by the schools is a determining factor in student achievement

Recommendations: As a PIC - what do you do to empower your parents and help their students and ultimately to participate more.

- Needs to be meaningful and relevant... is the problem the parent OR the situation is not meaningful to the parents.

Recognize Barrier to Achievement

Do you know the Language of the School/Language of Education?

Demand and Supply Parents

Demand Parents - those parents who know what they want and what they are entitled to]

Supply Parents - those parents that supply their students to the school (low ESL and bad experiences that they carry with them

PACS need to return to Mandates

- How can PICS build their councils to build up and support the parents so that they can support their children
- How can we help parents
- Perspective Taking: Have a walk through the neighbourhood and all have a conversation about the community so that you can have an understanding from both the parents and the community perspectives. Both parents and teachers have "baggage" that leads to assumptions about one another that affects the kids.

Confidence - strengths of each party.

As a PIC - job to start to consider how to build the 4 C's to support the PACS

Martha has a contact in the Halton RE: a parent who can do webinars

Use school opportunities to contact parents

- To create letters OR book an opportunity to come and speak and ask for the parents to come to ask (i.e. Kindergarten Info session nights. Grade 8 nights)
- Perhaps can allow for easier access and posting to the websites using a common access and allow for instant updating. Can be updated at the school level -
- Staging platform for a website
- Access to a castle site for anyone with explicit consent and need to ensure that we have parents/ family consents.
- Board looking at moving to subscription site option - to allow for a 1 stop shopping.

This is not necessarily fully accessible option and requires that families have computers

- Option to use Castle as a push out notification from individual schools only, but need to have an idea of what and when to send. Family can subscribe.
- Leverage students to assist drawing their parents in.

Concerns:

Remember that there is a danger in being too dependent on technology and variability with the Principal who wishes not to participate.

Some additional limitations to using the technology as a option; as it presupposes that the they only information that you want to receive from an e-mail is a response to your e-mail (limits the flow of information).

Superintendent's Report (Brent):

Distributed information in Newsletters on different Parent Engagement info. Also had some suggestions for secondary.

PRO Grants - due yesterday. Several schools interested, 1 request for extension.

Kathy Watts worked with an external partner from a neighbouring Board to write a grant

Labour update

2 bargaining units left to reach an agreement

- Occasional Teachers, and
- CUPE ELL staff (EAs)

Feedback solicitation for Public Concerns Policy

Came down as a result of the Ombudsman recommendations.
Mark has extended the deadline to allow for feedback - until tomorrow May 31, 2016

Committee By-Laws

Brent would like to thank committee members:

Vikki Brown, Lorrie Wren, Rosamond Anim-Somuah for their hard work in reviewing and providing feedback for the review.

Please see the following changes noted for By-laws (see attached):

- Few changes were noted BUT recommendation were made by the By-Law committee to be more purposeful about following the existing By-laws (many good practices already listed but not necessarily followed).

Please feel free to provide feedback to committee members, Kathy (Chair) or Brent (Superintendent)

Chair Report (Kathy)

comments from April session, enjoyed the strong breakout sessions and has

People for education - Geographic divide in the Ontario between rural and urban schools
S schools

Thought provoking - society for quality education.org

Weekly round-up from their blog from last week - tips for students and their families - Helping kids Thrive

Also attended the CPIC from Catholic Board

Speaker: Susan Williams

Strong breakout sessions: appreciated how they related to what was happening in the schools.

Building Girl's confidence (Indigo Girls)

Diversity Day (this was subsidized by PRO Grant money)Held a Multicultural event - Willow Rd school - well attended and some interesting shows from the community

The PIC event - good food and a good presentation

Thank you to the committee for the year of

Trustee Report (Martha)

Feedback from the PIC event - medium to high feedback; surveys have been correlated and has info that will be debated

Draft Policy feedback - survey in monkey link on the main site

FI Review - now has decisions. Cap for FI (will be an individual school cap - not a board-wide). All schools will have a cap (may not meet the cap), gives flexibility to add programs in areas/ regions.

There will be a FI group to also look at secondary with an anticipated deadline of June 2017.

Treasurer's Report (Brent):

Please see attached

Communications Report (Brent):

Please send requests, suggestions, and ideas to improve the website to Brent at "Brent McDonald" <brent.mcdonald@ugdsb.on.ca>;

Next Meeting: Monday September 26, 2016