

Upper Grand District School Board

Parent Involvement Committee

November Minutes (November 26, 2012)

In Attendance:

Parents: Giselle Scanlon, Axy Leighl, Martha MacNeil, Kathy Watts, Maureen Oesch, Deb Drake, Carrie Proudfoot, Sue Shaw, Rhonda Sharpe, Scott Doern, Kay Elford, Jane Brown

Board Personnel: Martha Rogers, Brent McDonald, Ann Charles

Community Representative: Heather Bailey

Regrets: Jaspreet Dhillon, Krista Thompson

Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome extended to all and introductions were made.
- Approval of November agenda and October minutes

Chair's Report

- People for Education conference was held Nov. 3rd and 4th. No members of PIC attended.
- Krista Thompson has stepped down as co-secretary. Kay and Deb will share the duties.

Board and Ministry Report

1. ETFO

- A conciliator was brought in, and a no board report was requested. ETFO local will be in a legal strike position as of midnight December 1st.
- The likely action will be work to rule. For many schools this may not look very different than the current situation, but will be very different for others due to the large discrepancy that has occurred to date in the withdrawal of services (the 'pauses') between different schools.
- In the meantime, there will be continuation of the McGinty Mondays and Tuesdays action: No school based meetings, staff will be in the school from ½ hr before to ½ hr after the scheduled school day, no extra-curricular activities.
- Stage 1 – Work to Rule – Withdrawal of Administrative Services: Some of the directives put forth by the ETFO leadership are:
 - Membership will: Continue to teach; continue to take attendance; maintain contact with parents; continue scheduled supervisory duties. Note these duties are primarily related to student safety.
 - Membership may: Run extracurricular activities; attend Board sponsored workshops.
 - Membership will not: Attend meetings outside of the instructional day; attend leadership meetings; attend support program meetings; attend Board sponsored PD activities outside the instructional day; participate in Ministry surveys, Ministry sponsored PD days, Literacy and Numeracy activities, secretarial activities (likely since this may be related to EQAO, a Ministry initiative); distribute Ministry materials. Job action with respect to the above will not be as impactful to the students as it is will be to the Board.
- Doug Cook, ETFO local president, invited School Council chairs/members to a meeting last week to discuss ETFO's positions. Several PIC members attended as representatives of their respective councils. The charter of rights and the labour laws were presented as a significant issue for ETFO.
- It was questioned whether PIC should take a formal position on the issue and/or make a statement to parents. What are other PIC's doing?
- There are ~1250 teachers in the ETFO local.

2. OSSTF

- Negotiations with the Board continued through September and in November the government got back involved in the discussions.
- Sanctions were initiated mid November, however, several boards and the provincial union negotiating team worked out a potential tentative agreement. A membership meeting is scheduled for tonight and a tentative agreement may be potentially going to ratification tomorrow night.
- There are ~761 teachers in the OSSTF local.

Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant

1. Focus Group Project Progress

- Sub-committee decided to go with Management Consultant Group (Barrie). Co-chairs are meeting with them on Thursday to go over cost, what they cover and other logistics.
- The decision was based on quoted cost, and inclusion of a special session on how to report on the results of the focus group activities.
- Looking at starting the training in January using a couple of test schools (any schools interested should contact Axy/Martha M.) and then taking the results of that to develop methodology to be used in other schools.
- Heather Anderson has offered to be the liaison and point person for the East Wellington schools (Erin, Brisbane, Ross R. McKay).

2. Spring Event-Speaker

- Recommendation to have the speaker(s) come from People for Education since parent engagement is their specialty, they are local and are within budget. Preliminary contact has been made, seem like they would work well for us and they seem quite interested. A spot has been tentatively booked and is being held.
- Members were in agreement to move forward with this. Martha M. will follow up with Jacqui Strachan and Annie Kidder. Will ask for an information package.
- The suggestion has been made to schedule a later start time than the event last year – possibly 4:30 p.m. - since feedback indicated that would work better for teachers/staff.
- Tentative date is Thursday, April 25th. Brent will double check the board calendar to make sure there are no conflicts.
- Goal is to get information out early (by Feb.), feedback from last year indicated the early notice was helpful. The marketing piece is very critical, get information out frequently and by many means.
- Last year the event was held at Centennial and refreshments were brought in from College Heights. Look into the possibility of booking College Heights and possible rental of round tables if not available at tentative venue.

Communications

- The website has been reviewed and there is a lot of information there, but it is difficult to navigate.
- Suggest putting a site map up which would help to find items easier.
- Much of the information is specific to Aberfoyle, suggest to make more generic.
- Kathy will contact Andrew Pasciel and work directly with him to revamp the site.

Superintendent's Report

- \$35,000 has gone out to schools in the form of the school based funding amount.
- Changing Futures (Drug Awareness) Seminar was attended by Martha M.
- \$2,900 spent on PIC brochure reprint providing one for each JK family and a few extras per school.
- Whole school dollars (Anti-Bullying initiatives) must be spent by December 31st.
- Student senate funds (\$500) are being held in the PIC account until used.

Next Meeting

- Monday January 28th, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. Location tbd, but likely in Fergus – possibly J. D. Hogarth P.S.