
Upper Grand District School Board PIC Committee

Monday, November 29, 2021

MINUTES

Those Present:

Matt McCutcheon, Martha MacNeil, Gillian Prieur, Kumidine Kariyapperuma, Ben McCabe, Jason Boyce, Debbie Bush, Anita MacFarlane, Rachel Albanese, Barb White, Jen Tulloch, Tara Dean-Whitt, Joanne Jordan, Heather Coates, Jeff Bennett, Jennifer Edwards, Mahrukh Syed, Sarah Ward.

1. Welcome And Introductions

- Matt McCutcheon started transcription and explained policy to the PIC group. By being part of this meeting you are consenting to the comments being transcribed for. Transcription will be shared with only the PIC secretary and then later deleted once minutes have been completed
- Barb White welcomed everyone to the meeting and individuals in attendance introduced themselves. Everyone shared their favorite Holiday tradition

2. Approval Of Agenda

- Gillian Prieur made a motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Kumudinie. All in favour.

3. Approval Of Minutes

- Gillian Prieur made a motion to approve the previous minutes. Seconded by Debbie. All in favour.

4. Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant Initiative Discussion And Planning

Gillian Prieur shared information.

- Sub Committee meeting held 2 weeks ago to discuss ideas for PRO Grant
- Plan is to have virtual PIC event similar to last year's format
- Sub Committee came up with 2 groups of topics that could be used as part of parent engagement at the PIC Event:
 - 1) Guidance Assessment in our schools – My BluePrint
 - o Transitions (High School, Kindergarten, post grade 12)
 - o Destreaming (moving beyond Math)
 - o Assessment - Different types of assessment (reports cards), Help for parents on what they should be asking about their child's progress to best support them
 - 2) Equity and Indigenous Education Awareness
 - o Across the 3 divisions (primary, junior, intermediate/senior), looking at ways to break language

barriers/ESL
Mental Wellness & Resiliency

Other Topics:

- o Having a school council session as well on how to better run your council, potentially holding a virtual event for just school council members - figure out things as a council with new parents, new staff, etc due to COVID it has been difficult
- o Building resources base for school council and families to have these events recorded so that there is a place where new school council can go to watch something and get ideas on how to run council
- Sub committee will meet again in January 2022 to finalize topics and dates/speakers

5. Board Report (including Equity and Indigenous Education Presentation)

Board Report Matt McCutcheon:

- Dec 6th resumption of food days such as Pizza/Sub days with controlled and limited volunteers that must comply with visitor vaccination disclosure procedure
- Contingency plans in schools/staff will be in mind in case of any COVID related lockdowns
- Food days are at principal discretion
- Community use rental beginning Nov 29th on a controlled plan for limited use for children and youth not for profit organizations
- Vaccination clinics for 5-11 in rare instances may be done in elementary schools but these are outside regular school hours and parent/guardian consent is required
- No immunization of COVID vaccine happening during school days for 5-11 year olds
- Superintendent recruitment process - 3 candidates in the pool, decision will be made in January to replace Superintendent who is retiring
- Important Dates: Nov 20th Final/Inaugural Board Meeting - 7pm, Parent Webinar about nurturing resilience through relationships which is available to anybody, on December 8th at 6:30 PM

Equity and indigenous Education Presentation Gerry Walker - Principal for Equity and Indigenous Committee

- Presentation summarizes Foundation of Indigenous and Equity Education and how it flows through UGDSB
- 4 points covered - Foundational Understanding of Equity, Building on those Foundational Understandings, Equity in the UGDSB, Indigenous Education
- Last year there was the addition of the EDI team, they support the staff side of EDI, if there is any learning for staff, they work in combination with Equity and Indigenous Committee
- Why Equity? - A lot of discomfort around topics and terms like racism, discrimination, oppression
- The goal of this committee is to create a space where you can speak honestly if called upon
- Recent events have brought into clear focus what racialized folks and those with identities connected to the margins have been saying for decades. The world is not equitable for all people and the education system is not equitable for all people.
- As an educational community we have a responsibility to identify and describe racism; Learning from your students, really important to take a moment to think about the WHY
- Why is it that this is the first time we are learning about these things?
- What is the role of the education system and what are our commitments to change the fact that many of us did not learn about truth and reconciliation for example.
- What are our duties as a community, as a school, as a principal, educators and as parents?
- Legislative work is required with a commitment that our schools/educators, etc. we realize that we are responsible to uphold the Charter of Rights/Ontario Human Rights Code which establishes all of our rights to not discriminate
- An important step in a deeper understanding of the foundations of equity work is an understanding of the language and using the language.
- Naming, identifying and removing barriers requires using of language and understanding it

- Speaking the language is a step towards removing barriers eg. Ableism, Homophobia, transphobia, androcentrism, classism
- On the UGDSB site under the Equity Tab there is a Glossary and definitions of words important to Equity and Indigenous Education
- Building on Foundation Understandings - Language matters, using the language important, using the correct prefix before a word is very important in a term e.g. Anti Racism, Anti Oppression
- Our understanding of language is one of the starting points in terms of coming together and having conversations
- Some examples of foundational understanding is the Glossary, Board Policies, such as The Safe schools policy which is here to support and maintain a positive school climate for all students, staff, and the community.
- Equity in the UGDSB - how do we implement it? Culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy - pedagogical approach recognizes that school systems not safe
- One of the important pieces of culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy is how do we get to know students? How do we create the space and time to build relationships and get to know our students also by not traumatizing anyone
- Indigenous Education - Policy 519 is a very new policy. It acknowledges that indigenous peoples are distinct from other equity deserving groups
- We have a responsibility to recognize and understand the deep impact of colonialism and how it works today,
- Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on indigenous peoples, education, culture and languages.
- Bursary and scholarship for Indigenous students - New program at UGDSB
- What are we doing for social class in the Board - due to COVID. Inequities in school, but need to create a safe place, equalizer to ensure that kids are able to not feel left out or discriminated against.
- How is effectiveness handled for the policies? Look at various branches and how we work through them. Pedagogy piece important -
- Equity Accountability Audit - members of the community, do they feel represented?

6. Input into Secondary Course Structure for Semester 2

- Ministry of education has advised that schools may return to traditional 4 course model in secondary schools
- UGDSB is seeking input from students, families and stakeholders for Semester 2 beginning in Feb
- The board has developed a survey for all secondary students to complete and staff will gather input from Student Senate, the Parent Involvement Committee, Special Education Advisory Committee, OSSTF, and Principals/Vice-Principals.
- You can also email Matt McCutcheon for additional input
- Most parents in the meeting were in agreement with 4 course model but find it might be beneficial to finish out the school year in current Quadmaster model and start new school year in September with 4 course model

7. Trustee Report

- Trustee Edwards discussed the Upper Grand Learning Foundation
- It is not part of school board but rather a charity organization
- Focus of the foundation is in 3 parts: scholarship, school fundraising, and Freedom to Achieve - for all schools,
- equity funding to help with eyeglasses, wheelchairs, travel expenses, for school board
- Suggestions that teacher presents could be in the form of a donation to the foundation
- A tax receipt will be issued for donations made
- Toonie Tuesdays
- Upper Grand Learning Foundation is currently looking for new members, particularly those that can fundraise
- Parents or people from community can help volunteer as members
- Can reach out to Jennifer Edwards if anyone wishes to join Email: jennifer.edwards@ugdsb.on.ca
- You can donate by either giving a cheque to school made out to the Upper Grand Learning Foundation or you can do e-transfer as well.
- Donating through Upper Grand Learning Foundation <https://www.uppergrandlearningfoundation.com/>

• 8. Chairs' Report

Barb White shared information.

- Families coming into school community not aware of how things work
- Guide families to right people to answer questions
- School Council Chairs: How can you help parents in your schools
- Review of Public Concerns Procedures Manual 215A - Concerns about your child talk should always start with a discussion with your child's teachers in order to share concerns and communicate with them
- Escalation process after Teachers should be as follows: Principals - Superintendents - Director of Education - Board
- Trustees are there to guide you through the process if you have concerns and on how to proceed
- What is PIC? PIC is your big picture in order to get a better view of the Education system within our province, within our board, we learn about the bigger high level things
- School Council is where you discuss more day to day work related to your own school rather than board. It entails planning school and community events, how to support school and build relationship with parents in school community, fundraising to support school needs

9. Questions, New Business And Final Remarks

- Gillian thanked everyone for their attendance.

The next meeting will be on Monday, January 31st, 2022 at 7:00 PM Using Microsoft Teams.