

Upper Grand District School Board PIC Committee

October 24th, 2022

# MINUTES

## Those present:

Barb White, Gillian Prieur, Matt McCutcheon, Martha MacNeil, Kumudine Kariyapperuma, Ben McCabe, Jason Boyce, Laura White, Heather Cowbrough, Jennifer Tulloch, Jennifer Edwards, Ryan O'Bryne, Margaret Lumley, Elizabeth Barrett

## 1. Welcome and introductions

Barb White welcomed everyone to the meeting and individuals in attendance introduced themselves. Everyone shared what they are thankful for. The Land Acknowledgement and the Board's Anti-Racism statement were presented.

## 2. Approval of agenda

Gillian Prieur asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Motioned by Barb White, seconded by Kumudinie Kariyapperuma

## 3. Approval of minutes

Gillian Prieur asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Motioned by Kumudinie Kariyapperuma, seconded by Barb White

## 4. Board Report

Board Report Matt McCutcheon

- PIC Membership and Structure:
  - PIC legislated through provincial government
  - Parent led committee
  - Co-Chairs and majority of members must also be parents
  - Committee can appoint 3 members from community
  - Director of Education or designate and at least one Trustee are members
  - PIC decides based on local needs who else to add to the group (e.g. Elementary and Secondary administrator, regional reps, etc.)
  
- Pro Grants:
  - Pro stands for Parents Reaching Out

- Grants that are provided annually by the Ministry of Education for parent engagement activities and events
- Projects required to demonstrate commitment to respecting role of parents in students educational experiences
- Projects should be around seeking parent inputs on how schools can: Provide safe welcoming school environment, maintain open communication with teachers, respect parents as valued partners within education system, inform parents about content of Ontario curriculum guidelines
- PIC Funding:
  - \$500 deposited into the Student Council line to support parent engagement
- Return to School:
  - Regular return to extra-curricular activities (e.g. sports, clubs, bands, etc...)
  - Field trips are beginning to be planned and have taken place in some cases
  - Assemblies, school events and visitors to schools following local school protocols continue
  - School events such as Open Houses, Barbecues, fundraising, etc... are occurring
  - Schools continue to employ multiple protective strategies to support healthy and safe environments for students and staff including ventilation (HEPA filters), hand hygiene, and availability of Physical Protective Equipment such as masks for those who choose to use them
- Truth and Reconciliation Week:
  - September 26th - 30th
  - September 30th was National Day for Truth and Reconciliation or Orange Shirt Day
  - Schools were engaged in a variety of learning activities all week with special focus on Truth & Reconciliation Calls to Action numbers 62 and 63 which focus on the education community
  - Goal is to continue this work throughout school year
  - Policy 519 Indigenous Education
- Labour Negotiations Update:
  - Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) in a legal strike position by November 3
  - In UGDSB, CUPE is custodians for the most part
  - Negotiations continue between union and province
  - Unions must give 5 days notice of any strike action
  - Not necessarily a full withdrawal of service, could be "work-to-rule" (withdrawal of some services).
  - Policy 519 Indigenous Education
- Release of Provincial EQAO Results 2021/22 on October 20, 2022:
  - Assessment did not occur for 2 years due to the Covid Pandemic
  - Results based on last years student data points
  - Grade 3/6 Math and Literacy, Grade 9 Math and Grade 10 Literacy Scores
  - Grade 3 reading and writing scores have declined
  - Learning gaps are to be expected due to Covid lockdowns
  - Status Quo in Grade 6 results
  - Grade 9 math results have declined (this could be due to blending of data - streamed and de-streamed)
  - Students had new curriculum under new settings which could result in lower scores for grade 9s
  - Status Quo in Secondary School Literacy Test results
  - Student census data will be used as a tool to help provide a better understanding of who students are that are performing well and also student groups that are underserved and how it correlates to EQAO results
  - EQAO results currently, there is no way to capture based data in terms of race, creed or culture
  - Ministry Funding Announcements to support learning for students
  - \$200/student for tutoring or learning supports
  - \$250 for children with special education needs
  - Extension of Tutoring Supports Program through March 31, 2023
  - Early Reading Teachers have been deployed to schools in UGDSB for students in grades 2 and 3 to help boost reading skills

- Upcoming Dates and Events:
  - November is Hindu Heritage Month
  - Post-Pandemic Mental Health virtual presentation for parents - Kevin Cameron - November 8
  - Remembrance Day - November 11
  - Board Meeting (Final) - November 14 (7:00pm)
  - Bullying Awareness & Prevention Week - November 20-26
  - Professional Activity Day - Friday, November 25
  - Next PIC Meeting - revised date - Tuesday, November 29 (7:00pm)

## 5. Guest Speakers Ryan O'Byrne and Margaret Lumley from University of Guelph

- Ryan and Margaret have been approved by the UGDSB Research Committee to engage with the parents and the parent involvement committee
- Studying parent experiences with Strengths to Grow online program that caregivers can use to discover and develop their child's unique strengths
- When you think about programs, support and services for our children and youth, think about different levels or tiers of support
- Example Green is for everybody, all children, youth families, etc, Blue is when youth require a bit more support and purple is higher level of intervention level often bridging to the community
- Strengths to Grow program is very accessible and beneficial to all in the school and community
- This program is aimed at the green level and around positive mental health and promoting mental health concerns
- Something this program will help to promote and develop is Strength based parenting
- This a style of caregiving in which the parent identifies and develops strengths in their child
- Research has shown when parents use strength based parenting practices, their children tend to be happier to do better at school and to be more resilient and ready to handle challenges and change
- Parents also feel happier and more confident in their roles
- It is a natural tendency to focus on problems, which leads to most time spent on paying attention to what is wrong rather than what is strong
- However, Strength based parenting style can be developed with practice which is goal of this program
- Create accessible and engaging opportunities for caregivers of UGDSB children to develop a strength based perspective and approach
- Based on feedback from parents, this program has been developed that is entirely online and self-directed
- It is asynchronous, meaning that parents can complete it at any time convenient for them.
- It is tailored to the age of the parent's child or children.
- So parents of young children in kindergarten to grade 3 can access the strengths to grow primary version
- Parents of preteen children in grade 4 to grade 8 can access the strengths to grow preteen version
- When parents access the program they are invited to watch a video that introduces them to the program and also explains the three sections which make up the program.
- Discover page presents pictures and brief descriptions of 24 strengths which you can click on for more details
- Online program also includes guides to choose strengths for their child such as practice talking to your child about a strength you have noticed the child using
- Work on helping the child identify those strengths in themselves and creating a plan to remind them how to spot those strengths in themselves
- From October 2022 to May 2023 UGDSB has given permission to invite parents of elementary school children to complete University of Guelph research study
- Participants will complete two online surveys (10 minutes each) and the online self-directed Strengths to Grow program (30 minutes)
- Survey will ask parents about their happiness as parents, their confidence as parents, how often they feel positive emotions, such as gratitude towards their child and how much stress they are experiencing
- Summary of the results will be available at the end of the research
- Principals, school councils, encouraged to send out information regarding Strengths to Grow study and program as parent engagement

## 6. Trustee Report

Martha MacNeil shared information Municipal Election Results:

- Jennifer Edwards (Erin, East Garafraxa, Guelph/Eramosa)
- Marina Hanenberg – acclaimed (Centre Wellington)
- Katherine Hauser (Guelph Ward 6 and Puslinch)
- Martha MacNeil (Guelph Wards 1&5)
- Kenn Manzerolle – acclaimed (Orangeville)
- Ralf Mesenbrink (Guelph Wards 2, 3, and 4)
- Robin Ross (Wellington North, Minto, Mapleton)
- Lynn Topping (Amaranth, Grand Valley, Mulmur, Mono, Melancthon, Shelburne)
- Luke Weiler (Guelph Wards 1&5)
- Laurie Whyte (Guelph Wards 2, 3, and 4)
- Last meeting for the current term is on November 14th and the first meeting for the new term of office is on November 15th.

## 7. Chairs' Report

Barb and Gillian lead open agenda discussions:

- What are school councils and who are the members and what are their roles on the school councils?
- What is the focus of school councils? What is everyone working on, what ideas are they willing to share with other councils, what are lessons learned that can be shared and discussed with our councils
- How do councils get parent engagement - Review school calendar to ensure no conflict between council meetings and other school events
- Have parents with kids in different school so need to ensure no conflicts with other school council meetings
- What do high school councils look like and how are they different from elementary schools
- More guest speakers in high school councils for example someone from guidance to share how university applications are completed
- Communication with parents and school councils is extremely important
- Communication needs to be very important, school councils need to find effective way to reach out to all families, and also think about how to bring that communication into High school councils
- School Board sponsored virtual event Post Pandemic Mental Health being help on November 8th hosted by Kevin Cameraon
- Kevin Cameraon is internationally renowned expert in terms of mental health and trauma for children in adolescence
- He has done a number of presentations for our school boards and other boards across the country
- This event is for parents specifically in terms of supporting children and youth with stressors that have occurred during pandemic and also post pandemic
- Consensus with PIC to provide \$2000 to sponsor portion of the event
- Building Better School Council Event - December 3rd 2022 at Centre Wellington Secondary School at 8:45am - 12:15pm
- Hope is to have 100 people across the school board community representing different school councils
- Event is not just for school council members or executives but also parents in community to learn about what council does
- Structure of event - Breakout sessions on different topics and focus on different roles
- Need facilitators for event who can talk to the different roles of the council e.g. Chair and Co Chair, Secretaries, Treasurers, Governance, Effective communication, Fundraising , High School Councils
- Flyer is ready and will be sent out to school council distributions lists, will be through social media

## 9. Questions, New Business and Final Remarks

**The next meeting will be on Monday January 30th, 2022 at 7:00 PM**