

## Parent Involvement Committee

**Date:** Monday, Nov. 30, 2009

**Time/Place:** 4 to 6 p.m.

HJA Brown Education Centre, 5650 Hurontario Street, Mississauga  
Location: Trustees' Area (Mezzanine Level)

**Committee** Savi Khanna, School Council Chair representing Brampton, Co-chair

**Members in** Karen McDonald, School Council Chair representing Caledon, Co-chair

**Attendance:** Valerie Arnold-Judge, Trustee representing Caledon

Sally Drew, School Council Member

Deanna Henderson, Parent Member representing the Special Education Advisory Committee

Dr. Salha Jeizan, Parent Member representing Multicultural Inter-Agency Group of Peel

Rabia Khedr, Parent Member representing the diverse community

Varsha Naik, Community Liaison Co-ordinator, Communications & Strategic Partnerships

Suzanne Nurse, Trustee representing Brampton

Judith Nyman, Director of Education

Debanjali Paul, Parent Member representing the diverse community

Carla Pereira, Communications Officer

### Regrets

Ashis Basu, Parent Member

Brian Woodland, Director of Communications & Strategic Partnerships

Allison Van Wagner, Trustee representing Mississauga

## Parent involvement research report and recommendations

Parent Involvement Committee members finalized recommendations that will be included in the Parent Involvement Report that was commissioned by the committee in the fall of 2008. Per our regular process, Carla will send the report to the board's Research & Accountability department for final approval.

Eighteen focus groups were held with parents. To ensure that the diversity of Peel Region was represented and that newcomers were included, 12 groups were conducted in languages other than English: Arabic, Hindi, Mandarin, Punjabi, Tamil and Urdu. Three focus groups were also conducted with principals of elementary/junior schools, elementary/middle schools and secondary schools.

## Parent involvement funding

The Ministry of Education has provided the Peel board with \$29,627 in base funding to support the work of the Parent Involvement Committee. The funding must be spent by Aug. 31, 2010. Carla Kisko, associate director of operational support services will be reviewing the request from the committee to rollover funding in the amount of \$25,789 from the 2008-09 school year to this year's budget. Carla Pereira will update the committee on the status of the transfer at the next committee meeting.

Committee members approved providing a thank-you gift (\$1,200) from the committee for volunteers attending the board's Volunteer Reception in June 2010. The committee also approved a \$1,000 sponsorship of the 2010 Parent Literacy Conference that will be held in April.

Committee members will discuss funding keynote speakers for the board's Parent Literacy Conference and Volunteer Celebration at the next meeting.

## Survey—search for new director of education

Survey posted on the Peel board website at [www.peelschools.org](http://www.peelschools.org). Input welcome.

## Ministry of Education—draft parent engagement policy feedback

1. Does the policy clearly identify a vision, strategic direction and action plan for parent engagement?
  - a) questions around who the intended audience is – if accessible for all parents need to be more inclusive, e.g. translations, simpler format
  - b) as an educational policy, it has what it needs, but may not be easily understood by all parents.
  - c) support materials should be accessible to as many parents as possible so that parents see themselves in the policy
  - d) involvement and engagement used interchangeably, but shouldn't be
  - e) policy does not speak to a core group of parents that do not hold education and/or learning as a key priority and/or do not understand the benefits and importance of holding education and learning as a priority – address how to motivate behavioural shifts where a child's academic participation and commitment is held sacred/important/critical within the home for more effective home/school partnership
2. Do the four strategies provide sufficient scope to assist boards, senior administration and school communities to support parents as partners with all education partners and contribute to student success?
  - a) would have like to see details on "how we can do better"
  - b) good scope—nothing missing—pretty global strategies
3. Does the action plan articulate a clear role for schools, boards and the Ministry to create the conditions to enhance parent engagement in Ontario?
  - a) yes
  - b) there are school actions, board actions and ministry actions, but what are the parent actions – policy is missing opportunity to engage parents in this section
  - c) parents need to be seen as equal partners – be more explicit in what you're looking for parents to do to be engaged and how that leads to student success – provide examples
4. Will the policy be meaningful to parents; would this be seen as an opportunity to enhance involvement across the province to support student success?
  - a) meaningful to all stakeholders, but more so for boards/schools that have more to do to enhance parent involvement
  - b) it's an opportunity, but the policy alone will not be able to enhance involvement
  - c) a document listing effective practices would be helpful
5. What are the key strengths of the policy? How can the policy be enhanced?
  - a) strengths
    - examples from other boards were helpful

- four pillars
  - consultation
- b) enhancements – see above

### **Action items**

- Carla to contact Dr. Christine Frank to finalize parent involvement report recommendations. Carla to vet report through the board's Research & Accountability department.
- Carla to explore joint meeting between Peel PIC and Dufferin-Peel PIC
- Carla to draft communication plan to support launch of parent involvement report
- Carla to explore communications strategies for generating awareness of PIC
- Carla to provide estimates for:
  - PIC magnets to be used as giveaways
  - Research to explore teachers' views related to parent involvement

### **Next meeting**

The next Parent Involvement Committee meeting will take place in the Trustees' Area at the HJA Brown Education Centre on Monday, Jan. 18, 2010, between 4:30 and 6 p.m.