

Parent Involvement Committee Meeting Highlights

Date: Monday, May 16, 2011

Time/Place: 4:30 to 6 p.m.

Trustees' Area, HJA Brown Education Centre, 5650 Hurontario Street, Mississauga

Karen McDonald, School Council Chair representing Caledon (PIC co-chair)

Kathy Parris-McDonald, Parent Member representing Brampton and French Immersion (PIC co-chair)

Stan Cameron, Trustee representing Caledon

Barbara Cyr, representing the board's Special Education Advisory Committee

Vijai Dasrat, Parent Member representing Brampton

Lucy Ding, Parent Member representing Mississauga

Savi Khanna, School Council Chair representing

Rabia Khedr, Parent Member representing Mississauga

Harinder Malhi, Trustee representing Brampton

Tony Pontes, Director of Education

Resource:

Alison Farbar, Acting Communications Officer

Varsha Naik, Community Liaison Co-ordinator

Carla Pereira, Acting Manager of Communications

Regrets:

Ashis Basu, Parent Member representing Mississauga

Velvet Dodge Matinna, Parent Member representing

Meredith Johnson, Trustee representing Mississauga

Salha Jeizan, representing Multicultural Inter-Agency Group of Peel

Approval of highlights from previous meeting

The committee approved the highlights from the Feb. 28 meeting.

Ministry of Education conference

Kathy and Karen provided a summary of a Ministry of Education conference for Parent Involvement Committee members. They noticed that other PICs don't have the level of support from staff and trustees that the Peel board's committee does.

PRO Grant Workshop on April 27

On April 27, Jack Nigro from the Ministry of Education facilitated a session for Peel board staff and school council members on how to write an effective PRO Grant application. Jack walked through how to fill in the application and what will and will not be approved. Feedback from participants was overwhelming positive—the group recommended we offer the session again next year.

Update on Diversity Parent Committee at Plum Tree Park P.S.

Varsha Naik shared a template letter for schools to help create a Diversity Parent Committee at schools. The purpose of a Diversity Parent Committee is to encourage parent involvement among groups in the community that may not traditionally be involved with the school. The committee at Plum Tree Park has created a sub-committee focused on welcoming new families to the school, and another focused on celebrating the various cultures represented by students at the school.

Selection of new committee members

Kathy and Savi announced the new committee members who were selected for the committee. The successful and unsuccessful individuals will be contacted by letter in the next week.

Discussion on how to use funding

The committee discussed which projects to support with its remaining funding—ideas included:

- develop a *Creating a Welcoming School Together* toolkit for schools to use when new families come to the school—schools can insert their own materials into the kit
- provide ready-made workshops for staff to present to parents
- creating a ready-made workshop on how the ESL/ELL program and how it supports students, translate materials and recruit presenters for the next school year

The committee decided to support the creation the *Creating a Welcoming School Together* toolkit and the development of a ready-made workshop on the ESL/ELL program.

Meetings for next year

Kathy suggested holding a separate planning meeting at the start of the next school year to discuss the priorities, budget and plans for the year. The committee also felt more meetings might be necessary.

The first meeting of the 2011-12 school year is on Monday, September 19 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the trustees' area of the HJA Brown Education Centre, 5650 Hurontario St. in Mississauga.

Public questions

Kathy asked a question about how walking routes are mapped for students to determine whether or not students are eligible for busing. She is concerned about students who walk through parks/fields. Tony explained that some walking routes do pass through city parks. If parents have particular concerns about the safety of a walking route (e.g. not enough lights), they can contact the municipality or the superintendent responsible for transportation.

Leeja Anderson asked about guidelines for getting on the Parent Involvement Committee. It was explained that the application process is annual and the qualifications are flexible. With so many applications—close to 60—it's a challenge to narrow it down.

Next meeting:

The next Parent Involvement Committee meeting will take place in the Trustees' Area at the HJA Brown Education Centre on Monday, September 19 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Please let Alison Farbar know if you are unable to attend. Refreshments will be provided.