



REGIONAL CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, February 27, 2017 – 7:00 pm - Boardroom

Present: Edith Heleniak (Chair), Lindsay Blasdell, Sue Defreyne, Jill Esposto, Jaclyn Hill, Carmen McDermid, Bonnie McKinnon, Nancy Mulroy, Betty Lou Peck, Colin Phee, Stéphane Rouleau, Michelle Shypula, Leslie Telfer

1. Opening Prayer

Carmen McDermid led the group in the opening prayer.

2. Welcome and Opening Comments

Superintendent Shypula welcomed the group.

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Bonnie McKinnon

Seconded by: Stéphane Rouleau

THAT the RCPIC Committee approves the agenda of the February 27, 2017 meeting.

Carried

4. Declaration of Interest- Nil

5. Approval of Minutes – Monday, October 24, 2016

Moved by: Bonnie McKinnon

Seconded by: Stéphane Rouleau

THAT the RCPIC Committee approves the minutes of the meeting of the October 24, 2016 meeting.

Carried

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

In response to an inquiry made by Colin Phee regarding the French Learning presentation on the October 24, 2016 meeting minutes, Carmen McDermid updated the group on the recent professional development workshop which provided additional training to our French as a Second Language (FSL) teachers for students with special needs, along with sound teaching strategies/pedagogies for all students. The half-day training session given by Sandra DeDominicis, School SERT at St. Gabriel, covered topics such as self-regulation, zones of regulation, behaviour management strategies, fidget toys and calming strategies for all students. A second professional development session for our FSL teachers and the Special Education department is scheduled for April 4 and will include further training/discussion on topics such as autism, learning disabilities, writing Individual Education Plans (IEPs), as well as assessment and technology, which are areas of learning priorities identified by the FSL teachers.



7. Presentations

7.1 The role of Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

SEAC Chairperson, Jill Esposto, provided the group with an overview of how she became involved with the Committee. Although she became involved as a Director of Services with Brant Family & Children Services, she is also a resident of Brantford and a parent to two grown children who attended our schools during their school years. Jill shared the importance of strong partnerships within the community in order to support and develop the unique potential of all students within the Board. The SEAC provides the opportunity to engage parents with the community to enhance the support for our learners with special needs and to promote quality education for all.

Carmen McDermid, Student Achievement Lead - Special Education, updated the group on the Working Together Symposium (WTS) that took place on Saturday, February 4, 2017 at Assumption College. This educational symposium is an example of a collaboration between System Board personnel (Special Education., Mental Health and Kindergarten), Grand Erie DSB and community agencies (some are represented on SEAC) to provide parents/guardians, educators, students and service providers of children, youth and individuals with special needs, behavioural and/or developmental issues, the opportunity to attend a variety of excellent workshops. The guest speaker was Dr. Jeff St. Pierre, Child and Parent Resource Institute, London, who shared insight on the risk and protective factors for children and youth mental health.

Another collaborative workshop between the Board and community agencies will occur on Saturday, March 25, 2017 at the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Parents as Partners workshop. This full day workshop is designed to support families with the transition as their child prepares for Kindergarten. Information and activities assist parents as they prepare for an effective partnership with their school team. The workshops are designed for parents/guardians who have a child diagnosed or exhibiting difficulties with one or more of the following: Autism Spectrum Disorder, physical disabilities, speech and/or language delays, behaviour concerns, developmental disabilities, anxiety and other concerns. The registration deadline is March 9, 2017.

Carmen shared how the Board, along with community agencies, plan entry to school case conferences in April for parents/guardians of children who have special needs who are entering our system in September 2017. The conferences assist with a more seamless and informed transition into school for our future Kindergarten students.

Carmen distributed and referenced pages 10-16 of the 2016-17 Special Education Plan, which outlines Special Education personnel within the Board and how these positions support student learning and the Board Strategic Plan. Carmen concluded that the Special Education team, along with the Student Support Services and Student Achievement Team, consistently work together to better meet the needs of all students.



7.2 Parent Math Night Update

The Committee welcomed System Student Achievement Teacher Sue Defreyne who provided the group with a fun Box Car and One Eyed Jack game play as an introduction to the math update. Sue discussed new tools and approaches that are being used to teach math and how they are proving useful in helping students to understand number sense, to process math equations, and to be able to explain different thinking patterns. Sue addressed parent inquiries on having difficulties with assisting their children with their math homework, and noted helpful websites such as www.homeworkhelp.com and Khan Academy. Sue highlighted an upcoming event at Jean Vanier School on May 9, 2017 that will focus on engaging students and their families with mathematics (Appendix A).

8. Correspondence

Superintendent Shypula shared information regarding the Ministry of Education's Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Symposium taking place in April 2017. This symposium is an effective way for parent members of the Regional Catholic Parent Involvement Committee and Catholic School Advisory Councils to network and collaborate with other parents and system leaders, and to create local strategies to enhance parent engagement in their communities while supporting student achievement and well-being.

9. Reports and Committee Updates

9.1 School Climate Survey

Superintendent Shypula provided an update on the School Climate Survey that parents, staff and students completed in 2016 and encouraged them to visit their school websites to access the follow-up action plan. An analysis of who participated in the survey and how principals collected their information was shared with the group.

9.2 Parent Symposium Update

Information regarding the upcoming Parents Reaching Out (PRO) event titled, ***Raising Responsible, Awesome Kids***, was shared. The event will take place on April 27, 2017 at Assumption College School starting at 6:00 pm. Guest speaker, Gary Direnfeld, MSW, RSW, will provide insight and share key strategies on raising awesome, responsible kids. Appetizers and light refreshments will be served by Assumption College students and complimentary childcare will be available. Various community agencies will be on site to provide information and to answer any questions that parents may have. Further information will be provided to schools, parents and various community agencies.

9.3 Renewing Our Promise Initiative

The Bishops of Ontario, along with the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) and the Office Provincial de l'Éducation de la foi Catholique de l'Ontario (OPECO) are inviting members of Catholic School Boards across Ontario to the ***Renewing the Promise: Exploring the Critical Role of Catholic Education in Contemporary Society*** Symposium being held in Toronto on November 14 and 15, 2017. This symposium responds to the need for Catholic education communities to engage in conversation to deepen understanding of both the challenges and opportunities Catholic schools face in our increasingly complex and secular society. Exploring the theme of ***Renewing the Promise*** will be an extension of the work done in the ***This Moment of Promise*** and ***Fulfilling the Promise*** documents.



The Symposium will bring together representatives of the key stakeholder groups who, together, share the responsibility for Catholic education. This includes, but is not limited to, the Chair of the Board, Director of Education, Elementary and Secondary Parents, Teachers, Principals and Students. Prior to the Symposium in November, Boards will be conducting a 45-60 minute face-to-face engagement sessions with a number of groups including Trustees, Special Education Advisory (SEAC) Committee Members, Catholic Parent Advisory Council Chairs, Principals, Vice-Principals, and Student Senate. This face-to-face discussion will invite participants to discuss the following three questions:

- How do you see Catholic Education in Ontario supporting students to be living witnesses to their faith in Jesus Christ?
- What are some current challenges facing Catholic Education in Ontario?
- What are some current opportunities presented in Catholic Education in Ontario?

Following the face-to face meeting and discussions, participants will then be encouraged to share individual responses to each question using the Thought Exchange on-line process. Once this data is collected, it will be collated, categorized, analyzed and shared with ICE and OPECO. This comprehensive data will then serve as the basis for specific conversations that will take place when Board teams gather during the symposium in November.

9. Closing Remarks/ Adjournment

Chair Edith Heleniak thanked parents and staff for attending and the meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.