



**REGIONAL CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, May 15, 2017 – 7:00 pm - Boardroom**

Present: Edith Heleniak (Chair), Lindsay Blasdell, Jaclyn Hill, Bonnie McKinnon, Colin Phee, Stéphane Rouleau, Michelle Shypula, Shannon VanDalen

1. Opening Prayer

Superintendent Shypula led the group in the opening prayer.

2. Welcome and Opening Comments

Superintendent Shypula and Chair Heleniak welcomed the group and led a round of introductions for the benefit of all members in attendance.

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Bonnie McKinnon

Seconded by: Edith Heleniak

THAT the RCPIC Committee approves the agenda of the May 15, 2017 meeting.

Carried

4. Declaration of Interest- Nil

5. Approval of Minutes – Monday, February 27, 2017

Moved by: Bonnie McKinnon

Seconded by: Stéphane Rouleau

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

Carried

6. Business Arising from the Minutes- Nil

7. Correspondence

Chair Edith Heleniak indicated her term for representing BHNCD SB at the provincial table of the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE) finishes at the end of May 2017. The mandate of OAPCE is to promote and protect publicly funded Catholic education in Ontario and provide parent/guardian voice to those who have children attending Catholic elementary and secondary schools. The OAPCE Board of Directors works in collaboration with various stakeholders in Catholic education including the Assembly of Catholic Bishops in Ontario (ACBO), the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE), Friends Advocating Catholic Education and the Ministry of Education to sustain and enhance the impact of Catholic education on students. As OAPCE representative for the Board during the past 6 years, Chair Heleniak has served to liaise between OAPCE and the BHNCD SB Regional Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (RCPIC) and Catholic School Advisory Councils. Stéphane Rouleau has volunteered to stand as the temporary representative at the June 2017 OAPCE meeting and the election of a new representative will take place at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year. Chair Heleniak provided information about the OAPCE Annual General Meeting taking place on



October 13 and 14, 2017 featuring keynote speaker Sara Westbrook. More information will be forthcoming. The board would like to extend their gratitude to Chair Heleniak for her dedication and commitment to leading the work of OAPCE at a district level.

Superintendent Shypula encouraged group members to participate in the *Renewing the Promise* Thought Exchange survey if they had not already done so.

8. Discussion: Feedback from Regional Parent Reaching Out Grant Symposium- Raising Awesome Responsible Kids featuring Key Note Speaker Gary Direnfeld

8.1 Overview and Next Steps

Superintendent Shypula provided an overview of the Regional Parent Reaching Out (PRO) grant process that resulted in the Raising Awesome Responsible Kids Symposium. This symposium took place in April 2017. Initial planning began in November 2015 and consisted of all parent councils providing feedback that reflected topics they wanted to learn more about. Following the analysis of this feedback, it was determined parents/guardians were interested in learning more about mental health and how to support the development of resilience in their children. Once this topic of interest was decided, the RCPIC executive began the PRO grant application process in February 2016 and grant approval was received in June 2016. In September 2016, intensive planning began and included members of the RCPIC and Mental Health Team. A comprehensive search for a keynote speaker resulted in the selection of Gary Direnfeld MSW.

Additionally, to further highlight the importance of making connections between home and school, it was determined that Mr. Direnfeld would speak to Grade 11 and 12 students across the district prior to the parent/guardian speaking engagement and would also be the keynote speaker during the system-wide mental health professional activity day for teachers and support staff.

Attached in this report are survey results (Appendix A) from those who attended the symposium and feedback is currently being collected and collated from staff who attended the professional activity day. As a next step, this survey data will be utilized to assist in the planning of future Regional PRO grant applications and identifying professional learning needs of staff.

9. Discussion: Engaging Parents at a School and District

9.1 Next Steps

Superintendent Shypula led a discussion addressing some of the challenges school communities and districts experience when attempting to engage parents/guardians in the Catholic education of their children and possible strategies to enhancement parent/guardian involvement. Below is a list of recommendations:

- When feasible, maximize use of platforms such as YouTube for messaging of information;
- Increase the use of interactive system-wide Skype meetings;
- Additional Skype meeting opportunities to allow parents to access information remotely (e.g. ability to access RCPIC meetings);



- Possibility of presenters being recorded so the information can be accessed at flexible times;
- Regular updating of board and school websites highlighting current events and relevant resources;
- Include learning opportunities for parents/guardians early in the school year (e.g. School Meet the Teacher Night); and
- Engage all school council chairs early in the school year to brainstorm success stories (e.g. recruitment of parent council members and volunteers, application of PRO grants, involvement in School Improvement Plan development, devising fundraising opportunities that align with goals in the School Improvement Plan)

10. Closing Remarks/ Adjournment

Superintendent Shypula extended her thanks and appreciation to all members present at the meeting and for their dedication to improving parent/guardian engagement to support the well-being and achievement of students across the district.