



**Parent Involvement Committee Minutes
Microsoft Teams
January 31, 2022 – 6:30 p.m.**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Heather Campbell, Director of Education; Carla Magisano, Trustee; Cindy Homer, Robert Moore School Council Representative; Lonna Oster, Fort Frances High School Council Representative; Alexa Wideman, Mine Centre School Council Representative; Sharla MacKinnon, Principal Representative; Nancy Pitura, Atikokan K-12 School Council Representative; Jessica Tucker, Crossroads School Council Representative; Sara McCormick, Donald Young School Council Representative; Carly Pruys, Community Representative, Northwestern Health Unit; Helena Guertin, JW Walker School Council Representative; Sherri Hay, Elementary Teacher Representative

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Marni McDonald, Recording Secretary

ABSENT: Heidi Loney, Donald Young School Council Representative; Robin Holden, Nestor Falls School Council Representative; Krista Brusven, Rainy River K-12 Council Representative; Shannon King, Seven Generations Institute, Community Representative; Michelle Strachan, Weechi-it-Te-Win Family Services Inc., Community Representative; Chantal Seguin, Sturgeon Creek School Council Representative

1. Call to Order

The Parent Involvement Committee was called to order by Co-Chair, Cindy Homer, at 6:38 p.m. CST.

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

3. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest disclosed.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of November 23, 2021, were approved by consensus.

5. Unfinished Business

a) PIC Representation and Recruitment Update

Director Heather Campbell provided an update on recruitment efforts. All community representative vacancies have been filled. Carly Pruys joins the committee as a community representative from the Northwestern Health Unit replacing Jamie Petrin, and Sherri Hay,

Elementary Teacher from Sturgeon Creek School, is the new teacher representative on the Committee. The only school not represented by the 2021-22 Parent Involvement Council is McCrosson-Tovell. Director Campbell will continue recruitment efforts for McCrosson-Tovell once the school returns to in-person learning.

b) Parent Reaching Out (PRO) Grant

(Reference: Parents Reaching Out Grant Options Report)

Committee members received a report on the PRO Grant eligibility criteria with sample projects from the previous year. This year, the funding has been increased to \$10,185.95.

The Committee was in favor of school community cookbooks. Each cookbook could be tailored to the individual school with age-appropriate content. For example, the high school books could highlight meals made through the Foods and Hospitality courses, and the elementary school books could have a sensory play-dedicated section. Additional ideas that could be incorporated into the books are:

- Meals based on the Medicine Wheel and local seasonal offerings
- Cultural recipes that are normally passed down through verbal traditions
- Student illustrations
- Math tips, and ideas for involving kids in the experiential learning of cooking and baking

Committee members will take the idea back to their school councils and Director Campbell will bring it to the Special Education Advisory Committee and the First, Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Advisory Committee.

Director Campbell will also investigate printing costs for each individual school.

6. New Business

a) 2022-2027 RRDSB Strategic Plan

Director Campbell shared the Board's new Strategic Plan that was approved at the January 7, 2022, Board meeting.

The Board will formally launch the new Strategic Plan during the April 22, 2022, Professional Development Day to give schools an opportunity to align their Improvement Plans with the Strategic Plan's priorities.

b) PIC Activity Schedule

(Reference: Parent Involvement Committee Activity Schedule 2021-2022 Report)

Director Campbell provided the Committee with a report outlining the Parent Involvement Committee mandate per *Policy 1.60 School Councils and Parent Involvement Committee*. The report identified several initiatives that would benefit from PIC input:

- Student Demographics Census Initiative
- 2022-2023 Budget Consultation
- Procedural Bylaws review

Director Campbell also noted that the Committee might be interested in presentations on:

- STEM Opportunities for Students
- The work being done to support the Grade 9 De-streamed Math courses

Nancy Pitura brought forth the idea that there should be a "parent council" at the board level to give advice to the director, similar to the parent council at the school level. Perhaps this means a new council, or perhaps the mandate of the PIC could be expanded to include parent concerns that cannot be dealt with at the school level. For example, teacher hiring is at the school level, but because of a board-wide union, one school's hiring can affect another school's future hiring. Another example is that the changes made to transportation procedures are not dealt with at the school level. A final example, AHS parent council was told by the principal that the decision to change to electronic newsletters came from the board..

Director Campbell clarified that some examples may not be within her purview. For instance, transportation is at arms' length to the Board with processes in place for concerns. While the scope of the Parent Involvement Committee is provincially mandated, there may be possible ways to broaden the mandate to allow more parent/guardian voice. However, the communication of concerns of Parent Involvement Committee members to the Director of Education and Trustee representative should not replace the process for resolving concerns that exists within all schools. Any changes to the Committee's mandates may represent a policy change and, therefore, would need to be brought forward to the Policy Committee for a recommendation to the Board.

Nancy Pitura and Alexa Wideman volunteered to be on the subcommittee for the bylaws review. Ideally, the subcommittee should have a third member.

c) **Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU) Updates**

(Reference: Northwestern Health Unit Updates and School & Childcare FAQ)

Carly Pruys, Health Educator, Chronic Disease Prevention from the Northwestern Health Unit provided a COVID-19 update from the Northwestern Health Unit.

Sherri Hay inquired about the availability of blacklight handwashing kits and tooth brushing efficacy disclosure tablets. Co-Chair Homer asked if there was any update on a return to providing regularly scheduled in-school vaccinations. Carly noted that with the COVID-19 mass vaccination clinics slowing down, the NWHU will be offering Tetanus boosters to Grade 12 students, but she is unsure if those boosters will be offered in schools. She will investigate both Sherri's request and the answer to Cindy's question and bring her findings to the next meeting.

Sara McCormick brought up concerns about the COVID-19 vaccination clinics at Donald Young School interfering with gymnasium time for students and the inability to separate the public from the students during school hours due to the school layout. Director Campbell noted that the Ministry has asked our Board to host clinics where other venues are not available in an effort to get more vaccination uptake, especially among 5 to 11 year-olds. Efforts, including condensed hours, and later appointment times, are being made by the NWHU to ensure that those clinics interfere as little as possible with the school day. Sara inquired if there was any plan to differentiate between 5-11-year-olds that are not being vaccinated due to opportunity and those not being vaccinated due to personal beliefs. Sharla MacKinnon noted that the clinic at Crossroads School was only for students that had permission from parents and staff member boosters.

7. **Director's Update**

Director Campbell provided a report on recent events.

Returning from holidays to remote learning was difficult for students. Students and staff have been back in person since January 17, but we are still seeing significant student absenteeism. There have been students that were on track to graduate that now need substantial support and possible credit recovery. Extracurriculars were paused, but have opened up to intramurals and practices this week. Schools should hopefully be able to host cross-school competitions in about two weeks. Cohorted field trips are once again permitted (i.e., "Outers" in Atikokan).

Overnight sports trips will be dependent on staff availability. Increased staff absenteeism has been the biggest challenge with the latest variant. While there have been many measures put in place to mitigate the absences, activities that increase staff being away from the school may need to be paused further.

The PowerSchool parent portal is launching in Rainy River and Atikokan High Schools. Transitioning to a new Student Information System is challenging at the best of times, but more so during the pandemic. Unfortunately, our previous system had reached end of life. Edsby, the previous portal, was a separate program. With the movement to PowerSchool, which had a built-in parent portal, the Board chose to save costs rather than pay for a duplicate program.

An Anti-Sex Trafficking protocol has been completed per Ministry guidelines. To properly address the issue, students, families, staff, and community partners need to be able to identify what trafficking looks like, so our next step will be training administrators, staff members, parents, and students.

Co-chair Homer inquired about the mental health parent supports (like social media platform information sessions) that were discussed at the previous meeting with Mental Health Leader, Tracey Idle. Tracey has been focused on getting mental health messaging out to students on the Board's newly-minted Instagram page, but this topic would complement the Anti-Sex Trafficking training. Director Campbell will follow up.

8. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be scheduled for the end of February. Marni McDonald will send out a poll with possible meeting dates.

9. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. CST