

RAINY RIVER DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Parent Involvement Committee – Annual Report 2019/2020

Date: October 29, 2020
To: Trustees
From: Rainy River District School Board - Parent Involvement Committee
Recommendation: **It is recommended that the report be received for information only.**

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

In the pillar of A Culture of Caring, the Rainy River District School Board Strategic Plan identifies the following home/school partnership goal: “Our students, staff, and communities are supported in safe, inclusive, and collaborative learning environments.”

CONTEXT

As demonstrated by decades of research, when parents are engaged in their children’s education, students have greater success in school, including higher grades, greater chance of graduation, better school attendance, increased motivation, and enhanced self-esteem.

SUMMARY

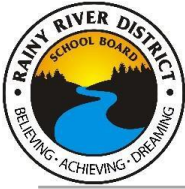
The 2019-20 Parent Involvement Committee was comprised of three community representatives, an elementary teacher representative, a principal representative, and 11 parent representatives from various schools and school councils across the District. The Committee worked to increase its representation throughout the District and had parents/guardians from schools not previously represented, join the Committee.

Throughout the school year, the Committee met five times between December 2019 and October 2020 to:

- develop a newsletter for parents and families,
- provide input into the 2020-21 budget,
- review the School Council handbook, and
- implement the Parents Reaching Out Grant 2019/20 for Parent Engagement across the District.

Parent Involvement Committee Newsletter

To support the work of school councils and highlight best practices, the Committee published a newsletter in the Fall of 2019, but due to the pandemic, was not able to publish one in the Spring of



2020. The Fall newsletter featured the importance of daily physical activity and helpful tips for parents on how to support physically active children, volunteering at school and parent engagement apps. The newsletter also promoted Board events such as visits by author Sigmund Brouwer and the Travel Scholarship Initiative. During the 2019-20 term, the Parent Involvement Committee decided to distribute the newsletter electronically going forward, only printing a few copies for school offices. This decision would allow the Parent Involvement Committee to use its funds for other endeavors, such as supporting the Dr. Greg Wells presentations in the spring of 2020.

Parents Reaching Out Grant

This year, the Ministry of Education provided a set amount to each board to support parent engagement activities. In consideration of the importance of student well-being, the Parent Involvement Committee arranged for Dr. Greg Wells to provide a presentation to parents/guardians on the importance of sleep, healthy eating, and physical activity in order for students and their families to have optimal performance, at home and at school. With the school closures and the movement to virtual learning, the Committee was able to have Dr. Wells provide two virtual presentations on wellness in May and June 2020 with over 100 participants attending.

Provincial Parent Involvement Committee Activities

Co-Chairs, Mellisa Gallagher and Monique Hagen, along with Director of Education, Heather Campbell, participated in a provincial Ministry of Education Adobe Connect session on Parent Engagement on April 23, 2020. This session brought together Parent Involvement Committee Chairs from across the province to discuss school boards' responses to the school closure, supports for online learning, and work to engage parents/guardians during the pandemic. Further sessions organized by Parent Involvement Committee Chairs were held and attended by the RRDSB PIC Co-Chairs subsequent to this meeting.

Conclusion

Despite the movement to virtual learning during the school closure period, the Parent Involvement Committee continued to meet to review and update the School Council Handbook, to plan the Dr. Wells' sessions, and to provide feedback to inform the 2020-21 school year budget.

Parent Involvement Committee	October 29, 2020
Board	November 3, 2020
