



Date: July 22, 2014

**To:** Rainy River District School Board

**From:** Rainy River District School Board Parent Involvement Committee

**Subject:** Annual Report – 2013/14

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In the pillar of Engagement of Students and Parents, the Rainy River District School Board Strategic Plan identifies the following home/school partnership goal: “Positive outreach to parents as essential partners in their children’s education enhances the success of students.”

As demonstrated by decades of research, when parents are involved in their children’s education, students have higher grades, test scores and graduation rates, better school attendance, increased motivation, better self-esteem, and lower behavior incidents.

During the 2013/14 school year, the Parent Involvement Committee met six times to review the Committee’s bylaws, specifically By-law 7 Meetings to revise the definition of quorum; to participate in a community consultation survey “From Great to Excellent” via a Ministry of Education webcast; and to provide feedback to support the Rainy River District School Board in the development of its 2014/15 budget.

In addition the Parent Involvement Committee completed the following initiatives during the 2013/14 school year:

#### Professional Development for Parent Involvement Committee Members and Parents

In May 2014, an EQAO Regional Parent Forum was held in Fort Frances. This was the first time that the Forum occurred outside of a larger center, as in the previous year, the Regional Forum occurred in Thunder Bay, Ontario. The Forum featured sessions on “Answering Parents’ Top Questions about EQAO Assessments” and a presentation by Dr. Lynda Colgan on “Why Mathitude Matters to Parents.”

In addition to the activities above, Co-Chair Leslie Danielson attended the Fifth Annual Parent Involvement Committee Symposium in Toronto, in April 2014, bringing back ideas and suggestions for parent involvement activities.

#### Parent Involvement Committee Newsletter (see attached)

To support the work of school councils and highlight best practices, the Committee published a newsletter in the Fall of 2013 and one in the Spring of 2014. The newsletter features helpful tips for parents to support their child’s transition into high school, as well as useful websites for parents and students.

#### School Council Handbook and Templates

The Parent Involvement Committee hosted a School Council Chairs' Session in November 2013. A Power Point presentation was used to outline the role of school councils and how to manage effective meetings. Several copies of the School Council Handbook were provided to each school council as well as agenda and meeting minute templates. Overall feedback on the session and the supporting materials was very positive.

#### Family Math Nights

The Parent Involvement Committee allocated funds from the Regional Parents Reaching Out Grant for each school hosting a Family Math Night in May. Included in the allocation was an amount for refreshments, an honoraria amount for secondary students to assist families with young children, and an amount for workshop materials, printing and door prizes. Tote bags were ordered by the Committee for each of the schools hosting a math night/event. Advertising for all the Math Nights was combined and covered by the Committee. A total of 280 families attended the Family Math Nights/Events across the District.

In conclusion, the 2013/14 school year was a very successful year for the Parent Involvement Committee, with the initiation of the first-ever school council training, the development and distribution of resources to school councils, and the funding and support for Family Math Nights at all of the Board's elementary schools during the months of May and June.