



**Parent Involvement Committee Minutes
Microsoft Teams/Education Centre
Thursday, June 1st, 2023 – 6:30pm**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Heather Campbell, Director of Education; Sarah Creed, Trustee; Sherri Hay, Elementary Teacher Representative; Helena Guertin, J.W. Walker School Council Representative; Carly Pruys, Community Representative, Northwestern Health Unit; Laura McCormick, Sturgeon Creek School Council Representative; Krista Brusven, Rainy River High School Council Representative; Shane Bliss, Principal Representative; Robin Holden, Nestor Falls School Representative; Stevie-Lee Kaemingh, Donald Young School Council Representative

STAFF: Casey Bye, Recording Secretary

REGRETS: Jorge VanSlyke, Northern Lakes School Council Representative; Shannon King, Fort Frances High School/Seven Generations Institute, Community Representative; Katie Mowe, Crossroads School Council Representative; Alexa Wideman, Mine Centre School Council Representative and PIC Co-Chair; Lonna Oster, Fort Frances High School Council Representative

ABSENT: Tanis Tom, Riverview School Council Representative; Michelle Strachan, Weechi-it-te-Win Family Services Inc, Community Representative

1. Call to Order

Helena Guertin, Co-Chair, called the Parent Involvement Committee meeting to order at 6:30pm 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 the March 21st, 2023 Parent Involvement Committee meeting were approved by consensus.

5. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

6. New Business

- a) Student Support Foundation Consultation

June 1st, 2023

A letter from Meghan Cox, Superintendent of Business, was shared with the Committee, inviting members to identify challenges within our schools that require further resources to support student achievement and well-being. Priorities identified by the Committee include:

- Nutrition program: the cost of food is rising but funding amounts remain the same. The Nutrition on Weekends program offers a budget of \$6 per bag, while it costs approximately \$1290 per month to feed a family of four.
- Delivery of supports: getting supports to students can be a challenge, and a delivery system could improve this issue.

It was also noted that donations are sometimes specific to the children in the system and may not necessarily continue. Tax receipts may or may not have an impact. Heather Campbell will draft a response letter to Meghan Cox and share it with the Committee via email.

b) PRO Grant Activity Updates

Committee members provided updates on PRO Grant Activities taking place in schools:

- Riverview School and Rainy River High School joined together to host the Humanizing Transactions presentation with Jessica Wilson, providing participants with taco in a bag for dinner. Participation for this event was lower than expected.
- Sturgeon Creek School hosted the Humanizing Transactions presentation with a pizza dinner and babysitting provided. Approximately 30 people attended, and the event was very successful.
- Donald Young School is planning a year-end BBQ with games and rock painting.
- Nestor Falls School offered the Humanizing Transactions presentation and although participation was low, there was positive feedback from attendees.
- Fort Frances High School Intermediate is hosting a Grade 6 Parents' Night on June 7th at 6:45pm. They will have snacks and board games for parent engagement, and families will have the opportunity to explore the school.
- JW Walker School is putting on a year-end BBQ with a petting zoo from Spry Farm, games and activities for kids.

c) NWHU School Update

(Reference: NWHU Spring PIC Updates)

Carly Pruys, Health Educator, provided an update on NWHU initiatives. Highlights include:

- Immunization clinics have been taking place across the region to catch students up on routine immunizations that were missed during the pandemic. Parents/guardians of students who are overdue for their immunizations will receive notices from the Health Unit.
- Needles may appear on the ground now that spring has arrived. It is important for children to know what to do if they find a needle or other sharp object on the ground.
- There has been a large increase in opioid-related deaths in the region based on a recent NWHU report. Naloxone kits are available from local pharmacies and the health unit. NWHU led a Supervised Consumption Services Needs Assessment across the region and the final report is now available on the website. Supervised Consumption Services are legally sanctioned spaces where people are allowed to use pre-obtained illegal drugs in a clean, safe, and supportive environment. Evidence shows that the use of this service decreases public drug use, prevents and almost eliminates overdose deaths, and saves taxpayers money by reducing overall health and social services costs.

- Northwestern Health Unit's 75th anniversary is this year. To celebrate, monthly draws for great prizes are occurring, with information available on the NWHU website.

7. **Director's Update**

(Reference: *The Right to Read Report Presentation*)

Director Campbell provided an update on recent events:

Better Schools and Better Student Outcomes Act

Bill 98 will be receiving Royal Assent. Also known as the *Better Schools and Better Student Outcomes Act*, the Bill has many aspects that impact schools and school boards. A few highlights of the Bill include:

- Review of Trustee Code of Conduct with changes to the process for investigations and a widening of available sanctions
- Provincial priorities for student achievement with the Ministry of Education directing the focus for student achievement goals
- Parameters around mental health supports delivery
- Review and revision cycle for curriculum based on labor market needs
- Required training for Board Members, Directors of Education, and Supervisory Officers or Superintendents
- Introduction of apprenticeship learning after Grade 10 to finish high school
- Direction to how schools and school boards communicate with parents/guardians
- Introduction of fees for parents to have learning resources, including library books and textbooks, evaluated
- Changes to how surplus property is disposed of
- Amendments to the *Ontario Collect of Teachers Act* and the *Early Childhood Educators Act*

The Ontario Human Rights Commission's *The Right to Read Report*

The government is looking at enforcing the implementation of the *Right to Read* recommendations, a review that started in 2019, examining human rights issues that affect students with reading disabilities. The outcome of the Report is that reading is not a privilege but a basic and essential human right. *The Right to Read Report* has 157 recommendations stemming from research, human rights expertise, and lived experiences.

Looking ahead, Rainy River District School Board will expand the Empower™ program to include more schools, expand Heggerty to all junior classrooms beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, implement a universal screen for all K-2 students three times per year as per the Ministry of Education's directions, investigate and purchase decodable books for classrooms, and appoint a dedicated Literacy Lead.

8. **Correspondence**

- a) 2023-2024 Budget Letter

Committee members were provided a copy of the 2023-2024 Budget Letter.

9. **Next Meeting**

Casey Bye will send out a poll with possible meeting dates in September.

10. **Adjournment -**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30pm CST.