



RAINY RIVER DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Parent Involvement Committee Annual Report 2022-2023

Date: December 5, 2023
To: Trustees
From: Helena Guertin & Alexa Wideman, Rainy River District School Board 2022-2023
Parent Involvement Committee Co-Chairs
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: “We work families, partners, and communities in mutually respectful and productive relationships to enhance the success of all students.”

CONTEXT

The Rainy River District School Board’s Parent Involvement Committee works to fulfil its mandate of:

- considering broad parent/guardian interests to support and enhance meaningful, inclusive and constructive parental/guardian engagement in all our schools,
- undertaking activities to help parents/guardians support their children’s learning at home and at school,
- promoting and supporting school councils in their advisory role,
- providing feedback to the Board from a parent/guardian perspective.

This annual report summarizes the activities of the 2022-2023 Parent Involvement Committee in fulfilling its mandate and supporting the Board’s Strategic Plan goal.

SUMMARY

As per its bylaws and the regulation, the 2022-2023 Parent Involvement Committee was comprised of a trustee representative, the Director of Education, an elementary teacher representative, a principal representative, and parent/guardian representatives from various schools and school councils across the District. Three representatives of organizations that work/support children served as Community Members; the organizations were Weechi-it-te-win Children and Family Services, Seven Generations Education Institute, and the Northwestern Health Unit (who is a standing partner on the Committee).

Throughout the school year, the Committee met five times between October 2022 and June 2023: October 26, December 12, January 16, March 21, and June 1. In these meetings, the members of the Parent Involvement Committee worked together to:

- identify topics and to provide feedback on two draft newsletters for parents/guardians and families,
- provide input to inform the development of the 2022-2023 budget,
- receive an update on the results of the 2021-2022 Student Demographic Census Initiative,
- hear regular updates by the Northwestern Health Unit on supports and programs for children, both within and outside of RRDSB schools,



- provide further updates to the Parent Involvement Committee bylaws,
- learn about *The Right to Read Report* and the Board's initial work and future considerations, to address the recommendations,
- implement Parents Reaching Out funding for school councils projects across the District.

Review of PIC Bylaws

In 2021-2022, the Committee thoroughly reviewed and updated the bylaws, which had not been updated since 2017. The two remaining changes were reviewed and updated in October 2022. The bylaws are now fully updated, with the bylaws expected to be fully updated in October 2022.

Participation on the Student Success Foundation Ad Hoc Committee

Two members from the Parent Involvement Committee – Helena Guertin and Shannon King – volunteered to sit as parent/guardian representatives on the recently struck Ad Hoc Committee. This Committee's mandate is to consider the advantages and disadvantages for the Rainy River District School Board to create a student success foundation.

Parents Reaching Out Grant

This year, the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) decided to allocate funding to allow school councils to design one or more projects that welcomed parents/guardians by:

- Creating a safe and welcoming environment with a focus on student safety (e.g., anti-human trafficking, Internet safety)
- Demonstrating respect for parents as valued partners within the education system regarding decisions about their child's education (i.e., transition sessions for parents/guardians to learn more about their child's new school, whether Gr. 6, Gr. 8, Kindergarten and/or special program Open Houses)
- Informing parents about the expectations of the Ontario Curriculum and supporting resources (i.e., Family Nights or Family Game Nights, providing activities that parents/guardians can do at home to extend learning)

Some highlights from the various events include the following:

Sturgeon Creek School, Nestor Falls School, Riverview School, and Rainy River High School offered Humanizing Transactions, otherwise known as Anti-Human Trafficking, presentations to parents/guardians. Jessica Wilson, of the Binesiwag Center for Wellness, shared her story as someone who had been trafficked when she was a teenager. The sessions outlined what human trafficking is, the signs or red flags to watch for, and how families can seek assistance if they suspect trafficking. Supper was provided to attending families, with childcare also being offered. Approximately 40 parents/guardians, along with 15 staff members, attended these sessions across the District.

Other schools looked to hold whole-school events to bring staff, students, and their families together in a welcoming environment. As part of these evenings, supper was provided, along with various activities related to the Ontario curriculum. J. W. Walker School had a Family Fair Night, which complimented their annual family BBQ. Despite the rain, families enjoyed various activities related to oral language development, with families receiving a brochure, outlining activities to build oral language skills at home.

Robert Moore School held a Family Picnic, with families completing various activities related to mental health and well-being. Taco in a bag was offered to all participants. The school had two partners – New



Gold and Gizhewaadiziwin Health Access Center – who supported the event.

Crossroads School similarly planned to provide a fish fry, in partnership with Naicatchewenin First Nation. Unfortunately, a small fire within the kitchen postponed the event, with families instead having a drive-up event to collect their food to enjoy at home. Door prizes with materials to support learning at home were also provided.

Feedback provided by schools showed that meals are essential to encouraging the attendance of families. Student attendance ensures that parents/guardians and the extended family attend and participate in various community-building activities.



PIC November 20, 2023

Board December 5, 2023
