



Rainy River District School Board

# Parent Involvement Committee Newsletter

Fall 2014

Welcome to the fall 2014 RRDSB PIC Newsletter!

Parents can get involved in their child's education in many ways, including through school councils and the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC).

PIC is important advisory body that operates as a direct link between parents and the Board's Director of Education and its trustees. Where school councils focus on the local school and community, the PIC participates at the Board level and focuses on encouraging and enhancing meaningful parent involvement across the District to support student success. As a parent-led committee, the co-chairs are parents. For parents to qualify for election or appointment, they must have a child enrolled in a school of the Board. The PIC also appoints up to three community members.

To become a member of PIC, contact your local school and submit an application form by October 20, 2014.

School council, at every school of the RRDSB, includes parents, school staff, community representatives and, in some cases, students. Council offers advice to the school principal on a number of topics. As a school council member, you can help your council discover new and exciting ways to contribute to the education of students in your school. Education is a partnership involving parents, students, teachers, principals, school boards, government, and the community. Your involvement in the council gives you the opportunity to strengthen that partnership, and to be part of a dedicated team working to support a high quality of education and an accountable education system for children in the Rainy River District.

Your participation can make a difference! Attend an upcoming school council meeting or talk to your school principal about how to get involved and/or become a member.

## Student well-being as the foundation for their achievement

During the PIC Symposium in April 2014, two new resources - *We All Belong* storybooks and the *Building Healthy Relationships Toolkit* - were introduced.

The storybooks were designed to be appealing, accessible, and culturally and linguistically appropriate for parents and school staff to use. This resource will help foster parent engagement to support student achievement and well-being, and promote a whole school approach to safe, inclusive and accepting schools.

*Building Healthy Relationships* is a tool kit and guide that will support parents of teens in the whole-school approach. It can be downloaded online at:

[www.ontariodirectors.ca/parent\\_engagement](http://www.ontariodirectors.ca/parent_engagement).



RRDSB Parent Involvement Committee

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**Next meeting:**

October 30, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.  
Education Centre  
Fort Frances

**Upcoming School Council Meetings:**

- [Crossroads](#)—November 20, 5:00 p.m.
- [Donald Young](#)—November 17, 6:30 p.m.
- [J.W. Walker](#)—October 21, 6:30 p.m.
- [Mine Centre](#)—February 25, 2:00 p.m.
- [Nestor Falls](#)—October 15, 5:30 p.m.
- [North Star](#)—November 5, 7:00 p.m.
- [Riverview](#)—November 4, 4:30 p.m.
- [Robert Moore](#)—October 28, 6:30 p.m.
- [Sturgeon Creek](#)—October 16, 6:30 p.m.
- [Sturgeon Creek Alternative Program](#)—October 23, 6:30 p.m.
- [Atikokan High](#)—November 25, 7:00 p.m.
- [Fort Frances High](#)—November 25, 6:30 p.m.
- [Rainy River High](#)—November 17, 4:30 p.m.

Visit your school's website for additional school council meeting dates.

For links to school websites, parent resources, the latest news, upcoming school activities and more, visit the Board website at: [www.rrdsb.com](http://www.rrdsb.com).



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"Together, we empower all students to believe in themselves, to achieve, and to dream."

## Technology tips for parents

### Tip #1

For many searches, Google will do the work for you and show an answer to your question on the search results.

**Weather.** Search [weather] to see the weather in your location or add a city name after weather to find weather for a certain place.

**Dictionary.** Put [define] in front of any word to see its definition.

**Calculations.** Enter a math equation like [3\*9123], or solve complex graphing equations.

**Unit conversions.** Enter any conversion, like [3 dollars in euros].

**Quick facts.** Search for the name of a location, movie, or song to find important information.

### Tip #2

#### Using Technology to Build Language & Literacy

When your child asks about an upcoming event, open your calendar app and talk about how you've scheduled it. For example, if your child asks, "When are we going swimming?", you could say "Let's take a look at the calendar." Open the calendar and talk about where you've entered the event. For example, "Look, here's September, and here I have a note on the 18th. It says, 'Amanda's swimming lesson.'"

## Report cards are coming! Report cards are coming!

### RRDSB Reports

#### Elementary:

- Nov. 18, 2014 Progress Report
- Feb. 19, 2014 Elementary Report
- June 26, 2015 Elementary Report

#### Secondary:

- Semester 1
  - Nov. 28, 2014 Mid-Term Report
  - Feb. 9, 2014 Final Semester 1 Report
- Semester 2
  - May 5, 2015 Mid-Term Report
  - July 2015 Final Report

What's the first thing you look at? Be honest. It's the grades, isn't it?

But there are more important things for parents to focus on. That's why the report card format starts with your child's learning skills—responsibility, organization, independent work, collaboration, initiative, and self-regulation. Research by neuroscientists and educational psychologists has shown that it is these skills that have the greatest impact on students' ability to succeed, not just in school, but in life.

These are also the skills that parents can help build at home. Students whose parents have high expectations and who focus on building strong work habits and a positive attitude are more likely to be successful in school. The information about your child's learning skills can help you support them in the areas that need improvement.

Report cards are also a great tool parents can use to initiate conversations about school. Go over the report card with your child, talk about where they do well and where they may be struggling.

Whether your child is struggling or doing very well, go to the high school parents' nights and elementary school parent-teacher interviews! They are great opportunities to learn more about ways you, your child and your child's teachers can co-operate on strategies to help in subjects where your child is having difficulty.

If there are comments or parts of the report card that you do not understand, ask the teacher about them.

Okay, now you can look at the marks.

*~ People for Education*



## Who does what in education?

### The Provincial Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education is responsible for overseeing all aspects of Ontario's public education system. Ontario's *Education Act* sets out the duties and responsibilities of the Minister of Education, school boards, supervisory officers (superintendents), principals, teachers, parents and students. The **Minister of Education** is appointed by the Premier, and is an elected Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP). Responsibilities include setting policies and guidelines, allotting funding, establishing provincial curriculum, setting graduation requirements. For more information, visit [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca).

### Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO)

The EQAO is an independent government body that oversees the province-wide standardized testing in grades 3, 6, and 9 and 10. For more information, visit [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com).

### Ontario College of Teachers

The Ontario College of Teachers regulates the teaching profession. For more information, visit [www.oct.ca](http://www.oct.ca)

### School Boards

There are 72 school boards in Ontario. There are also several 'school authorities' that oversee schools in hospitals, treatment centres, and in remote regions of the province. Responsibilities include best use of allotted funding, special local programming, setting local policies and procedures, budget, and establishing improvement plans that support the best interests of students.

**Trustees** are elected to the school board during municipal elections. They represent the interests of parents and students in their area and the whole District.

**School superintendents or "supervisory officers"** are board staff responsible for groups of schools in each school board.

### Schools

**Principals** are responsible for the management of individual schools. They may have one or more vice-principals assigned to help them.

**Teachers'** responsibilities include lesson planning, teaching, evaluating student progress, and classroom management.

**School Councils** provide advice to the principal and school board. Responsibilities include sharing information and seeking input from other parents on matters the council is discussing.

### School Board Election Day is Monday, October 27, 2014!

Help choose your RRDSB trustee representing the Town of Fort Frances & east unorganized area by casting your vote.

Trustees representing other RRDSB areas have been acclaimed for the 2014-2018 term.