



Rainy River District School Board

# Parent Involvement Committee Newsletter

Fall 2015

## Welcome to the fall 2015 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.

**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.

## Supporting your teen's time management

Lets face it...you do a lot and you probably feel like there isn't enough time to do all that you want to do. Here we give you time management tips for teens that you can use today.

1. Beat procrastination
  - Don't leave everything until the last minute.
2. Become organized.
  - If you are organized then you can fit more into your life. Being organized will save you time and reduce your stress. By being organized, doing homework at the last minute will be a distant thing of the past. You'll be able to find things and stay on top of what is most important to you.
3. Plan your week.
  - Each Sunday night spend 15 minutes to plan your week. Think of all your activities and then write them down into a weekly planner. Think about what are your most important tasks (they are the big rocks of your life). Write them down in you weekly planner. Also put any classes or work activities that you may have.
4. What matters most to you?
  - Write down all your activities that you need to do today., and then put an A, B or C. A is "really important", B is "less important" and C is "not important". Once you are done, choose your most important "A" task, and set out on doing that until you have completed it.

Source: [www.mytimemanagement.com/time-management-for-teens.html](http://www.mytimemanagement.com/time-management-for-teens.html)



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### Upcoming School Council Meetings:

- [Crossroads](#)—Nov. 23, 5:00 p.m.
- [Donald Young](#)—To Be Announced, 6:30 p.m.
- [J.W. Walker](#)—Nov. 17, 6:30 p.m.
- [Mine Centre](#)—Nov. 19, 2:00 p.m.
- [Nestor Falls](#)—Nov. 19, 3:00 p.m.
- [North Star](#)—Nov. 17, 7:00 p.m.
- [Riverview](#)—Jan. 19, 4:00 p.m.
- [Robert Moore](#)—Nov. 24, 6:30 p.m.
- [Sturgeon Creek](#)—Jan. 6, 5:30 p.m.
- [Sturgeon Creek Alternative Program](#)—Nov. 23, 6:30 p.m.
- [Atikokan High](#)—Dec. 8, 7:00 p.m.
- [Fort Frances High](#)—Nov. 18, 6:30 p.m.
- [Rainy River High](#)—Nov. 23, 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."*

## Special Needs

**Q: I think my child needs special education support. What should I do?**

All students will have times when they struggle with schoolwork or with school life. But some students may need extra support.

Parents may be the first to notice that their son or daughter is having problems in school, or a teacher may suggest to a parent that their son or daughter might need extra and ongoing support.

### Ask questions

- Ask your child if there are particular things that are consistently difficult at school.
- Ask the teacher if he or she thinks your son or daughter needs extra support and if the teacher can provide the extra help.
- Some medical conditions may affect learning (e.g., hearing or vision impairments), so it might be helpful to speak with your child's doctor.

### Meet with the school staff

- If you think your child needs extra support, ask the principal or vice-principal to hold a meeting with other school staff (called a school team meeting) to talk about your child.
- Prepare for the meeting. Sometimes it helps to write down questions such as:
  - What kinds of supports or programs would help my child succeed?
  - What is available in the school?
  - Will my child have to wait a long time to get into the right program?

At the school team meeting, the school staff may recommend one or more of the following options:

- that the teacher continue to provide support in the classroom;
- that the teacher develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for the student;
- that a student be formally assessed to find out if he or she has special needs and what those needs are; and/or
- that the school hold a more formal special education meeting, called an Identification Placement and Review Committee.

Remember that some parts of the process for getting special education support can feel confusing and may have unfamiliar names. Always ask questions if there are things you don't understand.

There are many organizations that can provide you with more information and support about special education, including the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, Community Living Ontario and our School Board's Special Education Department. There is also extensive information about special education on our website at [www.rirdsb.com](http://www.rirdsb.com), and on the Ministry of Education website at [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca).

*~ excerpt from People for Education,  
Tips for Parents, Special Education*

## Supporting Mentally Healthy Children and Youth

Mentally healthy children and youth are able to form positive relationships with peers and adults, manage stress and difficult emotions, bounce back from challenges and adversity, and enjoy an overall sense of well-being.

It is not uncommon for children and youth to struggle with their mental health. When emerging mental health problems are identified early, children are able to get the help they need sooner which can significantly alter the course of the mental health problem and help kids get back to being kids.

### Tips to support the mental health of your children

1. **Learn about common mental health problems** experienced by children and youth and how to recognize them.
  - Take a look at the ABC's of Mental Health Parent Resource [www.hincksdellcrest.org/ABC/Parent-Resource/Welcome](http://www.hincksdellcrest.org/ABC/Parent-Resource/Welcome)
2. **Talk with your kids about mental health and mental illness.** Acknowledge that mental health problems are common just like getting a cold or flu is common - although we don't "catch" mental illness.
3. **Help your child feel a sense of belonging** at home and with others.
  - This Parent Tool Kit from the Council of Ontario Directors of Education highlights how to help your children develop healthy relationships! [www.ontariodirectors.ca/parent\\_engagement.html#pe1](http://www.ontariodirectors.ca/parent_engagement.html#pe1)
4. **Most circumstances are temporary.** Share with your child that our mental health changes over time based on what is happening in our lives, how we are coping, and the supports we have.
5. **Encourage your child to seek help from a trusted adult** when they are having a hard time dealing with emotions like sadness, anger, anxiety, or loneliness.
6. **Engage in daily self-care.** Self-care is any action you take to care for your physical, mental, or emotional health. Model positive ways to cope with challenges and stress. Encourage good nutrition, exercise and sleep habits.
7. **Understand that there are effective treatments and supports** for mental health problems and illnesses.
8. **Gain an understanding of local resources** that are available to support your child.

Make sure you have the support you need!

- Check out Parents for Children's Mental Health [www.pcmh.ca](http://www.pcmh.ca)

Did you know that counselling services are available to **students** across the Rainy River District School Board?

Speak to your child's teacher or school administrator for more information.

