



Date: July 22, 2015

To: Rainy River District School Board
From: Rainy River District School Board Parent Involvement Committee
Subject: Annual Report – 2014/15

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.

In addition to updating the language in its By-law, the Parent Involvement Committee met five times to plan training for school council chairs; to develop a newsletter to parents; and to implement the Parents Reaching Out Grant 2014/15 for Family Science Nights across the District.

Professional Development for Parent Involvement Committee Members and Parents

In addition to the activities above, Committee member, Leslie Danielson attended the Sixth Annual Parent Involvement Committee Symposium in Toronto, in April 2015, bringing back ideas and suggestions for parent involvement activities.

The EGALE Canada Human Rights Trust conducted a professional development workshop regarding LGBTQ inclusion with a vision of providing safer and accepting schools in November 2014. Committee members were invited to participate.

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 2014 and one in the Spring of 2015. 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 2014. A presentation outlined the importance of school council bylaws and how to manage effective meetings, as well as ideas for Family Science Nights. Overall feedback on the session and the supporting materials was very positive.

Family Science Nights

The Parent Involvement Committee allocated funds from the Regional Parents Reaching Out Grant for each school hosting a Family Science Night Event. Included in the allocation was an amount for refreshments, and an amount for workshop materials. Each elementary school hosted at least one Family Science Night/Event, with over 2,000 people – students, parents/guardians, extended family members, and community partners – attending these events throughout the District. The application of a 2015/16 Parents Reaching Out Grant focused on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) has been since completed.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the 2014/15 school year was a very successful year for the Parent Involvement Committee, with development and distribution of resources to school councils, and the funding and support for Family Science Nights at all of the Board's elementary schools.