

# ***Minutes of the Parent Involvement Committee***

**Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup> 2023, at 6:30 p.m.**

A meeting of the Parent Involvement Committee was held on Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup> 2023.

**PIC Members:** Jim Van Allen, Huma Choudhary, Sensa Renab, Kristen McKinnon, Gurleen Saggu, SensaRAneb Burrell, Yugita Looknaugh, Lori Dunn, Waseem Ali, Peter Ackie, Tarun Chaudhary

**Trustee:** Stephen Linton

**DDSB Staff:** Superintendent Margaret Lazarus, James Klodnicki, Frank Samuels, Carolynne Waters, Tara Bryan, Nadia Nembhard-Hunt, Nadia Baby, Mitzi Hussett, Patrick Symister

**Regrets:** Tracy Marshall, Angela Mastrangelo, Ebony Gittens, Arun Rai, Nigel Hunter, Trecia Facey, Rupal Patel,

**Guests:** Camille Williams-Taylor

The Parent Involvement Committee Meeting was called to order at 6:35pm

Item	Discussion
<b>Welcome and Land Acknowledgment</b>	Jim Van Allen read the Land of Acknowledgement and the Indigenous and Human Rights.
<b>Agenda Approval</b>	Moved by Kristen McKinnon and seconded by Patrick Symister.
<b>Greetings from Director Camille Williams-Taylor</b>	<p>Welcomed by Huma Choudhary.</p> <p>Director Williams-Taylor shared her family and professional background. 34 years in education, as well as a parent of three.</p> <p>Director Williams-Taylor highlighted the importance of the parent engagement team and the PIC</p> <p>Engagement of families/community is a wrap around of our children as we are all committed to their success. Family can look different from family to family (grandparents, aunts/uncles, guardians). Some of our youth have lots of support, while others are struggling to get that support – this is where our schools can step in to offer that support to families and students. Our directive is: How do we partner, how do we as a PIC go out and cultivate these relationships.</p> <p>PIC represent support for parents and families as peers as we navigate forward to support our young people in finding their path.</p>

<b>Diversity and Engagement</b>	<p>The following questions were posed as we opened this topic for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What does Engagement look like based upon the varying demographics within our board?</li> <li>- What is Engagement? In addition to events, what else does this look like?</li> <li>- How can we help them help their children?</li> </ul> <p>Key takeaways from discussion included:</p> <p><b>Communication:</b></p> <p>Take advantage of opportunities for organic conversations – connect with school families (lunchroom supervisors, families picking up students) to ask them what they would like to know, share information about what is happening and what is available to them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Look at developing a resource package for newcomer parents (new to board as well as new to Canada) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Create a Board package</li> <li>○ Create a customizable school package <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Include localized information including resources available in the community, and from DDSB</li> <li>○ Utilize DDSB Social Workers – they can speak to many of these programs, resources etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Engaging specific communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How best do we do this? Organic conversations at school with the community; welcome events at the start of each year (DDSB Welcome BBQ and/or school specific events. How can the SCCs support this need in their school community)</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Utilize social media to share messaging quickly and easily</li> <li>○ Consider how else to communicate outside of online platforms (social media, emails, websites). What other channels are available? How can SCCs support this?</li> </ul> <p><b>Programming:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Food and security – how do we support this need (offer events and/or information, such as how to cook healthy on a budget; how can schools utilize local businesses such as COBBS to take items that would be discarded, and provided to school meal/nutrition programs)</li> <li>○ Addressing stereotypes and breaking them down</li> <li>○ Bridging the gap between student population and parent population in terms of information sharing and feedback. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Invite the student trustees and/or student senate to our PIC meetings so the student voices are heard in regards to their engagement and their parents engagement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Student senate member Ben connected during the meeting and said they would be happy to be a part of our meetings</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>PIC Sub-Committee Updates</b>	<p><b>Newsletter</b> – First newsletter was sent in December. A survey was included and feedback from this survey will be shared in the future. The second issue is planned for distribution on February 28<sup>th</sup>. It will include a piece on Ramadan, highlights of what is happening in our school community and a link to an interview with our new Director of Education.</p> <p><b>Parent Engagement Series</b> – The focus for the speaker events this year is on indigenous rights. The first speaker is Pamela Palmater, and will take</p>

	<p>place on Wednesday March 8<sup>th</sup>. The second speaker is Dr. James Makokis and his partner Anthony, focusing on celebrating indigeneity and their experience in winning season 7 of the Amazing Race – this will take place on May 9<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>Durham As Partners Symposium (previously Parents as Partners) –</b> The focus will be on Mental Health – the theme will be Supporting Resilience in Children: Mental Health and Social Wellbeing. It will be an in-person event after the last couple of years of virtual events. It will take place on May 27<sup>th</sup> from 9am-12pm at the DDSB Board Office. There will be a Keynote speaker (TBC) with various breakout sessions, all relating to various areas of mental health and wellbeing. Internal and external partners will be utilized in supporting this event.</p> <p><b>PRO Grants</b> – An information session was held in January, and application documents and deadlines was sent following this meeting. There will be a meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup> to review applications, and approve/allocate funds. By week of 27<sup>th</sup>, approvals and funding will be communicated for action, and schools can begin planning their events.</p> <p><b>Social Justice, Human and Equity Rights –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At the meeting it was discussed how we can show parents where they can access supports in school, and what that looks like. Build trusting relationships with our families and open communication channels. Tap into support groups already existing in our schools.</li> <li>- Human Rights Brochure – being developed, led by retired DDSB principal along with a group of peers</li> </ul>
<b>Engagement Strategic Plan</b>	<p>Margaret Lazarus motioned to table this item due to time constraints and move it to the next meeting. Nadia seconded the motion, and the motion was passed.</p>
<b>Engaging the SCCs</b>	<p>The first two SCC information presentations have taken place with positive feedback. A third information session, regarding By-Laws, has been confirmed for the Spring. Date TBC, consideration of Ramadan for scheduling. A Save the Date is forthcoming.</p> <p>An overview of a repository of both potential event Speakers and SCC Best Practices was shared, and received positive feedback. The idea of these working documents is that they will be constantly evolving with new information and act as resources and idea generation for SCCs and schools.</p>
<b>Websites and use of social media</b>	<p>The PIC section of the DDSB website has been reviewed, and is currently being updated where needed. Consideration to be given to video content, and whether it is to be updated and/or removed.</p> <p>Social Media channels to allow for quick and easy communication with our communities was discussed. A communications plan, with clear goals would need to be developed to ensure it is being utilized in the best way to support the PIC goals and directives.</p>

<b>Next meeting</b>	Clarification that the next PIC meeting will take place on Thursday April 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2023.
<b>Meeting Adjournment</b>	The PIC meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.