

# Minutes of the Parent Involvement Committee

Wednesday, February 21, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

A meeting of the Parent Involvement Committee was held on Wednesday, February 21, 2024

PIC Members: Mitzi Hussett, Arshi Ali, Huma Choudhary, Gurleen Saggu, Arun Raj, Lori Dunn, Nadia Baby, Peter Ackie, SensaRAneb Burrell

Trustee: Michelle Arseneault

DDSB Staff: Superintendent Kandis Thompson, Tara Bryan, Nadia Nembhard-Hunt, Patrick Symister, Pennie Marchione

Regrets: Barry Bedford, Nigel Hunter, Tarun Chaudhary, Angela Mastrangelo, Trecia Facey, Waseem Ali, Carolynne Waters

Guest: N/A

The Parent Involvement Committee Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Item	Discussion
Welcome and Land Acknowledgment, Indigenous and Human Rights	Everyone was welcomed and the acknowledgements were read.
Agenda Approval	Gurleen Saggu approved, and Trustee Arseneault seconded.
Introduction of new Trustee	Trustee Michelle Arseneault was introduced and welcomed. Michelle is the trustee for the PIC as well as the Whitby area of schools.
Sub-Committee Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PIC Newsletter           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> newsletter was published prior to winter break. The 2<sup>nd</sup> one will be published prior to the March break and will include the following topics:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ March break events by region.</li> <li>▪ The new Ontario Language Curriculum highlights.</li> <li>▪ Pathways for students: Transitioning to high school and beyond.</li> <li>▪ SEA Chromebook Information Sessions for Families.</li> <li>▪ A Message from Indigenous Education Department.</li> <li>▪ Highlights of Parent Engagement across the district.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If there is something the committee would like to be included, connect with Mitzi Hussett.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Parent Engagement Series           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parenting in the Age of Social Media virtual webinar was hosted by PIC and the DDSB Positive School Climate Department. Focussed on addressing a variety of new considerations for parents and caregivers while offering suggestions for keeping kids safe, responsible, and ethical as they navigate online.</li> <li>• It was highly successful. 611 people registered with 381 attending. 3 schools hosted watch parties.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Schools are encouraged to host watch parties to welcome the community to spend time at the schools.
- Great questions were asked and answered. Copies of these questions and answers will be posted soon.
- A copy of the presentation has been posted on the DDSB PIC page.
- Registrants were sent a survey; the results will be reviewed to help inform our next session on Mental Health that will occur in May.
- Send any feedback to Arshi Ali.

○ SCC Conference

- PIC hosting 1<sup>st</sup> in person Regional SCC meeting in 5 years on February 26 from 6-8:30. All Administrators and SCC Chair's from DDSB schools have been invited.
- 160 attendees expected.
- 19 community partners will have tables as part of an expo to share information.
- Participants will have 4 breakout sessions to choose from.

○ PRO Grants

- Provides funding to school boards to lead projects with a focus on the identification and removal of barriers that may prevent parents and families from participating and engaging fully in their children's learning.
- 44 projects were approved with \$50,000 allocated to these events. Applications this year were focussed on:
  - Addressing social inclusion and racism specifically anti-Asian, anti-Black, and anti-Indigenous racism and other prejudices toward racialized and marginalized groups
  - Creating a safe and welcoming environment
  - Demonstrating respect for parents as valued partners within the education system regarding decisions about their child's education
  - Enhancing communication with teachers
  - Informing parents about the expectations of the Ontario Curriculum and supporting resources
- SCC members to keep in mind the following criteria: events must engage families and have a clear theme/focus.
- This funding can be very impactful for schools in priority areas and assist families in learning with their students. There is a video available to help SCC's walk through the application process.
- We'll remind SCC's at the end of the year to start thinking about projects for next year. We'll be sharing a lot of information at the end of the year.

○ Social Justice, Human and Equity Rights

- Moving forward with reflection on school events and days – some events are not celebrated by all and can cause harm.
- Goal of the committee is to create an easy-to-understand parent resource that compiles all of our resources including ISS checklists, AODA considerations, Universal Design for Learning etc. to assist thinking to occur in advance when planning events.
- Committee will share ideas and provide guidelines and work towards having a resource to provide to schools next year. (Lori Dunn to join sub committee)

<p>PIC Year End Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report will be presented at the final PIC meeting.</li> <li>• The report will outline key initiatives that were completed throughout the school year to support the work of the PIC.</li> <li>• These initiatives include our Volunteer of Distinction event, Parent Engagement e-newsletters, Parent Reaching Out Grants; Parent Engagement Series Watch Party Events, and our Regional SCC meeting.</li> <li>• The report is concise and easy to read and provides the DDSB with information and advice to help engage parents and build strong, effective partnerships with families.</li> <li>• As the needs of the communities are always evolving, we must be responsive to these changing needs.</li> <li>• Looking at requests from the community about what they want to learn about. Any questions please feel free to reach out to Peter or Huma.</li> </ul>
<p>Board Strategic Plan Update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent involvement is still a challenge.</li> <li>• Living and learning in our community is especially important.</li> <li>• The Ontario Education Act requires all Boards to create a plan that articulates our shared values, guides our actions, and measures how we're doing. Sets our direction for the work of the school board – always with students at the centre.</li> <li>• Consultation occurred through surveys, input from students, and committees from May-October.</li> <li>• Connected Communities is one of the pillars – identifying the need to engage students, staff, and community.</li> <li>• Starting roll out around March break – lots of opportunities to guide where we want to go.</li> <li>• The greater community be able to access the information initially within the schools but also through community initiatives as well including digital pieces, posters in schools, website, reaching out through SCC's etc. There is already some information on the DDSB website in the January Board meeting minutes.</li> <li>• SCC's are stewards of this plan. It is important that we are informed and familiar with the plan. This committee will be looking at this in depth as a team.</li> </ul>
<p>Requests for Consultation with PIC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A survey will be sent to all PIC members to provide feedback, ideas, suggestions to inform our own plans.</li> <li>• We need to be able to provide guidance on DDSB processes. Kandis will reach out next week to see who is interested in participating in a separate committee to provide consultation from a parent perspective on policies etc.</li> </ul>
<p>Final Meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The final meeting will be May 22, 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are interested in becoming a co-chair, contact Peter or Huma for further information.</li> <li>• The group will be surveyed to see if there's any interest in having a hybrid meeting for the final meeting.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Meeting Adjournment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The PIC meeting was adjourned at 7:06 pm.</li> </ul>