

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

**Tuesday, May 27, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.**

A meeting of the Parent Involvement Committee was held on Tuesday, May 27, 2025

- PIC Members:** Gurleen Saggu, Huma Choudhary, Emily Will, Katherine Taylor, Arshi Ali, Bee Quammie, Alissa du Hasky, Ashley Lane, Chantel Walker-Hinds, Jennifer McLaughlin, Kerri-Lee Wier
- Trustee:** Trustee Shailene Panylo
- DDSB Staff:** Superintendent Martine Robinson, Nicole Brown, Fatima Muhtaj, Jo Anne Baker, Patrick Symister, Omotola (Omo) Olatunji, Sara Forbes, Emily Pantaleo, Afraa Yusuf, Lanya Lewis, Frank Samuels
- Regrets:** Superintendent Kandis Thompson, Trustee Stephen Linton, Nadia Nembhard-Hunt, Peter Ackie, Christie Low, Kim Hutt, Charmyn Lawton, Chris Zarras, Sayeka Hasan
- Guest Speakers:** Dr. Jean Clinton (virtually), Superintendent Heather Mundy, Superintendent Erin Elmhurst

The Parent Involvement Committee Meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
Welcome and Land Acknowledgement	Gurleen welcomed participants and guests.  Martine read the Land Acknowledgement.
Approval of the Agenda	Moved by Chantel Walker-Hinds and seconded by Arshi Ali
PIC Reminders	Gurleen went through the below information highlighting the following Norms for our PIC meetings.  <b>The role of PIC members:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing advice to their school board on parent engagement and ways to communicate with parents.</li> <li>• developing strategies and initiatives the board could use to effectively engage parents in improving student achievement and well-being.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sharing information with and supporting the work of all the school councils in the school board.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reminders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a live-stream and recorded public session.</li> <li>• If you are joining us via Zoom, we ask that you have your cameras on during our meeting.</li> <li>• We adhere to our by-laws, particularly Section 9 relating to demonstrating decorum and respect for other members of the PIC.</li> <li>• Please do not share individual student/teacher/school concerns or information in this public forum (if you have individual questions, we can support offline).</li> </ul>
<p>Special Guest, Dr. Jean Clinton</p>	<p><b>Dr. Jean Clinton, special presentation</b>, MD, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster, division of Child Psychiatry is sharing a virtual presentation to compliment her presentation on May 15, 2025, of Supporting our Children and Youth to Thrive.</p> <p>Dr. Clinton shared to her presentation with PIC and emphasized the power of relationships and connections, highlighting the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The brain development in the individual child and the adolescent brain. Myelinating – pruning and remodeling of the brain.</li> <li>• Novel stimuli is heightened reward experience through peers, it is biological necessity but as it involves risk taking it is also one of the highest mortality modes in this age.</li> <li>• The brain is a social organ. Failure to thrive if you don't have the resources around you.</li> <li>• Listen with Care, respond with love, and connect before you correct</li> </ul> <p>Dr. Clinton recommended some resources with PIC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">By Your Side School Mental Health Ontario</a>, a parent caregiver online resource hub and school facing toolkit to support Ontario parents in fostering the child's mental health and well-being.</li> <li>• "Mediatrician" Michael Rich, is a resource that can be shared in schools, etc. He is a paediatrician at Harvard with <a href="#">Digital Wellness Lab</a>. He is on a mission to understand and promote positive and healthy digital media experience for young people. From birth through young adulthood.</li> </ul> <p>Gurleen thanked Dr. Clinton</p>

System Presentations	<p><b>1. Creating Safe and Inclusive Schools - Violence in School Working Group, Superintendent Heather Mundy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Violence in Schools Working Group was created to support and provide information to the DDSB Trustee Violence in Schools Ad Hoc Committee about 1.5 years ago.</li> <li>• Total of 11 members. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Four (4) Trustees,</li> <li>○ Four (4) Staff Members,</li> <li>○ Three (3) Federation/Union Representatives.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The Purpose of Violence in School Ad Hoc Committee is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To secure an understanding of the issue of violence in school across the district.</li> <li>• To secure an understanding of structures in place to address the issues.</li> <li>• To secure an understanding of practices and undertakings to mitigate violence in schools and the impact that these practices are having in schools.</li> <li>• These understandings are to be gained for the purpose of reporting back to the Committee of the Whole- Standing on matters of Board policy, including any gaps in DDSBS policy framework regarding violence in schools.</li> <li>• It is not the role of the Committee or any working group to address any specific incidents of violence.</li> <li>• Themes from the recent discussions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Do we have enough support and resources for staff,</li> <li>○ Bullying prevention and intervention training,</li> <li>○ Understanding progressive,</li> <li>○ Learning new strategies to communicate effectively with families.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Superintendent Mundy engaged PIC in a group session and will use the data generated to inform next steps.</p> <p><b>2. DDSB School Achievement Plan, Superintendent Erin Elmhurst,</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a Ministry-mandated board-wide plan under the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act (2023) prepopulated and unaltered by DDSB.</li> <li>• It aims to improve student learning, well-being, and graduation outcomes</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It reflects the three Ministry priorities of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Achievement of learning outcomes in core</li> <li>○ Preparation of students for future success</li> <li>○ Student engagement and well-being</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The data is “trailing data” meaning that it is populated from the previous year.</li> <li>• Ministry requires for the engagement with families twice per year; fall to gather information and spring to share progress</li> </ul>
Sub-Committees	<p><b>Communication, Frank Samuels</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supported two (2) e-newsletters with departmental updates</li> <li>• 84.5% of respondents shared that the newsletter was an effective communication tool.</li> <li>• Continuing to explore additional ways to connect with families.</li> <li>• Next newsletter is in progress and will feature the following items by request: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Understanding Individualised education plans (IEPs)</li> <li>○ Understanding report cards,</li> <li>○ Looking at the impact of PRO Grants in the schools.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understanding teenage slang was highly read.</li> </ul> <p><b>Parent Reaching Out (PRO) Grants, Fatima Muhtaj</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 43 PRO Grant applications were approved to approximately \$84,500.00.</li> <li>• We have received 16 PRO Grant Final Reports which will assist in steering the 2025/26 processes and support the creation of a PRO Grant list of vendors and resources</li> </ul> <p><b>Engagement Speaker Series, Emily Pantaleo</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We offered three (3) sessions; two (2) virtually, and one (1) hybrid.</li> <li>• Over 1000 participants in total.</li> <li>• “Watch Parties” were encouraged to support schools in-person family engagement by providing schools with incentives including a food stipend and prizes for hosting.</li> <li>• Based on family feedback we are finalising our 2025-26 Speaker Series in the same theme of mental health and well-being.</li> </ul> <p><b>Regional SCC Meetings, Kerri-Leigh Weir</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This year, rather than having one (1) large SCC meeting, we had three (3) separate regional sessions for Ajax/Pickering,</li> </ul>

	<p>Whitby/Oshawa, and for the Northern region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the feedback we will host one (1) Regional and three (3) local meetings across DDSB for the 2025/26 school year</li> </ul> <p><b>Engaging our Diverse Communities, Lanya Lewis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The EDC sub-committee is focused on ensuring programs and engagement that reflect the diversity of our students</li> <li>We will survey community needs, partner with local organizations and build networks to support student and family engagement.</li> <li>A new opportunity to utilize our HUB spaces in six (6) of the secondary schools, to support our families in these spaces.</li> <li>Next year we will continue engaging voices in the hubs and building those relationships</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Looking ahead: Considerations for the 2025/26 school year – Fatima Muhtaj</b></p> <p><b>Focus Group Call-out</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus group participants are being sought for a Teaching and Learning policy working group, enabling students, teachers and staff to thrive.</li> <li>This will be hosted in a hybrid format.</li> <li>Please advise Nicole Brown or Fatimah Muhtaj if you are interested in participating on developing the policy.</li> </ul> <p><b>PIC Committee - Membership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support planning for the upcoming school year in a timely manner, we would like to begin filling our PIC roles before September.</li> <li>An email will be sent to all PIC members shortly to confirm whether you intend to return next year and if you are still interested in participating on the same sub-committee.</li> </ul> <p><b>2025-2026 School Year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will be meeting five (5) times during the year, instead of four (4).</li> <li>All PIC members will be asked to participate in a short video to share with the Regional SCCs they support. This will offer families an additional opportunity to provide feedback directly to PIC members.</li> <li>To further support the sharing of important DDSB information with our families, we will also provide monthly central slide</li> </ul>

	updates to SCCs for use in their meetings and communications.
	2025/26 Meeting Dates - TBD
Thanking our 2024/25 PIC	<p>Gurleen and Fatima extended their thanks on behalf of the Family and Community Engagement Department to all who served on PIC for your dedication and effort over the 2024/25 year. Your commitment, collaboration, and thoughtful input have made a meaningful impact and we're truly grateful for your time and effort.</p> <p>A special thank you to Peter Ackie, (regrets). Peter has served as Co-Chair for the past two (2) years, and his leadership, insight, and contributions have been deeply appreciated. We hope to see him return in another capacity in the future!</p> <p>We also want to our thanks to Nicole Brown, who will be concluding her role with the Family and Community Engagement Department at the end of June. Nicole's dedication, hard work, and positive spirit have made a significant impact in our department and the community.</p>
Meeting Dates for 2025/26	To be determined

Meeting adjourned at: 8:01 pm