



Grand Erie Parent Involvement Committee

May 19, 2016, 6:30 pm

Dogwood Room, Waterford District High School

Chair: Brent Howard

Recorder: Valerie Slawich

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Introductions B. Blancher
 - 1.1. Present: Brenda Blancher, Brent Howard, Sheila Slood, Tom Waldschmidt, Nancy Waldschmidt, Sarah Nichol, Christine Oliviera, Rita Collver, Shawn McKillop
Regrets: Pam Barrowcliffe, Ray Nutley, Jodi Flisak, Hilary Visheau, Verna Millington, Holly Knill-Horvath, Susan Noort, Jean Montgomery, John Harris, Rochelle Winter
2. Minutes B. Howard
 - 2.1. Approval of Minutes
 - 2.1.1. Nancy Waldschmidt moved to approve the minutes; Sheila Slood seconded
~ carried
 - 2.2. Business Arising from Minutes
 - 2.2.1. No new business
3. Financial Report B. Blancher
 - 3.1. Financial Update
 - 3.1.1. The budget was cut back slightly this year. Grants valued at \$4100 were awarded to successful schools. Brent brought forward the question whether parents should be involved in decisions regarding the Parent Engagement budget. Director Blancher explained that in October 2014 the Board was investigating the purchase of a new home communication tool, School Messenger. Both Parent Engagement and GEPIC budgets were slightly reduced to accommodate the costs of School Messenger. Next year, the budget will return to normal. GEPIC also has a small budget, receiving a base of \$5000 and \$0.17/student, which equates to \$9,416.60, but fluctuates based on enrolment. There were many more grant applications this year than in other years and it was harder to accommodate this demand. Brent added that the funds went towards School Messenger, a parent engagement and communication tool, which supports the work of GEPIC and School Councils.
4. Presentation W. Baker
 - 4.1. Police Protocol
 - 4.1.1. This is a draft document, and we are looking for parental input. Stakeholders reviewed the old protocol, compared it to what the new requirements are, and included suggestions from local agencies. Shawn McKillop will help Superintendent Baker send this to school councils as either a link embedded in an email message, or as a link in a message using School Messenger.
 - 4.1.2. Superintendent Baker gave an overview of the DRAFT Police Protocol.
5. Updates from the Board Table J. Harris/T. Waldschmidt
 - 5.1. Tom Waldschmidt reported that the last Haldimand East ARC meeting will be on May 31st, with a report going to board in June; budget planning for 2016-17 is now complete and will go to board for final approval; the annual employee retirement dinner is on June 7th; Education Week included a gala at the Sanderson Centre which was well attended; and he attended the annual PIC Symposium on April 16th.



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6. Director's Update B. Blancher
- 6.1. Bylaw 8 Terms of Reference Update
- 6.1.1. Director Blancher liked the changes that were made at the last meeting and checked the legislation regarding the composition of the committee. We don't need to worry about the November 15th date, this refers to the initial set up for the committee in 2011. All other changes are fine and follow the regulation. The next step is to take the revised Terms of Reference to the Board for approval.
- 6.1.2. The last Multi-Year Planning meeting was April 18th; implementation will be a kick off in September for 2016-2020. Student trustees hosted the last Student Senate meeting of the year on April 19th where students came together centrally to meet and hold elections. Elected Student Trustees for 2016-17 are Elizabeth Marr from Waterford District High School, representing the South Schools, and Brett Neuman from Paris District High School, representing the North Schools. The Grand Erie games were held yesterday at Cayuga Secondary School with Senior Administration joining the event to see the opening ceremonies and experience the games. All students were excited to participate in the events which ended with a dance. Director Blancher brought greetings to the First Voice Conference at Polytechnic School, sponsored by the Ministry of Education. The Conference included all school boards in the London East Region. Director Blancher has been visiting secondary schools as she is very familiar with our elementary schools from her previous role as Superintendent. The Director enjoys spending time speaking with our Administrators, having a tour of the schools, speaking to students and staff, and presenting "25-year gifts". Annual EQAO grade 3 and 6 assessments are coming up in June, as well as the grade 9 math assessment. Director Blancher is very active on social media and welcomes you to check out her blog, Grand Connections – you can find the link here [Grand Connections | Director's Blog](#) ; or follow her on Twitter @brenblanch
7. GEPIIC Chair's Update B. Howard
- 7.1. Annual PIC Symposia – April 16, 2016
- 7.1.1. Brent Howard, Tom and Nancy Waldschmidt went to the Symposium. It was nice to have Mike McDonald, former Grand Erie Superintendent and Deb Mathews welcoming the parents to the Symposium. Tom shared that one of the sessions included conversations with parents from other boards over concerns of communication between the Board and the classroom and getting parents involved. Brent commented that we need to establish trust in order to create parent involvement. It takes time to gain parent involvement and we need to persevere and be patient; think of different routes ~ school council is just one branch of parent engagement. When parents are engaged, literacy goes up. The day was very organized and the smaller venue was enjoyed. There was a general concern of communication between PICs – the Ministry of Education is working on a way for all PIC's to be able to communicate with each other.
8. Planning, Discussion and Sharing S. McKillop
- 8.1. Orientation Session – April 6, 2016
- 8.1.1. We had 33 attendees who enjoyed the evening. Our barriers are time and location. Guests are interested in learning more about technology, networking, social media, and health and wellness. They would like more training opportunities in the future. If we use the Family of Schools (FOS) model, we could have (4) events in the different regions. FOS would meet to decide which event they would like to host. Concern is that the resources would be four times greater and create even more demand on



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Shawn's time. Historically, GEPIC's involvement was limited to the Chair bringing greetings, but GEPIC members could help facilitate breakout sessions to alleviate workload. Group discussion culminated in having (1) session in the fall with awareness and training, and to model an 'Open Space' format; then FOS could host their own 'Open Space' session during the year. 'Open Space' sessions run on the law of "Two Feet" so you can get up and leave if the session is not what you want and move to another session. They are no moderators and are low cost; only require a venue and some snacks! Parents will collaborate and choose the topics that are of interest to them. Here is a link to an example of an 'Open Space' session ~ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I7DwCI7j0Bg>. A lead principal from each FOS will be present to answer questions and submit a meeting summary back to GEPIC. The Fall Orientation will be held on October 5 with the goal of discussing grants, recruitments, and will model an "Open Space" forum with no speakers. School Council groups will then plan their own session in FOS groups. Principals will be informed at the September Administrator meetings.

- 8.2. Parent Reaching Out Grants 2016-2017 – final submission date is May 29, 2016
- 8.3. Beyond The Bake Sale
 - 8.3.1. The books will be handed out in September or at the October fall session.

9. Other Business

- 9.1. No new business

10. Dates 2016 - 2017

- 10.1. Proposed Dates: October 28, January 12, March 9, May 4