*Chair: Brent Howard Recorder: Valerie Slawich*

**Minutes**

1. **Welcome and Introductions** J.Forbeck

John Forbeck, Brent Howard, Rita Collver, Nancy Waldschmidt, Tom Waldschmidt, Jean Montgomery, Rachelle Lambert, Wayne Smith, Pam Barrowcliffe, Kathy Jones, Kate O’Donnell, Holly Knill, John Forbeck, Shawn McKillop

1. **GEPIC Slate of Members** J.Forbeck
   1. Election of Chair
      1. Brent Howard was nominated as Chair; Brent accepted the nomination and will serve as Chair of GEPIC for 2014-2015.
2. **Minutes**  B.Howard
   1. Approval of Minutes
      1. At the time of the GEPIC meeting, the name of the appointed Principal of Teeterville was Richard Leadbetter. There were some organizational changes in June and Andrea Smith was assigned the Principal. The minutes will be amended to reflect this correction.
      2. Jean Montgomery moved to approve the minutes as amended; Tom Waldschmidt seconded

~ carried

* 1. Business Arising from Minutes

None

1. **Financial Report**  J.Forbeck
   1. Final Report for 2013-14
      1. Unspent monies from 2013-2014 Pro Grants will be returned to the Ministry of Education in accordance with the Transfer Payment Agreement
   2. PROGrants for 2014-15
      1. Printing costs for the School Council Kits will be reflected in the next update
      2. The Board is investigating the Implementation of a Home/School Communication Tool for Elementary schools as well as Secondary schools. Therefore, the budget for Parent Engagement is reduced this year from $500 to $200 per school. The $300 in Parent Engagement funds per school will be utilized for this purchase.
2. **Presentation** Kate O’Donnell
   1. SEAC Presentation from Kate O’Donnell, SEAC Chair

Kate is the Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee and will investigate securing a parent representative from SEAC to sit on GEPIC. Kate also expressed the need for more parent representatives to sit on SEAC and would like to encourage any interested parents to contact her or come to a SEAC meeting to learn more. Reference the Grand Erie District School Board website under Programs, Special Education, [SEAC](http://www.granderie.ca/Parents/SpecialEducationAdvisoryCommittee/Pages/default.aspx) for contact information.

1. **Updates from the Board Table** E.Dixon/T.Waldschmidt

We had ninety-five parents attend the School Council Orientation on October 1, 2014 at WDHS. The Orientation was the best attended, with representation from all three counties. Tom shared congratulations to Brent on his appointment as GEPIC Chair.

1. **Director’s Update** J.Forbeck

The Blackboard is emailed out weekly by Shawn McKillop after the Monday evening Board meetings. It is a wonderful connection between the board room, school councils, and parents. We are having a presentation on October 20th around Advanced Placement courses for secondary students that can choose to take these courses without writing an exam. These courses enrich their learning and awards them advanced placement opportunities at University. Some schools are currently planning their launch while other schools have commenced their programs in September. PowerSchool is our newly adopted Student Information System (SIS) which has presented challenges for everyone this fall. All staff are diligently working to ensure the new SIS will exceed our organizational goals. Trustee elections will take place on October 27th, Rita Collver and Tom Waldschmidt have been acclaimed in their respective areas. There are four trustees that are retiring this year and there has been great interest in all areas. We encourage School Councils to become involved and discuss the importance of our Trustees with parents at the school level.

1. **GEPIC Chair’s Update** B.Howard
   1. Brent is looking forward to another busy year of engaging parents.
2. **Planning, Discussion and Sharing** S.McKillop
   1. Support School Councils
      1. The presence of a GEPIC member at school council meetings is seen as advantageous to our school councils. The GEPIC member could listen to concerns, provide feedback, or bring back ideas/issues to GEPIC. GEPIC will consider holding a future meeting in Haldimand County.
   2. School Council Leadership Workshops
      1. Themes could be Communication; Practical Strategies; How School Councils can support Student Achievement; Mental Health; Nutrition; Transition
      2. GEPIC has interest in having an “Educational Topic” before every GEPIC meeting and would like to offer live streaming or webinars for their interactive capabilities. Shawn will investigate options for live streaming and recorded webcasts for anytime viewing.
      3. Shawn will extend an invitation to GEPIC and School Councils to attend the Social Media session on November 19th.
   3. School Council Orientations
      1. We had the highest number of attendees: 95 parents from 36 schools attended. We are interested in knowing why some School Councils did not attend, perhaps there is something GEPIC can do to help
   4. GEPIC Funded Grant
      1. A rubric would help GEPIC assess and approve requests for funding through GEPIC. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting.
3. **School Council Updates – Activities/Learning Connections**

**Holly Knill-Horvath – Branlyn**

Movie night and the Christmas Bazaar plans are underway.

**Pam Barrowcliffe – North Ward**

The second Parent Council meeting was this week. We are focusing on Achievement, Engagement and Environment. For Environment, we have been focusing on the inside of the school building by showcasing student art. The grade 8 trip will be to Camp Keltic in Lionshead and will hold a parent information night October 23rd.

**Kathy Jones – VHSS**

The Parent Council is small, still in the forming stage, but very busy.

**Kathy Jones – Port Rowan**

We are gearing up for Christmas events; we have an active student’s council.

**Hilary Visheau– James Hillier**

We have an involved school council with 23 members, and just had our first meeting this month. Other events include Meet the Teacher barbeque. Over the last few years we have moved away from fundraising. We are landscaping the school yard; launched a Read-a-Thon to raise money for a need new projection screen – students are very enthusiastic and we have received donations from Scholastic and Toys R Us.

**Jean Montgomery – WDHS**

We are currently recruiting new members, but things going well. We won the men’s tug-of-war at the fair; Pumpkinfest is this weekend, which keeps students and community busy.

**Rochelle Lambert – Teeterville**

Our school council meets four times per year, just before the Home and School Council meetings; Home & School organizes the fundraising; our new principal is Andrea Smith; plans are underway for our annual Christmas dinner.

**Nancy Waldschmidt – Paris Central**

Very successful Meet the Teacher night with a magician for entertainment; working on a math night with PRO Grant funds.

**Nancy Waldschmidt – PDHS**

Nancy may be assuming the School Council Chair’s position; interested in an information night for parents around Special High School Major (SHSM) program and apprenticeship programs. Co-op placements were challenging but all students now have a spot. Graduation is November 14th and we will be looking for a new location for 2014-2015. We are moving away from the Sanderson Centre because of the rising cost of using this facility.

**Brent Howard – SCS**

Participated in the fair, finishing 3rd overall; Meet the Teacher is on October 22nd; Hallowe’en dance on October 30th; Junior awards and Commencement is on November 7th, this is the first time it’s being held in the fall.

1. **Other Business**
   1. None
2. Meeting was adjourned at 8:22 pm by Brent Howard.
3. **Dates 2014-2015**
   1. November 27, 2014; February 5, 2015, May 21, 2015