



Grand Erie Parent Involvement Committee

March 7, 2019, 6:30 pm
Dogwood Room, Waterford District High School, Waterford

MINUTES

Present: Chair Sarah Nichol, Brenda Blancher, Yvan Brochu, Barkev Poladian, Nancy Waldschmidt, Tom Waldschmidt, Jean Montgomery, John Harris, Kimberly Newhouse, Jen Smith, Eva Dixon

Regrets: Susan Gibson, Tiffany Knight-Leegstra

Recorder: Valerie Slawich

A - 1 Opening

B. Blancher

(a) Welcome

- Brenda welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

B - 1 Minutes

S. Nichol

(a) Approval of Minutes

- Tom Waldschmidt moved, and Jenn Smith seconded approval of the minutes.

(b) Business Arising from the Minutes

- None.

C - 1 Financial Report

B. Blancher

(a) GEPIC Budget

- The GEPIC budget remains unchanged.

D - 1 Updates from the Board Table

E. Dixon

(a) Eva Dixon commented that the board is engaged in budget planning.

E - 1 Director's Update

B. Blancher

We are at the point in the school year when planning for the next school year starts to gear up with staffing considerations and budget planning.

(a) **New Indigenous Student Trustee** – Allan St. Pierre, our first Indigenous Student Trustee, left Grand Erie to begin a post-secondary program at the end of January which meant he was no longer eligible to sit as a student trustee. According to our Bylaw on Student Trustees, the Board determines whether or not to fill the vacancy and it was decided that since half of the school year was still left, we would proceed. Through a by-election process, Ashley Catrysse, a Grade 12 student at Waterford DHS was acclaimed to fill the vacated position and she attended her first meeting this past Monday.

(b) **Pink Shirt Day** - Grand Erie schools and sites participated in Pink Shirt Day, part of an international movement to stand together against bullying and intimidation and other misuses of personal power. – February 27th – lots of Twitter activity

(c) **New Positions** – Indigenous Cultural Mentors at McKinnon Park and Hagersville Secondary Schools – interviews were held this past Monday. These are non-teaching positions with the mandate of supporting Indigenous student in secondary schools on their pathways to post-secondary – work, training, college or university. Only 17 school boards are part of this project.



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- (d) **Unprecedented Number of Inclement Weather School Closures** – 6 days the entire system was closed. Over the past 6 years, not counting this year, we have had an average of 1.5 closures per year.
- (e) **Ministry Announcements - Memorandum from the Deputy Minister of Education** February 28, 2019 to all Directors and Board Chairs:

In recognition that school boards are now preparing for the 2019-20 school year, we are being asked to exercise prudence in making hiring decisions in light of the upcoming provincial budget and recent consultation on class size and hiring practices.

The government will be carefully reviewing the feedback received in the coming weeks and will continue to engage boards and labour partners on any plans and next steps.

School boards are advised to defer the annual processes of filling vacancies for retirements and other leaves related to teachers and other staff until the Minister of Education provides an update to the sector on or before March 15th.

In June 2018 the Ontario government implemented a hiring freeze. The Ministry is suggesting that school boards may wish to institute similar measures.

The Senior Admin team has had one meeting regarding our staffing process which was prior to the DM's memorandum being released and we have another meeting scheduled this Friday. We are aware of the challenges we are likely going to be facing and we are being very cautious in decision making around our typical processes that happen this time in the school year.

F - 1 GEPIC Chair's Update

S. Nichol

- (a) GEPIC Grant Awards
 - Grant application cut-off was February 11th; successful applicants have been notified.

G - 1 Planning, Discussion and Sharing

K. Newhouse

- (a) Spring Event "Paul Davis" April 16, 2019 | 6:00 – 8:30 pm | NPCVS
 - <http://socialnetworkingsafety.net/> Smart Parenting and Social Media
 - light dinner 6:00 – 6:30 in the cafeteria with Paul Davis starting at 6:30
 - Media release went out today; Sarah will be doing a radio interview on 98.9 myFM Simcoe tomorrow; and written content was sent to Principals today for inclusion in school newsletters
- (b) Ideas for events in 2019-20
 - Cultural diversity
 - Parent engagement is difficult: what resources can we provide to reduce barriers for parents whether it be language, culture, financial, mental health?
 - Mental Health
 - Please think about ideas for the next meeting in May



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H - 1 Other Business

(a) None.

I - 1 Adjournment

Nancy Waldschmidt moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 pm; Tom Waldschmidt approved.

J - 1 Dates 2018-19

(a) May 2, 2019