



Grand Erie Parent Involvement Committee

October 24, 2019, 6:30 pm
Dogwood Room, Waterford District High School, Waterford

MINUTES

Present: Sarah Nichol, Brenda Blancher, Kimberly Newhouse, Eva Dixon, Yvan Brochu, Barkev Poladian, Kristy Pollard, Amber Gillen, Nancy Waldschmidt, Jean Montgomery, Tiffany Knight-Leegstra, Jen Smith, Rita Collver

Regrets: Susan Gibson

Recorder: Brenda Blancher

A - 1 Opening

B. Blancher

(a) Welcome

- Brenda welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

B - 1 GEPIC Slate of Members

(a) Election of Chair

- Jen Smith nominated Sarah Nichol. Sarah accepted the nomination. No other nominations were made so Sarah was acclaimed as GEPIC Chair for the 2019-20 school year. The group congratulated Sarah with a round of applause.

C - 1 Minutes

Chair

(a) Approval of Minutes – May 2, 2019

- It was pointed out that K. Newhouse is listed as the presenter of item 'G-1 Planning, Discussing, Sharing' but she had sent regrets for the meeting.
- Nancy Waldschmidt moved, and Jean Montgomery seconded approval of the minutes.

(b) Business Arising from the Minutes

- None.

D - 1 Financial Report

B. Blancher

(a) GEPIC Budget

- The GEPIC budget this year is \$9,405, which includes the \$5000 base grant and \$0.17/student. Each school also receives \$500 for parent engagement as noted in the Grand Erie School Council Guide 2019-20.

(b) Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grants for 2019-20

- B. Blancher reviewed changes to the process for this year. No longer an application process by schools but instead a predetermined amount allocated to each school board. Grand Erie received \$16,150.46 for PRO this year. To compare, last year we received \$30,599 to support 31 projects across Grand Erie District School Board under the former application by school process.
- Discussion took place around how we might use this funding – there are clear parameters around the spending; however, the parameters are fairly close to those we used to allocate GEPIC grants in the past. It was decided to add this discussion later in the Agenda.



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E - 1 Updates from the Board Table

E. Dixon

- (a) E. Dixon shared that she had many emails prior to the Norfolk Fair. It all worked out. R. Collver shared that she also received many calls and emails and she commended the senior administrative team for listening to the community and for their willingness to change course for the benefit of the community. R. Collver also thanked the community for sharing their concerns.

R. Collver gave kudos to all who organized the School Council Orientation on October 17th and shared that she felt it was an excellent opportunity for networking and sharing among School Council members.

F - 1 Director's Update

B. Blancher

Our Fall secondary school commencement ceremonies continue, kicked off with the first ones taking place on October 10th, and finishing up on November 2nd. These are always exciting and rewarding events – Trustees and members of Senior Administration participate in these ceremonies. Awards assemblies have also taken place – honouring achievement. A number of fall sports – slow pitch, soccer, cross country, football took place in September and October. Grand Erie recognized Orange Shirt Day on September 30th.

Some highlights this fall:

- **Approvals to proceed on the Hagersville Child Care Centre and Central Elementary in Brantford** – originally shared with GEPIC last October but then all Approvals to Proceed were put on hold. Recently that hold was lifted for us and we will be proceeding.
- **Student Recognition Nominations**
Nominations are now open for Grand Erie's Student Recognition awards program. Students are honoured for outstanding achievement in one of four areas: arts, athletics, academics or community leadership.

Announcements from the Ministry

Policy/Program Memorandums

PPM128 revised – Provincial Code of Conduct – updated to include information on the use of cellphones during instructional time

PPM158 revised – School Board Policies on Concussion – to include establishment of concussion code of conduct and annual review – in our revised policy SO28 – we included a *Player Code of Conduct* in the resource guide – we will need to review the PPM requirements against this to see if there are further changes required

PPM162 NEW – on exemption from instruction related to the Human Development and Sexual Health expectations which will require us to develop a procedure that allows parents to exempt their child from instruction of the sexual health education component – we will need a procedure in place by November 30th



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PPM163 NEW– Service Animals in Schools – and our procedure needs to be in place by January 2020

G - 1 GEPIC Chair's Update

Chair

(a) GEPIC Grant Summary 2018-19

- Spreadsheet included in the package, it shows those schools who were unable to use the grants for a variety of reasons. One major issue was because the PRO Grant information arrived so late last year, schools applied for GEPIC grants for the same purpose and then the PRO Grants came in. Also, some events were scheduled on inclement weather days and had to be cancelled. Some discussion around looking at schools over the past few years who have been allocated funding but have not used it and it was confirmed that the grant subcommittee does look at this data as part of their consideration.

(b) GEPIC Grant Application and Deadline

- Discussion around combining the PRO Grant allocation with GEPIC Grant funding. K. Newhouse spoke about the guest speaker who presented in the spring last year – Paul Davis on social media. We received great feedback on Mr. Davis' presentation.
- It was noted that it does seem to be the same schools who apply for grants – might be a need for the GEPIC members to encourage School Council Chairs from other schools to apply.

H - 1 Planning, Discussion and Sharing

K. Newhouse

(a) Reflection: School Council Orientation October 17, 2019

- K. Newhouse presented the feedback from the session. S. Nichol summarized the feedback to inform directions for events this year
- R. Collver asked what guest speakers usually charge – K. Newhouse shared that Paul Davis charged \$900. – we received a discount; however, it does depend on the speaker and fees can range from free to several thousand dollars
- It's important to note that there may also be travel costs which can't be paid by PRO Grants but could be paid from our GEPIC funding
- A lot of discussion around possible speakers
- B. Poladian suggested that we keep in mind the Multi-Year Plan when planning topics; he also suggested that we poll School Councils across Grand Erie; dealing with mental health is a common theme in terms of what families are dealing with
- S. Nichol shared that we did survey in the past but did not get a lot of feedback
- K. Newhouse – safe schools, anti-bullying, well-being and mental health, social media and equity are all hot topics
- K. Newhouse also suggested something different – like the trades showcase event North Park Collegiate organized and presented last year
- T. Knight-Leegstra suggested that with the amount of money we have, we could do two events – perhaps one for trades and one for mental health
- T. Knight-Leegstra also shared an idea for a family event with an author – ties into well-being – the Minimalists – Joshua and Ryan



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- Y. Brochu gave an overview of what North Park did last year – trades, colleges, panels, guest speakers
- Need to decide on a spring event or events and what it will cost and then take the amount off the top of the combination of PRO Grants and GEPIC Grants to determine what we have to allocate to schools
- Communicate to schools that grants are open and the maximum amount they can apply for – set up the subcommittee
- Suggested we try for 3 events –and offer a different topic in each area of the board
- Committee agreed to a maximum of \$7,500 in total to fund any spring events
- Topics – well-being/mental health, equity, pathways beyond secondary school – timeframe is March (after March Break), April and May – check with speakers to see if they are willing to be recorded to be shared out after

Moved by N. Waldschmidt and seconded by A. Gillen that up to \$7,500 be allocated towards up to 3 GEPIC spring events. Motion approved.

Moved by T. Knight-Leegstra and seconded by K. Pollard that \$17,000 be allocated towards GEPIC grants. Motion approved.

- Deadline for GEPIC grants will be Friday December 6th and the subcommittee will meet on Saturday December 14th.

- (b) Ideas for PRO Grants Funds in 2019-20
- See discussion above

I - 1 Other Business

- (a) Cellphones and other Personal Mobile Devices in Schools
- B. Blancher reviewed the Ministry direction.
- (b) Parent's Guide to the Provincial Code of Conduct
- B. Blancher referenced this document provided in the Agenda package.
- (c) SO19 Updates
- B. Blancher highlighted a section of the Grand Erie Policy – SO19 – Privacy and Information Management.

Other Business

S. Nichol received information from Encounters Canada – K. Newhouse suggested Sarah forward this information to her and it will be distributed as appropriate.

Adjournment

Moved by N. Waldschmidt and A. Gillen that the meeting be adjourned at 8:39 pm. Motion approved.

J - 1 Dates 2019-20

- (a) January 16, 2020; March 5, 2020; May 14, 2020