

Parent Involvement Committee March 17, 2008 at J.D. Hogarth Public

In attendance: Jerry Diamond, Elaine Capes, Kay Elford, Neta Gear, Janet Hofstra, Martha Rogers, Anna Spiteri

Item	Information	Action	Person(s) Responsible
1. Welcome & approval of previous minutes and present agenda	Elaine suggested establishing a consistent format for the minutes. Anna requested strategic planning be on next meeting's agenda.		
2. Announcements	<p>*Everyday Hero Award: nomination forms can be found on UGDSB's website (deadline March 31)</p> <p>*Parent Information evening entitled "How to Successfully Interact with Your School" brought to parents by Children's Mental Health Support Group of Wellington</p>		For more information contact Janet or Kay
3. Report on UGDSB Pro-Grant Results	<p>Kay Elford presented: (see attachment)</p> <p>-interesting facts; UGDSB submitted 44 proposals – 35 were funded, an 80% approval vs. 33% from last year</p> <p>-reviewed the grant process; on-line submission</p> <p>*Notably: certain costs were deemed ineligible e.g. capital items, social events, furniture, resources for children, staff salaries</p> <p>-qualities of a funded proposal SC. & Regional</p> <p>-recommendations/feedback to Parent Engagement Office</p> <p>Elaine adds asking for an increase in the grant money limit to \$2500, up from the current \$1000</p> <p>Anna adds application submission timelines remain insufficient and suggests a gathering of councils in June to begin the thinking process, ideas generating as well as schools can connect to submit as a group & offer a computer lab/ fall workshop.</p> <p>Anna Spiteri presented our Regional PRO- Grant Result</p> <p>-Spoke with Wanda Percival as to why we were declined</p> <p>-regional grants were reviewed by an outside agency</p> <p>-thought workshop topics were too passive</p> <p>Considerations For Next Year:</p> <p>*more detail and further descriptions and clarification</p> <p>* workshops preferred over full day conferences</p> <p>*name speakers & outline what 'they' would talk about</p> <p>*be specific & detail how costs were formulated</p> <p>* highlight geography as a barrier and additional costs</p> <p>*babysitting & transportation costs were favourably regarded.</p> <p>*examples of approved regional ideas: Reading & Writing Strategies/ Including or drawing the Board in/ Registry of parent resources</p> <p>Kay points out that last year's unspent school grant monies have been carried forward to be spent by Sept. 30/08 or funds will default to PIC.</p>	<p>-Contact Schools receiving partial grant funding warning of *notable</p> <p>-provide feedback to Parent Engagement Office</p>	Kay Elford
4. Summary of "Meet Education Minister Kathleen Wynne" Town Hall Meeting February 20 at Centennial	Janet Hofstra summarized Kathleen Wynne's core priorities: 1. High levels of student achievement (going deeper & wider on literacy & numeracy) 2. Reducing gaps in student achievement 3. Increasing public confidence in publicly funded education (greater two way engagement with public, strengthening schools as communities)		

	<p>Two Questions asked of the audience:</p> <p>1. Suggestions for closing the gap? Responses include children readiness for entry, nutrition, more teacher training/equipping for special needs, more psych. testing & learning disability testing, more mentoring programs, IEP training, more money for special education.</p> <p>2. What do you need from the government to restore system confidence? Responses included conveying the privilege of education, ensuring we don't take the system for granted, consequences for bullying, whether mandates are effective ie. Safe & Inclusive Schools as well as, whether the PEO and the Provincial Parent Board is being responsive/ supportive to Parent Involvement Committees.</p>		
5. Share School Councils' Input (Challenges, needs & best practices)	<p>Elaine Capes began the discussion by reading feedback emails. Comments included concern about redundancy with regard to communications/support. The effectiveness of Dufferin Family of Schools was highlighted and concerns that the PIC "lives & dies at the whim of the ministry". Cheryl Hincks noted the geographical barriers that have limited family of schools. Anna concurred referencing the highschool's level of parent involvement and suggested a re-educating campaign with high visibility to draw parents in and convey the benefits for them.</p> <p>Elaine's second email response was with regard to 'what school councils should spend their money on'. The question was seeking clear spending guidelines. Martha Rogers spoke about the have & the have not schools when it comes to school council funds and the disadvantage some schools find themselves in. The arguments for and against capital project spending were discussed. Jerry Diamond noted the importance of involving principals who can then check with the Board's Planning Dept and/or Operations.</p>		
6. Considerations for Spring Workshop	<p>Kay then read John Gray's input. His suggestion of quarterly updates, perhaps professional presented, from the PIC was positively batted around the table. Elaine Capes suggested outlining the complete structure from the ministry, to our Board, all the way to the teachers and students in the classrooms. Anna added important issues could be presented. Neta Gear recommended outlining criteria for student success and Cheryl mentioned that parents often feel that they don't have a role to play and through a PIC publication we could convince them otherwise.</p> <p>Talk of spending money on this newsletter was considered as well as, a spring workshop.</p>		
7. Budget Summary	Carried forward to April meeting.		
8. Adjournment	Next meeting: Wednesday, April 16th		