



We're Putting Wellness First



We're Turning Innovation into Action



We're Committed to Collaboration

Parent Involvement Committee Meeting Minutes – May 9th, 2019

1. Approval of Agenda – approved
2. Associate Superintendent of Safe & Caring Schools Scot Gillam welcomed everyone to the meeting.
3. Associate Superintendent of Safe & Caring Schools Update (Mr. Scot Gillam)

a) Skills Competition – Toronto Congress Centre – May 6-8

Elementary (May 6) and Secondary (May 7 & 8) students who qualified in the Limestone Competition traveled to Toronto to compete in the Ontario Skills Competition.

Results – Elementary

Bronze – Lego Robotics - Grade 7/8 – L'Acadie

Bronze – Lego Robotics – Grade 4-6 - Welborne

Results - Secondary

Bronze – Liam Allford – Auto Body Collision Repair – NDSS

b) Education Week – Mental Health Week – May 6-10th, 2019

Lots going on to celebrate Education Week and Mental Health week. LDSB has shared many of the activities via Twitter and the website. Celebration of Dance also took place at 3 sites this week with hundreds of elementary students taking part. Dances took place at Fairfield ES, Loughborough PS and Fort Henry.

c) Track and Field

Most elementary schools are holding Track during the weeks of May 13 and May 21. District meets will follow as well as the LDSB Track Meet.

d) EQAO

Grade 3 and 6 testing will take place during the May 21- June 3 timeframe. Information regarding information on this will be coming home from individual schools.

e) Field Trips

Time of the year when many classrooms engage in year end activities/trips/excursions. These can be celebratory in nature but should still have curriculum connections and learning at the core of their foundation.

f) Health Unit Update

The research paper is almost ready for sharing and will be available in the Fall.

Limestone District School Board is situated on traditional territories of the Anishinaabe & Haudenosaunee.

g) Spring Symposium Update

Unfortunately the Spring Symposium was canceled due to a main speaker being unavailable. Presently, Jamil Jivani is booked for Saturday, October 5th, 2019 as a main speaker. Assoc. Superintendent Gillam still looking for other speakers for the “safe spaces” event.

4. Discussion Items – Co Chair Sabena Islam then led the group thru two discussion items.

Budget Submission Conversations

Several PIC members spoke to the group about the issues they would like included in the PIC submission. They included a plea from Jennifer Kehoe (Molly Brant) to maintain staffing levels in the classroom – both teaching and support staff – and if any savings found, to increase staffing if at possible. Hillary Wollis (LCVI) echoed this sentiment and included information to try and find efficiencies by working with partner organizations like Public Health and the City of Kingston. Courtney Bush (Winston) brought forward the idea of ensuring that both staffing and special education were priorities in the budget – this was echoed by almost everyone else in the room. Other ideas from unidentified sources including ensuring equity in schools that have students attend Challenge or LEAP and securing Gould Lake and other experiential opportunities for students. Finally, Christine Innocent (Ecole Sir John A) provided a comprehensive list of budget considerations – these were forwarded to her local Trustee as well.

Budget Submission to Trustee Elliott

Dear Trustee Elliott,

Last night, the Parent Involvement Committee discussed many opportunities for the Limestone District School Board’s budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The following were determined as budget priorities by Parent Involvement Committee members:

1. Maintain or increase staffing levels in schools
2. If cost savings must be achieved, ensure they are as far away from the classroom as possible. In other words, students should not see the direct impact of these cost savings in their day to day lives at school.
3. Maintain experiential programs (for example Gould Lake, Focus Programs, SHSM, etc.)
4. Look at the transportation budget for efficiencies. Work with the City of Kingston to enable urban high school students to use city buses as much as possible instead of school buses. Have more efficient routes available for for the school arrival and departure times,
 - o Investigate at actual student school bus utilization vs those entitled to school bus use.
 - o Examine the monopoly contract with Triboard.
5. Factor in the utilization of “Rainy Day Funds” into budget.
6. Scrutinize the expenditures on consultants and contractors. Referencing #2, these are the furthest away from students. Efficiencies can definitely be found in these costs.

We ask that serious consideration is given to this list during the budgeting process. Should you have any questions or require clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Focus Group Discussions – Elementary & Secondary

The entire PIC group identified that they, as a group, are very concerned about the cuts to education announced by the provincial government and the unknown effects at the time of the meeting on Limestone Schools.

The purpose of this focus group discussion was to brainstorm concerns at the elementary and secondary panels due to the cuts and then propose some actions PIC could undertake. However, without specific information on how the cuts will impact Limestone, which were not readily available due to the Ministry's timelines, it was difficult to formulate any actions at the meeting.

Secondary School Group

Concerns:

- physical classroom space - new school won't be able to accommodate more students as square footage is a significantly less
- class ratios different between high schools and courses they offer
 - schools with ESL, School to Community, shops, etc. will need to maintain the lower ratios for these classes, leading to other classes, with already larger classes sizes getting larger
- maintaining professional supports
- summer school being all e-learning
- funds for students applying to post-secondary

Possible solutions/suggestions:

- collaboration between schools to offer courses in clusters so students could go to another school for half a day or a semester
 - KSS andLCVI, Bayridge and Frontenac - students can go between campuses via Kingston transit
- creative solutions with course offerings
 - webinar style learning - if a course is offered at one LDSB school but not others, students could dial into a platform such as gotomeeting and be able to hear the teacher and see their slides. Could also have a live feed from the school with the teacher so students can watch and participate online.
- the Ministry needs to give LDSB flexibility in how they can allocate funds
- provide teachers with more training if there are cuts to professional supports
- schools/the board need to be creative with space utilization
 - areas for revenue generation need to be examined
 - can increase accessibility for students if services on site ie dentist, doctor, etc.

Elementary Schools Group:

- need a united message to the government
- what does this look like?

- need a specific list
- we need to know specifics from LDSB
- meeting with MPPs
- LDSB is represented in 3 ridings
- social media presence - Facebook, Twitter
- we need to determine our objectives
- Ministry letters - how many SACs have sent letters
- review goals of PIC
 - independent thinking
 - group thinking
- best mode of action? ADVOCATE
 - based on contexts?
 - collective PIC group
 - individual SACs
- need to let our trustees know
 - PIC group - unite
 - school group - local
 - individually - local
- filter information
- LDSB - large geographical area
- how can we represent everyone?

- align with unions
- Facebook - Ontario Families for Public Education

Meeting dates for next year

October 3, 2019

October 5, 2019 – Fall Symposium – “Safe Spaces”

November 7, 2019

February 20, 2020

May 7, 2020

The meeting was adjourned at approx. 8 pm.