

Parent Involvement Committee Meeting Minutes – 24 October 2024

Public Meeting

Roll Call:

Trustees:	Staff:
R. Hutcheon B. Godkin (regrets)	S. Gillam, Superintendent P. Gollogly, Assoc. Superintendent (regrets) A. Grange, Communications M. Christopher, IT
Invitees:	Recorder and Producer:
V. Wood, Outgoing Co-Chair and Sydenham HS C. Bevens-Leblanc, Co-Chair G. Monajemi, Amherstview PS M. Rickey, Bayridge PS J. King, Bayridge SS and Truedell PS A. Billings, Cataraqui Woods ES R. Patrick, Centennial PS S. Patrick, Clarendon Central PS B. Betts, Collins Bay PS M. Foster, JR Henderson and Module de l'Acadie V. Venditti, KSS/Vanier C. Innocente, LCVI/Calvin Park PS E. Offshack, EVS S. Bradley, Joyceville PS M. Valente, LSS M. Hudson, KLC J. Kehoe, Molly Brant ES M. Richmond, Odessa PS M. Carrier, Perth Road PS K. Leclair, Selby PS S. Gratto, Storrington PS C. Glavin, W.J. Holsgrove J. Clayton, W.J. Holsgrove (Alt.) L. Lollar, KFL&A Health Unit	E. Smith, Administrative Assistant

1. CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Wood provided the Acknowledgement of Territory.

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“The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee. We acknowledge their enduring presence on this land, as well as the presence of Métis, Inuit, and other First Nations from across Turtle Island. We honour their cultures and celebrate their commitment to this land.”

Co-Chair Wood called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the first Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) meeting for 2024/25 school year. She further informed that the meeting is being recorded and that it will be publicly available for six weeks, noting that all participants will be visible and heard.

Co-Chair Wood informed that Superintendent Scot Gillam is in attendance on behalf of Assoc. Supt. Gollogly. She also informed that Trustee Robin Hutchinson is attending on behalf of Trustee Robert Godkin.

Co-Chair Wood informed that she is stepping down from the position of Co-Chair as it would be her third year and noted that this creates a vacant Co-Chair position. She congratulated Crystal Bevens-Leblanc as elected second year Co-Chair.

She further provided an overview of what PIC is. PIC an important board level advisory body that operates as a direct link between parents and a board's Director of Education and Trustees.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

2.1 Adopted with amendment to add an update of Indigenous Education Committee (IEC).

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

3.1 Three declarations of conflict of interest were noted.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 PIC Meeting Minutes of 4 April 2024 were approved as amended.

4.2 PIC Meeting Minutes of 2 May 2024 were approved as amended.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

5.1 The updated PIC bylaws were attached to the PIC meeting invite for review. The floor was opened for any concerns, amendments or deletions regarding the updated bylaws.

J. Kehoe requested that sections 16 and 17 of the bylaws be revisited for language considerations. She expressed concern about being removed from the PIC emailing list, as the official PIC Rep, without prior knowledge, despite being endorsed by the School Council. It was suggested that the bylaws should include a provision to prevent the removal of an existing PIC Rep without consent or a conversation.

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Co-Chair Bevens-Leblanc clarified that the committee was looking at approving the actual bylaws that were sent out with the revisions that were considered last year. She further explained how the bylaws review process works and that it is done once a year.

PIC Bylaws (2024) were approved as amended (with last year's changes).

C. Innocente highlighted concerns regarding the distribution list for PIC communications. It was noted that many people have been randomly excluded from the distribution list at different times. This needs to be documented in the minutes for immediate attention. The committee acknowledged the communication issues and agreed to address them promptly to ensure all member receive necessary information.

6. EDUCATION SERVICES UPDATE

6.1 Co-Chair Wood welcomed everyone and provided her update:

- On September 18th, the Ministry of Education held a special meeting for PIC and parent engagement leads. The meeting provided an overview of recent revisions to policy programme Memorandum 128, the provincial Code of Conduct, and school board codes of conduct, with a focus on new provisions around vaping and cell phone use in schools. It also introduced new wrap-around supports for student mental health and parent engagement
- The Ministry allocated \$1.5 million for school boards to work with their PICs to run local parent information and awareness campaigns about excessive cell phone use and vaping. All related information, agenda, overview, and PowerPoints will be forwarded to all reps and committee members.
- Co-Chair Wood will distribute the information and materials from the Ministry of Education meeting to all PIC Representatives.
- The Co-Chair Wood announced the transition of leadership, thanking everyone for the opportunity to volunteer and represent them. The lead was then passed on to Crystal Bevens-Leblanc.
- Co-Chair Bevens Leblanc informed that the School Council Chairs Workshop (online) is currently being organized. S. Bradley has graciously offered to host the workshop again. The tentative date is either 4 or 7 November 2024. Final date will be confirmed and communicated to School Council Chairs.
- At the end of the meeting, Co-Chair Bevens-Leblanc provided information on what to expect at the next meeting (presentation of Kingston Anti Racism Working Group, creation of collaboration meeting groups).

6.2 Trustee Hutcheon provided Trustee update:

- The Director performance appraisal process, which has become an annual requirement due to ministry regulations, is ongoing. A third party has been engaged to conduct a 360-performance

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appraisal. A workshop was held to explain the process, and feedback from families will be gathered in the coming months.

- Trustee Judith Brown has recently passed away, and her replacement will be selected from the runners-up of the previous election in the next few weeks.
- Trustee Maracle has resigned as the Indigenous Trustee. Jamie Maracle will join as the new Indigenous Trustee for the next two years starting from the next meeting in November.
- The committee selection and the vote for Chair and Vice Chair will take place in November.

Discussion followed centered around the process of appointing an Indigenous Trustee from the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte. It was clarified that the board does not have control over the selection process, as it is the responsibility of the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte under the tuition agreement. The appointed Indigenous Trustee represents all Indigenous students within the board, and there is no difference in the role between the appointed and elected trustees. There was also a follow-up question regarding the cost of a by-election, which was estimated to be between \$175,000 and \$200,000 for the Limestone board. Additionally, J. Kehoe asked for a description of the roles of elected versus appointed trustees for the benefit of new members. It was reiterated that the roles are the same, and the appointment process is governed by provincial regulations.

6.3 Superintendent Gillam provided Board Update on behalf of Assoc. Supt. Gollgoly.

- Update began with a heartfelt acknowledgment of the passing of Trustee Judith Brown on 11 October 2024. Trustee Brown was celebrated for her groundbreaking work, passion, moral compass, and dedication to continuous improvement. She was admired by all who knew or worked with her, and the Board of Trustees and Limestone staff extended their sincere condolences to her family, friends, and the students and schools she served.
- The Fall 2024 United Way fundraising campaign was highlighted, emphasizing the importance of supporting the campaign due to ongoing economic challenges, housing costs, and food security concerns. Limestone is a proud contributor to this annual campaign, which aims to support vulnerable children, youth, and families in the region.
- The 2023-2024 EQAO results were discussed, noting that Limestone saw Good to Excellent improvement in 6 out of 8 provincial EQAO measures, with slight declines in two. The focus on improving teaching and learning in classrooms is critical to both provincial and board priorities and is integral to ensuring that each Limestone student has the skills and confidence to pursue their chosen pathways through their K-12 years.
- LDSB's collaboration with KFL&A Public Health was also mentioned, with efforts to create comprehensive educational materials on the dangers of vaping. This includes posters, lesson plans, parent resources, and videos. Additionally, LDSB is piloting the installation of vape detectors in two secondary schools to monitor and curb vaping on school premises. LDSB is seeking parent engagement

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ideas from PIC, SEAC, and IEC regarding concerns about screen time and vaping to help inform families of the potential harm. These initiatives aim to enhance both the physical and digital well-being of students, ensuring a safer and more focused educational environment.

- Supt. Gillam read Director’s letter to PIC of 8 October 2024 which was in response to the motion and recommendation on Live Streaming and Retaining PIC Meetings for public accessibility of 8 May 2024 (also included under Correspondence).
- C. Innocente asked for clarification as to how the request went from “permanently keeping it available” to six weeks and, secondly, status of the request for static camera focused on the front of the room. Thirdly, she clarified that they did not request the meeting link to be available only to participants. Instead, they asked for the link to be left accessible to anyone searching the minutes, without requiring special knowledge about the board or jumping through hoops. She expressed curiosity about how the idea of restricting access to participants only came about. Lastly, she clarified her motion regarding the availability of a meeting link. She apologized for not being specific enough and explained the difference between a publicly available link to watch the meeting and a link to participate. The intent was to ensure that anyone could watch the meeting without needing special knowledge or being on a special list.
- Co-Chair Bevens-Leblanc asked if the recording of PIC meetings is being retained in the official archives beyond the six weeks, even if the link is not available to public.
- Discussion followed concerning previously mentioned vaping and screen time and parent engagement in connection with these. Clarification was requested as to how the schools were selected to participate in the pilot project for vaping detectors, specifically what process was used.
- Supt. Gillam noted these questions/comments.

6.4 2SLGBTQIA+ Focus Group Update:

- Co-Chair Bevens-Leblanc mentioned that S. Bradley has stepped back due to another commitment, and the Co-Chair has resumed chairing the committee until a new chair is found. They are seeking new members for the committee, welcoming not only parents or caregivers but also allies who have contributed significantly over the years. Suggestions for reaching out to parents, caregivers, and allies are welcomed.
- The committee plans to approach Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) to host four events throughout the year. Trustee Elliott volunteered to help make connections with GSAs, aiming to directly engage with students and offer support.

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- A shout-out was given to J. Kehoe for her efforts at the Pride Community Fair, where she volunteered on short notice and engaged with attendees. Postcards with general PIC information and Focus Group's specific QR code for joining the mailing list were created and will be distributed at the next PIC meeting.
- Lastly, the speaker mentioned the 2SLGBTQIA+ group, emphasizing the importance of involving more people in the committee's activities.

6.5 Indigenous Education Committee (IEC) Update:

- Supt. Gillam informed that the initial meeting took place in September, and Jamie Maracle will be welcomed as the new Co-facilitator. Four Indigenous family nights were planned, but the September night was canceled due to low response. To address this, future events will be drop-in only, with the next one scheduled for 18 December at the Kingston East Community Centre, celebrating the Winter Solstice. Subsequent events will be on 19 March 2025 at the Kingston Community Health Centre, focusing on Wahta teachings, and on 11 June 2025 at the Rideau Heights Community Centre, featuring an Indigenous fair for students and their families.
- New team members include G. Mundell, who has rejoined as the elementary land-based Indigenous education teacher, and P. Vanderholst, who has joined as the First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) curriculum support and Indigenous grad coach. His role involves supporting secondary level courses, providing resources, professional development, and ensuring community involvement in classrooms. Additionally, P.V. will support self-identified secondary students at risk of not graduating by identifying and addressing potential barriers, both cultural and school-based.
- Gillianne Mundell is focusing on supporting teachers with land-based learning, particularly in Math. She has been working with teachers at Gould Lake and at larger sites with Indigenous students, including Southview, JR Henderson, and Maple. Every Friday, she spends the day at JG Simcoe, known as "Fire Fridays," working in classrooms and planning events for students and their families.
- The Indigenous student leadership circle has been reinitiated, with over 30 students participating. This year, 20 students will receive a credit in student leadership through the Ministry of Education's Recognition of Experiential Learning for Credit (RELC) program. The course includes Kanyen'keha (Mohawk) learning in collaboration with the Kingston Native Centre and Languages Nest. Students will engage in self-reflections and community teachings, such as working with deer or moose hide in the winter. The goal is to provide culturally sustainable and relevant learning opportunities, increasing students' knowledge and connection to Indigenous leadership, initiatives, histories, cultures, and perspectives. Language programming is also up and running, with Tahnee Bennett teaching Kanyen'kéha across the district, and a new Anishinaabemowin teacher has been finalized.

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- Indigenous Student Leadership Circle – great turn out this year thanks to our staff’s commitment to supporting this initiative – lots of meetings, including a family night and over 30 Indigenous secondary students attended a beading workshop last week.
- Danka Brewer continues teaching Algonquin at GREC. Supt. Gillam concluded the report and welcomed any questions.
- J. Kehoe asked who are the parents representatives that were chosen to be on IEC? When can the Indigenous parents expect the expression of interest as amended by the terms of reference to be out for the September 2024 school year? Supt. Gillam responded that the names of the parent representatives are listed in the minutes available on the board’s website under Indigenous Education. There are six parent/caregiver representatives. He explained that membership was confirmed in the spring meeting as per the terms of reference, and all members were willing to continue for this year. A similar process will take place in the spring of this year, and if any representatives wish to step down, a new expression of interest will be sent out for the vacancies. J. Kehoe requested that the names be provided at the next PIC meeting; after discussion, it was agreed that the names of parent/caregiver representatives will be included in these Minutes (Tasha Wallace, Garnet Armand Ruffo, Kaycie Brant, Nathan Cheechoo, Martha Kataquapit, Alison Billings).

7. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 and 7.2 Co-Chair Bevens-Leblanc noted that Supt. Gillam read the letter from the Director and the matter was discussed earlier in the meeting.

8. ASSOCIATION UPDATES

8.1 KFL&A Public Health Update:

- L. Lollar noted that detailed update will be included in the Minutes.
- She highlighted that a public health nurse typically attends these meetings to give updates, and she has been doing this for the past few years. She discussed the ongoing routine immunisation clinics for grade seven students, which include vaccines for hepatitis B, meningococcal C, and HPV. Links for making immunisation appointments and recording immunizations will be included in the Minutes.
- L. Lollar also talked about the current respiratory season, noting similarities to last year with flu and COVID-19 occurring simultaneously. She emphasized the importance of staying up to date with vaccinations and mentioned that public health is vaccinating children under five who do not have access to a primary care provider. Pharmacies are also providing vaccines, primarily for high-risk individuals.
- Additionally, L. Lollar mentioned that Grade 5 and 9 active passes have been distributed to schools, allowing students to access designated facilities for free. She provided information on the collaboration with school board around PPM 128, which involves cell phone restrictions and substance

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use, including vaping. Posters and infographics are being created to educate students on the benefits of less screen time and the dangers of vaping. Posters will be included with minutes.

- L. Lollar noted that PIC members have shown interest in getting involved in the process, and public health is supporting this initiative. She emphasized the importance of parent input and mentioned that further discussions will take place in an upcoming meeting.
- L. Lollar discussed various initiatives and updates. She mentioned that public health nurses work closely with youth workers in schools, providing student engagement displays on topics like social media and online kindness. Regarding the anti-vaping policy, there is a program for grade 6 educators that includes presentations and follow-up activities. An engagement display on vaping is also available for schools. While they don't counsel students one-on-one, they recommend the Quash app for those wanting to quit vaping.
- L. Lollar noted that the initially purchased vape detectors were not on the approved list, so new ones have been ordered. Advocacy around pouches for vaping is ongoing, and parent interest in this is being addressed. Evaluations on the vape detectors' effectiveness and impact will be conducted, with results shared across Ontario.
- Lastly, L. Lollar mentioned the availability of a parenting phone line and a Facebook page for student health inquiries and updates. More detailed information will be included in the Minutes.
- Discussion followed regarding “pouches” and vaping detectors.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Elections for PIC Co-Chair position – no election is required because Virginia Venditti did nominate, and the committee is very excited to acclaim her as the new Co-Chair.

9.2 Parents concerns regarding the EA shortages- The discussion revolves around concerns regarding the shortage of Educational Assistants (EAs) and its impact on students. S. Bradely raised the issue, emphasizing that the need of EA support affects not just her family but potentially many others. Superintendent Gillam was present to address these concerns and take note of them for follow-up. S. Bradley shared a personal situation to highlight the broader issue. Her child, who requires EA support as outlined in official documents, faced a situation where the EA was unavailable, leaving the family to decide whether the child could attend school without the necessary support. This situation caused significant anxiety and highlighted the critical role EAs play in supporting students with various needs, from behavioral regulation to academic accommodations.

S. Bradely requested data on EA or student support gaps, including how many students should have an EA but do not. She suggested that if the PIC wants to make it official committee business, it would be beneficial. Superintendent Gillam acknowledged the request and indicated a willingness to provide answers, even if not immediately available.

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Supt. Gillam discussed the ongoing issue of a shortage of Educational Assistants (EAs). He emphasized that this shortage is a significant concern and has worsened over time. To address this, they have been hiring casual EAs to ensure there are enough replacements for those who are off for valid reasons. He also mentioned that absenteeism rates among staff have remained high since COVID-19, particularly among younger EAs with young children. This issue is not confined to EAs but also affects teachers, custodians, and bus drivers. He assured that they are doing their best to combat this problem. In situations where an EA cannot be replaced, the administration works with parents, caregivers, and students to ensure the best possible outcome, sometimes bringing in emergency personnel who are well-trained and familiar with the students to mitigate any risks. However, the goal is to have enough fully trained replacements, and they are continuing to build up this workforce.

Supt. Gillam discussed the number of students without an EA and the shared support model they use. He mentioned that while he doesn't have the exact data at hand, the number of EAs in the system has been growing year by year. This year, they added over 300 EAs, more than 50 short-term EAs for students with new or crisis needs, and 45 EAs through Jordan's Principal, a federally funded program supporting status student who are Indigenous.

Supt. Gillam emphasized that simply adding more staff isn't always the best idea. Instead, they focus on capacity building for existing staff, including teachers and other support personnel. He noted that the decision on how many students should have an EA is made at the school level, based on fluctuating student needs. The goal is to provide targeted support to create as much independence as possible for students, though this isn't always feasible for those with complex needs.

He also mentioned that the board spent \$8 million more than allocated on special education, demonstrating their commitment to flexibility and up-to-date support for students. Supt. Gillam offered to provide more detailed statistics on the number and distribution of EAs in the system and invited collaboration with SEAC to advocate for more special education funding from the ministry.

S. Bradely raised concerns about the frequency of untrained emergency staff being brought in to meet students' needs. She acknowledged the necessity of this practice but emphasized the importance of understanding its frequency and impact. She also discussed the attendance campaign and its implications for students with identified needs. She highlighted the frustration of having to keep their child home due to unmet legal accommodations, which is beyond her control. She pointed out that the campaign feels like a downstream solution to an upstream problem, as it doesn't address the root causes of absenteeism for students who lack necessary support. She expressed the need for more data on how the campaign relates to identified kids and the challenges of ensuring continuity in education for these students.

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Supt. Gillam agreed with Bradley's points and mentioned that they have heard similar concerns from the community, including those related to students with special education or medical needs, as well as from the mental health community. He acknowledged that some students do not attend school regularly due to stress and anxiety. Supt. Gillam emphasized that while attendance is important, it is crucial for students to feel good, secure, and well-supported at school. He noted that schools, teachers, and support staff have a significant responsibility to create safe and welcoming environments. The board will continue to adjust their messaging to reflect this. Despite the ministry's requirement to report on the 90% attendance rate, Supt. Gillam highlighted that their attendance rate is actually quite good, and student achievement and well-being indicators are improving. Supt. Gillam assured that they are not pressuring students who are not attending for legitimate reasons. The board will continue to support parents and caregivers in overcoming any barriers to attendance, including the availability of support mechanisms at school.

Lastly, S. Bradley requested data on the attendance of students with identified special education needs, specifically in relation to predictable or chronic absenteeism. She suggested that it would be beneficial to highlight to the ministry that these students are missing school due to a lack of necessary support, which is tied to ministry funding. She expressed interest in seeing detailed data that segments out how many students with special education needs are affected by this issue.

M. Hudson expressed frustration over the attendance reporting system. She mentioned that the only option available to mark absence due to mental health is "parents approved" absence. She emphasized the need to track mental health as a reason for absences, as many parents may be hesitant to advocate or unaware of where to seek help. She suggested that school administrators should identify consistent patterns and proactively reach out to families to offer support and resources. M. Hudson has been requesting for years to have a checkbox for mental health as a reason for absence. C. Innocente noted that this topic was brought forward to PIC at least five times in the past and was curious as to why this request cannot be moved forward. Discussion followed.

Conclusion was made that the matter should be made as a formal recommendation to the Director of the Board, specifically that there be "mental health related" category in attendance reporting.

S. Innocente shared her thoughts on the "strive for five" initiative, describing it as adorable and catchy but also potentially shaming. She explained that the message can be harsh, especially for conscientious students who may feel pressured to attend school even when they need a day off. Discussion followed.

J. Kehoe raised concerns about the lack of data tracking for mental health-related absences. She emphasized that the information is available but is hidden in different categories, making it difficult to address funding issues for mental health support. She mentioned that committee has been discussing this issue for about nine years and questioned why there can't be a specific descriptor for mental health absences. She highlighted the stress and shame parents feel when receiving daily calls about their child's

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absence and suggested that a checkbox for mental health reasons would help both students and families. She also pointed out the importance of school administrators reaching out to families to offer support and resources, especially for those who may be hesitant to advocate for their children. She stressed the need for better identification and support for students with chronic absenteeism due to mental health issues and suggested that a more compassionate approach, such as saying "we missed you" instead of questioning their absence, would be beneficial.

M. Rickey asked Supt. Gillam for clarification on what roles and responsibilities are of an EA. Supt. Gillam explained that the roles and responsibilities of EAs depend on the position they are supporting. Most EAs are in place to ensure safety needs, medical needs, toileting, feeding, and self-regulation. The responsibilities can vary widely and are determined by the administration in consultation with the EAs to cover high-priority needs first. If those needs are met, EAs can be reassigned to other duties based on the school's specific requirements. Supt. Gillam mentioned that while EAs used to work more in classrooms and provide academic support, the current focus is on addressing the highest needs in the building. Teaching staff are relied upon to provide Tier 1 intervention and support for struggling students, with EAs serving as Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions to ensure student safety and dignity. Discussion followed.

J. Kehoe sought clarification on M. Rickey's original question. She wanted to understand how a child's gaps in services and learning are addressed when they are deemed to require EA support by legislation and their IEP, but end up sharing that support due to higher needs arising elsewhere. J. Kehoe emphasized the importance of ensuring that these gaps are identified and addressed effectively.

Supt. Gillam explained that EA support is quantified at the school level, not by individual students. It is the school's responsibility to allocate EA support based on their highest needs, as identified in a template provided to educational services. There is no legislation or documentation specifying the amount of EA time each student should receive; this is determined by the principal. Supt. Gillam mentioned that educational services provide EAs to schools based on the identified needs, and schools do their best to allocate this support. He noted that sometimes new needs arise, or students experience trauma, requiring adjustments in EA allocation. Schools with significant high needs, like Molly Brant, receive substantial EA support, but the process can be complex. The administration works closely with educational services to address any gaps in services as best as they can, though it is not always ideal. Discussion followed concerning EAs and emergency coverage list.

Discussion followed concerning CPIC requirements for parent volunteers. Concern was expressed vis-à-vis increased cost which may present as a parent engagement barrier for many families.

9.3 Promote "PIC Night with Director" – Co-Chair Bevins-Leblanc informed that this year the meeting will be hosted as a separate event on 21 November. Attendees are encouraged to come, hear the update from

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the Director and bring their questions. Question was asked if the event would be recorded and posted on YouTube.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

Thursday, 14 November 2024, at 6 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

Parent Involvement Committee LDSB PIC

Date	KFL&A Public Health Update – School Health
October 24, 2024	<p>Routine Immunizations: Round 1 of the Grade 7 school-based immunization clinics, which involves the immunization team and school team nurses going into schools with Hep B, Meningococcal C, and HPV is well underway. KFLA PH holds routine immunization clinics for those 18 and under. Students or caregivers can book online here: Routine Immunization Appointment This clinic is not for COVID or FLU shots. Reminder: Parents and guardians are responsible for reporting all children’s immunizations to KFL&A Public Health. This can be done on-line here: Immunization Records and Reporting</p> <p>Respiratory Season: This fall and winter, with several respiratory viruses spreading at the same time such as flu, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and COVID-19, we expect challenges similar to recent years. Staying up to date with fall vaccinations remains the most effective defense against many respiratory infections. Ensure everyone in your family gets the annual flu shot, COVID-19, and RSV vaccines for which they are eligible. The flu and COVID-19 vaccines are currently available for high-risk groups, including those over 65, pregnant individuals, and for children 6 months to 4 years of age, as well as for First Nations, Inuit, Métis, racialized communities, and those at high-risk of complications. Flu and COVID-19 vaccines will be more widely available to the general population on Oct. 28.</p> <p>COVID and FLU: KFLA PH will be holding COVID-19 and Flu vaccine clinics for children under 5 years of age without access to a primary care provider. KFL&A PH will not be offering mass immunization clinics and recommends individuals reach out to their family doctor first for vaccines. Individuals without a family doctor can reach out to their local pharmacy. <i>Appointments can be booked on our website at</i> https://www.kflaph.ca/en/clinics-and-classes/covid-19-immunizations.aspx</p> <p>RSV: KFLA PH will be holding RSV clinics when vaccine is available for infants under 12 months of age and toddlers between 12 and 24 months of age based on eligibility criteria.</p> <p>Grade 5 & 9 ActivPass: Passes have been sent to all schools for grade 5 students. Grade 9 students can use their student card to access designated facilities. Passes have been delivered to schools for students without a student card. https://kingstongetsactive.ca/resources/grade-5-9-activpass/</p>

PPM 128: Policy/Program Memorandum 128

The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct

What's new?

Cell phone/personal device policy

What it is:

Students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 are not permitted personal mobile devices – which includes any electronic device that can be used to communicate or to access the internet – during the school day except in specified circumstances.

Students in Grades 7 to 12 can have these devices during the school day but must have them powered down/silenced and put away during class time. Social media sites will be blocked on school devices and networks. Students in Grades 7-12 may only use their personal devices in the classroom if the teacher has permitted their use for learning purposes.

How is KFL&A Public Health School Team supporting schools/families?

School Board Level

- Supported work around the development of school policies around personal devices and substances.

Educators/students

- Developed posters/digital resources for schools aimed at grades 7-12 students with information on why these restrictions are important – what's in it for them. (attached).
 - **Boost your brain, avoid digital drain**
 - **Disconnect to reconnect**
 - **Less screentime = better mental health**
 - **Safer classrooms begin with no phones**
- Working to create a one-page infographic with more information around these 4 key messages, including how less screen time can contribute to better sleep and more physical activity.
- We are promoting Media Literacy Week (October 21-25) in schools by providing educators with links to specific lesson plans from MediaSmarts that focus on the connection between screens/social media and mental health.
- Student engagement displays are available to be booked by secondary schools. These interactive displays provide students with evidence-based information and tools for healthier living. The displays specific to promoting a balanced/healthy approach to screens are **Be Kind Online** and **Everybody is Welcome**.

Anti-vaping policy – enhancements to PPM 128

What it is:

Students possessing, using, or providing a vape will have the device taken away and disposed of, with notification to parents/guardians. Repeat offences will result in progressive discipline according to school board policy, and the involvement of Kingston, Frontenac, and Lennox & Addington Public Health (KFLAPH), as per the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, including the possibility of charges/fine.

How is KFL&A Public Health School Team supporting schools/families?

School Board Level

- KFL&A Public Health provides SFOA enforcement as required – specific criteria need to be met for this to happen; generally best to start with school policies.

Educators/students

- My Brain My Choice is a KFL&A Public Health substance use prevention program, targeted at grade 6 students. Grade 6 educators can collaborate with their school public health nurse on this program which includes resources for educators and families as well as a PHN presentation.
- ‘Vaping and Teens’ pamphlet has been updated. (Attached)
- Student engagement display: Clear the Clouds on vaping. This engagement session allows students to discover myths and facts about vaping and is available to be booked through the school’s PHN.
- Vaping cessation supports – we recommend the Quash app for students. QUASH is a free app designed specifically for youth to help them quit smoking/vaping.
 - We do not provide one to one counselling but can offer group support in schools if there is interest.
- LDSB is piloting vape detectors in washrooms at two schools (LCVI and Frontenac SS). The School Health Team and East TCAN have been asked by LDSB to evaluate the perceived reliability and effectiveness of vape detectors, their deterrent effect, any unintended consequences, and their utility in managing vaping incidents among students. The results of this evaluation will be shared with PHUs and school boards across Ontario to help inform evidence-based decision making on the implementation of vape detectors in schools.
- Our agency is working on advocacy around nicotine pouches (since PPM 128 is more than just vaping).
- Currently known as the KFL&A Unnamed Youth Project, this multi-sectoral community partnership aims to shift our focus from individual-level behaviour change to creating a supportive environment that strengthens substance use “protective factors” like access to structured

leisure-time activities and mitigates substance use “risk factors” like spending less time with parents. The partnership, which includes local school boards, city staff, Indigenous knowledge keepers, and youth-focused not-for-profit organizations, is currently focused on developing a youth engagement strategy. For more information, please contact Colin Ballie at colin.baillie@kflaph.ca or 613-549-1232, ext. 1908.

Parenting in KFL&A: Families and caregivers can connect with a registered nurse for any questions you have about your school age child/teen by phone 613-549-1154, email Parenting@kflaph.ca or following us on [Facebook](#).

Boost your brain, avoid digital drain



Keep your phone off and away during class to stay focused.

**Unlock your potential,
not your phone.**

Phones off while class is on.

Classroom comfort starts with no phones

Phones
off



Help foster a safe space, where everyone feels free to be themselves by keeping phones off and away during class.

**Unlock your potential,
not your phone.**

Phones off while class is on.

DISCONNECT to RECONNECT



Help form stronger friendships by keeping phones off and away during class.

**Unlock your potential,
not your phone.**

Phones off while class is on.



Less screen time

=

Better mental health



Having phones off and away in class can help decrease stress and anxiety.

**Unlock your potential,
not your phone.**

Phones off while class is on.





Vaping and Teens

Some people think vaping is a safe alternative to smoking. This is not true. Get the facts and make informed choices.

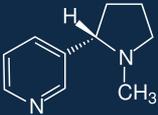
Vapes
come
in many
different
shapes
and sizes.



Are vapes safe?

Many people believe that vapes are just water vapour and therefore a safe way to have fun. However, this is a misconception. The reality is that all vapes contain harmful chemicals, and the majority of them contain nicotine, which is the addictive part of cigarettes.

Studies have shown that youth who vape are four times more likely to go on to smoke.



Nicotine



Ultrafine particles



Cancer-causing chemicals



Volatile organic compounds



Chemical flavourings that may be safe to eat, but their safety for inhalation hasn't been proven



Heavy metals such as nickel, tin and lead

What happens when you vape?



Vaping liquid or e-juice (containing chemicals such as nicotine and flavourings), is added to the device.



A battery powers a heating coil within the device, which turns the liquid into an aerosol (vapour).



The aerosol is inhaled into the lungs, where it is absorbed through the bloodstream and travels to the brain.



Nicotine is highly addictive and can affect how your brain develops, decreasing memory and concentration.



The aerosol is exhaled, possibly causing harmful second-hand effects to those around you.



Download the Quash App—a judgement-free tool to help you quit smoking or vaping.

[QuashApp.com](https://www.QuashApp.com)

Vapes are marketed by the same companies that sell cigarettes.

These companies are targeting young people with advertisements that portray vaping as safe, enjoyable, and trendy. Their goal is to hook new users for life, often by misleading them about the risks involved, in order to boost their profits.

These companies care about money. They do not care about your health.



Can I vape at school?

No. Vaping, as well as tobacco and cannabis use, is banned 24/7 on and within 20 metres of school property. If you are found vaping, you can be fined \$305. Anywhere you can't smoke, you can't vape.

Watch this 2 minute video to learn more about the effects of vapes and vaping.

bit.ly/TeenVapingandNicotine

