

Minutes of the Parent Involvement Committee

Tuesday, April 27, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.

An online meeting of the Parent Involvement Committee was held on this date.

PIC Members: Valrie Estridge, Trish Clark, Mayline Brown, Patrick Symister, Margaret Ogunkoya, Michelle Montgomery, Ted Foster, Hanah Nguyen, Simon Kariuki, Patrick Symister.

Trustee: Scott Templeton

DDSB Staff: Superintendent Erin Elmhurst, VPs Kavita Kanavalli, Frank Samuels, teachers Carolyne Waters. Sarah Khattab,

Special Guests: Steffanie Pelleboer, Saamah Jadoon, Shahana Arain, Camille Prince, Nadia Baby, Georgette Davis, Tim Ralph, Paulette Samuels Brown, Peggy Perkins

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

Land Acknowledgement and Human Rights

Valrie Estridge (Co-Chair) read the Land and Acknowledgement and the Human Rights Statements

Agenda Approval

Ted Foster and Trish Clark

Minutes Approval

Sarah Khattab and Margaret Ogunkoya

Valrie welcomed and thanked everyone on behalf of Superintendent Elmhurst and introduced members of the Parent Involvement Committee.

Board of Trustees update by Trustee Templeton

It was discussed that the French Second Language department submitted a report and it was not approved by the trustees and they are looking to receive the revised FSL Proposal

It was pointed out to the audience that the FSL report can be found on the DDSB website

Scott informed the audience that the Student Alliance of Singers “SASS” has joined up with the Rotary Club of Whitby and received a \$3000 award for students for a song contest in Durham. This great opportunity and information have been shared with the DDSB SCCs.

PRO Grant Updates

Sarah Khattab, PIC member and lead of the PRO Grant Projects 2020-2021 presented 3 of the 16 PRO Grant Projects.

- MEND administrators –, Shahana Arain and Saamah Jadoon presented their project
 - MEND – Muslim Educators Network of Durham creation of their website
- DENSA Network – Kavita Kanavalli – Chair
 - Durham Educators Network for South Asians

Kavita explained what is DENSA and virtual events during May 2021
- Camille Prince, Vice Principal at West Lynde P.S. presented the PRO Grant project – MINDS on MATH (MoMath) – Virtual Tutors supervised by former DDSB Students

Virtual Learning in DDSB

Georgette Davis, Superintendent of Innovation & DDSB@Home presented Administrators of DDSB@Home – Paulette Samuels Brown - Elementary Grade and Peggy Perkins Secondary FI. This year, the DDSB@Home – Elementary had over 16 000 students and DDSB@Home Secondary over 2200 students

Georgette explained how DDSB@Home schools are divided into Campuses

- Paulette Samuels Brown presented what it looks like in a day of the life of elementary students. For some students, virtual learning is an amazing way to learn and they are very successful and for other students, it's not working as well. Their learning experience is working better in the classroom.
- Peggy Perkins shared with us a day in the life of secondary students. During the pandemic, the secondary panels ran in quadmester – 2 courses running every 10 weeks 4 cohorts in the year.
- Tim Ralph, Education Officer for Innovative Education, explained the difference between online and virtual Secondary online.

E-Learning; the program has been exciting for a long time with approximately 4000 students registered – classes online learning without interaction and the Hybrid version – sometimes at home and sometimes at school depending on their classes. These students are grades 11 and 12.

Mental Health and Well-Being

Steffanie Pelleboer, Mental Healthy Lead, pointed out that schools are an ideal environment for supporting and promoting student mental health and well-being. We recognized students are being impacted by COVID-19 related restrictions, in-person gatherings, assemblies and celebrations

Steffanie's message was to take care of our self to be able to take care of others.

DDSB realizes: It was a challenging school year for all educators, students and families. The well-being of all educators matters as well.

Educators care and want to do their best as they support students and families

It was pointed out that kindergarten students have lived half of their life in Pandemic, half of their life in confinement and an at-home learning environment.

- Reasons for referrals to mental health services:
 - An increase in students reported concerned related to low mood, worry, feelings of isolation and fear, as well as experiencing anxious feelings, challenges related to the loss of sports, artistic forums, other forms of expressions which are reported to have an impact on motivation and connection.
 - Increased stress on parents who are working from home and supporting student learning needs, as well as supporting children who may be missing the structure of schools.

It was shared with the audience that the tool kit addressing Anti-Black Racism & Its Impact: A Well-Being Toolkit for Families and link for Parent: are available to view on the DDSB website *Self-Care is an important part of wellness. Take time to recharge.*

Science and Chemistry: STEM Virtual Club Nadia Baby, Science teacher at R.S. McLaughlin CVI

Nadia discussed Science online and showed the labs done in class this year in collaboration with Durham College and shared a short in-class video in the science lab.

Virtual STEM Club – using an Instagram page and Kahoot game with over 35 students.

It was discussed if any students going to R.S. McLaughlin CVI could join the Science Club and if only for Secondary students.

Communication Updates

Erin presented the Parents as Partners flyer on May 26, 2021, and shared the registration link.

Kavita discussed the DDSB Resource Booklet – the booklet is a roadmap for all new parents in DDSB. The booklet going to be in a digital and printable format and it's going to be distributed to schools.

It was suggested that the DDSB Resource Booklet should be incorporated into the Welcome to Kindergarten brochure.

It was discussed about the upcoming PIC Newsletter in June and any topics were welcome.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.