

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

YEAR END REPORT 2022-2023

This report has been provided to the Board of Trustees as required by the DDSB Regulation: Parent Involvement Committee and Ontario Regulation 330/10 which states that "The Parent Involvement Committee shall annually submit a written summary of the committee's activities to the Chair of the Board and the Director of Education"

The Parent Involvement Committee (PIC)

provides the school board with information and advice to help engage parents. The PIC undertakes activities to help parents support their children's learning at home and school. They also share information with and support School Community Councils.

1 
Communication
Representative

1 
Superintendent

1 
Special Education
Advisory Committee (SEAC)
Representative


1 
Central Staff Representative


During the 2022-2023
school year the PIC met **4** times


The Parent Involvement Committee comprises

1
Trustee

3 
Community
Representatives


10 Parent Representatives from
four geographical areas:
Pickering, Ajax, Whitby, Oshawa

3 
Elementary
1 Teacher
2 Administrators

2 
Secondary
1 Teacher
1 Administrator

Total Members: **23**

Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grants

A key focus for PRO Grant Initiatives is to reduce barriers to parent engagement and meet the individual needs in the school communities. The Ministry of Education provided \$75,000 to support PRO Grants in the DDSB. With a focus on collaboration between school communities, School Community Councils (SCC) members were invited to attend an information and PRO Grant co-planning session on January 18, 2023.

35 Applications were approved involving 38 schools.

The Parent Engagement Speaker Series welcomed two Indigenous presenters this school year.

In March, we were honoured to have Dr. Pam Palmater, a Mi'kmaw lawyer, professor, author, and social justice activist from Ugpi'ganjig (Eel River Bar First Nation) who spoke about Indigenous Rights, Social Justice, and Human Rights. Professor Palmater welcomed and answered so many questions across a range of topics from an enthralled audience.

In early May, our second speaker was Dr. James Makokis, a Cree Two-Spirit physician, who is a strong advocate for marginalized populations, particularly Indigenous and 2SLGBTQIA+ peoples. He has been recognized both nationally and internationally for his approach to medicine by combining traditional Cree medicine and Western medicine. With his partner Anthon Johnson by his side, Dr. Makokis also won season seven of "The Amazing Race: Canada." Dr. Makokis gave a deeply moving presentation that encompassed Indigenous learning, respect for the land and an empathetic understanding of the particular challenges faced by the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Both speakers presented Indigenous ways of knowing, learning, and an understanding that enriched all attendees.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Parent Engagement Series
presented by DDSB Parent Involvement Committee

MYTHS vs FACTS about Indigenous Rights

with **Dr. Pamela Palmater**

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2023
7:30-9:00 PM

What does it mean when we say that Indigenous Rights are distinct? Join Professor Pam Palmater, a Mi'kmaw lawyer, professor, author, and social justice activist from Ugpi'ganjig (Eel River Bar First Nation) as she educates and inspires us with her knowledge and insights about Indigenous Rights, powers and relationships.

There will be a question and answer period following the presentation.

Register for the online presentation

DDSB
Ignite Learning

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Parent Engagement Series
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The AMAZING JOURNEY continues!

with **Dr. James Makokis**

TUESDAY, MAY 9, 2023
7:30-9:00 PM

Dr. James A. Makokis is a Nehiyô (Plains Cree) Family Physician from the Saddle Lake Cree Nation in northeastern Alberta and the winner of Season 7 of "The Amazing Race Canada" with his husband Anthon Johnson as "Team Ahkameylnok" ("Never give up" in the Plains Cree language).

Dr. Makokis is an internationally recognized leader and author in Indigenous and transgender health. His philosophy of leadership is based on Nehiyô iyiniw wiyaskewewin (Cree Natural Laws) including kinowatsiwêwin (kindness), kowiyank itatêwêwin (honesty), schayitawowin (strength/determination), and pahewewamawowin (sharing) as taught to him by his Elders. He believes that power should be shared, especially with those who have been disempowered.

Register for this online presentation where Dr. James Makokis will share his experiences, stories, challenges and successes!

This event will be signed by interpreters from the Toronto Sign Language Institute.

There will be a question and answer period following the presentation.

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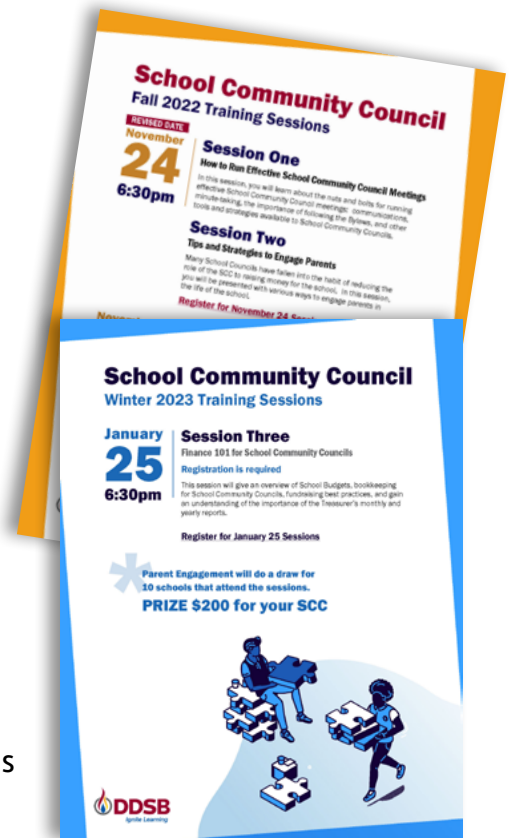
SCC Training Sessions

The PIC provided four training sessions this year for SCCs across the District. The first session, *Running Effective SCC Meetings*, was held on November 24, 2022. Facilitated by Dawn White, Principal at G.L. Roberts CVI, this session offered attendees the basics of serving on school councils. Effective school councils prioritize and support student learning, promote meaningful parental and community involvement, and actively seek input from their school community. Other topics discussed included communication as a key to ensuring strong partnerships and strategies for resolving conflicts.

The second session, *How to Attract and Engage Members of Your SCC*, was held on November 24, 2022. This session featured presenter Kristen McKinnon, parent member of the PIC, who included suggestions on creating dynamic meetings and breaking down barriers to attending and being a part of a school council. Some of the tips that were shared included; providing food, childcare, scheduling different meeting times, and alternate formats for meetings (virtual, in-person, hybrid, breakfast meetings, walk and talk, after school, and evening meetings).

The third session, *Finance 101 for SCC Chairs and Treasurers*, was held on January 25, 2023. This session was facilitated by Melissa Durward, Senior Manager of Finance, DDSB, and Sid Lashley, Internal Auditor, DDSB. The presenters gave insight into activities, equipment, and resources that school councils can utilize for fundraising and subsidy. The presentation also gave an overview of school budgets, block budgets, and school-generated funds.

The final session was held on April 24, 2023 and focused on SCC's *Bylaws*. This session was facilitated by Phanny Im, our in-house Legal Counsel and provided an overview of bylaws as they relate to our School Community Councils. Phanny addressed questions including: What are bylaws, and what is their purpose? How do we create them for our SCC? How do Rules of Engagement and bylaws differ, if at all?



Durham Partners Conference: Fostering Resilience in Children: Supporting Mental Health and Social Well-Being, May 27 2023

The Parent Engagement department hosted the annual Durham Partners Symposium, inviting families to engage in learning about fostering resilience in children, while supporting their mental health and social well-being.

We were joined by Perdita Felicien, our keynote speaker and former DDSB student. In her inspiring presentation, Perdita explored what it means to chase a dream and overcome the “hurdles” life can put before you and shared her life experiences.

Breakout speakers included:

- **Holly Richard** - Parenting in the Age of Social Media
- **Saroya Tinker** - Adversity and Resiliency
- **Alyson Schafer** - Parents Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being Matters, Too
- **Natasha Halliday** - Mental Health and Resiliency

All of the speakers were well received by our attendees. All registrants received a copy of Perdita's book *My Mother's Daughter* and had the opportunity to speak with the guest speakers.

Volunteer of Distinction

Each year the PIC and DDSB recognize the valued work of volunteers. Due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions in the 2021/2022 year, staff recognised our volunteers at their school location with a gift and certificate in the Fall of 2022. The volunteers for 2022/2023 will be recognized at the first in-person ceremony since 2019. It will take place on October 24, 2023 at Sinclair Secondary School.

Parent Engagement Communication

Parent Engagement produced 4 e-newsletters this year, including information, resources and strategies for parents/guardians, and these were shared with communities.

