

**Parent Involvement Committee Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday, February 21, 2012 at 7 pm
Rainbow District School Board
Board Office Boardroom**

Attendance:

Chair Kate Barber, Lansdowne Public School; Tonya Marcotte, Queen Elizabeth Public School/Lansdowne Public School; Trish Kitching, Gatchell School/Princess Anne Public School/Sudbury Secondary School; Trustee Doreen Dewar; Trustee Bob Clement; Sharon Speir, Superintendent, Rainbow District School Board; Lesleigh Dye, Superintendent, Rainbow District School Board; Nicole Czaja, FSL Program Consultant, Rainbow District School Board; Nicole Charette, Senior Advisor, Corporate Communications and Strategic Planning

Regrets:

Jennifer Michaud, Walden Public School

1. Call to Order: 7 pm

2. Welcome and Self-Introductions: Chair Kate Barber

Chair Kate Barber welcomed everyone and invited members to introduce themselves.

3. Presentation by Superintendent Lesleigh Dye and FSL Program Consultant Nicole Czaja on the New French Immersion Toolkit and Homework Help Website

Lesleigh Dye and Nicole Czaja provided an overview of the New French Immersion Toolkit and Homework Help Website – www.FSLHomeworkToolbox.ca - produced by Rainbow District School Board with financial support from the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage. A flyer that was distributed to all school boards in Ontario was shared with parents. All students in Rainbow Schools received the flyer last fall. Parents also received a bookmark highlighting the French Immersion Program from Grades 9 to 12.

The website supports parents who have children in a French Immersion (FI) program and wish to assist them with homework in French. It is also a resource for FI students who require an accessible user-friendly reference tool to help with homework. Learners and educators in other FSL programs will also find it helpful. Sections include audio files in French and English, video clips demonstrating instructional strategies, a reference guide for specific topics, a list of French language learning websites and general tips for learning French.

The website was based on the 2010 needs assessment conducted by Canadian Parents For French. Rainbow District School Board was approached by the Ministry of Education to expand its popular “Boîte à Outils” web page. The first phase of the FSLHomeworkToolbox website was launched in September 2011. A second phase is currently underway with a focus on resources for intermediate students. By next fall, the website will feature over 60 video clips demonstrating teaching and learning strategies.

4. Approval of Agenda

There were not sufficient members present for quorum.

Those present supported the agenda as presented.

The meeting proceeded for information only.

5. Approval of Minutes

There were no changes to the minutes.

The approval of minutes of the meeting held on January 10, 2012 was deferred.

It was suggested that there be a call to the executive members prior to future meetings to confirm attendance.

The agenda and minutes will be presented for approval at the PIC meeting on April 17, 2012.

6. Discussion based on presentation

Chair Kate Barber indicated that she is hearing concerns from parents about homework. Rainbow District School Board's homework policy is posted on the Board website. Parents should direct their concerns to the Principal of their child's school.

PIC suggested that information about the homework policy be included in the Guide for Students and Parents, which is sent home the first week of school.

Core French will begin in Grade 4 effective September 2012, providing more time for reading, writing, physical education and the arts in the Primary grades. The Ontario Curriculum identifies Grade 4 as the starting point for Core French as part of the English-language program.

7. Communications Report

Nicole Charette provided a communications update, as follows:

At the annual Accommodation Review Meeting of Rainbow District School Board held on January 31, 2012, trustees supported a staff recommendation that there be no accommodation reviews in Rainbow Schools over the next two years. Rainbow District School Board staff is currently working on three construction projects - Algonquin Road Public School, R.L. Beattie Public School and Sudbury Secondary School. A new construction project, the revitalization of MacLeod Public School, is scheduled to begin this spring. Recommendations in the Drummond Report, if adopted by the Province, could also have an impact on the Board's budget. The Board will revisit the possibility of further accommodation reviews in the future.

The Drummond Report was released on February 15, 2012. It contains a number of recommendations for achieving savings and reducing costs in the education sector. Chair Dewar

was concerned that user fees (ie. for transportation or a fifth year of secondary school) would create inequities. Reducing budgets for classroom supplies and textbooks will also have an adverse impact. She added that Mr. Drummond missed an opportunity to achieve significant savings by recommending one school board in Ontario.

Traffic flow will be the focus of a community information session on the new MacLeod Public School on Monday, February 27, 2012 at 6 pm. Construction of a new green school on the MacLeod Public School site will begin this spring. All parents/guardians, neighbours and interested community members are welcome to attend the information session at the school.

Jeremy Dias will return to Rainbow Schools from February 21 to 23, 2012 to continue the conversation about equity and inclusion. Students from a number of schools will have an opportunity to hear his message. Jeremy Dias was in Sudbury last fall for the Rainbow District School Board's Dare to Stand Out Conference. He also visited schools last spring.

The City of Greater Sudbury's Healthy Community Cabinet has recognized Rainbow District School Board for its Go Green initiatives. Rainbow Schools received a Healthy Community Recognition Award on February 16, 2012. The award is presented to individuals or groups who have shown exemplary leadership and dedication toward building a healthy community in Greater Sudbury. For more information about sustainability in Rainbow Schools, visit:

<http://www.rainbowschools.ca/GoGreen/>

The Sudbury Secondary School supplement "The Dawn of a New Era" was published in Northern Life on February 9, 2012. The community, including Grade 8 students, parents/guardians, neighbours and alumni, were invited to come discover Sudbury Secondary School at an Open House on February 21, 2012. The school features a new arts wing with modern music rooms and studios for dance, drama, visual arts, photography and media arts. The auditorium is currently being upgraded. The school also features state-of-the-art science and computer labs, upgraded classrooms with the latest in technology, new auto and woodworking facilities, a renovated gymnasium, a new library, and a new address at 154 College Street.

8. Committee Member Reports

The School Year Calendar for 2012-2013 will be released on February 23, 2012.

The Ministry of Education will host a Parent Involvement Conference in Toronto on April 21, 2012. Two members of the Rainbow District School Board PIC can attend the conference to network with PIC members from across Ontario.

9. School announcements

There will be no blacklight theatre for Gatchell School this year due to the renovations at the Sheridan Auditorium at Sudbury Secondary School.

Gatchell School will host a pancake breakfast on March 7, 2012 as a fundraiser for the school's swim program.

A landscape architect is designing the school yard at Gatchell.

Lansdowne Public School will host a Family Night with its PRO grant with a mini-Olympics theme (ie. physical activity as a booster for literacy).

Gatchell School is also planning an event with its PRO grant.

Schools will be able to apply for PRO grants for the 2012-2013 school year in May/June 2012.

It was suggested that schools send surveys home to parents to determine what they would like to have offered by their school for PRO grants.

Parents from Lansdowne and Queen Elizabeth noted that many families in their areas wait until August to register their children for JK/SK.

It was suggested that a message be sent to Principals regarding the role of PIC and encouraging them to invite their School Councils to attend a PIC meeting in the next school year.

10. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, April 17, 2012

Board Office, Board Room, 7 pm

Planning Meeting for 2012-2013