

GREATER ESSEX COUNTY PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE (GECPIC)

Tuesday, February 25, 2014 - 7:00 p.m. – Board Office

MEETING MINUTES

ATTENDANCE: Sheet was distributed for sign in.

7:10 pm Welcome – Katrina Elchami

AGENDA: Motion to accept agenda made by Gene Myers and seconded by Michelle Hedge.

PREVIOUS MINUTES: Motion to accept previous minutes made by Michelle Hedge and seconded by Gene Myers.

Parent and Family Centres: Sue Chanko and her team

- for parents, care givers and grandparents - free drop in centres where parents can play with their children from birth to age 6
- a provincial initiative, implemented by our board
- in our board they are located at Begley, John Campbell, Queen Elizabeth, Roseville and Taylor
- teachers are noticing that when children that attended PFC centres enter kindergarten they are much more equipped and prepared for the program
- many play centres within the PLC that will help to develop the children's creativity and language skills, gives them an opportunity to discuss science, environment and other educational topics.
- Each PLC has a facilitator who helps to prepare the programs and guides parents in each of the different activities and supports parents in many of their needs as well.
- Each centre has a book library that families can borrow from, not just children's material, but parenting resources as well
- math skills are developed as well thru fun activities
- a healthy snack is provided every day as well
- There are many resources and fun activities that are ready to be taken home to encourage parents to continue learning play at home

Marnie, a grandparent of a PFC child - visits regularly to PFCs around the area

- she is so excited to visit with him for consistency and a sense of belonging
- her grandson enjoys the trucks, toys, activities and snacks
- during this very long winter, the time in the gym is invaluable
- he's learned that it's ok to get messy when having fun, he's learned that it's ok to ask for help from another adult in the room
- When he goes to kindergarten....he'll be familiar with big hallways, bells, circle time, big gyms, rules about walking quietly down the all, etc. All things he's learned as an aside while attending the PLCs
- PLCs published a book called "Play with Me" this year and have included it in our folders. They have also included the DVD as well, please share both with your school councils or someone that you think could benefit from the centres.
- The only difference between these centres and the OEY (Ontario Early Years) centres is that the PFCs are board employees and run by the board. The OEYs are City of Windsor employees (funding is different)

Financial Reporting: Kathy Dominato

- AP BA 13 - Financial Guidelines on school generated funds (ask your principal for a copy of this report or Google for it, it is posted online)
- all transactions from all school funds and council funds fall under these regulations because they are all included in one financial report now.
- when your council is spending a larger amount of money, there is a way to procure a Purchase Order through the board and then the funds can be replaced afterwards.
- we have access to spend through "Webstock" as well so that we can purchase items that are secured pricing.
- Control and Ownership of Funds: The Principal is responsible for all school generated funds - Educational Act
- Any funds raised by the school or school council (and any assets purchased with those funds)

Examples of acceptable uses of funds:

- assistance fund
- field trips
- guest speakers
- ceremonies, awards, plaques, etc
- scholarships or bursaries
- extra curricular activities
- supplies, equipment or services

Unacceptable Use of Funds:

- goods or services from employees
- items funded through prov grants
- facility renewal, maintenance, upgrades,
- PD
- admin expenses not associated with fundraising

The Board is tasked with the responsibility of making sure that all school funds are collected and spent within all laws and regulations of municipalities, province and country. Therefore, our finance department is very strict on procedures and accountability.

It is very important for everyone to be aware of their role and responsibilities to help to secure and safeguard all school funds. Everyone needs to make sure they are doing their part. These roles and responsibilities are outlined in this document.

Cash Controls:

- establish procedures in advance for cash collection
- process should be clearly defined to make sure all cash is deposited properly
- cash receipts should be deposited intact (total receipts should equal total deposit)
- explain the story about running out of buns and having to go and get them (must be done through a separate receipt and separate cheque...don't use the money being collected – don't use the event cash box)
- under no circumstances should cash be taken out of the school for counting
- This is to protect the parents, not just the money itself, protecting the reputation of great volunteers
- restrict the handling of cash to a minimum number of individuals
- Whenever possible, cash should be deposited on the same day that it is collected or at a minimum on a weekly basis
- deposits should be tracked by each fundraising activity and recorded appropriately

Disbursements:

- they must be approved in advance with documentation
- original receipts/invoices must be obtained prior to payout
- **no photocopies or debit/credit card slips**
- cheques should never be pre-signed - the review of supporting documentation is an important aspect of the signatory's role

Reviews and Audits:

- There are 3 types of reviews/audits that occur on a rotating basis for School Generated Funds:
- Internal reviews performed by Board Staff
- External audits performed by the Board's external auditors (KPMG)
- Internal audits performed by the Regional Internal Audit Team (South Region)

Ministry of Education Audits:

- they have selected their sample sites already: 3 secondary, 7 elementary and 1 adult education centre
- Kathy will be there to help facilitate the audit
- If selected, ask your principal what role council members have in this audit. A letter was sent to them explaining the process

Upcoming Events:

- GECDSB staff are currently working with KEV Software Inc. to begin a 8 school pilot implementation of School Cash Suite
- will replace the current accounting system used for schools, School Gen Funds at these 8
- Product has an online payment feature for parents
- If successful, upon Board approval, the intent is to implement the software in all schools throughout GECDSB in phases over the next school year

Forms that are important to use:

- Deposit slips
- Financial Statement for School Advisory Funds (it can be sent in with yearend report)
- Monthly Bank Reconciliation
- School Fund Disbursement Request Form

Principal Report - Chris Mills (from Glenwood Public school)

Survey Monkey

- a great site (free) that you can use to gather quick information from your families at your school
- sign up for a free account
- The free portion of the site has one drawback where you can't print your results, you get them online
- Great place to gather an abundance of information from your community on something your council might be trying to decide on
- Send it out via their web link (newsletters, FB, website, etc.)
- Really quick way for parents to answer these questions and the results will be returned to you quickly
- For larger schools, send out different surveys to different sections of your school (divide by grade level or something)

Another program that is similar to this that helps with volunteering etc. "Signup Genius" sends out reminder emails, etc. (based on emailing systems)

8:15 pm Chair's Report: Katrina Elchami

- Save the Date flyer is available to help you advertise our next Spring Workshop for FNMI and Gay Rights - great speakers, March 29th all day. A bigger flyer will be emailed out the principal and school chair, please help advertise
- Low Stress Parenting workshop on the April 16 7-9pm Ciacarro Club - must sign up ahead of time - sponsored by us jointly with the City of Windsor
- Mental Health seminars

Director's Report: Erin Kelly

- Kindergarten Open Houses were very successful, great stories from around the board. Many parents reported having a great time sharing with their little ones getting them accustomed to the school
- Secondary board open houses went well as well, especially to the new Westview Academy
- Autism Gala, went so well, many educators from our board worked hard to help this organization, the philanthropy within our board is so appreciated
- Talbot Trail - Carnival - so much fun to attend, I appreciated the invitation
- There has been an increase in literacy funding recently and we are so appreciative of this
- Saturday at Begley at 2pm - FNMI gathering/open house to celebrate these individuals and this culture - more information on our website
- Naming of our new school (Benson/Taylor) will be called Westgate
- First Robotics Competition with many of our schools participating will be held here in Windsor at the St. Denis Centre at the U of W - April 3 - 5

Motion to adjourn at 8:43 pm (Gene Myers/Michelle Hedge)