

## GECD SB

### IEAC Committee Meeting

### Virtual Meeting October 22, 2020

#### Attendance:

Director Erin Kelly  
Tyler White  
Julia Burgess (Trustee)  
Kim John  
Crystal Michener  
Penny Fremlin

Dr. Clara Howitt  
Brieanne John  
Alan Halberstadt (Trustee)  
Cecil Isaac  
Rebecca Major  
Michael Harrington

Tina DeCastro  
Adrian Klein  
Louise Cervini  
Donna Grayer  
Loyell Bigjohn  
Rick McMillan (regrets)

Dr. Howitt welcomed everyone and asked Cecil Isaac to provide the IEAC with an opening.

After Cecil is welcome, Dr. Howitt guided the committee through the attached Power Point Presentation. The initial slides focused on the purpose of the IEAC, terms of engagement for the committee and the Indigenous Education Protocol for the GECD SB. The last Power Point Slide began the discussion on the following:

#### Discussion Items:

- GEC PIC Representation
- Totem Pole- Harrow Public School
- Future meeting dates (tentative)

**First item on the agenda for discussion- Greater Essex Parent Involvement Committee (GECPIC) Representation.**

- Discussion occurred as to the role and responsibilities of the IEAC representative on GECPIC, which include providing voice to GECPIC on behalf of parents and guardians from the IEAC, sharing, reporting, and providing perspectives from the IEAC.  
The first meeting is at 7:00pm on Oct. 27. Meetings are in the evenings. GECPIC meets a minimum of four times in the year not including Ad Hoc committees. The current scheduled meeting dates are as follows:

*GECPIC Meeting Update:*

*Tuesday, October 27, 2020;*

*Tuesday, November 3, 2020;*

*Tuesday, January 26, 2021*

*Additional meetings TBA*

**The next item on the discussion agenda - Totem Pole at Harrow Public School.**

- The administration of Harrow PS reached out to the central office for guidance after a community member called about the totem pole.
- The first step was to understand the history of how the structure came to be at Harrow PS. Administration reached out in various forms to the school community to find out information/history as to the totem pole.
- Someone who was related, (the son) to the gentleman who was part of the process of creating that structure reached out and gave us some background on it. The individual was understanding and very willing to work with the district on how we should move forward.
- We have learned that the totem pole at Harrow PS not a true totem pole. It represents a totem pole.
- We plan to move forward with the removal as well as a communication plan to help the school community understand the “why” as to the removal of the structure that has been a part of the school for so long. We do not want to remove it without warning. We want to build understanding and use it as an opportunity to educate.
- We are seeking input/guidance from the IEAC before we proceed with the removal.
- Committee members shared the following suggestions:

- *Reference made to Sara Davidson (a professor at Fraser University). She's Haida Gwaii and her father is a very notable totem pole maker (Robert Davidson). Sara is going to be a keynote speaker at an upcoming event. A recommendation was made that the district connect with her to seek her advice.*

- *Some history was shared as to the totem pole. It was raised in the centennial year, 1967, as a centennial project and was visited years later by Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau, who commented on it. There is a community attachment. The removal of it won't be seen by a lot of the community as something that should happen therefore the education piece is vital.*

- *A question was posed if there are other sites in the district with totem poles.*

*Answer yes, three sites. Other sites have peace poles initiated through the Windsor Rotary Clubs which are not connected to the Indigenous culture, however some Peace poles include Oneida and Ojibwa language messages. How we handle the removal at Harrow PS will be the model we follow to remove totem poles at the other two sites.*

- *It was suggested that we view this opportunity as a call to action in how we should be commemorating Indigenous people and we should work with the community (survivors and the Indigenous community and the art community) to discover ways of honouring the Indigenous people. This should be guided by policies within the district.*

Additional information shared with the committee as to an upcoming event:

- There is a partnership with Children First and the City of Windsor. They have special guest presenter. Shelley Moore. She is an author of the book, *“One Without the Other”*. She is in education and her specialty is focused on inclusion and Spec Ed. There is going to be four, one and a half-hour professional development sessions, which will be held bi-weekly via Zoom. Anyone who is interested is welcome to join. Individuals in the Windsor, Essex County area can get the learning package and that learning package includes two books created by the presenters. The series starts October 27 at 7:00pm followed by November 10, November 24 and December 8. There is no charge to join the “Narratives of Belonging” Zoom series.
- Posters will be forwarded to the committee and have been forwarded to GECSB staff

Action/Follow up Items:

- Share meeting notes via email with IEAC
- Set next meeting date for November- focus Board Indigenous Plan (BAP)
- Share Narratives of Belonging poster with IEAC