



PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, January 13, 2021

6:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

Members: Diana Mills, Martyn Reid (OCASC Member), Malaka Hendela (OCASC Member), Jaime Morse, Seyi Okuribido-Malcolm, Abdulnaser Atef, Kahmaria Pingue, Annette Dillon, Jacquie Samuels, Jennifer Hood, Heather Kotelniski, Kristina Price

Non-Voting Members: Wendy Hough (Trustee), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director)

Staff and Guests: Lynn Scott (Trustee), Christine Boothby (Trustee), Donna Blackburn (Trustee), Justine Bell (Trustee), Michele Giroux (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), Carolyn Tanner (Human Rights and Equity Advisor), Engy Abdel Masieh (Policy Analyst), Nicole Guthrie (Manager of Board Services), Darren Gatley (Board/Committee Coordinator), Ian Morris (SEAC)

1. Call to Order

Associate Director Reynolds called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. and conducted a series of round table introductions.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Martyn Reid,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

3. Review of PIC Report, 18 November 2020

Moved by Jennifer Hood,

THAT the PIC report of 18 November 2020 be approved.

Carried

4. Delegations

4.a Christine Moulaison, OCASC Co-Chair, Ratification of OCASC Members and Revisions to the PIC Bylaws

Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) Co-Chair, Christine Moulaison, noted that there had been some discussion between OCASC and the Board regarding whether OCASC members can sit as Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) chair and vice-chair. She sought to clarify that OCASC appointments to committees are not voted on annually, and that if a member joins a committee, they are automatically renewed annually until that member steps down which is now reflected in the recently changed OCASC Constitution. If a member steps down, they must provide two months' notice to ensure OCASC may find a replacement volunteer member. She noted that during the 19 November 2020 OCASC meeting, OCASC members were made aware that there are both one and two year membership requirements for certain committees which is why the changes were required. She added that pages 35 and 36 of the agenda discussed the appointment of Mr. Reid and Ms. Hendela.

5. Presentation

5.a 2021 Parent Involvement Committee Orientation

Executive Officer Giroux presented the [Parent Involvement Committee \(PIC\) orientation](#) to the group.

During the presentation, the following points were noted:

- There is currently one community member position vacant;
- PIC members are ambassadors to the community;
- OCASC existed before PIC was mandated;
- Virtual meetings are currently the main method of conducting meetings. PIC members are categorized as panelists and the public are categorized as attendees;
- The chair's responsibilities outside of meetings include one monthly meeting for agenda planning and presenting the annual work-plan;
- There is a provincial ad-hoc meeting in which the chair may be invited to participate;
- The chair will be required to provide an update at each PIC meeting;
- If both the community representative and alternate representative are present, only one may vote; and
- The District is very large and complex from an operational perspective due to the geographical size, number of schools, and programs. It is important to note that there are families in many different situations and backgrounds that have many different needs which may affect how some items are represented.

6. Action Items

6.a Report 20-105, Updates to the PIC By-Laws and Standing Rules (M. Giroux)

Your committee had before it Report 20-105 seeking approval for an update to the PIC By-Laws and Standing Rules, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 612/00 School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees.

Executive Officer Giroux noted that there had been previous discussions at PIC regarding eligibility for the office of chair and vice-chair. She noted that legal counsel advised that a recommendation to clarify section 6.18 of the by-laws be included by inserting language that would clarify that the deeming language did not apply to parent members who were appointed by Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC). She added that staff met with the Chair and Vice Chair of OCASC to discuss issues regarding chair eligibility. She added that since that meeting, OCASC held another meeting in which Ms. Hendela and Mr. Reid were appointed by OCASC to be their PIC representatives for a two-year term. She noted that the language in the PIC by-laws currently states that the term of appointment of OCASC representatives on PIC is one-year.

Executive Officer Giroux explained that staff had reviewed the draft OCASC minutes, the PIC by-laws and looked at options to move this matter forward. She drew attention to the five possible options, outlined in the [Supplementary Information Memorandum to Report 20-105](#), as follows:

1. Adopt the original recommendation clarifying that section 6.18 does not apply to OCASC members which means that a parent appointed as an OCASC rep could not be the Chair of PIC - this is consistent with the legal advice provided;
2. Defeat the original recommendation - this is possible but still leaves the committee with uncertainty about the applicability of the deeming provision to the OCASC representatives and could result in a challenge now or in the future;
3. Amend section 6.18 to clarify that the deeming provision applies to parent members appointed under section 5.2 (OCASC appointments);
4. Delete the deeming provision in section 6.18 - the deeming provision (second sentence) is the source of the confusion and if removed would align the by-laws with the regulation and would mean that only members appointed to a two year term were eligible to be the Chair;
or

5. Amend section 5.2 of the PIC by-laws to allow OCASC representatives to be appointed for a one or two year term and thereby making the two year term appointees eligible to be elected to the role of Chair.

During the discussion and in response to questions, the following points were noted:

- If members did not select an option to change the PIC by-laws, OCASC members would continue to have a one-year term on PIC according to the PIC by-laws and would therefore be ineligible for the position of chair;
- The Supplementary Information Memorandum to Report 20-105 was not reviewed by OCASC prior to the 13 January 2021 PIC meeting;
- All parent members should have equal opportunity to participate and be eligible for the position of chair;
- Ms. Hendela noted that OCASC parent members choose to act as a liaison between PIC and OCASC;
- Ms. Hendela noted that members of OCASC are school councils who join annually and the councils send representatives; OCASC has an executive consisting of officer positions that are elected from the membership for a one year period; however, OCASC also has legacy delegate positions as representatives on several OCDSB committees, such as Committee of the Whole and PIC, and these positions are filled with volunteers appointed to the roles and do not require those representatives to be part of a school council who is an OCASC member, but rather are individuals undertaking the representation work and reporting to OCASC membership. Therefore, these volunteer representative positions would not be limited by a one year term. The term is set by the terms of appointment, for example the recent appointment for PIC representatives has been set for a two year minimum term to ensure it would not have a barrier if an OCASC parent member were to run for the position of chair. The only limitation of representation would be by the committee terms themselves, for example a parent representative nominated to PIC via OCASC would no longer be eligible to sit on PIC if the child of the representative graduates or leaves the District;
- Historically, school councils appointed representatives to attend OCASC on their behalf. The representatives acted as a liaison between a school council and OCASC. School councils would hold annual elections or to retain members as OCASC representatives for several years;

- Discussions and agenda items regarding governance delay the work that members would like to accomplish;
- Ms. Hood noted that OCASC parent members often dominate the conversations at PIC meetings and the discussion focuses on governance and regulation issues rather than parent involvement and this has a direct impact on the ability of other members to participate;
- OCASC parent members made a commitment that PIC items would be heard first and that OCASC matters would be reserved for the agenda item “OCASC Report”;
- Members suggested deleting section 5.2 of the PIC by-laws outlining the term suggested by OCASC members. Section 5.1 could be amended to say “10” parent members, and section 6.18 could be amended to say “The Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee must be parent members and shall be elected for a two-year term by the parent members of the Committee” in order to remove the deeming provision. This would allow OCASC parent members to be the same in terms of appointment and only members in a two-year position would be eligible for chair;
- With the suggested changes, OCASC would be required to indicate to PIC if their members were being appointed for one or two years;
- In response to a question, Executive Officer Giroux explained that the OCASC appointments must be ratified by PIC and the ratification process is outlined in sections 6.8 and 6.9 of the PIC by-laws;
- Although PIC attempts to have as many two-year term members as possible, the provincial regulation requires there to be some members with a one-year term. There is currently one parent member with a one-year term;
- If section 5.2 is deleted, it would remove the reference that 2 of the 10 parent members be appointed by OCASC;
- Section 4.0 b. outlines that 2 of the 10 parent members be appointed by OCASC;
- Mr. Atef raised concern that deleting a section of the PIC by-laws may have impact on the other sections in the future;
- Section 5.5 outlines the reappointment process for members. There are no term limits for members; only the position of chair has a consecutive two-year term limit;
- By-law changes could be brought to a sub-committee in the future in order to reduce time spent at PIC meetings;

- Ms. Okuribido-Malcolm suggested that section 5.1 be amended so that it reads as “eight parent members plus two OCASC members” to ensure clarity.

Moved by Martyn Reid, seconded by Kahmaria Pingue,

THAT section 5.2 of the PIC by-laws be amended to allow OCASC representatives to be appointed for a one or two-year term allowing the two year term appointees eligible to be elected to the role of Chair.

Defeated

Moved by Martyn Reid, seconded by Seyi Okuribido-Malcolm,

THAT “eight parent members plus two parent members appointed by OCASC” be added to the beginning of section 5.1 of the PIC by-laws;

THAT section 5.2 of the PIC by-laws be deleted; and

THAT section 6.18 will have the content deleted after the first sentence.

Carried

1. Supplemental Information: Information Related to Report 20-105, Updates to the PIC By-laws and Standing Rules

Supplementary Information Related to Report 20-105, Updates to the PIC By-laws and Standing Rules was provided for information.

6.b Ratification of OCASC Members

Moved by Diana Mills, seconded by Seyi Okuribido-Malcolm,

THAT Martyn Reid and Malaka Hendela be appointed as the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) representatives for a term ending 30 November 2022.

Carried

6.c Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Associate Director Reynolds reviewed the rules for the election process and called for the first nomination for the position of chair.

Martyn Reid, seconded by Diana Mills, nominated himself for the position of chair.

Mr. Reid, in speaking to why he should be elected as chair, informed members that he had extensive experience in managing meetings through his time in working with the military. He has both international and cultural meeting experience and has the proven ability to be very efficient in governing meetings and achieving meeting goals. He noted that he is very

active in the community with the school council and OCASC. He informed members that he would like PIC to embrace a goal driven model, with the PIC work-plan driving its work. He noted that he was an immigrant to Canada and found it difficult to navigate the North-American education system and that he would like to aid the parents that do not have the same cultural advantages to be actively involved in their children's education.

Diana Mills, seconded by Seyi Okuribido-Malcolm, self-nominated for the position of chair.

Ms. Mills, in speaking to why she should be elected as chair, informed members that she enjoys reaching out and communicating with members of the community and completing goals. She noted that all members have a role in making education attainable, equitable, sustainable, and enjoyable. As chair she would ask PIC members for their commitment to support change and to personally address and be proactive to the issues members identify as part of a solution. She noted that PIC should reach out to the communities that the committee serves. She added that she would like PIC meetings to end in a timely manner, not including extenuating circumstances, to achieve work life balance. As chair, she would conduct meetings in a civil, respectful, and professional manner, where all members have an opportunity to express themselves. She noted that she would bring representation to PIC as a woman of colour, which would encourage members from all communities to engage with PIC. She noted that encouraging minoritized communities to be more engaged often starts with seeing representation in leadership positions, and that "deeds not words bring everyone to the table".

Moved by Annette Dillon, seconded by Seyi Okuribido-Malcolm,

THAT nominations be closed.

Carried

Following an election, Associate Director Reynolds declared Martyn Reid the chair of the Parent Involvement Committee.

Mr. Reid thanked members for the opportunity.

Martyn Reid, seconded by Malaka Hendela, nominated Diana Mills for the position of vice-chair.

Moved by Ms. Hendela, seconded by Ms. Okuribido-Malcolm,

THAT nominations be closed.

Carried

By acclamation, Associate Director Reynolds declared Ms. Mills vice-chair of the Parent Involvement Committee.

Mr. Reid assumed position of chair for the remainder of the meeting

6.d Report 21-001, Approval of the Allocation of 2020-2021 Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant (M. Giroux)

Your committee had before it Report 21-001 seeking approval for the proposed allocation of the 2020-2021 Parents Reaching Out (PRO) grant funding.

During the discussion period, the following points were noted:

- Parents Reaching Out (PRO) grants are provincially funded directly to the Board, whereas, in the past, each school council that applied to the PRO grant would receive \$750-\$1,000 for parent engagement;
- Funding amounts are less than what was previously available and decisions should consider obtaining more value for spending choices;
- Themed speaker nights could engage a wider audience;
- Speaker nights in languages other than the official languages (English and French) should be considered as a way of being more inclusive of the broader school communities and perhaps could be done in coordination with multicultural liaison officers (MLO);
- Ms. Dillon noted that topics regarding “financing your education” would be useful for grades 11 and 12 students that would be entering post-secondary education as many families struggle to cover tuition costs and with few student employment opportunities. Speaker Janet McDonald, who attended the November career fair, was recommended;
- Ms. Hood drew attention to a speaker series on self and emotional regulation that was previously provided and could be brought back as it is an important and relevant topic during the pandemic;
- Ms. Hendela suggested that the \$39,986 in PRO grant funding be categorized and discussed separately from the Board-allocated funding of \$150,000 to ensure different accountability structures;
- A District-wide speaker series could be implemented;
- The speaker events should include interactive elements to encourage engagement such as having smaller sessions to allow for breakout groups and to allow for a speaker question and answer period;
- Schools without councils could be included by working with the principals of those schools. The few schools without councils could partner with other schools in order to help offset any costs;

- Interactive sessions could involve having attendees prepare by gathering simple household objects in order to further increase participation and interactivity with some speakers; and
- Mr. Reid drew attention to the urgency of organizing the proposed speaker nights and suggested that the PRO Grant funding be used immediately and to discuss possible options for use of the Board-allocated funding at the next PIC meeting.

Moved by Ms. Okuribido-Malcolm,

THAT the 2020-2021 Parents Reaching Out (PRO) grant be used to facilitate school council speaker nights as outlined in Report 21-001.

Carried

Executive Officer Giroux noted that additional speaker series ideas and speakers should be emailed to her directly.

7. Discussion Items

7.a Report 20-084, Development of a Human Rights Policy (C. Tanner)

Human Rights and Equity Advisor (HREA) Tanner provided a presentation to the committee.

During the discussion and in response to questions, the following points were noted:

- HREA Tanner asked that PIC and OCASC share parent feedback from school councils;
- Mr. Reid noted that they were glad to see the socio-economic aspect was included;
- HREA Tanner noted that she has been working developing the policy, although she has organized a working group consisting of many subject matter experts from various departments within the Board to develop the consultation phase;
- The working group consisted of representatives from the Indigenous Education and Equity Teams, Human Resources, and Learning Support Services departments; Ms. Tanner also met with Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC), Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), and Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE);
- The consultation plan was approved at the 8 December 2020 Board meeting and will now go back to all committees for additional input and approval;

- The consultation plan will be presented to students and will look for ways to engage a variety of student groups including the Black Youth Forum, the Original Voices Forum for Indigenous Peoples, the Muslim Student network, and various students with disability groups for input on accessibility and priorities from their perspective;
- Ms. Mills noted that a whistleblower protection policy or another form of protection equivalent could be added to the policy;
- PIC members offered their service and experiences for HREA Tanner to consult on any ideas or to add a voice outside of the Board for policy wording or for any other considerations;
- Rights-based policies and programs should be funded to ensure that they are actualized;
- The policy could consider expanding protected grounds to include socioeconomic status; however, any expansion would require further funding;
- The policy does not detail specific issues, but rather creates a mechanism that can allow people to raise issues and concerns to address both systemic and individual cases of discrimination;
- Members inquired if staff will distribute the information regarding a consultation forum to each school council to ensure parent feedback;
- Certain community groups may feel uncomfortable in addressing concerns in an institutional setting due to past trauma. A reporting mechanism away from the traditional school setting could have a positive impact on these communities;
- A process that allows students, staff, and families to bring a trusted friend or adult could allow those with concerns to feel more comfortable in raising issues and may also allow those that have difficulty speaking either of the official languages to still have a voice and to aid in learning their entitled rights; and
- Ms. Hood suggested that the policy could be put into layman's terms in order for the wider community to better understand the content.

8. Information Items

8.a Chair's Report

Chair Reid welcomed new members to the committee and encouraged all members to engage with parents and be ambassadors in the District.

8.b Director's Report

On behalf of Associate Director Reynolds, Executive Officer Giroux reported that remote learning will be in place until 22 January 2021. The Province has indicated that they will advise by 20 January 2021 whether remote learning will continue beyond 22 January 2021. The District continues to work with Ottawa Public Health (OPH) to ensure students, staff, and families ready for a safe return to school when possible. The District is providing in-person instruction to approximately 800 elementary and 250 secondary students in special education classes whose needs cannot be met remotely. The District is working with OPH to conduct visits to these classes/sites to confirm safety practices. Staff will also be reaching out to those families to ensure they wish to continue in-person learning during the stay at home period. When schools return there will be additional requirements for masking for grades 1-3 and for masking outdoors in certain circumstances. Associate Director Reynolds added that there will also be changes to the daily self-assessments and some new opportunities for in-school testing. Details will be shared with families as more information is available.

8.c OCASC Report

Mr. Reid encouraged PIC members to attend OCASC meetings and to visit their website for more information.

8.d PIC Correspondence

The PIC correspondence registry was provided for information.

9. New Business

There was no new business.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Martyn Reid, Chair, Parent
Involvement Committee