

PROGRAM AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Tuesday, April 5, 2016
6:00 p.m.
Grimsby-Lincoln Room

PRESENT: Dave Schaubel (Chair), Sue Barnett, Helga Campbell, Diane Chase, Cheryl Keddy Scott (for Kevin Maves)

ADMINISTRATION: Lora Courtois, John Dickson

GUESTS: Corey Belliveau, Student Trustee Justin Dube, Lisa Gallant, Therese Grenier, Wes Hahn, Todd Halliday, Student Trustee Katelynn Hilborn, Tracy Krysa, Patti McGillivray, Cathy Meesters, Lori Powell, Jennifer Smith

REGRETS: Kevin Maves

SECRETARY: Erin DeRosario

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dave Schaubel called the meeting of the Program and Planning Committee to order at 6:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by Sue Barnett, Seconded by Helga Campbell

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF MARCH 22, 2016

Moved by Helga Campbell, Seconded by Cheryl Keddy Scott

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no new business arising from the Minutes of March 22, 2016.

NEW BUSINESS

SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANNING

Lisa Gallant, Health Promoter from Niagara Region Public Health provided the Committee with an overview of the School Travel Planning initiative, which promotes healthy, active living by walking to school. She explained how each school forms a Committee with school staff, parents, students, municipal staff and health professionals, using a facilitator to support the work. A steering committee oversees the program, to explore school readiness and verify capacity to bring on new schools. She also reviewed all of the seven participating

schools. Lori Powell, Executive Director at NSTS, discussed Niagara's pilot schools and shared the reasons why parents drive kids to school, including results from a national survey. She discussed how partners work together to support this initiative. Todd Halliday, Principal of College Street PS, shared his experience regarding the increase in walkers at College Street PS through the initiative. He explained the many events to support the program that take place throughout the year, such as community walk-throughs and a Tree Event to encourage students to walk to school. Trustee Cheryl Keddy Scott shared her experiences with safe walking routes and parking efficiencies in her community and outlined the importance of ensuring partnerships with everyone in the community. An inquiry was made regarding the possibility of having Ross Street PS in Welland and an elementary school in Niagara Falls participate in the program. Lisa Gallant shared that both of these scenarios are being explored at this time.

UPDATE ON ROLE OF LEARNING RESOURCE TEACHER/SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCE TEACHER/EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS

Superintendent John Dickson explained to the Committee that the role of Learning Resource Teachers, Special Education Resource Teachers and Educational Assistants involves a collaborative approach to supporting students, with the goal of ensuring that students achieve success in school. He stressed the importance of the in-school team and the detailed plans that they lay out for students with special education needs, as part of their role to assist in student success. He explained that Learning Resource Teacher/Special Education Resource Teacher (LRT/SERT) support is provided through a variety of placements, which may include indirect support, resource assistance, withdrawal assistance, and Special Education program placements. LRT/SERT allocations in each school are based on school population, special education caseloads, special education programming and school need, as well as other factors. Superintendent Lora Courtois spoke to the Special Education Achievement System (SEAS), which LRTs, SERTs and classroom teachers use as a tool to set goals and track student progress. There was discussion around the importance of parental communication when addressing student progress and creating plans for success. Superintendent Dickson emphasized that administrators are flexible and work diligently to accommodate parents' availability to discuss their children's needs. The latter part of the presentation pertained to the role of the Educational Assistant, which is to ensure students with physical, medical, self-regulation and communication needs are met, and they are able to attend school safely with success. The role of the Educational Assistant is also to assist students to access the curriculum.

UPDATE ON PLAY-BASED KINDERGARTEN

Superintendent Dickson brought a team from School Support Services to share in the presentation on play-based kindergarten. He provided the Ministry of Education background and research that led to the inception of this approach to learning in schools across Ontario. Patti McGillivray, Occupational Therapist, continued the presentation by sharing research on brain development and how it affects student readiness to learn. She outlined the new program, which includes a blending of philosophy and research findings. This framework encompasses the pillars of: belonging and contributing, self-regulation and well-being, demonstrating literacy and mathematics behaviours, and problem-solving and innovation. She also provided a snapshot of the Functional Screening Tool, which guides reflective thinking, planning, instruction, and interaction. Superintendent Dickson shared the importance of communication between kindergarten teachers and Designated Early Childhood Educators. He concluded the presentation with several examples from schools throughout the system, where teachers are using play-based learning to teach concepts such as math and literacy. Much progress has been made, however continuous learning and improvements are taking place each year throughout the implementation phase.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Schaubel asked if there was any other business and there was none.

NEXT MEETING

The next Program and Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 17, 2016** at 6:00 p.m. in the **Grimsby-Lincoln Room**.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Diane Chase, Seconded by Sue Barnett

"That the meeting of the Program and Planning Committee adjourn."

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.