

Minutes of the February 10, 2022
Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Meeting

via Zoom
Thursday, February 10, 2022
165A D'Youville Street
Time: 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

In attendance: Julie O'Hearn - St. Charles Elementary
Mel Young – Holy Cross
Colin Lapalme – St. Anne
Kelly Baird – St. Anne
Shannon Gouchie – St. Charles College and Holy Trinity
Maureen O'Hare-Nebre – Marymount Academy
Natasha Folino – Principal, St. Francis

SCDSB: Michael Bellmore – Chair of the Board
Joanne Bénard – Director of Education
Rossella Bagnato – Superintendent of School Effectiveness

Regrets: Paola Stefanuto – St. Benedict (Chair)
Amanda Demore – St. Charles Elementary (Vice-Chair)

1. Prayer and welcome

Participants were welcomed to the meeting. R. Bagnato led the Committee in the land acknowledgement and J. Bénard followed with a prayer.

2. School Board Update

M. Bellmore (Board Chair) provided a Board update which included the following:

- a. System enhancements: At the November 16, 2021, Board meeting, the Board of Trustees approved an appropriation of 2020-21 funds in the amount of \$873,000 to be used for system investments in 2021-22 in the focus areas of science, robotics, coding, the arts, including musical instruments, physical education, and classroom enhancements.
 - **The Arts (music, drama, visual arts) \$100,000**
We are purchasing a variety of instruments and art materials, such as Timpani drums for MMA, guitars, costumes and props for St Ben, choir riser for SCC and various instruments and art supplies for Bishop Alexander Carter. For elementary schools, they will receive funds to support the purchase of art materials such as paint easels, brushes, musical instruments, audio players
 - **Physical & outdoor education \$100,000**
We are replacing the 6 basketball standards at MMA, SCC and BAC, these will now be side swing wall mounted mechanisms.
We are also providing funds to our elementary schools to purchase various physical education supplies (skis, snowshoes, balls, nets ...)
St. John will also receive wall mounted mats with their logo for the gym.
 - **STEM/ Robotics**
To provide educators with opportunities to access the tools that help facilitate the development of 21st Century Skills and create an environment to encourage experiential learning opportunities, we will be purchasing K- 12 STEM and Robotics Kits for each of our schools. This is an investment of \$80 000 to support the STEM and coding expectations in the curriculum.

Vision: Leaders in Learning and Faith.

Mission: To realize each student's potential within our inclusive Catholic learning community by nurturing and developing their mind, body and spirit.

- **Science Labs**
An investment of \$30 000 is being made to update science lab resources in our secondary schools and science fair kits for our grade 7 & 8 classes.
- The Special Education Team has conducted an audit to ensure that all classrooms in Kindergarten and grade 1 have working **Sound Field systems**. These systems improve the learning environment for the entire class by improving the sound environment in the classroom - \$55,000.00
- **Technology and Coding: \$223,000**
Continued investment in devices, data projectors and computer labs to keep innovative practices at the forefront of student learning. Complementing these classroom investments will be the purchase of materials to enhance the coding programs which are an essential component of the mathematics curriculum.
- **Indoor Learning Spaces - \$250,000**
To continue to update our indoor learning space to provide an environment that is modern, inviting, safe and inspires our students to learn and innovate. Continue to replace old classroom furniture with flexible desks and tables that promote collaboration between and among students.
- **Outdoor Learning Spaces - \$100,000**
Outdoor spaces for teaching and learning builds community, increases connection between students and the land, and develops positive associations around school and the outdoors. Learning outdoors engages students, families, and community. We will be investing in outdoor learning spaces as an enhancement to the students learning experience. This will be a multi-year project.

b. High efficiency Air Filter Initiative

Current Status: We currently have 233 HEPA filters deployed as follows:

For schools or parts of schools without mechanical ventilation or with less effective mechanical ventilation, the board placed standalone HEPA filter units in all occupied learning environments, including: Classrooms (incl. Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK)), gyms, libraries, lunchrooms, and childcare spaces; For elementary schools with mechanical ventilation, the board placed a standalone HEPA filter unit in every FDK classroom and in every elementary classroom that had 28 or more students.

Next Steps: To enhance our strategy to reduce the transmission of the Covid 19 virus and other viruses, we are looking at the purchase of an additional 250 HEPA filters to ensure that there is a HEPA filter installed in every classroom in our system. The HEPA filter we typically use is rated to remove airborne particulate which will help with the reduction of air borne pollutants including viruses (such as COVID, Influenza and the common cold). The reduction of these airborne particulates may also have a positive impact on reducing absences as well as increasing occupant confidence in the ventilation in each of our buildings. Expected delivery of March 2022.

M. Bellmore thanked the members of PIC for their tremendous support and hard work as we all work through the constraints of the pandemic. He indicated how he and the Board of Trustees are extremely grateful for our parents/guardians, our students and our staff.

3. Presentation by Mark Fraser – Compass

Mr. Fraser "Compass Services" provided a general overview of "Compass Services". To access COMPASS Child and Youth Mental Health Services, for families and children call 705-525-1008. The committee was very grateful for the very well prepared presentation and thanked him for the presentation and for taking the time to answer all of our questions.

4. COVID update

J. Bénard shared a covid update which included the following information:

- Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) Program: All students in grades Kindergarten to grade 12 have access to Rapid antigen tests if they are symptomatic. Students were provided with a kit of 2. When

they return from an unplanned absence, they can then request another 2. Important to note that if a student tested positive, they cannot use a RAT for 30 days.

- Students are no longer required to wear masks outdoors, but distancing should be encouraged between cohorts as much as possible. Mask requirements for indoor remains the same.
- February 7, all of our secondary schools returned to a regular semester system (4 classes per day).
- All individuals participating in extra-curricular sports and high contact/high intensity activities will be required to wear a mask while on school premises but may temporarily remove their mask for active participation in the activities (e.g., masks may be removed while actively playing basketball, but must be worn while on the bench; masks may be removed while actively playing a musical instrument, but must be worn while waiting for the musical activity to begin and after it ends).
- Indoor curriculum-based programs (e.g. health and physical education and music) will also continue with the following requirements in place for students and staff:
 - Wearing a mask while singing and maintain as much distancing as possible. Elementary students will also be required to stay within their cohort.
 - Wearing a mask while participating in indoor sports where they can be worn safely. Masks may be removed during active participation but must be worn when not actively engaged.
- Mandatory daily confirmation of symptom screening for students and staff began Dec.1 and continues to be in place.
- Vaccination clinics have been taking place in schools: St. Francis, St. Charles, St. David, St. Anne and Pius. Mobile clinics are being planned in addition to more evening clinics in some sites such as Immaculate Conception.
- For the most up to date info please visit
<https://www.phsd.ca/>
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-education>

5. Planning the Parent Series

The preferred evening is Wednesday from 6:00 to 7:00 for the parent information sessions. Planning is underway to provide sessions on the following topics: mental health and well-being, a focus on math, a focus on literacy, cyber bullying and internet safety as well as transitioning to secondary school. Details to be shared soon.

6. Next Meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for April 7, 2022 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. via Zoom. Focus area as requested: White Buffalo Circle with Joel Agowissa.