

HAMILTON-WENTWORTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: September 2, 2020

ITEM 1 PRAYER/WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 5:07 p.m. via Skype and C. Ciapanna led the committee in the opening prayer. D. Eberts chaired the meeting.

ITEM 2 ATTENDANCE

PRESENT - COMMITTEE:

N. Centritto, Co-Chair, D. Eberts, Co-Chair,  
R. Gambale, T. Hartnett

ADMINISTRATION:

D. Hansen, Director of Education  
P. Daly, Chairperson of the Board  
C. Ciapanna, Superintendent of Education

REGRETS:

L. Fraser, L. Perini Parkes

RECORDING SECRETARY: K. Bullard

ITEM 3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 20, 2020 MEETING

MOTION:

THAT THE CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MAY 20, 2020 BE APPROVED.

MOVER: C. Ciapanna

SECONDER: R. Gambale

CARRIED

ITEM 4 REPORTS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) N. Centritto/D. Eberts

There were no reports.

b) P. Daly

i) Parent Guide for the Reopening of our HWCDSB Schools:

P. Daly thanked the committee for their continued commitment to parental engagement and support. He advised that staff have been working tirelessly throughout the summer planning for the reopening of schools. Policies and procedures were continuously updated with new information received from the Ministry. Transportation planning is underway for the resumption of service.

P. Daly reported that the parent guide has been provided to all parents, SEAC, employee groups and this committee. Regular communications have been sent and posted on the board and school websites.

ii) Staff Guide for the Safe Reopening of HWCDSB Schools:

P. Daly reported that every employee received this guide. It covers health and safety, remote learning, instruction, and the roles and responsibilities of each employee group. Best efforts were given to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff. The Board of Trustees met several times during the summer to review and approve recommendations.

iii) COVID-19 Funding and School Reopening Preparation Report:

This report was provided to committee members.

P. Daly asked for continued prayers for the good of our system.

c) D. Hansen

D. Hansen congratulated P. Daly for being elected the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association President for his third term and thanked P. Daly for advocating provincially for Catholic Schools and the Board.

i) Reopening Schools Update:

D. Hansen provided the following updates:

- staggered entry is consistent with guidance provided by the Ministry;
- staggered entry includes students coming in slowly over the first five days of school;
- staff will continue professional development the first day after Labour Day to include anti-racism training, health and safety and preparing for the reopening of classrooms to receive students;

- starting Wednesday September 9<sup>th</sup> , grades will be introduced by day;
- Kindergarten students were split into four cohorts that will come to school over four days;
- by Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup> all elementary school students will be in attendance;
- secondary schools will introduce students by grade;
- models of learning were explained;
  - the Elementary model includes students returning fully to school with safety protocols;
  - secondary schools will use an adapted model – courses are being split into cohort A and cohort B with students attending alternate days (Monday/Wednesday/alternate Friday or Tuesday/Thursday/alternate Friday);
  - there is a maximum of 15 students per class and students in class will have 300 minutes of learning per day (3 x 90 minutes of instruction with breaks, 40-minute lunch and 30 minutes at the end of the day with an opportunity for students to speak with their teachers either virtually or personally);
  - secondary schools are doing an Octomester model (1 credit at a time over 23 days to complete a total of 8 credits) – this would allow students to remain in small groups and allows the greatest distancing within the classroom;
- by Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, all students will be back to learning with instruction happening every day in schools;
- the Board is prepared to move to full in-school learning;
- 15% of students opted for on-line learning (3,200 elementary and 1,500 secondary);
- a virtual school is being planned with dedicated teachers in the classrooms;
- 325 minutes of synchronous instruction for elementary students with breaks and independent work;
- teachers will be available on-line for students;
- instruction will be different than what took place in the spring as it is much more teacher driven and will include more teacher availability for students;
- a virtual secondary school is also being planned; the on-line school will follow the same model as the in-school learning;
- on-line learning will not be able to offer the same courses as in-school due to teacher qualifications;
- all compulsory credits will be available;
- elective credits will be more challenging;

- elementary class size has been reduced (Kindergarten 23.3 students to 18.7 students – a huge impact to allow teachers to space students to at least one meter apart with some reaching two meters apart, Junior/Intermediate 24.5 to 22.68, and Primary classes were capped at 20);
- enhanced health and safety protocols (daily mandatory screening for staff, parents are directed to screening tools);
  - hand hygiene;
  - use of masks for staff and students at all times in the building;
  - recess in elementary schools – students need to stay with their cohorts;
  - introduction of signage;
  - washrooms;
  - ventilation in buildings;
  - cleaning routine with additional custodial staff /cleaning protocols;
- guidance has been provided by the Ministry on what to do in the event of a positive case or suspected positive case;
- in the event of an outbreak, Public Health will give direction regarding next steps; and
- funding for the hiring of many additional teachers and 10 new ECE teachers will be paid partially by the government as well as funds from board reserves.

D. Hansen reported that Principals were asked to identify areas for the cohorts to play together separate from their friend cohort and supervision staff will have to see that cohorts are staying separate. This will be managed by lunchroom supervision, and the staggering of breaks.

D. Eberts thanked P. Daly and D. Hansen for coordinating planning. A further discussion took place regarding the breakdown of students in elementary and secondary for on-line learning.

Re-entry dates were discussed. Parents/students can change from on-line to in-class and in-class to on-line at Thanksgiving, Christmas and March Break. Approximately 15% of students opted to do on-line learning. The ratio was two elementary to one secondary student. Those parents that did not respond are in large selecting remote learning. Grade 12 students were higher than the grades 9 and 10 students.

R. Gambale inquired about secondary exams. D. Hansen reported that 30% of a mark will consist of a final activity and 70% will be evaluated on course work. Some subjects may opt for a culminating activity or in-class type test or traditional exam. The removal of exam days will maximize face-to-face learning time.

D. Eberts requested clarification on board policy for visitors - specifically the Roots of Empathy Program. She explained that Roots of Empathy has school-based staff that are instructors already in the schools but are also volunteers that come into the schools. P. Daly advised that at the outset of re-opening visitors will not be permitted into the school unless an emergency. Programs will remain on hold for at least the first couple of months. D. Eberts advised that Roots of Empathy will be providing two new program models – one is the recovery model that is not starting before October and is a new curriculum that is being designed to help kids around the emotional adjustment back to school, and an adaptive program that will be starting in January for those schools that are not permitting visitors. P. Daly said that the board strongly supports Roots of Empathy and will work on these programs.

Permits for community use of schools will remain closed and will be reviewed in November.

R. Gambale asked for clarification regarding the availability of hand sanitizer/hand washing for students in portables. P. Daly advised that portables will have hand sanitizer available as well as all classrooms. Fire resistant cabinets have been purchased for each school for storage of additional hand sanitizer.

D. Hansen advised that paper towel dispensers have been reinstalled into schools as per the guidance of Public Health.

A brief discussion took place regarding masks. Cloth masks and plastic containers for students to store their masks when not in use, have been ordered. N. Centritto suggested that holes be put into the containers to prevent mold or bacteria.

d) C. Ciapanna

C. Ciapanna thanked the committee for their commitment to students and the system.

i) School Year Calendar 2020-2021

C. Ciapanna reported that the Ministry of Education communicated to boards to include an additional PA day at the beginning of the year to support staff in reviewing safety measures. The secondary calendar will eliminate exam days and a cohort calendar is being prepared.

He reported that a video was prepared for staff on COVID-19 to be viewed on the PA Day.

ii) Binbrook School

The school is scheduled to be completed in December. Accommodations for students have been made at the renovated vacant Our Lady of the Assumption School site as well as at St. Matthew.

iii) Vacancies

Information was sent to schools with responses due at the beginning of October to fill the two vacancies.

iv) Change of Meeting Date

The March 30<sup>th</sup> meeting date was changed as it falls during Holy Week.

Dates/Events

No report.

ITEM 5      MEETING DATES

Next meeting dates are:

- Tuesday, October 13, 2020
- Tuesday, December 8, 2020
- Tuesday, March 9, 2021
- Tuesday, May 11, 2021

ITEM 6      ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.