



**MINUTES OF THE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT THE PARKLAND SCHOOL DIVISION CENTRE FOR  
EDUCATION IN STONY PLAIN, ALBERTA ON 10 DECEMBER 2009**

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**ATTENDANCE:**

Student Representatives from:

Blueberry, Ècole Broxton Park, Connections for Learning, Duffield,  
Entwistle, Graminia, Greystone Centennial Middle School, High Park,  
Memorial Composite, Ècole Meridian Heights, Muir Lake, Seba Beach,  
Spruce Grove Composite, Stony Plain Central, Tomahawk, Wabamun,  
Woodhaven

Irene Goebel, Trustee and Co-Chair of Student Advisory Committee - Regrets

Richard Gilchrist, Board Chair

Dorcas Kilduff, Vice Chair

Robert Gillard, Trustee

Elsie Kinsey, Trustee

Kathleen Linder, Trustee

Darcy Kolodnicki, Trustee – regrets

Mary Lynne Campbell, Superintendent of Schools

Tim Monds, Deputy Superintendent

Kelly Wilkins, Associate Superintendent

Bob Bruce, Principal, Blueberry School

David Pysyk, Principal, Spruce Grove Composite

Carolyn Jensen, Vice Principal Connections for Learning

John Hodgson, Principal, Wabamun School

Sharon Smith, Teacher, Duffield School

Marsie Frist, Teacher, Memorial Composite High School

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**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Gilchrist at 9:00 a.m.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The meeting began with the singing of 'O Canada' followed by a welcome to the committee by Board Chair Richard Gilchrist. Participants introduced themselves.

**ICE BREAKER**

Associate Superintendent Kelly led the students in a group ice breaker session.

**SPEAK OUT**

Alberta Education: Speak Out, an Alberta Student Engagement Initiative, began as a way for youth to have a voice - a voice that can produce change. Through this initiative, we can work together to improve learning, and decision-makers get to know what it's like to be a student in Alberta today.

Students were asked for input on three prompts from the Speak Out Alberta Initiative:

1. Describe your surroundings and activities when you are learning at your best.
2. What is holding you back from learning at your best?
3. What can we do to overcome these obstacles and get to your vision of education?

Group discussions took place on each of the questions and the top two comments from each group were recorded. The summary, as well as group notes will be submitted to Speak Out as Parkland School Division's submission.

### **CO-CHAIRPERSON NOMINATION**

Students from the following schools were nominated for the Student Advisory Co-Chair position: Duffield, High Park, Memorial, Spruce Gove Composite, and Woodhaven.

Each nominee spoke to voters on why they should be elected as Co-Chair.

Votes were tallied, and the Co-Chair for the 2009-2010 Student Advisory Committee will be the nominee from High Park School.

### **CRITICAL THINKING**

Associate Superintendent Ben Beil discussed Critical Thinking as the school division's three-year AISI initiative (Alberta Initiative for School Improvement). Students were asked to discuss, in groups, the following question:

1. What does critical thinking look like, feel like, and sound like from the students' point of view?

A summary of each table's comments will be distributed with the next agenda.

### **FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS**

- **Bullying / Respect (10)**
- **Increasing student / teacher interaction (7)**
- **Discipline (5)**
- **School Spirit (4)**
- Boosting student confidence (3)
- Transition from Grade 9 to Grade 10 (2)
- Inter-division visits (2)
- Student engagement (2)
- Student involvement in community (1)
- Class size (1)
- Drugs & Alcohol (1)
- Developing meaningful curriculum (1)
- Concern for lower grade levels (0)
- More activity in learning (0)
- Effective teaching techniques (0)
- Teacher/Student time factors (0)
- Developing individual learning programs (0)

Students were given an opportunity to choose their top two preferred topics. The number beside each topic indicates the number of 'votes' that topic received.

### **LAST WORD – STUDENT COMMENTS**

Students had an opportunity to share their comments from the morning's meeting.

### **CLOSING COMMENTS**

Board Chair, Richard Gilchrist, thanked all participants for attending the meeting and congratulated the Student Co-Chair as the first Grade 9 Student, in the history of the Student Advisory Committee Meetings, to be elected as Co-Chair of the Committee. This position has historically been a high school student.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

# Student Advisory Committee

## December 10, 2009

### CRITICAL THINKING

Associate Superintendent Ben Beil discussed Critical Thinking as the school division's three-year AISI project (Alberta Initiative for School Improvement). Students were asked to discuss, in groups, the following question, and to provide their top 2 or 3 choices from the discussion.

**What does Critical Thinking *look like, feel like, and sound like* from the students' point of view?**

#### Table Responses:

- Attentive, listening, students seem interested in discussions that are on topic
- Students wanting to be involved
- Students feel the 'click' (I get it!)
- Body posture shows you are into it
- Learning is fun
- Wanting to pursue subject in more depth
- On top of the world when subject is understood
- Busy questioning to teachers and classmates, quiet talking, not distracting
- Students paying attention and actively doing something
- Ask more questions and take opportunities for 're-dos'
- Class discussions and group discussions
- Students are looking at teacher, paying attention, not 'playing' with cell phones or ipods
- Paying attention to what is happening
- Reluctant to leave the class / activity
- Students talking about the lesson
- Teachers communicate what students need to learn
- Good student engagement

#### Critical Thinking - Engagement

- The "click" where you move to sudden understanding.
- Body Language
- Everyone having fun
- Want to pursue topic more in-depth
- Focused on where the learning is coming from
- Attention – excitement to repeat / reluctant to leave – want more
- Asking relevant questions and working collectively
- Being active in the learning process
- Buss of activity (but with focus)

# **SpeakOut Session**

## **Student Advisory Committee Meeting**

### **10 December 2009**

**Describe your surroundings and activities when you are learning at your best.**

- Focused classroom
- Class engagement to activity
- Individual attention
- Comfortable environment
- Hands-on activities
- Teacher / student relationships
- Interactive learning / being involved with out of school activities
- How applicable the learning will be in future
- Enthusiastic teaching

**What is holding you back from learning at your best?**

- Stress at home interference in class
- Peer pressure, class size (stable size)
- Lack of student/teacher relationships (lack of confidence)
- Interactions with teachers
- Bullying, smart kids look down on average kids
- Lack of resources (text books, on-line)
- Boring class / more interesting
- Classes related to real life experiences
- Interactive class
- More time on projects, tests
- Student/teacher relations (help with class)
- Annoying students

**What can we do to overcome these obstacles and get to your vision of education?**

- Connecting with the teacher
- Teacher knowing their students
- Being able to approach the teacher
- More variety
- Places to go for help to learning
- Calm and comfortable environment
- Communications
- Respect
- Staff treats everyone with respect
- Parents can relax
- Positive attitude to students
- Peer coaching and teaching
- Separate classes by ability