



Excellence In Education

MEMORANDUM

Date: 07 December, 2010
To: Board of Trustees
From: Tim Monds – Acting Superintendent
Originator: Kelly Wilkins, Associate Superintendent
Subject: **Student Advisory Committee Meeting**

Recommendation

That the Board of Trustees receives as information, the Student Advisory Committee Minutes of 16 November, 2010 as presented at the Regular Meeting of 07 December, 2010.

/ds



**MINUTES OF THE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT THE PARKLAND SCHOOL DIVISION CENTRE FOR
EDUCATION IN STONY PLAIN, ALBERTA ON 16 NOVEMBER 2010**

ATTENDANCE:

Student Representatives from:

Blueberry, École Broxton Park, Connections for Learning, Duffield, Entwistle,
Graminia, Greystone Centennial Middle School, High Park, Memorial Composite,
École 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

Richard Gilchrist, Board Chair

Dorcas Kilduff, Vice Chair

Ron Heinrichs, Trustee

Elsie Kinsey, Trustee

Kathleen Linder, Trustee

Eric Cameron, Trustee

Tim Monds, Superintendent of Schools

Kelly Wilkins, Associate Superintendent

Ben Beil, Associate Superintendent

Bob Bruce, Principal, Blueberry School

Sharon Smith, Teacher, Duffield School

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Trustee Goebel at 9:05 a.m.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting began with the singing of 'O Canada'. Co-Chair Christie Kobialko then requested that everyone introduce themselves.

TEAM BUILDING

Co-Chair Kobialko explained the Team Building activity. Three Trustees will man three stations. Students solved two riddles per station and then rotated to the next station.

SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT – SCHOOL / DIVISION SPIRIT

Students responded to four questions. For each question, students changed partners.

1. What does your school do to spark involvement and spirit?
2. What methods could be used to create more involvement and spirit?
3. Are there any extracurricular activities that are not provided that you feel will improve the school?
4. What programs could be implemented so all students feel a part of the school community?

Students regrouped at their tables and wrote down three extracurricular activities and/or programs that could be implemented that would improve school involvement and/or school spirit.

- Wear school's colors day
- Fun Day – fun activities at different locations in school

- Academic Improvement Challenge – either rewards to students in increase their average by 5% average or school wide reward for 5% overall increase.
- More specific clubs (chess, data debate)
- Parkland’s Got Talent (competition between school)
- Class competitions (shoe box, door decorating)
- Intramurals during recess
- Assemblies, pep rallies, dances
- Sports for younger children
- More sports options
- Drama, dance and academic activities for those that don’t like sports
- Pep rallies – kids being able to see what you can do
- More extracurricular activities – floor hockey, table tennis, indoor soccer, snow shoeing, drama, dance, an academic activity.
- More extracurricular clubs - not drama/sports related
- Mixed grades carnivals – fun days that whole school can participate – eg. celebrating winter/summer
- Interscholar tournaments
- Year end parties
- Responsible contributions - fundraising to help other people, weekly meetings

STUDENT ACTIVITY - “Never Have I Ever”

As a table, students talked about some things they have never done (ex: never rode a camel) and wrote down 10 activities. During sharing, if a person from another table had done that activity, that group lost a point.

HEARING FROM OUR YOUTH – THE WAY FORWARD

Associate Superintendent Kelly Wilkins spoke to the educational landscape in Alberta – how things are changing. Alberta Education is very interested to hear what students have to say and have initiated Speak Out Forums and a dedicated website to provide opportunities for students to be heard.

Exciting things are also happening provincially that will affect students. The School Act is being reviewed, for the first time in many years (1995) and will be rewritten in the near future. The School Act provides a legal foundation of how education is delivered in Alberta. As part of that process, Alberta Education has established stakeholder groups - Setting the Direction and Setting the Action. Parkland School Division is excited about the opportunity to lead and guide the education of students. Trustees are interested in hearing student’s thoughts. Over the next year, they will be working/talking with community stakeholders about school boundaries, transportation, how we best utilize our school space better and other issues.

Today’s challenge for students is to think about your experience in education.

1. What is working well for you in school?
2. What is not working well for you? Challenges/problems/struggles.
3. What suggestions do you have for Parkland School Division to make improvements?
4. Which would you prefer and why?
 - staying at your home school with a limited selection of courses, teams, etc.
 - Travelling a distance to another school that offers greater selection.

LAST WORD – STUDENT COMMENTS

Board Chair, Richard Gilchrist asked students to share their comments from the morning’s meeting.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Board Chair Gilchrist, thanked all participants for attending the meeting. He noted that the March 15, 2011 meeting will be held at Memorial Composite High School. The Board of Trustees will host a BBQ lunch at the May 17, 2011 meeting and students will be asked to bring someone from a grade lower than theirs.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

**Student Advisory Committee Meeting
16 November 2010**

HEARING FROM OUR YOUTH – THE WAY FORWARD

Question #1

What is working well for you in school?

- The technology and how we interact with it
- The technology (ie smartboards & labtops)
- A lot of options (more activity)
- Availability of teachers to help you
- The options program, interactions with other schools, balanced options, smaller class settings, how the student council get to make decisions
- Blueberry School's grade 9 fundraising is working very well. Tomahawk's sports teams are going good as well. We also have a school carnival that is a huge success. Stony Plain Central has a very good option system. We have a huge variety and it reaches out to all kids, the athlete, the drama kids and everyone else.
- Class sizes are a comfortable size for a work class environment
- Lots of project work
- All the extra-curricular activities
- All the school educational trips
- High school math and science curriculums are not as boring as other subjects because they are more interactive rather than social which is more reflective
- The Option classes, it gives kids the ability to socialize with other people.
- Listening to personal music players

Question #2

What is not working well for you?

- Teachers should be qualified for the classes they are expected to teach (like French!)
- Tomahawk and Blueberry both don't have enough variety in their option programs. Duffield doesn't really have coaches that know what they're doing and Stony Plain Central, Blueberry and Tomahawk all feel like they don't have enough participation or school spirit tied in with their sport teams. Stony Plain Central has a problem with no school spirit or pep rallies which is really hurting school participation.
- New rules example: no electronics, people that now go into junior high have to take French. Split grade classes, cut backs in money, kids should be able to make choices
- Taking notes as a teacher lectures
- A bigger variety of options.
- Teacher time management (teachers need to ensure sufficient time on all portions of the curriculum - no cramming to fit some parts in)
- Rules must apply to everyone - no one should have special privileges, or the rules bent for them
- Being more interactive in class such as projects and group work
- A teacher just handing notes out and not explaining the work to the students

Question #3

What suggestions do you have for Parkland School Division to make improvements?

- Give more freedoms to students
- Beyond the Hurt is a program for anti-bullying
- As a group we feel that we need more anti-drug programs. They number of students that are using drugs at this young of an age is overwhelming and we need to lower it. Another thing is we have to make kids enjoy school more, make it more welcoming and fun. Students don't feel like coming to school so more

kids don't enjoy being there. Another idea that we thought of would be for the students to have access to the schools wireless internet on their smart devices/laptops.

- The outreach students should have a review package for the final exam
- Before making new rules at schools, listen to the students and see what they think before making that rule because some students get angry at the new rule. Have high schools near other junior high or elementary schools because some kids live pretty far from high schools.
- Expanded IP classes
- Technology needs to be more plentiful and equal among school (Meridian has one smart board for the school vs. Greystone has a lot of smartboards)
- More teachers trying to relate the curriculum to the student so that the student can understand and remember

Question #4

Which would you prefer and why?

A. Staying at your home school with a limited selection of courses, teams, etc.

B. Travelling a distance to another school that offers greater selection

- B: because you can learn from a larger selection of courses
- A: Some of our group would prefer staying at their current school because their current school gives them all they need for right now and because it's a huge change to leave a school you've been at just for a few more option programs.
- B: The majority of our group would rather be able to switch to a different school to be able to have the options they want or to play for a school with a real sports team that has good coaching.
- B: Traveling the distance is the preferred option because you get a bigger variety of classes/options to learn from. You would also get the ability to play on a sports team and socialize.
- B: There is more learning opportunities rather than one school having limited choices. A larger selection of courses not available at your own school. (all 5 of us agree)
- B. because there is more wide selections and there would be options there that you wouldn't get at other schools. (everyone in our group agrees)