**Don Valley East – Ward Forum**

**Trustee Ken Lister, Ward 17**

**Tuesday November 15, 2016, 7pm-9pm**

**Lescon Public School**

**Present:** Ken Lister, Audley Salmon, Joanna Hodson, Trixie Doyle, Susan Knisch, Otto Knisch, Kristina Laperle, Aretha Phillip, Vasso Tassiopoulos

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

* introductions from all in attendance

**2. Election of PIAC and alternate**

* Aretha Phillip nominated for PIAC rep, accepted nomination
* Kristina Laperle nominated for FSLAC, accepted nomination
* PIAC and FSLAC spots for alternate left open

**3. a) Guest Speaker - Trixie Doyle, PIAC co-chair**

**Topic: Engaging Parents in your School Council (see handout)**

* small parent councils struggle to get all work done; there is a need to recruit new parents for council
* it is important to understand your target audience when recruiting
* in the past trying to run a literacy program did not work; stay-at-home parents are needed to run the program
* some families can not take part in fundraising initiatives; before recruiting parents it is important to know about the demographics that make up the school population
* parents need to go from a passive to an active role
* it is important to know parents’ preferred method of communication; offline/online
* make sure that parents know that meetings are open to all; build a pool of involved parents
* keep parents engaged; share contact info
* PIAC can be contacted for further info; links also provided on handout

**b)** **Comments/Discussion**

* Aretha noted that challenges to get parents involved include language barriers
* some parents she knows use the WeChat app to communicate in their preferred language
* school information needs to be translated for parents
* we need to be inclusive; make parents feel comfortable, not excluded
* parent council can also benefit from fostering a relationship with school principal
* Kristina mentioned that a major issue is how to engage parents through e-mail
* Trixie noted that TDSB accounts will switch to gmail
* parent council need a TDSB e-mail address and a way to connect to their Ward
* in the past many motions have been made to improve access to contact information for parent councils
* Trustee Lister noted that contact lists vary: his own list, admin assistants’ lists, board lists
* some e-mail addresses cannot be verified
* Superintendent Audley Salmon noted that the gmail switch is happening at the end of November for TDSB staff; for council it will occur in 2017
* Superintendent Salmon will contact tech services about the e-mail issue and look into privacy
* he also noted that it is easiest to obtain accurate contacts by having parents enter their e-mail address through the website for newsletter to avoid error
* Trustee Lister noted that privacy legislation needs to be considered; privacy issues occurred in the board two years ago
* Kristina brought forth the issue of booking meeting places for sub-committees
* Aretha agrees that it is a challenge to find a meeting place for sub-committees; they need to pay for a permit to use spaces when principals are not there
* Kristina also noted that the e-based permit system is not working well
* Trixie mentioned that they have to schedule time to use the school when the principal is in the school and their council is using another space; there is an issue of being charged for using school space for council meetings
* Superintendent Salmon said that the principal has to be there so that the council is not charged to use the space; he will look into the issue/solution of principals supervising so that committees can access sites for meetings
* Trustee Lister also noted that the issue of permits has been heard; the e-system has had mixed reviews
* Trustee Lister noted that in his ward a high percentage of students are from low income families and this sometimes makes it hard to get parents engaged in fundraising and school community involvement; we also need to consider communication issues

**4. Superintendent Update—Superintendent Audley Salmon**

**a) Special Needs**

* there is a challenge to support special needs in schools
* there are limited resources in order to get more support from SNA, CYW, CYC
* quicker intervention is needed in order to meet the needs of individual students
* more funding is needed for staff
* the board does not provide but gives referrals for occupational therapy for students’ needs; referrals may take 6 months-1year
* referrals such as those for speech and language therapy take time which frustrates parents
* the needs of all students need to be met
* Kristina mentioned that the conference that took place in April focused on special needs
* she also noted that there are many issues involving support for special needs: it is better to keep students in the classroom, but there are also too many students in each class, which makes it difficult for teachers to provide individual attention in order to make lessons accessible
* Ken notes that boards spend more money on special education than they receive
* funding is based on class size and there is no opportunity to move funds from one area to another
* Kristina emphasized the need for smaller class sizes; small class sizes will benefit students’ well-being
* Trixie agreed that class size is connected to students’ mental health
* Aretha noted that money used for EQAO needs to be used in order to benefit students individual learning

**b) Optional Attendance**

* Optional Attendance is coming Feb. 1, 2017
* some parents do not understand the details of how optional attendance works
* the special education placement process starts in Nov.-Dec. and it is different than optional attendance
* Kristina mentioned that stories have been collected from parents and will be used to resolve issues in the special education placement process
* Superintendent Salmon recognizes the response to the issue which differs in different parts of the city

**c) Census**

* reminder of TDSB Parent Census is coming up
* 5 years have passed since the last census
* the census will focus on grades 6-12 and will come up the second week of April; parents need to be engaged in order to fill it out; their voices need to be heard; data collected contributes to school programs

**d) Time change**

* now that it gets darker out sooner we need to emphasize caution in school communities

**5. Trustee Update—Ken Lister**

**a) Ward Boundaries**

* the city is reviewing ward boundaries; 3 more city councillors will be added
* there can not be more than 22 trustees; there will be an issue of dividing 47 wards between 22 trustees
* the motion asking the city to have photo radar in schools passed; the province will send revenue to the TDSB to keep schools safe

**b) Bussing Issues**

* bussing issues: drivers are needed for every route; drivers are still needed
* the board is still look into legal options and getting financial compensation for bussing services that were not provided
* the Ontario Ombudsman is investigating school issues on bussing; there is now a focus on making sure that policies are in place in order to prevent the issue next fall

**c) York Mills Schools**

* Trustee Lister is going to the committee tomorrow where they will discuss the recommendation of changing York Mills CI to grade 9-12 and the Junior High Schools in the area to middle schools, grades 6-8
* both motions are expected to pass at the meeting

**d) Construction and Repairs**

* roof construction, solar panels, floor replacement are almost done at many schools
* Roofs under construction: Don Valley MS, Woodbine MS, Pleasant View Jr. High this fall
* Roofs done at Milne Valley MS, Cherokee PS, Dallington PS, Lescon PS, Crestview PS, Don Valley MS, Georges Vanier SS, Woodbine MS, Forest Manor PS, Pleasant View Jr. High, Ernest PS, Muirhead PS, Don Mills CI, Victoria Village PS, George S Henry Academy, Rene Gordon, Greenland PS
* Solar Panels installation near complete at Crestview PS, Dallington PS, Don Valley MS, Seneca Hill PS, Cherokee PS, Forest Manor PS, George S Henry Academy
* Milne Valley MS now has a new gym floor
* Almost done installing new air handling unit and new boiler vents at Victoria Park CI
* Broadlands now has a new PA system
* Vanier is having front area renovated
* Brian PS and Muirhead PS do not have their roofs done; some schools have to take surroundings into consideration; nearby apartments affect the issue
* most schools in the south part of ward 17 are not done; most of the north is done
* 3 projects are being done at Don Valley Jr. High: roof repair, painting, replacing/resurfacing stairs
* Many repairs at Don Mills CI: roof replacement, locker replacement, painting, floors, leaks, upgrading plumbing, parking lot repairs
* Muirhead PS is only scheduled for roof replacement
* more will be added to the list
* ideas and work is needed to make play areas in schools more interesting
* Trustee Lister will keep an up to date list of repairs; can be contacted for further info

**e) Heritage Month**

* November is Aboriginal Education Month within the TDSB

**f) Ward Forum Topics**

* Trustee Lister is open to suggestions for topics for upcoming ward meetings
* Feb. 16 there may be a Forum with Trustee Alexander Brown, Ward 12
* There is a Holiday Market Nov. 17 at Muirhead PS; bring a non-perishable food donation
* the TDSB is going through delegation procedures; delegating how many people are scheduled to speak at meetings; how to best speak to trustees

Tuesday January 17, 2017

7-9pm

Forest Manor Public School

International Bacalaureate program

Guest Speaker Manon Gardner, Executive Superintendent Teaching and Learning

Monday February 27, 2017

6:30-8:30pm

Greenland Public School

TBA

Monday March 20, 2017

6:30-8:30pm

Muirhead

Special Education

Guest Speakers Uton Robinson, Executive Superintendent, Special Education; Lori Moore, Central Coordinating Principal, Special Education

Tuesday April 18, 2017

7-9pm

George S Henry Academy

Fix Our Schools

Guest Speaker Krista Wylie

Tuesday May 23, 2017

6:30-8:30pm

Kingslake

Eco Schools

Guest Speaker Richard Christie, Senior Manager, Sustainability

**g) Questions/Comments**

* Kristina suggested the topic presentation of safer streets near schools; the need to create safer environments; parents want safer routes for schools
* Trustee Lister also noted that the TDSB is closing excess schools:

-at next meeting they may close Vaughn Road Academy because of declining population

-areas in Scarborough are being considered; closing 4 schools then building new schools to accommodate the community

* Kristina would also be interested in a Forum discussing online Virtual Library which is a great resource in offered in the TDSB
* Susan Knisch is from Community Info at Fairview Mall; she would like to be contacted about events to keep the community informed on what’s going on; she can engage the community to come to events

Meeting adjourned 9:10pm