

**PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES**

**Thursday, May 31, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.  
St. Thomas of Villanova High School**

**PRESENT:**

F.Favot, Trustee

**Board Representatives:**

Paul Picard, **Director of Education**

Mario Iatonna, **Executive Superintendent of Business**

**Elementary Parent Representatives:**

Dana Tonus, **St. Thomas of Villanova Family**

Heather Sawyer, **Elementary Alternate**

Donalda Turner, **F.J. Brennan Family**

John Blevins, **Elementary Alternate**

Shelley Bolger, **Holy Names Family**

Derek Thachuk, **Cardinal Carter Family**

**Secondary Parent Representatives:**

Heather McAuley, **Assumption Family**

Andrea Mason, **St. Anne Family**

Jill Braido, **Secondary Alternate**

Colleen Switzer – **At Large Representative**

**Guests:**

Maureen Eremic **What School?**

Gary Wigfield, **St. Thomas of Villanova**

Karen Osbourne, **Sacred Heart**

**Regrets:**

Julie St. John, **St. Joseph's Family & Chair of PIC**

**Recording Secretary:**

Donalda Turner, **FJ Brennan Family**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Action By</b>
5.1	D.Tonus chaired the meeting as Julie St. John was unable to attend. The meeting was officially called at 6:34 p.m.	INFO
5.2	Start with introductions.	INFO
5.3	Agenda approved. Moved by: C. Switzer Seconded by: J.Blevins That the agenda be approved as distributed. Carried.	INFO

5.4	<p>Approval of Minutes from the March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012 meeting.          Discussion on action items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Page 8 Item b) Student Achievement Initiatives; add <b>Byrne</b> after Emelda's name.</li> <li>2) Page 7 Item Sub-Committee Reports; Replace <b>home</b> with <b>email</b> addresses.</li> <li>3) Page 11 Item Chair's Report; H.McAuley asked that the word <b>anger</b> be struck from the minutes.</li> </ol> <p>Moved by: H.McAuley Seconded by: S.Bolger</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4) Page 3 Item ACTION ITEM: PIAC 2012 Working Groups list was not attached to the minutes.</li> </ol> <p>Amendments to the March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012 minutes were noted.          Moved by: H.McAuley Seconded by: S.Bolger          The minutes of March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012 to be approved as amended. Carried.</p>	Board
5.5	<p>P.Picard spoke to the committee regarding concerns expressed from JoAnne Shea, Superintendent and Emelda Byrne, Superintendent from the March 29<sup>th</sup> meeting. They felt harassed and intimidated by some of the parents. P.Picard accepted some of the responsibility as to what perimeters and items they were able to respond to. He further explained that any committee has growing pains. P.Picard noted after the last meeting there were vicious emails and phone calls to staff. The stress level was also high due to the fact that these meetings are running four plus hours and the staff members felt they were always in defense mode. They spoke with Administration as to how they feel and P.Picard has the responsibility to act regarding this situation. M.latonna and P.Picard decided it would be best if they became liaison for this committee. P.Picard also noted clerical support will no longer be provided as an employee is present for these long meetings and it takes hours to prepare the minutes and this is a problem.          He felt that it is unfortunate and sad when people don't want to come to meetings.</p>	INFO
5.6	<p>D.Tonus wanted to make it clear that as a parent group we have not worked successfully on moving forward. We need to work with the Board and work on developing a level of trust and mutual respect. She explained that it is our responsibility and right to ask questions. When we question something it's not a personal attack. D.Tonus agrees there is tension between parents and Administration. D.Turner noted that she saw frustration on J.Shea and E.Byrne's faces and feels that they shouldn't have been put in this position as it was extremely difficult to answer many of the questions asked from parents. J.Braido did not feel there was a personal attack from parents, this was her overall sense. H.Sawyer is tired of items not getting answered. D.Tonus stresses that parents need to feel that they can still address issues at meetings and we can have a discussion and make recommendations.</p>	INFO

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5.6 Cont'd	The goal is to be positive and professional in how we handle this. D.Tonus asked if Administration is ok with this and the response was yes.	
5.7	H.McAuley reviewed minutes from the Umbrella meeting held May 14 <sup>th</sup> . She noted that pro-grant application submissions should be hire due to all of the work S.Bolger did. Noted it was frustrating that the budget submission date was before the PIC meeting. M.latonna noted you can still make a submission. H.McAuley spoke about inconsistencies with the Board, one item noted when parents see the Director Report printed in full colour when the expense to have this done could go back to the students when we are struggling so much financially. D.Tonus noted everyone shared what type of fundraising they are doing at their schools and what's working and what's not working. H.McAuley noted it was discussed that a workshop in the Fall for parents would be beneficial to review; financial guidelines, minutes, roles of the Superintendent, PIC, Umbrella etc. H.McAuley will be looking for speakers. D.Tonus asked if there was a time frame right after Thanksgiving to have this. The more information parents have the more successful we will be. A plan will be prepared over the summer.	PIC/ Board
5.8	J.Blevin's noted the meeting cannot continue as a Trustee is not present. Right after he spoke Frank Favot walked in; he was a bit late due to a previous engagement. The meeting continued.	INFO
5.9	S.Bolger spoke about the reaching out grants. She met with E.Bryne and J.Shea and the report was very well done. She received quotes asking for \$16,000.00; the deadline is June 8 <sup>th</sup> . P.Picard noted in support of E.Bryne and J.Shea as they met with P.Picard and he said this was one of the best reports he has ever seen. He suggested we remove ourselves from a Regional submission and submit on our own as it would be a stronger submission. P.Picard read the report a couple of days prior to this meeting and noted he was extremely impressed and the report was of very high quality. H.McAuley asked if the Board was putting out another report. P.Picard said PIC putting forward best when not a lot involved. This is a local, personal thing. He would be shocked if this did not go through. D.Tonus thanked S.Bolger for all of her hard work. S.Bolger said she could try to increase the value to put towards the web site. P.Picard noted to meet with J.Shea. S.Bolger noticed most approved applications seem to be in the 10-15 thousand value. P.Picard noted he will make sure this is done on time. J.Blevin noted six in his family of schools have submitted for grants.	PIC/ Board

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5.10	<p>J.Blevin attended a PIC Conference in Toronto and said it was very educational. Lots of networking. They spoke about Internet Safety. D.Tonus noted the networking opportunities were great and the Ministry wants parents to get involved and delegates had an opportunity to discuss challenges and concerns. Lots of resources are available and we need to find a way to share this information with our families. One additional advantage of participating was the opportunity to hear how other PIC meetings were run and what is working for other schools.</p>	INFO
5.11	<p>D.Thachuk attended OPACE May 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> in Whitby, Ontario. It started with a mass, they had exhibits and each person got to pick three workshops to attend. They discussed Bill 13 and spoke about priests that express concerns regarding labelling group Gay Alliance.</p>	INFO
5.12	<p>S.Bolger – Everyone Belongs to Our School attended in London, Ontario. (In Umbrella Meeting). D.Tonus requested that moving forward everyone that attends a conference on behalf of PIC be prepared to pick one action item that this group can use. One idea to implement would be to make it more valuable for all.</p> <p>C.Switzer thought this was a good idea. S.Bolger noted in web design logo being designed. J.Blevins noting people were handing out business cards at the seminar. H.McAuley noted to not make business cards personal then you can print several generic cards and create a line for each member to write their name or be linked to the web site.</p> <p>There was some discussion regarding this and D.Tonus noted in theory it was a good idea and requested that C.Switzer look into at Staples for preprinted cards and come back with the estimated cost at the next meeting. C.Switzer is going to follow through with this.</p>	C.Switzer
5.13	<p>Board Updates: Agenda (C) D.Tonus to change to 2012.          P.Picard and M.latonna tag team.          Single biggest initiative new approach June 12 rolled out to Trustees in Public session.          Mental Health at lots of time on curriculum across province, we must meet a plateau. No. 1 – mental health No. 2 – physical well being          Bullying impacts mental health and physical health wants to move forward aggressively.</p>	INFO
5.14	<p>M.latonna talked about the declining enrollment. There has been a significant impact on schools. We need support and good relationships with the Catholic community. Our reality is the Catholic system is different. Level of anger is directed to Administration and Trustees from the public. If a child is not Catholic in Public schools you're compelled to work with the Board.</p>	INFO

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5.14 Cont'd	<p>School closures – When a Catholic school closes people are just going across the street to a Public school and not continuing on with the Catholic Board. We know commitment of faith in schools; we need to focus on value of Catholic education.</p> <p>When you only value Catholic education because it's near your house, then were going to have to confront a greater reality.</p> <p>Bad one – forced to system of 15,000 students. At least committed to faith.</p> <p>Downside – numbers continue to decline, no commitment to value system there will be no system.</p> <p>P.Picard believes strongly that it won't be outside that destroys our system we will do it ourselves.</p>	
5.15	<p>P.Picard spoke about Bill 13 GSA issue. Let's change Bill 13 it is changing only gender related issues. We are mandating issues for everyone. The law only saying the ability to generate specific clubs. In a GSA world what kids are involved? Good self image, comfortable with themselves. Bullying is more than this, kids are afraid to go home and tell their mom and dad.</p>	INFO
5.16	<p>P.Picard noted starting in the Fall Faith Audits will take place. Idea is to say what we need to do to support Faith. Who is delivering it? Audit system is core to build system around it and ensure that we are consistently delivering quality Catholic Education.</p>	Board
5.17	<p>M.latonna noted there are 2200 graduates this year and only 1000 registered for Junior Kindergarten.</p>	INFO
5.18	<p>M.latonna noted young people are encouraged to leave the City as there are no jobs for them and this has affected our enrollment not only in our Board but also the Public Board.</p>	INFO
5.19	<p>M.latonna noted we are not going to be a Board with 22,000 students and according to the Ministry we are a high risk Board. The Ministry said we need to close 8 or 9 schools right now. M.ltonna noted we are looking at closing 3. The Board just laid off 230 staff.</p>	INFO
5.20	<p>M.latonna noted June 14<sup>th</sup> the Ministry wants a plan submitted. June 12<sup>th</sup> budget to Board with a two week review. Cuts to teachers with 600 less students. The Ministry has hinted about amalgamating the school boards as they see it as a way to save money.</p> <p>D.Tonus noted this would be a good opportunity to get parents involved. We have to aggressively advocate about the value of Catholic Education.</p> <p>H.McAuley noted it's hard to contact parents and things are coming down and parents are not aware of it.</p>	Board Forum

<p>5.20 Cont'd</p>	<p>D.Tonus noted the Board needs to be more approachable. People believe in Catholic schools. Are we bench marking to the best. What enhancements/changes can we make to our Catholic Education system to make it world-class? We need to work together and regain our constituents faith in Catholic Education.</p> <p>H.McAuley noted students come from all over the City to attend the IB program at Assumption because it's good. Schools have a focus. Get kids interested.</p> <p>M.latonna noted; "So what I'm hearing is you would like a general forum." Response from group was yes.</p>	
<p>5.21</p>	<p>M.latonna noted the budget is a challenge and they are under stress to make decisions quickly as the Ministry is forcing this.</p> <p>They are offering seminars to Superintendents on how budgeting works to educate them on the process.</p> <p>H.McAuley noted teachers need to be communicated to. Grass roots with parents. D.Tonus restated the need to have all stakeholders encouraged to share their opinions on cost-saving strategies that do not negatively impact the quality of education, but instead focus on cutting costs.</p>	<p>INFO</p>
<p>5.22</p>	<p>H.McAuley noted social workers have been cut and M.latonna noted the Ministry does not fund social workers. We are an educational facility and help can be sought-after by professionals in the community. Most school boards do not fund social workers. D.Tonus stated that again, the public and families in the Catholic Education system need to be informed. Communication is key.</p>	<p>INFO</p>
<p>5.23</p>	<p>P.Picard; "When M.latonna spoke about amalgamate back and service cuts intended to help student." Backend cuts – budget. Attack on public service when it hit GM, Form now it's back to our door step. We are not going to throw people under the bus, politicians, administration and staff inherited this mess. We are going to move forward and focus on what changes we can make in the future to address what happened in the past and prevent it from happening in the future.</p> <p>P.Picard noted it is difficult times as they recently laid off several employees at the Board and he has to pass them in the hallway and their heads are now down. These are his co-workers and its' really tough.</p> <p>D.Tonus noted that there are definitely some tough decisions that will hve to be made. She emphasized that hopefully the shore term pain will lead to long-term success.</p> <p>D.Turner spoke about creating more publicity about the schools we have. For example: FJ Brennan has a construction class and an amazing facility on site to teach students basic construction skills. We need to advertise this more and what other schools in the Catholic system have to offer. This will attract students.</p>	<p>Board/ PIC</p>

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5.23 Cont'd	D.Tonus suggested getting parents to speak about the Board, our own schools and what we have to offer. We could get out positive stuff and coming from parents instead of the Board might be more encouraging.	
5.24	Library. P.Picard noted it's a process. P.Picard asked the principal from St. Thomas of Villanova (Pat Hickson as he was present during our meeting and sitting at a table in the Library) what their Library is like since the changes were made. He noted their Library is more lively, wi fi access, comfortable seating, students work in groups. Previously the room was full of books with outdated sources and they were not being used. Now each day there is between 90 to 100 students at lunch in the library. It's a nice atmosphere and more communal.	INFO
5.25	P.Picard – listen to messaging that we are different. Going to direct specific staff to bring all schools to where they should be. All schools are now 100% wireless. More dynamic working spaces will take some time. Budgeting will be an issue. He understands that there are problems, but overall he's hearing back from Principals this is a better place.	INFO
5.26	D.Tonus noted there are still inconsistencies as some schools still have books in boxes. She is referring to Elementary. This is an issue and people are afraid to use them. If the books are not being returned to the Library then teaching staff should be required to make better use of them in the classroom. There are thousands of dollars worth of fictional books in boxes. P.Picard noted this is a collective bargaining issue – labour issue. Sometimes the hardest this is getting past it. Staff not allowed to supervise students, could not teach. Library tech is a Librarian. Through collective bargaining they are not allowed to be in the classrooms alone with the children. Teachers have prep time previous model. Grievance with teacher and library tech. coming into the library.	INFO
5.27	H.McAuley asked if the Board is going to continue working with the Public Library after all of the scandal and P.Picard noted no.	INFO
5.28	P.Picard – WEC 50 library branches they needed to close there headed to come together. If we have empty spaces lets use and invite community.	
5.29	S.Bolger – noted at their school they list practices all books classified, parents levelled them feels their library should be used as a mode.	
5.30	H.Switzer - are books coming out of boxes? P.Picard – need to get past labour issues. Bring in all Principals to go through Libraries. Books are going back into the classroom and not the garbage.	

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5.31	P.Picard – noted why would Librarian level books, when they would lose my job.	
5.32	H.McAuley – noted some Librarians are working like crazy.	INFO
5.33	H.McAuley noted Apple may not be the best idea to push and P.Picard noted the IT Superintendent is doing a lot of research and agreed Apple may not be the only way to go. P.Picard noted you should not go out and purchase \$30,000.00 in computer equipment as you need to have diversity. H.McAuley noted the Board needs to notify Administration and staff so it's not centrally driven.	Board
5.34	(e) Budget Subcommittee – concern was not knowing how much this committee can spend. M.latonna noted he does not know. Agreed that the PIC should have input. P.Picard – PIC should operate like school council. Personal view – get figures to us and input back and forth. What funds need to be allocated to allow to you to do what you want to do. M.latonna will follow up and get back to the PIC at the next meeting.	M.latonna
5.35	D.Tonus suggested that the PIC votes on how to spend and makes this STRONG recommendation to the Board. P.Picard – reverse money there and they would comply with funds.	INFO
5.36	P.Picard noted we need to work at our level protecting you. When people get accustom of annual things then they change. We have a lot of Trustees that feel strongly about the commissioning ceremony. A lot of people would be upset if this was eliminated.	INFO
5.37	Item Budget – Mario # in September.	Board
5.38	Future Meetings: D.Tonus, we did four meetings and would perhaps like to change the format. Ideas were thrown around. J.Blevins – noted that previously the Elementary and Secondary were separate and felt this worked better. People at the Elementary level want to hear about what is going on at other Elementary schools and vise versa. He recommends PIC meet at least four times per year as per terms of reference and it notes the last Thursday of the month. C.Switzer – bring in subcommittee keep separate Umbrella and PIC. H.Sawyer noted she would like to see more meetings. P.Picard – the Umbrella Group standard is strong. Effort Elementary group loose could be forum, bring information to parents. Elementary – 75 people in attendance. Lots of information 1.5 hour meetings.	INFO

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5.38 Cont'd	P.Picard acknowledged that when you are in his world you can get out of touch. He welcomes input.	
5.39	<p>H.McAuley noted she thought the Umbrella Group has been abandoned. That's why attendance is low. Parents need a better explanation as to what it is.</p> <p>J.Blevin noted we need to increase number of PIC meetings per year. H.Sawyer recommended seven (7).          D.Tonus recommended six (6).          P.Picard noted it would be difficult to support seven (7) meetings with all of the commitments they have.          D.Tonus noted if there were more meetings they wouldn't be as long.          Group went back and forth discussing how many meetings, what months during the year don't work due to a heavy schedule.          S.Bolger noted to stick to four (4) and have other informal meetings in between.          A.Mason suggested web site might resolve problem. Forum on site.          Group decided on five (5) PIC meetings for next year.          Moved by: A.Mason. Seconded by: H.Sawyer.</p>	INFO
5.40	<p>Terms of Reference (By-Laws) Revise the bylaw to be revised to reflect to remove second sentence of 8.3 which reads. <i>"Meetings will normally be scheduled the last Thursday of September, November, February and May and begin at 6:30 p.m."</i></p> <p>Moved by: H.McAuley Seconded by: C.Switzer.</p>	Formally approve this item in Sept. 2012
5.41	<p>F.Favot feels bad that some parents can't speak at the PIC meetings. D.Tonus agreed and asked that we revisit the structure.</p> <p>H.McAuley noted the first meeting we all sat in the Board member chambers and excluded parents sitting below. D.Tonus suggested that we should welcome input from any other stakeholders.</p> <p>J.Blevins noted when a new person joins his meetings they must be aware of the format and to know they are not to bring their own agenda to a council meeting.</p>	INFO
5.42	<p>D.Tonus – agenda items submitted two (2) weeks in advance. Board noted they need agenda two (2) weeks in advance to plan for the meeting.</p>	INFO
5.43	<p>Parents spoke about their frustration with First Class Email. H.McAuley noted the group is using personal email addresses. This software is not user friendly and a lot of people are not familiar with First Class. M.latonna agreed. PIC will revisit saving money by having its members use personal emails instead of FirstClass next year.</p>	Board

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5.44	(4) M.latonna board policy. Draft sent out to Councils. This will take place 12 next meetings September 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2012 at 6:30pm.	Chair or Co-Chair to review election policy for PIC
	Next meeting. September 13, 2012 Location: Board Office	
	Distribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All present</li><li>• All other umbrella members not present at meeting</li><li>• J.Shea, Superintendent</li><li>• E.Byrne, Superintendent</li><li>• F.Favot, Trustee</li></ul>	