

December 2022



Welcome to The PIC Connection, the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC)
Newsletter for School Councils.

A Message from Mike:

Welcome to our December edition of the PIC connection. In this issue you will find an update from Amanda, my partner on the PIC executive. Along with a message from our Director Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini, updates from our Communications and Community Engagement department and information about the Parent Reaching Out Grant (Pro Grant). From the members of PIC and my family I would like to wish you all a wonderful Holiday Season filled with love, joy and most importantly family and friends. May the new year be kind to you all.

Please feel free to reach out to Amanda or me anytime. pic@hwdsb.on.ca.

Mike Palma Chair of the Parent Involvement Committee

A Message from Amanda:

Hi my name is Amanda Lloyd. I have 3 active girls in HWDSB. This is my 7th year as a member of PIC and 2nd year as Vice-Chair.

PIC Connects met for the first of our 5 sessions at Waterdown High School. Trustee Graeme Noble joined us and brought his own questions. The energy in the room was contagious. The main topic of discussion was parent engagement. We discussed how to manage a large parent council but creating sub-committees. We discussed barriers such as new caregivers not knowing about school council,

missing the first elections meeting. We discussed possibly sending home information about school council at the kindergarten orientation in May, sending home a School Council information guide to everyone home, posting information to the school website and also through School Messenger. After not being able to meet in person it was such an exciting start to connecting again with School Council. Out next PIC Connects is January 17, 2023 at AM Cunningham at 6:30-8:30.

I hope you have a wonderful and restful holiday season. I am looking forward to what 2023 will bring.

Happy Holidays!

See you in the new year.

Amanda Lloyd Vice Chair of the Parent Involvement Committee

A Message from Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini:

Joining HWDSB has been an incredible experience.

Since August, I've had the privilege and pleasure to meet students, staff, families, and community members. I'm getting to know the amazingness that is HWDSB!

As School Council members, you take time out of your busy schedules to give back to students. You're connecting families in your neighbourhoods and building stronger communities for everyone!

Thank you for your leadership on School Councils and Home and School Associations.

I'm mindful of how families are feeling at this time because it doesn't feel like a typical December. We're still navigating through a pandemic, parents are concerned about the health concerns, and the cost of living is difficult for families as we approach the holidays.

*I hope that we can move from surviving to thriving. That is why I encourage you to find the **joy** in the every day.*

So, I ask you: What brings you joy? Share your joy story at www.engagehwdsb.on.ca!

As we get ready to start the winter break, I send appreciation to you for being part of the HWDSB family and for welcoming me into this role. I hope that you find time throughout the holidays to reflect and renew for the year ahead.

Wishing you and your family all the best this holiday season. See you in 2023!

Sheryl, Director HWDSB

Communications & Community Engagement Update:

PIC Meeting Highlights

For the first time in several years due to the pandemic, PIC was able to hold its annual joint meeting with SEAC (Special Education Advisory Committee). The evening is held in December and a festive meal is provided. Greetings was shared by Director of Education, Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini and Superintendent of Specialized Services, Peggy Blair.

A presentation on Foundations in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) was delivered by Trish Woehrle and Meredith Strongman, Specialized Services Learning Consultants.



Naming of Schools Policy

HWDSB's policies are reviewed every few years and when HWDSB wants to make changes to a policy, staff bring it back to you for input. HWDSB invites you to share your thoughts on a policy that directs how we decide on names for schools.

Staff have proposed changes to HWDSB's Naming of Schools Policy that reflects our goal of equal outcomes for all people. The Board is also proposing that schools should no longer be named after people.

Share your thoughts on the proposed changes here: <https://www.engagehwdsb.ca/school-naming-policy>

Trustee Update

Trustees Dawn Danko and Amanda Fehrman joined PIC to share an update at Board. Inaugural Board Meeting and Trustees orientation. As well, information was shared about the Temporary Universal Masking Requirement.

Board Highlights

- Board Meeting and Standing Committee – December 19, 2022, 6:30 p.m.
- Policy Committee – January 11, 2023, 5:30 p.m.

PIC CONNECTS

Mike Palma, Chair of PIC, Amanda Lloyd, Vice-Chair of PIC and Shawn McKillop, Manager of Communications and Community Engagement, are hosting [PIC Connects](#)!

The first session was held earlier this month at Waterdown District High School. The next session is on January 17, 2023 starting at 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at A.M. Cunningham Elementary School.

We will reach out to surrounding communities/school council members directly, but anyone is welcome to attend any of the sessions available from now until May.

The format is casual, and we will have a brief agenda to guide our time. Items to share and discuss are School Council Support, Communication Standards, and general Board inquiries from you.

Our main priority is to offer these sessions to connect with a variety of parents, guardians, and caregivers who are volunteering their time to support the work and leadership of School Council. There is no RSVP required.

Topics discussed at the session at Waterdown High School included:

- Bylaws/Constitution best practices
- Fundraising ideas and successes
- Engaging events and how to attract volunteers
- Communication with families and between School Council Chair/School Principal
- Advocacy (School Council can advocate through Principal and to the Parent Involvement Committee; the Parent Involvement Committee can advocate to the Board of Trustees)



COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

- Effective communication builds positive relationships with parents, guardians, and caregivers. We want families to be well informed and know what to expect. We want staff to know how, what and when to communicate. ***This is our communications commitment to families!***
- Visit [Communications Standards](#)
- **Do you have feedback? Let us know. Email communications@hwdsb.on.ca**



Engage HWDSB

Engaging and consulting requires effort on everyone's part. It also means that we should never take feedback or our relationships with our communities for granted.

To assist in this, HWDSB launched a new and interactive platform to deliver on its commitment to community participation, collaboration and involvement in support of student success and well-being.



[Engage HWDSB](https://www.engagehwdsb.ca/) is an online place where students, families, staff and communities can learn more about work at HWDSB, share their voice, and engage throughout a project. Visitors to www.engagehwdsb.ca/ will see an expanding list of projects, policies and initiatives in the weeks ahead.

****Check out The PIC CONNECTION Newsletters and other support for School Council members at <https://hwdsb.info/SchoolCouncil>***

Sharing the knowledge: *Parent Reaching Out Grant (Pro Grant)*

The Parents Reaching Out Grants (Pro Grant) program provides funding to school boards to provide opportunities for School Councils, the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and the school community to lead projects that support parent/guardian/caregiver engagement and align with at least one of the following objectives:

- Addressing social inclusion and racism specifically anti-Asian, anti-Black, and anti-Indigenous racism and other prejudices toward racialized and marginalized groups
- Creating a safe and welcoming environment
- Demonstrating respect for parents as valued partners within the education system regarding decisions about their child's education
- Enhancing communication with teachers
- Informing parents about the expectations of the Ontario Curriculum and supporting resources.

Applications that meet the criteria are eligible for a maximum amount of \$1,000. Schools may develop applications individually, or with another school. **If schools choose to collaborate on an event, they can submit one application and combine funding.** Individuals from the school

community who have ideas for projects or initiatives that they would like considered, are encouraged to connect with their School Council or Principal.

Project Guidelines and Activities

- o Activities must follow all Public Health measures and HWDSB procedures. Should conditions change and revisions to applications be requested, please contact PIC@hwdsb.on.ca
- o Activities will support School Council initiatives or initiatives in partnership with community organizations
- o Activities will identify and address local barriers to parent engagement and may include but are not limited to:
 - Development of parent resources (e.g. leadership resource for parents, resources addressing well-being, mental health, and anti-racism for students and families, etc.)

Please see the included application package for information regarding the PRO Grant application process for the 2022-2023 school year.

Information should be shared with School Councils as soon as possible to encourage discussion and consideration for projects related to supporting parent/guardian/caregiver engagement.

The maximum funding per school is \$1000 and the due date for applications is January 27th, 2023. The application must have the signature of both the School Council Chair and the Principal.

Timelines

- Delivery of parent information sessions (e.g. how to support children and families at home, how to understand curriculum, etc.)
- Delivery of parent engagement sessions (e.g. parent networking sessions)
- Innovative activities that enable enhanced and diversified parent engagement.

- o **November – January: School Councils provide input to the Principal regarding the focus and scope of the activities**
- o **January 27, 2023 – PRO Grant applications due, please send completed applications to PIC@hwdsb.on.ca**
- o **February 24, 2023 – follow up communication with schools**
- o **June 30, 2023 – projects must be completed and funding spent**

Additional Considerations

As a reminder, ineligible expenses include:

- o Activities that took place prior to September 6th, 2022
- o Activities that focus on students
- o Payment to school board staff or volunteers including salaries, honoraria, gifts
- o Refreshments exceeding 10% of the approved funding
- o Out-of-province travel
- o Debts or financial losses that result from a project
- o Fundraising events
- o Central administration expenses must not exceed 10% of the budget (Examples: office supplies; copying and printing; postage; telephone costs; internet and wireless communication, dues, fees and licenses; legal, accounting or audit fees; insurance; bank charges and interest)

You will find an application form for the Parent Reaching Out Grant on the next page.

Planning should be a collaboration between school councils and the school principal.

Take your time completing it accurately and be sure to fill in all sections

Should you have any questions please reach out to us at PIC@hwdsb.on.ca.

Name of Project		
Name of School		
Principal:		School Council Chair:
Project objectives. Choose as many that apply		<input type="checkbox"/> Addressing social inclusion and racism specifically anti-Asian, anti-Black, and anti-Indigenous racism and other prejudices toward racialized and marginalized groups <input type="checkbox"/> Creating a safe and welcoming environment <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrating respect for parents as valued partners within the education system regarding decisions about their child's education <input type="checkbox"/> Enhancing communication with teachers <input type="checkbox"/> Informing parents about the expectations of the Ontario Curriculum and supporting resources.
Date/ timeframe of project		
Project description		Description: Purpose: Goals: Anticipated Outcomes:
Was the project led by parents and how was parent input included?		
Anticipated Numbers of participants		Parents: Students: Staff: Community Organizations:
How has the project created change in your school community?		
Did your project promote diversity, equity, and inclusion? Explain if so.		
What are key lessons learned throughout the project?		
PROJECT EXPENSES		COST DESCRIPTION
Facilitator/Speaker – travelling expenses and/or fees		
Translation		
Materials		
Promotion/Advertising		
Childcare		
Refreshments (10% Max)		
Other (please specify)		
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS (10% Max)		
Office supplies		
Copying and Printing		
Postage		
Other (please specify)		
TOTAL (Max \$1000/school)		
THIS PROJECT IS SUPPORTED BY:	School Council	Signature
	Principal	Signature

Examples of events done by schools:

- Parent Engagement Handbook
- Building Inclusion
- Multi-language Home Reading Program
- Supporting Health and Wellness activities
- Family Activity Night
- Family engagement (Online event, panel expert, guest speaker series)
- Digital Well Being
- Woodland Cultural Centre (virtual)
- Parent Support Library
- Brave Education Virtual Session
- Support Children's Well being
- Virtual screening of Blood and Water: a Story of Reclamation (Indigenous filmmaker Layla Black's 22 minute film)
- Learning Commons Book Inventory
- Literacy Night (virtual)
- Virtual Speaker
- Literacy resources to help parent help their kids
- Family Literacy night (virtual)
- Social Networking
- Telling Tales Virtual Event (Indigenous author and online presentation)
- Pick A Path (school safety)
- It Takes a Village (Community event)
- Public Speaker (Melissa Punambolam)
- Multi-language Home Reading Program
- Grand Opening
- Cookies and Canvas (Paint night for parents and students)
- Author Visit
- Self Regulation for Parents
- Equity, inclusion and well being
- Multi-language Home Reading
- Strategies in Discipline
- Parents as Partners
- Supporting Science Learning
- Supporting Parents in Building Math Literacy
- Social Media Education and Awareness, A Community Event
- Impact of Technology on Childhood Development
- Lunch and Learn - Managing Our Children's Anxiety
- Tools for Life: Child Wellness Conference
- Improving Math Skills
- Family Math Night
- Education Pathways for Success
- Family Math Night - Linking Learning Between Home, School and Community
- Fitness for Education
- Fun Family Math Night

- Einstein Meets Picasso: From STEM to STEAM
- Tech Free Engagement Evening
- Recognizing Our Diversity
- Parent Communication
- Ready for School - Healthy Eating Workshops for Parents
- Social Networking Safety
- Parent Information Night
- Indigenous Awareness Event
- Improving Communication Between Home and School
- Supporting Student Mental Health
- Engaging Parents in Education
- Mental Health Resources for Parents
- Celebrating Diversity – We All Belong
- Resilience, Confidence, and Mental Health:
- Partnering with Parents
- Family Math and Numeracy Night
- Math Nights for Families
- School and Community Wellness
- Self-Regulation Workshop
- Parent Communication
- Literacy Night
- Engaging ESL Parents
- Social Media Safety
- Mental Health and Well-Being Workshops
- Raising Good Decision-Makers
- Healthy Family Lifestyle
- Internet Safety
- Raising Awesome Kids - Parent Seminar
- Interactive Family Math Night
- Math is Fun! - A Family Math Night
- Bullying Awareness Presentation for Parents
- A Character Building Presentation
- Health and Wellness
- Growing Up in the Digital World
- Evidence-Based Learning and Study Strategies
- Community Building for Student Success
- Family Fitness Nights
- Mindfulness for Learning
- Parent and Community Information Night
- Fostering a Supportive Home and Educational Environment
- Parent Engagement Through Literacy and Numeracy
- Bridging the Gap Between Home and School

Up and Coming:

- **PIC Connects** Tuesday, January 17, 2023 A.M. Cunningham Elementary School 100 Wexford Avenue South, Hamilton 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. An information evening for all school council members.
- Next month The PIC Connection will share Fundraising Ideas.
- Our next PIC meeting will be on Tuesday 10, January 2023 at the Education Centre 6:30 – 8:30.

All PIC meetings are open to the public and held in a Hybrid Format.

In closing, thank you for reading the newsletter created by parents for parents.

Don't see something you would like to read in the newsletter,
drop us a line and let us know. Email pic@hwdsb.on.ca.

We firmly believe working together we can make HWDSB an even better place to work, learn, play and grow as staff, parents, guardians, caregivers and students.