

**Niagara Children's Planning Council (NCPC)**  
 March 27, 2015 9:00 am – 11:30 am  
 District School Board of Niagara (191 Carlton Street, St. Catharines)

**Present:** Lorrey Arial Bonilla, Lizabeth Brant, Karen Calligan, Kendall Cappellazzo, Kim Cole, Tracey Cosco, Lisa DeGasperis, Darlene Edgar, Carolyn Fish, Michelle Knapman, Nancy Lisi, Katherine Martin, Rosemary Martin, Sandra Noel, Sandy Toth, Kelly Wilcox, Zach Dadson (recorder)

**Regrets:** Tracy Belcastro, Jeff Biletski, Anne Biscaro, Sabrina Brown, Christina Clark, Donna Dalgleish, Dr. Andrea Feller, Oksana Fisher, Angela Hayes, Danielle Longboat, Sinead McElhone, Linda Morrice, Jen Smith, Jackie Van Lankveld

ITEM	Discussion	Action
<b>Welcome and Business Arising from Meeting Notes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- March 27, 2015 meeting minutes (moved by S. Noel, seconded by K. Cole) and the June 12, 2015 meeting agenda (moved by K. Martin, seconded by C. Fish) were reviewed and approved without change.</li> </ul>	
<b>Ministry Reports</b>	<p><b>Ministry of Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Day Nurseries Act will officially be repealed on August 31, 2015 and replaced with the new Child Care and Early Years Act.</li> <li>- One impact of the Act will be a change in child care ratio for 4-5 and 9-12 year old children:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o The ratio for 4-5 year old children will now be 1:13 (previously 1:10 for 4 year old children and 1:12 for 5 year olds).</li> <li>o The ratio for 9-12 year old children will now be 1:20.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- There have been no changes made to the ratios for children younger than 4.</li> <li>- The Act will also require unlicensed home child care providers to account for their own children in terms of ratios if their child is not in school full time (this will begin January 1, 2016). <a href="#">More information can be found on the Government of Ontario's website.</a></li> <li>- Licensed child care centres and affiliated home child care centres will be given a decal by the province that identifies them as a licensed facility. Independent home child care providers will be required to provide families with a written document identifying that they are not affiliated with a licensed agency.</li> <li>- The Ministry of Education coordinated a webcast on June 23, 2015 highlighting the Child Care Modernization Act and its changes (<a href="#">Webcast can be viewed here</a>).</li> <li>- <i>How Does Learning Happen</i> has been identified in a Ministry policy letter stating that child care program policies and vision statements must reflect the messaging within the document. There may be opportunities for community discussions on how to update agencies' policies and vision statements to reflect <i>How Does Learning Happen</i>.</li> <li>- The Ministry has released a new capital funding initiative. This initiative (3 years/\$40 million per year) will include considerations for investments in child care in schools. All funding will be based on priority.</li> <li>- Roll out of the Child Care Modernization Act will initially focus on child care but the Act does include Family Resource Programs.</li> </ul>	
<b>Partner Reports</b>	<p><b>Niagara Indigenous Children's Planning Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Niagara Indigenous Children's Planning Council is currently establishing a work plan for the upcoming year and working with members to ensure that attendance is as barrier-free as possible.</li> <li>- Niagara Region Children's Services reiterated their support for the Niagara Indigenous Children's Planning Council and have offered their and NCPC's assistance in any capacity.</li> </ul>	
<b>NCPC Research Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Parent Knowledge and Engagement Study's Parents' Voice Survey closed in May, 2015. The survey asked parents about their knowledge of their child's development and also aimed to better understand parents' perception of their engagement in their child's school.</li> <li>- The survey was completed by over 500 parents representing each of Niagara's 12 municipalities and each socio-economic background.</li> <li>- S. Tukonic is in the process of analyzing survey results and will be prepared to present findings before the 2015/2016 school year begins.</li> </ul>	

**Pillar Committee Reports**

**Children are Healthy**

- Beginning in September 2015 the Children are Healthy Pillar Committee will meet from 9:00am to 11:00am rather than 1:30pm to 3:30pm to allow for better attendance.
- The committee is in the process of developing five professional development sessions for winter/spring 2016:
  - o Name to be determined (based on “Setting the Foundation for Lifelong Healthy Eating Habits”) – February 2016
  - o Beyond the “no thank you” bite – March 2016
  - o Kids in the Kitchen – April 2016
  - o Kids in the Garden – May 2016
  - o Conversation Café – June 2016
- Rather than strategically share key messages to Niagara’s vulnerable populations the committee has decided that information shared by the committee will be shared universally.
- The committee continues to await news of the Healthy Kids Community Challenge which will inform key message distribution.

**Children are Learning**

- K. Cole has stepped down from her role as Children are Learning Co-Chair. K. Cole has co-chaired the Children are Learning Pillar Committee since its inception in 2012 and will remain a committee member.
- Laura Rasmussen will Co-Chair Children are Learning with K. Wilcox.
- At their June meeting the committee reviewed their work plan and received a presentation from Rose Gentilcore (Niagara Catholic District School Board) highlighting changes to the Full Day Kindergarten Program curriculum as well as a presentation from Angela Hayes highlighting changes to Niagara College’s Early Childhood Education program.
- A subcommittee has been established and is currently working on the development of a 2016 calendar that would incorporate the committee’s glossary of terms, messaging from *How Does Learning Happen* and pictures of early learning in Niagara. The committee is yet to secure funding for the 2016 calendar.
- The Children are Learning Pillar Committee continue to view the Ministry of Education’s pedagogy videos and discuss how to share emergent pedagogy with staff and colleagues.

**Children are Safe**

- The Children are Safe Pillar Committee has two upcoming professional development sessions planned. A session on October 7, 2015 focusing on domestic violence and a workshop with Mary Gordon (Founder, Roots of Empathy) on October 27, 2015 that will discuss bullying and empathy in the early years.
- Domestic Violence Workshop
  - o Two sessions will be planned on October 7, 2015. A morning session for managers and administrators (8:30am to 11:00am) and an evening session (6:30pm to 8:30pm) for frontline staff.
  - o The morning session will touch on policy development and how to support staff, families and children who may be experiencing family violence. An individual from Design for a New Tomorrow will discuss the impacts of family violence, how to recognize someone who may be living in a home that is experiencing domestic violence and how to support staff if they are supporting a family who is experiencing family violence. The morning session will also include a brief presentation from the Neighbours, Friends and Family program.
  - o The evening session will include a presentation on how to recognize the signs of domestic violence and what its impact on children can be. Attendees will be provided an opportunity to discuss scenarios at breakout tables. A staff member from Design for a new Tomorrow will facilitate each breakout discussion.
  - o The evening session will include a presentation from an individual who has lived experience in a domestic violence situation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o An “Anonymous Box” will be present at each session allowing attendees to submit questions they would like answered but don’t want to ask in front of the entire group. Individuals can write their question down, put it in the box and staff from Design for a new Tomorrow will answer them. The Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC) will distribute answers to attendees.</li> <li>- Mary Gordon Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Mary Gordon will be in Niagara on October 27, 2015 to discuss bullying and empathy in the early years.</li> <li>o The workshop will be from 9:00am to 4:00pm at Niagara College (Welland campus) and will be open to anyone who works with children.</li> <li>o Results of a survey conducted by the Children are Safe Pillar Committee regarding bullying and teasing in the early years will inform the session.</li> <li>o An evening session (6:30pm to 8:30pm) will be offered for parents.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Once these sessions are finished the committee will revisit their work plan and establish new goals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Families are Strong, Stable and Connected</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This year the table established two subcommittees to work on the committee’s two areas of focus: the development of a Niagara Families Charter and parent engagement (potentially through parenting expos, new and pre-existing).</li> <li>- NCPC-RG completed an environmental scan of existing family charters in Ontario. There are a few communities that have family charters (including Hamilton and London) however the committee envisions Niagara’s charter to be more of a celebration of the role families play in early learning than existing examples.</li> <li>- The committee hopes to leverage existing parenting expos (i.e. the District School Board of Niagara’s Parent Involvement Conference) as a method of sharing information and resources.</li> <li>- At each meeting committee members review website statistics for Parent Direct Niagara and discuss opportunities to leverage the resource in the community.</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional Pillar Committee Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- D. Edgar recognized the important work each Pillar Committee has done this year. Since the formation of the Pillar Committees in 2012 there has been a dramatic change in the work that is happening through the Planning Council including a great deal of action and collaboration.</li> </ul>	
<b>NCPC Budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Niagara Children’s Planning Council discussed the funding of NCPC. Budget discussions took place without the Business Education Council of Niagara (Secretariat to NCPC) present. Follow up budgetary discussions will take place over the summer at the Niagara Children’s Planning Council Executive meeting.</li> </ul>	
<b>New Business</b>	<p><b>Infant Mental Health Pilot Project</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The pilot project’s organizing committee has been able to secure permission from all 13 participating agencies, the Niagara Falls Fire Department and EMS to have their logos appear on the Infant Mental Health Pilot Project poster. Posters will be placed in visible locations at all participating locations.</li> <li>- There has been a lot of positive feedback received regarding the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) including the benefit of the same language being used across agencies.</li> <li>- A tech support day occurred on June 9, 2015 and allowed participants the opportunity to ask questions and solve any problems they may have had regarding the tool. Tech support days will occur every 4-6 weeks.</li> <li>- The pilot project organizing committee continues to meet (their next meeting is June 22, 2015) and will begin to look at next steps for the project. Next steps will <a href="http://www1.webcastcanada.ca/events/live/moed0615eng.php">http://www1.webcastcanada.ca/events/live/moed0615eng.php</a> include further imbedding the science of infant mental health into early learning programs in Niagara.</li> <li>- While one of the purposes of the pilot project is to test the validity of the ASQ the committee recognizes that it is only one tool out of many. If the pilot project supports the validity of the tool the committee hopes to have the ASQ endorsed by Niagara’s</li> </ul>	

	<p>early learning community. The pilot project also assesses the helpfulness of the tool to those who are administering it and whether the tool has increased their ability to have conversations with parents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A Niagara Infant Mental Health Community Update is planned for January 20, 2016. The committee hopes that the community update will provide an opportunity to bring more agencies into the fold and highlight next steps for the project.</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional Updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Niagara Region Children’s Services will be tentatively bringing their Child Care Plan to committee for approval on July 14, 2015.</li> </ul>					
<b>Future Meeting Dates</b>	<p><b>All Niagara Children’s Planning Council meetings occur from 9:00am to 11:30am at the Niagara Catholic District School Board (427 Rice Road, Welland)</b></p> <table data-bbox="310 331 1354 396"> <tr> <td>Friday September 11, 2015</td> <td>March 4, 2016</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Friday December 4, 2015</td> <td>June 3, 2016</td> </tr> </table>		Friday September 11, 2015	March 4, 2016	Friday December 4, 2015	June 3, 2016
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