

London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership Education Sub-Council

Wednesday May 18, 2011 (4-6 P.M.)

Location: College Boreal – Citiplaza Second Floor

Present: Jean-Pierre Cantin, Mo Jeng, Helen Patterson, Muriel Abbott, Susanne Quan, Janet Pinder, Imtiaz Shah, Yamile Albarracine, Kate Kennedy, Cynthia Konnerth, Gebremariam Woldemicael and Huda Hussein

Regrets: Jo-elle Rinker, Becky Howse, Shelley Taylor, Farahnaz Faez, Sheila Carson, Tamara Kaattari, Ramiro Castro and Candace Miller

Welcome & Introductions

Jean-Pierre welcomed the three new members and invited them to introduce themselves. Introducing himself as Chair, Jean-Pierre noted that the vice chair was unfortunately absent due to previous engagements. He requested all members to attend the meetings as often as possible as attendance is key for the continuity in our work. He also informed group that a governance structure for the LMLIP will be developed by September.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2011 Meeting Minutes reviewed and approved

Update on Central Council

Jean-Pierre noted that the April meeting for the Central Council was not held due to Easter Monday and council is meeting on May 30, 2011.

Recruitment of new members:

Janet Pinder indicated that a new staff joined the Ontario Early Years Centre as a data analyst who will be interested to join the Sub-council. Jean-Pierre thanked Janet and encouraged group to invite friends who are interested in the issue.

Moving Forward

Employment and Education working group: Jean-Pierre indicated that this will be an ongoing working group and the group is meeting to discuss future plan. We will ask volunteers to join this working group at our September meeting.

Coordination among service providers at Language Instruction for New

Canadians: Helen briefed group of what Coordinated Language Assessment and Referral Services (CLARS) is about and that it is going well so far. The project is being piloted in London, Kitchener and Kingston. **Pilot is extended because of the federal election, and the Call for Proposals was put on hold.**

Mapping Resources group: The group reported that they will be meeting on June 2 and that the work plan is rolling since funding has been secured.

Supports to Parents/Students

Muriel reported on behalf of the two groups. The group noted the good work that is happening in London in terms of connecting with parents/students with the SWIS program, multilingual documents about parents' role within the education that have been produced locally by TVDSB or provincially by the Ministry of Education and the collaborative work of the parents involvement committees at the two school boards. Given the condition that committee members do not have access to parents and students some of the action plan cannot be moved forward. The group concluded that their goals need to be redirected. As a result of their review, the group indicated that what they have identified is not a lack of initiatives, but rather a general lack of awareness of coordination among initiatives. The group would like to have the Sub-council's input in moving forward.

Discussion was opened and the following was noted:

- Group may look into developing a resource document outlining available resources and share with SWIS
- Based on a current model, "parent circles" at Kipps Lane Hub, where principals and parents are invited and open a dialogue – this may need funds to do on an ongoing basis
- Managers of some Child & Youth Network initiatives may be invited and we may find ways to work together in engaging parents and students
- A current demo project to engage parents is currently underway at Glen Cairn School
- Cultural associations can play a big role. For example the Chinese Association has been offering workshops on rights and responsibilities to new parents and on other topics that the parents identify. ACFOLA is currently looking into this and we need to engage more cultural groups
- The challenge to involve immigrant parents is similar to that of involving main stream Canadians
- Select 2-3 schools where immigrant students are in great number and engage those schools in the dialogue of how to support parents and students
- There was agreement that immigrant parents feel outsiders to the school and not welcomed in some cases – this may be attributed to lack of cultural competency training for the school staff
- Parents feel they can have a voice if they are confident – how to help these parents to be confident and to see themselves as a stakeholder in the education system
- Westminster High School is successful in engaging parents as they have the Urban funding and if such funding is available in schools with a large immigrant demography many parents and students will actively participate in the school system

ACTION:

- Invite Managers/Coordinators from the System Reengineering groups to our September meeting
- Invite cultural leaders to learn about their challenges, knowledge related to the education system

- Will continue to find ways to engage management at the school boards level

Wrap up: Jean-Pierre thanked the group and the new members and encouraged everyone to stay committed and plan to attend all the meetings scheduled for the upcoming meetings. He also reiterated that most of our action plans need funds and we will explore ways to secure funds to advance our strategies.

Next Meetings: All the following meetings will take place between 4 and 6 P.M.at Kinsmen Recreation Centre, 20 Granville Street

- September 21, 2011
- November 16, 2011
- January 18, 2012
- March 21, 2012

Funded by:

