City of Stratford Schools Transition Meeting

Minutes

January 30, 2013

Anne Hathaway Public School

7:00 pm

Co-Chairs Ross MacSorley and Helen Orr

Committee Members—School Council reps, students, teachers, parents.

- Ross MacSorley welcomed everyone to the meeting and he introduced the purpose of the Transition Committee, which is to ensure a smooth, positive transition for everyone.
- Helen introduced the three student reps and included the other students who were also present and asked for their input. The three Bedford student reps are: Braeden White (grade 5 English), Jessie Hahn (grade 5 French Immersion) and Hannah LaCroix (grade 6 English).
- Others who were present introduced themselves. Amongst the group were several parents, principals from 3 of the other Stratford schools, the two local trustees and Kim Black, Superintendent.
- Helen also introduced David Frier, who is in charge of transportation for the Board.
- Helen informed the group that the staffing process has begun. We are also in the process of acquiring resources for the new classrooms and library materials for the second French Immersion site. The goal is to ensure that all resources will be equitably distributed between the two sites.
- David Frier did a presentation which explained the policy on bussing students within the city of Stratford. Students who live more than 1.6 kilometres walking distance from their school will be bussed. The city of Stratford schools that do not offer French Immersion will continue to be pick up and drop off sites for designated students to go to and from Anne Hathaway Public School.
- May 23 after school "open house" for transitioning students. All city schools would participate and these tours of the schools will be led by Parent Council reps and student reps from each school. The proposed time is 5:00 pm-7:00 pm. If parents cannot make it to this event, they will be encouraged to contact the school to arrange a different time to tour the school. School councils will be seeking volunteers to help visitors tour the school. Student volunteers from each school will also be sought. David Frier also offered that the bus drivers could potentially play a role in this evening as well.
- June 13 "Transition Day"- All transitioning students will visit their respective schools. The students present liked the idea and wanted to do fun things with their visitors, like a "play day" outside and also have them visit classrooms in which there could be displays of student work. The transitioning students would also have an opportunity to meet the teachers at their

new school. The idea of setting up “pen pals” between the students who are going to a new school and the students who will be attending the school where they are going was also proposed. These students would then be “buddies” for their pen pals when they came to visit.

- The idea of a “Welcome Package” for new students was proposed.
- Communication:
- A “Transition Conference” could be set up on the Board Website where you could check out information and events. There could be a “Stratford Transition Information” icon on the Board website where people could go to get updates on what is happening.
- We would also need to send paper copies of information about Transition events.
- Helen and Nicole Rider will create a document on “talking points” to help parents to know what to say to their children around the topic of moving schools. This document would be shared with all principals and students.
- Parents should be able to find out by June which teachers are going to be at which schools.
- Parents would appreciate a note home to explain the “first day of school” process at their child’s prospective school.
- Helen proposed another meeting for AHPS and Bedford to discuss the celebration aspect for the end of the year and students leaving schools. School councils could strike committees to plan these events.