

**Key Learnings and Outcomes:
Stop, Collaborate and Listen
Round Table Discussion and Rapid Fire Session**

Prince Edward Island Home and School Federation
66th Annual General Meeting
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Sessions Facilitated and Report Submitted by
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“Moving Your Organizational Family Forward”

Overview

The following report outlines the activities at the 66th Annual General Meeting of the PEI Home and School Federation which was facilitated by Kin Consulting Group. Within this report, the theory and methodology of the facilitated sessions can be found. Also contained within this report are the complete findings from the activities. Please see the appendices at the end of this report for the complete findings.

Activities: Theory and Methods

Carousel Brainstorming

Carousel Brainstorming is a cooperative learning activity focused around movement, conversation, and reflection that can be used to discover and discuss issues, as well as creatively and appreciatively consider solutions to the issues. The Carousel Brainstorm provides an opportunity to use the group's collective prior knowledge to further individual understanding. It is an active, person-centered method for generating and sharing large amounts of data and identifying solutions to the issues at hand¹.

Ten topics pertinent to the PEI Home and School Federation were determined prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Tables of 8-10 were set up in the room and each table had a placard with a topic noted for discussion, as well as chart paper with a consistent framework for responding to the topics and recording the thoughts of participants. The topics were formed into an "How do we..." styles of questions, and the first round of the brainstorming session asked attendees to express thoughts and ideas of what the ideal situation for their chosen topic would be. This was followed by two rounds of dialogue regarding barriers that exist to realizing those ideals. Finally, two rounds of creative solutions concluded the brainstorming activity. Delegates chose the topics they attended as they were not able to attend to every topic. Facilitators from within the Home and School Federation guided the dialogue at each table and ensured all thoughts and comments were recorded. Included in the ten topics was an "Open Discussion" table, where delegates could raise concerns or ideas that were outside the scope of the other topics.

Rapid Fire Session

The table facilitators or a representative for each topic shared the ideas generated from the morning session with the entire group. This included previous successes and concerns experienced in some of the topics by some of the local home and school associations. This allowed for complete sharing of the information and also allowed time for questions and further comments.

Capturing the Information

All notes were gathered by Rebecca Gill and Reta MacDonald of Kin Consulting Group after the sessions and compiled into an electronic document to ensure the sharing of the information could continue. Comments recorded outside the brainstorming carousel activity have also been incorporated into this report. This report was completed and submitted to the PEI Home and

¹ <http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/brainstorming-reviewing-using-carousel-30630.html#research-basis>

School Federation. Please see the appendices for the complete Carousel Brainstorming and Rapid Fire Session Learnings.

Sample Findings

In the following paragraphs, sample findings that emerged for each topic are outlined. Please see appendices for complete recordings of the information gathered.

Student mental health and wellbeing: anxiety, depression, attendance, belonging

Creating environments that are safe and supportive for all students, and that are student centered, are key for ensuring student mental health and wellbeing. This includes ensuring wellbeing is a top priority for all students, and that the resources required to support this are in place and available if and when needed for every student. Barriers to an ideal reality with respect to student mental health and wellbeing include lack of access to professionals, stigma, and a reactive rather than proactive approach to mental health. Celebrating diversity and creating accepting environments were noted to be key steps in establishing strong mental health frameworks for all schools. Extending the reach of the school well-being teams is also needed to ensure the health and wellbeing of island students. One tangible idea that was identified through the discussions included providing Mental Health Literacy training for students and parents alike.

Student physical safety: transportation, personal safety and bullying

Knowing how to protect oneself, both by being aware of one's surroundings and by listening to one's instincts is key for the physical safety of students. Assistance is also needed by times - for example, crossing guards when students are walking to/from school. A lack of parent engagement, as well as a lack of knowledge by parents, was noted as barriers to an improved reality for student physical safety. It was also noted that there are not enough crossing guards for island students. There were many tangible solutions provided to ensure the safety of our students, from having a second adult or a police officer on buses, to having seatbelts on buses, to standardizing speed limits in all school zones, to increasing awareness of what bullying means and providing education to both parents and students on such topics. Specific solutions, such as expanding the PATHs program and providing conflict resolution training were also suggested, as was providing a self-protection course for students.

Universal provincial healthy school food program: national advocacy, non-profit model

Many ideas were suggested for an ideal universal provincial health school food program. A program that is flexible, has many food options, and that is supplied via local food/farmers are just a few of the suggestions for this non-profit model. Barriers listed included money (who pays for what?/funding?/sustainable?), the location of hub schools to their outlet schools (issues with food staying proper) and that many children are resistant to healthy food. Creative solutions include meal card plans with opt in/out options, tasting sessions, tax receipts for farmers who donate supplies, and making the students a part of the process, where they would grow food as part of their curriculum, and perhaps even trade it with other schools. Another way to increase student engagement would be field trips to farms, so that students have a better appreciation of what they are eating and where it comes from. One model that was suggested to for the

creation of such a program is the QEH Foundation model. It was noted that a model like this could be used for many things in education, not just a food program.

Encourage strong relationships within school communities and create welcoming schools

School environments where no one feels intimidated, where everyone is welcome, and where everyone feels connected were some of the ideals noted for encouraging strong relationships within school communities and creating welcoming schools. The busy lives of families was noted as a barrier here, as was a lack of communication. It was also noted that the transition from intermediate school to high school for extracurricular activities can be a challenge, as there is not much support for students at the high school level. Actionable solutions to allow for welcoming schools include inviting parent participation when school improvement plans are being created, as well as having welcoming foyers in schools. Shifting the focus of “meet the teacher” to “meet the family” and having a light barbecue or ice cream social at these events would create a welcoming and warm atmosphere to begin the school year and set a welcoming tone for the year ahead.

Engage newcomers/parents and create welcoming schools

Identifying all new families to PEI is the first step in ensuring they are welcomed into our schools and communities. Handbooks and information packages should be provided in various languages to ensure all messaging is communicated. Providing spaces within our schools to allow for cultural or religious customs should be considered, as well as extracurricular activities that do not require language (i.e. chess). Barriers to engaging newcomers/parents and creating welcoming schools include language and the fact that many parents do not speak English. Transportation (or lack thereof) can also affect engagement, as can a lack of knowledge of different cultures and cultural norms. Cultural sessions for students and parents should be provided to ensure a welcoming environment is not only possible, but also probable. Translation services for all home and school meetings should be provided, with consistent dates/agendas used to increase participation and predictability. Another creative solution that would create a welcoming environment is to host orientation type activities, similar to postsecondary educational institutions, allowing newcomers to meet families within their schools, all the while having some fun.

Support the needs in classrooms as identified through school assessments (e.g. human and academic resources)

Evidence based, early intervention was noted as an ideal to support classroom needs as identified through school assessments. A major barrier for this is the fact that assessment results are currently not provided in a timely manner. Another barrier could be the strictness of the exemption process. Rich discussions around timing of tests, addressing test anxiety, and enhancing current supports (i.e. lengthening reading recovery) were had when creative solutions were being put forth. The fact that learning can be negative for those who excel or struggle was noted with respect to provincial assessments, and conversations were also had around adjusting the methods of assessments so all students could at least have the opportunity to excel. Adjusting the wording of the assessments to make them more fun and

relatable to the students could improve assessment results. Increasing communication to parents and students about what the assessments require may also improve assessment outcomes.

Improve communication and supports in Home and School

Communication must be open and it must go both ways, from administration to parents and from parents to administration. It was noted that daily back and forth communication between home and school is useful...for both home and school. Barriers with respect to communication include the fact that some parents and students have literacy challenges, and that parents currently have to go looking for communication in various areas (social media, email, SAS, newsletters, etc.). Implementing text based communication for more immediate information sharing was noted and is currently being used by the Nova Scotia Educational system. It is a proven mechanism to ensure information is relayed in real time, and that parents are aware of student behavior and weather closures in a timely manner. Also suggested was more consistent use of SAS, both within and across schools. It was noted as well that when students are used to deliver a message to home, the message is not always communicated clearly and in a timely fashion, if at all; consistent, clear communication method(s) are needed to ensure information is distributed and received.

Support having enriched curriculum in all classrooms for all students

The voice of teachers is paramount in supporting the enrichment of curriculum for students. Ensuring teachers are able to have the proper level of autonomy when it comes to identifying enrichment opportunities will lend itself to the success of the effort. Barriers listed for topic included class size, the various needs in the classroom, and the lack of librarians in schools. It was felt the class composition and the physical set-up of the class need to be considered when trying to support enriched learning for students. Online enrichment was suggested, as well as harnessing the resources that exist within the community to provide this type of learning. Technology investments were suggested as a means to support students with varied levels of learning needs. An expansion to the International Baccalaureate (IB) program to all schools that can support the program was proposed, with an intention to ensure the broadest reach of the benefits of this program to the most students.

Parent Engagement Projects

In order to ensure the successes and challenges of these projects are shared widely amongst all locals, there were a number of ideas discussed. Barriers included meeting format and the facts that the same parents show up each time. The use of social media through Facebook pages and other online platforms was identified as one manner to extend the reach of the learnings from these projects. Having a teacher representative attend all Home and School meetings as a means to share information from the parents back to the school and vice versa was one mechanism listed. Another local identified child care as one of the biggest barriers as to why parents could not attend meetings. That local arranged child care for their members so parents could come to the meetings with their children, knowing child care was not a barrier preventing their attendance. Consideration may be given to changing the name to "Community

Engagement” from “Parent Engagement” so as to involve everyone, inside and outside the school.

Open Discussion Table

There were a number of items discussed in the open discussion section of the carousel exercise. The intent of this section was to ensure that all members had an opportunity to voice their concerns or identify topics that may not have been covered in the other areas of the activity. It is important to note, that while all nine topics included in the carousel were provided based on feedback from the PEIHSF executive and locals, we wanted to ensure other voices and ideas were generated through the course of this brainstorming exercise.

Some of the ideas that were discussed in this section included maintaining or increasing the play based approach in Kindergarten and considering infusing this approach into primary grades. The success of “Salmon are our Friends” program was noted, with a recommendation to have this program, which is delivered by the Abegweit First Nations, be supported as a model with more enthusiasm in all schools.

Conclusion

The PEI Home and School Federation, along with the local Home and School associations across the island, are dedicated to ensuring island children receive the best education possible. This was evident throughout the Carousel Brainstorming Activity, as delegates had rich conversations about the topics listed. Participants were engaged and motivated to discover creative solutions to the barriers noted, all the while being respectful and appreciative of the ideas of others. This was proven once again during the rapid fire session via the attentive listening demonstrated by the entire group and the further creative solutions that were put forth. Our children, our schools and our future will all thrive due to the continued dedication and work of the PEI Home and School Federation and Local PEI Home and Schools.

Appendix 1: Student mental health and wellbeing: anxiety, depression, attendance, belonging

Issue	How do we improve student mental health and wellbeing?
Ideal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safe and supportive environment with readily available resources and no long wait times ● Empathy ● Student centered ● Well being #1 across province ● That all children feel welcome and important ● Youth worker access every day ● That every child has access to the services they need ● Daily guidance in every school ● A program for parents in how to navigate and advocate for their children and mental health issues ● Encourage students to go out and do their best. Praise them for what they have done and encourage them to keep trying
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Closed doors ● Lack of political will ● Reactive rather than proactive ● Access to professionals ● Stigma ● Ability to advocate ● Default on sending kids home ● Denial ● Lack of Mental Health Literacy skills ● Lack of Awareness of resources ● Shortage of personal staff ● Lack of time ● Shared School Counselors
Creative Solutions to Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduce the stigma to shift paradigm - providing mental health for all ● Tie into peer helping courses ● Expand Younger Big Brother ● More money ● Wellbeing comes first ● Require extracurricular activities ● Increase reach of Student Well-being teams ● Support connections and relationships for each student ● Implement a triage system for needs ● Peer mentors - older students helping younger students ● More diverse extracurricular activities ● Provide Mental Health literacy for parents and students ● Use common language ● Ensure a program exists for parents to navigate the system ● Implement school uniforms ● Start early - implement student centered mindfulness/yoga/non-

judgement

- Focus on process rather than outcomes
- Acceptance
- Diversity - ensure it is celebrated
- Strongest Families Program - ensure it is promoted and continued
- EA's helpful in adapting school for many students
- Not worrying about getting to school on time makes a big difference in stress levels for some children
- Become friends with newcomer students - helpful to both parties

Appendix 2: Student physical safety: transportation, personal safety and bullying

Issue	How do we ensure student physical safety?
Ideal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Awareness program ○ Teach students to trust and listen to their instincts ○ Signs/awareness ● Crossing Guards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kids who walk to school ○ Walk access
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bus Drivers require support on buses to monitor & help with children ● Self protection for children grades 6 - 9 ● Bullying ● Non- acceptance of religion worry of offending ● Knowledge of parents ● Lack of parent engagement ● Youth don't tell what happens x 2 ● Lack of understanding of what is acceptable ● Social media presents negative images ● Zero tolerance on enforced ● Lack of knowing wrong from right x 2 ● How to say no ● Feeling nothing will be done ● Not enough crossing guards ● Bus drills and bus schedules can be challenging for some students with special needs ● Lock Down Drills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not sure they help, and could possibly cause more fear
Creative Solutions to Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bussing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Second adult on buses, more eyes, bus monitor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Position for high school student to be bus monitor ○ Have police on buses periodically ○ Seat belts ○ Enforce no tolerance ○ Education in "having a voice" ○ Walk to school when weather is appropriate and parents are able ○ Consider combining public school bus and public transportation buses to align routes and make stops less frequent and closer to homes and schools ● Crossing Guard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encourage MLA's to establish guidelines ○ Speed limits in all school zones (regardless of routes needs to be 30)

- Bullying
 - PATHS program and conflict resolution (Parkdale school and Central Queens)
 - Course added to Physical Education (Self Protection)
 - Promote Kids help phone
 - Offer free Non Violent Crisis Intervention to all parents and students
 - Increase awareness of what bullying means - ensure people know the difference between school yard spats and bullying

Appendix 3: Universal provincial healthy school food program: national advocacy, non-profit model

Issue	How do we implement/advocate for a universal provincial healthy school food program within a non-profit model?
Ideal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flexibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ opt in/opt out ○ food options ○ free/pay what you can ○ social ○ can schools work around menus (ethnic, likes) ● Get culinary institute on board ● Procurement to be local ● French ● Lunch ● Resources are present on PEI ● Doesn't have to be complicated
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Older kids can't plan for supper, let alone what they want to eat later on in the week (pre-order issue) ● Money <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ who pays for what? ○ funding? ○ sustainable? ● Ethnic diversity ● Coordination/consistency ● Who classifies _____ as healthy? ● Who will work? (talent pool) - volunteers ● Home and school could lose fundraising money (Vernon River) ● Non-profit model ● Parents in community need to know about it ● Location of hub schools to their outlet schools (food stays proper) ● Leadership roles ● It is Generic - can you change it? ● b/c online - can't plan for a week ● Framework - what the model would be - still allowing for special days ● Children are resistant to healthy food ● Too much fast food in cafeteria
Creative Solutions to Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meal card ● Tasting session ● Tax receipts (farmers to donate) ● Playscape/grow a garden - maintain/resources ● Make kids part of the process ● Field trips to farms ● Schools can grow and trade ● Culinary programs - coop opportunity ● Health "QEH" foundation model in education (not just food program)

- Support capacity of Home and School culinary programs/adp programs
- Smoothies/carrot sticks (\$3)
- Tasting sessions
- Greenhouses/coop farms
- Increase exposure to healthy foods
- Provide education to increase exposure to healthy foods
- Different schools should grow different produce
- Make kids part of the process
- Offer free student run healthy snack program

Appendix 4: Encourage strong relationships within school communities and create welcoming schools

Issue	How do we encourage strong relationships within school communities and create welcoming schools?
Ideal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diversity in communication/access to language support ● Community outreach by school/access to school (grandparent, extended family) ● Welcoming climate - Zero intimidation ● No discrimination ● All feel connected ● Input and communication both ways
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Liability - public in schools, access for full family to be around ● Parents not welcome in school on meet the teacher night ● Busy lives of families ● Lack of communication ● Too much emphasis in high school on athletics and music to the exclusion of students not interested in neither one nor the other -we need to cultivate other opportunities for building relationships and elevate them to the same level of respect as sports/band/theatre ● The transition from intermediate school to high school for extra curricular activities was a challenge - not as much support for students who needed it at the high school level
Creative Solutions to Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Welcoming - School improvement plans - welcoming to include parents ● System centric policy changes - include parent engagement when reviewing school level policies ● Access - immediate family/grandparents have access to schools - anyone outside must have vulnerable sector checks (some flexibility) ● Inviting foyer ● Messages in different languages ● Welcoming ● Pair staff with number of families to welcome ● Newcomers - translation from newcomers association ● Grandparent/parent classroom engagements ● Parent input - assessments - 3 references from parents to offer feedback on interaction with administrator ● Meet the family not meet the teacher ● BBQ or informal setting for meet the teacher ● Review school policy and procedures and be consistent all over the province ● We need to reduce the busy chaos of the first day of school - especially for students starting a new school. Activities that are loud, social, involve face painting or sports are not welcoming to many students ● Having blueberries and ice cream at elementary school “meet the teacher” night was a welcoming action.

Appendix 5: Engage newcomers/parents to create welcoming schools

Issue	How do we engage newcomers and parents while creating welcoming schools?
Ideal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More information ready/available at all levels ● Welcoming to all new families to PEI ● Schools identify newcomers ● EAL term is broad ● Available spaces for religions (Muslim/prayer room) ● Handbooks/transitions/integration into system ● Services within school system ● Potential funding/tax info ● Cultural info for parents ● Need to welcome the whole family ● Variety of backgrounds integrated into school
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of past ● Language ● Culture/food ● Many parents with no English ● Transportation ● Knowledge of culture and culture norms ● Prior schooling (refugee camp) ● Easy access to translation service (8-10 students) ● Definition of newcomers (within Canada too!) ● Definitions of common terms - PSB etc ● Struggle outside of school to be part of the community ● Mindset of students ● School info in all languages ● School culture/environment ● Homework
Creative Solutions to Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Services for newcomers (EAL, PTSD, etc) working together like student well being teams ● Translation earlier in system/adjust home and school meeting for languages ● Extracurricular activities - culture exchanging activities that do not require language ● Combine community groups/services to help involve newcomers in areas ● Cultural sessions for parents/students/teachers (sensitivity training) ● How a culture works - align/function together ● Buddy-playing at recess/lunch - outside of language based games ● Newcomers connection to education ● Orientation activities like university ● Student to student committee, parent to parent ● Change mindset admin/teachers/parents/students - all together ● Promoting friendliness and inclusiveness ● Establish peer committees

- Extracurricular activities
- More welcome to new students/PEI students
- More open communication from school to school
- Translation resources for home and school meetings - dates for meetings, invitations, websites and resources should be standard
- We need to work harder to reach out to all families, regardless of language or other barriers to participation

**Appendix 6: Support the needs in classrooms as identified through school assessments
(e.g. human and academic resources)**

Issue	How do we support the needs in classrooms as identified through school assessments (e.g. human and academic resources)?
Ideal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What to know, not just results but needs ● Know realities ● Early intervention ● Those not meeting-having evidence based tools to change outcomes ● Assessments done as required (access) ● Research based interventions ● Provincial broad assessments to support those struggling ● “FM systems” should be standard, funded items in all public school classrooms ● We need schools with enough room and supports so that students are never locked up in closets or small offices due to behaviour or stress/anxiety
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Class sizes/wait times ● Delay in results - in next year before result (time lost) - too late to develop appropriate program or to shift circ. ● All assessments are the same but children are different/Missing kids whose abilities are different based on exemptions/May not understand but still have to do it ● Exemption process too strict ● Resource teachers to have more input ● Is it testing the students or testing the teacher? (shouldn't be attached to grade - early/middle/late) ● Class composition - small class high needs/big class low needs - EA support ● Absenteeism (hockey, etc.) causes complexity - teach it twice ● Time - school model 1 hour time (30 students - no EA with diagnosis/student styles); lack of resource support; kids deserve enrichment opportunity and they are lost - 1 hour difficult ● Children out for hockey ● Flex block to help with extra circ. and homework ● Does flex block work the same in each school?
Creative Solutions to Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Figure out what they need earlier ● Stream earlier (primary) or don't stream - intensive support class - primary skills get solid ● High school streamed academic/general/advanced - not in best interest - based on one environment, not inclusive ● Reading recovery stops too soon ● More intervention to build skills early, more intensive ● Schools/parents made aware of resources available for support ● Look at assessment adapted to the student ● Training teachers how to support kids to address anxiety

- Wording of test/assessment - turn it into game/fun
- Look at anxieties around testing - help with that
- Looking at individual groups/classes
- Increase communication of what assessments require
- Learning is negative with pressure to those who excel/struggle

Appendix 7: Improve communication and supports in Home and School

Issue	How do we improve communication and supports in Home and School?
Ideal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open communication: admin to parents and parents to admin ● Better communication about “Special Topics” being addressed at school: even if an emergency discuss. send a mass email so parents are at least aware at end of day ● No such thing as too much communication ● Daily back and forth communication between home and school is useful for both home and school
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Admin not welcome to parent’s involvement ● SAS not consistent ● Not enough direct contact with parents (use students to take home information) ● Social media/email - need to check it...SAS/Newsletter - going to look for information ● Engaging parents - many options ● Parents and students with literacy challenges ● Communication at high school is different than elementary - expectations/schools/principals/student
Creative Solutions to Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SAS use for information via email K-12 ● Home and School be the facilitators of the communication via FB/email/newsletter/etc. ● Make communication consistent and simple from all sources ● Same message sent out from all sources (email, Facebook, website, newsletter) ● Minimum standard for communication via email ● TEXT based for emergent or immediate notices ● Can SAS distribute via text? ● Target grassroots tax credit for donations to school breakfast programs similar to the old fitness tax credit (e.g. \$300 cap on donations so it is grassroots and it targets the general public, not corporations) ● School newsletters/emails are useful. We need to make sure that if we only send email, that 100% of families have a way of receiving it.

Appendix 8: Support having enriched curriculum in all classrooms for all students

Issue	How do we support enriched curriculum for all classrooms and for all students?
Ideal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How can we find the best balance? - content/competencies and predetermined/free learning ● Finding the right balance - not this <u>or</u> this, rather this <u>and</u> this ● Different ways to learn the lessons, Montessori style learning ● Each student moves at their pace and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is not left behind educationally ○ is individually challenged ● Pool of resources to promote individual education ● Have the student excited about their own learning ● All kids need teaching/learning that reflects their strengths and challenges - we need to stop using the phrase “special needs” and think of all people as having their own, unique special needs
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding of outcomes ● Time ● Teachers feeling autonomous ● Resources (and knowledge of) ● Amount of work ● Fear of change ● Class size ● Needs in the classroom ● Lack of librarians in schools ● Access to technology (hardware, Wi-Fi, tech support)
Creative Solutions to Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Class composition ● Online Enrichment Classes ● Listening to teachers (allow them to be the guide) ● Harnessing community resources ● Self guided learner driven opportunities (by choice) ● Integrated curriculum ● Break up class into groups to allow for enrichments ● Significant investments in innovative technology designed to reach the kids on either side of the spectrum of challenge vs under challenged ● We should look at expanding the IB program to all schools, and to look at its approach for all students, not just ones deemed “exceptional”

Appendix 9: Parent Engagement Projects

Issue	How do we share Parent Engagement project successes and challenges?
Ideal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase communication on Facebook Page ● Invite guest speakers to attend meetings ● Invite Grade 9 parents and students to May meeting to welcome and answer questions for incoming families ● Identify individual issues addressed at a meeting
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting format ● Same parents show up each time ● Busyness of people - most people don't come as they are afraid of being put on a committee ● Ways to keep people engaged ● Length of Home and School meetings
Creative Solutions to Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Need to change format - Zoom/WebEx/Online ● Provide gift cards for speakers ● Have a teacher representative at your meeting ● Set a schedule for H&S meetings months in advance ● Provide minutes to parents who cannot attend H&S meetings ● Start and finish meetings on time ● Ensure proper translation is used - not Google Translate ● Have culinary students cater meetings ● Offer child care at meetings ● Ensure parents see progress from meetings ● Consider holding meetings off-site (restaurant, etc) ● At Meet the Teacher night, have a sign up for parent representatives in each class so they can keep the rest of the class up to date via Facebook page ● Let's change the name to "Community Engagement" from "Parent Engagement" so as to involve everyone, inside and outside the school ● Continue to pursue projects that involve multiple schools collaborating ● Expand the Home and School model to embrace engagement at college and university and beyond to "lifelong learning"

Appendix 10: Open Discussion Table

Issue	What other issues are important to our School Communities?
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of substitute teachers in both English and French programs ● Lack of resource support for children with learning disorders or high needs ● Lack of substitute bus drivers ● Lack of Public Schools Branch representatives in our area ● Busses not arriving on time or not following our policy ● Students arriving late/absenteeism ● Requirement for visual/hearing assessments (K-12) ● Safety concerns about kids being forced out for recess in unsafe conditions ● How to cultivate volunteers and how to retain volunteers?
Creative Solutions to Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curriculum ideas - coding (computers) Grades - model off UK ● Maintain or increase play based approach in Kindergarten and infuse into Primary grades ● In the spirit of Reconciliation, the Dept of EELC should have on staff a program coordinator, the success of “Salmon are our Friends” program, delivered by the Abegweit First Nations should be a model. It needs more support and enthusiasm ● Individual help for H&S to organize the Executive and meetings ● Other: Look at the current model for “inclusive education” to see if it remains the best approach ● Other: The staff parking lots of schools should be open for people with challenges - physical, medical, intellectual, etc.