

LAKEHEAD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MINUTES OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

Board Room
Jim McCuaig Education Centre

2026 MAR 2
6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Robin Cawlishaw, Chair
Michelle Riemer, Vice- Chair
Leah Vanderwey
Brittany Kennedy

George Saarinen (virtual)
Laura Prodanyk
Dawn-Marie Francis
Suzanne Posthumus (virtual)

MEMBERS ABSENT, WITH REGRET:

Terry Godick
Lorraine Mashongoane

Tara Ingram
Carla Mulholland

RESOURCE PRESENT:

Sherri-Lynne Pharand, Director of Education
Fred Van Elburg, Teacher
Kristi Lees, Principal
Heather Harris, Superintendent of Education

Jamie Smith, Communications Supervisor
Christine Jones, Executive Assistant
Stephanie Ryyananen, Finance Supervisor
Kali Bernst, Principal

1. **Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions**

Robin Cawlishaw, Chair, welcomed the following guests:

- Heather Harris, Superintendent of Education, Early Years & Elementary Education;
- Kali Bernst, Principal of Indigenous Education and Program; and
- Stephanie Ryyananen, Finance Supervisor.

2. **Disclosures of Conflict of Interest**

There were no disclosures of conflict of interest.

3. **Approval of the Agenda – March 2, 2026**

The agenda of March 2, 2026, was approved by consensus.

4. **Land Acknowledgement**

Robin Cawlishaw, Chair, acknowledged the lands and traditional territory.

5. **Delegations/Presentations**

- 5.1 Robin Cawlishaw, Chair, introduced Suzanne Posthumus, Chair of Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) delegate representing Tara Ingram, SEAC representative.

- 5.2 Stephanie Ryyananen, Supervisor of Finance presented the 2026-2027 Budget. All members' questions were addressed.
- 5.3 Heather Harris, Superintendent of Education, Early Years & Elementary Education, and Kali Bernst, Principal of Indigenous Education and Program presented Lakehead Public Schools' Cultural Safety Plan and provided a Executive Summary handout of the plan. Director Pharand expressed her gratitude to the community, staff and students for all their contributions in completing this plan. The rollout is expected for September 2026. Superintendent Harris, shared that requests for creating personal Land Acknowledgements will be discussed at a future Miiniwewinan Indigenous Education Advisory Committee and will have the process approved. All members' questions were addressed.

6. Approval of Minutes – November 17, 2025

The minutes of November 17, 2025, were approved by consensus.

7. New Business

7.1 26-27 PIC Priorities for Budget Deputation

Sherri-Lynne Pharand, Director of Education, shared the handout of the 2025-2026 PIC deputation submitted for the members input and updates. Christine Jones, Executive Assistant, will summarize and send the 26-27 PIC deputation letter to the chair and vice-chair for their approval.

7.2 Miiniwewinan: Indigenous Education Advisory Committee Report

No member available to attend to date.

7.3 Special Education Advisory Committee Report

Suzanne Posthumus, SEAC Chair, provided the following SEAC update;

- Sasha Friske, Registered Behavior Analyst, and Kim Pineau, Autism Resource Teacher, presented the Autism Student Supports Presentation; and
- Maggie Fredrickson, Principal of Special Education, provided a special education update.

7.4 Jamie Smith, Communications Supervisor, providing the following update:

- 2026 Pink Shirt Day image of the otter, was created by a Crestview Public School student;
- Lakehead Public School Foundation is hosting a Quiz Night, on May 2, 2026, at the Knights of Columbus Centre, more details to follow;
- collaboration has started with Sister Margaret Smith Centre (SMSC), in creating a parent resource site that would include their Grade 4 – Grade 6, on-line safety information called ICRAZE;
- Brittany Kennedy, Community Member, Matawa First Nation, offered to introduce Jamie to her contacts at the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Center for additional collaboration on the parent resource site; and

- Christine Jones, Executive Assistant, will confirm what options are available to have Jake Ernst, Speaker, to present virtually and the possibility of having it recorded with permission to use it as a resource link on our parent resource page.

Moved by Robin Cawlishaw

“that by a show of hands, we approve the funding to support the Jake Ernst, Speaker event”. Carried.

7.5 Director’s Report

Sherri-Lynne Pharand, Director of Education, shared the following Director’s update:

- Childcare report presented the Boards’ daycare current operations;
- Grade 8 Reach Ahead report, presents where students in Grade 8 have the opportunity to attain one credit before entering Grade 9;
- Lakehead Public School Foundation (LPSF) report, shared that they are hosting a Quiz Night, on May 2, 2026, at the Knights of Columbus Centre and there is a call out for volunteers for LPSF Annual Golf Tournament at Whitewater, on August 24, 2026. Foundation supports a variety of student scholarships, student needs, and school events our Kingfisher Outdoor Education Centre;
- International Education Program reported 46 students in attendance for the 2025-2026 school year and that we are always looking for host families;
- Student Achievement report was presented without EQAO results as we await from the Ministry;
- Presentation of our Indigenous Skilled Trades-KZ Lodge, along with Special Education was presented at the Ontario Public School Board Association (OPSBA) Conference in Toronto, ON. The KZ Lodge program currently has 96% of the students obtaining all eight credits in the program;
- our Grade 8 students will start receiving electronic devices, that will follow them during their secondary path;
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) training is now complete for all staff, with AI guidelines posted on our website. Christine Jones, Executive Assistant, will send them to the committee members;
- the 2026-2027 School Year Calendar was released today and can be found on our Boards website; and
- upcoming Science Fair, on April 7, 2026, at Lakehead University, everyone is welcome to attend.

Trustee Vanderwey shared that on March 4, 2026, at 6:00 p.m., at the Waverly Library, there will be a workshop on The Role of a Trustee.

All members’ questions were addressed.

8. Other Business

8.1 Robin Cawlishaw, Chair, reviewed the PIC correspondence that was distributed since our last meeting;

- 8011 Use of School Buildings Facilities and Grounds Policy;
- 8012 Fundraising in the Schools Policy;
- 8010 Fees for Learning Materials and Activities Policy;
- 4030 Territorial Student Program – Transportation & Services Policy;
- 5010 Special Education Policy;
- 7030 Human Rights and Workplace Harassment Policy;
- Parent Workshop Series; and
- 2026-2027 Budget Input Session

8.2 Robin Cawlishaw, Chair, shared that we will circle back once Christine Jones, Executive Assistant, confirms the status of a virtual option with Jake Ernst.

Additionally, Christine Jones, Executive Assistant, will follow up with TVO for a future presentation.

9. Next Meeting Date:

Meeting date of May 4, 2026.

10. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.