



Pandemic Working Group (PWG)

Location: Zoom
Date: Thursday, January 6, 2022
Time: 12:00pm to 1:00pm

Agenda & Notes

Agenda Item	Notes
Member Updates & Immediate Problem Solving	<p>Emergency Child Care > Operating again, but the eligibility criteria is much stricter due to staff shortages. ECC criteria can be found here: https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/covid-19-community-supports-for-the-vulnerable.aspx#emergencychildcare</p> <p>City of Kitchener > All summer student positions now open. Please share widely. https://www.kitchener.ca/en/jobs-and-volunteering/job-opportunities.aspx</p> <p>Carizon > Continuing to do home visits as needed and in-person with newcomers. However, most groups pushed out to after January 17th or switched to virtual.</p> <p>YMCA > Have shifted to virtual. Please reach out to Jaime (jaime.Jacomen@ytr.ymca.ca) if you have any thoughts on how early years professionals working in Early ON can support the community during this time. Funding that YMCA receives will continue to support work to support children and families across the community and they have flexibility to determine the best approach to meet needs.</p> <p>SCHOOLS > Schools shifted to remote until at least January 17th.</p> <p>Viamonde > Communications department is currently working on creating a Q&A for COVID-related questions section on their website for parents. This will not only help parents navigate all these changes in online and in-person learning, but also alleviate the amount of calls/emails the school is currently receiving.</p> <p>MonAvenir > Keeping an eye on absenteeism with the in-person/remote shifts, for both staff and students. Have suspended the hybrid model and are back to remote. Reaching out to parents to ensure they have the supports needed for remote learning.</p> <p>WRDSB > Have moved to remote learning with previously established practices. Working with families who struggle with access to Wi-Fi to help</p>



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	<p>rectify this issue. Welcoming back ACE-congregated students on Monday (Jan 10th). Working to address and mitigate staffing issues. Start date for newcomers refugees has been pushed back in order to help determine the best way to help them transition to remote learning. After January 17th, may do a split between in-person and remote learning, depending on parent requests.</p> <p>Immigration Partnership > Raised concern that no newcomer refugees have been able to register their children for school since arriving in August and onward. Noted that perhaps refugees could be one of the groups given priority for in-person learning. The group discussed options to advocate to the Province for prompt return to in-person learning in support of child and youth well-being. The group decided to see what precedent for advocating to the Province may have been set by the Pandemic Control Group during earlier phases of the pandemic.</p> <p>Public Health > Noted that decision making priorities (local, provincial, national) include keeping spread low and preventing hospitals from getting overwhelmed, as well as keeping most vulnerable populations safe. Vaccine rollout was ramped up just before Dec 24th and has been going full-speed since then. The Hockey Hub model (employed at Bingemans and Pinebush) has been put back in place, which can roll out high numbers of vaccines in a short time. Grace encouraged all to keep checking Public Health Twitter and Facebook as openings are posted there, as well as to keep checking the Bingemans & Pinebush locations.</p> <p>Grace followed up after the meeting with the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Canadian Pediatric Society, the Pediatrics Section of the Ontario Medical Association and the Pediatricians Alliance of Ontario called on the provincial government to resume in-person learning no later than January 17th. They stressed “certain decisions and measures pose a far greater risk to children and youth than the virus itself.”• There was a provincial on Jan 6 was to support access to vaccine for educational staff. Locally, a plan is being finalized to have vaccine clinic spots available for education and childcare staff at designated locations as well as some options at existing clinics for private schools. Details will be shared through employers to relevant staff. <p>ACTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monika to ensure any school board FAQs are linked on Family Compass, as well as current Emergency Child Care info.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott to bring forward Tara's recommendations re: prioritization of refugee students to WRDSB. • Barb will consult with the Pandemic Control Group re: advocacy.
Staff Wellness with Jim Moss (YMCA Work Well)	<p>Jim Moss will attend and address the following issues/questions from the Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff shortages in all spaces • How do you hold the tension when you work in a helping profession and you're trying to help your staff slow down? • How does the workforce stay well while still addressing increasing needs? • Possible healthy boundaries for staff to set in order to take care of themselves. (Because doing this will also empower others to do the same) <p>Deferred to a future meeting.</p>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barb and Alison to attend the January 14th Psychosocial & Spiritual Health Pandemic Working Group to discuss ways in which their group could best support the psychosocial and spiritual health needs of young people and families at this point in the pandemic (particularly by mobilizing informal supports). <p>ACTION: If you'd like to join the meeting, please reach out to Alison for meeting details.</p>
Next Steps	<p>Next meeting: January 20th, 2022 *NEW</p> <p>Note: an earlier meeting may be called if there are advocacy steps to be taken.</p>

Future Agenda Items

- Supports needed for children/youth/families during pandemic recovery
- FACS trends related to pandemic impacts