

Parent Engagement Opportunity Fund

June, 2009

Dundas Consolidated Home and School Association

President: Kandy Johnston

Principal: Paul Sullivan

**Name of Project: Closing Ceremony for Dundas Consolidated:
Open House and Student Recognition Ceremony**

Goal(s):

To help the students, school staff and parents say good bye to their school and each other.

Description

In June we hosted an Open House and Student Recognition Ceremony.

Did you achieve your goal?

Yes, we had a wonderful evening with approximately 65 parents in attendance. Parents were very enthusiastic and interested in becoming more involved in the learning experiences of their children and showed this in their participation at this event. Parents are also talking about how they can help the children to transition to their new school. This event certainly helped in this area.

Who did the project benefit?

Our project benefited parents, students and the school community as a whole. It provided an opportunity for parents to become more involved in their child's learning experience. Having their parents more involved will also help the children as they transition to a new school environment.

What challenges are you still facing with parent engagement?

Parental engagement is always an issue as we try to encourage all parents to be involved in their child's school experience. We will continue to encourage this through our future activities as well. However, this is a personal choice and we can't force people who don't wish to participate.

Thoughts about the project topic (provided by project partners)

Dundas Consolidated School closed its doors as a public school for the final time in June, 2009. While it was a time of sadness, the community, students and parents - past and present - used the closing event as a reminder of the "spirit of community" that is rural PEI. Urban centers change on an ongoing basis; closings and openings are a daily occurrence. What is *there today*, may be *gone tomorrow*.

This is not the case in rural communities where each new family, individual, company or service that moves into the community is a cause for recognition and celebration.

We are an island culturally, as well as geographically. If we are to remain true to our heritage, then listening to the voice of rural PEI is essential. While Dundas Consolidated School is now closed, its heritage will remain through the people who used the school as a *center of their community*. Hopefully, they will be able to continue using the school as a place for *community-centering*.