

WESTMOUNT SCHOOL COUNCIL MINUTES – September 19th 2017 (7:00- 8:30 p.m)

Members in Attendance: Angela Ferguson, Mike Armstrong, Hanif Dadani, Kirsten Patterson, Kim Koplin, Anuradha Khanna.

1. **Members welcomed** (Total 5)
2. **NO AGENDA:** Meeting was open for any questions and concerns.
3. **May 2017 minutes reviewed & approved.**
4. No Report by **Student Council.**

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

5. **Can school help in carpooling?** (Concern of a Grade 9 parent)

At present there is no help available except personal connections. Ideas like use of social media, creating of an area map for interested families, help of school council, which potentially could connect parent community were discussed.

6. **Does school provide any help to students who forget HSR Presto Card or Bus ticket or run out of cash to reach home?**

There is no such help available in office, but office and staff have helped some students in past by lending cash for bus ticket. Bus tickets are sold in school by students. School wants to emphasize encouraging students to take responsibility for such things.

7. **What is the update on school renovation?**

The Principal updated that as our school renovation is a small budget work, bidding took a while. Bestco Company finally started the work in the beginning of September. Renovation is running 2 months behind schedule but indicate we will finish on time. All the asbestos is being removed from floors and ceilings. The target is to complete Phase I by Jan 7th 2018.

8. **When will be the Parent Portal code available for parents, to get access to their child's progress at school?**

Ms. Ferguson said that she will ask the Vice Principal Mr. Joshua Connor to clarify the details of this concern of parents from the board and will update soon.

9. **Does school teach students how to use authentic media for inquiry?**

Ms. Ferguson shared that some Grade 9 students have to take a mandatory course called "Foundation of Inquiry". It teaches students not only the skills which are required to succeed in self-paced program but also how to use right websites for inquiry and learning. It would be good for all.

10. **Update by Principal on school's effort to increase the Graduation rate:**

- Board has asked to set targets for this year. Last year in Victory Lap (Grade 12 +) out of 72, 61 graduated.

- Student success teacher is assigned to track progress of Grade 9 students. Out of 360 Grade 9s only 6 did not get their full credits. Student success will track grade 9 and 10 this year.
- Teachers are assigned also to track progress of Grade 11 students.
- Guidance department is fully dedicated in monitoring Grade 12s and 12 +es.
- To increase Graduation rate new changes have been made regarding mandatory 40 hrs of volunteering. Starting this year students have to complete volunteer hrs by the end of Grade 10, instead of Grade 12.

11. Suggestions by a parent to improve our schools graduation ceremony.

A parent suggested that our school should start giving cords to students for their academic achievements. This will give special sense of achievement and encouragement to those who are putting extra efforts and sacrificing other things to perform better. This initiative could also motivate others to perform better to earn a cord. Another parent debated that it should be kept simple as it might demotivate those who do not have potential for higher academic achievements. No conclusion was drawn

12. What is the update on Breakfast club?

School is again running the Breakfast club this year, five days a week from 8-8:30 am, with the help of some teachers and student volunteers. Main objective is to encourage students to eat breakfast. No warm food is served. On the go, easy to eat options like yogurt, fruits, cheese strings etc. served to students.

13. Is attendance mandatory on Flex days?

Yes, School does require students to be present in the school on Flex Days. Students should be encouraged to plan their own day so that they can finish pending work and be on track.

14. Update by Principal on changes in the Self-paced program and assessment methods:

School is now more focused on making the learning environment shift from self- paced to Self-Directed. It is believed that this will give better learning and understanding of subjects to students. There are some changes in the assessment and grading system. Principal promised to invite some teacher to explain the new changes in detail to the parents in the school council meeting.

Next Meeting will be on Tuesday October 17th 2017, at 7:00 pm in Room 123. Election will be held at this time.