



# École Élémentaire Michaëlle Jean

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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## School Council meeting Tuesday, November 23rd, 2021

### **In attendance:**

S. Constable, P. Hatala, S. Hall, L. Aquino - Soriano, G. Bijelic, L. Billingsley, M. Patrinely, M. Aherns, M. Nafk, T. Rayner, M. Lee

### 1. Meeting called to order and Land Acknowledgement

- P. Hatala called the meeting to order at 6:03pm
- P. Hatala led the Land Acknowledgement

### 2. Approval of the minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes from the September 28th Parent Council meeting made by S. Hall
- Second by T. Rayner

Minutes for the September 28th Parent Council meeting were approved

### 2. Principal's Report - S. Constable

- Dead trees in the front of the school have been removed by the city
- Water testing occurs twice daily and is logged into school database. The testing must meet acceptable water testing levels in order to be entered into the system. If it doesn't meet acceptable levels, it can't be logged in. Therefore, because it is logged in everyday, we can have peace of mind that the water is safe.
- Individual classroom construction hasn't yet started. It was supposed to start 3 weeks ago. We are awaiting materials for the classrooms to be fitted with heating and cooling systems. There is one empty classroom for the class that has to relocate to due to the remote teacher working from home. It will not be the learning commons which is great so all the classes can continue to utilize the learning commons.
- Cross country was a huge success for the 6-8 and 3-5 runners. The students really felt supported by having the whole school community out there cheering them on. We only needed one bus, so school was able to absorb that cost.
- School council budget remains at \$1284.81 We can carry over until next year
- No update from facilities about the parking. S. Constable asked last week. They are still looking into it. This is something that will take a lot of time, they are in



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conversations with places at the city to see about the front of the school; what is under the ground so we don't hit into any septic or water beds/issues.

Nov 22-25 is bullying awareness and prevention week. Teachers are engaging in a lot of activities provided by the curriculum department provided in French! Will end the week on Nov 25<sup>th</sup> with pink shirt day in support. The school has made a point this week that the best way for all of us to prevent and stand up is for students, staff and humans to show kindness, random acts of kindness and to respect each other every day. If we do this, can make a big difference.

3. Friday Nov 26<sup>th</sup> is a PA Day – for staff – The first half of the day will be introducing a course that the social work department has designed called “On the Horizon” – moving toward safer and more inclusive classrooms. It is a huge priority/focus for HWDSB right now. This is a starting point for learning how we can do this in the classroom. The second half of the day will focus on CLI – Continuous Learning and Improvement – really knowing the students. where they are at socially, academically, emotionally. How do we get them there, what specific strategies do we need to help them progress? In previous years this was about academics. This year the board's annual plan and the school's annual plans will continue the focus of academics, but now knowing our students and where they are socially and emotionally. Post covid, students may not be where they were prior to covid. Many still have anxieties. The first month back at school focused on wellbeing, but some students are still struggling. How we can help them as a person to achieve their full potential? How are we addressing the gaps in learning? Teachers are encouraged to understand that the assessments of the students are not the results that they may have seen prior to covid. Teachers are focusing on where the students are at, and where they want to move them to. There will be some gaps. Especially the grade ones. They will meet the kids where they are and build the relationships so they can move forward. S. Constable will inquire if council can have access to the learning.

4. Parent teacher interviews are not formally occurring this year on the PA Day as they have in the past. The board decided not to this year. Parents can request an interview. All they need to do in contact the teacher and they will meet with you.

Teachers concerned about students' progress will reach out to parents

Home work – teachers are not giving as much to do at home as in previous years, by the end of the day, the kids are done. They have worked really hard and it has been an adjustment to get back to a regular school day. At night, give them time to have a break and see their family. If there is a parent who would like more work, just contact the teacher. Teachers are being mindful about the student community – a lot of the students participate in extracurricular activities that are mostly back in full swing. Teachers are aware of how much students have to do at the end of the day. Teachers are



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encouraging students to read in French and English daily. Parents should encourage kids to read – anything at least 20 minutes per day.

## 5. Chair updates P. Hatala

- Parent/Caregiver survey has been developed with the purpose to try to engage with parents and or caregivers in our school community in the hopes of getting some insight into what issues they feel might be important for Parent Council to address this year; how they might like to get involved with supporting the school and how we can raise awareness of the Parent Council
- Survey distribution for December 1st through 17th, 2021 – Would like to get things out by next Wednesday (December 1st) ideally. Council is encouraged to review questions
- Analysis of results will occur on January 15th, 2022
- Results will be shared with Council on January 17th, 2022
- Results will be shared with the school community on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022
- The survey will be using Microsoft Office forms which is already within the boards suite of tools that they use and School Messenger System will be used as the way to distribute the survey
- Proposed questions
  - Basic Demographic Information (Number of Children, Grades)
  - What are 3 aspects of life at MJ that your child enjoys?
  - What are 3 aspects of life at MJ that your child wishes could change?
  - As a parent/caregiver, what is one thing you would like to see continue at MJ?
  - As a parent/caregiver, what is one thing you would like to see improved at MJ?
  - What topics in education/school life might you be interested in learning more about if the school council was to facilitate information sessions or resources? Addendum - and how they would like to see that information?
  - What are one or two areas that you feel the school council should focus their work on?
  - Are you interested in participating in school council meetings or volunteering at school council events? If yes, request email address.
- G. Bijelic suggested questions to gauge the awareness of council at present – what do they think we do? Are you aware that for example: council helps facilitate transportation?
- Might try to do at the beginning of each school year.
- Would also be interesting to do a similar type of questionnaire in June



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- Additional funding discussion. There are opportunities that are potentially available to us for some funding
- The Parent Engagement Funding Allocation - \$500/school – use the funding to increase parent/caregiver engagement/education (ex. Speaker)
- Parent's Reaching Out (PRO) grant – PIC develops a process for how to access the grant
- Ideas from council?
  - How can non-speaking French parents help with children's homework;
  - Reach out to Lisa Reynolds – core French/consultant
  - Fridge magnets – 10 quick tips – give to parents to give them additional info on how to help kids with homework
  - By February, following the Parent/Caregiver survey, we will have a better idea of how we might be able to leverage funds – to help the parent community

## 6. Other Business

- In the community, with winter break coming up, there are always lots of food donations, however, after speaking with individuals who work closely with the food banks, it is in Jan/Feb./march when things peter out again
- P. Hatala proposed some kind of initiative in the new year, to work collaboratively with the school and have a possible food drive in the new year.

## 3. Future Meeting Dates

- Next meeting Feb 22nd, 2022
- May 24th, 2022

Meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm