

## Mount Albion Parent Council Meeting

Thursday, September 28, 2023

6:00 – 7:00 pm

### Attendees:

- Cheryl Urbanczyk (Principal)
- Kristy Luker (Vice Principal)
- Lisa Hewitt (Secretary)
- Andrea Dunlop (Co-Chair)
- Prashanth Kannan (Co-Chair)
- Elizabeth Roediger (Treasurer)
- Amber Mayne
- Luba Dubinsky
- Jennifer Lazarski
- Carlos Magana
- Tamara Jones
- Stephanie Blanchard
- Alyse Nishimura
- Jessica Gold
- Julie Young
- Nicole O'Neill
- Ariana Rusic
- Belal Ahmad

### Regrets:

- Melissa Smith
- Judy Davidson
- Adele Dantonio
- Kelli Ridgeway

### Call to Order

- Andrea calls to order at 6:06 pm

### Introduction and Elections

- Elizabeth has volunteered to be treasurer. There were no other applicants so is elected.
- Lisa has volunteered to be secretary. There were no other applicants so is elected.
- Prashanth and Andrea have volunteered to be co-chairs. No other applicants so both were elected.

### Community Rep Report

- Regrets from the community reps. No update provided.

## Principal's Report (Cheryl)

- Aside from the past couple days, have had a very successful startup with the new school year.
- New windows in many areas of the building. Some of the construction is still being finished up.
- There is new curriculum coming out. Have started the process of looking at literacy data and figuring out what the needs are to support students and obtain resources
- Really working on being able to support students with special needs within regular classroom
- Financially looking at ability to purchase technology (iPads)
- Secure school situations:
  - Past few days have been challenging across the board. Have received emails and phone calls from parents asking about parts of the procedure. Whenever there is an incident, the school must follow that procedure.
  - The school is to contact the police and follow their lead along with assistance from the superintendent. The response may look different depending on what has happened (two events - one evacuation and one that was not an evacuation). With the second event, police decided it was not necessary to evacuate after completing their investigation.
  - Another area of concern is timeliness of communication. Been in touch with the board to provide that feedback.
  - So much of what happens is constrained by the policy.
  - Wednesday's threat did not come directly to the school. Police walked through questions: 1) did you have rentals the night before (no), 2) were there contractors in the building (no), etc. Doors have not been unlocked since they were locked last night by the MA community. Asked staff to visually scan surroundings from their classrooms since they know their classrooms best. Wednesday's situation was deemed "not imminent" by the police after the answers to the list of questions and their investigation, and it was decided best not to disturb classes.
  - Does not have the information as to the details of the incidents.
  - Threats that are received board wide are coming in different ways. Sometimes school, sometimes outside agency, sometimes random person in the school board.
  - Advice given to staff is scanning rooms at the end of the day, so when they start the day the next day, know if something is different. Doors are locked and there is a security system that would go off if someone tried to enter the school after hours.
  - Gap identified: during aftercare, the doors are unlocked. Administration is aware of this and looking to fix this. There are passes (for teachers, students in the portables), but would trigger an alarm if someone tried to come in after hours. Also pointed out that there are many places outside that something could be hidden (inside portables without alarm, underneath, portables, forest, playground). All of this is taken into consideration in providing feedback to the school board on the policy. Parents can also contact school board directly with these concerns.
  - Parent asked if school would consider additional security such as metal detectors, bag checks. Kristy suggests to bring to the school board
  - "Fire drill" was the terminology used with the students, but some of the older students were able to look it up on cell phones and find out what was going on
  - Cheryl has confirmed that the police are taking these threats seriously. It is an active investigation so they cannot release any information. Kristy called both times and the police were here within 5 minutes.
  - If anyone has feedback, needs to go directly to the board. Contact superintendent, Gerry Smith.
  - Cheryl and Kristy's hands are tied by the HWDSB S Secure Schools policy (<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/secondary/supports/secure-schools/>) and the police investigation. They cannot overrule the decision of the police and cannot do something that is not within the policy. They can bring feedback forward and encourage upset parents to contact the superintendent with concerns. Contact non-emergency police line directly if looking for updates on the investigation.

### **Teacher's Report (Kristy on behalf of Judy)**

- Terry Fox run happened today
- Students had a softball tournament, everyone seemed to have a great time and heard positive feedback about the Mount Albion students' sportsmanship on the field.
- Volleyball is underway, tryouts have been happening
- Cross country has 80 kids trying out
- Jr swim team is up and running

### **Recap of Last Year (Andrea)**

- Last year was a challenge in terms of Parent Council for a few reasons including potential looming strikes/work to rule, change of principal, return to "normal" post COVID.
- Normally Parent Council runs a fall fundraiser. We took a step back and switched fundraiser order for the teachers to take the lead in the fall (in case work to rule/strike happened later in the year and they were unable to run one then)
- In the spring, did a first aid kit fundraiser that did really well and a smaller Dominos Pizza fundraiser.

### **Holiday Fundraiser**

- Hoping to do a fall chocolate fundraiser as chocolate has been very lucrative previously.
- Looking at Purdys which is done online.
- Purdys payment is through School Cash and Worlds Finest was not.
- Chocolate has made in the range of \$8000 in previous years.
  - Andrea will send poll to vote on whether we want to do Purdy's, World's Finest or something else for the fall fundraiser.
- Other potential fundraiser ideas:
  - Flipgive app – a member's hockey team has used them and made over \$1000 previously. Might be harder to get buy in from a school community.
  - Card box
  - Fair at the school for students to purchase gifts for family (concern was expressed regarding equity and all students being able to participate so will not move forward with this one).

### **Speaker Paul Davis**

- Last year planned on having a speaker, Paul Davis, come in. He teaches about cyberbullying, and how parents can safeguard apps for kids.
- He does a parent talk, junior talk (grade 5 and below) and senior talk.
- Last year the cost was \$1500 to get him to come in. Might be slightly more this year.
- Currently account is at \$1451.56
- Andrea asked members to vote: majority vote yes.
- Andrea will contact him and see possible dates and confirm cost for this year.

### **New Business**

- Question: Is typing being taught anymore.
  - The students mostly work on iPads as the school does not have laptops.
  - Typing was not in the old curriculum, but is in the new one so staff are in the process of trying to work it in.
  - It is possible to turn an iPad into a makeshift laptop with a wireless keyboard.
  - Would ideally like laptops but the team is working with what they have and are able to obtain.
  - Trying to creatively work in how to teach typing – ideally with laptop but also on the iPads.
  - Have access to the Heritage Green Trust Fund and can apply every 2 years for a grant. Did not apply last year, so hoping to apply for a larger one this year. Gatestone has already applied for a similar grant and Cheryl and Kristy are waiting to see if it is approved before completing the application paperwork for Mount Albion.
  - Board approved laptop range from in cost from \$1800-\$2200/device.
  - There is no board funding for technology, has to come from the school or raised from fundraisers.
- Question: Mount Albion is rated a 5.7 on the Fraser Institute scale. The Fraser Institute rankings use publicly-available data such as average scores on province-wide tests (<https://www.fraserinstitute.org/school-performance>) . Does this influence the way curriculum is taught to students?
  - No, not necessarily. Teachers plan lessons based on the provincial regulated curriculum and the needs of the students/classes.

#### **Next Meeting:**

- Required to meet 4 times per year.
- **Next meeting: November 30, 2023 at 6-7 pm**

#### **Adjourn:**

- Andrea moves to adjourn.
- Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm