

## Rousseau School Council Meeting

Monday February 22, 2021

6:30pm-8:15 pm

**School Council Attendees:** Kim Strecker (Co-Chair); Allison Assaf (Co-Chair); Harmony Maiuk-Conti (Treasurer); April Burk (Secretary); Mr. John Gris (Principal); Ms. Beth Bennett (Teacher Representative); Ms. Michelle Fawcett (Teacher Representative)

**Student Council Attendees:** Violet and Reece

**School Community Attendees:** Bridget Downing-Scime

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### Meeting Summary

1. Welcome – By Mr. Gris including the Land Acknowledgement
2. *Student Report* – Violet and Reece
  - Valentine’s were prepared and have been sent to retirement/nursing homes by Ms. Bennett, Ms. Fernandez/Ms. Carte Combes, and Ms. Knight’s classes.
  - Spirit Day on Friday: Movie Character Day
3. *Teacher Report* – Ms. Bennett
  - Teacher are happy to have returned to the classroom
  - Kids are excited to be reunited in person
  - Grade 6 graduation
    - Grad wear forms to be prepared and sent home from company School Tees Inc. at [www.schooltee.com](http://www.schooltee.com)
    - Grade 6 yearbook looking for a project organizer. The 2020 co-ordinator, Laura Campbell-Hustler, had suggested it should be started around January or February.
    - Reaching out to parent regarding a Grade 6 parent committee to plan a celebration for the 2021 graduates.
    - Mr. Gris to look into HDWSB signage and ideas communicated to the K-8 schools for graduation.
4. *Principal’s Report*
  - Learn.Disrupt.Rebuild
    - K-12 curriculum resources provided by the HWDSB in September 2020 to address a directive from the Ministry of Education to provide Support for Anti-racist and Anti-Oppression education.
    - Learning lines up well with the ethical obligations mandated from the Ontario College of Teachers through their standards of practice.
    - Human Rights approach taken by HWDSB in education and lines up with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

- Speaks specifically to the dignity and worth of people to equal rights and opportunity free from discrimination.
- Climate of understanding and mutual respect so everyone can feel part of the community and participate fully.
- Acknowledgement that racism exists in our society, our schoolboards, and in our schools and HWDSB will continue to do everything they can to foster a well-being for all students and staff and to support to students' rights to equality in education and staffs' rights to equality in the workplace.
- Raising awareness and directly addressing obligations that HWDSB has to provide inclusion and removing barriers.
- This resource aligns with two of the key pillars in the HWDSB's annual plan.
- There are four modules to this program and Rousseau is currently working on module two and is expected to be complete in early spring.
  - Module 1. Physical Safety, Mental Health and Wellness.
  - Module 2. Understanding Identity and Intersectionality.
  - Module 3. Exploring Human Rights, Equity and Anti-racism.
  - Module 4. Empowering Action and Allyship.
- A sample lesson will be shared at the next school council.
- More information available at <https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/about/equity/learn-disrupt-rebuild-hwdsb/>
- Rousseau Implications – Ms. Fawcett
  - Passionate about anti-racist education and opportunity existed to expand this in our school.
  - Her experience shows an increase in diversity in the school over the 19 years she has been at Rousseau.
  - Led a schoolboard initiative 2010-2011 which tackled equity, through the arts. The event looked at the inspirational and messages Martin Luther King Jr. Students across the board learned music throughout the year celebrating various cultures.
  - Strong curriculum connections particularly in social studies in grades 5 and 6.
  - There is a strong tie between racism and bullying.
  - Teaching basic concepts, such as what is a dominant culture? Currently teaching about Canadian communities and the history of marginalized communities. What does it mean to be marginalized? Teaching children the language to have those conversations.
  - Representation is extremely important, and she is using resources that expose her class to many types of representation. This includes a Guide to Haudenosaunee Art by Dakota Brant to assist in teaching and helping students to create their own types of this art. Also, The Canadian Black History Table shared by the HWDSB which is a starting point for students to write biographies and creating art based on the material.
  - Desire to incorporate terms, language and teaching into our daily lives.

- Mental-Health
    - Emotion-Coaching: Listening first, and using a three-statement approach to validating students' feelings.
    - Listen, empathize, and mirroring statements.
    - Helping to deal with the dis-regulated individual.
    - Important to give students the language to relay these feelings to the adult.
    - Adults cease being problem-solvers and instead become listeners.
  - Facilities Update:
    - Still awaiting commitment from the Ministry of Education regarding funding for the Rousseau school renewal.
    - Hallways have been painted while school was closed for remote learning.
    - Ant issue has been treated and is being monitored.
    - Wire exposed at the edge of the teacher parking lot.
    - Bottleneck occurs at the primary playground that would be eased if the snow was cleared at the fence.
  - Protocols Update
    - New COVID-19 screening procedure.
5. Second Transition from "In-person to Remote" or "Remote to In-Person"
    - Kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 2 students are receiving one additional student each.
    - Using wellness check strategies from the first transition to assist students with this change.
  6. Picture Day
    - May 5, 2021 will be school picture day.
    - Mr. Gris to look into the availability of the photographer for grade 6 celebration photos, if COVID-19 rules would allow.
  7. Financial Update – Outstanding expense of 10 iPad's totalling approximately \$5,000 not yet paid until received. The order has been resubmitted by the Executive Assistant of the Associate Director. Approximately 20 iPad's were loaned out in the system. HWSDSDB to rollout solution to ease in getting this equipment returned at the end of the year.
  8. Racism Controversy at HWDSB school trustees
    - Investigation concluded alleged incidents did occur.
    - School Trustees voted to remove the names from the report, even those whose names were to be removed.
    - Glad that the student had the bravery and courage to bring this forward, and hopeful that the school board continues to fund and support ongoing learning necessary to address and emphasize inclusion in our school system.
    - On a local school level, parents have trust that the educators at Rousseau will continue to teach inclusivity and equality to these students.

9. Other Items

- Home and School Associations are able to continue to fundraise, however, parent council is not able to fundraise as per the HWDSB. Rousseau does not currently have a Home and School Association. The school is allowed to accept donations from parents, but the school is not in a position that the lack of fundraising is affecting the needs of Rousseau students.
- Increasing the participation in the School Council meetings to ease transition from one school year to the next by advertising or creating more interest. An idea includes hosting an online event such as an anti-racism speaker. Harmony Maiuk-Conti is going to reach-out to possible sources to see the cost and feasibility of this concept with HCCI or Enhance.

10. Next MS Teams Virtual Meeting: Tuesday March 23, 2021.

Meeting Closed at 8:15 pm