

Sir William Osler

School Council Meeting Minutes

February 19th, 2020 – 18:30 – 20:00

Location: Learning Commons

1. Learning Commons walk-around:

Prior to the meeting, an opportunity was given to the council to walk around the new layout of the Learning Commons. Discrete “centers” have been set up to cover topics such as structures, origami, learning to draw, author spotlight. Efforts have been out in to displaying engaging book covers. The walk-around was well received by the council.

Meeting started: 18:37

2. Land Acknowledgement

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board acknowledges our presence on ancestral Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Confederacy land as determined by the Dish with One Spoon treaty. The intent of this agreement is for all nations sharing this territory to do so responsibly, respectfully and sustainably in perpetuity. We respect the longstanding relationships with the local Indigenous communities, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the Six Nations of the Grand River.

3. Attendance

In Attendance:

Voting Members: Mohamed Nasr, Ross Harper, Richard Gelder, Diana Stanley, Clare Rivlin, Rebecca Hoo, Katharine Spencer, Sherif Abdou, Mike Travers, Kathryn Stenhouse, Catherine Roberts

School Administration:

Gerry Smith

Regrets:

Martha Aimola, Sarah van Geffen, Lisa Richter

4. Call for new business:

A request was made for more information about lockdown drills. Recent articles have appeared about how they don't work, and can create anxiety among children. Mr. Smith gave an example of a lockdown drill and explained that these are mandated by the board.

A council member requested an opportunity to discuss bullying in schools, in general terms, and what the school council can do to help? Mr. Smith had similar topic on the Principal's Report.

5. Teachers Report

There was no Teacher's Report this month, due to ETFO job action.

6. Principal's Report:

Mr. Smith gave updates as follows:

a) New school officer:

So far, Constable Richard has made four visits. Mr. Smith has requested an entire day visit on 4th March, to address, for example, vaping; mental health and to give teachers opportunities to raise other issues.

b) Social Worker support:

The assigned Social Worker is Steve McCann. The service has previously been a phone based service only, but this has now changed to have an in-building service for at least half a day every week. This service can be useful for students dealing with grieving; vaping issues and the need for crisis intervention. In addition, social work Masters student will be working with the school.

c) Demographics:

591 students, average class size: 25.5

d) Canadian Book Exchange:

There has been a response, and this has been shared on Google Drive

e) Pizza Vendor:

Some kids have asked to change the vendor, citing "too spicy" at times. Mr. Smith likes to review once per year. Currently looking at Pizza Pizza. A comment from the council was that we should be supporting local vendors, such as A1 or Emilios. Mr. Smith will look into this.

f) McMaster – girls camp:

Dofasco has donated money to support Grade 4 to 7 girls to go to STEM camps at McMaster

g) Term 1 report cards:

No cards went home due to Job Action. Parents are advised to contact Principal or VP for marks. Kindergarten reports are just one comment piece.

h) Kindergarten registration:

22 kids registered at the moment.

i) Text books:

There have been concerns about quality of text book from French Immersion. Geography text books appear to be good but the number of French text books is low and old. It appears that History text books have taken four years to translate and publish. School wants to invest more in text books. Mr. Smith is currently working with learning resource teacher to achieve this. PDF versions can be easily issued. This was met with general approval from the council, but the question of distribution was raised. An option to attach PDFs to teacher's blog is possible, but a second option is needed, as some teachers don't have a blog. One council member discussed using The Hub e-learning facility but not all teachers use this.

j) Job Action

Council members requested an update on the job action, but Mr. Smith has no new information at this time. The chair recognized impact to fund raising that job actions will have. Mr. Smith suggested that if there is a full strike/walk out, certain fund raising events may not be able to go ahead. As movie night has historically been council led, then this may be an exception. A council member suggested that other "exciting" things for the kids could be arranged, in order to raise funds. Mr. Smith explained that it must be something new and unique, and not historically run by teachers.

7. Treasurers Report

There is a discrepancy between expected and indicated funds in favour of the Council. This is currently being investigated by the school administrators and council.

8. Canadian Parents for French:

There was a small report from CPF. There will be more French language movies at Westdale theatre and local activities to promote CPF

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 19:31

The next meeting will be 15th April (none in March due to March break)