



School Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, December 5, 2016

Time: 7:00 pm – 9:00pm

Location: Westdale School Library

Co-Chair	Diane Crawshaw	Principal	Michelle Visca
Co-Chair	Joanne Thompson	Secretary	Louise Adam
Triune President		Staff/Teacher Rep	Sarah Lindner
Guest		Community Rep	Kaywana Gargarello

Parents: Michelle Visca, Sarah Lindner, Joanne Thompson, Louise Adam, Phyllis Connelly, Kaywana Gargarello

Regrets: Diane Crawshaw, Grant Thomas, Michelle Rodney-Bartolos

Opening and Approvals:

Approval of Agenda for Monday, December 5, 2016 meeting

Approved by Phyllis Connelly & Seconded by Kaywana Gargarello - ALL IN FAVOUR

Approval of Minutes from Monday October 19, 2016 meeting

Approved by Kaywana Gargarello & Seconded by Phyllis Connelly - ALL IN FAVOUR

1. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- Diane and Joanne will follow up with Grant to set up a speaker from the Home & School Association for the February 2017 meeting (membership drive)
- A discussion was held about the Parent Engagement Fund application deadline which is May 2017 - Joanne mentioned having a roll-up banner specifically for the Westdale School Council might be a good investment and could be paid for by the Parent Engagement Fund
- Diane and Joanne will reach out for suggestions via email ... another suggestion was booking a speaker for the next scholastic year where we could partner with other high schools (amalgamating the parent engagement funding) i.e. ideas - Karyn Gordon (<http://www.dkleadership.org>)

2. CHAIR REPORT – Joanne Thompson

- A discussion was held re setting up a Westdale School Council Facebook Page to engage and inform parents/guardians (other groups are having tremendous success with communication through social media)



- Items on the Facebook Page could be upcoming school council meetings, meeting minutes, surveys, Christmas basket donations, upcoming events, etc.
- The Westdale Facebook Page would be linked to the Westdale school website
- Diane, Joanne and Louise to work on making this happen with Sarah and Kaywana's assistance/expertise
- Sarah will reach out to Wendy Melnick (Media Arts Department) to ask for her assistance
- Michelle will reach out to the school student body – community service hours would be granted to students helping with the development and launch of the Facebook Page
- There was a discussion re Westdale H & S Christmas hampers/baskets (what was done in the past (at the previous meeting Michelle Rodney-Bartalos mentioned that feeder schools are sending money to contribute to the Westdale H & S Christmas baskets)
- Sarah advised that the Science Department is sponsoring a basket
- Sarah will follow up with Michele Murray (who is the lead in this project)
- Diane and Joanne will put out an email to the Westdale School Council to explore an interest in sponsoring a Christmas basket
- Louise will email Sarah and Michelle Murray to get the profile for the baskets
- It was suggested that Diane reach out to the Trustee and Superintendent to invite them to the April meeting
- Kaywana mentioned that sending out the questions to them before the meeting worked very well in the past

3. PRINCIPAL REPORT

- Michelle discussed the Board's Strategic Planning Framework focus is well being and learning priorities (School Improvement Plan)
- Michelle outlined various data – safe schools, grade 9 credit accumulation, EQAO, TRIUNE students input
- Students were surveyed and felt they were being judged on academics and appearance (by staff and peers)
- Westdale's grade 9 credit accumulation is not the highest in the province (8 out of 8 credits in grade 9)
- There is a belief at Westdale that the only path is the academic stream (there is a gap between applied and academic)
- Michelle reiterated that it is important to remember than no doors are never closed – the learning cycle is constant
- Michelle showed a youtube.com video of Jo Boaler's and Carol Dweck's "growth mindset in the classroom" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3icoSeGqQtY>) and



- (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiiEeMN7vbQ>) - the way we praise is crucial in terms of student success along with critical feedback - students lack the courage to take risks
- During the Professional Development Day, teachers were introduced to focusing on the “process rather than the final mark”
 - If a student is on the cusp at level 2, the learning team will look at gaps that could push the student to level 3 which in turn will push the entire class to a level 3
 - Michelle discussed the new math strategies that are being introduced throughout the process – there is a disconnect between how math is being taught and how it is being tested
 - We have to dispel the myth that a person has to have a “math brain” to be good in math – math has to be learned
 - We have to believe in a higher potential – that making mistakes is really good
 - Making mistakes gets the synapses firing - cognition is linked to belief (that is when the brain grows)
 - One has to believe they can learn anything
 - Michelle talked about the Spark Physical Education Program in high schools – it has been proven that exercise improves cognitive activities (20 minutes of activity where your heart rate is constantly at 80 – have to be moving constantly)
 - The Westdale Middle Gym will be set up for Sparks – students will wear a heart monitor – see youtube video discussion by Dr. John Ratay (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBSVZdTQmDs>)
 - The correlation between Sparks and learning something is amazing
 - Westdale will be changing to a 5 period day beginning in September 2017 to accommodate the Sparks Program – there will be a 75 minute lunch period and no flip on Day 2

4. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

- Moved to next meeting

5. TEACHER REPORT

1. SEARCH FOR COACHES – UPDATE

- have list for coaching needs for this school year
- potentially is quite a need for 2017 school year

2. TEACHER PRESENTATIONS

- a) Math – lower math scores in HWDSB; how are we helping our students to improve their numeracy?



- b) Special Education – new developments; helping students with different disorders; how are IEPs implemented in the spec ed room, classroom, etc.
- Michelle and I will determine teachers to come in and present

3. PA DAYS/MEETINGS:

NOV 4 PA DAY:

i) Mindfulness Team

- Teachers learned there is a mindfulness team at Westdale
- This group focuses on the mindful pathway/unmindful pathway & how to utilize this into the classroom
- Focus on incorporating self-regulating tactics into classroom situations
- Team members are learning about the brain – students learn they have ownership over their brain and their functions. Any teachers welcome to join.

ii) STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Westdale Secondary goals for this year:

a) Student learning and achievement goals:

- 65% of students in gr 9 applied math will meet provincial standard on EQAO this year
- 95% of grade 9 students working towards OSSD will earn 8 out of 8 credits this year
- will do this by working in **learning teams** to learn how to effectively use student work to find skill gaps (research, communication, etc) and apply **high yield strategies** to address these gaps

Examples of High Yield Strategies:

- a) Identifying similarities & differences*
- b) Summarize and note taking – write a journal after the completion of a curriculum activity to reflect and self-assess*
- c) Homework and practice*
- d) Clearly set objectives and provide feedback*
- e) Generate and test hypothesis*

b) Positive Culture and Well being

- 75% of students will feel they are ‘often’ accepted by adults at Westdale as indicated by positive climate/culture survey at Westdale
- will do this by creating a ‘growth mindset’ classroom where students feel they can improve – not stuck in place in terms of their learning. Help students feel as if they are being cared for by an adult and NOT judged by their marks!



EXTRA INFORMATION ABOUT THE GROWTH MINDSET IDEA:

- teachers will focus on **growth mindset** in the classroom where there are many assessments and few evaluations on curriculum material
- teachers will focus on 'marker students' in the classroom – those students who are maybe level 2 achievers, who are of interest, of promise, of mystery
- teachers will try to utilize teach tactics to them to help improve all class efforts/improvements
- WHY? Well, when a student sees a grade, they cease to investigate how to improve/change
- idea of '**growth mindset**' = descriptive feedback focused on ESs that give students encouragement and next steps with nurture a growth mindset. **SBA** is a tool to help them develop a growth mindset!! (**Standards Based Assessment**)
- teachers need to communicate = you care about the process of learning and NOT just one performance!!
- well crafted activities and questions that connect to curriculum accompanied by clear feedback offer students a growth mindset pathway helps them to know they can learn at high levels, learn critically, and how they can get there
- help them gain tools to help maintain their confidence in learning by keeping them focused on the process of achievement
- growth mindset is about closing the achievement gap, not about making low-achieving kids feel good in the moment but not learn in the long run."
- Teachers who incorporate a growth mindset also provide critical feedback and give students an opportunity to revise their work. They create a classroom where students are encouraged to take on challenges, try new strategies and acknowledge and explain their mistakes, she said.)

c) New classroom focus:

- descriptive feedback into assignments
- growth-mindset classroom = show them that their efforts mean something!!
- aware of 'marker' students
- make thinking visible

DECEMBER 2 PD DAY

i) Board Focus board wide is on math!

- transfer math focus on all departments:
- all comes together: grade rates, math scores, well being, growth mindset, process driven = all 5 components are strongly interconnected
- Jo Boaler video: focus on growth mindset in math and how its okay to make mistakes



4. SCHOOL EVENTS:

- a) Event 'Pause, Shuffle, Play' – on Thursday Dec 1, periods 3 & 4
 - students who signed up could choose a workshop to attend:
Connect/Keep Learning/Be Active/Take Notice/Give
 - Presented by Warriors 4 wellness, Hamilton public health, positive space, triune and WAC
 - a 'kickoff' on Thursday – are going to continue with these workshops – maybe 1 a week, etc.

6. SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS/DISCUSSION

- Westdale Field Update (see attached)

7. OTHER BUSINESS

- Meeting dates:
 - February 6th, 2017
 - April 4th, 2017 (Tuesday)
 - May 1st, 2017 (Offsite)

Meeting adjourned at 9pm