

Westdale Secondary School Council Minutes

Tuesday October 25th, 6.15-7.15

The meeting was called to order at 6.27pm. Anita Bane volunteered to be secretary for the evening.

Rollcall: 7 voting members were in attendance and the meeting continued as planned. (David Penton, Kristi Gringhuis, Claire Rivlin, Anita Bane, Suneth Wijeratne, Catherine Roberts, Teacher representative Erin Lepischak, Principal Brian Goodram)

Approval of minutes of September 27, 2022. The motion to approve the minutes was put forward by Anita and seconded by Christine, none were opposed.

Student Council Report: no student council representative was in attendance.

Teachers report (Erin Lepischak): Ms. Lepischak informed the group that the Food and Nutrition Program is in full swing in the school and Ms. Kleri Venizelos (Head, Learning Resources Department, Westdale Secondary School) is asking for parent volunteers to assist. One of the parents asked if it would be possible to have the students assist and obtain volunteer hours, Mr. Goodram noted that some of the items are held in the teachers' lounge and for privacy reasons students would not be able to assist at this time. The second item discussed was the Alumni event /football game held on Friday Oct 21st that was well attended and enjoyed by all. The third item discussed was the family teacher interview evening planned for Oct 27th, one of the parents in attendance asked if there was alternative times for parents who were unable to secure spots during the designated times. Ms. Lepischak said that parents could contact teachers by email to arrange a phone or video call. Teacher's emails are available through the school website. Student ambassadors will be assisting at the family teacher evening.

Principals Report: Mr. Goodram highlighted some upcoming events including

- Family teacher night Oct 27th 5-7pm
- French immersion night Nov 29th
- School musical 'Footloose', Dec 1, 2, 8 & 9

Mr. Goodram also discussed at length the 3 safe school incidences that occurred in the school over the last two weeks, while maintaining an appropriate level of privacy for students involved. The first incidence involved an assault on a student in the school by another student the victim was taken to hospital and the assailant was apprehended by the police and has been suspended pending the results of an investigation. The school is conducting their own investigation separate to the ongoing police investigation as per procedure.

The second incidence involved a written threat on a change room wall. Police were alerted and following an on-site threat risk assessment they determined that there was no imminent threat to students or staff.

The third incidence was a threat from a non-Westdale student to a Westdale student via social media. The police were alerted and the school was placed in a 'hold and secure' setting. The individual who placed the threat was subsequently apprehended and the 'hold and secure' setting was lifted.

A spirited Q&A session ensued in which Mr. Goodram answered parent's questions and assured the council of the ongoing commitment of the school and board to a safe and inclusive school environment.

Parents thanked Mr. Goodram for all his efforts and those of the other teachers concerning these challenging situations.

Canadian Parents for French Update: Claire Rivlin gave an update and provided some literature on some programs available to encourage and promote the French language including FrenchStreet.Ca and Say Oui. The latter is a group established to help people to become French as a second language teachers.

Report from the Chair: Dave Penton recently attended the Student Council Start up meeting at the HWDSB and briefly discussed the community outreach efforts and enhanced communication initiative of the board to encourage more parents to get involved with the schools. In addition, Dave highlighted the Foundation for Student Success which provides some funds for students and teachers. Parents or interested parties are also able to make a tax deductible donation to a school of their choice should this be within their means.

No further business arose and the meeting was adjourned at 7.15 (motion forwarded by Anita and seconded by Christine, none opposed)