

School Council – November 28, 2023

In Attendance – Brian Goodram (Principal), Kim PH (Teacher Rep), Len Lu (Triune), Shannon Boyle, Claire Rivlin, Kristi Gringhuis, Catherine Roberts, Susan McBurney, Danielle Schwalm, Jan Sumner, Jerome Galante, Louai Moghrabi, Anita Bane

Minutes

Meeting began at 6:20

Land Acknowledgement

Roll Call

- Introductions - Brian G, KPH, Jerome, Susan, Len, Kristi, Claire, Catherine, Jan, Shannon, Danielle, Louai, Susan

Approval of Minutes from October Meeting

- Minutes approved; Claire motioned to approve; seconded by Catherine

Student Council Report

- Semi formal on Nov 15; went pretty well; two months wasn't enough time to plan
- Some complaints about ticket sale times again; had 100 on first day, then 200 on second day; times SCO opened were different than published; people prefer later sale times rather than earlier
- Question: do we have to use SCO or can there be a different platform used? Brian explained how SCO works and who administers it and why it's used; will look at other ways to make accessible for everyone next time
- Do we know how many students were on waitlist and didn't get ticket? Waitlist was capped at 100
- Is it possible to split the events into a 9/10 and 11/12 event in the future?
- May prioritize students who didn't get a ticket for fall first for spring
- SCO excludes people without internet access; can students be responsible for getting their own tickets instead of making parents responsible
- Some tickets were set aside for students who couldn't use SCO but they had to email teacher before to request
- Can it be a physical ticket and then the payment through SCO comes after with a code that must be entered?
- Can there be parent volunteers? Must go through volunteer process.
- Complaint about music played that there wasn't enough music geared to non-Western culture. DJ is board employee. May consider using Spotify to generate music requests next time
- Election concerns will be rectified by having a re-election and adding on to council if a new person is elected. If results are the same then nothing will change. Timeline to occur before Dec 10.
- Holiday season event ideas for December? Movie night? All events inclusive to all. Bake sale? Cookie Decorating?
- Holiday Concert upcoming as well

Teacher Report

- Since the last meeting in October a very successful family/teacher interview night was held and the Post-Secondary Planning presentation for Grade 12 families was well attended after interviews
- Wrapped up university visits at lunch with Brock, King's, Western, Queen's and Trent – thank you to Ms. Girolametto for her leadership in organizing the visits
- On November 8 Mohawk College and Niagara College presented to targeted classes and any students interested in attending and then there were 2 additional lunch sessions where counsellors were available in the library to assist students with the OCAS application - thank you to Ms. Girolametto and Ms. O'Leary for organizing
- On November 2 I presented to interested students at lunch about the Queen's Chancellor's and Melvin R Goodes scholarships; was well attended by about 20 students

- Counsellors have all reached out to Grade 12 students and have been meeting with these students on an ongoing basis to discuss post-secondary plans, complete applications, research scholarships, etc.
- On November 9 we were the first school to host Grade 7/8 Open House. Was very well attended by students and families as departments showcased what they had to offer families.
- Westdale had four students selected to participate in the first round of the Loran Scholarship and two of these students were selected to participate in the semi-final interviews today. The Loran Scholarship is awarded to 36 students each year from across Canada, tenable at 25 partner universities, including McMaster, UBC, Dalhousie, University of Toronto and more. It is valued at over \$100,000 over four years

Principal's Report

- Grade 8 FI Info Night tonight in auditorium; allows families to visit space again
- iTHINK initiative wrapped up with Grade 9 and 10 students; based on Rotman Model (pro/pro); developed an action plan – Grade 9 Frosh Week (club fair, get to know teachers, Grade 9 social/dance) – students landed on a feasible plan
- Sr Girls basketball won cities and SOSSA and made it to OFSAA; lost in quarterfinals
- Staffing update – enrollment is up so additional lines/courses will be added; waiting to hear from board to determine allocation for Semester 2; lens is equitable pathways for depth and breadth of programs; over the next few weeks hiring new teachers for Sem 2
- Question – where will pool of teachers come from in the middle of the year? Teachers were hired for first semester and those teachers will apply for jobs in system and will be placed in the system (discussion about permanent lines/expansion and how staffing works)

Chair's Report

- Regained control of Westdale Facebook page
- Catherine joining HWDSB FASLAC committee; advises school board about French program
- Article about the science of sleep and teens was shared with the group; group discussion about the need for a later bell time

Canadian Parents for French

- French Street is a database listing cultural events in French across Canada
- Planning event for January
- Table set up with information for the FI Info night tonight in auditorium
- Will create a CPF slide for next year's event

School Council Networking Event

- Claire will forward info to group
- Jan 9 from 6-8 pm

By-Law Review

- Last update was 2019
- Item #1 Name – is good
- Language translation is a common gap; board is working on ways to make website more accessible; “add on” documents are not currently able to be translated. Need to be more responsive to multi-language needs. Can there be student reps from various groups attend meetings to get information out? Perhaps explore whole school parent engagement for PRO grant?
- Item #2 Goals – language is fine; how is it executed? Add equitable communication opportunities (in last sentence after positive interaction)
- Item #3 Membership – is good
- Item #4 Roles and Responsibilities is good

- Item #5 Officers of SC – is good
- Item #6 Meetings – is good
- Committees should be #7 – otherwise good
- Amending the Bylaws should be #8 – otherwise good

Westdale Holiday Drive

- Brian spoke about holiday drive
- Many students find two week break challenging; holiday hamper drive for many students; provided over 30 families with support last year
- call out to Westdale community to help supplement our work here at school with holiday hampers or collect donations through SCO to buy items for hampers
- if there are families in need we can help support
- sought support of SC to get message out to greater Westdale community – granted
- Brian will put out message through school messenger to families
- Want to ensure as many families are supported as possible; lots of ways to ensure families are supported
- Question: are there added needs or other ways we need help supporting families? Brian will bring this back to admin team
- Business can support by donating gift cards or if they would like a tax receipt they can go through HWDSB Foundation

PRO Grant Process and Topics

- Last year we didn't use program
- Deadline is end of January to put in application
- Brian would like to invite someone from Corporate Communications to next meeting to discuss translation/multi languages
- Is there a list of the languages used in the building? Supported through SWIS in many languages
- **Social Media**
 - o Navigating with teens
 - o Impact on teens
- **Youth Mental Health?**
 - o Geared towards parents supporting their child(ren)
 - o Cheryl Boswell (Youth Mental Health Canada)
- **Karena deSouza?**
 - o LinkedIn profile: Preparing adults 16-60 for the Future of Work, Author: Contours of Courageous Parenting, GenZ, Transition, Strategy, Speaker, Podcast: Tilt the Future; Climate Action
 - o Quotes: “cannot create a good university application in Grade 12 if you don't have good Lego blocks from Grade 9” and “if it's not the kid's ambition, it's not going to work”
- Will continue conversation on email with suggestions from the group
- Catherine and Claire will complete application

Further Business

- Question: is there winter gear need? Basket Brigade supplied winter coats, boots, hats, mitts; located in staff room
- Donations can come in to main office
- Question: wondering if there has been activity with regards to Jewish students; have been one off situations and taking opportunity to educate students about their actions has been priority; no protests to date and will follow protocols if needed

Meeting Adjourned 7:41 pm