

School Council – October 24, 2023

In Attendance – Brian Goodram (Principal), Kim PH (Teacher Rep), Nicole Lee (SO), Len Lu (Triune), Shannon B, Claire R, Catherine R, Kristi G, Jerome G, Danielle S, Louai M

Regrets – Susan M, Anita B

Minutes

Meeting began at 6:20 pm

Land Acknowledgement

- Claire read the Land Acknowledgement

Appointment of Secretary

- KPH volunteered and got the job
- Motion to approve brought forward by Katherine
- Seconded by Shannon
- Approved

Rollcall

- Went around the room and everyone introduced themselves to the group

Welcome Superintendent Nicole Lee

- Brian welcomed SOSA Lee to our meeting
- Nicole is excited to be here; been on the job for 4 weeks
- Excited to work with school staff

Approval of Sept 26, 2023 Minutes

- Under principal's report – items to clarify, instead of LTO and permanent, change to 9 permanent teachers
- Quote about contacting trustee and 'make a racket' struck from principal's report (parent shared that trustee noted the quote, not the principal) and moved to other business
- Motion to approve brought forward by Katherine
- Seconded by Shannon
- Approved

Update School Council Mailing List

- Members asked to use sign in sheet to check email addresses

Triune Report

- Triune publicly elected executives – co presidents, Grade Reps
- Activities so far – planning semi formal (Nov 15) at Liuna Station; will be sending information to invite teachers to volunteer; number of tickets determined by fire code and teacher volunteer numbers
- Club fair went well
- Looking to foster more inclusive events
- Question: What is the best way to communicate with parents so students know what is happening at school?
Answer: Parents prefer email communication to them directly; social media perhaps (Instagram); showing families how to subscribe to the school website
- Can Triune have a Hub Page for announcements?

- Election concerns: was a logistical miscommunication for Grade reps; constitution reviewed last school year; different grades were permitted to vote for different grade reps (constitution states that the grade reps are chosen by that grade); ballots designed were designed for all grades which are contrary to the constitution of triune; undemocratic to have voters vote for other grades; important to follow democratic process
- Brian will meet with co-presidents to figure out a way to rectify situation with constitution front and centre
- Len spoke with teacher advisor before the election and teacher felt that students just don't represent their grade
- Triune needs to elect some other positions (secretary, social rep, etc) soon

Teacher's Report

- Teachers participated PD last Friday; work centered around the HWDSB Multi Year Plan, the Westdale Annual Plan, using OneNote in classrooms, numeracy and literacy; Continuous Learning and Improvement during department time in the afternoon
- HPE hosted a very successful Homecoming event
- Teachers submitted preliminary marks last week and preliminary reports were sent home electronically yesterday. Teachers are preparing for interviews this Thursday with families
- Information was shared today with Grade 9 students about Take Your Kid to Work Day, scheduled for Nov 1. Forms due back to Period 5 teacher by Oct 27.
- Student Services has hosted a number of events in the last month including 5 post-secondary institutions, a session for students at lunch on the completion of the OUAC application, a field trip to Mohawk College for their College Information Program, a session on applying to universities outside of Ontario and our upcoming information session for Grade 12 parents after interviews this Thursday
- Lots of clubs and teams running and lots of things for students to get involved in

Principal's Report

- Family teacher night Oct 26; only 2 hours is challenging; invite parents to reach out to teachers throughout school year; email addresses and phone extensions shared for all staff to families
- Multi Year Strategic plan approved by trustees recently; school working with directions team to look at 4 core values; compassion, dignity, trust and joy
- new mission statement released is focused on 'belonging'; new iThink initiative to bring together a group of Grade 9 students from our feeder schools to tease out what belonging means to them; students will present findings to staff

Chair's Report

- attended School Council training run by HWDSB; was a lengthy but worthwhile meeting
- learned about bylaws
- from meeting, learned that agenda for tonight is ambitious; move to push by-law review to November meeting (moved)
- Katherine activated school council email and will work on the Facebook page

Canadian Parents for French

- Non-profit run by parent volunteers; enthusiastic new executive
- Virtual after school programs running
- Support all students learning French (Immersion, Core, Extended); including home schooled students

By-Law Review

- Moved to November meeting (moved)

PRO Grant Process and Topics

- Parent Reaching Out grant; propose event hosted at school as a way to reach out to community

- Funding from ministry to cover costs; approximately \$1000; can be a Westdale event or an event hosted by multiple schools; last one at Westdale was a combo event with other schools to host a guest speaker on adolescent brain development
- Challenge is that most speakers are more than the funding;
- SOSA Lee noted that most successful events are parent engagement sessions; larger group and smaller group sessions; paid speaker and then some unpaid speakers (Public Health, Social Work)
- Principal Goodram noted that School Council has \$500 to supplement spending; also support staff at Westdale to leverage community partnerships (Health Nurse, SWIS Workers, e tc)
- Chair noted that Len might be able to assist with determining 'hot topics' from student perspective
- Based on last year, timeline for application is end of January and event must be completed by end of June
- Chairs ask members to think about possible offerings for next meeting

Standing Invitation to SOSA Lee and Trustee Wong

- Chairs extended a standing invitation to SOSA Lee and Trustee Wong to attend future meetings and come as often as they are available

Annual School Fundraising Plan

- Westdale is a very busy place; >30 clubs running
- Fundraising plan must be shared with HWDSB finance
- Not doing large fundraising as a school (if school council wants to fundraise they are welcome to)
- Reached out to staff to share fundraising events; many events/groups have responded to Brian with plans for the year
- Brian shared an Excel document with the group and will share with SOSA Lee's office by Oct 31
- Large school events and trips funds are pulled from grants, etc to support students to attend
- Question – money raised by a club stays with the club? Answer – yes
- Athletics has a bingo license for fundraising
- Triune asked about support for November 2024 for grants, etc for Model UN. Foundation grants available, can do fundraisers, etc
- Question – anticipated revenue is amount expecting to raise? Answer - yes

Further Business

- Chairs brought up bell time issue to SOSA Lee and reiterated the desire to change the start time later; referenced petition signed by parents wishing the same; discussed teen vs younger children sleep patterns, older students being able to care for younger students before and after school; equity concerns for students who have to travel on multiple buses to get to school on time (in winter weather, early in the mornings); student voice (Len) also in favour of later bell time and echoed equity concerns
- SOSA Lee reports several secondary schools are dealing with this; reports that process is being reviewed, potentially in the spring; advocacy to ministry for additional funds for transportation to provide flexibility for bell times so fewer bus routes would have to be doubled up
- Homecoming Game – enjoyable and recognized the hard work by staff; great turnout
- Chair – schools that run FI receive money to run FI; how much money allocated to FI is actually being used to support busing to FI? SOSA Lee says in theory, yes, but money provided already doesn't cover running the program; pulling funds could impact programming

Meeting Adjourned at 7:26 pm