

School Council – January 28, 2025

In Attendance – Brian Goodram, KPH, Nicole Lee (Superintendent), Shannon Boyle, Danielle Schwalm, Claire Rivlin, Nicole Crowder, Van, Cindy Stranek, Rachael Shay, Robin Latour, Brook Dodds (PHN), Jan Sumner, Kristi Gringhuis, Catherine Roberts, Jeremy Lavrence, Camille Blackwood

Regrets – Jerome Galante,

Minutes

Meeting began at 6:19 pm

Land Acknowledgement

Approval of Minutes from November 2024 Meeting

- Minutes approved; nominated by Catherine, seconded by Shannon

Student Council Report

- Exams and quiet week; quiet month
- Semi formal successful; minimal complaints
- Spring semi formal in April – perhaps Grade 9/10 students only since Grade 12's will have prom but what about Grade 11's?
- Hot chocolate on Friday to celebrate semester 2

Teacher Report

- Kleri reports that cucumbers can be purchased at home but ideally should be chopped in the staff room on site
- Visited all elementary associate schools to begin option selections with Grade 8 students
- Will be returning to all elementary associate schools next month to select courses with students in myBlueprint
- Hosted Grade 8 Info Night last Tuesday; good turnout
- Guidance Counsellors have been seeing students steadily for Semester 2 course changes and option planning for next year
- Limited course availability for students who wish to explore a course change for next semester. Many classes full and teachers at/close to their maximum PTC
- Ability to select options for next year opens in myBlueprint on Feb 5 and closes Feb 21. Students can add courses now but cannot submit until Feb 5
- After Feb 21 parents can approve course selections in Parent Portal
- Planning a parent session for next month (date TBA) to assist students with course selections and post-secondary planning

Principal's Report

- Update on flood/flooring replacement in Student Services
- 86% success rate for FTE on OSSLT
- Final evaluations complete and Semester 2 starts on Friday
- Permanent staffing complete; LTO staffing interviews today and tomorrow for 11 positions
- Outlook app "Groups" showed who was in a particular class; this feature has been removed which has caused consternation amongst students

Chair's Report

- Bathroom concerns; students going home at lunch to use the bathrooms or use other facilities
- Single use bathrooms "smell gross, are dirty, are used for making out and vaping"

- Brian reiterated Grade assemblies are used to remind students about appropriate bathroom use; also open to suggestions from Triune

Committee Updates (PIC, CPF)

- CPF
 - o Planning virtual musical morning in Feb on Zoom for younger kids; free
 - o Securing location for 25th anniversary event in spring
 - o Virtual after school programs still robust
 - o Local membership has grown
- PIC
 - o January was networking event; next meeting is Feb 11
 - o At next meeting Transportation is attending PIC to discuss; PIC members have submitted questions about many areas of transportation; PIC cannot ask school specific questions so questions have been tweaked a bit

PRO Grant

- Joanne Thompson (previous chair, now Ancaster chair) interested to help secure Dr. Jean Clinton but they missed the deadline for her school to apply; will see if Westmount or Sherwood might be interested
- Additional PIC funding for Mental Health? Cindy reports that PIC went into reserves to top up each application to \$900. Danielle believes it might be a different budget altogether
- Brian will follow up with board staff about this PIC funding but is concerned that there may not be any further funding this year if PIC has dipped into reserves this year
- Shannon suggests that tonight we decide on a speaker and a date; worried that the more schools we involve the greater the concern for seating space
- If auditorium is filled, can have overflow livestreamed in the caf (not recorded)
- Do we want people to RSVP for numbers/communication? Preference would be for a board-approved platform like School Cash Online (could also accept donations here as well)
- Group is split between Dr. Jean Clinton or Mike Shoreman (Mike could come Feb 26)
- Nicole suggests that time is ticking and that perhaps Mike is the better choice for this year and we defer Dr. Jean Clinton for next year and plan it beginning in September
- Triune could also gauge student interest for a presentation for them as well with Mike but the interest may not be there
- Danielle notes that Feb 26 may not be doable at this point and wonders if the group is ready to vote tonight; time is moving along for this school year
- Suggestion for everyone to watch a couple videos for each possible speaker
- Can we book Mike now and plan to book Dr. Jean Clinton next year?
- Healthy debate between the group about the two choices;
- Feb 26 – auditorium available; cafeteria as well if needed; will need communication blast; can use SCO; communication to school community; school Instagram; focus on the fact that he's a Westdale grad

Transportation/Bell Time Study Update (Nicole Lee)

- Danielle wonders if other schools have the same concerns and can we bring a louder voice
- Jeremy sits on HWDSB Student Senate – Jeremy presenting next week at Student Senate about the issue/concerns
- Are voices from PIC and Student Senate powerful to make change?
- Needs to be a HWDSB focused issue about student mental health instead of just a Westdale issue
- Does transportation answer to the ministry, boards? Transportation answers to all 3 entities
- Board exceeds available funding each year and has to pull from other areas to make ends meet

- Many routes drop to both public and catholic schools so a study or any flipping of routes must be agreed to by both boards
- Cindy – can we do a pilot at Westdale with Student Success and a later start time?
- How are the efficiencies calculated and is there a better way to be efficient?
- Anyone can attend PIC meeting but can only observe. Feb 11 at Ed Centre at 6:30 pm
- Van wonders about expanding scope on research (countries who rank high in things like happiness, education, etc)

Further Business

- PHN
 - o Role is not working directly with students as PHN; works from a wellness perspective and health promotion
 - o Brook is also at Hess and Bennetto
- Cell Phone Use and lates
 - o Students may feel like some teachers have given up on cell phone use in class
 - o How did the policy come about with suppressing wifi (easy to work around)? Many schools in other countries have more robust rules and regulations but we aren't there yet with the direction from the ministry
 - o Good opportunity for a reset for Semester 2 start up
 - o Implementation is going better in elementary; many schools have cell phone "jail" but they are not in secondary schools as liability is a risk
 - o Shoe racks for phones in classes present risks of theft
 - o Are the rules and guidelines too soft?
 - o Consequences for being late? Detentions?
- Partnership with BIA to support each other for Westdale village businesses

Meeting adjourned 7:50 pm