

MINUTES

Westview Elementary Parent/Teacher Council

Date | time September 26, 2019 | 6:00pm | *Meeting #1* of 5

In Attendance

Shelly Frith, Beth Wheaton, Jennifer Smith-Balkissoon, Ann, Amy Zorzetto, Peppi Nikolaidis, Mrs. Joanna Crapsi & Mr. Mike O'Hoski.

Regrets: Walla El-Hag.

Welcome & Introductions

Mrs. Crapsi welcomed the group and outlined the format of previous Councils she has been party to. Mr. O'Hoski introduced himself as the Staff Representative. Each Parent in attendance then shared their name, their child's name and their child's grade with the rest of the group. There are both new and returning members to the Council.

Elections for the Executive Council

The format of the council was discussed – formal vs. informal. Mrs. Crapsi shared that she had been a part of councils on either ends of the spectrum and all areas in between. It was preferred by the group to follow an informal structure and therefore no elections would need to be held. Shelly agreed to continue as Chairperson but requested a volunteer for Secretary to take notes. Beth agreed to take the minutes.

PRO Grant & Metro Grant

Was the Parent Reaching Out (PRO) Grant was due in May 2019 and was not submitted. A few had heard news that the grant had been discontinued.

Mrs. Crapsi referred to a \$500 portion of the school's budget allocated to "Parent Engagement" initiatives that had been put toward Translation Services in the past.

ACTION: Mrs. Crapsi will investigate to determine if that amount is available in the 2019/2020 school year as well.

The Metro Grant is due soon and is geared toward improving fruit and vegetable consumption in the school. In the past, there has been success with Cooking Clubs.

QUESTION: Is there still a classroom in the school with a functioning kitchen?

<https://www.greenapple.metro.ca/submit-your-idea/index.en.html>

Beth was able to find some possible information regarding additional grant funding from the following:

<https://www.crayola.com/for-educators/ccac-landing/grant-program.aspx>

<https://www.bestbuy.ca/en-ca/about/school-tech-grants/blt435b1a6205497079>

<https://www.ophea.net/healthy-schools-certification/funding-opportunities/all-funding-opportunities>

Principal Update – EQAO Results

Mrs. Crapsi discussed the results from a Westview Elementary perspective. She mentioned that although the results were a slight dip from the results from the year before, that was to be considered in conjunction with the spike that was experienced from the year before. She has been to consult with the students to determine what they struggle with. She also pointed out that there were a significant number of students reading at Level 1 approximately 5 years ago (they are actually needed to be at least at Level 2 but ideally at Level 3) and thankfully that the number of Level 1 students has gone down so the school is generally still in an upward slope despite the dip. Other strategies include targeted intervention groups to help with the Level 1 literacy and some staff members are going to be delving deeper into contributing factors and possible areas to facilitate improvement.

Some influences to the results included the accommodations that commonly occur in the classroom (and are not made in the EQAO testing environment). The EQAO site does have a section devoted to outlining the ways they are trying to modernize the process.

Another demographic factor raised was the gap between the results between boys and girls. The discussion included the possible reasons why – different interests, activities, etc ... - and that despite the differences the boys do tend to “catch-up”.

Mrs. Crapsi did identify that her past focus has been on Mathematics but will now be transitioning toward Literacy. The discussion then included different methods of student learning – i.e. going outside for reading time or other learning initiatives. There are limitations to what they can do for health and safety reasons however. Mrs. Crapsi also noted the curriculum is considerably student-driven – i.e. if the students would enjoy outside reading, they should mention it to their teacher for consideration as the staff will accommodate whenever possible.

Welcome Back Family Event (Scavenger Hunt/Amazing Race Type Event)

This was being considered for the Meet the Teacher Night that traditionally happens in September however, due to ongoing construction to improve accessibility in the school, it will need to be deferred to a later date. A lift is scheduled for installation from the first to the second floor with demolition scheduled in October and completion in December. In discussing possible dates for the Welcome Back/Meet the Teacher Event it was decided that January 2020 would be best.

ACTION: Mrs. Crapsi to release a new communication regarding the postponement.

The conversation turned to possible types of events:

- Movie Night with a Parent Workshop to run concurrently?
- Food Truck Event? If not food trucks, food should be supplied in some capacity.
- Scavenger Hunt/Amazing Race activities during Meet the Teacher?

ACTION: A sub-committee will need to be formed to discuss and plan the event(s).

Monthly Workshops for Students

A new concept for student development/engagement is to implement Monthly Workshops for students to learn from community volunteers at no cost to them or the school. These would happen during Nutrition Breaks and the number of them/frequency would be determined by student interest in each workshop.

Some possible workshop ideas:

- Jujitsu
- Halloween Face Painting

- Origami

Who would provide:

- Volunteers from the community;
- Parents, friends or family of students from the school;
- Secondary Students (from Westmount) that need additional volunteer hours.

ACTION: Mrs. Crapsi to determine if Police Checks are necessary for the volunteers due to the temporary nature and minimal time engagement of the initiative.

Fundraising

Do we want to hold a fundraiser this year?

Mrs. Crapsi cautioned the group to consider the audience when determining if and when to hold a fundraiser for the 2019/2020 school year – disposable income levels, ease of delivery and families new to Canada are just a few of the factors.

Some fundraising ideas:

- Raffles – Raffle Tickets, 50/50 Tickets?
- Holiday Bazaar?
- Gift Card Sales?
- Poinsettias?

Also, it was mentioned integrating a Holiday Event within the fundraising initiative – i.e. Holiday Concert? Carol Sing-a-long? Is there a choir? (yes, just not officially formed yet for the current school year).

ACTION: Mrs. Crapsi to bring back to the teachers for review and input.

ACTION: A sub-committee needs to also be formed for fundraising initiatives.

Other

Year End Trips:

Are these parent or faculty planned/driven? It is a combination of the two. An important factor in planning the 2018/2019 school year end event was that some parents did not approve of their children staying away overnight. The solution was to transition to Altitude Camp at McMaster instead of the Toronto trip made in previous years. This made it possible to include more of the students as it was local enough that they could go for a day trip and venture home after while the other students could stay in residence for the overnight experience.

Possibly in future there could be more than one option afforded to the students – one day trip at a lower cost, and one overnight trip.

Ski Trip:

This is available to all grades.

QUESTION: What is commonly the cost for this?

For students that cannot afford the cost it was noted that the money generated from Tuesday Pizza Lunches is used for both graduation and to supplement the cost for some of the students.

Any additional fundraising to be considered for school trip assistance will be deferred to the Fundraising Sub-committee.

Technology & Social Media:

What is the current relationship between learning, technology and social media?

What has been offered in the past regarding these initiatives?

In the 2018-2019 school year, Mrs. Gesse created “technology-free” days on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Should this be done school-wide? It is at the discretion of the teachers. They use technology appropriately and effectively when they feel it is beneficial to the curriculum.

Last year, a Police Liaison Officer was brought in to discuss “The Brand of You” with the students and a workshop was also held for both parents and students regarding online safe and privacy.

The meeting ended at 7:15pm.

Next Meetings

November 19, 2019 | 6:00pm, Westview Elementary School

January 21, 2020 | 6:00pm, Westview Elementary School

February 18, 2020 | 6:00pm, Westview Elementary School

April 28, 2020 | 6:00pm, Westview Elementary School