

Parent Council Meeting, May 20, 2015: Minutes

1. **Welcome and Introductions:** Tracey Wiegand and Lorie McMahon

2. **Guest Speaker** (Sheena Bounsanga) Topic: Mindfulness

- guest speaker, Sheena Bounsanga was introduced by Anne Schott
- Sheena Bounsanga is an early childhood educator and a Mindfulness Coach
- Sheena spoke about mindfulness as an alternative approach for behaviour regulation and stress management in children. Mindfulness is the art of paying attention in the here and now without judgement. Pattern of learning mindfulness includes stimulus-pause- respond rather than reacting immediately to stimulus. The presentation was very informative and the topic would be appropriate to explore further with students and teachers. Extra copies of mindfulness information packages were provided to Lorie McMahon if anyone is interested.

3. **Principal's Update** (Helmut Tinnes)

Talent Show auditions complete. Notice of important dates will be disseminated to parents next week. Parents may attend the two dress rehearsals (Monday June 15 and Tuesday June 16). The actual talent show will be for students only.

EQAO testing postponed indefinitely due to labour unrest.

School Climate Surveys are in progress. Students have completed surveys to date and more follow up to occur. Committee is still looking for more parent survey responses.

Grade Six Camp will take place at Silver Lake this year. June 10 to 12th.

Track and Field taking place on Friday June 5th with the Regional Track meet on June 18th at Golden Hawks Stadium.

MJ Enhancements Mary Johnston received a \$3800.00 grant. It has been spent on garden carpet, armour stone and galvanized sand play troughs to enrich the JK/SK outdoor play area.

Volunteer Tea to take place on May 26, 2015 at 8:30 am. Please RSVP if planning to attend.

Class Creation for 2015-16 School Year: Teachers will not take part in class creation due to labour unrest. Transition meetings with Centennial Public School have already taken place. ECE and EA staff can contribute to class creation feedback. Mr. Tinnes knows students well and will create classes for next school year.

2015-16 School Budget: is still being assessed. Trustees are currently involved in this process. Grants to school are based on student numbers and board is still waiting for conclusions regarding enrolment numbers, special education assessments etc.

Pro Grant: Funding is available up to \$1000.00 for facilitation of school programs. Mary Johnston has applied for the grant and been granted the money to fund a Math Night. This night will include presentations involving students sharing how they are learning and progressing in the current math curriculum. Parents will be invited to attend, learn about the new curriculum, how to better support their children and where to access resources. The event should be scheduled early in the 2015-2016 school year.

4. **WRAPSC and PIC Reports:** Lorie McMahon and Jill Magazine

MEETING NIGHT June 10: Special Committee of the Whole - 7pm Budget Discussions, Special Delegation Meeting

WRAPSC:

School Council Handbooks will be updated this summer. This is a Ministry document and volunteers are needed to contribute to the document. Willing volunteers can visit the Mary Johnston website or the WRAPSC website for further information.

PIC:

Subcommittee at Mary Johnston is working on a plan to engage newcomer parents. They are working from a pilot model from a school with many New Canadians. The committee is also awaiting final approval for a website by which parents can communicate with each other about school related issues. There is also an upcoming Town Hall in which parents can meet the WRDSB Director of Education.

Karen MacLeod ran focus groups with students in March and April regarding safe and inclusive schools. It was determined that students request more supervision during breaks to feel safe. Mary Johnston is responding to this student need by enlisting the John Howard Society to educate students about their safety and how to speak up in unsettling situations. Also, a map is in progress to designate supervised areas for students to access if needed.

5. **New Business:** Lorie McMahon

Website Update: Council is exploring creating a volunteer tab on the school website to describe all volunteer opportunities available at the school and encourage parent involvement. Please submit any volunteer needs for next meeting.

Home Reading: Heather Hickey will be purchasing home reading books to be used in the 2015-16 school year. The Used Book Sale generated 700 dollars for books to be purchased. Next year's program will run without a parent coordinator. Heather is

working on communicating with teachers about running a classroom based program in 2015-16.

New Health Curriculum: A small group of parents participated in the student strike to protest the new health curriculum.. Parents are encouraged to investigate the curriculum via the Ministry of Education website. Use the Health and Physical Education tab to locate the curriculum document. Mary Johnston will be teaching the curriculum next year. Students may opt out only after parents have had a discussion with the Principal but an alternative for these students will not be provided. No alternative programming will be forthcoming.

Next Meeting: held June 17th, 2015. Will be discussing the direction of council for the 2015-16 school year regarding volunteers needed, fundraising programs and community activities. Please bring any ideas for discussion to the June meeting.

Adjournment.