

October 16th, 2019
Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Grant Boudreault, Yvonne Strange, Liana James, Karen Day, Ashley McMartin, Darin Parish, Amy Van Steendelaar, Karen Day, Michelle Linthorne, Caroline Kucevic, Krista Brant, Dana Free, Lisa Brant, Angela Clarke, Melane Brant, Connie Starr and Ladena Prithipual

Staff Report

- Mr. Parish covered for Mrs. Kirkpatrick. Mr. Parish recapped events on the school website's calendar, providing some additional detail where appropriate.

Financial Report

- No change. Sitting at roughly \$8700.

Chair's Report

- **Little Caesars Fundraiser.** Not going to do before Christmas. With Elmira Chicken being delayed, there simply wasn't time. Little Caesars will take place after Christmas.
- **Poinsettias.** Going with Vandermeer Nursery. This is a company in Ajax that we are going to use. General consensus among Parent Council Members is that they like the variety provided by this company. Date of delivery will be (we are going to ask for) Wednesday, November 27th. If they are unable to do so, the delivery date will be December 4th (which is guaranteed). As well, they do Spring Flowers, which is something the Parent Council is interested in running. Vandermeer will create the order forms for us so that we will not have to create our order forms.
- **Christmas Vendor Sale.** Vendor agreement has been approved by the office. Ashley McMartin has spoken with BOB FM already. Starbucks was an issue last year. Because it was free, people came back repeatedly. This year it will just be coffee, with the first cup free and then a donation requested for additional cups after this. In terms of donations, we are going to ask for a non-perishable food item for the food bank. Caroline is going to reach out to last year's vendors, who were quite happy with last year's vendor show. If anyone knows other vendors, please reach out to them and invite them to participate. Based on the number of vendors we will use the stage, if required. Last year we had 30 vendors.

It was discussed as whether to use newspaper ads again; the decision was not to as social media is where most of the interest came from. Caroline is going to aim for a mix of vendors again (hopefully to avoid vendors selling the same products). Mrs. Starr has already created the binder for Let It Snow Vendor contracts. Fee per table will be \$25. A silent auction will be occurring again. Mrs. Starr pointed out that she did not feel that enough visitors knew that a silent auction was taking place; she feels that it should be in a more prominent location. Mrs. Starr noted we should have name tags or something identifying staff/Parent Council volunteers to help vendors and people coming in.

- **Breakfast with Santa.** Ladena has someone who can volunteer for this day.
- **Purpose of fundraising for the Parent Council this year will be to raise money for an outdoor play structure.** This will be put on an all fundraising information that is sent out to parents. In terms of the actual equipment to purchase, the thought process is some kind of outdoor “working out” equipment. The structure is quite durable, so it isn’t likely to be damaged by people after school on weekends. In terms of cost, it really will depend on which companies are approved at the time we have reached the money.
- **Digging back into the Constitution:** will take place in a future meeting.

Principal’s Report

- LTO being hired for Mrs. Ayres’s class. The reason it has taken longer than anticipated is because there were no applicants after the first posting, which meant we had to post again. The posting doesn’t close until tomorrow (Thursday, October 17th). This has become a bit of a problem in the TLDSB for the past few years. Most/all of our “LTO List” staff members are in LTOs, along with a large number of our OT (supply teachers). There is a fairly small pool of supply teachers to hire from for LTOs at this time of the year. As well, not all supply teachers want to do LTOs.
- People mentioned the “I’m Here” campaign in the last Parent Council Meeting. The TLDSB has launched the campaign as we have a significant percentage of our students classes as being “persistently absent” - which means being absent for 10% of the school year (roughly 19 days per year). Approximately 21% of our TLDSB students fall into the persistently absent category. Even a day absent every 2 weeks means that a student will miss more than 1.5 years of schooling in a typical school career.

Students with better attendance, on average, do better academically. As well, there is often a relationship between attendance and behaviour. Students who are away more often generally struggle more with routines.

Persistent lates are also problematic. Students who are late often miss key pieces of lessons. In the Primary division, most classes do Literacy in the morning. Tied into this would be discussions around what the day is going to look like. In addition, a student who is late is going to interrupt the learning of others (many students are probably going to stop what they are doing to say “hello”, as will, likely, the teacher).

We are encouraging better attendance through monthly assemblies.

Parent Council members asked about reasons for higher absenteeism. General discussion around anxiety being a significant factor; this wasn't as much the case in years past. Discussion also around students sometimes need more individual responsibility in terms of not immediately solving problems for them (e.g., repeatedly sending home permission forms).

- Our Executive Functioning focus ties into the above topic, as well. Each month we are making one of the Executive Functions a focus. September's was organization; October's response inhibition. We are asking staff members to make the focus an open topic multiple times over the course of the month, but, ideally, a part of day to day conversation. For example, I was in a classroom where a teacher was explicitly discussing organization and how that pertains to setting up your Google Drive with folders for each grade and then subjects within that folder too. Staff members have had students complete an Executive Function Checklist which visually shows students strengths and areas of focus. Some staff members have completed “Barriers and Strategies” anchor charts with their class. An example for a Primary class would be getting down to work. On the “Barriers” side you would list all of the potential reasons preventing you from getting to work. On the “Strategies” side you would list all of the ways you can overcome potential barriers.

We are finding that our students increasingly struggle with Executive Functions. In terms of organization, for example, students no longer have the skills that we tend to take for granted. Just as students in the past were meticulously taught how to keep a proper binder with notes for all of their subjects, we have to teach students how to organize themselves in a digital world.

Other Information

- n/a

Next Meeting

Wednesday, November 20th