

## **School Council Agenda**

Monday, April 1st, 2019

6:30pm - J. F. Carmichael Library

### **Minutes:**

Attendance: Anna Maste, Sandra Orton, Melissa Y., Ron Zhang, Sarah Kennedy, Ula Matusik, Ashley Jardin, Kerry Bock, T. Scott (VP), Coosje Weber (Acting Principal for the month of March), Nancy Lowen - Teacher representative, Lisa Grant - Grade 3/4 teacher & guest speaker.

Regrets: Stephanie Brubacher, Aimee Polevoy, Charity Friesen, April Trink

Welcome and Greetings

### **Updates and Business:**

1. Finances Summary:

No summary today. No changes since last month.

Home reading coordinators mentioned they will be sure to spend their money soon.

Legacy fund question: Is there going to be a contribution to this fund this year?

**Anna will email Penny with direction to move funds into that area.**

2. Event planning:

a) Movie Night – Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup>

- Small Foot has been selected
- Volunteers please arrive at 6:00, doors will open at 6:15
- Volunteers: to put popcorn into bags, Melissa Y. can do popcorn, Ula will try to come, T. will be here, Nancy will get a student to set up the projector, and Mrs. Grant will have a DVD player ready too.

b) Math Night – Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 3:40pm

- Updates from volunteers
- Melissa ordered the temporary tattoos. They say, "Please come," with the date and time. Melissa will pick up the Smarties and calculators before the night, Jackie is in charge of refreshments and Anna will check in with her to see if she needs anything, Sarah will pick up some games, Mrs. Weber hasn't had any luck with getting in touch with the Lego store, so Anna will go down there to chat with them.
- Mme. Colaiezzi will continue to coordinate the teachers side

c) Spring Book Swap

- Date changed slightly to May 22<sup>nd</sup> as tables weren't available for the 15<sup>th</sup>

Sarah had agreed to connect with Talize, and pick up some of the books. The new date will be ok with Sarah too. Anna can't make it that day, so we need lots of volunteers to help Sarah put out the books. Volunteering would start at 2:20, and goes until 3:20, putting books on tables that whole time. Melissa will post something on the parents' Facebook page, so hopefully people will show up to help.

- d) Kindie Night is April 30<sup>th</sup> – School council usually sets up a booth. The school contact is Deanna Williams. 6:00pm is the start time. Do we have any volunteers to man the booth? Anna will start the evening and set up, but cannot stay for the whole time. Melissa Y. can come at 6:30, and possibly bring Aimee with her as well.

### 3. Committee Updates:

Home Reading, not much to report – need to pack the books up in May, before June. The school will let the Home Reading Coordinators (Charity and Aimee) know once the library staff have chosen a date that they will start packing, so the home reading volunteers can get in before that, so they don't feel they are in the way.

### 4. Vice-Principal's report:

#### EQAO presentation:

Measures reading, writing and math

The test was created to be aligned with the Ontario curriculum

Happens each spring, within a 2 week window, begins the Monday following the Victoria Day weekend

Minimum of 3 days, could be as many as 2 sections per day, but could be stretched to 1 section per day for 6 days.

There's an EQAO website that gives lots of information for parents

Mrs. Grant talked to us about the classroom level, grade 3 perspective:

Her strategy is to, throughout the year, build up the students' stamina, help them learn how to help themselves to math tools when needed, encourage them to go back and check their work, help them conquer their fear about the test because it's intimidating. This test builds on the learning the kids have done from JK to grade 3. She also encourages them take a risk if needed, to always answer a multiple choice question.

There are multiple supports for kids who need it while writing the test, for example text to speech or speech to text versions of the test.

Every kid gets a grade 3 test, even if they are working at a lower level, so if they work at a grade 1 level day to day, they are made to take the same test.

Each child's score is mailed to their home address in September.

School scores are published, but will only include scores from a B- to an A, so the lower scores are not included in the stats, but they are the most important information sets for the school.

JF Carmichael looks at the trends in the data, rather than worrying about the one cohort/year's scores.

Also, the tests that are published publicly are not all the questions the students answered, for various reasons.

EQAO has noticed patterns, and there's a direct correlation between students who struggle in grade 3 and grade 6. They will probably struggle in high school. So they're using these scores as predictors to help figure out where and to whom they should offer some extra support.

Also teachers can look at individual scores and figure out if students need more support, or if they have test taking anxiety. But they scores only come out the following year, so this is less useful than report cards.

Students should be reminded to slow down, there's no rush. They can take all the time they need to finish the test.

A test session is about an hour. The students can go to the bathroom, get a drink or stretch, but a seating chart is provided to EQAO by the teacher when the tests are written, so they must return to the same spot. And they cannot have a nutrition break or go outside for recess during this time.

Kids who need it, get alternative tests, or scribing support (having an adult sit next to them writing exactly what they say).

How is the test framed to the kids before they have to write it? It is usually brought up at the beginning of grade 3, discussed, and skills are developed over the year to help them complete the test.

Mrs. Weber suggested that the school could consider taking the contextual data next fall and see how the kids replied to how they like reading, or math. Do they see themselves as a "reader", as a good math student?

Do the students do mock tests before the actual EQAO? They have in the past, but the teachers don't want to teach to the test. So they integrate the same sort of questions throughout the year, and train them on how to answer (fill in the full circle, don't just put a checkmark, plan your response to fit in the box, etc.) and how to plan your response to questions.

Parents don't need to prep with your child at home. If you visit the web site you'll see that it is more to give you information about what the test looks like, and help with testing anxiety in your children.

The presentation will be added to the parents' Facebook page.

In other school news: Mrs. Weber is here until the end of this week. Brian McGregor will assume the acting role of the Principal for the rest of April. He is another retired Principal, who is willing to help out.

Mrs. Weber is impressed with this school – especially the WITS strategy. She has seen the kids using the language, and that is a powerful sign that when we try to problem solve, there is trust that there will be someone to help and guide them. She has travelled from class to class and joined in the assemblies, and she sees and feels the students using these strategies.

The Leadership team is doing a food drive that starts on Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup>, 10 days, to support the Food Bank.

A Running club is starting for grades 4-6. Parents can join in if they want. The “mud puppy” event is coming up too.

T. shared how happy we are to have new faces, and thoughts and ideas, at our School Council meetings and if you have any other questions, just shoot an email to Anna, and she can pass them on to T. and T. will be sure they get answered.

A new fundraiser coming for Nutrition for Learning. The new fundraiser will be selling freezies, coming on Fridays in the spring.

The web site for Nutrition for Learning: [www.nutritionforlearning.ca](http://www.nutritionforlearning.ca)

5. What's on your mind?

Is there a wait list for French Immersion or did everyone get in this year? Everyone got in.

JF Carmichael Parents is the Facebook page. 92 members now, started with 1.

Are we talking about anything happening with the school year next year, with everything happening in the government these days, meaning the political climate? Is there anything we as parents can do to help out or make changes? What is the climate going to look like next year? Are we expecting any staffing numbers to change? The response that the province has given to teachers: communication at board level will be proactive but there is no information yet.

No known cuts here at the school yet, but staffing is not yet finalized.

If there is a strike, what can we do about it, what should we do about it?

Once the provincial budget gets tabled, the reality will be known. Until then, no idea what the board's budget is in this area.

The school has been told that at the primary level, the provincial budget won't make an impact or it will be very slight; one more kid per classrooms, supposedly.

You can go to ETFO's website (teacher's union) [www.etfo.ca](http://www.etfo.ca) to get more info about what they (the teachers) are advocating for.

The teacher's contract is up in August.

Anna Humphrey – her new book is being released on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Mega Bat and Fancy Cat, she would be a great person to have come in to chat about her books, or get her in the newsletter. Eric Walters was at the school today, and his feedback was that he said the kids were fantastic.