

J.W. Gerth Public School

School Council Minutes September 24, 2014

Welcome and Introduction: Sarah Mohr welcomed all to the first meeting of the 2014-2015 school year.

Attendance: Sarah Mohr, Michelle Kropp, Marlene Kroetsch, Sunni Ronzio, Melanie Toth, Pam McConnell, Andre Bastel, Tamara MacKinnon, Meagan Cochrane, Christy Coghill, Susan Schaffner, Maggie Watson, Holly McPherson-Mount, Karla Schroeder, Connie Phillion, Penny Vassiliou-Ford, Penelope Sisk, Guillaume Autran, Natalie Waddell.

Minutes and Agenda Review: No issues.

School Council Guidelines: School Council helps to set priorities of the school for the benefit of all. It is not a forum to air any disagreements or issues with teaching staff. Attendees need to come to 2 consecutive meetings for voting rights. Voting rights are used when we have proposals.

Principal's Report: Susan Schaffner

Susan welcomed all. If you choose not to return to school council meetings, please let us know the reason why.

EQAO – the results are on the school website. EQAO is for grade 3 and grade 6. Grade 4 students will get a report home (as they wrote the test last school year) indicating how the child did with EQAO.

Math is becoming a priority across the school board.

There are a lot of resources out there (i.e. the internet) for kids in grade 3 who will take the test this year.

Teachers are trying to incorporate the format of the EQAO in the classroom so kids are familiar with the format. Difficulty is getting the grade 3's to independently do the test. The teacher, for example, cannot re-word the question with this test, whereas they can in the classroom setting.

Question: question raised about the existence of differences between French Immersion and English stream students and EQAO results: no glaring differences between students.

Grade 3 test is in English regardless of language subject is taught in.

No obvious gender differences noted either.

Staffing: Susan was thrilled with all the parents who showed up the first day to celebrate the school being only JK - Grade 4. The Grade 4 students are really rising to the challenge. Please be patient right now with the phones being answered, the kids are still learning.

Some re-organization with grade 3; one more grade ¾ split because there was one grade 3 with 25 students and that is too many (the cap in junior is 20 students).

Staffing is in place for this year, several new enthusiastic teachers and staff at J.W. Gerth.

Jeff Laythorpe is teaching grade ¾ English, planning time coverage, some special ed. and he is designated to teach technology for the school. School has 40 iPad, 40 iPad minis, and 40 Google chrome books. He will be getting the kids in each class familiar with technology (e.g. Google apps). There are many apps that can assist various learning needs.

Safe Welcome: the doors are locked during the day. You must press the button to ring the office. Question regarding the "tailgating" of parents and students through the doors. There is nothing that can be done unless there is full time

person watching (which is not going to happen). Please tell your kids they need to come to the front door and press the 'main office' button to be let in.

If the police feel there is something that the public needs to know, the school will let us know (e.g. stranger issues etc.).

Board Improvement plan for Student Achievement: Target areas: collaboration and mathematics. Several teachers will be part of the committee that works on a J.W. Gerth school improvement plan. This information will be shared at next School Council meeting.

More information and videos on the board website about the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement 2014-2015: www.wrdsb.on.ca/bipsa/

Parents can contact Principal Schaffner if you feel you need to talk about any issue. Parents can also contact the teacher at any time to make the teacher aware of any issues with a student.

Teacher Update: Christy Coghill

School Clubs and groups:

Running clubs: grade 1, 2, and 3 are one group; grade 4 is another.

When running club ends: dance crew for Christmas concert with a grade 2 group, and a grade 3 and 4 group to keep numbers manageable.

Choir: grades 1 and 2 together, and grades 3 and 4 together.

Fall Scarf Frenzy: Suzanne Rakoczy will run the club. First session grade 1 and 2. Cost involved for materials. Next group will be a grade 3 and 4 groups who will use a loom with yarn. Parents will purchase the yarn. She can manage 10 students at a time. Expecting a lot of students to sign up.

European handball: will start once running club is finished. Grades 3 and 4 right now.

Bucket drumming – Just grade 4.

Christmas Concert: December 10th at 6:30 p.m. Dance, choir, and bucket drumming.

JK/SK Christmas celebration: possibly also the grade 1's (with Kindergarten) will be doing something for Christmas.

Remembrance Day: November 11th 2014 at 10:30/10:45 a.m. for the ceremony. Parents are welcome.

Scientists in the School: Grade 3's are interested, possibly the Kindergarten classes as well.

Terry Fox run on September 26th 2014 at 2:00 p.m. Assembly first and then the kids will go out after.

Chess club was raised as a possibility for later in the year – winter is a good time.

If a student is interested in a club, they can suggest it to their teacher.

Information is on the school website.

Treasurer: Vacant position

We have an opening for treasurer for 2014-2015 school year.

Responsibilities: creates the monthly Treasurer Report, writes cheques, does deposits, assists with counting money when possible. Sometimes, this individual needs to be available during the day. Melanie Toth will be Treasurer for 2014-2015. If anyone wants to shadow the position for the year, please let Sarah Mohr know.

Update to outdoor classroom allocation of \$3000.00: Schools must use a school board approved contractor. Earthscape (Elmira and Toronto) is one of the few contractors that perform this kind of service. They were contacted and came up with a plan. The \$3000.000 initially allocated may grow. A cost of \$762.75 is required for a total concept design plan. For now, the JK/SK team will like to put in raised garden and outdoor kitchen. Denise Heard is the teacher contact for this project.

Earthscape will be invited to the next school council meeting. It was also suggested they bring pictures, or if other schools have used them and what the feedback is from those projects.

Earthscape has a website: www.earthscapeplay.ca where they have a lot of pictures and projects broken down by cost.

Treasurer Report:

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| Opening Balance: | \$17,579.64 |
| Deposits/Credits: | \$11,774.73 |
| Cheques/Debits: | \$10,457.19 |
| Closing Balance: | \$18,897.18 |

Fundraising: Pam McConnell

QSP: assembly at 2:00 p.m. September 25th. Goal this year is \$5000.00.

ESNS: Julie Stothers is setting up that program. Wednesday is pizza day. Subway/Boston pizza on Fridays and milk will be available Monday to Friday. We are running a full program this year to start sometime after Thanksgiving weekend. We will need a paid person for 1 hour a day. The pay is \$13.00/hour. The paid helper will be needed the 1st nutrition break, Monday Friday, 11:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. There is a fridge for the program.

Voting for school council positions: Michelle Kropp is co-chair. Melanie Toth is Treasurer for 2014-2015.

2014- 2015 priorities: Musical playground: where do we want to go? Can we do that space in relation to noise? Outdoor equipment? Any new climbing apparatus has to be supervised.

Suggestion made about supporting another school with our school council funds. Concern is the money raised by J.W. Gerth parents would like to stay here at J.W. Gerth, as this is the feedback that has been received in the past.

There will be a new school opening in the future that will have students leave J.W. Gerth (boundary changes when the school opens) and questions about allocating the funds raised by school council. This can be further discussed when that time arises.

Any new ideas for school council for 2014-2015, please bring them forward.

Money for the Home Reading program will be allocated when the request comes in.

Question: Any thoughts about mailbags other than the plastic Ziplocs? Something thicker and made of material and can be re-used. This is something to think about.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Next meeting October 29th, 2014 at 7:00 in the Library