

# WRAPSC MINUTES

## May 7, 2019

The meeting began at 7pm.

- I. Approval of minutes for April 2, 2019  
Moved by Tammy Dahms – Bluevale Collegiate Secondary School  
Seconded by Beth Robson – Sandhills Public School                      Motion carried
- II. Approval of agenda for May 7, 2019  
Moved by Sara Heroux – Glencairn Public School  
Seconded by Ashley Harasym – Smithson Public School                      Motion carried
- III. Sensory Pathway

Our first speaker was a teacher from Clemens Mill Public School, Kimberly Gilhespy. She gave a description of the sensory pathway that she and fellow teacher Chris Wilson put in at Clemens Mill in Cambridge. Kimberly and Chris saw the idea over the 2018 Christmas holidays and upon returning back to school in January they put a plan in place. It took 6 weeks for completion and has been a huge success with both students and staff using the pathway. They purchased the Cricut machine for 300.00 at Michaels using funds donated by the Parent Council. Vinyl for the floor tiles was purchased there as well. This machine can cut out all sorts of patterns out of vinyl and paper. The pathway has been useful for all the kids at the school to not only release energy but also includes learning aspects from start to finish. Examples would include counting, shape recognition, colours, and other educational activities. See <https://twitter.com/cwilson1224/status/1102614146850394114?s=03> for a demo, or look at a school in Manitoba that has a similar pathway: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P4q8dNwsR3E> Both teachers from Clemens Mills would be happy to talk to other teachers/school councils that would be interested in a similar project at their elementary school.

- IV. Diversification in School Councils

Deepa Ahluwalia is the Equity and Inclusion Officer at the WRDSB. She came to WRAPSC to discuss the challenges that parents have that prevent them from attending or joining school councils. The starting point is to “Identify and remove barriers to parent engagement that may prevent some parents from fully participating in their children’s learning and to reflect the diversity of our students and communities”. Examples would include a need for childcare or a need for a translator. Then Deepa went on to talk about general principals School Councils need to think about before they start on a campaign to diversify their membership.

- A. Diversity celebrates an increase in numbers that reflect minoritized status in schools and incremental growth. However, should our aim really be Equity?
- B. Equity celebrates reductions in harm, revisions to abusive systems and increases in supports for people who have been discriminated against.
- C. Inclusion celebrates awards for initiatives and credits itself for having a diverse group of people. However, is seeking justice more impactful?
- D. Justice celebrates getting rid of practices and policies that were having disparate impacts on minoritized groups.

Deepa organized engagement projects at both AR Kaufman and Franklin Public School. The aim was to build trust and relationships with parents to make them feel comfortable with being a part of the school. Relationships are the first step to reaching the entire community and recruiting volunteers. Deepa and her staff would be happy to advise other schools on how to organize similar programs.

V. Walking School Bus

Colleen Cooper, walking school bus coordinator and with the Canadian Cancer Society, presented a new initiative from the CCS. The Walking school Bus program started in Quebec in 2000. The Canadian Cancer Society gets funding from Trillium for every school that is interested. Each school is provided with a tool kit, and help finding adult volunteers. They offer pedestrian training sessions, crossing safely sessions, and other great tools to continuously teach safety. Currently eight schools at WRDSB are participating in this initiative. See [walkingschoolbus.cancer.ca](http://walkingschoolbus.cancer.ca)

VI. Board Updates

- A. French Immersion Survey – WRAPSC members were reminded that the survey is still available at : <https://www.wrdsb.ca/blog/2019/04/24/tell-us-about-your-experience-with-our-french-immersion-program/>

Coordinating Superintendent Matthew Gerard sent a message letting us know that this survey is only the first step in engaging parents, both French Immersion and Non-French Immersion. More opportunities for input will become available.

WRAPSC members expressed some dissatisfaction with the online survey. Issues included the lack of space to write comments, and the limited number of options on the menu. The Survey was limited as to what you could choose. For example, you could choose extremely satisfied or very satisfied, but not simply satisfied or OK. The next option down was not very satisfied. Members also reported that the teacher or staff version had not been made available yet.

- B. Ontario Ministry of Education: Proposed increase in average class size

The Steering Committee presented a letter that they would like to send to the Minister of Education, objecting to recent class size changes and other cuts.

Motioned by Mandi Bond

Seconded by Sara Heroux

Motion carried.

Barb Dowling suggested that WRAPSC provide a template for parents to send to their MP's etc. This was agreed to, and a sample template is attached (provided by Steering Ctte member Heidi Holmes) A template for school councils to use is also attached.

- VII. Meeting was adjourned at 840pm so everyone could mingle with other parents and trustees who were present. Trustees present were Karen Meissner, Carol Millar, Scott Piatkowski, Nathalie Waddell, Cindy Watson, Joanne Weston, and Kathleen Woodcock. Chair Jayne Herring sent her regrets.

Next meeting October 1st, 2019 at 7pm