

Vista Hills School Council

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 12, 2019

Where: Vista Hills Public School Library

When: Thursday, December 12, 2019 at 6:30pm

Attendees: Melanie Roberts, Jen Christopher, Sharon Han, Anne Plouffe, Diana Clipsham, Hajra Hafeez, Jennifer Phan, Seoyeon Jang, Joo Young Lee, Mahtab Kamali, Miran James, Greg James, Jerry H, Mrs. Sheriff

Agenda Items:

1. Welcome and Introductions –Shemira
2. Vice-Principal Report –Shemira
November & December
Empathy focus

Staffing Update:

Mrs. Tanya Shaw leaving after winter break

New LTD (2 days a week) in January 2020

Krystal Keys – starting in February Grade 2/3 (3 days a week)

School Activities Updates:

Dec 12 – 13 Marketplace

- Money raised will go to One4Another International (\$4,000 raised from poinsettias)

Dec 16 – 20 Community Christmas sing-a-long 8:30am

Dec 21 – Jan 5 Holidays

Jan 6 First Day of School

3. Approval of Minutes from November meeting – Jerry
Motion to approve Anne Plouffe, second Hajra Hafeez

4. Home Reading – Anne Plouffe
 - a. *Proposed addition of English Levels beyond Level S*

A home reading survey was sent out to parents and teachers in December:

- 32 parents and 6 teachers participated in the survey

Summary of the results (if interested in seeing a copy of the complete presentation please message vistahillsschoolcouncil@gmail.com):

English books

- Not nearly enough Level A books for current students plus JK students will start using the Home Reading room in January
- Low number of available books per student for Level R and some students have levelled out of home reading (reading level past what is available through home reading)

French books

- May need more lower level books
- Have a low level of higher level books but not too many students using them now

Feedback from library – higher level home reading books didn't go out as much, it seems more chapter books and self-selected reading from the library was preferred by students.

Overall parents and teachers value the home reading program. Need to look into options for enhancing the program and making sure there are enough resources for all students who are part of home reading.

Options to consider for Home Reading Program

1. Order Level S-U English books
 - PROS – more books, encourage more daily reading, keeps students interested
 - CONS – books cost \$24 each, books are too long for some students, content may be too mature
2. Student to pick a daily book from the library
 - PROS – more books to choose from, Mrs. King will give students an additional book over their current limit
 - CONS – books are not grouped by level, Mrs. King cannot help students select appropriately leveled books
3. RAZ Kids
 - PROS – low cost just over \$100 for 36 students, goes up to level Z, reward system to encourage reading
 - CONS – technology needed, not sure when new books are added, tablet not best medium for some kids
4. Order books for home reading through Scholastic
 - Great price – 98 books for \$371.50 for \$3.79/book
 - Lots of options with familiar titles that students like

Will establish a new Home Reading Committee to review and look into options 2 – 4:

- Email to parents asking who would be interested
- Decide how \$2,000 will be spent (already approved school council funds)
- Spend \$500 on Level A now since there is a shortage at that level
 - Anne to follow-up with Mrs. Patten

Motion to approve establishing Home Reading Committee and to spend \$500 on Level A books for the home reading program Jen Christopher, second Diana Clipsham

b. Update on board policy changes to library resources

VH recently found out that due to cutbacks, there is not as many staff available at the WRDSB education center to catalogue new books so VH is no longer allowed to use fundraising money to go towards new books. Cataloguing of library books is done centrally by WRDSB.

Money raised from the last two scholastic book fairs (total \$2,900) was supposed to go towards purchasing much needed graphic novels and French books for VH. According to the new board

policy, this is not allowed. But since these book fairs took place before the cutbacks and it was communicated that money raised would be for VH library books we would like to send a letter from school council to the school board. Greg James will work with Mrs. King on a draft letter asking to use those funds towards buying books.

Money raised from the book fairs could be used to improve the VH library but we really need the money to go towards extra books as we are a growing school.

If the library isn't able to use the money for books, SERT Mrs. Marshall could use the funds for kits to assess reading levels.

Part of the money raised through future book fairs could go towards home reading. We will get more books through Scholastic than if they are purchased elsewhere.

5. Financial Report – Hajra

Funds available as at December 2019:

\$9,960.58 WEFI (Waterloo Education Foundation Inc.) for outdoor projects

\$13,745.12 School Council funds

6. Feedback from office about discretionary fund for students in need – Hajra

- Have \$500 available for discretionary fund
- Looking for more non-perishable, protein items out of discretionary fund

7. Meal in a Jar School program – Miran James (presentation and discussion)

- Miran presented Meal-in-a-Jar as possible option for VH lunch program (*in addition to pizza and pitas that are currently offered*)
- Local company, healthy meals, less than 500 calories, nut free
- Lots of meal choices (meat or veg)
- Cost \$5.99 plus tax with 10-15% back to the school
- Meal-in-a-jar would make morning of and drop off at school
- Miran looking into different container options, nutritional value in line with school board guidelines and how ordering and distribution would work

Next meeting Thursday January 30th at 6:30pm in the school library.

Ongoing school council fundraisers:



COBS Bread at the Boardwalk

Mention Vista Hills Public School when you order and Cobs will donate 10% of your order to our school

Mabel's Labels Fundraiser online at https://mabelslabels.ca/en_CA/fundraising/support/ and search for Vista Hills

Thank you for your support!