

**School Council Meeting minutes**

**February 24, 2021, 6:30pm**

**Virtual Meeting**

**Welcome to those attending** –

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Present** | **Name** | **Present** |
| Karma Harris |  | Kira Bruschke | X |
| Liz Kristensen | X | Rick Foucault | X |
| Laura Gillians | X | Christine Glidden | X |
| Marisa Moser | X | Jenn Amos |  |
| Doerte Schulze |  | Heidi Holmes |  |
| Jodie Hancox-Meyer | X | Cristina Shaffer | X |
| Tonya Veltman | X | Krista Luft |  |
| Amber Fitzgerald | X | Bobbie-Jo Seitz | X |
| Stephanie Evansberg | X | Christina K | X |

**Welcome Message – Tonya Veltman**

* Last meeting until April

**Territorial Acknowledgement – Jodie Hancox-Meyer**

**Principal’s Report – Jodie Hancox-Meyer**

* I would like to provide School Council with an update from Jenn Balkos, our amazing library clerk. Jenn has truly gone above and beyond during the pandemic to provide staff and students with some really creative ideas and solutions to continue to promote literacy here at Westvale:

*In a year that is anything but normal, we have introduced the Mobile Library to our Westvale students and it has been a great way to connect our readers with books.  Each week I see almost 200 students outside of their classroom door, bringing a curated collection of books for them to choose from, as well as bringing books students have placed on reserve in the library.  I created an Online Westvale Virtual Library this year (*[*https://sites.google.com/wrdsb.ca/wsvlibrary/home*](https://sites.google.com/wrdsb.ca/wsvlibrary/home)*) that has information, Read Alouds, Forest of Reading, and a Frequently Asked Questions page.  We have just started the Forest of Reading Program at Westvale, reading the Blue Spruce picture books on Thursdays and on Tuesdays reading excerpts from the Silver Birch and Yellow Cedar books (chapter books and non-fiction).  These read alouds are being live streamed during Nutrition Breaks, and there are activities and contests that are available to students on the WSVLibrary site for each book read. While students were learning from home, I was able to complete an inventory of the school library (first one since June 2019) and discovered that out of our 13,587 books in our library only 55 items were 'missing', which is a pretty small number considering the shutdown last March.  I was also able to join some classes to read aloud in their google meets while we were learning from home - it was great to see the kids without their masks!*

* Thank you to Tonya Veltman who, through her employer Equitable Life, arranged for the Earth Rangers to do a virtual presentation (at no cost to the school) for our grades 1 through 6 students on February 17th. This presentation was informative and engaging for all students and introduced them to both some common and some unusual live “critters”. They did interesting and interactive trivia with the classes and additionally promoted ways in which students can help to protect wildlife and the environment.
* Earlier today, February 24th, our grades ¾ to grade 6 classes had a virtual workshop (paid for by the school) with Paul Davis (the same expert who did our parent workshop sponsored by School Council on January 26th). Paul presented some very realistic advice and information to the students (and their teachers) about the dangers of social media and I’m confident that this will leave a lasting impression on our kids. I would love to bring Paul back on a regular basis (perhaps every other year?) to work with our junior students as the world of social media continues to change and evolve.
* As you are likely aware, parents were given one final opportunity in January to change their child’s mode of learning for the duration of this school year. We have a number of students who will be transitioning from distance learning back to in-person learning on March 4th. We also have a number of in-person learners who will be leaving us to begin distance learning on March 8th. The very good news that I received from the Board was that Westvale would not be impacted by another reorganization as many schools were. Having “escaped” another “re-org” means that all students will be keeping the same teacher and all teacher assignments will be staying the same. This is wonderful in terms of us avoiding yet one more difficult transition during an already challenging year!
* Kindergarten registration for the next school year starting in September remains in full swing and we currently have 31 new JKs registered. It is too early to know what this means in terms of how many Kindergarten classes we will be allocated but we are excited to know that we will have at least 31 new learners joining us.
* Those families who registered their SK child for grade 1 French Immersion should be receiving notification sometime this week about whether they have been allocated a spot (either by lottery or because they have an older sibling in FI) or whether they have been wait-listed at Westvale. The school will also soon be informed about how many sections of grade 1 FI we will be allocated.
  + We have been allocated one class next year; 23 of the 29 children who applied to the program are in the program and the remaining children have been wait listed and will be offered a spot should one arise in the order in which the applications were received. Families will also be offered a choice to do FI at an out of bounds school.
* The Ontario Covid School Screening tool was modified as of Monday, February 22nd and now has more stringent rules about when staff and students may attend school. If any staff or student has even a single symptom from the list, they may not attend school (and the rest of their family must isolate) until they get a negative covid test, an alternative diagnosis from a physician or have isolated for 10 days. This will have significant impacts on attendance (both staff and students) but the hope is that the increased screening measures will keep everyone safer.

**Teacher’s Report – Marisa Moser**

* It is so nice to be back in the physical classroom and teaching again! It is business as usual at school. We are continuing to follow all the covid-19 protocol and guidelines.
  + Consider sending hand cream as kids’ hands are getting very dry
* Today we celebrated pink day to support anti-bullying. We will be doing Westvale Wow’s for the month of March as a whole school with a theme of initiative.
* Westvale participated in a virtual school wide assembly that featured Earth Rangers and animals. Junior students also participated in a Paul Davis presentation.
* An update in regards to the money we gave to Susan Morley.
  + A huge THANK YOU goes out to all of you, the most generous school council a Music teacher could ever ask for. At first, Ms. Morley had hoped to spend the entire lump sum in a single purchase, with the bulk of the funds going toward ukuleles, and then residual funds going toward glockenspiels and other percussion instruments. And then Covid happened. She has opted to put a hold on ukuleles this year, as she cannot provide effective instruction while trying to maintain a safe distance from students and Covid guidelines. Rather, she has decided to focus on rhythm activities. I am currently in conversation with the educational services consultant from Long and McQuade as I work toward finalizing this big order for the ukuleles and glockenspiels for use next year.

**Treasurer’s Report – Rick Foucault**

* Balance carried forward is $9442
* Still haven’t paid out Paul Davis ($452)
* Paid out $300 for Virtual Games Night
* $4100 available funds; still waiting to fully confirm with school records

**WRAPSC Updates – Heidi Holmes**

* Next meeting is April 7th: agenda items will include a report on Specialist High School Major (SHSM) and Co-op Programs for Secondary Schools from Ron DeBoer as well as a guest speaker named Theresa Pastore who will present on Parent Engagement in Education and comes highly recommended.  PIC is paying her fees and all school members are invited to join (virtually).
* WRAPSC drafted and shared a letter with WRAPSC members regarding WRDSB and concerns re: parent engagement; encouraged members to use it to personalize and send to Trustees as well with School Councils.  I have attached a copy of the letter and cover letter here if you wish to share.
* At the January meeting, we had a presentation from the Food4Kidz group; info is in minutes (attached).  Trustee Laurie Tremble also spoke about the role of Trustee.  We finished with an open discussion around issues, resources, etc.
* Our April agenda is still being determined but will include an update from the WRDSB French Immersion Committee, led by Superintendent Matt Gerrard.

**Family Games Night Review – Heidi Holmes/Laura Gillians**

* Great night; a little less engagement than the first games night

**Brainstorming for engagement of community and school**

* Magic Night Update - AMBER
  + Local magician she has used in the past is available for a virtual magic show
  + $125 for 30 mins or $165 for 45 mins
  + Five the Magician
  + Has multiple dates for availability; Free March 11th
  + Stephanie forwarded a motion to do a 45 minute session for March 11th
  + Laura seconded the motion
  + 6:30-7:15
  + Amber to reach out to co-ordinate and arrange for payment; to confirm the date
  + Amber to ask what type of virtual platform he uses for the meet (google meet or zoom would be our preference)
  + <https://www.bigsmilescompany.com/five-the-magician.html>
* What about an outdoor event; virtual scavenger hunt
  + Painted rocks? Some concerns about distancing.
  + What about a more generic scavenger hunt?
  + Could we do a prize or a shout out for the person with the most items
    - What about joke prizes (most ridiculous garage door colour, etc.)
  + Submit the scavenger hunt virtually
  + Tonya willing to co-organize the event; please email with interest (Kira has volunteered)
* Virtual chick hatch – Stephanie has offered to do one
  + Kids could name them and check in on them
  + Would need to be hatched from Stephanie’s home
  + Livestreaming would make it the most exciting
  + Cost for eggs is around $30, and might need wood chips; other supplies are covered
  + Usually start at the end of May so they hatch in June
  + Stephanie to talk to Jenn Balkos about the livestreaming aspect (any privacy concerns about it being out of someone’s home); if that’s an issue, perhaps it’s taped recordings instead
  + Could have them outdoors in June for kids to visit (maybe every other day), but kids would not be able to touch them for sanitization reasons as long as 6’ of distance was maintained.
  + Jodie recommends advertising by school day
  + Tonya motions $100 for the chick hatching
  + Bobbi Jo seconds the motion

**Next Meeting Date –** April 28, 2021, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.