Conestogo Public School Council Minutes: Thursday, October 10, 2013

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ACTION ITEM SUMMARY

- Council Budget Review
  Principal, Treasurer, Chair
  Deadline: in preparation for November 14th meeting.
- Funds allocation for community outreach: Brainstorm ways to facilitate community outreach through funding. Consider allocating DrumFit funds to reach a particular community outreach goal.
  Principal, Council Exec, Council Members
  Deadline: review at November 14 meeting, vote.
- Girls On the Run program – review – registration deadline Dec 20th
  Principal, Council Exec, Council Members
  Deadline: review at November 14 meeting, vote.
- November presentation: Full Day Kindergarten and the before school/after school program possibilities – Board System Administrator
  Principal to book presenter, Council Exec to add to agenda
  Deadline: for November 14 meeting.
- Contact information of parent in community who can help record Oh Canada to Mrs. Carrere
  Barb Dowling
  Deadline: asap.
- Teacher's Survey, Next Steps – deferred to November's meeting
  Barb Dowling
  Deadline: November 14 meeting.
- Orientation package for new members: suggestion to create an orientation package to hand out to new council members.
  Communications Committee
  Deadline: TBD
- Next WRAPSC Meeting
  Fiona von Kannen
  Meeting: November 5th
- PitaPit – request for second volunteer
  Parents
  Timeline: Mondays
- PitaPit – ask parents to write their children's PitaPit order days in their planners.
  Communications Committee
  Timeline: next PitaPit email
- DrumFit – request for second volunteer
  Parents
  Timeline: TBD
- Snacks – next meeting
  Karen Hofbauer
  Meeting: November 14th

WELCOME & GENERAL BUSINESS

Attendance

(✓ present, × absent/regrets. Parent Members must attend 7/10 – 70% of meetings to maintain voting privileges.)

Role	2013-14	Sep 19	Oct 10	Nov 14	Dec 12	Jan 9	Feb 6	Mar 5	Apr 10	May 8	Jun 12
Co-Chair	Barb Dowling	✓	✓								
Co-Chair	Heather Cote	✓	×								
Secretary	Deb Jones	✓	✓								
Treasurer	Jane Martin	×	✓								
Principal	Brian Beney	✓	✓								
Teacher		Mme. Larke	Leslie Donald								
Parent Members (11)	Chris Sabean	✓	✓								
	Jaime Bickerton	✓	✓								
	Karen Hofbauer	✓	✓								
	Marsha Ferguson	✓	✓								
	Natalie Edery	✓	✓								
	Susan Wagler	✓	✓								
	Tim Alles	✓	✓								
Parent Volunteers	Aimee Leveck	×	✓								
	Carolyn Rouse	✓	×								
	Fiona von Kannen	✓	✓								
	Florence Bray	✓	×								
	Jen Sellars	×	×								
	Juli Chinnick	✓	✓								
	Lori McCrae	×	×								
	Melanie Thompson	×	×								
	Monica Beal	×	×								

	Sandra Clark	×	✓								
	Sue Hoffele	×	×								
	Vanessa Harrow	✓	×								
	Rebecca Hallman		✓								
	Shannon McTaggart		✓								
Snacks		Juli	Susan	Karen	Natalie	Marsha	Jaime	Heath.	Deb	Barb	Brian

Agenda – Review & Approval

Adjustments to Agenda:

- none

Agenda Approval Motioned by:

1st: Jaime

2nd: Susan

Minutes, Sep 19 – Review & Approval

Adjustments to Minutes:

- none

Minutes Approval Motioned by:

1st: Tim

2nd: Jaime

PRESENTATIONS

"Girls on the Run" program – Shannon McTaggart (parent)

- Shannon has girls in grades 8,7, and 5 at CPS.

Program offerings:

- Grades 3-5: "Girls on the Run"
- Grades 6-8 "Girls on Track"

Schedule:

- April to June. 10 weeks. 2x/week. 1.25 hours/session, likely at 3:45pm – 5:00pm.
- Warm up, full curriculum, fully scheduled and coordinated.
- Running and activity games based on themes.
- At the end of the 10 weeks, girls complete a 5km fun run with medals at the school.

Costs:

- School registration fee of $50 to commit to the program and completing it.
- User fee for the girls. Base fee of $139, including tax. Registration is completed online. (No family plan or discount.)
- Registration for the program closes at the end of December.
- Trying to get it into 17 schools this year. Number of schools already registered.

Coaches:

- Need 1 head coach, 1 assistant coach for each age group. Head coach must have CPR and safety training, has training session. Assistant coach has online training session.

Curriculum:

- Not just a running program: Self esteem, healthy living, healthy choices for girls.
- Program is truly not a running program—the run will be at the end at the host school for girls in the program and parents, staff, community.
- Program is run by volunteers. We ask the school to supply the volunteers.
- Program has run at Riverside by Shannon.
- We also have junior coaches—high school students can earn volunteer hours.
- Change in the girls from the beginning, girls arrive quiet and timid, even though they go to school together, they aren't bold. By the third to forth time, it is amazing to see the transformation in their confidence with what they will share with the group.
- Lots of time spent talking about the lesson of the day.
- For instance, healthy living, healthy choices like nutrition. The game involves exercise but the game is about learning. Everything is interrelated.
- At the end, the 5km run reinforces everything they have learned.
- Program has been running in USA since 1996. Over 7000 girls through this program.
- Will leave information packet and brochure.

Requirements:

- **Registration deadline: December 20th.** Need to know you have 2 coaches committed. In January, we like to have an assembly to the girls in those age groups. Safety training hosted in February, training in march, start in April.
- Very excited to have it in the area.
- Trying to bring to schools where there is not a lot of parent activity.
- Minimum # of kids/group? Really is not a minimum.
- Don't necessarily have to be a student here.
- Program has an insurance policy to cover the program.
- Require a space for bad weather. But mostly run outside
- 3-year program so if you come in at grade 3, you never repeat the same lessons.
- Schools subsidizing the fees? In some schools, the school subsidizes everyone, other schools subsidize particular students who cannot afford to pay for it. Can register for subsidized fees.
- If you register the school at full price, every family that registers can also complete the process for subsidization—they can apply for a discount. There has never been a girl turned away for funding.
- Run like an after-school program—volunteers complete a police check—children are supervised like an after-school child-care program.
- There is a community challenge component to the program. On week 3, girls come up with a list of things to do to give back to the community. For instance, one night, we may choose to do a litter cleanup rather than playing games. There are lots of ideas or the girls come up with something….weeding gardens, washing windows, something.

- At this point, looking for support to run the program, advertise the program to find a coach, encourage the school to approve the program.
- School commitment is use of the gym, if necessary, and the field.
- Every year the school registers again.

Parent question: If a girl can only go 1x per week rather than 2x can they still come?
Response: We ask them to commit to the program and come to all sessions. It is a small, cohesive group growing together and sharing things.

Parent Question: is there a conflict with other sporting events?
Principal: If there are other things happening after school, they would have to be accommodated. After school can work as long as there is no conflict with another school event. Schedule is a ways away. I also have to check in with rentals because there are other groups and organizations. Right after school, there would not likely be a conflict.

- Website: http://girlsontherun.ca/
- Next meeting: review and vote.

Principal's Report – Brian Beney

Board and School Improvement Planning for Student Achievement

This month's focus for my report is on our Board and school improvement plan for student achievement. Each October a committee of staff review our results from the previous year and develop our School Improvement Plan. To start off, I will show you our System's Improvement Plan video as an introduction.

- View 2013-14 System Improvement Plan video clip (8 min)

The focus of our staff PD day tomorrow is on school improvement for the 2013-14 school year. The staff will spend the morning looking at a variety of student data, discuss strengths, areas needing attention and our action points and planning.

There are several sources of data that we review including: contextual information about our students and school, attitudes/behaviour towards learning and achievement data.

A variety of achievement data is reviewed on an ongoing basis including: reading records (JK – 3), CASI (grades 4 – 8 related to reading comprehension strategies), report card information, EQAO results, ongoing teacher observations and in class assessments by teachers.

EQAO Results (Spring 2013)

This slide shows our school's results in the reading, writing and math tests (grades 3 and 6).

Grade 3 (34 students participated out of 37)

- Reading: 28 (83 %) achieved levels 3-4
- Writing: 24 (74%) achieved levels 3-4
- Math: 26 (76%) achieved levels 3-4.

Grade 6 (29 students participated out of 32)

- Reading: 21 (72%) achieved levels 3-4
- Writing: 23 (79%) achieved levels 3-4
- Math: 21 (72%) achieved levels 3-4.

As part of our interpretation of the results we take note of the students that did not achieve level three and that some are those that are designated with some form of special needs. We also look at how this particular cohort of students have done over the course of the 3 years from the grade 3 test to the grade 6 test.

This slide show's our results from Grade 3 (2009-2010) and Grade 6(2012-2013). We see a slight increase in our writing scores, but a decrease in reading and in math. This also guides our discussion and future planning.

Where do we go from here?

- Identify specific students scoring below level 3 and support as needed.
- Look for specific areas/strands that students are showing deficits or gaps and support as needed.
- Teacher P.D. regarding math instruction – networking.
- Use of 'Mathletics' grades 3 – 6; opportunities for reinforcement at home.
- Use of sample EQAO sample tests for practice.

This is a brief overview of one part of the achievement data that we are reviewing. Are there any questions?

Parent question: When trends are seen at the Board or province level indicating issues, are resources allocated to address that issue?
Principal: Yes, you will see resources allocated to solving the issue. The math curriculum is demanding and staff may require additional training to facilitate it effectively.

Parent question: [example of child working with a tutor in math] In speaking with the teacher last year, the teacher indicated that there are learning gaps. Has the Board asked the parents or tutors?
Principal: Parents always have a voice. Not every parent can afford tutors. One-on-one tutoring will always allow focus on specific groups of skills, for reinforcement, without distractions, etc. but it does not focus on other aspects that are very important. We sometimes have opportunities to have tutors come to the school to provide one-on-one support. What are the community employers and agencies saying as well? We ask for input there too.

Teacher Leslie McDonald comment: In the past, I would work from a text book, ensure I understand it, and guide the students through the text book, my background is language. Inquiry based learning—we got lots of PD in language on this. Last year was the first year that we used IBL in math. My job is as a facilitator to their learning. I don't have to know how to answer the problem, I just have to guide them. They all went a different way, but they all found their way. Following this strategy, kids were teaching themselves—they gained confidence. There is a lot of exciting PD going on right now.

Principal: One thing the Council invests money in each year is Mathletics. Advantages: not only done at school, but also at home. Teacher can design what they are doing based on reviewing the child's needs. This also reinforces what is going on in the classroom.

Parent question: Is the curriculum also reviewed and reassessed? Sometimes the curriculum seems to be skipping key learning.
Principal: Curriculum is constantly under revision even though we don't see the official published revisions constantly. Curriculum is very rigorous requiring time, attention, instruction.

Other Updates

Planned Renovations

Last week I met with our architect regarding the planned renovations for Spring 2014. The plans include an expansion of one of our grade one classes, more parking spots and some additional tarmac around the back. It does not involve the removal of the forest area, playground area etc. The anticipated start date is around the end of May 2014.

Parent: Grade 1 class extended out, we will have an odd shape out the front.
Principal: Planning department has looked at the community population, etc, and has determined that this addition will fulfill those needs. Looked at the forecast down the road, we are seeing declining numbers, not increases.

Safe Entry Plan

Safe entry planning for our school will also be timed during the construction of our addition. The installation of entry systems and cameras will occur and full implementation of this safety plan will be in place in September 2014. The school system will issue more details to parents later on this year.

Extra-curricular Opportunities

Last night the staff discussed extra-curricular opportunities including sport teams, clubs, intramurals to mention a few. A full list of these opportunities available for our students will be posted on our website, shortly. A copy can also be sent out to our parents via the School Council emails.

Next Month's Focus

- Next month's educational focus will be on Full Day Kindergarten and the before school/after school program possibilities. A system administrator will be present to make a presentation and be available to answer questions. Action item: ensure presentation time for this system administer.
- Safe Schools – Maintaining a school community of respect and kindness
    - School Survey Results
    - Anti-bullying awareness in November
    - Resources for parents

Teacher's Report – Leslie Donald, Grade 8

Just finished all of our assessments—to end of September, ensuring I know where every student in the class is with regard to learning. We assess and then decide how to move forward teaching from there. We know our kids, have the opportunity to talk to Kendra with Strong Start. Kendra does an amazing job by herself.

Extra-curricular:

- Twila had her kids on their autumn walk.
- Grade 1's had their Thanksgiving dinner with turkey today.
- Mrs. Fox has had her running club.
- Grade 7 and grade 8 leadership clubs.
- Grade 7's have the Student of the Month. Had a bake sale.
- Grade 8's just finished their food drive with a structured building contest.
- Leadership group, hopefully with some parent volunteers, will get the food to Woolwich as it must be delivered.
- At Christmas, we discussed going to a retirement home to sing Christmas carols, take cookies, bring cheer.
- We are also doing the Free the Children.
- 20 tickets to the We Day celebration. Open to the grade 8's so they have to go through an application process.

Other component to education that I want to stress: when I came here last year, there were very few document cameras, projectors, etc. and now, wow, thank you I want to say to council. To make that happen, that kind of learning, I'm seeing a huge change with the teachers with the Professional Development. Brian is bringing those experts into the school. We are getting websites. I'm realising that especially boys don't like to communicate between parents and teachers. The website helps me to communicate with parents. School has a website and teacher websites are linked to that.

Thank you for the iPads and training because they are making a big difference with kids.

Principal: All classrooms got new computers today. Old computers go back into the school system. The board trustees are very generous with the system allocation. Brand new iMacs—45 of them.

Lisa, our music teacher, needs to put together another recording for Oh Canada. A parent in the community who could do recording. Marg Minster.
Action Item: Barb to provide contact information.

No PD Day in November for parent interviews. Teachers are now making arrangements with parents to meet, perhaps in the evenings. Teachers are discussing what night that will be. I [Principal] will send out a letter communicating the change. Board's policy is simply that we as a teacher must communicate with parents. If we decide on a specific night,

it does not mean that all teachers need to do it. In past, the secretary did a lot of work to ensure that the schedules were convenient for parents with multiple children. Not so this year, for teachers and parents it will be more difficult.

Parent: Would be helpful if that information came out sooner rather than later so parents can add it to their schedules and plan for it.

NEW/OPEN DISCUSSION ITEMS

WRAPSC Meeting Summary – Barb Dowling

[see written report]

- Very good meeting.
- Best part with John Bryant, new Director of Education. Believes strongly in parent engagement.
- Testing: did talk math. They are in a conundrum regarding results.
- School debt of 4.5 million.
- We will get the official WRAPSC minutes.
- Aside: decisions about what goes up on the website versus not.

Teacher's Survey, Next Steps – Barb Dowling

[see written report]

Action item: Discussion of next steps differed to next meeting.

Define/Approve Council Mission Statement & Goals for 2013-14

[Council viewed and edited the document 2013-10-10_Vision-Mission-Goals_School Council_Conestogo PS.doc]

- Edits noted, document updated.
- Decision to add this document into the constitution.

Vote to approve this document and add it to the Council Constitution:

Motion to Approve: 1st Chris 2nd: Susan

Members in favour: 9

Orientation package for new members: suggestion to create an orientation package to hand out to new council members.

STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

Treasurer's Report, Budget Review – Jane Martin

[see written reports]

Discussion:	Decisions:	Action Items:
▪ Why so much money still in the bank as of last year? Fun Fair deposit. ▪ Balance of just under $13000. ▪ Adjust DrumFit goal? ▪ 21 teachers, $200 each. Adjust?	▪ Remove reference to book fair.	▪ Chair, Principal and Treasurer to review budget.

Budget Focus Discussion

- Principal: Anything to do with operating the school comes out of the school's $32000 budget. Some of the items on our budget can actually be covered by the school's budget. Typically, fundraising is not intended to go toward that operational piece. Where the extras are is for example if a division wants to purchase some larger ticket items that go beyond the operational budget. Eg if there is a huge curriculum set we want to purchase, can the Council help support. Teachers have an allotment for supplies and that is already in the budget.
- Parent: We as Council have always felt that there is a shortfall but perhaps that has not been the case. Principal: I don't look to Council funds for operational funds to run the school, that comes out of my budget. The extra things are the result of fundraising.
- Pads for the gym were over and above what the school budget was able to provide so these were an appropriate item for Council to fund.
- Sound system in the gym need to be addressed?
- Principal: Original vision of school council was to promote parent partnership and engagement. It has become fundraising-oriented but has sometimes lost its original intent.
- There is no policy that says that we cannot carry over money but it is discouraged to leave money unused.

Focus for Funds this Year

- Wider reach into the community this year? Tie into the leadership program.
- Ensure our fundraising supports our vision and mission statements.
- Action item: Brainstorm ways to facilitate community outreach through funding. Consider allocating DrumFit funds to reach a particular community outreach goal.

Process for Cashing School Cheques

Parent question: Cheques that are made out to the school are not cashed immediately, why?
Principal: Banking procedures have changed in the school—it is all handled centrally through the finance department at the Board office. The time for the secure courier to the Board office, issues with year-end in September this year, etc, delayed cashing of cheques. **Parents should expect that their cheques will be cleared within 2-3 weeks.**

Committees & Events – Status Reports

Magazine update – Chris Sabean

- Ends on Tuesday—order this weekend!
- Everything running smoothly.
- Handing out monkeys everyday and prizes for monkey spotting.
- Other prizes distributed as well.
- Bonus monkey day.
- 665 magazines. 536 online. Ahead of last year. Bonus prizes encouraged kids to push orders faster.
- Last year 1098 magazine sales. Still 500 to come.
- Currently profit of $6800.

Ongoing Committees and Events

The following chart has been updated to reflect decisions with regard to committees and events for 2013-14:

Highlights/Discussion	Decisions	Action Items

Communications Chair	Ongoing	School/Student/Family	Juli Chinnick, Jaime Bickerton
▪ Scope and vision for communications. Hard copy newsletter needs to flag the items that are sent electronically with a method for requesting and providing hard copies.		▪ Newly created committee.	
WRAPSC	Ongoing	School/Student/Family	Rotating Volunteers
Waterloo Region Assembly of Public School Councils: Purpose - to assist all School Councils of the Waterloo Region District School Board, herein after referred to as WRDSB, to further their support of student achievement. This is accomplished by providing a single voice for School Councils on matters of significant importance impacting all schools. In addition, the Assembly establishes a forum for the exchange of ideas, concerns and best practices for School Councils, and provides the Director of Education, staff and trustees with an effective means to share information and consult with School Councils on current issues and future plans.		▪ School Councils may be represented by their Chair or Co-Chair, or appoint any parent/guardian member of their School Council. ▪ All WRAPSC meetings take place at 7 p.m. at Forest Heights Collegiate Library. ▪ Schedule: the first Tuesday of October, November, January, February, April and May	Tentative meeting dates: ▪ October 1: Barb ▪ November 5: Fiona ▪ January 7: Flo ▪ February 4: ▪ April 1: ▪ May 6:
Constitution & Bylaws		Ongoing	School/Student/Family
▪ Owned by the Chair			No changes required.
Safety Committee	Ongoing	School/Student/Family	Natalie Edery
▪ Addresses physical safety issues like crossing guards, bussing, etc. ▪ Could encompass much more. ▪ Could amalgamate with the safe schools committee.		▪ Keep on the agenda list.	▪ Natalie: Draft a Safety Corner section for the next Conestogo Round-Up.
Mabel's Labels	Ongoing	Fundraising	Chris Sabean
▪ Ongoing. ▪ Little effort required. ▪ Communications plan to ensure we are not bombarding people.		▪ Continue.	
PitaPit	Ongoing	School/Student/Family	Susan Wagler, second volunteer required
▪ Tasks: Hand out forms to classes, get forms to PitaPit, distribute Pitas, troubleshoot issues. ▪ Mondays: 45 minutes lunch hour.		▪ Require more volunteers.	▪ Second Volunteer required to help at the school. Mondays – 45 minutes. ▪ Next PitaPit email: Send

▪			request to parents to write the PitaPit days into their child's planner.
School Family Directory	Oct. 25	School/Student/Family	Juli Chinnick
▪ In progress with Juli.		▪ Send electronically only. Parents may request a hard copy.	
Magazines	October	Fundraising	Chris Sabean, volunteer for next year
▪ The program is booked and process initiated in the spring. ▪ Receive packages at the beginning of the school year.		▪ Recruit a helper for next year. ▪ Will request volunteers to help with the ice cream party, etc.	
ProGrant – Voice Kits		Community	Marsha Ferguson
[discussion deferred to upcoming meeting]			
Staff Appreciation	Nov 22, Mar 28	School/Student/Family	Jen Sellars, second volunteer?
▪ Fri Nov 22 – lunch ▪ Fri Mar 28 - treats			
Valentine's Dance	Feb 14-2013 ?	Community	Vanessa Harrow
▪ [discussion deferred to upcoming meeting]			
Gardens	Spring	Community	Juli Chinnick
[discussion deferred to upcoming meeting]		▪	
FunFair	COMPLETE Sept 12	School/Student/Family	
			▪ Principal: review storage space options.
Community Social Event	? April	School/Student/Family	Marsha Ferguson
▪ Last year: games night. ▪ Choose new event. TBA ▪ Skating night.			▪ Choose new event.
TBA Social/Fundraiser	Spring	Social/Fundraiser	TBD
[discussion deferred to upcoming meeting]		▪	
Dance-a-thon - DrumFit	Thursday, March	Fundraiser	Natalie Edery

	7, 2013		
▪ Continue with DrumFit. ▪ Need a second volunteer. Someone who is available during the day.		▪ Second volunteer required.	▪ Communicate call for volunteers available day of DrumFit.
Greenhouse	TBD	Fundraiser/Community	TBD
▪ [discussion deferred to upcoming meeting]		▪	

9:00PM: ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by: 1st: Jaime 2nd: Natalie