Conestogo Public School Council Minutes: Thursday, February 6, 2014

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- **DrumFit**: Monday, March 3, 2014
- **Staff Appreciation - treats**: Friday, March 28, 2014
- **Council Annual General Meeting**: Thursday, September 11, 2014
- **FunFair**: Thursday, September 18, 2014

ACTION ITEM SUMMARY

WRAPSC Meetings:
Next Meeting: April 1 Flo
May 6 meeting: Fiona

Snacks – next meeting:
Heather

Hockey Helmet Policy – skating trips:

- Discuss long-range plan to help parents prepare to provide CSA-approved helmets.
- Next year, ensure we advertise that we have skates available for kids who do not have their own.

DrumFit – Mon March 3, 2014:

- Review photo used on take-home sheet to ensure that there are no privacy issues. – Natalie
- Ensure letter gets sent out post-Family Day weekend, Tuesday, Feb 18 – Natalie and Principal
- Add post onto school website advertising the event – Secretary

Spring Social Dinner – Wed June 4, 2014:

- Send home a letter to parents with date, options, ask for a rough estimate of how many attending and menu items interested in. - Marsha

FunFair – Thu Sept 18, 2014:

Event committees:

- Book events (and managing the day of and paying the suppliers)
  Jane
- Prize donations (collecting, storing, tagging – auction or ticket, handing out)
  Barb & Deb
- Food/ticket (arrange the food and be their contact; collect & organize food and raffle ticket orders)
  UNASSIGNED – VOLUNTEER NEEDED
- Volunteers day of event (usually made up of: parents, teachers and former students who were grade 8's the year before)
  UNASSIGNED – VOLUNTEER NEEDED
- Advertising & Decorating (all posters - general and event - and event-day decorating)
  Susan
- Set-up – general (where events are – what is needed at each and prize tables arranged)
  Tim & Brian
- Clean-up: post-event end of evening.
  Marsha
- Thank you's (prize donors and any others)
  Juli? Secretary to email Juli asking willingness.

- First council meeting/Annual General Meeting – the Thursday before the FunFair – Thursday, September 11, 2014
- Send out call for volunteers with Minutes package – Secretary

New Activity Suggestions:

- Martial Arts demonstrations: contact local academy (Deb)
- Art exhibit? Some big mural? contact Mr. Fox (unassigned)
- Robin in the Hood: investigate participation (Jane)
- Chalk drawing on concrete.
- Cake walk? (ensure that they are nut free)
- School band?

Homework and Learning Strategies:

- Organise a presentation to discuss learning strategies outside of a council meeting where we can welcome all parents. – Principal to review options and possible timing

Council Processes:

- Upload Parent and Council email lists – Deb, Juli and Karen
- Note on website that paper docs available in library – Deb
- Post events on school calendar, in conjunction with Principal – Deb

Communications Discussion:

- Next meeting's agenda—follow up on the parent and teacher surveys and create action items around them - Chairs
- Staff communication: Investigate best ways to communicate with staff. Does the staff get a copy of our minutes after our council meetings?
- Monthly Council Presentation – Staff meetings: follow-up on providing a council report at monthly staff meetings. – Deb

Healthy Eating Program:
Needs assessment – Principal
No set dates.

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	Carolee Fox	none	Kendra Platt	Shannon Brown				
Parent Members (10)	Chris Sabean	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	×				
	Karen Hofbauer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	Marsha Ferguson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	Natalie Edery	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	✓				
	Susan Wagler	✓	✓	✓	×	×	✓				
	Tim Alles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Parent Volunteers	Celeste Alles	×	×	×	×	✓	×				
	Aimee Leveck	×	✓	×	×	×	×				
	Carolyn Rouse	✓	×	×	×	×	×				
	Fiona von Kannen	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓				
	Florence Bray	✓	×	×	×	✓	×				
	Jaime Bickerton	✓	✓	×	×	×	×				
	Jen Sellars	×	×	×	×	×	×				
	Juli Chinnick	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	×				
	Lori McCrae	×	×	×	×	×	×				
	Melanie Thompson	×	×	×	×	×	×				

	Monica Beal	×	×	×	×	×	×				
	Sandra Clark	×	✓	×	×	×	✓				
	Vanessa Harrow	✓	×	×	×	×	×				
	Rebecca Hallman		✓	×	×	✓	×				
	Shannon McTaggart		✓	×	×	×	×				
	Laura Martin						✓				
Snacks		Juli	Susan	Karen	Natalie	Marsha	Jane	Heath.	Deb	Barb	Brian

Agenda – Review & Approval

Adjustments to Agenda:

- none

Minutes, Dec 12 – Review & Approval

Adjustments to Minutes:

- none

Minutes Approval Motioned by:

1st: Natalie

2nd: Tim

PRESENTATIONS

Reading of the Mission Statement – Barb Dowling

[Barb read the mission/values/objectives –available on the School Website]

[Juli incorporated our mission/values/objectives into the Bylaws.]

Principal's Report – Brian Beney

Information Package for Parents - February 10

- Information letter with web links to report card, homework and curriculum; report card; before and after school program information; School-Day card and teacher letter will be sent home on Monday, February 10th. Please take time to review this important information.

Hockey Helmet Policy

- All parents should have been notified of the school board's updated policy re. mandatory usage of CSA-approved hockey helmets for skating activities. With the exception of one grade 8 class, we have been able to continue to offer this opportunity. Thanks to our parent community who have sent in extra helmets for students who do not have them. Further discussion and communication with our parents will occur as we evaluate our options for next year.
- Action Item: Discuss long-range plan to help parents prepare to provide CSA-approved helmets.
- Parent suggestion: Offer a helmet exchange at end of season? Email blast encouraging parents to pass on helmets to other families.

- Parent comment: There actually have been donations in the past of skates. Parents have asked where they are. Teacher reply: They are in the storage room in the school. It would be good to know more in advance if a student does not have skates.
- Action item: Next year, ensure we advertise that we have skates available for kids who do not have their own.

Full-Day Kindergarten Registration

- Opportunities to register for our new FDK program next year will occur during the week of February 10 - 14th. If parents are not able to book an appointment during the school day, evening and weekend locations are also available. Please visit www.wrdsb.ca for more details.

Before-and-After-School Program Registration

- Registration opens on February 10 to these new program opportunities at Conestogo for September. School-based childcare programs offer access to high quality programs in a convenient location, with no waiting lists. Programs are offered from 7:00 am - 6:00 p.m. Monday to Friday, PD Days, and at a reduced number of sites during March Break and the non-statutory week at Christmas.
- Please visit www.wrdsb.ca/beforeafter for online registration and more information.

Bus Cancellation Days

- Typically we have about 20% of our students attend school when the buses are cancelled. Classes are combined and usually with a different teacher. Although new material will generally not be introduced, this is a great opportunity for review, remediation and reinforcement activities based upon what is currently being taught. Additional P.E. activities are sometimes planned as well. Non-curricular related activities such as the showing of full-length movies is discouraged as it does not make good use of the time for our students. Please speak with your son/daughter's teacher(s) for more details re. bus cancellation days.
- Parent comment: can we communicate this information to parents? I was under the impression from my kids that they were only watching movies so I kept them home but I would prefer to send them.
  Principal: In the past, movies were shown but we are discouraging them now.

Bullying Awareness Voice kits for parents

[green kits provided, participants opened and explored them]

- I am distributing a number of the kits for you to take a look at tonight. You are welcome to sign one out for a few days if you'd like. Our Safe schools team will be deploying these to each classroom by the end of the month. We trust it will be one more practical resource for our parents and students to address any bullying behaviour in our school and community.
- Thank you to Marsha for getting the ball rolling on this resource. We are very lucky to have these.

Questions or Comments?

Teacher's Report – Shannon Brown

- I have worked for the board for 19 years and 11 of those years at Conestogo School.

Homework expectations

- February 10th – document coming out developed by the school board. Explains the purpose of homework and guidelines.
- Homework should be purposeful and meaningful.
- There are no set expectations for homework but the expectation is that as they get older, they will get more homework.

- Parent comment: My son is in grade 8 and gets no homework. How will he adjust to grade 9 with 2 hours of homework expected a night?
- Parent comment: my son's experience is that classroom time is given for homework that was not completed at home or completed in a timely fashion. At highshool, periods are so much longer than here, there is more opportunity to get work done in class. They will be prepared going into highschool.
- Parent comment: I'm concerned about the time-management aspect. Why do some schools give homework and ours doesn't?
  Principal: That is a broad statement. Some teachers do give homework and some do not. If you want your child to have homework, I will challenge teachers as to what activities they can do but I also challenge the students to discover for themselves "what can I do now to take this learning to extend what I am doing in the classroom?" Encouraging them to learn how to go deeper—books, websites, etc.
  Parent: Teacher replied he does not have time to mark extra homework.
  Principal: Student can do more on their own with websites, etc. There is a new concept called a flip classroom. I would like to explore this. Teachers send home a teaching component like it would have been presented in class but it is presented online and completed at home. The student learns the content and the concept at home and then they expand what they were taught in the presentation in the classroom. Instead of getting the teaching in the class and having to figure it out at home, the presentation lesson is at home and when they come back, we put it into practice as a class. I am interested in pursuing this.
  I will challenge anyone that part of the motivation at some point cannot be external—I have an interest and desire, what can I do to learn more on that? Giving homework for homework's sake…there are some benefits to that but I don't think the benefits are really there to support learning. I hear that parents are frustrated because they don't know what to do with the problem because they were not there for the presentation.
- Action item: Organise a presentation to discuss learning strategies outside of a council meeting where we can welcome all parents. – Principal to review options and possible timing.
  Chair: Could we do it this year or are we looking at early next year?
  Principal: Uncertain, I need to review priorities.
- Teacher: when I send home homework, it is nothing new. Part of primary homework in primary is home reading program. That is so essential to learning.
- Parent comment: My daughter in grade 3 does not get much homework but we work on things ourselves because we know they are coming.
- Principal: For primary, we really encourage the Mathletics piece. That is a way to reinforce what is being done in the classroom. That is something we will definitely continue to support.
- Parent comment: That is a good idea if we can dedicate an entire meeting to that subject. I'm always trying to figure out what's our role? There are topics that come home and we sometimes don't know what to do with them.
  Teacher: Ensure you go back to his teacher for clarification.
- Parent question: Do all classrooms have textbooks? I remember in the past we did not have enough textbooks. Why is there not a textbook going home?
  Principal: We typically do not like the textbooks going home; we don't want them go to missing.
  Parent: But it helps to have the book to look at.
- Parent comment: It is not fair if half the class is finished—they have done their job—but the other half has not.
  Principal: I am in the classes a lot and I have not seen that happen here now. I don't know what happened in the past but now I am not seeing this.
  Parent comment: perhaps a more useful discussion is if homework has changed, why and what research supports it?
- Parent comment: Everyone has such a different experience—all kids are different.
- Principal: How we can create the balance but give opportunities. With families with other resources online, etc, benefits interests.
- Teacher: It has to be something they can do independently.

- Parent: It is more than homework, it is about communication and the summary of projects that they did and the feedback, self-evaluations, etc, that is new and we talked about it last meeting—I love that feedback. The more of that I see, the better.
- Grade 3 class examples: what we are doing in my grade 3 class. Students study forces and then create a toy at home with parent help. [example toys shown – boat, car, magnetic bowling game]

Olympic Days at CPS – Friday, February 14th

- School-wide event: Next Thursday we will start Olympic team events here. Students will be divided into 13 different groups, mixed ages and grades. We will make flags and a cheer for our teams. Friday the 14th will be a play Olympic day—dress for lots of time playing outside.

STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

Treasurer's Report – Jane Martin

[see written reports]

Discussion:

- It was a pretty quiet month—only 2 withdrawals.
- Balance just over $10,000.
- New budget spreadsheet for review: trying to estimate a percentage complete for line items to help us understand if we are on track. Percent complete (sometimes a best guess). Projected column takes budget percentage. If it is 100% complete, it will show the actual final number. [Thank you to Karen for implementing this new format!]
- Balance row at bottom shows us if we are on track to have the $5000 left in the bank at the end of the year.
- We decided not to do the DrumFit as a fundraiser, so that is closed off as 0.

Decisions:

- Adopt this new spreadsheet format going forward.

Committees & Events – Status Reports

DrumFit, Mon March 3, 2014 – Natalie Edery

Date: Monday, March 3, 2014

- [viewed video from last year]
- Drumfit instructor will spend the whole day and run through 6 periods. On this date, we can line up with the health classes.
- We hope to get some parents out to cheer the kids on.
- Cost is $950 - $1073 total, we will put a variance on the budget.
- [viewed letter created to send out to families]
  Secretary: Can we communicate on the letter that this event is sponsored by Parent Council to encourage healthy living?
  Natalie: Yes, we can add that. When will we send this letter home?
  Principal: We have so much stuff going out next week. After the family day weekend we can send it out.
- Communicate that we are doing this in support of healthy living/lifestyle.
- Action item: review photo used on take-home sheet to ensure that there are no privacy issues. – Natalie
- Action item: Ensure letter gets sent out post-Family Day weekend – Natalie and Principal

- Action item: Add post onto school website advertising the event – Secretary

Spring Social Dinner Event, Wed June 4, 2014 – Marsha Ferguson

Date: June 4, 2014

- Phoned township: We already have the permit – we have the sports pad, picnic ground and picnic shelter.
- Schmuck truck is going to be there from 4:30pm – 7:00pm.
- People can bring stuff, like balls, discourage hockey sticks but encourage basketballs, etc.
- Closer to the date, we need to send something home to the parents advertising what food is being served and what they might want so that the food provider will have an idea of numbers.
- The baseball diamond is not reserved. Anyone playing baseball there can enjoy the food as well.
- It will be a smaller menu than the big one—there won't be as many options.
- School gets a 10% kickback on food sales.
- Teachers do not need to serve but they are very welcome to come. We will encourage teachers and staff to come, if they can.
- Most kids should be coming with their parents. The note should specify that parents must stay to supervise their kids.
- There will be port-a-potties.
- We can advertise on the school website.
- Action item: send home a letter to parents with date, options, ask for a rough estimate of how many attending and menu items interested in.
- Action item: post events on school calendar, in conjunction with Principal – Secretary

Council Processes Update – Deb Jones

- Google Account: Karen has created a Google Drive account with Gmail Council.CPS@gmail.com (thank you, Karen!).
- Council documents: Deb has uploaded all of her monthly meeting working documents.
- Process documentation: Deb has started to document the monthly process for meeting preparation and recording.
- Action item: Upload Parent and Council email lists – Deb, Juli and Karen
- Action item: note on website that paper docs available in library – Deb

FunFair – Barb Dowling

Main goal

To bring the community together and welcome us all back into the school community after the summer. This event is not a fundraiser; it happens to raise money—it is a Funraiser!

Organization

- Instead of having a separate fun fair committee that goes off to do the event, we run the event from within Council because it is too big to run separately.
- We cannot work so far ahead that nothing at the event is last-minute but we hope to accomplish a lot more ahead of time.

Date

1. We need to set the date.

- Options: there is a crunch when we return in September. Is it better to move the event?

- Moving later in the fall, we have weather issues.
- It has been done at the beginning of the year to bring the school family back together—to reunite us coming back into school.
- On the teacher survey, the teachers communicated that they loved the fun fair on meet the teacher night. It works so well.
- So, does the teacher opinion trump everything else—even though the date is not convenient for us?
- Parent: More people come out because they come to meet the teacher and do this at the same time.
- How much flexibility do we have with meet the teacher night?
  Principal: Keep in mind that school starts back early. Sept 2 – We have almost gained a week. We also have construction finishing. If we could move it out a week, that would be better.
- **Decision**: Thursday, September 18th, 2014 – Fun Fair night.

Events:

- Last year, the group reviewed how many tickets were sold for each event so we can review those.
- Video game truck: Not popular, it has to go.
- Face painting: We lose money on it but it is hugely popular. Encourage the face painters to paint only half a face, move more kids through, faster.
- Horse rides: Keep.
- Principal: liability issues will not allow us to use a dunk tank.
- Martial Arts demonstrations: action item – contact local academy (Deb)
- Chalk drawing on concrete.
- Art exhibit? Some big mural? action item – contact Mr. Fox (unassigned)
- Cake walk? (ensure that they are nut free)
- School band?
- Robin in the Hood: action item – investigate participation (Jane)
- Parent: ensure that we have activities that can move inside if it rains.
- Prizes, donations: We have a donation request letter. If people can each individually get a few donations/prizes each, we will have lots. The more people can bring in, the better—we need a large group of people collecting.

Event committees

To be made up of council members, active and new parent volunteers; require everyone on board:

- Book events (and managing the day of and paying the suppliers)
  Jane
- Prize donations (collecting, storing, tagging – auction or ticket, handing out)
  Barb & Deb
- Food/ticket (arrange the food and be their contact; collect & organize food and raffle ticket orders)
  UNASSIGNED
- Volunteers day of event (usually made up of: parents, teachers and former students who were grade 8's the year before)
  UNASSIGNED
- Advertising & Decorating (all posters - general and event - and event-day decorating)
  Susan

- Set-up – general (where events are – what is needed at each and prize tables arranged)
  Tim & Brian
- Clean-up: post-event end of evening.
  Marsha
- Thank you's (prize donors and any others)
  Juli? Action item: Secretary to email Juli asking willingness.
- Action item: First council meeting – annual general meeting – the Thursday before the FunFair – Thursday, September 11, 2014.
- Action Item: Secretary to send out call for volunteers with Minutes package.

WRAPSC Meetings Update

Call for volunteers for upcoming meetings:

- April 1: Flo
- May 6: Fiona volunteered to attend.

Communications Discussion

- Our original goal was communications: how do we get back inline with that?
- Action item: next meeting's agenda—follow up on the parent and teacher surveys and create action items around them.
- Staff communication: Does the staff get a copy of our minutes after our council meetings?
- Action item: investigate best ways to communicate with staff.
- Can we attend the staff meeting and complete a short presentation? Ask staff what we can do for you? We get a teacher report at the beginning of our meetings, could we provide a council report at staff meetings?
  Principal: Yes, that is possible.
- Action item: follow-up on providing a council report at monthly staff meetings. - Deb

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by: 1st: Susan

Addendum: List of 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
▪ 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: Cancelled ▪ February 4: did not attend ▪ April 1: Flo ▪ May 6: Fiona
Constitution & Bylaws		Ongoing	School/Student/Family
▪ Owned by the Chair			▪ Update bylaws with new mission – Complete ▪ Updated bylaws: PDF and upload to website, store doc in Google Drive - Secretary
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.	
Mabel's Labels	Ongoing	Fundraising	Chris Sabean
▪ Ongoing. ▪ Little effort required. ▪ Communications plan to ensure we are not		▪ Continue.	

bombarding people.			
PitaPit	Ongoing	School/Student/Family	Susan Wagler, Juli Chinnick
			PitaPit emails: Suggest parents to write the PitaPit days into their child's planner.
School Family Directory	Oct. 25	School/Student/Family	Juli Chinnick
▪ Complete.		▪ 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.	
ProGrant – Voice Kits		Community	Marsha Ferguson
[discussion deferred to upcoming meeting]			
Staff Appreciation	Nov 22, Mar 28	School/Student/Family	Jen Sellars
▪ Fri Nov 22 – lunch – Complete. ▪ Fri Mar 28 - treats			
Gardens	Spring	Community	Juli Chinnick
[discussion deferred to upcoming meeting]		▪	
Fun Fair	Date TBD	School/Student/Family	
▪ February meeting – begin planning. ▪ March meeting – dedicated to Fun Fair planning. ▪ This is a council event, requiring full participation.			
Community Social Event	Wed, June 4, 2014	School/Student/Family	Marsha Ferguson
▪ Location: Conestogo Park. ▪ Family picnic with food vendor truck. ▪ This event replaces McDonald's Night.			
DrumFit	Mon, Mar 3, 2014	Healthy Lifestyle Event	Natalie Edery
▪ Continue with DrumFit. ▪ Proceed as a Healthy Lifestyle Event, not a		▪ Second volunteer required.	

fundraiser. ▪ Need a second volunteer. Someone who is available during the day.			
Greenhouse	TBD	Fundraiser/Community	TBD
▪ [discussion deferred to upcoming meeting]		▪	