Conestogo Public School Council Minutes: Thursday, February 12, 2015

Upcoming events ***2***
Action Item Summary ***2***
Welcome & General Business ***4***
Attendance 4
Agenda – Review & Approval 5
Minutes, Jan 8 – Review & Approval 5
Presentations ***5***
Principal's Report – Brian Beney 5
Teacher's Report – Kim Howey 5
Standing Agenda Items ***6***
Treasurer's Report – Karen Hofbauer 6
WRAPSC Reports – Fiona 6
Committees & Events – Status Reports ***8***
Kung-Fu Fitness Day – Follow-up – Agnes 8
"Conestogo Counts" Math Night – Natalie & Jane 9
New Business ***10***
GRA Grant: Greenspace Revitalization 10
Open Discussion Items ***10***
Totts to Teens Talk – Brian 10
Block Parent Program Presentation – Marsha 11
Sports Team Equipment – Susan 11
Mad Science Program – Rebecca 11
S'Cool Life Fund Grant – Deb 11
Pizza Alternatives – Council 11
Parent Survey – Deb 12
Adjournment ***12***

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Next Council Meetings:**
    - Thu Mar 12, 2015 – Block Parent presentation, 15min, Tara Mondou
    - Snacks: ?
- **WRAPSC Meetings**:
    - Apr 7
    - May 5
- **Mad Science**: Friday, March 13, 2015, 9:00am – 12:00pm, 2 assemblies.
- **Staff Appreciation Treats:** Friday Mar 27, 2015
- **Math Event**: Monday, April 20, 2015, presentation 6:30pm – 8:00pm
- **Teacher Survey**: February 2015

ACTION ITEM SUMMARY

Student Voice Initiative:

- February 28th deadline - Email with information regarding this program to Grade 7/8 teachers. – Co-Chairs http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/students/speakup/index.html?utm_source=shortlinks&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=bihi

WRAPSC Feb Meeting - Breakout Groups Information Gathered:

- Post on school website with summary. – Brian, Fiona, Deb http://www.wrdsb.ca/our-schools/get-involved/wrapsc/

WRAPSC Meeting Math Info:

- Pass minutes from the meeting to the Math Sub-committee - Fiona

Fitness Day invoice from WKFA:

- Forward Invoice to Karen. - Deb

ProGrant – "Conestogo Counts" Math Event

Date: Mon April 20, 2015

- **Announcements**: Announce the event and launch registration using School Day (mid Feb) - Brian
- **Teacher Awareness**: Principal – the teachers have been made aware of the event and are excited about it. Some of them use Marion's books.
  Discuss event with teachers, see who would like to take part, perhaps providing an overview of the CPS math program prior to Marian's presentation, or working with the Grade 7 and 8s in organizing the student sessions - Brian
- **Gym Capacity**: 350 people.
- **Capacity of kids**: 3 different groups. Will require separate registration groups.
- **Classrooms**: We can use the classrooms to hold separate groups.
- **Parking Capacity**: need to review - Brian
- **Community Marketing**: Market the presentation to the community after CPS registration completed (March) - Barb

- **Math Stations**: Work with Grade 7 and 8s about facilitating math stations for the remaining grades (Feb to April).
  Grade 7-8s will be involved in the UofW math program. - Barb, Jane, anyone else interested?
- **Chess Club**: Contact Chess Club in Breslau for a facilitator during event, as well as getting costs and schedule for a regular chess coaching club (Feb)
  Chess Club is run out of City Hall. The club has huge chess pieces, individual boards, and coaches. Can conscript coaches to come in. - Jenny
- **Family Math Program**: Review the Family Math Program (formerly Esso math program) for K to Grade 2 students and find ECEs from the Y or others to facilitate student sessions (Feb)
  Jen reached out to the Early Years Centre and the representative there is very enthusiastic. - Jenny, Katherine, Marsha
- **Caribou Math Quizzes**: Learn more about Caribou Math quizzes and holding a Challenge session during the event for grades 4 and up (March) - Natalie
- **Intermediate Kids**: Need to ensure that we have activities to engage this age group.
- **Chair Rentals**: Look into chair rental for the Apr 20 event, can Chris Bauer or council volunteers recommend where we have rented chairs from before? (reserve Feb) - volunteer needed
- **Registration Timelines**: Until end of March – registrations within our school community. Afterward, open to general community in the first week of April. Focus on encouraging parents from the public more than kids, since capacity in the student groups is limited.
- **Video Recording**: Do we want to record Marion's presentation?
- **Door prizes**: Ballots to win a math-related game or book?
- **Set Group Limit Expectations**: In advertising, we need to clarify that group numbers are limited so register now.
- **Updates to Committee**: get an update to Natalie yet this week – Jenny

Magazine Fundraiser:

- Spring Action Item: Highlight again in June with a reminder to people to renew through QSP. – Chris, Deb, Brian

GRA Grant:

- Proceed with sourcing options and applying for the grant. Agnes, Karen, Jenny

Talk "From Totts to Teens"

- Talk delayed to end of March at earliest due to demand.
- Public Health Nurse Talk: Post informational links on website. – Brian, Deb

Sports Equipment Replacements

- Delay proceeding until later in the year.

Pizza Discussion

- Create a post with a link to the Ministry Healthy Eating criteria, explaining the mandate. – Brian, Deb

Mad Science Program

- **Date:** Friday, March 13, 2015
  9:00am – 12:00pm
  2 assemblies

Parent Survey

- Send out to council to complete and provide feedback. Review results in Excel file and adjust. – Deb

WELCOME & GENERAL BUSINESS

Attendance

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

Role	2014-15	Sep 11	Oct 9	Nov 13	Dec 11	Jan 8	Feb 12	Mar 12	Apr 9	May 14	Jun 11
Co-Chair	**Jenny Benham**	P	N	P	P	P	P				
Co-Chair	**Rebecca Hallman**	P	N	P	P	P	P				
Secretary	**Deb Jones**	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Treasurer	**Karen Hofbauer**	P	P	P	N	P	P				
Principal	Brian Beney	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Teacher		Karen Larke			Lisa Carere		Kim Howey				
Parent Members (12)	**Barb Dowling**	P	P	P	N	P	N				
	Marsha Ferguson	P	P	P	P	P	N				
	Jane Martin	P	P	N	P	P	N				
	Chris Sabean	P	P	P	P	P	P				
	Katherine Sunday	P	N	N	N	P	P				
	Susan Wagler	P	P	P	N	P	P				
	Fiona von Kannen	N	N	P	P	P	P				
	Agnes Lehtonen	N	N	N	P	P	P				
Parent Volunteers	Natalie Edery	P	N	P	N	P	N				
	Tim Alles	P	N	N	N	N	N				
	Juli Chinnick	P	N	N	N	N	N				
	Carolyn Rouse	N	P	N	P	P	N				
	Stephanie Forte	N	N	N	N	P	N				
Snacks		Jane		Fiona	Marsha		Chris				

Agenda – Review & Approval

Adjustments to Agenda:

- Playground greening grant discussion

Agenda Approval (with revision noted) Motioned by:

1st: Susan

2nd: Katherine

Minutes, Jan 8 – Review & Approval

Adjustments to Minutes:

- none

Minutes Approval Motioned by:

1st: Agnes

2nd: Karen

PRESENTATIONS

Principal's Report – Brian Beney

Welcome to Term Two

- New learning, challenges and celebrations as your children enter the second half of the school year.
- Reports go home Feb. 20.

Parent Partnership and Engagement at Conestogo

- Parents are actively involved in the life of the school and engaged in the learning process with their children outside of the school.
- "Student learning is most influenced by the nature of parents' engagement with their children at home" Strong Districts, K. Leithwood (2013).
- One success story when parents-schools-community works together: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-JMWf0eAAdA

Keeping Current and Staying Informed

- *SchoolDay* continues to serve the needs of over 95% of our school families.
- Website (both the WRDSB and School).
- Request for email communication (see link on our school website's footer http://con.wrdsb.ca/).

Thanks for your support in helping make Conestogo one of the best schools in our Region!

- Parent question: Can teachers still use School-Day to send out information.
  Principal: Yes. All field trips must go through School-Day. Some teachers have websites. Some use School-Day. Some depend on planners.

Teacher's Report – Kim Howey

- **Teaching History**: Started in Cambridge. Moved to West Waterloo at Abraham Erb, where I taught Grade 5 and 6 and Special Ed—was there for a number of years.
- Excited to get the Grade 7-8 position here—wanted to teach that grade level for many years.

- Students were very forthcoming with information when I arrived. From conversations in first two weeks came the initiation of 2 leadership groups:

  Grade 8 – "Colts4Change" leadership group:

  - Large group, almost entire Grade 8 class.
  - Focus this year on fundraisers and feel-good initiatives.
  - World Cancer Day was very successful; raised over $1000 for the Hospice.
  - They are excited for their next events: Pink Shirt Day on February 25th, and a Dance-a-thon March 12th.

  Grade 7 – "Spirit Squad" group:

  - The Spirit Squad hopes to plan one spirit day per month from now until June.
  - The grade 7 group is also huge (25 our of 30 students joined).
  - They are planning several spirit days.
  - In celebration of the success of "Jeans for Teens", they will be hosting their first Spirit Day tomorrow (Feb 13).

Classroom:

- In terms of for our grade 7/8 curriculum, we spend a lot of time talking about community, national and international issues, specifically the various points of view of the stakeholders involved. This was introduced through a Persuasion 101 unit.
- We will move into literature circles using rich novels with the themes of civil rights (grade 7) and global issues (grade 8). We will spend time comparing realistic fiction and historical fiction text, doing some character analysis and identifying features of a narrative.
- Poetry and free writing is also on the agenda as will be reading for meaning through theme versus main idea.
- We are lucky to have a chrome book for each student, which we use daily. Students have been exploring a new-to-them Google app called Read and Write.

STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

Treasurer's Report – Karen Hofbauer

[see written reports]

- 20 Chairs for Room 2: Our intermediate numbers increased proportionally so we needed more intermediate chairs. Under Principal's allocable.
- Magazine Fundraiser – bi-annual loyalty bonus: $1500.
- Magazines: Spring Action Item: Highlight again in June with a reminder to people to renew through QSP. – Chris, Deb, Brian
- Technology expenditure: Chromebooks.
- Anticipating $8500 in bank at the end of the year.
- Rule of thumb not to carry over a large balance at end of year.

WRAPSC Reports – Fiona

January 13th WRAPSC Meeting Summary

- WRAPSC is working on a **School Council Handbook** for the fall – best practices.

- WRAPSC has a **Facebook** page.
- Starting a new **Google Docs** initiative where they will have a public Google Doc area, which will have a link to their Facebook page.
- February 28th deadline for SAC – **Student Voice** – individual student who would apply to be part of a group of selected students to provide feedback on education and they have a meeting with the Minister of Education. Is this something we wanted to make our current grade 7 and 8 students aware of if they are not already.
  Action Item: Email with information regarding this program to Grade 7/8 teachers. – Co-Chairs
- April 18th – **PIC parent event** – Building Skills to Navigate the School Years – flyer for council – supply will be sent to all schools to send home with students – registration is open now. Free childcare is provided. (see attached flyer).
- **Safe Caring & Inclusive Schools** – team event – March 11th from 7-9 and SCIS electronic forum for sharing information and ideas still in the works.
- The majority of the January WRAPSC meeting was spent in **breakout groups discussing various topics around communication** – there is a detailed account of this brainstorming/information gathering in the WRAPSC minutes (link provided below). To improve communication between home and school – they had 30 schools represented at the meeting and 22 guests. Topics discussed were:

    1. How can parents make the most of the interview time with the teacher at the beginning of the year? How can telephone interviews be more productive?
    2. What are some strategies that teachers and newcomer Canadians can use to overcome language and cultural barriers in their communication with each other?
    3. How can parents be better informed about curriculum and what is going on in the classroom so they can help their children at home?
    4. There are special challenges staying connected at the secondary level when a student has multiple teachers. How can parents & teachers better manage communication within such a setting?
    5. How do teachers determine when and how to approach parents with concerns? What route should parents take if they have concerns about something happening in the classroom, at school or on a field trip?
    6. How can technology be better leveraged to help teachers and parents stay connected, especially given the restrictions of CASL?
    7. Report cards can be difficult for parents to understand. What are the key things parents should look for in report cards? What are the key things parents want to know? How do teachers make use of the EQAO data and what use can parents make of their child's EQAO data?
    8. Transition between Grade 6-7 and 8-9 can be difficult and confusing for students and parents. What information do parents need to help ease transition? How can schools and teachers help with that?

The minutes from the WRAPSC meeting are available in the link below along with further detail on the information gathered during the breakout session:
http://www.wrdsb.ca/our-schools/get-involved/wrapsc/

- **Breakout Groups Information Gathered**: How can we distribute this information? Provide a link to the document on the WRAPSC site. Different parents will focus on different information at different stages.
  Motion: Post the information on our website with link to the document. 1st Karen, 2nd Agnes.
  Decision: **Action Item**: Proceed with posting on school website with summary. – Brian, Fiona, Deb

February 3rd WRAPSC Meeting Summary

- The entire evening was devoted to the topic of Math.
- Guest Speaker – Dr. Donna Kostopoulos from Laurier spoke.

- Top 10 ways to support your child with mathematics:

    10. Learn where to look for help.
    9. Find the mathematics in every day routines.
    8. Play more games and puzzles.
    7. Partner with your child's teacher. Teachers, partner with the parents.
    6. Get involved with the homework – even if you think you can't do it (parent engagement is very influential).
    5. There is more than one way (no wrong way to do it).
    4. Talk numbers. Talk spatially. (Everyday talk influences achievement.)
    3. No bad talk (don't say you hate math or you can't do math!).
    2. Believe in yourself (less than 7% of people have a mathematical disability).
    1. Believe in your child.

- More information is available on her websites.
    - www.wlu.ca/education/dkotsopolous
    - www.wlu.ca/mathbrains
- Also at the meeting, we heard from Ed Enns from the School Board on tools and techniques to help your kids at home.

Additional resources were provided:

- WRAPSC Math Night Tips for Parents/Guardians, which included tips for supporting your child, Ontario Ministry of Education Resources, Other Sources on the Internet.
- Homework Help – Free Math Tutoring for Grades 7 to 10

- **Action Item**: Pass along minutes from the meeting to the Math Sub-committee - Fiona

COMMITTEES & EVENTS – STATUS REPORTS

Kung-Fu Fitness Day – Follow-up – Agnes

- **Venue**: Waterloo Kung-Fu Academy. Split up groups into poses for the 5 traditional Kung-Fu animals (tiger, leopard, snake, crane, dragon).
- **Took Place**: Wednesday, February 11, 2015

Report:

- Wonderful day. It was really fun.
- It worked well for all age groups.
- Sifu Dave is so experienced with each age group that he engaged all kids. He showed kids the proper exercises.
- It was neat for the kids to have different instruction.
- It was a success.
- Feedback from Teachers: Positive.
- Had a couple of families who chose to opt out for personal reasons but not many.
- **Action Item**: Forward Invoice to Karen. - Deb

"Conestogo Counts" Math Night – Natalie & Jane

Details:

- "Conestogo Counts"
- Confirmed date: Monday, April 20, 2015
- Speaker: Marian Small – available April 20th
  http://www.onetwoinfinity.ca/

Update from Natalie:

So far, we have in place for the CPS Counts event:

- Marian is officially booked for April 20th, confirmed for 6:30 - 8:00pm.
- I have confirmed the U of W CMEC Workshop for Grade 7 and 8:
  Hosted by Michael Miniou from 6:30 – 8:00pm.
- Barb's marketing piece is done.
  Action Item: Review the marketing document to ensure it is accurate. – Math Committee

Follow-up Items for CPS Counts Event:

- **Announcements**: Announce the event and launch registration using School Day (mid Feb) - Brian
- **Teacher Awareness**: Principal – the teachers have been made aware of the event and are excited about it. Some of them use Marion's books.
  Discuss event with teachers, see who would like to take part, perhaps providing an overview of the CPS math program prior to Marian's presentation, or working with the Grade 7 and 8s in organizing the student sessions - Brian
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- **Set Group Limit Expectations**: In advertising, we need to clarify that group numbers are limited so register now.
- **Action Item**: get an update to Natalie yet this week – Jenny

What does success look like for this Event?

- 250 Adults attending to listen to Marion.
- Awareness.
- Fun.
- Engagement and Dialogue after the event.
- Excitement from Kids and recognition that you can use math in everything.
- Well-organized event.
- Feedback from parents that they want to make it a yearly event.
- Marketed so that kids want to come. "Mommy, we need to go to this and I want you to come with me."
- Strategies to help our kids succeed in math here and when they enter Grade 9.
- Having 250 adults attend and feel excited about the event.
- Gym full of interested and engaged parents. (WRAPSC talk said "6 out of 10 parents have anxiety about math" – lessen some of that anxiety.

NEW BUSINESS

GRA Grant: Greenspace Revitalization

Grant application deadline: February 27, 2015

Motion: To apply to the grant, lead by Karen, Agnes, Jenny. 1st: Susan. 2nd: Chris.
Decision: Proceed.

Action Item: Proceed with sourcing options and applying for the grant. Agnes, Karen, Jenny

OPEN DISCUSSION ITEMS

Totts to Teens Talk – Brian

- **Date**: Still to be determined.
- Brian spoke to the program manager. Her nurses are currently very engaged. Realistically, we need to look at later in March at the earliest.
- Web links: In the meantime, there are some great links.
- Dates: Currently, Thursdays are the best dates for us for facilities.

- An invitation is out to the public health nurses but it is completely voluntary for them to speak with us.
- **Action Item**: Delayed to end of March.
- **Action Item**: Put post with links on website in the meantime. – Brian, Deb

Block Parent Program Presentation – Marsha

- **Date**: Thursday, March 12, 2015, 15 minutes
- Don't book a teacher next month.
- **Action Item**: Special Presentation – advertise it. - Deb

Sports Team Equipment – Susan

Sport Team Bibs:

- 20 bibs for girls, 20 bibs for boys, with screening.
- $440 for screening.
- $1200 total.
- 1 quote received.
- **Decision**: Delay decision until after we hear confirmation of the music grant in order to know how much money we can allocate.

Sport Knee Pads:

- Have not yet gotten quotes for kneepads.

Mad Science Program – Rebecca

Date: Friday, March 13, 2015
9:00am – 12:00pm
2 assemblies

S'Cool Life Fund Grant – Deb

- **Status**: Application was submitted. We are awaiting the results. There is a new music grant available.

Pizza Alternatives – Council

Discussion:

- Posting Healthy Lunch Ideas: discussed posting healthy and creative lunch ideas.
- Teaching healthy eating but also teaching good economics: Eating out is very expensive—it is good to teach kids good budgeting.
- Nutrition Talks: ideas for preparing a healthy lunch, healthy eating, etc.
- Educational Tools: We can provide information but people also need to take responsibility to educate themselves.
- Principal: As a school, we have a mandate to provide healthy options. We are providing a service.
- Pizza is also cheap.

Options:

- Soup day.

- Orders from the **Lunch Box**: can pick different options every week. (Swiss Chalet, etc.). Like Lunch Lady, it is ordered online. http://www.lunchboxorders.com/

Communications:

- We are not "taking away pizza". It is a Ministry of Education policy.
- Action Item: We can create a post with a link to the Ministry Healthy Eating criteria, explaining the mandate. – Brian, Deb

Decisions:

- Additional discussion required.

Parent Survey – Deb

- Survey has been created in Google Docs. We will do a test run and review the format of information in the Excel file.

Action Items:

- Send out to council to complete and provide feedback. – Deb

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by: 1st: Susan 2nd: Karen