

2020-2021 Vincent Massey School Council meeting – November 18, 2020

Attendance: Ginette Thibeault (Principal), Scott Macklin (VP), Suhana Kadoura (Teacher), Nivin Radwan (Teacher), Chrystal Beckett, Christina Moffat, Heather Munro, Allison Klus-Palermo, Kate Connolly, Christine Dalglish, Tammie Winsor, Cheryl Khoury, Brennah Holley, Naomi Hirshberg Mitchell, Shabnam Ebrat, Shereen Khan, Umar Mustafa, Janet Wallace, Marlene Doyle

1. Meeting was called to order
2. Previous meeting minutes were approved (Heather Munro, Chrystal Beckett). Agenda for meeting was approved and seconded (Kate Connolly, Chrystal Beckett)
3. **Teacher updates:**

Nivin Radwan – Kinder Division

- Has been enjoying being back at school. Although there are many new cleaning measures, we are finding ways to incorporate it into our day and making it manageable.
- Asking parent council for large bins to put toys in. They not only allow students to play together yet keep distanced (with the bin between them) but also makes sanitizing the toys easier as we spray the toys in the bin and leave them there to dry. We have one set of four, which has been our test, and would love a set of four for each of the three remaining classes.
- Two weeks ago the kinder division celebrated Dot Day (something we usually celebrate in early September) that is inspired by the book “Dot” written by Peter H. Reynolds, which encourages students to be proud of whatever their abilities are and to make their mark on the world. Many dots were created during art activities, as well as various games with dots, and a song by Emily Arrow about making your mark:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_l43cxDQ-o
- Last week, in addition to learning about Remembrance Day, the kinder division also talked about peace and what that means to them. We read “The Peace Book” by Todd Parr and also sang Peace In My Fingers by Susan Sadilior.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytir4oUCJT4&t=1s>
- Today kinders and junior division celebrated backwards day by wearing out bedtime clothes (pjs) during the day.

Primary Division

- Students enjoyed Halloween activities such as our costume parade, bingo activities and decorating bulletin boards. We also enjoyed the Remembrance Day ceremony.

Junior Division

- Grade 5/ 6 classes had a virtual question and answer period with the mayor.
- The French immersion classes were able to enjoy a workshop with the university of Ottawa engineering department. They were able to conduct virtual experiments on energy.
- The grade 5 and six classes attended virtual scratch coding workshops.
- They are also booked to attend a virtual workshop with the science museum and the war museum.
- The junior team plans on using the wish list money that was previously offered to have more virtual workshops.

Suhana Kadoura – Intermediate Division

- Division has been holding Virtual assemblies: kids have been working in their homerooms to plan, film, edit and publish for their fellow students to enjoy
- On Halloween students had a costume contest and a bulletin board decorating contest
- Held scaled down Remembrance Day celebrations and is planning ways to celebrate the holiday season
- High School info is starting to come in – rec'd info from Canterbury H.S. International Baccalaureate program which has an application process (there will be a slideshow and flyer)
- Students and teachers are learning about Xello (replaces "Career Cruising"). An intro session for each gr.8 class will be held this week and next with Meg Davies, our student success teacher (R8A Th19th, EF8A Mon23, EF8B Th26)
- Some "YouthNet" Presentations coming up:
 - How to be a friend (Dec.1)
 - Get Real [inclusivity] (Dec.3) - rebooked from the spring due to school closure
- Science & Tech Virtual Field Trips:
 - Design Tech - in-class design with off-site 3D printing (Nov.27)
 - Hidden worlds - microscope and scientific measurement (Early 2021)
- Kids Code Jeunesse Workshop:
 - AI as a follow-up to our screening of the film "Coded Bias" (EF8A – Dec.15)

4. Council portion of school website

- Website has been updated; removed outdated items and items that we won't be doing this year due to COVID, like in-person fundraising activities, movie nights, etc.
- Q from Chrystal: What's the difference between the parent council Gmail and OCDSB school email addresses? Kate and Cheryl mentioned that they only used the Gmail account in the past, to keep the council arm's length from the school/school board.
- Re: gardening club contact info for website, Janet Wallace will be the contact this year but we'll list the generic parent council email address. Kate Connelly and her husband Andrew will help.
- Re: parent resource section: Chrystal suggested sharing links to parent-run businesses. Tammi remarked that it might be hard to determine what businesses could be promoted. Could consider for the future.

5. Principal Updates

- Progress Reports: Shorter period and attempts to fill in the gaps - will be available to parents on Friday via the parent portal
 - Step by step instructions in several languages can be found on the board website: https://www.ocdsb.ca/contact_us/report_card_portal
- Parent/Teacher conferences: No PD day this year; shorter timeframe to meet parents - if you are not invited to a meeting, you can always request with the teacher
- Priorities for our school remain: safety protocols for Covid; engaging all of our learners; staff personal development
- Safety protocols due to Covid: We keep reviewing and updating as per board and OPH direction
- Reviewing: Social distancing even when masks are on, keeping masks properly in place, washroom sign and out, no extra items from home, garbage from lunches returns home
- NEW protocols: Equipment use for Phys.Ed/Daily Phys. Activity outside, use of lockers/hooks and cubbies

- Coming soon: Use of large gym, use of equipment at recess
- Other issues reviewed with students: Use of cellphones, decision re: high value items at school
- Staff development: Best practices to implement, alignment of practices, how to best meet the needs of various learners in-person and virtually, new curriculum, new technology
- Facilities Update:
 - Review has begun at our site to redevelop the frontage of the school to include a bus drop off lane
 - It takes a few months to determine if a plan can be implemented – need to do a survey and measurements, soil testing/boreholes etc.
 - If a plan is approved by the school/board, then the board will need to work with the City of Ottawa for approvals – this could take more time due to Covid. (Possibly summer of 2022)
- Snow removal - contractors would normally have contacted the Chief at this time but we have not yet heard from them. We can brainstorm some ideas and I will share with our Chief to determine what might be doable
- Library Updates: Our Librarian has been off, I will provide an update as soon as he returns
- Important Dates:
 - Friday, November 20 - Progress Reports available on the Parent Portal
 - Friday, November 20 - National Child Day
 - Thursday, November 26 - Parent/Teacher interviews
 - Tuesday, December 1 - School spirit day - Pajama Day
 - Wednesday, December 9 - School spirit day - Rainbow Day
 - Friday, December 18 - School spirit day/Red and Green Day/last school day before the holidays
- Principal Profile: due every year for Council to review. Will review at next meeting.

6. Fundraising

- Do Nothing – typically Feb/March
- Samko Toy Sale (cancelled)
- Fundraising for Gr.8 End of Year trip
 - Heather Munro suggested organizing a committee for gr.8 parents to plan the end of the year celebration; Kate Connolly and Marlene Doyle would participate
- Auction – discussed but nothing planned
- Marlene Doyle suggested that we use funds raised to buy more gym equipment kits for classes. Principal noted that we made up the kits with equipment we already owned; she can asked the teachers what else they may need so that each class can have a kit and ask them to draft a proposal for council.
- Tammi suggested virtual activities to raise funds, like virtual running races

7. Treasurers Report

- Parent's Council account has a balance of \$5,252, with \$2,347 earmarked for the library
- School account balance is \$9,400, with \$3,213.39 earmarked for the library
- Kate Connolly made a motion to approve up to \$2000 for teachers to buy extra gym equipment so that each class can have their own kit; was seconded by Heather Munro.

8. Kinder Project

- Janet: school tree planting grant. City suggests that we plant 4 trees which are highly salt resistant but are not native trees. Also funds from Community Environmental (Jacqueline Willmore) in the spring. Principal will submit our report to the City by February (deadline).

- Marlene mentioned that her husband works for the city and he will help with anything city-related

9. Traffic Safety

- Doesn't need to be a standing item on the agenda anymore. Advance walk at Haig & Smyth has been a big improvement.
- Christine will be the point person if needed in the future.
- Naomi Hirsberg Mitchell shared some concerns about traffic at Edgcombe; has seen cars doing u-turns and driving unsafely. Principal mentioned she could remind parents through a Friday update email, as well as look into having By-law come and observe/ticket cars as Edgcombe does have no-parking signs in some sections.
- Tammi echoed Naomi's comments and asked that instead of reminder in a Friday Update, perhaps a separate email just on traffic safety.

10. Handicap Parking

- Heather Munro noticed that we only have 1 handicap spot and at times, this spot is taken by a teacher. Principal mentioned that she can look into whether we can add a 2nd; it all depends on the size of the spot, as handicap spots have a size requirement
- Christine Dagleish mentioned that how many spots you have depends on how many parking spots are in the lot.

11. Library Rejuvenation

- Tammi and Heather did some reconciliation of the accounts. \$7,994.05 is the fundraising total and we have spent very little: \$1000 for beanbag chairs and bought some books from Samko and Miko.
- Previous Flip Give account expired and they will need to renew it. Funds will continue to go towards the library until another purpose is identified.
- Christine and Chrystal asked Tammi by email prior to the meeting if she would consider using the funds from Flip Give for something other than library. Tammi agreed to consider if Council agrees. Kate Connolly thinks that the funds raised from Flip Give should stay earmarked for the library given that that was the intention all along.
- Tammi mentioned we can give Eliot ~\$4500 for books this year, \$1600 of which is in the school account already; the rest could need to be transferred from the parent's account. Ginette is waiting to hear back from Eliot if buying books this year is possible.
- Ginette asked about \$1k for STEM activities – Tammi replied that these funds have been set aside.

12. Other/New Business

- Christine mentioned that she and Cheryl represented VM last year at OCASC, Ottawa Carleton's committee for school councils. Looking to have new parent reps for this school year who could share findings with parent council.
- Tammi shared on behalf of an anonymous VM parent who has a child at another school and that child had access to online book software that her child at VM can't access. Ginette shared that this is something teachers could ask for funding for

13. Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm