

2020-2021 Vincent Massey School Council meeting – March 17, 2021

Attendance: Ginette Thibeault (Principal), Scott Macklin (VP), Nivin Radwan (Teacher), Chrystal Beckett, Christina Moffat, Heather Munro, Allison Klus-Palermo, Kate Connolly, Janet Mark Wallace, Jacqueline Willmore, Amanda Bongard, Donna Yau, Lamin Gassama, Amanda Crook, Louise Doherty, Kerrier Rodier, Layla Dos Reis, Amanda Bee, Erinn Brooks, Raz Abdess, Josie Sirna, Jennifer Ellis

- 1) Meeting was called to order
- 2) Previous meeting minutes were approved (Christina Moffat, Chrystal Beckett). Agenda for meeting was approved and seconded (names not recorded)
- 3) **Teacher updates** (Nivin Radwan)

Kindergarten:

- The spirit week has been a hit also with the kinders
- “Sensei Kindheart” has contacted the kindergarten classes and invited them to be kindness ninjas and spread acts of kindness around the school and community. So far they have made posters of kindness animals for the walls of the school, handed out kindness notes to the staff, and cards for the residents of the Perley retirement residence.

Primary updates:

- Primaries are enjoying our spirit week! They had a great time at our outdoor dance party for St-Patrick’s day.
- They are looking forward to the concert last this week and are also excited to make cards and pictures for the residents at the Perley retirement residence.

Junior updates:

- The juniors have had a great week so far. They really enjoyed their bingo games today and thanks to some parent and staff donations , they were able to give out some gift cards as prizes.
- They are still looking forward to the events on Thursday and Friday like Little Rays Reptiles and the Craig Cardiff concert
- We also would like to thank Ms.Beckett for volunteering to create a video about nutrition .
- The grade 5 6 immersion classes will also be hosting a film festival on Friday.

Intermediates update:

- Students have raised a total of \$2,000 from their sled-a-thon and have created their care packages to the Russell community.

4) Principal Updates (Ginette Thibeault)

School Highlights:

- COVID 19: 3 positive cases - 2 staff and 1 student as per dashboard
- We are working closely with OPH - we get our direction from them and the board. Communications and follow-ups are provided by OPH
- Deep cleansing has been taken care of and they’re reviewing all protocols
- Staff shortages are happening. Receiving help with casual/central staff
- Planning for the 2021/2022 school year is underway. A bit later than last year with projections; projections and enrolments directly impact staffing

Board Updates:

- Form re: in-person or virtual school in the fall is now closed. Those that did not respond, the default is in-person
- We have provided parent feedback to the board

Important Dates:

- Thursday, March 18th: Tropical Day
 - Friday, March 19th: Pajama Day
 - Thursday, April 1st: "Wacky day" Fashion Disaster Day
 - Friday April 2 to Monday April 5: Easter holiday - no school
 - April 12 to 16: spring break - no school
- Question from a parent: what was the survey response rate? Ginette can add to a Friday email. Close to 500 out of 615
 - Question from Heather: What is the benchmark for cases before closing the school? Ginette said she didn't have that info on hand but could add to a Friday update email.
 - Question from Cheryl: Will VM receive funding next year for smaller class sizes, similar to what we rec'd this year? No, we aren't guaranteed the extra funding.
 - Comment from Allison: With 3 cases so far, knowing that the virus is in the school, some parents wish they would return to virtual schooling for a few weeks to avoid further cases/spread. Ginette shared that she has heard both sides of this argument, the other side being that schools should remain open through these cases.
 - Question from Donna: Was there any feedback from the community screening held at the St Patrick's gym? OPH didn't give specific #s but were no positive cases identified from our school.
 - Questions from Cheryl: what about the massive puddles outside? Scott is looking into this quite a bit to ensure all students have outdoor space despite puddles.
 - Question from Heather: What about having some kids in the front yard? It's a possibility, maybe older kids?
 - Question from Amanda: Is there anything parents can do to help? Parents who want to help could shovel snow onto pavement for it to melt

5) Fundraising

- Do Nothing: Allison has the poster updated and will work with office staff to set up School Cash Online. Motion for the dates of the fundraiser to be March 22-28 date was carried (Kerri Rodier, Chrystal Beckett).

6) Treasurer's Report

- The figure we have to spend this year is \$2,074.17.
- We've already transferred \$2000 for wish lists, \$1800 for kinder yard

7) Kinder Project

- 4 new trees approved by City of Ottawa and OCDSB for May 2021 planting
- \$400 of gardening tools (shovels, rakes, watering cans etc.) have arrived at VM and Home Hardware Elmvale provided a 25% discount

- Ritchies provided estimate of \$597 for plant materials - we will order from them as the other vendors have not responded and Ritchies has offered 25% discount. Will finalize the list and submit for Board approval ASAP.
- Jeff Kaster from Evergreen said the mud kitchen can be installed next to the shed in the kinder yard in summer and will not require a new accessible path. This frees up the additional \$1000 council funding approved for our project. We will need to remove a small bench attached to that side of the shed prior to installation. Meeting with Mr. Macklin March 18 to discuss form 800 that Mr. Fields will fill out to order this and the tree protection.
- Reaching out to Mme.McNally to choose a painted playground game with the children
- Garden clean-up scheduled for April 24 and 25
- Kinder yard planting scheduled for May 22 and 23
- Next meeting April 10, 10am
- Question from Christine – how to join gardening club? Respond to post on FB or send an email to janetmarkwallace@gmail.com
- Question from a parent: What about the front flowers? We may need to move them forward so they get rain otherwise they'll die b/c they're covered by eaves
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8) **Library Rejuvenations**

- No updates at this meeting

9) **Grade 8 working group**

- No updates at this meeting

10) **Refuse to Lose**

- How does it work? Students nominate and Parents on the council executives chose the recipients
- Deadline? Get ballots in by early or mid-May, decide at May meeting
- Quote for reference:
 - *Every year since 2006 the Vincent Massey Parent Council has recognized special members of the community with the "Refuse to Lose" award. All members of the Vincent Massey community are invited to nominate a person for this award, and in past years the "Refuse to Lose" award has been presented to VM teachers, staff, students, and parents. "Refuse to Lose" is VM's motto, and its power comes from the actions it recognizes and promotes. The "Refuse to Lose" motto expresses VM's belief that outstand*

11) **March Break**

- Discussion around teacher appreciation. Reminder that parent council funds can only be used for things that will directly benefit students, not for teacher appreciation events.
- Item was tabled to the next month's agenda.

12) **Other/New Business**

- Question from a teacher: Any idea of school photos for this school year or next? Ginette hasn't heard anything but says board is looking into it for high school grad student
- Comment from co-chairs Christine and Chrystal: Wondering about posting a comment on the FB group to advice parents not to share personal information about positive COVID cases or classes affected.

13) Meeting adjourned at 8:04pm