

2022-2023 Vincent Massey School Council meeting – September 21, 2022

Attendance: Julie Chouinard, Susan Bouwer, Erinn Brooks, Erin Rempel, Kate Connolly, Trisha Yourth, Allison Klus-Palermo, Katie Eberts, Cheryl Khoury, Fatna Asmaa Amrharhe, Jia Yin, Lisa Scott, Louise Doherty, Murali Rajen, Christine Dalglish, Sowmya Nesan, Valerie De Franco, Caitlin Anstee, Abdallah Issa, Fatiya Ismail, Feroza Ebrat, Frshita Ebrat, Kellee Sutherland, Lisa Phelan, Sataman Sukhansh, Aleks C, Jessica Sutherland, Ashy Q, Tanu Aggarwal, Himanshu Gupta

1. Meeting was called to order
2. June 2022 meeting minutes accepted (moved by Erinn Brooks, seconded by Allison Klus-Palermo)
3. Discussion around executive and voting
 - Julie to include call-out for interest in next Principal email
 - Decision to hold vote during October meeting
4. School updates (presented by Julie Chouinard)

Introduction of new admin: Julie

- Shared employment history and experiences
- Transition with Ginette was very thoughtful and thorough; ongoing
- Core of work this year will be on literacy and equity, an integral part of work; many staff taking course called “Top ten tools”, aligns with Right to Read inquiry; focus on practice

Introduction of new admin: Susan

- Shared employment history and experiences
- Equity and literacy is both this year’s focus and a personal passion

5. Teacher updates (presented by Trisha Yourth)

DIBELS literacy assessment tool

- Looking at literacy gaps that exist and have been exacerbated by Covid
- Board has provided a new tool to track and follow students who are identified as lagging in literacy
- Will help determine how to bridge gap using new tools (Top ten tools); will target intervention
- The professional learning community will help each other use the tools effectively through discussion and sharing of lessons learned; working as a community
- Will assess in June to see how year went
- This is a new tool that launched last year
- All support teachers are helping and working together to make this possible

Question: How will the students with this literacy gap be identified? Is it teacher or parent/guardian driven?

Answer: Will assess all students in school; want to catch kids that are not visibly struggling. Will use an assessment tool called DIBELS, 3 times a year. A full assessment is comprised of 5 tools, each takes 60 seconds to complete. Performing the assessment 3 times a year will show whether/not there has been growth from Sept-Dec, and we can adjust strategies if necessary

Question: Is the test in English only? Are there plans for immersion students?

Answer: DIBELS is currently only available in English, and there is no other French tool available right now. However, the process of learning to read is not language specific. Therefore, the

assessment translates to learning to read in French and vice versa. The assessments begin in Junior Kindergarten, so we are catching lagging literacy at the earliest stage.

Question: Is part of the structured literacy initiative to purchase decodable books? / What are decodable books?

Answer: Decodable books give a better sense of a student's literacy because they can't be memorized, which is something that many students do; they must be decoded, which employs a student's literacy skills and reveals literacy gaps more readily.

Kinder updates

- Celebrated dot day on September 15; dot art is in the hallways with positive messages to believe in yourself
- Great learning opportunities from weeding planters and planting bulbs for spring; found various vegetables

Primary updates:

- Great start to the school year; held first assembly with focus on safety and rules
- Heart of the city piano program beginning – grades 2-4; will be open to students upon teacher recommendation

Junior updates:

- Cross country running has started; Monday/Wednesday/Friday practices
- Unsure if there will be a regional cross-country meet; if not, we will host community event

Action item: Julie to ask about whether/not cross-country is available for intermediate

Intermediate:

- Cooking club has started; hope to create a cookbook

Student council:

- 100 students interested; 26 selected
- Looking at popcorn sales on Fridays for fundraising
- Julie and Susan attended first meeting
- Goal is to have student council prep at monthly parent council meetings

Other announcements:

- Boys football has started
- Yearbook club starts Monday, September 26
- Terry Fox run taking place October 6
- Pizza will begin in October

6. Treasurers Report

- Costs associated with minor fix to playhouse in kinder yard no longer needed because house was removed
- Interest in re-stenciling kinder, junior and hopscotch in the spring; could potentially share stencils with other schools (Alta Vista); potential for some cost, if there is interest
- Balances:
 - School Council Line: \$7,820.16 (\$1,000 of this total is a donation earmarked for maker space)
 - RBC Chequing: **\$2,687.60**

History of dual account discussed: originally just had the account at RBC; school board wanted to have the money in the school for fraud issues; however money couldn't get money out so we created a separate account

7. Information night – parent council awareness/recruitment activity
 - Will coincide with meet the teacher event on September 22, 2022
 - Information table at front entrance with sign-up sheets
 - Voted in favour of offering popcorn for donations – money raised will go towards paint
8. Parent council meeting logistics
 - Various factors considered such as: family care timing, virtual vs in person, retaining parent interest through focussed and shorter meetings with pre-set agenda, need for flexibility to adjust agenda on the fly
 - Voted in favour of virtual meetings at 6:30 pm
9. Garden project
 - Jaqueline Whitmore leading gardening initiative
 - Previously sought and was awarded grants to beautify kinder yard
 - Gathering on Sunday to garden – please share interest
 - Requesting \$60/berry bush to line walkway
 - Decision to wait on vote for berry bushes (moved by Erinn, seconded by Katie)
10. Clothing swap
 - Allison leading annual clothing swap
 - Items to sell for \$1/each; small fundraiser and provides access to affordable clothes for community
 - Previously overlapped with movie night to generate extra interest & traffic
 - Have submitted 2 community use of school requests, for October 1&15 – waiting on approval for use of gym
11. Outdoor learning space
 - Need to establish sub-committee and begin fundraising
 - Also need input from teachers; can share schematics for teacher reaction/feedback
 - Lisa offered information on OCDSB tenders for outdoor classrooms (leading fundraising for Pleasant Park for similar initiative)
12. Diversity sub-committee
 - Interest in creating a Diversity sub committee
 - Could arrange speakers and events within school for National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and others
 - Would be great to get other council members involved
 - Susan volunteered to represent on an equity committee and coordinate with diversity sub-committee lead for reaching out to the community
13. Bus safety
 - Need safer bussing for students
 - Interest in U shape road in front of school to get kids off Smyth road – have been trying to advance this for many (10) years
 - Julie shared that drawings for a loop are with the board; soil testing necessary before it can begin so looking at 1-2 years; but seems very likely that it will be built!

- construction can't begin until after soil

14. School yard drainage

- Should be added as an ongoing item to the agenda
- Previous administration worked very hard to make progress on this; would like to keep up the momentum
- Tied into/necessary for outdoor learning space
- Julie emailed Ginette to inquire/discuss

15. Fundraising

- Toy sale
 - Ms. Burns led in the past; profits went to CHEO
 - Was very popular with students and their families
 - Environmental education – circular economy
 - Interest in hosting in more months than just December to encompass other culturally significant events
- Pizza/pita pit/milk
 - Pizza already happening – school fundraiser
 - Milk has been extremely popular in the past
- Multicultural event
 - Typically held in May
 - Food, fashion show with different traditional clothing; gift giving

16. Menstrual products in bathrooms

- Still don't appear to be available in bathrooms
- Interest in learning more about equity and access for this – do other schools have them?
- Moxie Club is/was fundraising for this
- Julie shared that we did receive some kits last year, which were placed in the gender neutral bathrooms; uncertain where supplies come from; waiting for memo from board

17. School board trustee information

- Kate shared that there will be a Q&A session with all board trustees on October 2
 - Kate will attend and give synopsis at next parent council meeting
- Julie shared that the Friday email will speak to an info session with all trustee candidates taking place virtually on October 6

Next meeting: is Wednesday, October 12 6:30

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM