

Westmount School Council Meeting - January 2023

Date: January 18, 2023

Location: Video Conference

Time: 7:00 PM

Chair: Roti Akinsanmi

Council

Vice-Chair: Kim Anthony

Treasurer: Navdeep Kailey

Secretary: Thomas Chan

Communications Director: Kathy Good

Fundraising Director: Laura Teterenko

Parent Engagement Director: Ashley Wilford-Matthews

Special Events Director: Ameet Kooner

Director-at-Large: Terri May (missing)

Director-at-Large: Melissa Wolsey

Administration

Superintendent: Dr. Myra C. Hood (could not attend)

Principal Elementary Campus: Hal Curties

Principal Mid-High Campus: Graeme Finlay

Student Council Representative: N/A

Note: Video recording of this meeting is also available online ([link](#))

1. Opening Remarks, Approval of the Agenda

For the March 8th School Council meeting we will have an “Ask me Anything” session with with Dr. Myra Hood, our new superintendent.

Ashley Wilford-Matthews motioned to approve the agenda, 2nd Navdeep Kailey. Agenda approved.

2. Approval of minutes from October 12th and November 23rd, 2022 School Council meetings

Thomas Chan motion to approve AGM minutes, 2nd Navdeep Kailey second. Minutes approved.

3. Reports from Council

a. Parent Engagement Report - Ashley Wilford-Matthews

- **Parent Engagement Sessions** - Had two parent engagement sessions in December. We had Mr. Pickle (Gord Hamilton), who went through some of the math games that he brought into the Westmount classrooms. Parents were really engaged. There were ~65 parents at that event. Next, we had Jill Foreman, who is an occupational therapist. We've had a number of sessions with Jill Foreman before. Jill talked about parenting strategies, mental health and executive

function. Paul Davis came in on January 10th to discuss digital safety and social media. He also spent the days running a session with the students.

- **Coffee Talks** - Will continue alternating in-person and online. Next Coffee Talk is online for the Mid-High on January 20th. For the Elementary campus it will be online on February 10th

Question (Roti): Will we have another session with Mr. Pickle?

Graeme - This is the first time we had a session with Mr. Pickle. Our sessions are done with him, but departments are looking at next year. Was great, because he did different problems for each class.

b. Fundraising Report - Laura Teterenko

- **Hot Lunches** - December was very exciting. First attempt at with hot lunches. Coco Brooks made it really easy. Going forward we could do one of those a month. Made about \$700 in total.
- **Bottle Drive** - Bottle drive schedule for January 19th. You can contact Skip the Depot directly if you can't make the bottle drive.

Question (Roti): How hard is it to host a hot lunch once a month?

Very easy to do. Waiting to see how everything worked out logistically. Plan for once a month.

Question (Hal): Can we include meals for the lunch supervisors, since they are the ones responsible for distributing the food?

We have a ordered for staff, so we can do that for the lunch supervisors.

Question (Ashley): What other food options are there?

Everything from Tim Hortons to Edo Japan, Subway, Booster Juice, etc. What we have to look at is the prep work. Some restaurants will just drop off the food and it's up to the organizers to distribute the food. Why we chose Coco Brooks is because every pizza was labeled, and it was the easiest process.

Hal - Years ago we did a parent survey to see which food providers parents preferred

c. Treasurer Report - Navdeep Kailey

- **Revenue** – Had our direct donation fundraiser during the month of December. Heartfelt thank you to all the parents. Raised \$8,275 just for the month of December. We wouldn't be able to do anything without your support. Bottle drive, funds are trickling in. For the last quarter we \$1,714 collected
- **Expenses** - haven't had an expenses so far. Loaned the WCEFS \$2,000 for their startup costs. This will be paid back once they receive the funds from the casino
- **Current bank balance is \$39,503**

Question: What is the goal of fundraising?

categories are broadly, school residency program, field trips, parent engagement for parent education nights. Lunch & learns. Year-end event.

d. Alumni - Kim Anthony

- Reached out to Julie Jansen to see who is taking this on for the administration. From there we will determine what activity that we could do before the end of the school year.
- Still looking for volunteers. You can email the School Council at schoolcouncil@westmountcharter.com

e. DEI Report - Melissa & Terri

- Will meet with Terri and two volunteers to determine how to move forward

4. Principals' Report

[EC Principal's Report](#)

[Mid-High Principal's Report](#)

a. Elementary Campus Update - Hal Curties

- **Lunar New Year** - Year of the Rabbit. People born in the Year of the Rabbit are calm and peaceful.
- **Elementary Campus** - January theme is respect. Encourage parents to look for opportunities in the home to show respect. Great book to read is "Do Unto Others". This segue into DEI conversations. Make sure that everyone is being represented in the materials. Feed the city challenge was a success. 2,500lbs of food and \$3,000 in cash raised. Thank you to all parents for their generosity. Had mountains of chocolates and goodies before Christmas. Report Cards will be coming out on January 31st.
- **Mad Science** - Thank you to all of the parents for their donations. We were able to bring Mad Science in for all of our classes.
- **Coffee Talks** - Next coffee will be Friday February 10th. Dr. Hood our new superintendent will be in attendance.
- **Drama** - Run by our TLAs. Starts September and ends in June. Mostly involves students with learning disabilities.
- **Parent Teacher Conferences** - took place in November and we have another set in February. Based on the parent survey, the amount of online vs. in person is about right. Lots of parent satisfaction with those meetings.
- **Intake** - Normally, we would have potential candidates into our school at the end of January. Due to increase in illnesses, we will not be doing that this year
- **Professional Development** - Started year off with professional development with Dr. Bruce Shore. Thank you to School Council for providing the funds to make that possible.

Question (Ashley): Would Bruce be interested in doing a parent session?

We could certainly ask him.

b. Mid-High Campus Update - Graeme Finlay

- **Article Talk** - One of the administration's committees is focused on gifted research. Part of that involves looking at articles on giftedness. In the Mid-High report there are two good articles. One article is about intelligence and giftedness and how students associate being smart as being gifted, which is not true
- **Exam Schedule** - Currently in exam break for high school (Grades 9 to 12). School is still open to high school students. Teachers are available for drop-in. Suggest that students email teachers first if they want to drop-in
- **Reregistration** - Reregistration for current students for both campuses is a two-step process. First step is an intent to register and a deposit. Step one has to be complete by February 3rd. Once you pay the deposit you will be sent out a package. The deposit is \$100 per child. Also, you can't have any outstanding dues.
- **Intake** - Applications for Mid-high are still open until the 15th. Website has all of the information.
- **Art Curator** - Still looking for art curator. Want to turn learning commons into somewhere they can showcase that stuff. Simon Corrin is willing to help out with digital. Absolutely phenomenal what the students are creating.

Question (Roti): Is there any interest in monetizing the work?

Not really crossed my mind. Historically, we might take some of the art to decorate cards for a fundraiser. Typically, we avoid things for profit.

5. Administration Diversity, Equity & Inclusion ("DEI")

- Administration had a senior leadership meeting with the superintendent. Will meet as the Executive DEI council. Will decide how to move forward from there.
- Last year a "state of Westmount" was completed by the administration to look at the representation and diversity of the staff. One of the open conversations is the demographics of the students. One of the things we will do is a survey to create baseline data. Would like a thoughtful and well worded survey.
- In addition to the Executive DEI council there is also a Student DEI council and Staff DEI council. Student DEI has been doing discussions through STS, setup presentations and organize event. Currently doing work around Black History month. Looking to perhaps run basketball tournament to raise money to support different communities. Considering bringing guest speakers for Black History month
- Staff DEI engaging staff in more conversation. Will pick an article/topic and invite staff members to the conversations. Have done one or two so far this year. During the past 18 months the administration started looking at diversifying the at literature.

6. Closing Remarks

For the March 8th School Council meeting we will have Dr. Myra Hood, our new superintendent.

Closing on a note of gratitude. Monday met with the principals, Tuesday at an event with Paul Davis and Wednesday we had the first in-person meeting of the Executive council. Great to see how engaged the community is at Westmount. Thank you so much.

Meeting Adjourned - 8:00 PM