



ST. MARY C.S.S. PARENT COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, November 14, 2018

Executive Members	Name	Attendance
Principal	Susan Duane	P
Chair	Beatrice Povolo	P
Vice Chair	Nancy Carpenter	P
Secretary	Shelley McMurter	P
Financial Secretary	Lisa Cairns	P
Teacher Representative	Melissa Wilson-Clark	P
Teacher Representative	Vivian Riva	Ab
Parish/Non-Teaching Representative	Tomy Valookaran	P
Parent Representatives		
Parent Representative	Adele Sartor	P
Parent Representative	Cordelia Clarke Julien	Ab
Parent Representative	Frances Quin-Ford	P
Parent Representative	Jennifer Millar	Ab
Parent Representative	Jill Williams	Ab
Parent Representative	Kathy Miller	Ab
Parent Representative	Keisha Petrolo	R
Parent Representative	Lisa Allison	P
Parent Representative	Louella DiFrancesco	P
Parent Representative	Nelly Medeiros	P

Attendance: P= Present Ab = Absent R = Regrets

Other Attendees:

Name	Attendance
Joanne Taylor	P
Karen Forint	P
Laura Rowed	P
Mel D'Mello	P
Samuel Koroma	P
Allison Jacko	P
Julie Roberts	P
Yemisi Aladesua (Public Health Nurse)	P
Dan Allen	P
Ryan Putnman	P
Jim McCarthy	P

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting Called to Order: 7 pm

Opening Prayer: T. Valookaran

Welcome and Introductions: B. Povolo

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

Approval of Minutes: October 3, 2018 – no changes

Motion to Approve by: F. Quin-Ford Seconded by: L. DiFrancesco

REPORTS

Principal's Report: S. Duane

Greenhouse Project

- There is a greenhouse build in partnership with Durham College happening at St. Mary's
- Micro greenhouses are built outside and is going well
- These greenhouses will be used by various teachers as part of the student's education

Grade 8 Students

- The grade 8 students from all of St. Mary's feeder schools were visiting on November 14, 2018
- The students had the opportunity to see St. Mary's, meet teachers, and look at the different courses available

Christmas Outreach

- The Christmas Outreach is coming up
- Students are gathering shoe boxes and filling them with toiletries

School Improvement Plan

- There are 3 pillars to the school improvement plan which is created through input from teachers and students – numeracy and literacy, growth mindset and resiliency, and faith development
- There is a focus on numeracy and literacy as this area has been determined to be the greatest area of need with another focus is on the importance of growth mindset and resiliency
- The school improvement plan links numeracy and literacy with exposing students to similar strategies to allow for consistency
- The faith development is based on the pastoral plan with faith development for students and staff
- The plan is a working document that is reviewed and tweaked throughout the year
- The plan looks to engage students and parents through various pathways
- There is a guidance person who works with the elementary and secondary schools to assist with integrating students
 - The students are encouraged to use career cruising with the idea to help students focus on their skill sets and determining where they want to go
 - The teachers are also guided in their classrooms to use career cruising to help make it more engaging
- Students have been taking initiative such as:
 - Setting up peer tutoring and after school help to assist each other
 - Offering to hand out surveys to other students to assist with the gathering of data for further improvement
 - Doing more with respect to wellness and learning how to self regulate - they have been practicing flash mob dancing (specific to teachers that are participating)

- Encouraging others to be responsible for their garbage - going out with a garbage pail for students to use when coming back from lunch
- The student committees are doing various initiatives – equity and inclusivity, peer mentorship, raising issues associated with learning disabilities, daily physical activity, mental wellness café, stand up to bullying, etc

Financial Report: L. Cairns

- The fall uniform sale raised \$757
- There is currently ~\$14000 in the council budget – money is set aside for graduation and \$1500 for outreach
- Council received one ask for funding: the Robotics classes are using outdated materials (10 years old) resulting in the inability to participate in any competitions – the request is for robotics kits for grade 11 and 12 classes - \$6000 will be paid through school funding – the ask is for \$5000 to complete the purchase – discussions will continue at the next meeting
- S. Duane will reach out to staff and student council to see if any additional funding requests will be brought forward

NEW BUSINESS

Student Busing Update and Pick Up/Drop Off: Ryan Putnam

- R. Putnam provided an overview of events that have occurred in relation to the busing and school pick-up/drop-offs since September
- Busing Transportation
 - The first week of September was less than optimal for busing of the students
 - Transportation routes are decided based on historical trends, however, there was a higher number of students taking buses
 - The goal is to have 2 students to a seat, however, there was a shortage of bus drivers in September and there was also an attempt to reduce the number of buses due to cost savings and the lower bus drivers
 - The busing routes have since been rebalanced with some runs being consolidated
 - The situation with the busing has settled but it is not perfect
 - Bus drivers have taken a hard stance on having musical instruments on the bus – any item that cannot fit on the student's lap or under the seat will not be allowed on the bus
- Traffic Flow at the School
 - Changes have been made to the traffic flow at St. Mary's
 - Last spring the school bus drop off and pick up was evaluated and a decision made to have the buses be in the front of the school
 - As the number 1 priority is student safety the front lane will be for staff parking and buses only during drop off and pick up times
 - The side of the school off of Whites Road will be restricted to service vehicles only
 - Lines have been painted to direct traffic flow, walkways and paths have been clearly marked, and drop off/pick up area has also been marked
 - There have been a number of requests for an exit onto Amberlea – one challenge to this possibility is that a fresh site plan would be required which may incur significant costs to ensure the changes meet the current requirements (e.g. changes in parking requirements based on new codes there may be a need for more parking spaces)
 - There is an on going commitment to see if there is any capability for an exit onto Amberlea with potential to have signage to prevent left hand turns during drop off and pick up times
 - A traffic study has not been completed and it is felt that based on the expertise of individuals evaluating the situation, one is not necessary
 - There are multiple areas around the school where students could be dropped off and picked up without cars having to go directly past the school – e.g. the plaza, feeder streets into the area
 - The current expectation is that if students are being dropped off and picked up at the school, they are to be dropped off/picked up on Amberlea - the back of the school lot is to be used for parking only and for emergency drop offs (e.g. students carrying large instruments/equipment, projects, or using crutches, etc.)

- Next steps:
 - o The changes will continue to be monitored and there will be conversations with the city for a second exit at the back of the school
 - o Unfortunately there will not be any relief for busing - if anything, there will be more bussing with the Seaton community
 - o Amberlea will be the main drop off/pick up area with the back parking lot being used for rare circumstances and the front parking lot is not to be used for parent drop off or pick up during morning and afternoon school times

Public Health Nurse Role: Y. Aladesua

- Yemisi Aladesua provided insight into the role of the public nurse and the initiatives being set out
- The public health nurse is present to assist with the student's mental health
- The role involves parents to encourage stress management at home and school
- Mental health is about having a healthy brain not an illness – when mental health is healthy, it can assist with problem solving
- Stress is a key trigger for mental health issues so the public health nurse helps students manage stress to keep the brain at its optimal level by helping students identify the issue and provide strategies to cope and learning when professional help is needed
- Coping well with stress is a Canadian wide initiative
 - o Symptoms of stress may include: difficulty sleeping, being fed up, feeling flushed, nervous or worried, irritable moody, withdrawn
 - o There is a mental health crisis line for students

OPEN QUESTION PERIOD

- None

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting Adjourned: 9:10 pm

Closing Prayer: All

Next St. Mary CSS Council Meeting

Wednesday, December 12, 2018 @ 7:00 pm - St. Mary CSS Library

St. Mary CSS Parent Council meetings usually take place on the first Wednesday of the month, from 7:00pm – 8:00pm in the school library. All parents are welcome to attend the monthly Parent Council meetings and bring agenda items forward for discussion.