



ST. MARY C.S.S. PARENT COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, November 1, 2017

Executive Members	Name	Attendance
Principal	Mike O'Brien	P
Chair	Beatrice Povolo	P
Vice Chair	Nancy Carpenter	P
Secretary	Shelley McMurter	P
Financial Secretary	Lisa Cairns	P
Teacher Representative	Melissa Wilson-Clark	R
Parish/Non-Teaching Representative	Tomy Valookaran	P
Parent Representatives		
Parent Representative (Grade 9)	Julie Roberts	P
Parent Representative (Grade 10)	Cathy Hadley	P
Parent Representative (Grade 11)	Louella DiFrancesco	P
Parent Representative (Grade 12)	Lisa Allison	P
Parent Representative (French)	Frances Quinn-Ford	P
Parent Representative	Kathy Miller	P
Parent Representative	Keisha Petrolo	P
Parent Representative	Allison Jocko	Ab
Parent Representative	Jill Williams	P

Attendance: P= Present Ab = Absent R = Regrets

Other Attendees:

Jennifer Millar

Janet Yukich

Melvile D'Melio

Joseph Longo

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting Called to Order: 7:05 pm

Opening Prayer: T. Valookaran

Welcome and Introductions: B. Povolo

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

Approval of Minutes: October 4, 2017 – no changes

Motion to Approve by: N. Carpenter Seconded by: J. Williams

REPORTS

Principal's Report: M. O'Brien

Post-Secondary Fair

- The post-secondary fair was successful in October
- There was a lot of people at the event and was a great learning venue

Commissioning Mass

- A family mass will be held on the evening of February 6th, 2018 - a time is yet to be determined but may be around 6:30-7:00pm
- An invitation will go out to the feeder school's parent council chairs to share with the families
- The choir and band will participate in the celebration

Sports

- The summer sports are starting to wind down for the year
- The junior soccer team won LOSSA
- There is one cross country runner going to OFSAA
- The senior volleyball team has an opportunity of winning the championships

Upcoming

- November 23, 24, 25, 2017 St. Mary's will present Mary Poppins
- December 6th and 7th, 2017 there will be a band concert
- December 14th, 2017 there will be a choir concert
- January 18th, 2018 there will be a dance showcase

Sharelife

- St. Mary's has been recognized for their contributions to Sharelife
- St. Mary's community has raised approximately \$24,000 in the last 3 years

Financial Report: L. Cairns

- There is approximately \$15000 left in the budget for this year after all expenses have been removed
- ~\$200 was made on the used uniform sale
- There will still be the annual fees that need to be allocated: Outreach funds, Reach Club, Graduation pins for 435 graduating students (~\$3000)
- The Special Education Program will continue to wash student used uniforms for the used uniform sale – they require soap and supplies at about \$50
- Will need to look into any supplies that may need to be purchased for the set-up of the used uniform sale night

NEW BUSINESS

World Day of Poor: T. Valookaran

- November 19th, 2017 is the World Day of the Poor
- Students are looking into special projects to do for this day
- Having a shoe box provided to each room to be filled with toiletries is something that is being considered and would be dropped off at the Pope Francis Centre

Teacher Request: J. Yukich

- J. Yukich presented to council a need for a cord snake to clean up any tripping hazards of multiple cords and an amplifier as part of the sound system in the cafeteria where all of the school events are held
- The amplifier currently being used is the original one purchased for the school and is very old and needs to be replaced
- The request for funds from council would be to purchase a cord snake, preferably before the Mary Poppins show, at \$269 and an amplifier, preferably before Christmas, at \$505 with a total for both pieces of equipment at \$874 with tax
- A motion to approve the purchase was made:
Approval for the purchase of the cord snake was granted by N. Carpenter and seconded by K. Petrolo
Approval for the purchase of the amplifier was granted by J. Williams and seconded by C. Hadley

School Uniform Policy: M. O'Brien

- Discussion last year occurred around the possibility of adding a blue shirt to the uniform, however, at the time McCarthy's could not accommodate the change – further discussions to occur
- There has been a petition started by students at St. Mary's to remove the winter uniform which was started after a couple of students were hot and wanted to remove their sweaters – the students are looking to have the second layer become an option rather than remain as part of the uniform
- M. O'Brien explained that the school uniform includes the second layer which is to be worn all year – in the summer months (from the long weekend in May to Thanksgiving in October) there is an option to wear the second layer to provide relief from the summer months – there have been occasions where these dates have been adjusted to accommodate changes in unusual warm weather
 - o A suggestion was made that perhaps this information needs to be made clear to the students and parents as there is a misconception of a summer uniform and a winter uniform existing
- The current school policy is that a student must wear the school uniform (includes the second layer) while on school property, a student may ask to remove the second layer while in class – some teachers will allow some will not
 - o A discussion around why a student would need to ask in order to be able to remove their sweater occurred – the school uniform is a symbol of the Catholic school, it provides uniformity for the school and distinguishes the students from the public school system – the uniform is a requirement and the teachers are required to enforce the uniform policy
 - It is important to remember that this symbol and distinction of the Catholic school is important in times where governments are challenging the need to continue to support the Catholic school system
 - o There is also a concern that if students are given the option of wearing their sweater in the classroom rather than asking a teacher, there will be a disruption in the classes, the sweater will not be worn in the hallways and on school properties – it may also start a chain reaction of the sweaters not being brought to school because other sweaters will be worn – the uniform and the symbol it represents will be lost

Next steps: if the St. Mary's community wishes to look at changing the uniform, there is a 4-5 step process that needs to occur involving an in-depth evaluation and consultations – St. Mary's is not able to make this decision alone

- o M. O'Brien will bring the concerns discussed at the meeting to the department heads and staff to see what teachers are experiencing and their thoughts on this issue
- o T. Valookaran will talk to the students who started the petition to let them know the issue was discussed at the council meeting and the staff will be made aware of the issues
- o Clarification of what actually constitutes the St. Mary's uniform will be presented to the students at the either the February assembly or discussed in the home room classes – to be determined

Used Uniform Sale: B. Povolito

- February 22nd, 2018 5-7pm has been selected for the used uniform sale

- The permit will be extended to 9pm in case the event needs to be extended

School Emergency Response: M. O'Brien

- There was a comment made by a student on October 5th, 2017 that someone was coming to the school and threatened the safety of students
- The incident was spread on social media which was brought to M. O'Brien's attention
- This information sparked St. Mary's to react and contact the school board superintendent and the superintendent of safe schools as per the safe school practice e.g. safety at school, responding to potential threats, etc.
- The police were contacted and the allegations were thoroughly investigated and determined that there was no direct threat from the incident
- A message was sent out to the St. Mary's parent community via the Synrevoice and Twitter regarding the event the following morning
- A request was made to communicate the event sooner to the community as once it hit social media there were concerns around sending children to school the next day. As suggestion was made to send out a message sooner, around 7:30am, on Twitter, having something on the school website, Synrevoice, and setting up an emergency number so parents could call and receive a voice recorded message before children are heading to school – M. O'Brien has agreed to complete an emergency test of the system to see how quickly a message could be sent out to the community
- If the threat had been reasonable, there would have been police officers on site at St. Mary's and the school would have been closed
- The school does follow a Violent Risk Threat Assessment process that analyses the behavior of individuals and their potential threats. If an individual is talking about the threats all the time – this would be a sign that it may happen and the threat becomes reasonable and plausible – the process would bring in community agencies to gather information for the case – this would involve a social worker who would interview the child and the parents – the social worker would determine the level of risk for the child actually carrying out the threat.

EQAO Math Results: M. O'Brien

- Deferred to next meeting

Budget Requests: B. Povolo

- School sound system and allocations for other school projects
- Discussion deferred to next meeting

OPEN QUESTION PERIOD

- None

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting Adjourned: 8:40 pm

Closing Prayer: All

Next St. Mary CSS Council Meeting

Wednesday, December 6, 2017 @ 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.