**ST. MARY C.S.S. PARENT COUNCIL**

**Tuesday February 4th, 2025**

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| **Executive Members** | **Name** | **Sign In** |
| Principal | John Di Vizio | P |
| Chair | Adele Sartor | P |
| Co-Chair | Sabrina Pallotta | P |
| Secretary | Paul Dalton | P |
| Financial Secretary | Emily Povolo | P |
| Teacher Representative | Melissa Wilson-Clark | P |
| Chaplain | Mariana Bosetti | R  |
| Parish/Non-Teaching Representative | Danilo Simonelli (SIJ) | P |
| **Parent Representatives** |
| Parent Representative | Amanda Dass | P |
| Parent Representative | Arianna D’Urso | P |
| Parent Representative | Ayesha Sardar | Ab |
| Parent Representative | Babz Boehm | Ab |
| Parent Representative | Barbara Perrott | P |
| Parent Representative | Bessy Stergiou | Ab |
| Parent Representative | Carla Hipolito | Ab |
| Parent Representative  | Claudia Nicholas  | P |
| Parent Representative  | Cordelia Clark Julien | R  |
| Parent Representative  | Danielle Boyle | P |
| Parent Representative  | Jason Boyle | P |
| Parent Representative  | Jennifer Millar | Ab |
| Parent Representative  | Kim Layman | P |
| Parent Representative | Leah Changoo | P |
| Parent Representative  | Lilani Kulathungam | P |
| Parent Representative | Mark V. Campbell | Ab |
| Parent Representative | Melissa Edwards | R  |
| Parent Representative | Melodie McLymont | Ab |
| Parent Representative | Nancy Barry | R  |
| Parent Representative | Nicola Sutton-Leslie | P |
| Parent Representative | Nindu Kumar | P |
| Parent Representative | Oluwoyomi Dime | R  |
| Parent Representative | Paula Thomas | Ab |
| Parent Representative | Rachel Vigliatore | P |
| Parent Representative | Reg Sadler | P |
| Parent Representative | Shivaun McLymont | Ab |
| Parent Representative | Tara King | Ab |
| Parent Representative | Tonia Edwards Kelegan | P |
| Parent Representative  | Zhora Adatia-McGlashen | R  |

**Attendance:** P= PresentAb = Absent R = Regrets

**Other Attendees: P.C.** Adam Whyte, Jayson Julien

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| **CALL TO ORDER**  |

**Meeting Called to Order**: 7 pm

**Welcome**: A. Sartor / S. Pallotta

**Opening Prayer**: J. Di Vizio

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| **ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN** |

**Approval of Minutes**: November 5th, 2024.- A. Sartor

**Motion to Approve by:** E. Povolo **Seconded by:** D. Simonelli

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| **REPORTS / INFORMATION ITEMS** |

**Guest Speaker:** Police Constable A. Whyte

RE: Proposal: “Lunch with the Liaison” Initiative

**Introduction:** As a School Liaison Officer (SLO), the majority of my role has been focused on reactive tasks—responding to calls for service, conducting investigations, and addressing incidents as they arise. While these duties are necessary, they limit the time and opportunity to proactively engage with students and school staff. To address this gap and strengthen the connection between law enforcement and the school community, I am proposing the "Lunch with the Liaison" initiative.

**Objective:** The goal of "Lunch with the Liaison" is to create a regular, accessible space where students and staff can engage with police officers outside of emergency situations. By setting aside dedicated time each week during lunch hours, this initiative will allow for informal, proactive interaction, fostering relationships and providing support for a variety of student issues. The goal for the program is to build bridges with students and the community.

**How the Initiative Will Work:**

* Each individual liaison officer will meet with school or school board administrators at each participating high school to discuss the program, gain support, and ensure alignment with school priorities. This step is crucial for securing approval and ensuring successful implementation in every school.
* A regular weekly time during lunch hours will be designated for the "Lunch with the Liaison" sessions at each high school. Each liaison officer has 3 dedicated high schools, so will rotate each week to a different high school, attending each one monthly.
* The initiative will be promoted to students and staff, making it clear that this is an informal, open opportunity to connect with police officers.
* Sessions will allow for one-on-one conversations or group discussions, addressing a range of issues from personal concerns to career advice.
* Other units (e.g., Human trafficking, Cyber Crime, Drugs, Job Fair and ProAction) may join for focused discussions on specialized topics.

**Why This Initiative is Needed:**

1. **Proactive Engagement**: The current reactive nature of our work leaves limited opportunities to connect with students before incidents occur. "Lunch with the Liaison" will give us a chance to engage with students in a positive, approachable setting, offering guidance and support before problems arise.
2. **Building Trust and Approachability**: Regularly scheduled lunches will provide students with the opportunity to get to know us better. By making ourselves consistently available, we will build stronger, more trusting relationships with students and staff, ensuring we are seen as approachable and reliable.
3. **Supporting Students**: Many students face challenges related to home life, school, and mental health. By being present during lunch, we can offer a safe space for students to share concerns or seek advice. Additionally, this time can allow youth to ask questions about careers in law enforcement or other opportunities within the Durham Region.
4. **Addressing Critical Issues**: These lunch sessions can also serve as a platform for discussing key safety topics such as cyberbullying, substance abuse, human trafficking, and online predators. We can invite specialists from other units to share insights on these pressing matters and ensure students are equipped with the knowledge to stay safe.
5. **Creating Collaboration Opportunities**: Having a dedicated time and space can also benefit other school initiatives. Various student groups or programs could use this time to collaborate with us, allowing for greater involvement in school activities, safety initiatives, and educational presentations.

**Benefits:**

* **For Students**: Increased access to supportive officers who can help with personal, school-related, or safety concerns.
* **For School Administration**: Strengthened relationships with law enforcement, contributing to a safer and more supportive school environment.
* **For Officers**: More opportunities to proactively address issues, gain insights into student needs, and build relationships with the school community.

**Council Feedback & Discussion**

Overall, the Parent Council’s feedback was positive. Parents raised questions about student communication, learnings from the previous liaison, and managing incidents, including follow-ups with the community.

**Key Points & Responses**:

* The program is voluntary and primarily spread through word of mouth.
* Unlike previous liaisons who were reactive, this initiative aims to create a proactive, positive student experience.
* It has been suggested to start with Student Council and Retreat leaders to assist in promoting the program and providing feedback for improvements.
* P.C. Whyte is open to student presentations for additional engagement.
* An inquiry was made regarding P.C. Whyte’s uniform while on school premises and whether he will be fully equipped. He will confirm any modifications permitted while on duty.
* A recommendation was made to assign other officers for enforcement situations to maintain student trust. PC Whyte will confirm feasibility based on policy. However, it is noted that any questioning or enforcement requirements that are needed are mostly done out of school and with the parent’s cooperation.
* It was also recommended that when an incident happens, a community debrief (with inappropriate legal details omitted) was suggested to reduce misinformation.
* Again, the goal is to balance community support with proactive engagement while minimizing incidents in the school.

**Consensus**: Move forward with a trial until the end of the school year.

**Review**: The program's progress will be evaluated at the **June council meeting**.

**Principal’s Report:** John Di Vizio

Mr. Di Vizio showed a quick demonstration on how students and parents can use the anonymous reporting tool for incidents within the school following Constable Whyte’s presentation (the “Report It” tool on school and board websites)

**Teacher Updates: Retirements, New Hires & Staffing**

Retirements

* + Mr. Cecillon
	+ Ms. Tyler

New Hires

* Mr. Cedrone – Chemistry / Biology
* Mr. Mattila – Biology / Science
* Mr. Ferrantone – French
* Mr. Bakshi – Business
* Ms. Klymiuk – English / French / History

Currently looking to hire 3 – 5 new permanent teachers moving forward

Staffing

* Grade 9 English / English / Civics (In place shortly after PC meeting)
* English – 2 Grade 9’s (In place shortly after PC meeting)
* Religion (In place shortly after PC meeting

**Facilities**

* The chillers that are on the roof are being replaced. They went down just prior to exams and the facilities team did a remarkable job in getting the situation rectified.
* Vape Detectors will be installed in the bathrooms within the school in the next few weeks. St. Mary signed up to be part of the pilot program to ensure we were one of the first schools to have them installed in Ontario and help manage the vaping issue we have been addressing for the past few years.
* Concave mirrors were installed in blind spots of the hallway for added safety.

**Tech & Teaching Equipment Updates**

Currently working on getting funding for hard-tech courses, with plans to upgrade electrical, mill, and lathe equipment.

**Key Dates**

Feb 3rd – 7th Musical, *The Little Mermaid,* for all associate schools

Feb 4th Semester 1 marks due to Admin

Feb 4th – 6th Sr. Basketball

Feb 4th – 7th, 18th Jr. Basketball

Feb 4th, 12th Wresting

Feb 4th Course selection workshop for Grade 9’s (P4)

Feb 4th BLOSM Workshop

Feb 5th Monarch Day

Feb 5th, 20th Sr. Girls Volleyball

Feb 5th, 21st Swim Meets

Feb 5th Course selection workshop for Grad 10’s (P4)

**Feb 6th – 8th Musical, *The Little Mermaid***

Feb 6th National Sweater Day

Feb 6th Course Selection workshop for Grade 11’s (P4)

**Feb 7th Report Cards Issued on Edsby**

Feb 10th Valedictorian Nominations (open for the week)

Feb 11th FBLC Bakesale over lunches

Feb 12th, 20th Jr Girls Volleyball

Feb 13th Grade Level assemblies (P1 & P2)

Feb 13th Taste of Black culture over lunches

Feb 13th Semi-formal dance

**Feb 14th PA Day**

**Feb 17th Family Day**

Feb 19th Ontario Shores Trip (Mr. Mayers, Ms. Cayford)

Feb 19th Auto Show Trip (Mr. Sorbilli, Mr. Greco)

Feb 19th Café Cabaret Tryouts

Feb 20th Couse Selections Due

Feb 20th, 24th Grade 12 Retreat

Feb 20th LOSSA Jr Basketball

Feb 20th Wrestling LOSSA

Feb 20th Student Council Admin Meeting

Feb 25th Black History Month Assemblies (Motivational Speaker)

Feb 26th Pascal Cayley Fermat Math Contest

May 4th – 9th Catholic Education Week

May 7th Mass with Cardinal Francis Leo has been confirmed.

May Month is dedicated to Mother Mary

**Financial Report:** E. Povolo

**Balance to Start the Year: $19,074.14**

**Balance as of November 5th: $18,094.14**

**Spent: $2,265.18**

Flowers for Council Member $75.71

Christmas Outreach $2,000.00

Grade 8 Night $189.47

**Raised: $85.00**

Used Uniform Sales: $85.00

**Current Balance (Feb 4th, 2025):** **$15,913.96**

**\*\* $2000 has been earmarked for Grad gift. \*\***

**Funding Requests to Parent Council: M. Wilson-Clark**

• Mr. DiFonzo:

* + Requesting **$1,000** for hearing protection for up to **24 students**.
	+ Currently in discussions with suppliers.

• Mr. Pisani:

* + Received funding from the City of Pickering for soil and plants for the outdoor classroom.
	+ Requesting **$2,000–$3,000** (pending supplier quotes) for a permanent pathway to improve accessibility (currently mulch).
	+ **Question:** Isn’t this something facilities pay for at the board level?
	+ **Answer:** Unfortunately, no. Since this is a unique, additional space, it falls outside the board’s responsibility.

**R. Sadler & M. Wilson-Clark** will discuss funding requests outside the council meeting. An update will be provided at the next meeting in early April.

Grad gifts & bursaries are to be discussed at the next council.

**Parish Update (St. Isaac Jogues):** D. Simonelli

No Update

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| **OTHER ITEMS** |

**School Tour**: Mr. Di Vizio will lead a tour at **6:00 PM** on **April 1st** for those interested, one hour before the next Council meeting.

A parent praised the **Grade 9 Information Night** in early January, highlighting the **engaging** **presentation** and the **welcoming, excellent student tour guides**, who were informed and entertaining.

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| **ADJOURNMENT** |

**Closing Prayer:** J. Di Vizio

**Meeting Adjourned**: 9:10 PM

Next St. Mary CSS Council Meeting

Tuesday April 1st @ 7:00 pm – St. Mary’s Learning Commons

*St. Mary CSS Parent Council meetings usually take place on the first Tuesday 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.*