

**Walter and Gladys Hill School Council**

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 24th, 2021

**Meeting Minutes\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Present:** Diana Noble (Chair), Andrea Hall (Secretary), Swapnil Sharma (Parent Council Advisory), Marie McKay (Director at Large), Julie Dolmont (?), Brendan Toner (Principal), Robert Skulsky (Vice Principal), Melbourne Freya Fourny, Tiffany Lavechia, Shannon Smith, “Naika/Melbourne”

1. Diana Noble called to order the regular meeting of the Walter and Gladys Hill at 6:33 p.m. on November 24th. Shared Treaty 8 Land Acknowledgement
2. Introductions: round table to introduce ourselves by name, children attending the school and one thing that people may not know about you
3. Review & Approval of Agenda: Marie motioned to approve; Freya seconded the motion - motion carried
4. Review & Approval of Meeting Minutes: Andrea motioned to approve; Swapnil seconded the motion - motion carried
5. Principals Report (Brendan):

* COVID vaccinations:
  + Now that vaccines for children aged 5-11 have been approved, want to clarify that there will be no vaccinations at the school without written permission by the parent, just like with every other vaccine.
  + We have seen schools participating in the vaccination process in the district – ex. at McTavish – so it is possible that there will be some role for the school to play in that space, but there is no direction from the district yet.
  + As of January 17th, a district administrative policy will be in effect, requiring staff and visitors to be vaccinated.
  + The specifics are being finalized, but this policy will likely apply more to participating in school activities vs. things like dropping off lunches. Where a criminal record check is required, likely a vaccination status check will be as well.
  + The school will begin loosening up restrictions around gym space and access to the school. For example, school council meetings could potentially be held in person in the new year. In preliminary discussions on next steps.
* COVID travelling requirements:
  + With the vaccine now available for children aged 5-11, people may start to consider international travel.
  + Currently, if your child is 5 or under, no quarantine is required provided both parents are vaccinated; we need to wait for federal guidance on quarantine requirements for children 6-11.
* Remind App:
  + The school is trying to get all parents on board for the Remind app – which is an instant way to communicate with families.
  + This is the last year the app will be used as it is very expensive.
  + Teachers could use for free in the past, but the school invested in this for regular, school-wide communications like morning weather conditions, bus delays, etc.
  + While we are using it, we would like to get as many people on board. Remind App code: @3977gd
  + Question from Tiffany: today was the first cold warning for early entry. Can we stipulate which door kids can go in? Answer from Robert: the policy is that if the temperature is below -30, students can enter using the closest door. Temperatures -24 to -30 – students to enter using their own doors. Going forward, this can be included in the Remind notifications for clarity.
* Digital Report Cards:
  + Report cards will now be available online. This is an efficient way to get report cards out and reduces risk associated with worldwide shortage of photocopier toner. This will save time and money.
  + ECDP will maintain a paper record, but K-6 is digital
  + This will drive parents to the PowerSchool app, which has been closed while teachers get their report cards in, but will reopen on Friday.
* Holiday Concert Update:
  + Three virtual concerts this year: Dec 13 ECDP and Kindergarten (?), Dec 14th Division 1 and December 15th Division 2
  + Using Facebook live, the virtual concerts will release at 6:30 p.m.
  + The music teacher is working with each class on a song
  + Comment from Robert: because we haven’t been able to have people in person, as things loosen in the new year, we could look at doing a spring concert or something to bring parents & families back to the school. Staff and parents are missing these in-person experiences.

1. Friends of Ravens Update (Freya):
   * School clothing arrived this week and was distributed to the classrooms
   * Dec 2nd Growing Smiles flower order will arrive; December 3rd will be the pickup. There is a meeting of the Friends of Ravens tomorrow to finalize pick up details
   * At tomorrow’s meeting, they will also decide on fundraisers for the year and get moving on getting volunteers for the casino well in advance, as historically this has been a struggle.
   * Comment from Swapnil: as this is such a multicultural school, christmasy fundraisers do not appeal to everyone. Perhaps items that are more general would appeal to all the cultures. Answer from Freya: this would be possible – any suggestions on more inclusive initiatives would be welcome. The Growing Smiles Christmas arrangements has been historically very successful, so they keep doing it.
   * Question from Tiffany: do we still have the Growing Smiles ongoing online order system that we could start advertising? Answer from Freya: she will have to follow up but don’t think it exists anymore. Fundraising could be more local, but the group needs input.
2. Roundtable - Parking Lot Issues:
   * Diana: It takes a long time to exit the parking lot if turning left onto Sandpiper, backing everyone up and creating a bottleneck in the YMCA parking lot – is there anything we can do to improve traffic flow?
   * Robert: the school has asked if the city could come by and do a traffic audit, but nothing came of it. The lot is usually cleared by 8:08 a.m. and 2:55 p.m, and the main priority to keep it safe. Usually people are kind and courteous. The squeaky wheel gets the grease, so parents getting into the pulse line or approaching council would help - but the school can’t mandate traffic rules
   * Freya: with the new council, may be a good time to ask for support.
   * Shannon: the current set up is much better than in the first few years the school was open.
   * Question from Tiffany: When the city looked into it previously, was there any opportunity to use the fire lane? Robert: not sure if is feasible as kids from W&G and St. Kateri are accessing the doors, snow removal is a concern.
   * Diana: approaching council is good plan.
3. Round table: what would you like to see for a 2021/2022 focus?
   * Diana: parent council Facebook page - everyone should follow this if they aren’t already and invite parents you know to follow. One suggestion she has heard was around increasing the park space.
   * Swapnil: now that COVID restrictions are easing, it would be nice to be able to reintroduce extra curricular activities – like ski trips to the school, after school activities. Brendan: there are 3-4 things ready to roll out, but right now the barrier is not being able to mix cohorts. Once that is lifted, they should be able to do after school clubs.
   * Freya: The park is definitely on the top of the list. Last year there were meetings with RMWB to look at a more inclusive space. Perhaps we could revisit this and the parking lot/traffic issues at the same time. Get the councillors out to take a look at both.
   * Marie: getting back into the school for volunteering and the community events like Chinese New Year.
   * Julie: similar to Marie, looking forward to being able to get into the school and participate.
   * Andrea: would like to be able to attend assemblies.
   * Shannon: Hot lunch expanded to two days a week; very happy to have it back.
   * Tiffany: hot lunch, parent involvement engaging with classroom, attending the assemblies/concerts and the inclusive playground. There were a lot of people in the communities looking forward to having a more inclusive playground, not just from the school but also the community
   * Robert: reintroduction of tech and trade, robotics, parents in the school
4. Round table: How can we increase parent engagement?
   * Shannon: communications have been tough; there were some historical issues with the original council/friends of ravens. Admin encouraging participation would help – there are no teachers involved with the council.
   * Swapnil: periodic surveys to get feedback would be helpful to get information on what is important to them, what is missing. Surveys are a neutral way of getting a connection and people may feel more open to express their thoughts. We could include a request for permission to send email or follow up.
   * Marie: survey is a good idea, people are much more likely to engage if they have to do a 30 second survey vs. attend an hour long meeting.
   * Andrea: many people don’t understand what is in it for them with the council or the Friends of Raven. Could include this type of communication with the survey.
   * Diana: look at pushing some information on social media - need to explain to people what the council does.
   * Julie: being asked increases engagement. Reaching out to our networks - that is why people volunteer - they get asked.
   * Freya: the council used to have a table set up and surveys for the parents at parent teacher nights. Now, everyone is used to doing everything online, so there would be uptake on a digital survey. Encourage outgoing network members to show up – like Shannon.
   * Freya: we used to do something called Feature Teachers: we would invite representatives from Division 1 and Division 2 to come to alternate meetings to get their feedback. Also looked at having a parent rep to bring forward things from their child’s classroom for each classroom – this could be something that you pose. Also could open up a 2-way communication to get Parent Council information back to the parents?
   * Diana: could we stream the Parent Council meetings on Facebook and that may prompt people to join online? We could look at streaming to both the parent council page and the W&G school page. Could stream to both pages?
   * Brendan: YouTube is streamed with the success through the district. This could encourage more passive observers to join the meetings more regularly. The more we target, the more will get involved. McTavish does stream their Parent Council Meetings.
   * Robert: we are moving to a new website provider for the school website - so there may be new options for streaming straight through the school website.
   * Diana: even if we are in person we could stream.
5. Round table: What partnerships can the school create this year?
   * Swapnil: we could look at a partnership with Toastmasters; encourage a debate club and improve confidence in public speaking
   * Shannon: is Some Other Solutions (SOS) still doing peer mentoring through the schools since COVID? Brenan: SOS has been in the past, Girls Inc. has recently done a presentation on economic literacy. Teachers have reached out to Centre of Hope, Angel Trees.
   * There are a number of community partnerships that are in existence. Very important.
   * Freya: Could we partner junior high/high school for tutoring? Bring in some kids or groups that help with tutoring to help with things, preparing grade 6s for the PETs.
   * Tiffany: have we ever engaged with the Rainbows club? This organization helps kids who are experiencing grief or divorce. Robert: <https://www.rainbows.ca>
   * Marie: Pre-COVID, there was a group (maybe the Metis Association?) who would come and share things with the kids about the outdoors and indigenous traditions – ex. a bonfire where the kindergarteners got to make bannock. This was a good opportunity: Brendan: that was Robert Grandjam from Ft. Chip. The school district does have something called “Land-based learning” that they support.
6. Next meeting: January 26, 2022
7. Meeting Adjourned 7:47 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Andrea Hall

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Minutes approved by: Diana Noble

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