



Walter and Gladys Hill School Council

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 26, 2022

Meeting Minutes

Present: Diana Noble (Chair), Andrea Hall (Secretary), Swapnil Sharma (Parent Council Advisory), Marie McKay (Director at Large), Brian Mullaly (interim-Principal), Robert Skulsky (Vice Principal), Kriscinda Maki (Director at Large), Christina Oxamitny (Director at Large), Leslie Booker (Guest), Elena Gould (Casino Chair Friends of Ravens)

1. Diana Noble called to order the regular meeting of the Walter and Gladys Hill at 6:31 p.m. on January 26.
2. Review & Approval of Agenda: Brian motioned to approve; Swapnil seconded the motion - motion carried.
3. Review & Approval of Meeting Minutes: Marie motioned to approve; Christina seconded the motion - motion carried.
4. Principals Report (Brian Mullally):
 - Introduction:
 - He has been at Walter & Gladys for the last three weeks while Mr. Toner is away; has found it to be welcoming school
 - He officially retired in 2017 but has assisted the school board in administrative positions as required since
 - Time makeup from the holiday extension:
 - No update from school officials as to whether students will be required to make up the extra week off at winter break; will advise if an update is provided
 - In his experience, usually there is no make up in circumstances like this
 - Parent Teacher Interviews:
 - Feb 16th is the earlier day 3:30-6:30 p.m. for PTIs, February 17 is the later day 5:00-8:00 p.m.
 - Same format as they have been for the year: virtual or phone call

- The administration prefers the zoom meets as there are only so many phone lines
- New PTI website went live in December; less confusing and allows siblings to be scheduled at the same time
- Parking lot management:
 - Seems less chaotic due to the current reduced attendance
 - Brian isn't up to speed on the issue; will have to table for the next meeting
- Updates to extra-curricular activities and parent involvement:
 - Inter-school basketball (grade 5/6); Mr. Smith has begun practices
 - Skiing is being looked at; potential dates have been identified for W&G (Grade 6) but reviewing to ensure they can go ahead within COVID restrictions
 - Science Fair – virtual format (February 23, 24, and 25)
 - Visits to Heritage park for grade 4 students

5. Friends of Ravens Update (Elena):

- Casino February 24 and 25th
- Since the sign up for volunteers was launched, the casino has implemented a mandatory vaccination requirement for all volunteers; this has impacted some volunteers who aren't vaccinated
- We need to share on social media; ask family and friends
- The casino has temporarily amended hours of operation, which impacts the volunteer schedule. Elena will be updating and sending the amended schedule to volunteers. Updating the sign-up genius.
- Volunteers needed:
 - Thursday evening 9:00-1:30 – 5 positions need to be filled
 - Friday evening late shift – need 7 positions
- The money raised by the Casino is provided on request to teachers – the society recently approved learning resources (example literacy, sensory room resources). Items not covered by district or Alberta education.
- There is a Volunteer application form that must be filled out – you must declare you have no criminal record
- Question (Emilie): Is the link the same? Elana to revise the sign up and email the link to Brian.
- The school to send out the signup link and request volunteers through Remind

6. Meet a Teacher: Mrs. Booker

- A recommendation from our previous council meeting was to invite a teacher to the meeting to engage with the Parent Council
- Introduction: Moved here in 1998 and was hired immediately
- Taught at several schools and was the first FMPD employee seconded to Edmonton, where she did a behavior consulting role here in town – but the paycheck came from Edmonton.
- Following that role, Leslie was a coordinator for Early Learning. After the fire, she returned to the classroom. She is our Reggio inspired ECDP teacher, at W&G for 5 years.
- Question (Christina): What is your favorite part of the day? *Monday morning, seeing the kids all lined up outside. Fridays they do cooking which is fun. She is missing the Reggio family nights due to Covid.*
- Question (Andrea): How is everyone managing with the Covid protocols in ECDP. *It was a very rough September. They are our COVID kids and haven't that socialization. For some this is the first time they have left the house or mom and dads. A lot of crying, kids not wanting the parents to let go. Lots of anxiety. They are adjusting and settling in very well. Using "Germ Juice" (v. "hand sanitizer"), learning about germs, how to sneeze. Always cleaning. The kids are in close contact – not many can wear the mask, hard to manage. They are aware of Covid and worry if Mrs. Booker is not in the classroom.*
- Question (Diana): Any advice on how to help these COVID kids? Kids not learning as consistently as they normally would? How to mitigate kids falling behind? *Leslie sends out weekly emails so that parents know what they are doing every day. Using seesaw, pay attention to correspondence. It is some burden on the parents to help them catch up. Reading, reading, reading. Kids will eventually get caught up provided there is no disability. Can we do some extra work, some activity. Reach out to the teacher – anything to do at home? Go to the Parent Teacher Interviews.*
- Other: it is Recruitment time for this age group – they really are the foundation of the school. Most families will stay until grade 6 when they start in ECDP. Such an important age for the school. Registrations for children born in 2018 to come to school in September. Virtual ECDP open house in March. Spread the word, recommend to anyone with kids born in 2018.

7. Roundtable – How to make the hot lunch program better:

- A few parental concerns about the hot lunch program. Some kids didn't get what they ordered. Food late or not hot.

- A parent volunteer runs the website – orders come in, she collates and submits orders with the vendors, then prints off labels and class summary sheets for the staff
- Vendors bring the food in big boxes and it gets labelled and distributed
- 15 classes in the school – usually 12 orders/class
- Pizza is one item so easier; multiple items slows things down
- Organizing the tags ahead of time has helped, but it takes 30+ minutes to prep and 10 to distribute
- Question (Christina): Is this a 2-3 person job? *Emilie has gotten some help because she is on supervision as well. Some teachers have been able to help.*
- Question (Swapnil): Could we use lunch leaders from Division 2 to help distribute and help? *Emilie – that idea was discussed but there is a cohorting issue, and the kids would be missing instructional time. Another concern is around grade 6's handling food – not appropriate for them to be doing at this time. Staff has done the AHS food safety course and have inspections with the breakfast program. The recommendation at the last inspection was to ensure that everyone working with food should have this course.*
- Comment (Diana): Are there too many options being provided? Maybe right now is not the time to have so much choice.
- Comment (Swapnil): the amount of choice has increased substantially over time. Now we have many vendors. Keep the popular vendors and choices.
- Comment (Marie): agree. The list of options has grown.
- Question (Krisinda): Can we not have fully vaccinated parent volunteers, along with a rapid test to ensure volunteers are COVID free? *Brian – this is a school board regulation. The AP49 lists out all of the restrictions. It is reviewed once/month to ensure alignment to provincial regulations. Heightened sense of security to keep non-essential people out of school buildings. Will review in February.*
- Question: what would be more manageable for the staff? (Diana) *Emilie – it is the sides that is the issue. If there was a set combo in one container would that help. So far everything comes separate and the staff has to put them together for the kids. If the vendor could package as a meal then it would be easy. Multiple items slow things down.*
- Andrea motioned that Diana should have a meeting with the Parent Volunteer to discuss streamlining the hot lunch options/asking vendors to group items together to make it easier for the staff to manage. Swapnil seconded the motion. Motion carried. We will get an update from administration in the March meeting on the hot lunch situation.

Round table – Parent concerns?

- Question (Christina): Recent report on what teachers are looking to do next year indicates that there are 1/3 of teachers planning to leave the profession? Is there anything we can do to show our appreciation?
- Comment (Diana): should we invite some to the parent council meeting to have a roundtable? *Mr. Skulsky – inviting teachers to the parent teacher meeting would help. It would demonstrate that parents are interested in their kids' education, want to be involved, do appreciate what the teachers do. It is a partnership and the best results are achieved when everyone is pushing in the same direction. We rely on each other for the partnership.*
- Comment (Swapnil): we talked about going live on Facebook – could we try that? *Diana: Looking to stream the meeting on Facebook next time around.*
- Comment: could we do a link or thread where people can drop in comments to share appreciation. Comment on how they appreciate and how much we value them – like a testimonial.
- Comment (Christina): great idea, this would encourage parents to interact with the page.
- Comment (Brian): I appreciate the question. No matter what profession you are in, everyone wants to feel appreciated for the job they do. It is nice for a teacher to get appreciation from parents. Recently Friends of Ravens put approved two requests for some ideas on ways to show appreciation. In advance, thank you. Valentines day, international women's day, world teacher day are coming up – these are opportunities for parents individually or collectively to show appreciation.
- Action: Diana to draft a letter to the teachers to invite them and explain what we are doing.

Round table – potential risk of learning going online?

- Question (Marie): how is staffing going at Walter & Gladys. Any chance that our classes may go online at this time? *Brian – we don't know whether we will be going online or not. The importance of kids being in school is recognized and going online is a last resort. The intent is to keep kids in school. The superintendent can direct individual classes to go online to address COVID hot spots. For the school district to close, that would be from the minister of education and COVID rates would have to be high for that to happen. Staffing has been difficult – very hard to maintain a full complement of staff. Brian has had to request getting a teacher who was seconded to the board office to come and assist in the classroom. This made it manageable, but it has been a scramble since Christmas. The school is just managing with 6, 7, 8, staff absent at a time. Data from other countries who have experienced Omicron earlier than us indicates that we are in a spike right now, but that it going to level off.*

Round table: Joint Networks Meeting:

- Joint networks meeting on February 1/2022. 6:30 pm. for Fort McMurray school council members, chair, another person. All of the school councils within the community.
- Andrea to attend, Diana to send agenda/meeting request.

8. Next meeting: **February 23, 2022**

9. Meeting Adjourned 7:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Andrea Hall

Minutes approved by: Diana Noble
