

Connaught School Council Meeting – Draft Minutes

Date and Time: October 15, 2019, 7:00 pm

Location: Connaught Public School Library

In Attendance:

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Staff: | Caretta Williams DeAveiro, Principal; Minou Morley, Vice Principal; Michelle Richardson, Teacher Representative. |
| Parents: | Sophia Wong, Chair; Laura Hurst, Treasurer; Melissa Black, Secretary; Kerry Barnes, Brian Cockburn, Heidi Feenstra, Heather Hammond, Jennifer Joliffe, Francis Otarola, Catherine Pirie, Danica Rogers, Callie Sanderson, Andrea Villeneuve, Matt Villeneuve. |
| Other: | |

1. Call to Order, Approval of Minutes, Approval of Agenda

- Draft agenda – **Approved**
- Minutes from September 17th meeting – **Approved**

2. Principal's Report (Caretta Williams DeAveiro)

- **EQAO Results (from June 2019):**
 - Grade 3 and 6 results were above both Board and provincial standards in reading, writing and mathematics again this year.
 - There was a slight decrease in Connaught's Grade 3 writing test results and declines in Grade 6 reading, writing and math results as compared to 2017-2018.
 - Moving forward, staff will be delving into individual scoring and will formalize a mathematical goal for the School Learning Plan. As always, parent involvement in the process is encouraged. Parents who are interested in participating, can reach out to Caretta and Minou.
- **PD Day (October 11, 2019):**
 - The morning began with an outdoor smudge ceremony followed by a series of activities that focused on the curriculum and on creating *conditions for learning*.
 - In the afternoon, staff received training from the Canadian Centre for Child Protection on their *Commit to Kids Program*. The program educates and creates awareness around sexual abuse and reinforces the need to report troubling behaviors or situations.

- Discussion:
 - A parent mentioned that she had attended the October 10th presentation on "[Protecting Your Child: Reducing the Risk of Sexual Abuse](#)" by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection. The presentation, which was part of the OCDSB Speakers Series, focused on helping parents/guardians better understand the issue of child sexual abuse and the importance of reporting.
 - In Canada, individuals who work with children are obligated to report suspicions of child abuse and investigations are done by law enforcement and child welfare agencies. It was mentioned that any incidents/situations observed within the Connaught Community should be reported to Caretta and Minou.
 - It was also mentioned that all schools in the City of Ottawa, including Connaught, are assigned a School Resource Officer (SRO) as part of a city-wide program administered by the Ottawa Police Services. The SRO is a personal police contact for a school, whose role is to provide support to the school community as a whole, which includes students, parents, school staff and administrators.
- **Budget**
 - Connaught's 2019-2020 budget is \$30 270, a \$505 increase from last year. Detailed information on the budget will be shared in the Spring.
- **Safety:**
 - The second of three annual practice fire drills took place on October 10th at 11:30 am. The first Lockdown practice will take place on October 30th at 10 am.
 - Connaught's Emergency Evacuation Site is Parkdale United Church.
- **Education Week (Minou):**
 - During the week of May 4-8, parents will be invited to attend a vernissage that will showcase artwork created by students. The event will also be a fundraiser for the school and will offer parents the opportunity to purchase students' work. The event will be themed around Canada's five regions and inspired by Indigenous artists from the various regions.
 - A call out for parent volunteers will go out closer to the date.

3. Teachers' Report (Update)

Kinders:

- ***Inquiries – Baking, Shapes, Human Body*** - Students made muffins which allowed them to access the curriculum by reading recipes and measuring ingredients and cooking times; they also participated in a "Shape Walk" to

identify shapes in the environment surrounding the school; finally, some students enjoyed a visit from an ER doctor to explore the human body as a classroom inquiry topic.

- **Orange Shirt Day** (September 30th) – Students participated in an assembly which discussed the effects of Residential Schools and the legacy they left behind.

Primary and Junior:

- **Field Trips** (Gr 1 and 2) – Grade 1 classes went apple picking which included a focus on certain components of the curriculum; Some Grade 2 classes went to Gatineau Park as part of their Water Cycle project.
- **Reading Buddies** (Gr 1) – Students have been assigned Reading Buddies at the grade 4 and 5 levels and have started meeting with them.
- **Composting** (Gr 3) – Students are working on individual composters and are journaling about topics such as soil composition and natural recycling.
- **Ottawa Writers Festival** (Gr 3-6) – Students from several classes are participating in the *Republic of Childhood* writing workshop with poet Pearl Pirie and author Alan Cumyn. “Sharing events” for parents are planned for November 20-22.
- **Visit from the Chief Electoral Officer** (Gr 5-6) – Students enjoyed a visit from Stéphane Perreault, Chief Electoral Officer and from members of CIVIX, a non-partisan charity dedicated to engaging youth in the democratic process. The junior students at Connaught will be casting their parallel ballots in the *Student Vote 2019* on October 17th.

Extra-curricular:

- **Visits to Grace Manor** – Kinder students will be visiting Grace Manor on October 24th to sing to the residents.
- **Greenelicious** – Students in grades 3 and 4 have started working on various Greenelicious initiatives including harvesting lettuce from the vegetable towers, and producing kale chips (for sale) from the vegetable garden.
- **Sports Teams:**
 - **Soccer** (October 15) – Grade 6 boys won the Tier 2 level.
 - **Cross Country** (October 22) – Students from grades 3-6 have started practicing two mornings a week. The competition will take place again this year at the Terry Fox Athletic Facility at Mooney’s Bay.
- **Nature Education Centre:**
 - Harvesting of the garden continues to take place. Grade 3 students delivered swiss chard to the Parkdale Food Centre (PFC).

- Thanks again to parents for tending the garden over the summer. Plans going forward include organizing a cleanup party (early November) to put the garden to rest.
- The shed was re-keyed last week; all teachers now have access to it with their classroom keys.

4. Treasurer's Report (Laura & Andrea)

- **Highlights for the month:**

- **Revenues:**

- Pizza Day Round 1 commenced; tracking favorably to last year's trend. Projected \$2500 net for first pizza round.

- **Spending:**

- \$1500 contribution to water fountain/bottle refilling station – Still pending
- \$400 spending request for on-line current events-related resources for French Immersion classes (raised in the September meeting). **Decision:** To be funded by school, not by council.

- **Spending Requests:**

- Discussions took place on spending priorities for the year.
 - Close to \$18 000 is still available from the school yard renewal fundraising campaign. Initiatives planned for 2019-2020 (e.g. bulletin board, chalk board for Nature Education Centre, Music Garden Flowers, weather station) are projected to cost about \$8000.
 - School Bus Expenses: It was pointed out that the cost of bus transportation has doubled since last year. While staff will take advantage of less costly transportation options (e.g. Presto pass, parent volunteers) additional contributions from council would be appreciated to support field trips outside of the city (e.g. Upper Canada).
 - Teachers' Expenses: Even though council has budgeted \$100 per teacher for classroom expenses, it was pointed out that not all teachers submit expenses for reimbursement. Those that do, often submit closer to the end of the year after prompting by council. To support council in its forecasting, it was suggested that teachers be reminded about the funds available and encouraged to use them. Council is open to ideas on simplifying the receipt submission process if needed

- It was discussed that council support would still be appreciated for IT-related expenses.
- Given that Council currently has some funding capacity available, a suggestion was made to create a master “wishlist” comprising the top priorities of staff and other recently received requests (e.g. school bus requests, more balls for the yard, volleyball nets) in order to help to better understand the universe of needs and to prioritize spending accordingly. This will be further developed in the coming days and weeks.
- **Treasurer’s Transition and School Website:**
 - Andrea now has access to the school council email account and has attended two training sessions. She has also received training related to maintaining the School Council section of the website and is able to make updates as needed.
 - Council will explore the possibility of using a cloud-based version of Quicken to manage the council’s finances.

5. Committee Updates

- **Events and Fundraisers**
 - **Halloween Movie Night**, Karen Monaghan (October 25th) – The movie Trolls will be shown. Leadership Club to set up an Information Table again this year.
 - **Citrus Fundraiser**, Mark Scrivens (October-November) – Event added to HotLuches.com website; forms went home today in the backpack express. Proceeds will go towards the Gr 6 overnight trip to MacSkimming in January and the graduation ceremony in June.
 - **Scholastic Book Fair**, Laura Hurst (November 13-15) – Will be one week earlier than in previous years and will take place once again during the Parent/Teacher interview period. Because of the small selection of French books available through Scholastic at this time of the year, other options, including a separately sourced French book list, are being explored. Laura, Caretta and Elliot Poole to look further into these options.
 - **Multicultural Potluck**, Jennifer Joliffe and Heidi Feenstra (November 27 or 28) – Request to hold the event earlier this year to offset families’ busy December schedules,
 - **Stone Soup** – Lead volunteer has still not been identified. Council will reach out to the parent community on Facebook and through a flyer in

the backpack express. If volunteers are not identified by January, the event may need to be cancelled for this year.

- **Active Transportation** (winter and spring events) – Darcie Doan has offered to lead the event; Francis Otarola has offered to help.

- **Schoolyard Renewal**

- “To Do” items identified included placing orders for an outdoor Bulletin Board and a chalk board for the Nature Education Centre and the purchase of Music Garden Flowers (as per S’Cool grant).
- Staff confirmed that a new bike rack and an outdoor weather station had been ordered. It was also confirmed that new outdoor balls were required as many of the existing ones are damaged.
- Ideas for projects going forward include:
 - Installing and painting fiberglass and plaster tulips recently acquired from the City of Ottawa.
 - Research grant opportunities for interior and exterior art projects (e.g. entry way and stairway window stained glass, 1st floor wall mural, mural for the Nook)
- Junior Play Structure – it was mentioned that the play structure, installed in 2002, would be soon nearing the end of its life cycle. Council will request an assessment by the Board to determine actual number of years remaining for planning purposes.

6. Club Updates

- **Tech Club – New (Matt Villeneuve)**

- Matt, a parent of a JK student at Connaught and a Quality Assurance Manager, presented ideas for the creation of a new club to help engage students in IT and to develop their skills. Options discussed included:
 - Coding for younger children using visual (drag and drop) programming languages (e.g. Scratch Jr).
 - Coding for older kids using text-based languages (e.g. Python, Lego Mindstorm, Scratch).
 - Conducting stand-alone projects, possibly in robotics design, and incorporating the principals of the software design lifecycle (e.g. planning, design, implement, test, maintenance, etc.).
- It was mentioned that the Tech Club could complement the Scratch Club which is currently offered to junior students during recess periods. It could take place after school for one hour a week and could probably accommodate up to 25 students depending on the age group.
- Next Steps: Matt to reach out to Sophie Desmarais (Scratch Club) to discuss collaboration between the two clubs.

- **Leadership Club (Michelle Richardson)**
 - Students will organize the Good Food Red Box Campaign from Oct 28 to Nov 1 to collect food and financial donations for the PFC.
 - **Ask:** Parents are being asked to donate any red milk crates they may have.
- **Environment Club (Marie-Eve Larocque, Sophie Desmarais)**
 - Students will be making “litterless lunch” presentations to classes.
- **Indigenous School Alliance (Minou Morley)**
 - Students will meet on Fridays.
- **Scratch Club (Sophie Desmarais)**
 - Open to Juniors. Students meet during 25 minute recess breaks to learn and practice their coding skills.

7. Key Dates

- Next Meeting : November 19, 2019