

Connaught School Council Meeting – Draft Minutes

Date and Time: February 18, 2020, 7:00 pm

Location: Connaught Public School Library

In Attendance:

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|-----------------|---|
| Staff: | Kim Simpson, Principal, Minou Morley, Vice Principal. <i>Note: Michelle Richardson, Teacher Representative, was absent due to ETFO strike action.</i> |
| Parents: | Sophia Wong, Chair; Laura Hurst, Treasurer; Andrea Villeneuve, Treasurer (in training); Melissa Black, Secretary; Kerry Barnes, Brian Cockburn, Elizabeth Eagen, Jennifer Joliffe, Catherine Pirie, Karina Roman, Callie Sanderson, Mark Scrivens |
| Other: | |

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

- Draft agenda – **Approved**
- Minutes from January 21st meeting – **Approved**

2. Principal’s Report (Kim Simpson)

• Labour Relations Update

- There will be no term 2 report cards. However, marks were collected and reviewed, and communication will be sent home if there is a concern.
- Individual Education Plans (IEP) will go home on Feb 24th. While teachers completed them, there were impacts from the labour action in terms of printing, etc.
- There will be a full walkout on Friday Feb 21st; Kim and Minou will be at school for the full day. *Note: To date school closures have taken place: December 4, January 15 & 20, February 5 & 6.*
- Everyone has been very professional and respectful throughout the process. Parents are encouraged to check the Labour Relations page on OCDSB website for more information.
- Discussion:
 - Given the cancellation of the Grade 6 sleepover at MacSkimming, it was asked if a **substitute activity**, such as an outing to the Girl

Guides' Camp Wolseley, would be a possibility. Kim to inquire with the board and return to the group with further information.

- A parent asked about council's responsibility to inform parents about the government's [compensation program](#) for child care costs incurred from strike action. After a group discussion, council executive members agreed to include the program link to the School Council section of the Connaught's website. It was further discussed that donations of this money could be made to the school (they would be deposited into the general account and distributed where needed).

- **Planning for 2020-2021**

- Parents have been asked to indicate their **Intentions** for programming and school location (e.g. Kinder to grade 1, and grade 6 to grade 7)
- Transfers – Connaught is a zero cap site, meaning that no more students can be accepted for next year. Early projections for next year are for 379 students - which is considered stable. The current population is 387.
- Teachers are indicating their **Assignment Preferences** for next year now. Assignment preferences for other staff will take place later in the spring.
- A **staff bulletin** will be sent to teachers every Friday; also, a **staff survey** process will be started to facilitate the collection of information from classes on issues such as wish list requests. Surveys will take place as needed (Note: staff are free to submit requests at any time to Kim as well). It was mentioned that if council wishes to consult with staff, they can provide information to Kim as part of the survey process.

- **Finances**

- Kim recently participated in a personal training session with an OCDSB Senior Financial Analyst.
- The session focused on transparency and process around the management, monitoring and use of school council funds and oversight of fundraising activities.
- She informed the group that the requirements for school council generated funds are the same as those for other school generated funds (e.g. milk and popcorn sales, etc.).

- **Current Events**

- **Kinder Information Night** took place on January 30th. There was good turnout and thanks go out to Andrea and Lindsay for representing council. There are currently 29 students registered for next year.

- Discussion: Andrea mentioned that some parents were very enthusiastic about joining council; a suggestion was made to do a follow up with parents who expressed interest in volunteering at the next Kinder Information Night (May 7th) and to initiate the nomination process for next year's council positions.
 - Next steps: update school council nominee form for discussion/distribution at next meeting.
 - **Art of Play**, an after school social skills group, is taking place. Seven students are participating.
 - A **data tracking** session for EAs and ECEs took place to discuss frequency and informational data collection and analysis.
 - **Algonquin College nursing students** completed their practical learning assignment. There was a huge interest in the program based on the number of forms sent back.
 - Discussion: Following the question raised at the January meeting, it was confirmed that information collected by nurses was for training purposes only, but that it would be shared with families of participating students. After the assignment is completed, the college destroys the information.
 - The **Milk Program** is up and running for the 2nd round. Proceeds are going towards the purchase of science materials.
 - A reminder that February 26th is the **Winter Walk day**. Students are encouraged to walk to school with funny hats and noisemakers. Feb 26th is also **Pink Shirt Day**.
- **Follow up from January Meeting**
 - Kim followed up with Laura regarding outstanding items including Scientists in Schools (Thank you!) and the work orders for the outdoor bulletin board and chalk/white board – which are on hold until the snow is gone.
 - She also provided information on several items discussed at the January meeting with respect to planning for upcoming events, art projects and spending requests:
 - **Learning Commons** - Gillian from Burovision came to the school for a tour on Jan 28. She sees Connaught as a good fit for their 'Get Inspired' project and will follow up with Kim after talking with her team. Kim reached out to the Board facilities team to inquire about the feasibility of the project; they said that it should be fine as long as there were no structural changes.

- **Green screen** - teachers are interested but are requesting that it be installed in a low traffic area where they would have the ability to control sound, etc.
- **School Council Resource Room** - EAs worked on it so there is more space.
- Crossing Guard needed as per School Messenger message.
- **Request** for 5 more wobble stools for grade 6 classroom (**\$621**) – bring total number in school to 13.
 - Decision: **Approved**
- **Request** for two Tech Tubs (secure and portable storage for Chromebooks)
 - Discussion took place on whether to order 2 small bins or one large; both options would cost **~\$700**; staff to decide best option.
 - Decision: **Approved**
- **Request** for Skate storage system in equipment room (and for parent volunteers to install it).
 - Discussion took place around the risk of exposed blades and some inexpensive options, such as bins, to address it. Kim to confirm details including number of skates that require storage, space options, etc. for next meeting.
- **Individual Teacher Funds** – Possibility of changing this for next year so that items would be vetted through the office.
 - Discussion: Staff noted that items purchased through the funds are considered as school resources which need to meet certain criteria (labelling, inventory, ownership, guidelines, etc.) and respect the board’s vendor contracts. A parent responded by noting that increasing bureaucracy for a small \$ amount might discourage teachers from using the fund. Sophia to put out a call on OCASC to find out how other councils manage.
- **Popcorn sales** - Questions around the school’s sale of popcorn with respect to transparency (express purpose for the funds raised), environmental impact (packaging) and whether or not the initiative respects the “healthy schools” requirements. Staff will be re-evaluating the initiative.

3. Teachers’ Report (Minou Morley)

Primary and Junior:

- **Outdoor Learning** (Kinders) – Students played games (using bean bags) to support learning about team work and taking turns; also explored the shapes of snowflakes by catching them on black paper and examining them with magnifying glasses.
- **Math** (Kinders) – Students have been hunting around the school for objects shaped like spheres, cylinders, pyramids and cones.
- **Scientists in Schools Workshops:**
 - **Strong & Stable Structures** (Gr. 3) Took place on February 19th; student challenge was to create strong and stable cube in class and to write a procedure so that their parents could “re” build it at home.
 - **Pulleys & Gears** (Gr. 4) Took place on February 10th; student challenge was to create a “multi-combined pulley” with Konex and to develop procedures to explain how to test it.
- **Google Read & Write Workshop** (Gr 3-4) – whole class instruction and practice took place with OCDSB Technology Coach Corry Robinson.
- **Fitness & Yoga** (Gr 3-4) – regular gym classes now include “FitBoosts” and “FitFlow” yoga teachings.

Extra-curricular:

- **Mindfulness** – “21 Days of Mindfulness with Rebecca” is continuing.
- **Lunar New Year** – Kinders welcomed the Year of the Rat with a celebration in the library and a feast of tofu dumplings (made by students), rice noodles and oranges - while using chopsticks.
- **Garden Tower** – new seedlings were planted following a mishap with the pump. Greenelicious kale chips should be back up for sale in the next few weeks.

4. Treasurer’s Report (Laura Hurst & Andrea Villeneuve)

- Laura provided updated financial reports containing council’s projected fundraising amounts and expenses (including a list of items to be purchased) for the remainder of the year.
- Many items on the list were addressed during the Principal’s report. Other items discussed were:
 - **Weather station:**
 - Still waiting for the base (tripod) to be installed. Kim explained that there is a waiting list for the board’s carpenter.
 - **Music Flowers / Mulch:**
 - The money has been allocated; next steps are to follow up with the board to place orders.
 - **Shelves for Shed:**
 - Kim to find out if the board will fund these.

5. Committee Updates

- **School Renewal Projects (Kerry Barnes/Melissa Black)**
 - **Art Beautification Committee (ABC)** – Lindsay Machinski, Elizabeth Eagan, Catherine Pirie
 - Melissa updated the group that the committee’s plan to consult on **art project ideas** at the pancake breakfast needed to be adjusted due to the breakfast being cancelled. Kim suggested that consultations with staff could take place through the Staff Survey; it was further suggested that Google Survey could be used to gather input from students.
 - Kerry inquired if the **tulips** could be moved into the school; Kim mentioned that she could bring one of the tulips to the school right away and that she would speak to David to confirm an indoor plan for both.
 - Next Steps:
 - Committee to prepare a consultation package for Kim to send to staff;
 - Committee to meet with Kim and Minou to discuss location/details around multi-language “Welcome Art” project.
 - **School Yard**
 - Discussion took place on the **grant opportunity** from the Canadian Dermatological Association to build a shade structure. Given the timing, in relation to the work that has just been completed on the school yard, it was decided to pass on the opportunity for this year.
- **Events and Fundraisers**
 - **Pizza Day** (Brian & Lindsay)
 - Brian mentioned that there was one day left in the current round. The next round will start on the first Thursday after March Break and consist of 7 days as opposed to 5. The deadline for Round 2 payment is March 6.
 - **Kudos (!!)** to Brian, Lindsay and volunteer team for keeping the program on schedule during the strike action.
 - **Upcoming Events:**
 - **Pancake Breakfast**, Sophia (February 25th) – Cancelled due to strike action/planning challenges.

- **Dance Night**, Kerry, Danica & parents of Leadership Club students (April 3rd); Kim provided the group with details on how dance nights were organized at her previous school (e.g. hiring of a DJ, glow bracelets, raffle, entry fee).
- **Movie Night** – Karen (May 1st) – to align with Star Wars theme. Leadership club to organize theme-related bake sale.
- **Vernissage**, Minou (May 7th) – To take place with “Kindergarten Evening”.
- **End of Year BBQ**, Kirsten (June 18th)
- **Lawn-it-for Connaught**, Cynthia & Darlene (June 12th); Update from Cynthia to say that a tentative date has been set with the Elmdale Lawn and Bowling Club. They would like to focus the fundraising on the “Learning Commons” project to support the idea in whatever way is needed. The fundraising goal will be \$10,000 - to be achieved through sponsors, a silent auction and liquor sales. Next meeting is February 26th at 7:30 at the Tooth & Nail - all are welcome!

6. Club Updates

- Note: With the exception of the following, all clubs are postponed until further notice.
- **Leadership Club (Michelle Richardson)**
 - Meetings postponed until further notice, however...
 - 4 leadership Club members raised over \$50 (to add to the club’s fund for Kipsongol, Kenya) on their own time and initiative by shovelling driveways and walkways.
 - Four other members created an informational slideshow related to Pink Shirt Day - a day to stand up to bullying. The presentation will be shared with all teachers to help initiate conversations on the topic.
- **Tech Club (Matt Villeneuve - Parent)**
 - Cohort 2 was impacted by a power outage and a strike day; three out of the five sessions took place.
 - Cohort 3 starts today.

7. Key Dates

- Next Meeting : March 24, 2020