

Connaught P.S. School Council

2021-22 Annual Report

For the 2021-22 school year, Connaught School Council maintained a virtual existence with all meetings held online. Council held a virtual meeting with the school community to set priorities for the year which included: supporting our students, beautifying our school, connecting with the Connaught Community, and facilitating the Pay It Forward campaign.

All fundraising activity was also conducted virtually, until the lifting of COVID-19 public health restrictions in the spring of 2022 permitted in-person gathering and in-school volunteer activities. Council was finally permitted to resume our popular end-of-year BBQ for the first time since 2019, which was our only Community Use of School event this year. During the period where in-person gatherings were not permitted, Council focused on providing regular updates to the school community via electronic means. In January 2022, Council resumed planning for the paused Library to Learning Commons project. Council also applied for and received support from the Hintonburg Economic Development Committee for new soccer balls and mini frisbees. Parents continued to support a range of school activities to support the increasingly popular “food bins” in classrooms, and efforts to maintain the Nature Education Centre and gardens with produce donated to the Parkdale Food Centre.

Fundraising

Connaught School Council started the year with a balance of approximately \$12,350 and raised \$21,650 over the school year. With a school population of 360 students, this amounts to about \$60 per student, an increase of \$45 per student from last year.

Council re-ran the traditional holiday wreath and Bridgehead coffee sale in late November.

Council also took over responsibility for the Spirit Wear sale, previously run by a Connaught teacher. In addition to being able to order clothing for their children, community members could donate funds to ensure all Colts could have access to Spirit Wear. Approximately \$200 worth of t-shirts were purchased with donated funds. Proceeds from the Spirit wear sale went towards Connaught’s “Pay it Forward” initiative which provided funds to two schools with less fundraising capacity to spend on a priority initiative of their choosing.

The Bridgehead Coffee and Wheeler’s Maple Syrup Easter Breakfast sale ran again in March.

With relaxed restrictions, pizza days returned in April and community members were also able to plan and run Lawn it for Connaught - an adults-only lawn bowling event - as a major fundraiser for the Learning Commons project, raising over \$11,000 for the initiative.

School Council also continued with online fundraising with several commission-based fundraisers, including Chapters Indigo Online, Plantables and Mabel's Labels. New this year was Pints 4 Connaught with the Merry Dairy in support of the leaving ceremony and future grade 6 class trips.

Spending

The School Council spent nearly \$15,740, comprising the majority of fundraised funds on the following:

- Reimbursing teacher expenses
- Inclusive books for the school library
- Items for the kinder yard:
 - Bins to quarantine classes' assigned equipment
 - Pool noodles for physically distanced play
 - Toys for snowy days
- Technology:
 - A Classroom set of Headphones
 - Attachment to mirror webcam
 - iPad HDMI dongles
- Shed supplies and seed squares for the Nature Education Centre
- Books in honour of departing teachers
- Staff Appreciation lunches
- Pay it forward: support for two schools with less fundraising capacity
- Learning Commons project

A number of spending initiatives, related to further outdoor improvements, continued to be postponed until further notice. The unspent funds raised this year will be directed towards the Learning Commons, with another major purchase planned in September.

Initiatives

Due to Pandemic restrictions, Council was not in a position to organize in-person events or volunteer activities for much of the school year. However, spring enabled the return of Pizza Days, which was well supported by parent volunteers, and the end of year BBQ.

One of Council's main commitments for this year was the resumption of the Learning Commons project. Concepts and overall design were discussed and finalized by the Library Committee and a phased approach was agreed to to facilitate fundraising efforts. Phase one included purchasing tables and seating for the programming space as well as a new mobile circulation desk. Council committed the April, May, and June pizza day proceeds as well as \$1500 from the reserve that had been set aside pre-pandemic for this project. With the success of our spring fundraising initiatives, most of those funds were committed at the end of the school year to order new bookshelves, bench window seating, a mobile book drop, a new music cart, and a standing

work table for students to consult digital resources. By the end of the school year, about half of the funding needed for the project had been committed for spending.

Parent volunteers also committed to the revitalization of the school's front garden beds, which had become quite overgrown. Dead or overgrown shrubbery and invasive plants were removed. New shrubs, pollinator/butterfly friendly perennials and mulch donated by a local garden centre were added to enhance the visual appeal of the space.

Composition of Connaught School Council in 2021-2022:

Executive

- Chair: Julie Mayrand
- Vice-Chair: Zoe Lomer
- Treasurer: Andrea Villeneuve
- Secretary: Gisele Salazar
- Fundraising Coordinators: Sabrina Sengupta, Sarah King

Staff

- Principal: Kimberly Simpson
- Vice-Principal: Minou Morley
- Teacher Representative: Michelle Richardson

Members

- Fundraising
 - Holiday Wreaths & Coffee: Sabrina Sengupta
 - Spirit Wear: Zoe Lomer, Sabrina Sengupta
 - Plantables: Zoe Lomer, Julie Mayrand, Andrea Villeneuve
 - Coffee and Maple Syrup: Sabrina Sengupta, Sarah King
 - Lawn it for Connaught Organizing Committee: Cynthia Sheswell, Darlene Moll, Tobin Kelly, Steve Alexander, Marianne Alexander, Thomas Dunne, Joanna Courtney, Kimberly Senf, Tim Willis, Julie Mayrand. Over 15 community members helped to run the event.
- Learning Commons Committee
 - Kimberly Simpson
 - Minou Morley
 - Julie Mayrand
 - Elizabeth Eagen (parent)
 - Kimberly Senf (parent)
 - Melissa Burke (librarian)
 - Judith Kemp (librarian)

- Pamela Jones (teacher)
- Garden Committee
 - Julie Mayrand
 - Damian McGee
 - Chantelle Hamilton
 - Thomas Dunne
- Events:
 - End of year BBQ: Zoe Lomer (Event Coordinator), Sarah King and Julie Mayrand (volunteer coordinators). 20+ community members helped set up, run the event and clean up afterwards