**Castlefrank Parent Council**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, Nov. 29, 2016 7-9 p.m.**

In attendance:

Parents: Robyn Bascombe, Sarah Brearey, Nilay Ertemur, Teri McDonald, Carol Mothersill, Ralph Quapp, Amie Schombs, Andrew Seymour

Staff: Ron Henry, Anne Labonté

1. Call Meeting to order (7:01 pm) – Sarah Brearey

- Approval of minutes from last meeting with minor changes – *motion by Sarah Brearey, seconded by Amie Schombs*

- Approval of agenda, with minor change, moving treasurer’s report to item 3 – *motion by Anne Labonte, seconded by Teri McDonald*

2. Chairs’ Report – Carol Mothersill/Sarah Brearey

i) Events debrief

1) Fundraisers (Carol Mothersill)

Halloween dance:

- 100 families in attendance. Profits of $900 from dance will be used to support school literacy

Chapters fundraiser:

- Total amount raised was $1,200 in Chapters gift cards, which was split between Castlefrank and Katimavik. Castlefrank’s share will be spent on improving the school library

2) Literacy Month (Carol Mothersill)

Literacy Night

- Children enjoyed listening to Inuit author Michael Kusugak; bookmarks are being sent home

- The turnout for the event was the lowest of the three PRO Grant events that have been held at Castlefrank. Of particular concern was the low number of kindergarten parents who attended

Book Fair:

- approximately $3,500 raised to spend on Scholastic books for the school library; about $900 raised to purchase French books

Forest of Reading:

- The books have been purchased and should arrive at the school in December; launch to happen shortly thereafter

Raz-Kids Program

- The program has been rolled out to all students in the school. It was a huge task and a great job by staff getting every child entered into the program

- Council received a note from teacher Anne Labonté thanking council for funding Raz-Kids. She reports that her students are already reading more than before, that reading has improved, and that students are taking advantage of the ability to record themselves reading

3) Parent and School Council Conference (Sarah Brearey)

- Held on Nov. 19 at Longfields-Davidson Heights School. Dr. Jennifer Adams, the director of education for the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, was the keynote speaker. There were a number of workshops for parents and school council members. Other items of interest: board is working on ‘exit outcomes’ of students as they graduate and looking for members of a parent involvement committee

4) Kanata Zone Meeting (Sarah Brearey)

- Hosted by school trustree Christine Boothby. Topics included the western area review, the eastern area review and the review of the gifted program. There was also a presentation by the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre, who now have a children and youth counsellor for children aged six to 18. Those interested can call directly to make an appointment and do not require a doctor’s referral

- Request to Robyn Bascombe to update the school blog with the information about the Kanata Zone Meeting

3. Treasurer’s Report – Amie Schombs

i) Budget review

- Amie provided a line-by-line review of the current revenue/expenses (see handout.) Of note: $500 OCDSB funding has been deposited; the hot lunch fundraiser has brought in more revenue than projected; the $1,000 PRO Grant has been deposited, although funds received are higher at $1,295, which reflects revenue from the night. Halloween dance brought in $1,518 revenue. Our popcorn fundraiser has more revenue than projected, bringing in $3,417.50

-Total revenue collected to date is $33,777.48

- On the expenses side: Halloween dance expenses at $619.65; council has issued $80.91 to the spirit committee for Terry Fox event; $50 has been spent of the teacher allowance; choir has received $172.16; the Pro Grant amount is at $1,043.80 and amount spent to date for staff wish list is 889.30 to cover the Forest of Reading program. Administration costs are at $329.93, which includes expenses from the Meet the Parents night and a $150 photocopier fee from last year that carried over to this year’s budget. Buddy Bench is being paid out of this year’s budget. The $35 OCASC fee is reflected as being issued, although cheque has yet to be cashed

- The opening account balance for this year (approx.. $7,000) includes expenses from last year, including $1,374.08 for Buddy Bench, $150 for photocopier. $1,395.60 for school jerseys was just withdrawn. When those amounts considered, account has roughly $4,500

- Funds received to date have almost hit our projected total. Big picture is that we are on track for this year

- Bank account: Council may wish to have a discussion about using a business account versus a personal account to reduce fees. During discussion, concerns are raised about potential costs for transactions and minimum balances. Difficult to predict number of cheques council may issue in a given month, and council does not want to keep people waiting for payment. Need to look at banking fees and find best fit for our needs. Any decision to change account must meet the guidelines set out by OCDSB

**ACTION ITEM:** Update for January meeting on banking options should be presented to council

ii) Funding requests: Staff funding requests being dealt with as part of Teacher’s Report

4. Principal’s Report – Ron Henry

- Lice inspection held on Nov. 29. 202 students were inspected today; remainder will be inspected Wednesday afternoon. Thank you to parent volunteers. There were a few cases where nits were found and one case of lice. It is not an epidemic, but there have been a larger number of cases this year versus other years

- School learning plan: Teachers are in the process of implementing the plans they put together and will debrief at a future staff meeting

- School well-being plan: Plan was submitted to the board. The plan contains a general anti-bullying theme which is being put together and will be presented to grade level groups. One initiative that has been implemented is a ‘cool down zone’ on the playground. It’s a place for students to go as a first level intervention and have problems addressed. It involves problem-solving strategies and dealing with conflict. Original plan had a teacher in the cool down zone, but there wasn’t much need, so there is now an extra teacher on the yard

Plan now is that if student is identified repeatedly for same issues, it moves up to the principal. Further action could involve the sending home of a letter or the student being removed from the yard if problem persists

i) Elementary School Program Framework

- Outline of the proposal is provided on a handout

Three goals of the proposed elementary school program framework 1) to provide optimal learning environment 2) to provide programs as close as possible to student’s home community 3) provide equity of access

The implications of the framework:

1) School configurations. All schools will be K-6 or K-8, depending on the format of the high school that supports them. This will impact Castlefrank, but not likely for four to five years

2) School size. There needs to be enough students for 1.5 classes at every grade level. At Castlefrank, there are two English classes currently. Grade 1-2 split, and a Grade 3. This limits flexibility about where students are placed, and can limit opportunities for collaboration. Currently Castlefrank is a dual track school

3) Full day Kindergarten. 50/50 split English and French. This has already happened

4) Elementary program options. There are four program options. Regular English with core French, Early French immersion for Grades 1-8 in single and dual-track sites, middle French immersion only at dual track sites, and the alternative program in English with core French. These would be the models a school could have. Some want special education set-up in geographic based locations

Consultation: Board encouraging discussing at school council, completing the online survey, or emailing questions or comments as a parent or on behalf of a school council

Once adopted, this will provide the framework for school reviews

There is a link to the survey on the school board’s webpage which asks parents for their feedback about the extent they agree the framework will have the desired effect

Carol Mothersill recommends that a post go out to parents asking them to provide their feedback, particularly kindergarten parents who could be impacted by the decision in the future. The survey deadline is Dec. 13

**ACTION ITEM:** Put the link to survey on the council blog

5. Teacher’s Report – Anne Labonté

- Librarian Jennifer Voelker wants to give a huge thank you to school council for their support and funding of library initiatives. Chapters Night has resulted in $600 in new money for the purchase of books, and she will be consulting with teachers for input. She adds that literacy night author Michael Kusugak signed the library’s copies of his books. She also wanted to thank all the parent volunteers who made the book fair a success

i) Funding requests from teachers:

a) Junkyard Symphony: A bilingual, 60 minute show that is focused on recycling, music and fun. Cost is $725 for one show; for an extra $200 they will conduct a pair of rhythm workshops

b) Scientists in Schools presentations for all classes: Hands on workshops for students focused on science. Each workshop is $190. There are 15 classes at Castlefrank, so cost for all students will be $2850

(Carol Mothersill is employed by Scientists in Schools and declares a conflict)

c) Motivation speaker from “Be your best school school” workshop: Some of their sessions focus on bullying prevention, growth mindsets and eloquent communication. No cost estimate.

d) Luv 2 Groove: This is a group that teaches dance moves to the students. It involves free flow and body movement, and they transform the gym into a ”movement experience.”

A full day (or 4 sessions) for 25 to 60 kids is $550 plus HST. A three-day dance unit (four sessions over three days) for a minimum of 100 students and a maximum of 300 students per week is $1,300. (It is not clear if this means there are 12 workshops over the three days, or some other configuration.)

A four-day session is $1,700 plus HST while a five-day unit is $2,100 plus HST

- Discussion about whether OCASC can provide ideas for motivational speakers. If they have a list, perhaps it could be reviewed by the school

- Council would like to hear more details about motivational speakers. Council is open to idea but should be a more involved discussion. The school would also like to explore the possibility of having parents come and speak to students about their jobs

**ACTION ITEM:** Get further details about motivational speaker and return to council with information/suggestions

- Discussion about whether Scientists in School should be funded for each class, or each cohort. Where more than one teacher involved, do we fund for each cohort and let the teachers decide the subject?

Ron Henry notes that if council chooses to fund it, will be important to arrange necessary volunteers for the half day

**MOTION:** Sarah Brearey moves that council fund up to $2,000 for presentations by Luv 2 Groove for whatever is deemed the best fit, fund one Scientists in Schools presentation for each class (can be either science or math, at the discretion of the teachers) and a Junkyard Symphony presentation for the entire school. Motion seconded by Teri McDonald. Passed. (Carol Mothersill abstains from vote)

ii) Staff wish list

- Kindergarten teachers would like funds to purchase new bike helmets

- A drumfit kit. These are big yoga balls where students use drumsticks to beat them like a drum. They can also sit on the balls

- Light table for kindergarten students

There are no details on costs for any of these items. Council advises that kindergarten teachers have $300 to purchase playground equipment; the other items should be costed and estimates provided on the forms provided by council for consideration

Discussion as to whether a decision on spending is being made prematurely given the additional items being requested without cost estimates. It is noted there is no council meeting in December. With the next council meeting in January, any delay will mean that staff cannot begin the process of scheduling the workshops and performances

Carol Mothersill advises that staff should be advised as to what council has approved, and if there are additional items staff really want, they can fill out the form and council will discuss at a future meeting whether it can be funded

iii) Other items:

- Literacy room: It needs to be organized again and wonder whether parent volunteers available

Council is reluctant to spend more time organizing the room. The room was set up neatly. Council has put up time and money to organize it. It should be up to the users of the room to keep it organized

- Food drive: Being held from Dec. 5-16

- Holiday showcase: Will be on Dec. 16 from 8:45 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. If buses cancelled, will be held on Dec. 19

6. OCASC Report – Ralph Quapp

i) Complaint resolution policy: Objective of school board policy is to know the process of resolving complaints through their ombudsman, particularly involving board employees. The policy doesn’t incorporate school council, because council are not board employees

ii) DJs and SOCAN licenses: Schools should watch to ensure DJs have necessary license to play music at school functions to avoid problems with rights to music

iii) 1% challenge: Attempts were made to try and locate a school for Castlefrank and Katimavik to partner with. No schools have come forward. Consensus that funding for other schools may be best made by providing financial contribution to the Education Foundation and they will distribute according to need. Further discussion on this item will be made during “Other Business” portion of meeting

7. Upcoming events – Sarah Brearey

i) Family Movie Night and Silent Auction

- scheduled for Dec. 2, all proceeds will be provided to Ron Henry to support Castlefrank families in need. Doors open 5:45 p.m., movie starts at 6 p.m. Pizza will be available. There is no admission charge; families are asked to donate what they can. Organized by Sarah Machan

ii) Bake sale/Cake walk

- scheduled for Dec. 14, organized by Kim D’Angelo. Raffle tickets for reserved seats/parking spot for Holiday Showcase will be sold

iii) Winter event ideas

**ACTION ITEM:** Brainstorm fundraising event ideas for January meeting

8. Communications Corner – Robyn Bascombe

- Blog posts are scheduled; current issue with email notifications going out. The account may be overdue; Carol Mothersill arranging to update credit card information on account

9. Other business

i) Warm clothes project (Nilay Ertemur)

- Project to provide all 15 classes with a large Ziploc bag of clean winter clothes that can be made available to students who may have come to school underdressed for the weather or who have wet clothes. There are bins for the return of dirty items in the office. Currently, parent volunteers will wash and return the items. The bags will be provided to teachers on Nov. 30; this has been organized by parents, but they are hoping they may receive school council support

Discussion on how funding requests to council are made in writing with detailed cost information; discussion on whether the group can monitor how many items are being used and how much is returned

ii) 1% challenge/Adopt-a-school (Sarah Brearey)

- Katimavik is on board to partner with Castlefrank to help another school in some way. Information provided is that other schools typically just raise money and donate it to Education Foundation, who distribute it

- One percent of Castlefrank council’s budget is approximately $350. Discussion on whether Castlefrank can host a Twoonie Tuesday, where students are encouraged to bring in $2 to support schools in need. Council could match donations up to the 1% amount

**ACTION ITEM:** Finalize a Twoonie Tuesday plan at the January meeting

iii) Volunteer recruitment

- General discussion about whether we need to do more to try and encourage parent volunteers

10. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm

Next meeting is Jan. 31, 2017