**Castlefrank Parent Council**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, Oct. 18, 2016 7-9 p.m.**

In attendance:

Parents: Sarah Brearey, Lindsay Desjardins, Diane Gardner, Christine Kirkland-Klerks, Sarah Machan, Deirdre Mander, Carol Mothersill, Ralph Quapp, Amie Schombs, Andrew Seymour

Staff: Ron Henry, Val Cook

1. Call Meeting to order (7:03 pm) – Sarah Brearey

- Approval of minutes from last meeting with minor changes – *approved by Amie Schombs/Ralph Quapp*

- Approval of agenda – *approved by Deirdre Mander/Christine Kirkland-Klerks*

- Request from Ralph Quapp for a registry of action items to be kept throughout the school year

2. Chairs’ Report – Carol Mothersill

i) Meet the Parents Night debrief – Deirdre Mander

- Diverse turnout of parents from all grades; event was set up as a welcome and to get together for parents

- Kids Kingdom provided door prizes for ice breaker games; information was provided on local clubs and businesses; refreshments were provided

- Children did well in library while parents met in foyer; three Katimavik students read to children

- Idea generation station generated eight new ideas (handout); Ron advises the building project idea aimed to have Grade 3 students build something that could be added onto the next year by the next graduating class, like a legacy project. Amie suggested painted ceiling tiles created by students. Many of the ideas would need a champion. It was suggested that council keep a repository of ideas

- Event came in below $150 budget; receipts submitted to Carol Mothersill

- Carol recognizes and thanks Deirdre Mander and Stephanie Nasmith for their hard work organizing the event

ii) Literacy Night

- CES uses our PRO Grant to hold a workshop for parents. Previous workshops have focused on math and family wellness. This year’s theme is literacy. Event is scheduled for Nov. 9 and is being organized by teachers Dan Muldoon-Roy, Connie Toye and Beth Wynn. We are at the point where parent volunteers required. The plan for this year’s event is to again offer a meal of pizza, veggies and drink and then head into the workshops. This year’s special guest and presenter is Michael Kusugak, who is an Inuit author and co-author of a book with Robert Munsch

- Dinner is at 4:45 p.m.; first workshop starts at 5:30 p.m.; event runs until 7 p.m.

- First workshop will be hosted by Dan Muldoon-Roy and Connie Toye and will focus on the reading strategies that teachers use in class. Parents can hopefully use the same techniques at home. Children will be in foyer playing literacy-themed games during this workshop

- Second workshop is hosted by Beth Wynn and will provide an introduction to the RazKids program and a presentation on how to use it at home. The RazKids program was funded by CES school council

- Ron Henry will again read to children, which is always quite popular

- Once workshops are completed, everyone will congregate in the gymnasium for a group read

- Volunteers are required for photocopying and laminating materials and to help with the event on Nov. 9. Sarah Machan and Deirdre Mander volunteer for night of, Amie available to assist with copying

- Literacy Night is part of a month of literacy-based activities. Our Chapters fundraising night is scheduled for Wed., Nov. 2; Literacy Night Wed. Nov. 9; Book Fair is scheduled for Wed. Nov 16. All events with the exception of the Chapters fundraiser require volunteers

c) Quorum

- CES school council constitution states a quorum of nine is required. Occasionally there is a very small group of parents who attend meetings, particularly in winter months

- **MOTION:** by Carol Mothersill that council set quorum for 2016-17 at five parents. Seconded by Andrew Seymour. All in favour

4. Principal’s Report – Ron Henry

i) School budget

- School budget set at $76,467 this year. Approximately $16,500 being clawed back after school went over budget last year, leaving approximately $59,900

- Of the $59,900 budget, approximately $48,000 is to cover the cost of occasional teachers or EAs. It is typically not enough to cover the replacement costs; the school usually exceeds that amount

- The approximately $12,000 remaining is spent on costs like paper, photocopying and incidentals. It is not a lot, about half of what the school had last year. Ron intends to make sure it doesn’t impact students and is looking at ways to reduce costs, such as electronic newsletters, less paper, etc. The goal is to return to a balanced budget. Ron does have some money in school generated funds that has been carried over from previous years that can be spent on students; focus will be on making sure students have what they need to learn

- There are no significant expenditures forecast for the 2016-17 school year

ii) School learning plan

* This year’s school learning plan is focused on math and numeracy. Math is what gets taught in math class, while numeracy is how you use and understand numbers in other subject areas. Goal is to come up with a plan for one week that can carry over into the next so that students can connect math learning to the other subjects. The hope is it will improve student learning in math. Collaboration is important between teachers because different teachers are teaching different subjects
* The school also has a well-being plan. The theme this year is “slow down, think about things and do them right the first time.” The school’s anti-bullying efforts are a part of the well-being plan. The school’s new “Buddy Bench” is included in the well-being plan

- Parent-teacher interviews are set for the evening of Nov. 17 and the morning of Nov. 18

- First newsletter of the year was sent home Oct. 18. The goal is to send future newsletters via e-mail to save on photocopying costs. This will also allow the inclusion of direct links and student work. The November newsletter is expected to include a section entitled “Straight Talk from the Principal’s Desk” which is intended to deal with more sensitive topics, such as a disruptive child or a phone call home from a teacher

5. Teacher’s Report – Val Cook

- Anne Labonte’s class will have a presentation on Oct. 19 from an Inuit children’s group that ties in with the social studies curriculum. They are also planning a field trip to Billings Estate in June to learn about life in the 1800s

- Mandy Albania is organizing an assembly dealing with bullying that will involve a video and tie in the Buddy Bench

- Librarian thanks school council for its support of the Forest of Reading program. A large assortment of French and English books has been ordered

Carol Mothersill provides update on order. School has purchased: one set of K-3 English, two sets of 3-6 non-fiction, chapter books in English to be sent home along with one set K-3 French and two sets of 3-6 non-fiction chapter books in French to be sent home

**ACTION ITEM:** Request that Val, Miriam and Anne keep school council updated on the Forest of Reading program

- Connie Toye thanks everyone for their support of this year’s Terry Fox Run/Walk. Castlefrank raised $2,650 this year for the Terry Fox Foundation. In the past 18 years, Castlefrank has raised $28,872

- Connie Toye and Wendy Byrtus running the yoga program for Grades 1 to 3 every Thursday beginning on Oct. 20

- Sonya Martel is running the choir for Grades 1 to 3, practices are held on Tuesdays at 1:15 p.m.

- Phil Pilon supervised the cross-country club this year. Race was Oct. 18; top male finisher was 11th place, top female finisher 23rd place. Everyone had a lot of fun

6. OCASC Report – Ralph Quapp

- OCASC vision for this year is “advocacy” (Ralph has separate minutes from the meeting)

- School council and parent training sessions on the advocacy theme have been set for Nov. 19. Online registration will be available beginning week of Oct. 26. Carol Mothersill advises that event usually involves a keynote speaker and breakout workshops on speciality subjects

- People for Education conference is set for Nov. 12 in Toronto. Interested parents can attend; the conference provides some financial support for travel costs

- “Chalk it up” session topics included Orange Shirt Day. The majority of OCASC reps felt it was held too early in the year, and both parents and teachers were ill-prepared. There was recommendation that more information be available next year about the day and its meaning

- Sir Winston Churchill school council made a proposal they hope will help address fundraising inequality between school councils. The proposal is that school councils should consider putting aside 1% of fundraising dollars and provide it to an education fund or to a sister school that may benefit from fundraising support

Ralph proposes that Castlefrank meet this challenge and donate 1% of our fundraising to another school

Discussion: Val Cook: She participated in a similar program while teaching at Mary Honeywell Elementary School that paired that school with another school and it was quite rewarding. If it is a sister school, students, parents and teachers can see the direct results of their fundraising and support

Deirdre Mander: The more students can get involved the better. A sister school is nice because students know who and what they are helping

Carol Mothersill: Castlefrank raised approximately $37,000 last year, so a 1% donation would be approximately $370. Making a straight donation would be very easy, or should we challenge students and find a school to match with?

Ron Henry: It is very easy to send out a message to other principals looking for a school to pair with. Pairing with another school can also lead to an exchange where Castlefrank students can visit that school and students from the other school can visit Castlefrank

Amie Schombs: Can Castlefrank pair up with Katimavik and do a K-8 partnership with another K-8 school?

**ACTION ITEM:** Ron Henry will make efforts to find a school for Castlefrank to pair with, while also reaching out to Katimavik principal Jeff Gervais to see if Castlefrank and Katimavik can work together. Carol Mothersill will reach out to Megan Venner at Katimavik school council about proposal. Ralph will attempt to get more details at October OCASC meeting about how they propose school councils support another school. The proposal should be added to the November agenda for discussion and a decision on how to proceed

7. Communications Corner – Deirdre Mander (Agenda item moved up to accommodate Deirdre)

- Apology for a scheduling error that resulted in the blog post regarding school colours and popcorn day being sent out on the morning of the day

- School council blog saw 18 new parents sign up this week; there had been 14 new sign ups since the start of the year

- Discussion about whether school council should use the Castlefrank and Katimavik Parents Facebook page to create events. Carol Mothersill says council is careful not to put too much on the page and tries to strike a balance so users aren’t overwhelmed. Deirdre notes the page is not monitored by school council, although school council events are posted there. Ron Henry adds that there is a need to be careful because sometimes posts are made to that community page that aren’t endorsed by school council or staff

8. Treasurer’s Report – Amie Schombs/Carol Mothersill

- Financial statement for last year was circulated at the September meeting and is being used as a baseline to plan for this year. Some items on that budget, such as the Book Fair and Holiday Movie Night, are money that come in and then goes out immediately. Council is tentatively projected to bring in $27,668.10. Carol and Amie reviewed amounts/expenses budgeted and proposed several changes.

The following changes were proposed:

- Increasing the amount for the staff wish list to $8,000 from $6,250

- Reducing the amount for playground equipment from $550 to $400

- Reducing the amount for kindergarten equipment from $500 to $300

- Reducing the amount for the CES/KES festival to $1,100 (this is intended to be revenue neutral event)

The teacher allowance will remain at $100 per Kindergarten class room, and $50 for other teachers. (Teachers are advised to keep and file all receipts at once using council provided reimbursement form.) Council has lost approximately $240 in pizza revenue due to fewer students/orders; communication costs have increased slightly due to exchange rate from US. $250 moved from last year’s surplus to supplement this year’s budget. What has yet to be added to this year’s budget is fundraising support for another school, which will be decided upon at the November meeting

Council has already committed $2,900 of the proposed $8,000 staff wish list budget for Raz-Kids and the Forest of Reading program. Val and Ron are asked to go back to staff and let them know there is approximately $5,000 remaining in the budget; council will select to fund proposals from staff that benefit the largest number of students

**MOTION:** Amie Schombs moves that council passes the budgets with the above-mentioned amendments as discussed at the council meeting. Seconded by Ralph Quapp. Passed

**ACTION ITEM:** Teachers should provide a wish list of items they would like school council to fund by the Nov. 25 council meeting.

8. Fundraising

i) Food Box – Carol Mothersill

- There was $2,760 worth of food box orders. The actual cost of the food was $1,731, resulting in a profit for council of $1,029. This money is being used to support literacy programs

ii) Popcorn – Sarah Brearey

- Thank you to Dave and Diane for coming in to help organize popcorn orders. It went very smoothly. There are 180 pre-ordered bags. School ordered an additional 20 bags for walk up orders; 10 of those were sold. Council profit is $1.20 per bag. Projected revenue for sales of 190 bags over nine months is a little more than $2,000. Budget will be updated to reflect the higher projected revenues

iii) Halloween Dance – Sarah Machan

- Dance will be held Oct. 28 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the gym. Cost is $10 per family which includes a drink and chips. Pizza is available for purchase. Volunteers are still needed

iv) Chapters Fundraiser/Book Fair - Carol Mothersill

- Megan Venner organized; profits from the event will go to support Castlefrank and Katimavik

- Chapters will donate 20% of all sales to the schools in the form of gift cards; those wishing to participate need to identify themselves to our volunteers before visiting the cash register

- Book Fair will be held on Nov. 16, Nov. 17 (including during the evening during parent-teacher interviews) and during the morning of Nov. 18. Volunteers still needed.

v) Other ideas

- Amie Schombs: Gift basket fundraiser for each class. Classes could put together baskets based on themes, such as gardening, sports, movie nights, etc. and the basket could be part of silent auction

9. Other business

i) School council photo

- Sarah Brearey proposes elected members of school council provide photos that can be posted in the school for the benefit of other parents

**ACTION ITEM:** Every elected member of council should please send a photo to Sarah Machan

ii) Parent survey

- Council should send out an electronic survey to parents that can ask questions about topics such as what parents are interested in seeing in the school, what they are interested in volunteering for and how best council can communicate with them

10. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:08 pm.