Castlefrank Elementary School Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday October 28th

7:00 pm – 10:00 pm

**Attendees:** Carol Mothersill, Stephanie Naismith, Lianne Wallace, Andrew Seymour, Katy Pintar, Jennifer Guerra, Jennifer Christopher, Miriam Walker, Barbara Martinez, Jen Kemp, Jessie Lia, Alan Higginson, Sylvia Higginson, Megan Venner, Deirdre Mander, Elham Seddigh Ayafar, Christine Kirkland-Klerks, Sarah Machan, Kendra Smith

1. Welcome
2. Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm. Approval of Minutes from Sep. 29, 2015 meeting by Stephanie, seconded by Jen C. Approval of Agenda by Allan, seconded by Megan.
3. Presentation on proposed changes to Early French Immersion in OCDSB.

Barb presented an overview of the proposed changes to the Early French Immersion program in the OCDSB.

The parent survey was extended to October 31.

In general, the proposed changes, which will shift the percentage of time children are exposed to French from JK to Gr. 4, are proposed based on the following themes:

* Expectations for kindergarten are designed on a 2-year timeframe, and currently there are concerns with flow because JK and SK are separated by language. The proposed changes will reformat JK and SK to a 50-50 model of English and French.
* The changes are designed to ensure access to everyone. There is currently some disparity for EFI, based on socioeconomic factors, uptake for boys versus girls, and English as a Second Language learners.
* The proposal for Grade 1 to 4 is a 60:40 model (French to English), to provide a greater opportunity to identify learning needs in both French and English. Math will be taught exclusively in English.
* The goals of the proposed changes are to improve student achievement in math, support early identification and intervention for learning challenges in math, and align language of instruction for math in Grades 1, 2 and 3.
* The proposed changes would ensure that the program still exceeds the Ministry’s requirement for an Immersion program by 1464 hours. Core French will also be strengthened, with an addition of 814 hours of French.

NOTE: The decision by the OCDSB to accept the proposed changes has been deferred for a year, to allow for additional research to address some of the questions raised during the community engagement stage of the roll-out.

After Barb’s presentation, there was an opportunity for parents to pose questions about the proposed changes and how to get their voices heard by key decision-makers in the community and the Board.

1. Principal’s Report – Barbara Martinez

Progress reports will be coming home the week of December 10th.

A Remembrance Day Ceremony will be held on November 11th, with a separate ceremony for the kindergarten students.

A lockdown drill occurred on Friday October 23rd, and the Principal and Police Officers involved commented on how smoothly the drill was followed.

Playground have been purchased and are in various classrooms, and a pump is located in the main office. The reception has been very positive.

Regarding the parking of cars in front of Holy Redeemer that prevent walking access to the sidewalk, a Bylaw officer has been seen ticketing and speaking to drivers.

1. Teacher’s Report – Miriam Walker

Boomerang lunches are being trialed every Friday, and Ms. Walker asked for everyone’s patience and support as the school tries the approach one day a week.

A pedestrian safety presentation was held for the school and it was well received.

Halloween costumes are allowed on Friday October 31st.

Picture retakes are on November 6th.

On Thursday October 30th, the West Carleton Drama Class is performing a play for the school “Learning to Stand Up for Yourself”.

Extra-curricular activities are being cancelled for the time being as an outcome of the work-to-rule, and this applies to: lunch time yoga and choir. Run club has already ended for the season.

1. Chair’s Report – Carol Mothersill

Carol reported on the latest Kanata Zone meeting. The proposed EFI change were discussed, and a briefing was delivered on how the Board of Trustees works. A presentation on the OSTA (Ottawa School Transportation Authority) walk zone changes for the 2015/16 school year and lessons learned to-date was given. The hiccups that occurred at the beginning of the year seem to have been resolved. The OSTA has started a call centre and is preparing a lessons learned document. Christine Boothby reiterated the need and interest for a walking school bus, particularly on the East side of Castlefrank. Renovations to Earl of March (intermediate and highschool) were also discussed, and the transition seems to be going very well.

Based on parent feedback, the crossing guard hours at Castlefrank and Kakulu will be extended to 3:45 pm each day.

1. Chair’s Report & Fundraising Update – Carol Mothersill

There will be pizza at the Halloween Dance. Decorations for the dance will be very simple, and a matt zone will be set up so children can relax and have a quiet space amidst the noise. The parking lot will be very dark, so Sarah and Jen volunteered to tape off the field so that no parking occurs on the play yard. There will be a costume parade at the dance.

November 5th there will be a Castlefrank/Katimavik joint fundraising event at the Centrum Chapter’s. The money raised will be split and given to both school librarians to purchase books (in the form of Chapter’s Gift Cards).

In November, the Scholastic Book Fair will be run, but it will be difficult/impacted by the potential work-to-rule actions. The fair will be run the week of November 17th without the involvement of the librarian. The Festival de Livres sales quota was not met with the previous Book Fair and won’t come this Fall, but we need to promote French book sales to meet the quota for next year.

In December a Movie Night will be scheduled. Jennifer and Sarah volunteered to organise the Movie night. Discussion focused on learning from the Katimavik approach to raising money for a Charity (Holiday Hampers/gift cards) in December. Supporting families in need is a priority for both school communities.

Megan V. made a motion to identify the proceeds from the December movie to support a holiday hamper and at a future council meeting will discuss a longer-term strategy to charitable giving by parent council. The motion was seconded by Deirdre.

Kim D’Angelo will be organising a bake sale in November or December.

The Food Box Fundraiser was a big success, in large part due to Kim’s efforts (thank you Kim!). In total, 77 boxes were purchased, and with 3 weeks of organisational efforts, and time the day of delivery to weigh produce, $1,100 was raised.

1. OCASC Report – Stephanie Naismith

The last OCASC meeting occurred on October 15th. The discussion focused on Nadia and Susan’s presentation on the proposed EFI changes. An alternate for the OCASC meetings was discussed.

Stephanie reported that many schools in the Board use an online payment system for their fundraising efforts – pizza, hot lunches, etc. It’s very easy, involves no paperwork, but does not integrate with the milk or pizza suppliers so some work has to be done behind the scenes by an administrator who separates the money.

Stephanie also reported that some schools set aside a portion of their parent council budget every year to support a buddy school that is in need.

1. Treasurer’s Report – Jennifer Kemp

A review of the current budget was provided. The following items were discussed:

* Teachers’s allowance – it was decided that each class room would receive $50, and the kindgergarten class rooms would receive $100. The allowance would be re-visited in January/December and if extra funds were available, a second allotment would be considered .
* Teachers’ wish list:
  + School club requests – school pinnies (a class set of 30)
  + Chess sets – Mr. Muldoon Roy would like to start a chess club, and has sourced a chess set that is $8, increasing the school club budget by $235to accommodate the request for the chess club.
  + Technology needs – document cameras (lady bug), projectors in the classroom (there are currently 3 rooms that have projectors installed, and 8 more are scheduled to be installed, but 4 rooms still need them), speakers for computers, iPads, gym equipment (hula hoops, soft sponge balls)
  + *A wish list and corresponding budget was requested and will be discussed in full at the November council meeting.*
* Experiential activities in the school year that are supported by Council –
  + It was decided that Tradanza would not be supported this year and other options would be considered.
  + The PRO grant will support a Family Wellness evening with a drum fit workshop for Castlefrank families. A parallel Drum Fit activity for the whole school has been tentatively scheduled and dates are held.
  + A proposal for a “Jungle Sports” was presented – a private company that sets up for 4 or 5 days in the gym (which can’t be used for any other activities during that time). The gym set up includes low ropes, climbing and crawling and 2 classes can be in the gym at one time. All classes at CES would have 3 times in the gym over the 4 day period. The activity costs $11 per student - $3,750 in total. Barb will review any potential insurance issues.
  + *There is $1,500 in the budget to direct to some type of activity, and the decision will be moved to the November council meeting.*

Carol moved to approve the budget with the amendments to the school clubs (an increase of $235), Grade 3 leaving costs (a reduction of $730 due to lower number of Gr. 3 students) and teacher’s allowance (set at $50 per class, $75 for the JK/Sk classes) line items. Megan seconded the motion.

1. Communications Corner – Deirdre

The theme of the blog will be changed and it was proposed that a calendar of events be added to the blog, so that it can be used as a broader communication for the community.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 pm