

The Dr. G.W. Williams School Council
Minutes from the meeting of
January 22, 2018

Present:

School Administration (Staff) - Christopher Hilmer, Susan Sopha
Parents - Chris Baker, Jill Harris, Svitlana Shamova, Pei Wang
Student Representative: Adrian Rassaf

Regrets: Dina Paraskevopoulos, Lynn Pearson, Judith Lalonde

Welcome

Chris Baker opened the meeting at 7:00 pm and introductions were done.
Decision to move ahead with agenda and minutes of last meeting due to inadequate numbers for motion and vote.
Also, decision to postpone Dina's agenda item to next meeting.

Student Report

Adrian Rassaf

Adrian advised of the following Student Council activities:

- In December - Comfy and Cozy Day-and candy grams were delivered on the same day. Candy grams sold very well.
 - Council plans to run Kisses for Cassie February 7-14 to raise money for cancer research at the Hospital for Sick Children. Cassie was a student at the school approximately 13-15 years ago. She passed away but fundraiser continues to take place and monies go to the oncology department at the Hospital for Sick Children.
 - Council had considered adopting a park to clean and maintain it but there was a concern that there would not be enough volunteers so this will not go ahead. Council will consider a smaller Earth Day related initiative.
 - Jr and Sr. boys' basketball teams are doing well. The Sr boys have been invited to a prestigious tournament, the Black Ball tournament in Orangeville February 2nd and 3rd.
 - Equity Council provided some de-stressing activities ahead of exams. They offered tips to help reduce exam anxiety.
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Data

Mr. Hilmer provided information about survey results.

Last May, parents were invited to participate in a parent school climate survey. Last week, the board released the responses provided by parents. At Williams, 79 parents responded, which is a 12% return rate. This return rate is on par with the average returns for other secondary schools. The following is some information obtained from these results:

Question: How would you identify your racial or ethnic background?

4% of Williams parents identified as being of East Asian background. Across the board, 28% of high school parents identified as being of East Asian background

Parents were asked if they agreed with the following statements:

Modern Learning:

I talk to my child about using social media safely. 94% of Williams' parents said yes. Average response across the board was 95%.

The instruction my child receives at school is relevant. 63% of Williams' parents said yes. The average response across the board was 75%.

My child is interested in what he or she is learning at school. 74% of Williams' parents said yes. The average response across the board was 85%.

The school my child attends keeps me well informed about what my child is learning: 54% of Williams' parents said yes. The average response across the board was 72%.

Math

School staff share resources with me that support learning at home. 18% of Williams' parents said yes. Average response across the board was 38%.

The school gives opportunities for families to engage in math together. 13% of Williams' parents said yes. Average response across the board was 32%.

Mental Health

In general, my child likes who he or she is as a person. 92% of Williams' parents said yes. Average response across the board was 91%.

I know where to go for my child to get mental health help. 71% of Williams' parents said yes. Average response across the board was 70%.

I am satisfied with the information the school gives me about mental health supports. 49% of Williams' parents said yes. Average response across the board was 54%.

Caring and Safe Schools

My child feels safe at his or her school. 93% of Williams' parents said yes. Average response across the board was 93%.

I am aware of the anonymous reporting button in regards to bullying which is on the board website. 24% of Williams' parents said yes. Average response across the board was 26%.

My child has stayed away from school to avoid being bullied. 13% of Williams' parents said yes. Average response across the board was 9%.

Equity and Inclusivity

I always or often feel welcome at the school. 73% of Williams' parents said yes. Average response across the board was 81%.

I feel there are barriers in the way of my child's learning. 37% of Williams' parents said yes. Average response across the board was 22%.

Diversity is respected at the school. 75% of Williams' parents said yes. Average response across the board was 83%.

I feel there are barriers in the way of my child accessing teams or clubs, etc. 13% of Williams' parents said yes. Average across the board was 20%

Student Survey.

In April, Williams students participated in a school climate survey, which is mandated by the Ministry of Education every two years. The results are meant to be used by individual schools for school improvement, and staff then set targets to improve numbers over the following two years. This survey was completed as a school and results from approximately 400 students were obtained. The following is information obtained from the survey:

Students were asked to indicate their agreement with the following statements:

I have experienced discrimination in the class or school setting
28% said yes. Goal is to bring this down to 15%.

I see, hear or learn about my social identity in class.
52% said yes. Goal is to bring this up to 60%.

I see, hear or learn about my social identity during extra-curricular activities.
42% said yes. Goal is to bring this up to 50%.

At school, I have at least one caring adult who supports me.
68% said they agree or strongly agree. Goal is to bring this up to 75%.

This year I have been bullied by another student or students at the school.
16% said yes. Goal is to bring this down to 9%.

What I learn at school is relevant to my everyday life.
51% said they agree. The goal is to bring this to 60%.

Students were asked how often they felt nervous or anxious.
43% said all the time or often. Goal is to bring this down to 33%.

It is noted that this data is not compared against that of other schools. There are plans for staff to meet with student groups to discuss these results and to learn more about how certain questions were interpreted. Targets were set for areas where staff felt they could make improvements.

Some discussion followed. Questions were asked about whether responses would be better tracked over time by looking at each year individually.

Each year, the board sets targets for each individual school and creates a 5 year plan to work towards meeting the targets. Williams is currently in a 5 year plan that started in 2015 and is working towards meeting targets by the 2020/2021 school year as follows:

Credit accumulation- is the number of credits earned each year with 30 being required to graduate. For Grade 9 students, the goal is to achieve 8 credits, by Grade 10 a total of 16 and by Grade 11 a total of 23.

Goals for students to earn credits for the school year 2020/2021 are as follows:

Grade 9- 89 → 93% will achieve the target

Grade 10- 89 → 90%

Grade 11- 83 → 87%

Grades 9 and 10-there is no difference in credit accumulation rate for boys and girls. In grade 11- targets for boys are 78 → 83% and for girls 88 → 91%.

Our school continues to have a goal of an 89% graduation rate after 4 years.

OSSLT

Refers to the literacy test completed in Grade 10. Grade 10 students are considered first-time eligible. Grade 11 or 12 students who were not successful in Grade 10 or not ready to write in Grade 10 may also write the test, but are considered previously eligible.

For Grade 10 students writing the test for the first time, the target for students in applied level is 61 → 71% success. Academic students are successful at a very high rate so no targets are set. To pass the OSSLT, students need to achieve a 75% on the test itself and the successful completion of the test is a requirement for graduation.

Students with an identified special need have a success target from 78 → 84%.

EQAO math is for Grade 9. Students who achieve a level 3 or 4 are deemed successful. Targets for this school are 91 → 95% for academic students and 48 → 62% for applied students.

Administration Report

- EQAO is being written today and tomorrow by Grade 9 students. Student results on the test count for 5% towards their final grade. The same test will be completed in June for students taking math in second semester.
- OSSLT will be written on April 10. There will be an after-school literacy support starting February 12th. Staff will identify students who may need extra support and students can register if interested. A Lit Blitz occurred before the break in which homerooms worked on different aspects of the test each day
- Next Friday is P.A. Day
- Timetables for Semester 2 are out. Semester 2 begins Monday, February 5.
- Prom for Grade 12 students will be May 3.
- Interim progress reports will go out March 23. Parent interview night will be March 29 and mid-semester report cards will be sent out via homerooms on April 27.

IB Programme

In December, there was a verification visit at the school, and the school hosted two visitors from the IB organization, one from Houston and one from Waterloo.

They met with Mr. Hilmer, Ms. Durbacz, the superintendent, parents, students in the Williams' Pre-IB programme, and teacher representatives from each subject group.

They toured the school and reviewed course outlines. They gave some suggestions related to course outlines and will submit their report to the IB organization, who makes the final decision. Mr. Hilmer reported that the site visit went well, and Williams is feeling ready for the official designation. Visitors reported that they noted the enthusiasm of the teachers and were impressed that so many teachers had been IB trained. The school is hopeful to hear the final decision of the organization by April 2018.

At the end of November 2017, students wrote the admissions test for next year's Williams' Pre-IB program to begin in Grade 9 in September 2018. About 221 students applied. Offers of admission have been sent out, and 113 have indicated acceptance to date. The hope is to have four Williams' Pre-IB classes in September 2018.

No chair report or mailbag items. Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.
Next meeting Monday, March 19, 2018 --right after March Break.