

The Dr. G.W. Williams School Council  
Preliminary minutes from the meeting of  
November 20, 2017

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**Present:**

*Parents:* Lynn Pearson (Chair), Dina Paraskevopoulos, Naren Chandrasekhar, Chris Baker (Vice-Chair), Karen Kelly (Grade 9 Parent Rep.), Svetlana Shamova, Mei Zhu, Judith Lalonde, Jill Harris (Secretary)

*School Administration/Staff:* Christopher Hilmer

*Community member/Guest:* None

*Student Representative:* Sanjanaa

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**Welcome and Re-Introductions**

Mr. Hilmer welcomed all and introductions are done at 7:00 pm. Lynn opened meeting  
Approval of October agenda - Motion: Karen Kelly; Seconded Dina Paraskevopoulos  
Approval of October minutes - Motion: Chris Baker; Seconded Karen Kelly

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**Student Report**

Sanjanaa provided the following update from Student Council:

- For Halloween, there was a costume contest. It was a success, and the winning group dressed as Care Bears.
- Movember has a table in the front foyer. Teachers have volunteered to grow beards/moustaches and students can make a donation and vote for their favourite. On November 29, there will be a photo booth in the foyer. Proceeds from the photos taken go to men's health/cancer organizations.
- Twin Day was successful; there were even groups of triplets.
- Student Council is considering ordering sweaters or t-shirts for Student Council members so as to be identified more easily; Council members would purchase their own.
- December: plans for holiday candy grams during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of December where students can buy candy canes for friends.
- A table will be set up in the front foyer for students to create Christmas cards for Canadian soldiers. Student Council will have posters to advertise and provide cards and letters for students to sign.
- Looking ahead to February: some thoughts for a tattoo fundraiser, perhaps with the school logo.
- Williams' Community Classes and Best Buddies will be the host for a dance-a-thon for other Community Classes on December 1. It is a fundraiser for Sick Kids Hospital and involves students from 20 YRDSB high schools. Various organizations have donated products like pizza lunch from Pizza Pizza and plates, etc. from Costco and cookies from a local bakery. Best Buddies has sold pizza after school to raise more money for this cause. There are plans for a raffle. Students have also been donating spare change in classrooms for Sick Kids. The goal is for our school to raise \$2000 for this cause.
- Semi-formal is Thursday, November 23 at King Valley Golf Club. There are over 150 students attending.

- Williams is running the “Fill a Purse for a Sister” campaign in which new or gently used purses are donated, and filled with donated personal items. All donations go to a local women’s shelter. There are collection boxes around the school.
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### **Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant**

Dina advised of a grant that she applied for last year on behalf of School Council. Dina completed a specific request for funds for learning opportunities for parents related to youth and mental health. As a result of this application, Council has been granted up to \$1000 to spend this school year on initiatives for parents to address issues of youth mental health. Some suggestions included having speakers from agencies such as Youth Speak give sessions where parents would have the opportunity to come out for an evening (or two sessions?) to hear about strategies and supports for mental health for youth. Dina asked that there be a small committee formed to work out how the grant will be spent. Information as to how the grant was spent and receipts for money spent need to be provided to the Ministry. The PRO Grant is a Ministry of Education initiative and more details can be found on the Ministry website. Anyone interested in joining the planning committee can approach Dina and Lynn; the hope is to meet ahead of the next Council meeting in January. It was agreed that we should also apply again for next year. One thought: is Aurora High also involved in a grant opportunity, and if so, is Williams interested in working together on an event?

Parent suggestion that we look to the Canadian Mental Health Association for ideas.

Mr. Hilmer suggested that Mr. Fuller might also have some suggestions.

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### **Administrator Profile**

The profile was reviewed at last council meeting and no changes were made. Discussion again tonight about working to raise the profile of the school and how this can be done. Is this part of the administrator’s role?

Decision under “Building Relationships” to add the following: *Is able to promote the positive reputation of the school in the local community*

Also decision under “Developing the Organization” to add the following: *Can work with all stakeholders to maintain and promote a vibrant school culture in and beyond the classroom*

Motion to approve the addition of these items in the administrator profile: Motion to Approve-Dina Paraskevopoulos; Seconded by Judith Lalonde

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### **Administration Report**

#### **Website**

- Many updates and changes to the website since September’s meeting. Council had an opportunity to have a look.
- Minutes from Council meetings could be posted upon approval by Mr. Hilmer. There was a suggestion that a draft of the minutes could be uploaded after being reviewed. It would be a draft only-would still need approval at the following council meeting.

- Parent request to have information on the website about steps that students and parents should be taking in each grade to prepare for Grade 12 – something like a FAQ for each year as to what parents/students need to think about as they plan for Grade 12 graduation and beyond.
- Each department has a page on the website with staff contacts.
- Suggestion that the website should have information about SHSM-Specialist High Skills Major
- Library page has links to other websites and other information catalogues. It also has links to other resources according to subject. It is very user friendly and has a large amount of information.
- The school website format is established by the board and includes standard tabs and information. There is required board content and then school specific content on the website.
- Suggestion that information about the website updates be announced in the “Tell.”

### **Report Cards**

- Mid-semester report cards went out last week. There are four reports per year in November, February, April and July.
- Interim progress reports are done approximately 5-6 weeks into a new semester so that problems that arise early on can perhaps be rectified by the time of the mid-semester report.
- Page 1 shows a student’s mark and comments. Comments are from a set group and should speak to students’ learning, strengths, and next steps.
- Also in the report card is information about students’ learning skills and work habits – organization, responsibility, independent work, collaboration, initiative, and self-regulation.
- Page 3 has a response form which requires a student to reflect on achievements and goals. Students should complete these, have them signed by a parent, and return them to their homeroom teacher. All reports form part of a student’s OSR (Ontario Student Record) i.e. official student file.

### **Post-Secondary Fair**

- Was held on October 26 at Williams. Aurora High, St. Max, Cardinal Carter and Williams take turns hosting each year. Colleges and Universities send representatives who speak to students and parents about programs, campus life, admissions requirements, etc. It was well attended this year.
- Also, Mr. Fuller hosted an OSAP seminar for interested students. Students are always encouraged to look online into OSAP availability. Parents with OSAP questions can contact Mr. Fuller in the Guidance department.

### **School Council Forum**

- Board divides schools into four areas. Williams is in the central area of our Board, and there was a School Council Forum for this area on October 25 which Mr. Hilmer attended. All school councils from each elementary and high school in the area are invited to attend; however, communication about the event was not efficient.

- Sessions: council rules and how councils run; fundraising; and equity on council. If anyone is interested in doing fundraising, please let Chris know.
- Chairs of various councils were looking for ways to communicate with one another. The Board now has a system in place for chairs to communicate with one another called Edsby.
- Edsby will be able to do a lot of things. Williams will get training on Edsby next spring so that it can be in place for September. Parents will be able to access their student's marks, make plans for parent-teacher interviews, etc.

### **Grade 10 Literacy Test**

- Lit Blitz planned for Grade 10 students with a launch assembly on November 28. Students will be given a booklet which will mimic test activities such as reading a graphic text and interpreting the information; reading a passage and answering questions; writing a newspaper story based on a photo; writing an opinion piece, and answering multiple choice questions.
- From December 5 to 15, Grade 10 students will be assigned one activity from the booklet as practice in class.
- More guided practice will be planned as the test date gets closer.
- In January/February, the school will offer an after-school literacy program.
- Test will be on Tuesday, April 10 this year. Successful completion of the test is a requirement for a student to obtain a diploma.

### **IB Programme**

- In December, there will be site verification visits to move Williams from being a candidate school to an authorized school.
- Visitors from the IB organization will visit the school, and then a final report follows in the spring. Chris is confident that the school is prepared.
- Plan is for Williams to be an official IB school in September 2018 and to start offering the IB Diploma Programme to students in Grade 11.
- Currently there are two Grade 9 classes for a total of 58 students and 13 students in Grade 10.
- Assessments for next year's applicants took place this past Saturday and will take place again this Tuesday night.

### **Other News**

- Remembrance Day assemblies were very good and quite moving. There was a guest from the Armed Forces. The Grade 9 Drama class presented a series of tableaux set to the "In Flanders' Fields" poem. The band performed as well.
- Sr. Band students have the opportunity to attend the Atlantic Music Festival in Halifax at Mount Saint Vincent University.
- November 1 was Take Our Kids to Work Day for Grade 9; this allowed the school to bring in Grade 8 students for visits. Approximately 375 Grade 8 students visited this year. Lots of questions about the differences between applied and academic. Grade 8s attended one core course and rotated to other subject

- areas during the day to see the difference between academic and applied. They had the opportunity to see elective subjects and explore the school.
- Habeeb is off on a leave. A retired principal named John Glezakos is filling in for him at this time.
  - Applications for Speak Up Grant for students are available. Williams applied for two grants last year and received funds to use towards honouring the past and looking to the future. Next year marks the school's 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary. There has been some thought to restoring old photos as there are so many photos from the 130 years. It would be nice to put old and new photos up to show history and future. The project was not completed last year. Chris can apply again this year. Consideration to having photos printed on aluminum and mounted in the front foyer.
  - WAC – Williams Athletic Council – sold hoodies and sweatshirts in the past few weeks. The logo was designed by a student.
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No items in mailbag. Motion to adjourn the meeting: Dina Paraskevopoulos;  
Seconded by Judith Lalonde. Meeting ended at 8:30 pm.  
Next Council meeting Monday, January 22, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the school library.