

Michaëlle Jean Public School Council Meeting Minutes

Date: February 8, 2022.

Location: Virtual/Zoom

Time: 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

In attendance:

School Staff: Nora Mazlounian, Christine Chin

2021-2022 School Council Members: Kim Sato, Melissa Wallace, Corinne Francis, Deepshika (Deep) Swaroop, Sushma Kavikondala, Sarah Talebizadeh, Moiz Mohamedali, Ashley Bebbington

Members-at-large: Carmen Lam, Chunghong Wang, Muzi Liu, Jessie Perry, Zoya Khademi, Claudia De Oro, Muzi Liu

1. Welcome/Introductions

Kim welcomes all members to the meeting.

2. Regrets & Recognitions

Moiz Mohamedali

3. Approval of November Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes made by Kim. Ashley seconds the minutes. Minutes from November meeting approved.

4. Principal's Report

Nora: Report cards are going out electronically on the week of Feb. 21. We were told that we will be having EQAO this year and the EQAO is going to be online, so students will complete the assessment. We don't have information about what that looks like for virtual/online students, but there will be examples of tests available for students and teachers and parents will be able to access this on the EQAO website just to have an idea what it will look like and how to navigate the test. Nora isn't sure what it will look like at this time, but she will let us know if she finds out.

We will be getting new camera systems at the school. They will be upgrading the cameras in the halls and outside. Current cameras are not of the best quality. The school requested the upgrade and fortunately is not paying for it, as it usually has to. They are putting wide-angle cameras so there is a better view. Will set it up so all angles are covered. Will make sure all blind spots are covered and the quality will be a lot better. The installation should start at the end of February to the beginning of March.

Kim: Is the idea of having the camera to be able to go back and see what happened?

Nora shared how in the past there was an incident where a parent slipped on the ice. They had to review the footage to see what happened. There is a camera on the parking lot. The company said to let them know if there were any hidden corners where strangers could be hiding out. Luckily we don't have those, but some schools have bushes and so on. Cameras will be located in the hallway, not in the classrooms or washrooms.

5. Treasurer's Report

Sushma: Shared financial report from Nov. 2021 to Feb. 2022.

6. Committee Chair Reports

Communications Officer

Corrine: No new business to report. Hoping to have one newsletter at the end of each month depending on available content. If you have any info to include, let her know and she will include it.

Parent and Community Involvement

Kim read Moiz's update as he was unable to attend the meeting. Moiz said he is working on the tree planting event with the City to take place in April or May. Wondering if we could organize a virtual tour or video for incoming Grade 1s so parents can understand what the school is about.

Nora: We do a virtual tour only for students who are registered. Under normal circumstances, we would invite new students to the school in April or May, but because of COVID-19, the last couple of years, we have sent out a virtual tour and they have gone well. The Grade 1 teachers give a little shout-out to introduce themselves and we have adapted it over the last two years. The first year was brand new and the second year was more complex. We have been adapting it.

Kim asked if the school gets a lot of questions after sending the video.

Nora said in the past, they had an in-person info session in January where she would give a presentation. At that point, parents would ask questions about English language learning, bussing, special education, questions about volunteering, lunch programs, extracurricular activities, and so on. Since we haven't been able to have that evening event now, the Board created a video for all parents to access. At the end of the video, there is a slide deck that answers a lot of common questions. Everything is laid out for them. If they have additional questions, they call their home school or MJPS, which doesn't happen very often.

Sarah asked if there was a possibility to come in and set up a spread with edible items for an Iranian observance. It would have to be the Friday before the 18th.

Nora: We usually don't put it on the table because the kids will touch everything, but they can be put in the display case. You could drop off the items, but you wouldn't be able to come in.

School Climate

Kim introduced Sarah as the new Chair of School Climate. She had been sharing the Parent and Community Involvement role with Moiz but is now taking on this role.

Christine: Carnavale event will begin the week of the 14th. Every day there will be a different Spirit Day. We will try to keep it really simple because we want the days to be inclusive for everyone. For example, toque day, pajama day, scarf day, red and white day, etc. We try to make sure the majority of students would have the items. We will also do a Bingo and there will probably be some outdoor activities. We don't say what day on the schedule for some of the activities because they are weather dependent. We have different rules from last year in terms of equipment. Any equipment that will be required, eight or nine different stations, no longer needs to be sanitized in between, but parents do need to dress their kids appropriately for school in case they will be outside. Teachers will take their students outside for 20 minutes or so each. Asked if Council wants to add anything to Carnavale.

Nora: One of the caretakers wore the Bonhomme de Neige costume last year and will be doing it again this year.

Christine: Nora put in an order for the button-making machine so the students can make buttons. Will need volunteers.

Sarah asked if volunteers can come inside. Nora said no. It would have to be outside.

Christine suggested giving maple candies to the kids. Nora said we wouldn't get them by next week. Last time they were ordered and they were expensive and took a long time to arrive, around six weeks.

Nora asked about whether hot chocolate will be served. Kim said that in the past, we borrowed the Tim Hortons hot chocolate thermos machine and they gave us cups and lids and we give them half a cup and dilute with water to make it not as sweet. She remembers they had to run back halfway through and refill it from Tim Hortons. May need to have someone waiting to refill at lunchtime. If lunch assistants could stay on and serve it afterward, that would work. Under normal circumstances, parents would come volunteer and run the activities, but now we can't have any volunteers inside and so teachers are handling it now. Sarah offered to pick up and drop off hot chocolate if it's around lunchtime.

Sarah said she would call Tim Hortons to find out the cost and to figure out timing. She asked how many students are at MJPS. Nora said we have 340 students at the school. Sarah said she could pick up the hot chocolate on Friday the 18th after finding out the details.

Kim asked if there will be a craft for Carnavale. Nora said it's a good idea to leave it for spring. Christine agrees that there already is a lot going on next week so it will be good to give kids something to look forward to in the spring.

Kim asked about buttons and when the kids will finish their artwork. Nora said the buttons could be finished by end of this week or next and cross fingers we will get the button maker. We may have to pick up the button maker because the courier only comes on Wednesday. They would only be able to bring it next Wednesday. If we can pick it up on the Monday, that would be better.

Location for pickup is at the Board office in Newmarket so one of the teachers would have to go get it. Opportunity to do buttons on the weekend as well. Nora said we will find out tomorrow. Deep said she could also help. Kim said if any other parents are interested in helping to put emails in the chat. Several wrote their email addresses in the chat.

Student Success

Deep: No updates due to ongoing pandemic.

7. Teacher Report

Christine: Rabia talk was well attended. Up to 70 participants were watching at one point and they stayed for most of the event.

Next speaker will be Katrina Moore, author of “Grandpa Grumps.” Hoping to book her for April, but has yet to receive confirmation. Will let us know when it is confirmed.

For Lunar New Year, Christine Lee and Christine Chin put together a display case and resources. Goal as a teacher librarian is to diversify the library. Showed examples of books that are more diverse. Will try to get books in French, but they are hard to find.

For Black History Month, we currently have a decorated display case and are also working on more books that show diversity.

The students have been enjoying Maker Space. Currently have seven robot Bee-Bots and are looking to purchase more. Kids learn to code the Bee-Bot so it can get home. Teachers have been incorporating coding into their curriculum. Seven Bee-Bots are available per class, so with 20 students, it’s an intimate space.

Kim asked about the problem that many diverse resources are not available. Wondering if kids can be encouraged to write their own books and think like an author. Share their own stories. Christine said this is a great project for Grade 3s.

Christine: Received a lot more Chromebooks so Christine will be delivering technology this week. With the allotment, each Grade 1 class has five Chromebooks and iPads. Every class from Grade 2 and 3, will have a minimum of 12 Chromebooks per classroom. Luckily we were able to get them. Nora said that’s part of the \$12,000 budget taken from School Council plus Nora added \$13,000 from her budget and the Board added \$10,000. Received 85 Chromebooks. Christine mentioned at the last meeting there are still Chromebooks that have yet to be recovered from virtual students. The expiry on the Chromebooks we just received expire Jan. 2023 which explains the need to refresh and repurchase. Also, sometimes when we receive the Chromebooks back, they have to be decommissioned or repaired. We are grateful to have the new Chromebooks, which are much easier to use.

Kim asked if the Chromebook news can be shared in the newsletter. Nora said it could.

8. New Business

Corinne: Will we be doing the art card fundraiser? Are we doing that before March Break so it's available for Father's Day or after March Break?

Nora said we had been planning to do it in the spring, but it could be moved up. Need to encourage students to make their card generic so they could use it for multiple occasions, not just Father's Day or Mother's Day, or so on. Otherwise you wouldn't be purchasing multiple cards for one season. Didn't want to overload the parents as we just did a fundraiser right before the winter break. Didn't know about the timeline. If we want Nora to register right away she can.

Corinne: Can you clarify the timing on how long it takes?

Kim shared a timeline for Art Cards for Kids. Timeline is about four weeks. Unsure about timing from when parents order and when they receive it. Christine said she will have to talk to Nora about privacy policies that exist on several sites because we don't know how students' information is stored. If we are entering names, it may be red-flagged.

Christine said she will find out about permissions to use this software. Nora will wait before registering. As soon as Christine gets the OK, then Nora will register and then it doesn't matter when we start the cards and give ourselves a month.

9. Other Business

Kim asked if we should get everything ready for the pizza fundraiser in case restrictions get lifted. Nora said last time we talked about finding a company that could individually package the pizza and the pricing. Also have to consider what is included (apples with pizza, etc.) Nora said they used to charge \$4.25 a slice. Kim shared pricing for Abruzzo Pizza from April 2021. Kim said she will get back in touch with Abruzzo. Nora said the info should be in previous minutes, but said to check in with Abruzzo as the cost of everything has increased. Kim said we will start thinking about that.

Deep suggested looking into Swiss Chalet for the lunch program. Nora thinks it will be too expensive. Deep said she used to do it for Silver Stream School. Deep said she will look into Swiss Chalet as an option.

10. Adjournment

Kim made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Deep.

Next meeting April 26, 2022 from 7-8:30pm