

Minutes of Meeting – Thornlea School Council

Place: School Library

Date: May 16, 2016

Time: 7:15 p.m. – 9:10 p.m.

Attendance: Mr. Joe Foti, Principal
Mrs. Genevieve Seabrook, School Council Chair
Mrs. Elizabeth Manz, School Council Secretary
Parents

Agenda: Updates by Mr. Foti of what was happening in the school

1. Mr. Foti talked about a trip to France that the French Immersion students undertook from April 21-29, 2016. The audience was interested in the detail of the itinerary, participants and teachers who went on the trip, highlights, adventures and misadventures en-route, local customs, food, weather, people, etc. It was a lively session where parents shared their own experiences along the way.
2. Prom will take place this Thursday, May 19, 2016, from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. 200 tickets have been sold as more than 80% of Grade 12 students will attend. There will be two police officers hired for the event (cost: \$900), and no alcohol will be allowed.
3. Graduation ceremony will take place on June 29, 2016 in the school gymnasium. All Grade 12 awards will be given out at the event, as well as a scholarship. The valedictorian will be decided by student votes. The graduating class will include our second graduating French Immersion class, SHISM, and Co-Op students. Food will be catered.
4. Timetable for next semester are already done, Guidance will start calling in students with conflicting schedules so changes can be made ahead of time.
5. We have four teachers retiring and seven new teachers coming in the fall. The school is expecting 850 students including visa students (ELL students) and more French Immersion students. The school board is projecting conservatively for 790 students. The retiring teachers are Mr. Everard (English), Ms. Grishanick (Science), Ms. Philp (Special Ed), and Ms. Pirie (Special Ed/Drama). Their work and contribution are much appreciated and they will be missed.
6. Last week we had the Art & Music Night. The Renaissance paintings are currently showcased in the library. Our students are showing plenty of talents in art and in music, we hope more parents will come to show their support and encouragement next year.

7. Mrs. Seabrook enquired about our ESL program. Mr. Foti provided a brief explanation and gave the reasons why we are the school of choice for ESL students. These visiting students are more advanced in maths than their peers in Ontario, their presence at our school contributes to our higher maths scores in standardized tests.
8. There was a dynamic discussion about how maths and English are currently taught in elementary schools. Parents voiced their concern that this has affected student performance in high school. Mr. Foti assured the audience that English grammar and spelling are being taught in high school. They are taking into consideration that incoming grades 9 students might not have been taught as thoroughly in primary school.
9. Mr. Foti mentioned a few projects that are on his agenda for next year, namely, that the hallway adjacent to the side of the library will be renovated to create a common area for students to hang out and relax during break times. Depending on his budget and the actual costs, he wants to upgrade 50-100 computers. Lastly, black boards are long overdue for replacement with white boards, although some teachers have requested to keep their black boards.
10. Parents are requesting a big outdoor information sign for Thornlea's school to replace the current one that no one can see. The present one is too small and badly positioned.
11. Fundraising activities: the TSAC car wash was very successful at \$5/car, total income amounted around \$1,300; basketball game with the police came in at \$800; Thornstock is coming up.
12. After the very successful presentation at the last School Council meeting in April, It was suggested that Dr. Silvia Bernardini could give a talk on June 3rd to school staff to advise them on how to help students with anxiety and stress.
13. Looking ahead, next year meetings will include topics such as college application, scholarship, mental health, drugs/sexting/social networking among young people. Suggestions from the school community are welcome.
14. School Cash Online (www.schoolcashionline.com) will be set up and running on the school website by next week. The school will absorb the 3% transaction cost imposed by the bank.
15. Next School Council meeting will be September 19th 2016.

Mrs. Seabrook thanked the audience for attending the meeting and Mr. Foti and admin for all their hard work. Meeting adjourned. at 9:10PM.