

Willowbrook Public School Council Meeting
Thursday October 28, 2021
7:00 pm Online

Attendees: Alex Pancharovski, Srdjana J., Sonya L., David K., Sophie G., Mahkameh K., Antonio F., Pooneh M., Amanda A., Raymond L., Naomi G.

Agenda

Welcome & Introduction

- Approval of last meeting minutes from September 23, 2021
 - no questions about meeting minutes from September 23
 - David motioned for approval; minutes approved

Administrative Team Report

- public health notification 2 weeks ago regarding covid; reminder that Covid-19 is still in our community and school
- staff trying to enforce social distancing as best as they can; keeping with protocols in school
- transmissions have happened outside of school
- one positive is that during the Covid dismissal affecting the younger classes, staff did not have to be dismissed
- last year, when there were positive cases identified in a class, many parents emailed admin about the identity of the positive case(s) using aggressive questioning, but this year, a lot less of these kinds of questions
- 4 classes dismissed, had to get computers out, but was pretty seamless experience
 - school community were able to move to online model fairly easily

October Events

- Thanksgiving food drive: 1st time done for Thanksgiving—50 bags of food and went to local food bank in Thornhill neighbourhood
 - good to do since there are immediate needs in our school community as well as broader community; great for kids to see food brought in and ensuing discussions
 - acts as a segue to Red Bag Food Drive (have done for the past 3-4 years); the Red Bag Food Drive was started by former Thornlea student; drive will start Nov and end in early Dec
- G4s and above participated in an intra-school cross-country meet
 - Covid makes it difficult to do anything with other schools
 - trying to carry on with athletic calendar as best as possible
 - kids that weren't usually interested in trying out for X-country, ended up doing

so → shows kids are hungry for some kind of athletic activity

Clubs

- next sport coming up is badminton (Jan)
- volleyball is starting, just in gym now, but possibility of school team (G4-8)
 - Public Health is working on inter-school play; not sure of implementation timing
- library is open; library time embedded in timetable for classes
 - Ms Cardoso is looking for library volunteers
 - sanitization protocols still in place
- Mental Health and Wellness Club starting up
 - pre-pandemic, Willowbrook offered did Wellness Wednesdays (students did meditation/relaxation/grounding activities)
 - Wellness Wednesdays will be starting up again; students to lead activity
- Gay-Straight Alliance
 - based on data from board, which informed the creation of this club
 - Willowbrook has students that are looking for a safe space to meet; open to allies, as well
 - staff member will be leading club and starting tomorrow (Friday, October 29); will meet with G7/8 students for 1st meeting, but eventually the club will be open to whole school
- going ahead with yearbook this year (students are asking for a yearbook)
 - yearbook company offers a platform to Willowbrook to put together a yearbook
 - estimating about 200 yearbooks will be sold (\$20-25/book, depending on how many are sold)
 - yearbook should be finalized in May
- Picture Day on Oct 26
 - retakes will be at the studio or students/families can send in their own student photo with white background
 - no class photos; but will create composite photos of kids' classes
 - pics of G8 grad photos booked for Jan 2021
 - keeping to Covid protocols: 1 robe for each student vs. sharing robes
- fire drills/lockdown drills (6/school year; 2/school year)
 - lockdown drill went well yesterday
 - completed final fall fire drill today
- Remembrance Day
 - similar to last year, poppies and poppy stickers ordered through local legion
 - not doing assembly, but class-based activities instead
 - modules on Remembrance Day for online students
- Grade 5/6 teachers: Beaver Computing Challenge, Nov 8-12
 - like Gauss, and is administered by University of Waterloo
 - total cost is \$86 to run for G5s and 6s (\$2/test) (\$120 for Gauss tests)
 - *Alex: asking parents what their feelings are about math competitions*
 - ❖ positive reaction from council parents

- ❖ minimal cost to parents and good opportunity for students, as long as it is presented as a positive opportunity to students
 - there is also a mathematics challenge for younger grades; will look into more details
- Blue Spruce reading program (K-3 reading contest) and Forest of Reading program for older grades
 - Ms Cardoso will lead this program
 - To participate in the program, school is required to purchase of full sets of books (includes many Canadian authors) for a total cost of \$757; council to help with 50% (*see Treasurer's Report below*)
 - Willowbrook then participates in nation-wide reading contest
 - *Council: voiced support for participation in program*
- progress reports
 - teachers are working on them now; reports will be emailed to GAPPS accounts starting week of Nov 15; coincide with parent-teacher interviews (virtual @Google Meet Nov 18 pm and Nov 19 am)
 - takes a few days to arrive in students' inboxes
 - parents can choose interview times starting Nov 1-9 on Edsby
- school council forum Nov 15: open to all members of councils; anyone interested to email Alex
 - workshops available to attendees
 - presentation on ideas on school council fundraising
- destreaming
 - YRDSB and Ministry of Education involved in destreaming due to research
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHYVA_2nvFc&t=152s
<https://www2.yrdsb.ca/schools-programs/destreaming>
- Milk Program: Sue Marsden
 - might be able to start this up again (possible revenue stream for council)
 - can run it in the same way as the healthy snack food programme (a teacher/class has showed interest in running the program)
 - Parent council volunteers can't help out (can't come in school)
- Healthy Snack Programme
 - *Is Healthy Snack Programme part of YRDSB programming?* Willowbrook receives funding from a few different sources: school applies for grants from nutrition programs, which allows Willowbrook to purchase the snack items with awarded funds
 - Willowbrook has generous funding, but has asked Council for funds previously
 - Currently, Willowbrook has a surplus of funds which allowed school to purchase snacks this year and also have willing staff to run program
 - have had parent donations for these kind of programs in the past
- Afterschool programs
 - no permits allowed in the building outside of YMCA; vendors like Mad Science do offer virtual classes

- may change if permits are allowed in the spring
- Willowbrook can run an afterschool G7/8 literacy and numeracy club (M/W or T/Th; 1 hr of homework help)

Treasurer's Report

- \$8500 opening balance; keep \$5000 in reserve
- didn't pay for agendas this year due to budget constraints (no fundraising for 18 mos)
 - few leftover agendas; didn't over-order (most of the primary and junior kids bought agendas)
- Council usually gives music (\$1000), art (\$1000), as well as money for lice check
 - Last spring: Council gave to grad fund and 2nd lice check
- *Did \$1000 for Grad from 2020 get used?*
 - did not get used, except to buy plaque (approximately \$100)
- Blue Spruce reading program: \$757; council to help with 50%
 - Ask: \$375 for literacy contest
 - ❖ David motion for approval: approved
 - Alex: ask Ms Parina for needs from music dept and get back to council
- lice checks most likely not happening; remove from budget
- not doing banquet hall for G8 grad; will be doing plaque
- water fountain ask from earlier meeting:
 - fountain on 1st floor is digital and fun to use, but it's expensive (\$3-5K)
 - new one is not needed
- Amanda: raised point that council funds are diminishing
 - Alex: will contact Finance to see what the actual restrictions re: fundraising

Discussion on Possible Online Events

- last year's events went well (Fire and Ice, Cooking Night, STEAM Night)
- may be grants available, like the PRO grant (\$500)
- will need volunteers, organization to get events running
- tentative date for next event Thursday, Dec 2, 6pm
 - volunteers: Pooneh, David, Amanda, Mahkmeh
 - last year, cooking event started at 430-630
 - consider doing something like dessert to accommodate shorter timeframe
 - Should we apply for PRO-grant and use this money for the event?
 - David to follow up with Maisie for info on previous cooking night
 - Ideal to have event posters in 3 languages (English, Farsi, Chinese)

Wrap Up and General Questions/Comments

- Srdjana: suggestion to start each meeting with a safety moment
 - e.g., Halloween: if driving anywhere, to make sure to drive slowly and brake often
 - i) don't wear mask that would restrict vision; can consider carrying illuminating products
 - ii) clear pathway to homes for trick-or-treaters

- iii) consider candy close to sidewalk so that people with accessibility challenges can access candy easily
- iv) consider self-serve table to keep to covid protocols

Next meeting: January 13, 2022