

# MINUTES

## Windham Ridge Parent Advisory Council

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*October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014 | 6:30-8:30pm*

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### Attendance

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Liz Novatsidis  
Starr Mills  
Véronique O'Malley  
Doug Chester  
Kelly Giesen  
Mukesh Gautam  
Esther Boivin  
Amir Mirshahi  
Julie Romanovich  
Houda Alassad  
Kristina Barybina  
Vivian Aitas  
Preeti Kumar  
Joanne Leo  
Josie Khan  
Dan Cipollone  
Nicki Kalogirou

### Welcome

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New council, staff, and guests were introduced. Welcome to Mukesh Gautam as Treasurer. Also noted that role of Secretary would be shared by Preeti Kumar and Julie Romanovich.

### Board

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Guest speaker from York Region School board, Nicki Kalogirou presented an overview of the Online Payment Solution pilot project. Two different systems are being tested across several schools. The board's goal is to decide by December on which system to use and eventually roll out to all schools in the board.

There were questions from the group whether the use of the online system would raise the cost of the trip or item purchased online. Nicki confirmed that the price would be slightly higher to accommodate the user fee but it would be included in the price of the trip or item purchased. i.e., parents will not see two prices (one for the item and another as user fee).

Nicki Kalogirou to follow up on the issues that some parents are having with contacting the third party vendor regarding their problems with access to the online payment system.

A survey has been sent to Véronique so it can be sent to the parents for feedback. Liz and Starr have been forwarded the survey and it will be made available online for all parents.

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## Principal's Report

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### Staff Wish list:

Discussion of Staff wish list led by Véronique O'Malley. Itemized list was reviewed by council and results are:

- 1) Supply Teachers (choir band, Sports, Literacy, Science), YRDSB only supported 12 teachers & Busses (band, choir, sports regional events, science competitions; York U Challenge) YRDSB only supported – total wish is \$4260, council agreed to provide ½ for a total of \$2130
- 2) Social skills, Self-regulation group games requested by Mme Maw – unanimous vote to provide the \$100 requested.
- 3) Notebooks and materials for English Creative Writing Club Gr: 7-8 – unanimous vote to provide the \$40 requested by Mlle Gasior.
- 4) Science Lab Supplies: Thermometers, Glass funnels, timers – unanimous vote to provide the \$300 requested by Mme Cowan.
- 5) Technology Initiative through Cost Sharing: decision to provide the \$6250 now since the deadline for requests to the Board is end of November.
- 6) Total money distributed and agreed upon: \$8820
- 7) Agreement that remaining items will be revisited and reviewed after QSP program in November.

It was suggested by the group that the Wish List be modified next time to include the grades that the wishes relate to. That would make it easier to see if the funds were being used for the benefit of all grades.

### Lice Check Update:

Update provided by Kelly Giesen. In September, 539 students were checked and 14 were sent home. The company providing the lice checks was very professional and extremely diligent. Discussion about performing lice checks twice a year as sufficient, once in September and once after Christmas break. Possibility of educating parents to perform checks at home discussed.

Idea to send home an information sheet on lice and ask for donations towards the lice checks (such as loonies, toonies, etc.) to offset part of the costs. Lice checks cost \$800 each time. Agreed to have someone take on the initiative and try this fundraising idea out.

### EQAO:

Results from last year discussed and reviewed. Overall impressive scores in both Grade 3 and 6. As is the wish to always increase the number of students performing at a Level 4, attention is also given to seek out those who are struggling below a Level 3 and provide assistance.

### Homework Policy:

Policy reviewed and discussed. Véronique said that we currently have a simple homework policy. We follow the School Board recommendation. If we would like to change the number of minutes we currently follow, we can suggest it to the (new) School Trustee, after election, who will bring it to the School Board for consideration.

Any feedback, suggestions, or recommendations to be directed to co-chairs Starr Mills and Liz Novatsidis. Véronique said to think about the policy and put it on the agenda for November.

### Basketball/ Tennis on town courts:

Update by Doug Chester. Supervision is an issue because the basketball court is on Town of Richmond Hill property. Our teachers cannot do supervision because they are only on duty for 20 minutes during lunch break. We need someone for the full 40 minutes. Two parent volunteers (Adrienne Ambrozic and Nicole Marshall) have offered their time to supervise the Grade 6s & 7s on Fridays at lunch recess until end of November.

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### Treasurer Report

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Welcome Mukesh Gautam as this year's Treasurer. As it is still early in the year, brief update provided by Kelly Giesen: all incoming funds are from Pizza lunch, outgoing funds to lice check, outgoing funds to paint playground (funds committed to from last year).

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### Teacher's Report

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Esther Boivin: Not much to report yet. On behalf of teachers, she thanks all council members for volunteering our time and efforts in performing these tasks for the good of the school.

Dan Cipollone: Informs of the success of the Avengers/Play pals system in which the Grade 8 students take on the task of working/playing with a different grade each day during both recesses. They resolve conflicts and make sure the children are playing nicely. Also put into place Economics of Living where students do jobs around school in return for Monopoly money.

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### Committee Updates

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#### Education – Technology Workshop:

Amir Mirshahi – First Technology workshop for parents set for Thursday, November 27. Amir to source out workshop presenters. Véronique suggests checking the York Regional Police programs for parents.

Request for possibility of providing documentation of workshop topics after workshop completion for those who could not attend.

#### Fundraising – QSP / Direct Donations:

Vivian Aitas – QSP starts Thursday, October 9. It is a 2-week program. Discussion of prize incentives: random daily draws, winning class?, entire school goals rewarded with Pajama day, chewing gum day, etc.

In addition to purchasing magazines, there is also an option to just donate money which is great for parents who don't want magazines but would like to contribute.

Also discussed and Vivian to find the answer: What does QSP stand for?

### Volunteers & Yearbook:

Julie Romanovich – There is a long list of parent volunteers this year waiting for opportunities where they can help out. So far, there is an adequate group for pizza lunches so there is no need for requesting the assistance of Grade 8 students. Possibly later on in the year when the parent volunteer numbers decrease.

Yearbook: It was discussed at council meeting we would go with Lifetouch as the provider this year. However, once the contact was made to Lifetouch to have the publication agreement drawn up and any online service prepared and ready to go, the service was slow. This brought concern as to the speed and quality of service throughout the year and especially at time of print. Jostens was then given an opportunity to revise and match the Lifetouch prices. Jostens price was reduced and now similar to the Lifetouch price. Different opportunities to have student artwork displayed throughout the book will be explored as opposed to having one student's art on the front cover. Publication agreement was drawn up and received within one day of contacting Jostens.

Delivery time for the book was agreed for June and purchase price of book set at \$22.

Véronique to give Julie number of families in the school so we have an idea of how many books to order.

### Student Programs:

Houda Alassad – Programs suggested:

Clay club, crochet club, mosaic club, ribbon club, Lego club, Lego Robotics

Program ideas suggested: Marketing club for Gr. 7 & 8

Houda to set schedule and ensure that there are no huge scheduling conflicts. Also the programs should include all grades so there is something for everyone.

### School Grants:

Kristina Barybina – looking into the Crayola Champion Creatively Alive Children grant opportunity. The 2014 deadline has now passed. Kristina will complete application for 2015 and provide to Véronique. Each grant-winning school (up to 20 grants awarded) receives \$2,500 and Crayola products valued at \$1,000.

### Communications/Council Website Updates:

Preeti Kumar – no updates this month.

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## New Business

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- 1) Art Mural: Véronique - suggestion to create a 'beautiful welcoming school' by having walls and/or stairwells painted with art murals as it promotes pride and respect within students. The name of one local Aurora artist given to Julie Romanovich. Liz and Starr may have another contact provided by a Windham Ridge parent. Julie to source out artists and see what they have to offer.

Suggestion to contact alumni at high schools such as Aurora HS and art colleges to see if the art students would like to take this on as a volunteer project. Will need a School Council member to take this on (and look into issues like liability, insurance, damage to property etc.)

- 2) Graduation Revenue Report: Provided by Kelly Giesen – Last year the Grade 8s managed to raise \$7031.00; Parents contributed \$16,025.00; Total grad expenses amounted to \$22,472.00; Overage allowed for a \$12 refund per family at the end of the year.

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## Next Meeting

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Tuesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014