



## Shingwàkons Public School

### School Council Minutes (February 28, 2023)

#### **1. Approval of Minutes**

- a. January 24, 2023 School Council Minutes to be approved by School Council via email.

#### **2. New Business**

- a. Nothing to report.

#### **3. Co-Chair Report**

- a. Fundraising: A fundraising committee has been created. Some of the activities that are either 'in place' or that the committee hopes to start are as follows: Lunch Lady (already in place), Purdy's Chocolate (this fundraiser is ready to start – the details need to be posted to the school's Facebook page, the committee is hoping to have this fundraiser both internal and external to the school), Mabel's Labels (this fundraiser is already in place and orders have started, the committee will be posting details on the school's Facebook page, this fundraiser will be kept open indefinitely - especially for the Kindergarten students starting next year), Papa Jack's popcorn (this is ready to start, will be available either every Friday or every second Friday, school cash online can be used for this fundraiser, the price of the popcorn still needs to be determined. School Council needs to purchase the popcorn in advance. The school can front load the cost and School Council can pay back the money)
- b. Other Events: Other activities for the school include the following: cake walk, dance, fun run. School Council asked parents during the Open House what they

might like to see as activities at the school – these are some of the ideas that were shared. Cake Walk: Could be held the first or second week in May. This is a very inclusive activity – various food options to address allergies, stations with just toys etc. School Council will ensure that every child has an opportunity to go to the cake walk and put a ticket in the bin. Fun Run or fitness in the gym: These activities would bring everyone together with a focus on health and fitness. These activities could include the physical education teachers. These ideas are initial brainstorming, School Council is always open to other suggestions. Activities could also be coordinated with the official school opening.

- c. Funding for school council: Funds are available to new school councils. School council is in the process of determining how to apply.
- d. PRO Grant: Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant. This grant is \$500.00 a year to school councils to bring in a guest speaker. An invitation for parents and guardians to hear current research around a variety of different topics. There are specific criteria which apply to 'how' the grant may be used by a school council.

#### **4. School Report**

- a. Slide Show: A slide show of the various activities occurring around the school was shared during the School Council meeting.
- b. Gym: The gym is open as of last Tuesday. There are still a few things that need to be completed, however the gym is available for student use. Both staff and students love the space. Physical Education classes have already been held in the gym. Kindergarten students have also had the opportunity to use the gym.
- c. Blues in the Schools: Blues in the School is an organization out of the United States which was adopted by RBC Bluesfest in Ottawa. The program pairs local artists with schools. The artists come in and teach the students about the blues, the history of music, tempo, and rhythm. There is an opportunity for one class to spend time working with one artist for the week. The class learns about instruments and creates music together. The class will finalize their activity for a performance for the whole school. This activity really engages children in an interactive experience. The Kindergarten students were not involved because of engagement level – this activity is more suitable for an older audience. This is a 'for fee' program. Parents and guardians were asked to contribute.

- d. Spirit Week: The week before March break will be Rainbow Spirit Week. Each day will be a different colour and students will be encouraged to try to dress in the colour of the day. Parents and guardians should not feel pressured to go out and buy new clothes for the spirit week. If students want to participate but do not have a specific colour of clothing, the school will provide something for the student to wear.
- e. March Break: March Break will take place the week of March 13 -17, 2023. The school will be closed.
- f. Vice Principal: Vice Principal, Sarah McMerty-Cunningham, has been asked by OCDSB to move to Richmond Public School for the next two months. Tricia Scott will be stepping in as the Vice Principal – the transition has been seamless, and it is great to have Ms. Scott as part of the administration team.
- g. Climate Survey: Every two years the school district is required to complete a school climate survey. This survey will be the first survey close to post pandemic. The goal is to have a 70%-80% participation rate from parents/guardians. The survey alternates between students and parents/guardians. This year the survey is for the parents/guardians. The survey provides excellent feedback and assists administration with making decisions in relation to how things are structured at the school. Please remind our community to complete the survey. The survey will be available in multiple languages. The link will be released tomorrow, and the survey is open until March 24, 2023. Once the information gathered by the survey is consolidated, the school will receive a report on the information that has been shared – including parent/ guardian opinions on how the school is performing in terms of inclusiveness, how the school responds to concerns raised by parents/guardians, and how parents/guardians feel their children are being responded to by staff at the school. It is very important the school receives this information. A higher participation rate increases the accuracy/ 'true to life factor' of the feedback. Please try to share the survey with the community and encourage parents/guardians to complete the survey.
- h. Strategic Plan: It is the final year of the OCDSB strategic plan. The strategic plan sets the direction for learning in the OCDSB. The OCDSB is currently seeking a new director. The OCDSB has requested feedback for the 2023-2027 strategic plan. The deadline to provide feedback was February 24, 2023. The feedback was conducted through a 'thought exchange' which is an anonymous platform allowing participants to exchange thoughts and rank thoughts shared by others.

- i. Garden Grant Application: The school has applied for this grant. The school has an outdoor classroom. The school is looking to do some replanting as there is currently a classroom that has a large number of plants to be replanted. This will be a great way for students to learn about sustainability and food security. The school will work towards setting up garden space outside of outdoor classroom. The teacher has applied for the grant and will find out in August if the grant will be received by the school. This will help to determine the level of garden that can be installed.
- j. Lost and Found items: The lost and found items will be put out on display for students next week. A video will also be taken of the contents to share with the community. Once the week is over, any unclaimed items will be bagged and donated to Family Services.
- k. Question: The mountain of snow in parking lot – what is plan and what we can do in the future? Answer: There is probably not a whole lot the school can do – a school is built with a snow removal plan. The choice was to place the snow in the parking lot at the designated location. To remove the snow off site costs a significant amount. As for the snow in the school yard, we do not allow the students to play on it during recess, however they are allowed to play on it during supervised physical education classes.
- l. Question: What about the safety issue as the snow hill in the parking lot reduces visibility coming in and out of the school? Answer: The biggest problem is during dismissal time. Parents/guardians are allowing their children to play on the hill at dismissal. The Principal is out in the parking lot at dismissal and the school does not allow parents to enter the parking lot until dismissal is complete. There is not a large amount of traffic that comes out of the parking lot at that time, just a handful of staff. The biggest concern is the children up on the hill. The school encourages parent/guardians not to allow their children to climb the hill.
- m. Question: Snow removal cost for upcoming years? Can School Council funds be used for snow removal? Answer: Not sure this may be a good use of school council funds. At the present time, there is space for the snow, so there is no desire to remove the snow. However, once the need for parking spaces grows as the number of staff increase, the school may have to look at snow removal.
- n. Question: Spirit Week – would it be possible to change the wording of the poster to ‘encourage’ instead of ‘dress head to toe’? This will better reflect the idea that

parent/ guardians are not expected to purchase new clothes for students to participate in Spirit Week. Answer: Yes – this is possible.

- o. Question: Any thought of including a vertical farm in the greenhouse? Answer: This is included in the grant the school applied for.
- p. Question: Has the school considered a cover for the outdoor classroom so that it can be used all year? Answer: This is an interesting option to explore.

## **5. Treasurer Report**

- a. Treasurer is in the process of setting up a School Council account.

## **6. Committee Report**

- a. No report. See Co-Chair report.

## **7. Communications Update**

- a. Communications: The School Council received one email last month.
- b. School Council Website: The Constitution and the link to the Mabel's Labels fundraiser is now on the website. School Council website is now complete. The School Council is open to any suggestions re: content of the website etc. Also, an auto reply has been set up for the School Council email account.
- c. Communication with families: Currently there is a school Facebook page and the School Council website. School Council is trying to reach parents/guardians to let them know how to reach School Council and to communicate information re: various activities. School Council is considering putting together a one-page document providing information about upcoming events and fundraising. One option to share this one-page document is to print out a physical copy and have it placed in students' backpacks to be taken home. This option will be explored further by School Council. Question: There is also a 'Parents of Shingwakons PS' Facebook website – can this information be posted on this site? Answer: It is open for School Council to post there. However, perhaps the best option is to share links on this site to the actual school website. Posting on sites outside of the school Facebook site can invite negative comments. Sharing links to the school site provides more control over any negative commentary and the school administration can address any negative commentary.

- d. Survey: School Council will look into creating a survey via Google. The link may be sent out to parents/guardians in the weekly newsletter. The survey would ask the school community about activities/ fundraisers they would like to see initiated by School Council.

## **8. Open Floor/ Questions Raised During the School Council Meeting**

- a. Question: We were recently away for three weeks, how do we report our child's absence from school? We were told by the school to send an email and that the school will respond and provide activities for a child to do. We were also told that if our child was away for longer than three weeks –our child would be unregistered from school and re-registered? Answer: This is incorrect. If a family is going on extended vacation, the school needs to know when the student is leaving and when the student is returning to school. The school is required to provide you with a program (i.e., journal to complete or other activities). The school does need to know when the student will be returning or a date close to the expected return date. Otherwise, the student will be marked absent. One a student is absent for a certain number of days, a school social worker will reach out to the family. There are some circumstances when a student will be deregistered from school and reregistered upon their return. For example, if the student is attending OCV (Ottawa-Carleton Virtual) Elementary and travelling.
- b. Question: Possible sponsorship of School Council activities? Answer: There are rules around sponsorship. School Council is different from the school. The school itself cannot have sponsorship names on uniforms etc., however the school can still publicly thank an organization. The School Council can use a sponsor's name. An example of this would be an organization's name displayed on the school council tent.
- c. Question: Does our school accept in kind donations? Answer: Yes. A tax receipt will be issued for the donation. Question: Does the library accept book donations? Answer: We would have to consult with the library technician. Also, once the makerspace is up and running, the school will be looking for donations for the space. There is also an opportunity to reach out to your child's teacher to ask what may be needed in the classroom.
- d. Question: Is the library up and running? Answer: The library is not yet open. We are still in the process of cataloging books and the millwork is not complete. We will start to invite students to the library for makerspace challenges. There will be

no circulation of books this school year. The books that are catalogued will be put into classroom sets.

- e. Question: Daycare? Answer: Daycare will be open in September. Once the daycare center is close to accepting applications, which is done through the City not OCDSB, the school will provide the community with information to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to apply for a space. The families within the school will have priority. It is anticipated that there will be far more families applying than available spots. There are 50 spaces for preschool and toddler. There is no infant program. This will be a very sought-after daycare program in the community. The daycare will be English. Question: When will it be ready? Answer: the space must be completed, inspected, and approved before applications will be accepted. Question: Why are there only 50 spaces allotted? Answer: This is in line with the requirements of the Day Nurseries Act and the physical space.
  
- f. Question: Milk Room – why is there no stove? Answer: There are new building codes. If you have a stove top in a school or a public facility, the facility is required to have a fire suppressant fume hood (requires a chemical fire suppressant). This is not for elementary schools. Other schools have been grandfathered, however our school is a new build. No stove will be in the school. The school did inquire about a wall oven, however the cost of one wall oven is more than two stoves and therefore not cost effective.
  
- g. Question: French stream for Kindergarten and Grade 1 – what happens if we change our mind over the summer? Answer: Parents/ guardians can always change their minds, even well into the school year. It is for our planning purposes. The school already has its numbers for next year, how many classrooms, staff, portables etc. This information has an impact on whether the school will have enough students to fill certain classrooms.

Adjourned at 8:05pm

**Meeting Attendance**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Email Address</b>	<b>In Attendance</b>
Laurie MacLeod		Y
Vusal Babashov		Y
Amanda Connolley		Y

Mehdi Mostajeran		Y
Danielle Fournier		Y
Sarah Wade		Y
Ronny Quint		Y
Ranganathan Balakrishnan		N
Johanna Golding		Y
Akhere Areghan		Y
Todd Thompson		Y
Tricia Scott		Y
Colleen Scott		N