

Mutchmor Public School Council

March 4, 2020

Present: Sandra Walker (Principal), Marie-Pierre Roure (Vice-principal), Sheri Segal Glick (co-chair), Elizabeth Nicholds (co-chair, pizza), Kiersten Love (pizza, outreach), Melanie Love (playground), Alexandria Sjoman (OCASC co-rep), Colin Baril (OCASC co-rep), Nadine Ibrahim, Ahmed Ibrahim, Irene Pijuan Aragon, Kevin Smith (engagement), Sarah Dingle (secretary)

Guests: N/A

Regrets: Rob Gottschalk (community rep), Kate Binnie (treasurer), Kathy Cowan (outreach), Adrienne Annan (book sale), Ana Gonzalez (fun fair).

Approval of agenda

Agenda was approved.

Approval of minutes from previous meeting

Last meeting's minutes were approved.

Co-Chair update

There was a discussion about the role of the Council in disseminating information about demonstrations supporting the teachers' labour action. This echoed discussions that have been held at OCASC recently. School Councils are not political bodies and represent the whole school, so should act with caution; however, members of the Council, acting as parents, are not prevented from taking action.

Fundraising ideas are always welcome. These can be sent to the co-chairs who will put them on the agenda.

Because the date of the current meeting was changed due to the snowstorm in February, the dates of the next two meetings have shifted slightly. They will be April 1st and April 29th.

Sheri will bring cookies to the next meeting.

Principal's report

Rink update

-Sandra reports that the Ontario's Daycare Act has a requirement for minimum amount of space for playgrounds, but the Education Act does not.

-Grade six students in Tracy Smith's class have been collecting data on students' opinions about and use of the rink. Most common response is "no opinion" (ambivalence is apparently very common at this age!) but the small number of kids who do use the rink are very supportive of it. They have also measured the size of the rink and have calculated the effect of the rink on the amount of space available

per kid in the yard. They found that there are now 3.7 square meters of yard space per kid with the rink, compared to 4.3 square meters per kid before the rink. A student report is forthcoming.

-Given the weather, it is not expected that the school will be able to use the rink again this season. However, it can't be taken out until the ground thaws. Sandra has asked for it to be removed as early as possible (April).

-A group of parents has formed a rink committee. They have asked Sandra to send out a google questionnaire to parents for their views. Sandra will request to see the raw data.

-Teachers are noticing that the way the yard is being used by the students is changing. Some groups of kids are being pushed out of the space they typically used before, because there is less space to go around. The football games are ongoing but other games such as manhunt and tag are not happening as much. More kids are just standing around than before; this could also be a function of the weather and the slippery ground.

-More conversations with the Board about the rink are to come, but nothing is scheduled.

Strike update

Sandra shared an update about the labour action situation. The Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario has a moratorium in place for the current two weeks in order to lobby. There is a requirement for five working days notice prior to any strike action.

School report

-Marie-Pierre provided a report. No significant updates from last meeting, but lots of great learning taking place.

-Joanna Courtney (Learning Support Teacher) is on maternity leave until January 2021. There is currently a replacement in place.

-Emphasis has been on kindness and empathy during recent weeks. This is being reinforced in daily announcements, in the classroom, and projects (eg, the "kindness wall" that the kindergarten Early Childhood Educators set up outside the school office.)

Treasurer report

No update. Kate will follow up on outstanding checks.

Engagement

Parent comment – Membership Toolkit (online school directory) is easier to use now which is great!

OCASC (Ottawa Carleton Association of School Councils)

Colin Baril, the new OCASC co-chair, gave a report from the February OCASC meeting.

Some schools in the Board will be eligible for grants from a \$40K envelope for parent involvement based on the "RAISE" index which measures level of need. Others will be asked to mentor other schools. The Parent Involvement Committee will be producing a gap analysis of parent council needs.

Representatives from the teachers unions were there to answer questions. Each gave their point of view. Questions from parents were largely in support of union's position – protecting special education funding, not increasing class sizes, etc. They recommended that parents consult the following websites: buildingbetterschools.com, bargainingforeducation.ca, buildingschoolsstrongereconomy.ca.

Book sale

Adrienne sent an update by email. The space in the basement for the book sale is almost cleared out – thank you to the custodian, Yolanda, for her help. Sandra has been very helpful at sending out Book Sale info. Volunteer sign-up is out on Membership Toolkit. Other updates:

- The book sale co-chairs are hoping to meet with teachers to promote the sale and coordinate things.
- The steering committee has purchased mood lighting to improve the atmosphere at the sale – receipt is in the Council mailbox.
- The committee will be looking to Council members to fill some money-counting shifts during the sale dates.
- Catherine Pritchard has created a schedule for children's day that pairs the younger classes with the older classes for better flow.
- Articles are being written for Glebe Report, OSCAR to promote the sale.

Fun Fair

Ana Gonzalez has recruited a group of parents to help organize the fun fair. There is a meeting happening this week (week of March 2).

Outreach

Kathy has reached out to the Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre for a potential partnership again this year. She has also been looking into a theatre group, Kids on the Block, which helps to sensitize kids to persons with special needs; they could be brought in to give a presentation.

Kiersten submitted an application on behalf of the Education Foundation to the Whole Foods food bag fundraising program. She has also been in touch with the school council at Cambridge Street Public school to offer our help.

Pizza

When a recent strike day coincided with pizza day, the pizza was donated to the Ottawa Mission. The Mission sent a thank you note which Sandra shared with parents. Sandra received a lot of positive feedback from parents about this donation.

Playground committee

Melanie is setting up consultation meetings with a landscape architect and with a parent at Hopewell School who organized their recent playground fundraiser/design. This will hopefully help clarify the process for the Mutchmor community for replacing its own play structure.

GNAG will give the Council \$25K for the new playground. Corpus Christi school has also committed to providing some funds but the amount is TBD.

Sandra suggested that we might want to hold off new fundraising until we have a clear plan for the playground. This will help us to back up our requests for funding. There was discussion about setting a date for when the new structure should go in. Consideration: the Board will not pay for the removal unless it is condemned.

Melanie will organize a meeting of the committee. Alex volunteered to help.

Community rep

No update this meeting.

Other Business

Flip Give

-At last meeting Kate Swan suggested we look into Flip Give, which is a fundraising app. Kate will set up a test site to pilot this to see if it is a good fundraiser option for us.

Next meetings: **April 1st and then April 29th.**