



ASSEMBLY MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday January 12, 2016 7pm-9pm

Forest Heights Collegiate Library

Attendance: 20 School Council Representatives

3 Guests

5 Members of the 2014-2015 WRAPSC Steering Committee

Welcome

Jessica Rodriguez, WRAPSC Co-Chair

Agenda change as Jordan is unable to attend to give report on the April PIC event.

Motion: Approve agenda for January 12, 2016.

Erica Beck motioned. Glenn Anderson seconded. Motion carried by majority vote.

Motion: Approve minutes from November 3, 2015.

Erica Beck motioned. Glenn Anderson seconded. Motion carried by majority vote.

PIC/WRAPSC Co-Chairs Report

Laurie Tremble, PIC/WRAPSC Co-Chair

Update on WRAPSC PRO grant, Safe Talk Training. 5 parents have been selected to be trainers. Their training is underway. Training in secondary schools to start after March break.

Directors Town Hall was held in November with John Bryant, school principals and council chairs. Combined minutes from both meetings will be sent out soon. USB drives of council handbook are available and the handbook can be found on the the WRDSB website by searching for School Council Handbook.

Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) website is updated with new resources for parents all about math. There are 5 modules that people can use, according to grade. Find this online at http://www.ontariodirectors.ca/parent_engagement.html.

PIC has been in contact with the WRDSB regarding help for Syrian refugees. Things are still being ironed out. Schools would have received a letter today from John Bryant showing how you can donate to WEFI to help the refugees. If your school is doing something to assist, please let us know so that we can share with other schools! Canadiansafeschools.com is looking for backpacks and school supplies for Syrian children.

"School Day" should be up and running in all schools by Sept 2016. Lots of questions regarding how the program will work regarding paying by cash/credit and the additional fees associated with School Day. All schools will be encouraged to use this tool for communication with parents as it is CASL compliant. Parents are not required to sign up or to use the payment function of the tool.

Ontario Arts Council would like more art added to school in the 2015-2016 year. An artist can come to a class or school to work with the students. Schools are responsible for a small portion of the cost. Find more information at <http://www.arts.on.ca/Page28.aspx>.

Bus Safety, kindie drop off procedure. Yesterday (Monday, January 11) Jessica and Laurie met with STSWR, WRDSB staff and representatives from bussing companies regarding best practices for kindie safety. Not all are relevant to every school, but many should be happening in all schools. The meeting showed that things are on the right track with ensuring the safety and pick up of the youngest riders. They are aware of when drivers and parents are not following the proper procedures. They believe there have been fewer incidents this year than previous years, though they don't have actual data from the previous years. They are open to ideas and suggestions to make this as safe as possible. One idea to come out of the meeting was a plan to send reminder info to parents, staff and drivers of the main procedures they should be following.

The People for Education Conference was in November 2015, the report from our people that attended will be shared soon.

Kathi Smith, school board trustee, is looking for feedback on union negotiations. How do parents feel about communication during this process? Email Kathi Smith at kathi_smith@wrdsb.on.ca

April PIC Event Report

Jessica Rodriguez, WRAPSC Co-Chair

PIC Event- Strengthening Family School Relationships

All schools will receive a poster to be hung where all parents can see it.

Daycare will be available the day of the event. All children will be welcome.

If there is a family with a need for transportation, we can arrange bus tickets for them. This will be on a need basis.

Translators will be available at this event.

The website is not live yet, will go live in February once the last of things are secured.

Volunteers are still needed for the day of the event. Please email Jordan at PIC@wrdsb.on.ca if you can help.

Angelica Allen brought up how important WRAPSC is in spreading the word of this event.

Making the Grade, All about Student Evaluation

Angela Mercier, Superintendent of Student Achievement and Wellbeing

and panelists:

Scott Lomax, Superintendent

Liz Anderson, VP Westheights

Christine Hrstov, VP Sandhills

Kelly Gudas, Principal Brigadoon

Debbie Tyrrell, Principal Grand River SS

Brett Dubrick, VP KCI

1. What are the differences between marking systems? numbers, rubric, letters?

Christine: when you look at letter grades, they correspond to the number rubric. 4 is an A, 3 is a B, 2 is a C, 1 is a D. Teachers often focus on levels then turn them into letters on report cards. In grades 7 and 8 the letters are used with rubric numbers. The numbers are more specific. Students may be achieving at different levels in different strands. 72, 75, 78 show the +/- .

All through the learning process, students should be getting feedback in the way of marks and descriptive feedback. The feedback students get is what shows them the next steps they should take to get to the next goal. When kids get hung up on the grade, they forget about the learning.

Brett: Professional judgment is used when determining where exactly marks should fall when in a letter grade.

Level 1- = 52% = D-

Level 1 = 55% = D

Level 1+ = 58% = D+

Level 2- = 62% = C-

Level 2 = 65% = C

Level 2+ = 68% = C+

Level 3- = 72% = B-

Level 3 = 75% = B

Level 3+ = 78% = B+

Level 4- = 83% = A-

Level 4 = 90% = A

Level 4+ = 95% = A+

2. Are these various marking systems in secondary school?

Scales and percents are used as well as considering the students body of work. Everything is used, learning skills, descriptive feedback is considered. On report cards, you will see it in percentages. Daily work can be letters, rubric, or percentages depending on the work and assignment. Report cards will look at the course outline and how things rank, performance and final exam.

Re secondary report card marks, these are generated primarily from a limited number of assignments and tests that students complete throughout the course. "Formative" work, which includes smaller assignments, homework, class work etc. is not included in the calculation of the report card mark. However, formative work will inform the learning skills part of the report card. It may also come into play when the teacher is using his/her professional judgement to assess, for example, how many times a student was able to demonstrate a certain skill. Generally, the mark comes from 70% course work and 30% end-of-year work such as exams, term papers etc. Angelica Allen asked about how information is communicated to parents, as in high school things do not need to be signed by parents and high school kids may not communicate about school with parents. Things vary by teacher regarding how they communicate and when. Things should be discussed before a report card comes home if there is reason for concern. Talk to your child, and if you aren't getting the information from them, contact the teacher directly. "Growing Success" is the name of the Ministry document that WRDSB uses that has all of the information about assessment.

3. If a teacher uses a variety of different marking systems, how can a parent understand how a mark is achieved based on these scales?

Communication is extremely important between student and parent, or the parent has to make the connection. Technology is a great way for teachers and parents to connect. Sesame app is one way. Teachers can log in and see rubrics, you can log in with QR codes.

4. What are exemplars and how can parents access these?

Exemplars are work examples, typically level 3 or 4, as a sample for the students. The teacher can get the students to help co create the exemplar, or they can use a premade one. How can a parent access these grade level work exemplars? The best way is to go to the classroom teacher. Older students can ask to take a picture of the exemplar to use as a point of reference.

5. How is technology used to assess students, and how is this used for a report card mark?

Teachers can capture audio or video. Google Read and Write, and sesame app are great apps for helping students overcome barriers. In secondary grades, it can be used as a tool, used to do practice tests, or receive instant feedback.

6. There is a reporting system in place in secondary schools since 2013 about late or missing work. These are included in learning skills and are now being reported on separately to show initiative. This is what employers are looking for.

In regards to the “no zero” policy, staff explained that parents need to understand what various marks reflect. A project handed in late that still demonstrates a full understanding of the material is graded at level 3 or 4 based purely on what learning the student was able to show. You will see a consequence for late/missing work in learning skills (e.g., organization, responsibility) which is assessing those types of skills. Staff encouraged parents to place as much importance on the learning skills as on the subject grades. Staff should be contacting parents when material is not being completed on time so they can work together to get the student back on track.

Staff also said that if a student is routinely handing things in late or not at all, then not only will their learning skills marks suffer, but they are likely to not do well on material they do submit so that their course grade will also be low. In their words, you don't see high grades and low learning skills or vice versa. So there usually is a natural consequence to a student who is not completing work. Also, if enough work is missing, a student can get an I, Insufficient Evidence or a NR, No Report, in which case they won't earn a credit.

A student who is very late handing something in may lose the opportunity to hand that piece of work in because after a certain period of time it will become irrelevant. For example, once the teacher has returned the work handed in by other students they are likely to not accept any further work from a late student. This will affect their report card as the teacher will not have a full body of work from which to generate the marks.

Scott Lomax- Our WRDSB scores for grade 9

Its purpose is to provide the board with direction and focus regarding what to work on. The results over the course have time have been improving. The province as a whole is declining in math, and we are running parallel to the rest of the province. This is a focus for us at this time. Dreambox is a software tool available to grade 1 and 2 across the board to enhance and support teachers. It is also available in the high schools that offer the Fast Forward program. At the secondary level, applied level math students marks are low, but academic are not. Actions are in place to help applied level math students get their marks up.

In response to the question about whether we are properly preparing students for university and the work world, they again said that there is a natural consequence embedded in the school system for those students that are not consistently doing the work. They stressed that they do make students aware that the expectation is that students will be full participants in their learning, which means that they will complete all work on time to the best of their ability.

A question was asked about students who earn very high grades (100% was cited!). Are these students being given room to grow and improve? Staff explained that teachers are trying to move away from subjective marking with the use of tools such as rubrics which clearly lay out what is expected for level 1, 2, 3, and 4 work. The final assignment that you see coming

home with a 100% grade is not the first effort. All of the formative material that came before but is not part of the report card mark calculation will show where the students improved, made mistakes etc. So if in the final assignment they meet all the criteria for a level 4, it is possible, although rare, for them to get 100%. We sent a few questions via email to Angela Mercier, and she sent back responses.

1. On a secondary school report card, who gives the learning skills mark since there isn't a core teacher? Do they discuss it, or is one teacher assigned the responsibility to provide that mark?

In secondary school, students get learning skills "marks" in every subject they are taking, so essentially they could have 4 sets of these "marks" if they are taking 4 courses in a semester.

2. Again re: secondary, the word "formative" was mentioned several times. What exactly is formative work? Does it get marked but not counted in the final mark? Is it considered for learning skills and/or can it come into play in the final report card mark in some way?

Formative assessment is really meant to "inform" both teachers and students where they are in their learning. Often, formative assessments are not graded (although they could be), rather, teachers may provide written or oral feedback to students on where they need to improve. These assessments may be looked at again at the summative of the unit (the end of the unit), if a student did not do well on the summative task or test, yet the teacher knows from previous formative assessments that the student was capable and maybe just had a bad day!

3. It seems like enrollment in French Immersion is on the rise. With EQAO testing in English, do you think there is a correlation?

We don't believe so. We look carefully at our French Immersion (FI) results and our FI students, do very well, and at many schools, actually outperform their English track counterparts

Emphasis is being made on trying to focus on learning and not just the grade. Ask your students "what did you learn?" instead of "what did you get?"

Closing

Jessica Rodriguez, WRAPSC Co-Chair

Jessica thanked everyone for coming and reminded everyone of the next meeting on Tuesday February 2, 2016 at 7pm