

ASSEMBLY MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday February 2, 2016 7pm-9pm

Forest Heights Collegiate Library

Attendance:

School Council Representatives: 26

Guests: 1

Welcome

Jessica Rodriguez, WRAPSC Co-Chair

Agenda changed as Wendy Brubacher's presentation was added to the agenda.

Motion: Approve agenda for February 2, 2016.

Glenn Anderson motioned. Sarah Heroux seconded. Motion carried by majority vote.

Motion: Approve minutes from January 16, 2015.

Glenn Anderson motioned. Kerri Gettliffe seconded. Motion carried by majority vote.

PIC/WRAPSC Co-Chairs Report

Jessica Rodriguez, Reading for Kerri Gettliffe, PIC /WRAPSC Member

Update on the Syrian Newcomers and donation drives

1. PIC had an opportunity to hear from Graham Shantz, Superintendent of Student Achievement and Well-being and lead of the WRDSB taskforce for receiving the Syrian refugees.

2. PIC is looking at a number of ways to support these families and support engagement of new parents in our school system. Where we might be looking for volunteers we will communicate more through WRAPSC as well as providing updates.

3. In the meantime, staff have identified to Graham a need for about 200 backpacks and school supplies. Kerri has also learned through contacting St Vincent de Paul, one of the agencies collecting items for incoming refugees, that because families are very large and many have very young children that baby and toddler items like strollers, highchairs, playpens are in great demand (new or gently used). Schools, of course, are filled with young children whose families may be finished with those sorts of items and happy to find a way to donate them. We've also heard from Reception house that there is a need for toiletries and cleaning supplies.

4. Some schools might be interested in doing a campaign for new backpacks and school supplies and/or used baby items or some of the other items. We will send out more detailed information about the needs once we finish these conversations with board staff. There may be an official letter or official board campaign or these may be parent-led campaigns that schools can choose to become part of. Ideally either way parents will help out with collecting or communications so that staff can continue to focus on teaching. We may be putting together a group of volunteers to collect items that have been dropped at schools that choose to participate.

5. If people have more questions after the meeting, contact WRAPSC and questions will go to Kerri. She can be reached at 519-500-3819 or via email kgettliffe.cooper@gmail.com

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, ages 2 and up, 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..

Overcrowding in Classrooms in the Full Day Kindergarten Program at (insert school name) Public School

Presented by: Wendy Brubacher and Francois Sfigakis

Insert power point from Wendy

WRAPSC Members were encouraged to write to local MPP regarding overcrowding in the FDK programs.

Volunteer Action Centre

Presented by Dianne Boston-Nyp

The Volunteer Action Centre (VAC) is a hub for non-profit or not-for-profit organizations

The VAC is part of a network from all across Canada

The VAC target market is really high-school students, but anyone can access and apply for volunteering opportunities

They post a feature ad each week of special events looking for volunteers

There are opportunities for individuals or groups of people

There are opportunities for people in all languages. Community Support Connections is a good spot to check for listings of opportunities in different languages.

Year of Code (YOC)

Presented by Stephanie Rozek

The Year of Code is a yearlong campaign to promote tech diversity. The campaign runs July 1, 2105- July, 2016.

Coding is the new literacy

This campaign gets people more comfortable with technology. It also empowers people and develops confidence when using different devices

The goals of YOC are to educate children and youth, put Waterloo Region on the map, engage communities at all levels, and increase diversity and inclusivity in technology.

YOC also wants to demystify technology. Assist people at all levels, and to increase confidence for the users.

How does it matter to us?

YOC has a target date of March 21, 2016 to match females who are studying technology, or are early in their career with elementary aged females and teach them to write code and create web sites

The program will run for 6 weeks. The YOC will seek teacher and administration approval

The pilot project will be 5 children from 5 different schools. The second program will be 10 children from 10 different schools

YOC will do leaning events if needed, contact the YOC for more information

yocwr.ca/subscribe

stephaine@yocwr.c

Budget Consultation/Information Session

Matthew Gerard- Financial Services WRDSB

(See attached PPT.)

Q and A

1. Is the board looking at getting rid of the credit cap for high school students?

If there is a student enrolled in school, there is funding for that student.

2. Did accommodating all the newcomers this year create extra pressure on the budget? Were there any financial grants for the board?

The newcomers have not created any pressure on the board, we are a large enough board to manage the numbers and keep quality education. The board will receive funding from the Ministry for any student enrolled by March 31.

3. Can't control the teacher salaries at an administration level. How do we compare in ratio to other board?

There is a cap at the administration level on salaries. It's hard to make an estimate on how we compare to other boards. The WRDSB is spending within its caps. There are restrictions on how much Ed centre staff can be paid.

4. What government negotiations lead to a net zero?

The net zero is provincial.

5. Do you know what the government will fund this year? Yes. Do you know what they will fund next year? No, we don't know.

6. Matt talked to how the FDK money is allocated

Their school has a specific need

Talked to the funding per student/person in the class

The presented mentioned that space wasn't an issue, that she was told there is no money in the budget for a new teacher

She also mentioned that the number of students in the room was within the limits

Questions presented to WRAPSC from Matt:

1. What programs/services offered by the WRDSB are essential to student achievement and well-being?
2. Do you have any suggestions for creating cost savings in the WRDSB?
3. Do you have any suggestions for creating operational efficiencies in the WRDSB?

Sharing from the group

Essential programs include the Magnet programs, French Immersion and Music. It was suggested to have all these programs in one school

Technology was also mentioned as an essential part of student success. Matt mentioned that there is funding to keep replenishing the technology equipment

Staffs with the WRDSB mentioned that she attends a number of events hosted by the board at a local hotel. Matt commented that there is construction being done at the Ed Centre to accommodate these types of events in the future. It is a slow process but changes are happening.

Can we look at busing changes? Sometimes there are only 1 Or 2 SK/JK students who need busing. Can we add more or less stops to ensure that the buses are as full as possible? Perhaps we need smaller buses?

Matt replied to the comment by saying that Transportation is a dynamic situation, and that the cost of buses vs. cabs has been something the board looks. We have limits on how far students can walk, and at what age. Changes to transportation are done at the Trustee level. About 15.2 Million is budgeted by the ministry for transportation.

He mentioned that van to child cost more expensive.

An assembly member asked why there is such a difference between the public board and catholic board's walking distance guidelines for students. Can't we change our walking distance to be the same?

We can't as both boards have to agree. There are also not enough buses to make that work.

Trustee Smith commented that there was an agreement in the past, but things have changed. There are 4 school boards competing for students. The WRDSB is aligned to stay competitive with the other boards.