

WRAPSC Minutes Oct. 1, 2024

Minutes recorded by Amy Pharoah

Executive Team: Chair Sara

- Sara: chair
- Kelly: handles the virtual aspects; skilled in legal issues with school councils
- Rachel: member at large

- WRAPSC will continue to offer in-person and virtual offerings

Meeting Summary: Chair Sara

- WRAPSC hopes for this year
- Elections for WRAPSC Executive
- Update from Facilities
- Best practices a year in the life of council
- PIC
- Vote on letter to send to trustees
- large group discussion

What is WRAPSC? Chair Sara

- Founded in Oct. 2000
- purpose: further support of student achievement through parent engagement
- WRAPSC works with PIC & supports them
- a single voice for school council on impact of all schools

- board rep present: Michelle Newlands

WRAPSC Hopes for the Year: Chair Sara

- Resource for parents and members
- giving time to the board
- reaching schools
- giving members time and opportunity to learn from each other by group discussions
- voicing our members' ideas, concerns, hopes to the board

Elections for WRAPSC Executive Team: Roles: Chair Sara

- Chair/co-chair
- Secretary
- virtual meeting host
- social media/email account, making past info available for members
- members at large: to help with setting up at meetings, organizing speakers, attend board meetings to give notes to the group

- minimum time commitment: 1 hour/month with virtual meeting with the executive WRAPSC team
- prepare & plan future meetings
- election appointments will be held at the end of the meeting
- WRAPSC is on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and reachable by email wrapsc@gmail.ca
- Chair's Idea on how to promote school council and use Ministry Grant: Make t-shirts for school council that say "Ask me how to join?" They also handed out candy. Laurentian school council.

Facilities and Procurement Update: Facilities' speakers: Lauren Agar, Marina McLaughlin, Barry Kingsley (senior management)

- Playground Equipment:
 - Funded only through fundraising
 - playground inspected annually
 - use of playgrounds are restricted by principals when deemed unsafe
- Expenses covered by facilities:
 - Facility services pays for base prep where playground equipment sits
 - excavating to create a functional drainage layer
 - facilities covers the cost below ground; school councils have to fundraise for what is above ground (the playground structure)
- Accessibility:
 - law to make outdoor play spaces accessible
- Procurement:
 - make sure playground supplier is giving the best competitive proposal not necessarily the best price (ie. more bang for your buck)
 - procurement developed a process to speed up approval process
 - Ministry of Education sets restrictions on what fundraising can be used for
- Selection of a Playground Design:
 - Once a school council has enough money, then facilities reviews and approves of the playground based on the location
 - submitted proposals provided to each member of the evaluation committee (principal/VP, parent council member, teacher)
- Proposal Review:
 - Proposals will be reviewed based on criteria:
 - Company profile, experience of the company
 - demonstrated past experience with the board
 - proposed playground element and design
 - approach and methodology
 - 95% of the final score of the proposed offering
 - \$45,000 for a playground
 - old way that facilities worked: cheapest price, but now: go with the best package for the price
 - now has evaluation criteria

- sometimes get best design with a little more money because the businesses are motivated to give the board the best package to win the deal
- Example costs: Crestview School cost facilities and the school council a total of \$120,000 (playground and the grounds); \$15,000-\$20,000 for grounds; \$100,000 for playground
- o factor for facilities when deciding placement of playground: run off from snow
- o before fundraising: talk to facilities; plan 5-7 years ahead of playground replacement
- o all sites can house a playground structure
- o playground cost is not covered; school council needs to raise funds for it
- o one slide costs: \$30,000
- o member suggestion: Love My Hood: suggestion to send this grant info to principals and school councils
 - Michelle Newlands' idea: the principals meet monthly so she can see the option of best practices told to them as well.
- o facilities: natural playgrounds (ie. wood structures) are much more expensive and don't last as long as regular playgrounds
- o facilities wants to create more places where people can talk and read and not just have playgrounds
- o member asks: Are swings allowed on new playgrounds? Facilities' response: Yes, absolutely
- o member asks: What are the rules surrounding accessibility; some playgrounds themselves are accessible but not the ground? Facilities response: look up the CSA standard; AOD compliance
- o engineered wood fibers: AOD compliant
- o member question: Are there any playgrounds for grade 7 and 8 kids, especially because some kids are 12 years old in grade 8 and at this school, grade 7s and 8s aren't allowed on the playground. Facilities' response: Playgrounds are designed to handle kids up to and including age 12. However, the principal is the one to decide if 12 year olds can be on the playground.
- o member question: How can we know which playground design will allow for winter play? Facilities' response: Sometimes playgrounds can be used in the winter time, but it is up to the principal to allow use of it in the winter.
- o member question: How do we find out if our playground will be deemed unusable 3 years out? Facilities response: The principal will have a plan; assessment committee
- o if a playground part is removed, the RFP process needs to be done.
- o member's thoughts for alternative playground options: tarps, shovels, bungee cords. Response: school by school choice
- o member question: Can we bring in someone that wants to install/partly purchase a playground for us? Facilities response: No, facilities has to abide by broader sector guidelines, CFTA, Quebec/Ontario agreements as a public funded sector. If donation over \$10,000, then facilities has to go over the options; more competition means better options; SITA agreement
- Planning for New Schools and Additions:

- o member idea: Can a school donate \$1,000 to another school for a playground that can't afford one? Michelle Newlands response: Yes! Could create a kitty towards schools that can't afford it
- o rule: the same playground designs can't be replicated exactly the same for 2 km proximity.
- o members' concerns: automatically flushing toilets and hand dryers are loud and scary to some kids. Response: Have never heard about this issue before.

Parent Engagement Fund: Chair Sara

- \$500 every Sept.
- schedule a GL account
- secretaries and admins know where it goes
- ideas for PRO grant: volunteer tea; cover cost of paper photocopying
- member idea for high school councils: create a magnet for parents that shows significant dates like school council meeting dates, PD days, semester and other breaks, blended learning days, assessment and evaluation dates, exam dates. Cost: around \$1/magnet. Notify parents of magnet coming home so teens don't leave magnets on lockers.
- school councils can ask where the Ministry Grant money is going to; school councils may be allowed to use it, but it is at the principal's discretion
- member suggestion: cap the director of education's salary of \$300,000 when schools are struggling to afford things and school councils are working so hard to bring the money into the schools. Response by the chair: If you have concerns surrounding this issue, speak to your trustees.

Month by Month suggestions for School Councils & Chairs of what to cover: Chair Sara

- September:
 - o Chair should sit with the principal before the first school council meeting; discuss the agenda
 - o council rep should be at the open house
 - o elections need to be completed 30 days from the start of school
 - o at the first school council meeting: council's goals for the year should be discussed. 2 goals/year can bring a focus to the work the group does
 - o recap what was successful the year before
 - o give council members homework for the next meeting
 - o member question surrounding the PRO grant: Michelle Newlands: amount awarded to a school is not a set amount anymore; decide what you would like to do (reach for the stars) and request if you can do it; be ambitious
 - o fundraising: how much money does your group need; don't fundraise for the sake of fundraising
 - o have a plan at your first council meeting, nail down dates of your meetings for the year
 - o create consistency through school council
 - o vote by school council to decide some things like virtual or in person
 - o principals can stop a proposal
 - o have a Gmail account for council and organize it for future councils.

- November:
 - High school council: remind parents that students can start tracking volunteer hours
 - does our school have a math action team?
 - add to school council agenda: mental health info, add cyber safety, legality of cell phone use, how to pick the best high school magnet programs as topics, and how new language program is taught; can invite a teacher/rep from the school to speak on this
- January-April:
 - how council is progressing
 - what needs to be accomplished
 - event planning
- May:
 - PRO grant final report
 - School Council report
 - Principal's Report: purpose is to help the board decide on new principal when a principal is leaving; the purpose isn't to evaluate a current principal
 - deadlines for all reports
- June:
 - How did the year go?
 - Did the group accomplish what was set out?
 - Plan for next year: next year's meeting dates because sometimes a principal may leave at an odd time and you have no mechanism to have the next meeting. (ie. some schools have had 12 different principals in 8 years)

To Run a Hybrid meeting: What you will need: Chair Sara

- Projector
- Screen
- Speaker
- laptop or chromebook
- Google meet link can be provided by the principal

What is PIC? Chair Sara

- An important board-level advisory body that operates as a direct link between parents and the board's director of education and trustees.
- provides advice to their school board on parent engagement and ways to communicate with parents
- developing strategies to improve student achievement and well-being
- sharing info
- Notes from PIC:
 - Event held at Kitchener Public Library: Rise Up: How to Raise Anti-Racist Upstanders 2SLGBTQI+: guest speaker; run by PIC and WRAPSC
 - Always looking for new members

Letter to be sent to the Trustees Chair Sara

- letter to advocate for more communication with parents
- wanting a letter sent to parents when their child witnessed (not necessarily engaged in) an incident
- wanting others to help develop an action plan for coping with these situation in the future; want tools to guide conversations
- concerns by members: frequency of letters going out; stigmatization of students with behavioural issues
- actions going forward: lock down exact wording of letter; no vague responses. Discuss at our next meeting. No vote in October.

WRAPSC Meeting Dates for 2024/2025 School Year: Chair Sara

- Nov. 5
- Jan. 7
- Feb. 4
- Apr. 1
- May 6
- can attend in person or online; however, in person adds greater opportunity for conversations before and after meeting
- elections: to sign up to join the WRAPSC executive team, email wrapsc@gmail.com this week and you will be able to join the next executive virtual team meeting (meeting soon) to guide the 2024/2025 year

Next Meeting: November 5, 2024 at Forest Heights Collegiate Institute in the school's library from 7-9pm.