

WRAPSC MINUTES

January 9, 2018

Attendance: 33 people; 28 schools represented

The meeting began at 7pm.

Motion: That the November 7, 2017 minutes be approved (distributed via email).

Motioned: Mandi Ballentine

Seconded: Lindsay Glass

Motion passed.

I. Act Out – Todd Vercoe

Todd Vercoe presented information about the children's drama workshop called Act Out. Act Out has been in Kitchener-Waterloo for 23 years and does 4-5 productions per year. The age group for Act Out is 5-17 years old. Act Out is board directed, nonprofit, and is a registered charitable organization. The drama workshops that Todd and his colleagues have been presenting focus on developing imagination, critical thinking, and self-discipline. Skills such as anxiety reduction and time management are also emphasized. They have a cast A and a cast B so all the children can participate in the shows. They also have a program called "bring drama into your classroom", Todd or one of his colleagues will go to the school and help teachers and students with a drama play or club, and they can also help with production costumes and sets. If anyone is interested in more information please send an email to info@actoutkw.com. Website: <http://actoutkw.com/>

II. Conference

Laurie Tremble briefly talked about the PRO event, entitled Equipping Parents, Supporting Students. This event is organized annually by PIC and WRAPSC and is a great workshop to attend. This year it will be held at Bluevale Collegiate on April 7, 9am to 3 pm with registration starting at 8:15 am. They have free child care so parents can attend the workshops. This year keynote speaker is Marsha Vanwysberghe, who is a life coach, kinesiologist, parent and author. She is on the Amazon best seller list right now. Her talk will be about journeying more effectively through the parenting maze and will touch on topics such as how to advocate for your child without losing yourself in the process, parenting with love and letting go of the expectation of perfection. If you have any questions or want to register please do so at pic@wrdsb.ca or call 519-570-0003 ext 4555. Volunteers are also needed on the day of the conference, so please let Laurie know if you can help, even for a short while.

III. CASL

CASL stands for Canadian anti-spam legislation. Angelica Allen explained that although this legislation from the CRTC was designed to reduce spam, it has had no effect on spammers but has hampered schools, charitable organizations, and businesses. She explained that school boards originally took a very conservative view of the legislation, so that if a teacher should ask for pizza money in an email to parents of children in his/her class, it would be construed as a commercial message and could not be

sent without express permission from parents. Angelica explained that this was not the intent of the legislation (since the teacher has your child in their class, it counts as a pre-existing relationship), and that emails can be sent out to parents as long as there is an unsubscribe feature included. A discussion ensued as to whether the CASL legislation has actively discouraged teachers from communicating with parents, potentially hampering parent/student engagement. WRAPSC members were very appreciative of the teachers who do take the time to contact parents, either via a group email or individually.

Laurie Baines from the WRDSB Communications Department presented further information on CASL, including changes to the legislation, and explained that the use of School Day will help alleviate parent concerns. Her notes are attached.

Laurie explained that School Day is CASL compliant. It requires parents to set up an account and it links their child's information and requires an email address. By creating the account parents are then giving consent to the school to send them information about commercial activities, such as pizza days and field trips. What this means for School Council is that we can use School Day as a means to communicate with the school community by working with administration to send out Council related messages. Laurie assured WRAPSC members that communication with teachers and parents does not fall under the CASL legislation so we can continue to email teachers as a form of communication.

WRAPSC members did raise some concerns over School Day use to collect money, and how long it took for school councils to get the money (refunds for funds expended). This is an important discussion that will be covered in February's meeting by Matthew Gerard, the Superintendent of Business for the WRDSB.

IV. Google Groups for School Councils

Nick Manning, (Chief Communication Officer for the WRDSB) described Google Groups and how they could be used by school councils. These groups would have many advantages, including continuity so that the Council email address could be passed from Chair to Chair, an improvement in document retention, and communication among School Council members. It would help WRAPSC in contacting school councils, as it often takes months to get contact information for individual school councils. WRAPSC members expressed support for the concept. It was noted that the Principal of each school would have to be an administrator for each account, but that each school council would determine the use of the Google Group.

The Communications Department will set up a group for each school, and the information will then be communicated via the school Principal.

V. Summary

Melissa Jenkins recapped the evening and the meeting was adjourned at 9:01pm.