

School Council Meeting
Thursday September 14, 2023

Present: A. Romanelli, Principal, K. Buchta, D. Sevensco, Lindsay Guest, Anna Dukiewicz, Shelby Brock, Christy Feit, Kati Atkinson, Lindsay Gibson, Rob Young, Jess Walt, Sarah Spears, Kerry Morrison, Matt Bobinski.

Principal Romanelli (April) opened with a welcome to everyone and read the Land Acknowledgement & UGDSB anti-racism statement.

April reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Elections will be held at this meeting for School Council Secretary and Chair and Treasurer. According to the by-law these 3 executive positions need to be voted on within the 1st 35 days of school. April reviewed the expectations of the school council members.

Speak and act in a respectful manner
Consider the best interest of all students

Encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued

Maintain the highest level of integrity

Act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of a school council

All present introduced themselves.

Copies of the School Council By-Laws which were enacted in March 2021, were made available and will be posted on the school website.

April reviewed the roles of school council members

-Play a role in helping parents become actively involved in their child's education

-Advisory to the principal, where we put the interests of all students first

-Promote community involvement and engagement

April read a quote by Helen Keller

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.”

April reviewed the roles and responsibilities of each executive position. A description of each position can be found in the School Council By-Laws 2020/21 which is posted on the school website.

Only 2 nomination forms were received by the deadline however April gave the opportunity for anyone present, who would like to be added to the nomination list, to put forth their name. Only 2 people remained interested.

C. Feit asked what is involved in being a part of School Council, April reviewed the commitment that school council members make which is to attend a minimum of 4 meetings per year.

R. Young asked if School Council had to be held on a Thursday evening? Is there any other option? April answered that yes, School Council will be on Thursday evenings.

Kati Atkinson shared information about fundraising that was a success last school year. Those fundraisers were Cookies, Pizza & Ice Cream bars.

It was questioned if there is a way for parents to pay a donation toward a child whose family is unable to afford pizza. A donation item for pizza orders for needy families will be set up on school cash online.

It was suggested that we also offer the choice of ordering 3 slices of pizza for students. (not just 1 or 2 slices).

The need for pizza volunteers was discussed by Kati, we have had difficulty finding volunteers to help distribute pizza on a Thursday at second break. We are looking for help between 12 - 12:45.

Lindsay Gibson discussed the possibility of a vegetable box fundraiser. It was decided that this would be a good idea if it can be set up before the deadline.

The possibility of running a Christmas Cookie fundraiser was discussed.

There was a discussion about other fundraising options. April advised that we would like to keep fundraisers to only a few per year due to the economic times we are in. Karla Foote gave information about a seed fundraiser that she has found successful.

April gave information about what School Council raises funds for. Last year there was a focus on literacy and School Council helped purchase books and programming. This year the focus would be on math manipulatives and STEM.

There were questions about what math manipulatives are. April described the items in detail. K. Buchta brought some into the room for everyone to see and peruse.

Question about Scientists in school April discussed the difference between Scientists in the school program and STEM items available for the classroom.

It was discussed that a Vulnerable Sector Check is needed or a declaration signed each year to volunteer in the school or on school trips.

Principals Report

The Principal opened the floor for any new business.

Rob Young addressed playground rules.

April addressed that last year after 7 months of observation with many incidents of physical injury and bullying. Rules were put in place due to student safety on the yard. It is the responsibility of the Principal to keep all students safe. There are other schools within this board that follow a similar structure with regards to student areas. We want students to be safe and happy here at school.

Question: What are the guidelines? What are the ramifications if the line is crossed? April gave a visual review of the yard areas through the window. She described the “zones” in detail explaining that we are supporting students not policing them, just reminding them if they move into wrong zone. April models by example, all students are treated respectfully by staff.

Question: If there is bullying is there any way to raise bullying awareness at home? What can we do to talk to our children about it? The possibility of a future event to help parents raise awareness with children at home was discussed

There was a discussion about siblings seeking out each other on the yard when there is a conflict. We are trying to remind students to go to adults for help if they need it.

Diane gave information on the history of the yard zones at Grand Valley school. The yard has always been divided into zones for recess in the past. A change was made around 2019 to try to remove zoned areas. We were closed due to covid not long after that. Due to covid restrictions and recess cohorts, 2022 was the first school year that all students were back on the yard all together at recess.

Question- Is there a lack of supervision on the yard? We currently have the required amount of supervision on the yard, plus an additional person.

Volunteers are unable to be on the yard due to the training requirements needed.

Question: Is there an avenue to raise funds for staffing the yard? We can look into this as a possibility if needed.

Question: Concerned about the inability to be able to help out on the yard. Jessica Walt, who is a teacher at another Upper Grand school and a parent discussed her yard duty experiences.

Principal advised the date of Meet the Teacher night and updated on upcoming trips, such as the Plowing Match and Island Lake Conservation area.

The next School Council will be on Thursday November 16th, 2023.

Meeting adjourned.