JMQ – School Council meeting

Date: November 3, 2021 @ 6:30pm

Attending: Andrew Creighton, Jennifer Pederson, Heather Dowling, Sarah Dean, Lisa Arnott, Emily Pearson, Jocelyn Louise, Jennifer Gilbert, Jennifer Cowie, Jessica Robbins

1. Welcome & Intro

Started with opening introduction from Andrew Creighton and a welcome back to the second meeting by Jennifer Pederson

1. Principal’s Report

Thank you to everyone for joining and to Jennifer Pederson for arranging this meeting’s agenda.

* A primary focus is How do we make the JMQ community feel connected? We aren’t sure how long the covid restrictions will last, so what do we implement, in particular for new parents, to ensure they feel welcomed into our school’s overall community
* Picture day happened on November 2nd and the grade 3 classes did a great job helping as runners to get each of the classes ready for their pictures
* Retake day is scheduled for November 24, 2021
* Progress reports are now being worked on by the teachers
* This is a difficult time, in particular looking at the GAPS that have arisen as a result of the pandemic. (where were the kids prior to Covid and where are they now?)
* A pleasant surprise is that the GAP the children are facing is not as big as anticipated or thought of
* Teachers are finding ways and planning tasks to work around this GAP to help the children bounce back
* Community survey – composed of 11 questions, Emily and Heather will meet with Mr. Creighton prior to the release of the survey to the general school community, to obtain feedback from the perspective of a parent/caregiver to see how we can ensure good response to the survey
* Meeting with Mr. Creighton will look at the 11 questions and make it more receptive
* A main focus is equity, better support, what can we celebrate as a school that we are doing well, what can we as a school community do better for the students and the parents to support them.
* PA Day was Oct 29, 2021 and was a very positive and amazing day for staff – everyone back together as a complete group
* Looking at assessment of kids, what drives programming, individual kids needs
* Direction Team – a voluntary group of teachers who communicate directly with the principal (Dean/Bennett/MacGregor/St Ange/Pearson) – they led staff PD
* Mr Creighton has 5 meetings per year with Cheryl for support – these have been great to get back into
* Fire drills – completed – no one will be out in the cold 😊
* Ms. McKenzie (sp?) and Mr. Creighton attended a first aid 2 day certification to fulfill requirement to have certified individuals in the school
* Food & Friends – up and running – healthy food is available in all classrooms (thank you to Billings/Arnott/MacGregor/McKenzie for this)
* Remembrance Day – whole school ceremony
* Looking forward to when we can open the school doors again and allow parents in to see our community
1. Intro to council and Google Drive
* Everyone should have access to the JMQ School Council folder shared through google drive
* Past agendas/minutes
* Posters and info on past events, ie: dances, bunny breakfasts, movie nights, etc
* Community outreach
* If you find something that is a good/fun idea, etc, feel free to upload to the folder so that everyone is able to access it 😊
1. PIC
* Attended at the end of October – was an overwhelming amount of positive information
* Pizza days were a BIG focus of discussion – not able to do during covid restrictions
* Public health recommendations and regulations are what drive the restrictions in place for the schools – cannot go outside of those until Public Health decides to lift them
* Keeping kids engaged during the entire school day is a big positive (ie: other schools using TV to keep kids in their seats during lunch – not here, which is fantastic)
* Our Facebook community group is doing well – over 250 members, active, positive, utilized
1. Promo/Engagement
* Odd start to the year – not new to covid, but still working with limitations
* Staff are doing a great job with greeting the kids, doing covid check ins if needed, etc
* All staff also promoting wellbeing of the kids, while the board wants to promote the wellbeing of the teachers
* Brent McDonald – very supportive of the teachers – more need to recognize just how much the teachers are doing and taking on to ensure that the kids receive the best education during the pandemic/covid restrictions – keeping kids engaged and happy
* How do we keep an overall community feel between the school and the families?
* The survey will be a good tool to begin the process and discussion – we will reflect as a staff and school council
* Survey timeline – for the new year – we don’t know what Covid restrictions will look like, but we want to have an overall community feel – how to improve and keep doing what we are doing well
* Review of questions prior to send out will ensure thought and feedback about how effective the survey will be and make it clearer/easier for parents to answer
* How do we best get parent engagement? Letters out? Social media call?
1. Green Area
* Clover was planted 2 times last year and signs were put up while growing. Has come back quite well
* Pollinator/buttefly garden (outside Mrs Pearson’s class at the end of the school by the church)
* Need people power to maintain
* Possibly reach out to community garden groups? Highschool kids with projects that involve the green space?
* Follow up to have the asphalt repainted (was set up to happen prior to covid)
* Jess Robbins (personal registered butterfly/pollinator garden) – Heather to be involved with green project
* What can be done along the trees? Build them up and while protecting the trunks of the trees, offering areas of interaction for the students (to sit, etc)
* Proposal of a sub-greenarea committee
* Important to get something put into place
1. Visual (turtle area was referenced to commence discussion)
* How do we bring the visual area together?
* Map of the world? Culture/history?
* Utilize recycled materials?
* Privacy issues?
* Families to possibly share their backgrounds
* Fit into an 8x8 area – who are we as JMQ??
* Inclusivity!!!
* Mme Dean – diagnostic – drive instruction – provide results (we need information to drive a decision on what we want to do in this area – with a strong baseline so we can execute it well)
* Be mindful of the fact that CW is a very white/middle class community – there have been too many incidents recently within the schools that point to a NEED for inclusivity, equity, and finding a way to educate the children at an age appropriate level.
* How do we teach the youngest children about issues of equity? We need to get uncomfortable in order to make change and do so in a welcoming/equitable way
* Things to contemplate – what is the base? KINDNESS & EQUITY

Thank you for joining -