School Council

Meeting Minutes

December 15th, 2021

**Opening:**

Karen Kennedy called the virtual meeting (due to Covid restrictions) to order at 6:38 pm

**Present:**

Marianne Millsap – Principal

Karen Kennedy – Co-Chair

Carly Ferris – Co-Chair

Amber Gallaugher – Vice-Chair

Colleen Kee – Outgoing Treasurer

Monica Watson-Treasurer

Melissa Irwin-Secretary

Jennifer Robertson-Teacher Rep

Erika Williamson

Annalea Kidd

Andrew James

Alana Mercury-Conter

**Welcome:** Karen welcomed everyone and offered for Jennifer to go first with her Teacher’s report while Marianne made sure the link to the meeting was available on the website.

**Teacher’s Report:** Jennifer said she always sends an email out to staff to give them a chance to share with us. They wanted to thank us for the Poinsettia Fundraiser and all the work Council did; they appreciate it so much! Jennifer mentioned that seeing the positivity in the school over this week of Spirit days is so lovely to see the kids love it.

Junior choir has started with Sandra Hawkins, Jennifer Roberts, and Neil Ananthan-Horning with grades 4,5, and 6. The choir started on a day with a covid case. The children were sat down in their cohorts in the gym and listened to the songs rather than singing. Since then, the choir has happened in cohort classes during recess.

Jennifer mentioned her thanks for everyone’s patience with Chromebooks during the shutdown of classes due to covid cases.

Jennifer shared a message from Katelyn Charbonneau (School Counselor). Here is the message below:

“ We are just wrapping up our Christmas Angels Program at the school. We helped nearly 30 students in our school community this year, and had over 40 donors offering support. Not only were we able to give out Wishlist items to students, but also provided gift cards for food and clothing etc. We also had a family local to North Dufferin drop off chickens and ducks for each family for Christmas dinner too. It has been just short of AMAZING, and couldn't have done it without everyone coming together.

I have also been organizing our Care Cupboard in the school, and have given out items along with the Christmas Program too. I will be advertising it to students in the New Year, so everyone has access in times of need.

I also plan to organize our Winter Coat Drive items, and they will be readily available for all staff to easily access in the school anytime.”

Marianne-Also wanted to send a huge thanks to Annalea and Shannon Wright for heading the “Coats for Kids.” They did a ton of washing of donated items, and it was amazing support!

Q: Karen Kennedy asked if the Care Cupboard is only for Christmas or runs all year.

A: Jennifer said it opens in the new year for personal items.

A: Marianne said the plan is for the cupboard to run all year long.

Some Comments from the teachers:

Neil Ananthan-Horning said his class has enjoyed planting garlic and doing outdoor activities and science experiments.

Sandra Wellman is pleased to have the “Music Play” Program, a digital resource for music. She is happy to help other teachers use the program.

Jennifer finished off with a reminder of Leslie’s ( School Administrator) retirement and that she would be missed, and her time at Primrose was appreciated by all who knew her. She also said that Kevin (custodian) is also moving on as he received his high school diploma and was offered a position with the Board and will head to schools in need of extra support.

**Treasurer’s Report: Monica was able to jump on the meeting to give her report, so she followed after Jenifer.** Monica reported that the “Forest of Reading” was paid for, and the amount owing for Council is $1,272.8. There was also an invoice for parts to repair the slide totaling $2,319.28. This item was approved last year (May), and just getting the invoice now. She will put it in the spreadsheet.

Monica wished to thank Colleen for all her help in learning the treasurer position. At this time, Monica wishes to pass on the Treasurer position as she cannot be consistent with meetings and would instead pass it on to someone who can be consistent.

Karen Kennedy thanked Monica for all she had done and recognized this was not an easy decision. She also mentioned that we hope to see her back when she can make meetings and is always welcome!

Q: Carly Ferris asked if there was a total yet for the Poinsettias.

A: Monica said it is not in yet, but it will be added to the spreadsheet when it comes.

Karen mentioned if anyone knows someone interested in taking on the position of Treasurer to put it out there to others. Colleen said she is willing to train and stay until someone steps up for the role.

**Principal’s Report:** Marianne wanted to add to Jennifer’s report that our Assistant Office Coordinator is also moving on as her position was a temporary one. The position will remain temporary, and Marianne is just waiting to hear from the Board to post the job ad. Our new administrator taking over from Leslie will be a great addition to Primrose. She has worked as an administrator within the Board, so she knows the job well. She has heard such great things about our school and is glad that her job will now be closer to home.

Grad pictures and picture retakes have been moved to February 24th. February is ideal since we are unaware of what will happen following the Winter break.

Covid hit us hard, but things are going well. Having all the cases has been hard on our teachers and staff, so we truly appreciate the support from parents and the community. Everyone handled it well.

**Eco-Schools Club Update-Ashley/Carli/ Annalea –**Presented by Marianne for Ashley. We received our Bronze sticker for 2021, which is great despite the challenging circumstances. We continue with the Eco-Schools initiatives with planting garlic, Kindies growing sprouts, the waste-free lunch campaign, switching off lights (coming after the break), National Sweater Day, and collaboration with Dufferin Waste.

Marianne said a letter from the Board revealed that schools could move online following the break. We could know as late as the Sunday before returning to school, but we just don’t know. If this were to happen, Monday would be Asynchronous, and Tuesday would begin online. We are prepared in case this happens, but it is in the hands of Public Health.

**Other Business:**

Karen asked about vaccines concerning teachers and students and what that looks like at the school.

Marianne mentioned that most clinics for vaccines are only at high schools at this point but will let us know if Primrose were to have one. As for teacher vaccinations, there is no mandate for teachers at this point. Teachers who are not vaccinated are tested 2-3 times a week, and if not compliant, they are put on administrative leave.

Karen also mentioned that a parent had emailed her regarding how things were handled at child pick up from a covid case. The parent was concerned about directly being asked if siblings were vaccinated or not. The parent was upset at this personal approach in front of other parents and students.

There was some discussion and opinions on the concern of privacy. Marianne assured that teachers and staff are not to ask about the vaccinations of students. Public Health investigates and lets the office know who can return.

In resolution, Marriane assured there would be an email reminding staff that they are not to ask for vaccine information from parents and that the protocol is to hear from public health which children can return to class. She said the last thing we want to do is make people feel bad.

Jennifer apologized on behalf of teachers agreeing that this should not have happened. She said it was a good reminder to respect privacy. She also mentioned that this is so new to everyone, and teachers have to be careful about so many personal items, but they all try very hard to respect all students, parents, and staff and need to be cautious.

The next question was regarding protocols for classes that have a majority of students vaccinated (Grade 7’s and 8’s at this point) and what happens when a case is found to be in one of those classes.

Marianne said there wasn’t a specific protocol that she is aware of but thought it would be similarly handled as in the younger classes. Unvaccinated children would stay home, and the vaccinated stay in class. She will take this question to the superintendent, assuring that this is a concern from Council and the school community.

The next topic discussed was the rapid test kits. They are available at the school for pick-up until Friday at 4 pm. Marianne said they are willing to stay to hand out to parents. Parents can pick them up for friends, and other arrangements can be made to get the tests home to students. Student belongings are also ready for pick up. All classes have belongings labeled and prepared for pick-up.

There was also a discussion around the last few cases and how the protocols were handled, specifically regarding students sent home on the bus. Marianne said that the call came late in the day from Public Health, and we were directed to send kids home on the bus that there was no need for parents to rush to pick up their children. She also reiterated that there isn’t anything they can do until they hear from Public Health when they don’t know there is a case. It was discussed there had been a major hack at Public Health during this time which may have accounted for the delay in receiving word from them of a case. Marrianne assured that they are doing their job on the school’s end as best they could.

The final topic was quickly stating that it was a great benefit to have the meeting link sent out in an email, and Marianne will send the link on messenger so that parents can easily find it to join in meetings.

Adjournment:

Karen Kennedy adjourned the meeting at 7:56 pm.

The next meeting was not discussed

Minutes Submitted By: Melissa Irwin

Minutes Approved By: Executive & Admin.