

St. Matthew School Council

Date: Tuesday September 18, 2018, 6:30 – 8:00

Location: Learning Commons

Present: Gilda Johnstone (Principal), Heidi Gaiser (co-chair), Kim Chabot (co-chair), Pat Poulin (teacher rep), Lisa Bruce (CUPE Rep), Denise Quigley (Treasurer), Dave, Beverly, Anne, Renny, Andre, Lisa, Jessica, Tammy, Jazmin, Patti-Jo, Elizabeth, Heather, Patrick, Andreas, Diana,

Regrets: Amanda, Brenda

Minutes of Meeting

Prayer lead by Gilda Johnstone

Agenda approved by Kim, seconded by Heidi

Council Positions

- Heidi Gaiser and Kim Chabot to continue as Co-Chairs for a second year, until elections at the start of the next school year.
- Denise Quigley to continue as Treasurer
- Two vacant positions: Secretary to record minutes of meetings. Parish Liaison to report to council on relevant events and news from St. Agnes parish council. Anyone interested in either of these positions please advise Council.

Spiritual Update

- St. Agnes Parish registration for sacraments is happening this Sunday (Sept 30) during masses. Must register online in advance and bring necessary documents to the appropriate mass on Sunday.
- The first school mass of the year will be held on Thursday (Sept 20) at 1pm. All are invited. Masses will be lead by students this year.

Budget Update

- Treasurer has requested the balance sheet to review and confirm balance of the account. Based on June numbers, approximately \$5,000 in the account is unallocated.

Climbing Structure

- Police investigation into the fire at the climber is ongoing. Any information should be reported to the police.
- The principal confirmed that the climbing structure was owned by the school. It is located on City property and the City of Waterloo maintained and serviced the climbing structure under an agreement with the school board. St. Matthew school purchased and installed the structure.
- Cost to replace with an equivalent climber to what is currently there (purchase and install) is estimated at \$50,000 - \$60,000
- Removal of the burned climber will likely occur by October. Until that time, fencing will remain up and students will not use the surrounding area during recesses.

- Based on the information provided thus far, Council will be considering a replacement climbing structure as one of the fundraising priorities for 2018/2019.
- Even if funding in place, replacement will not occur until Spring 2019 at the earliest.
- Principal Johnstone will provide updates to Council and the school community as further information becomes available from police, WCDSB and/or the City.

2018/2019 Fundraising Priorities

- Gym Speaker System - \$3,000 was allocated last year by Council toward replacement of the current speaker system. An additional \$5,000 is required to proceed based quotations obtained Spring 2018.
- Climbing Structure – possible contribution amounts from other parties (WCDSB, City of Waterloo) are not known at this time. This item will be discussed further at the next Council meeting when we have received more information from the school board. However Council anticipates contributing funding toward the replacement.
- Teacher Reimbursements – it is proposed to offer up to \$100 to each classroom teacher and ECE as a reimbursement for classroom expenses. Reimbursement would be paid out on submission of receipts by teacher/ECE. Budget amount is \$2,500. Council deferred vote on this item until the next meeting.
- Additional funding priorities will be discussed at the next meeting. It is requested that members of Council bring forward any requests prior to the meeting by emailing the council account.
- Schools in WCDSB are permitted to hold one fundraising event per year. There are guidelines regarding fundraising that must be followed. Several questions around fundraising and sponsorship were discussed to determine options to raise additional funds if needed for the climber. In short, the dance-a-thon fundraiser in October is our school's main, if only, opportunity this year to fundraise for the climber and any other priority items. Hope is that we will have a very successful campaign this year.

Dance-a-thon Fundraiser

- will take place on October 31, 2018 with format to follow last year's event.
- Students can wear costumes (no masks or toy weapons).
- Raffle tickets awarded for each \$5 raised, doubling at \$40 and re-doubling at \$80.
- Kick-off assembly to be held on Thursday October 4 at 1pm, and donation envelopes will go home with students that day.
- We need donations for the raffle table! Last year over 40 prizes were given, the ballots were a great incentive. If you are able to ask any company for a donation, please email the council account so we can avoid duplicate requests and track our donors to send thank you notes.
- Volunteers will also be needed for preparation, setup and the Cosmic Store at the event. Please email the Council account if you are able to help.
- Co-chairs requested a budget of \$800 to purchase raffle prizes as needed to supplement the donations we receive. Amount was approved by Council.

Open House

- School open house is being held tomorrow night (September 19). Council will provide coffee, water, cookies in the gym during the presentation. Traffic presentation with Leslie Maxwell & Bylaw starting at 6pm. We will have a Council table set up during the open house to recruit volunteers and take questions.

2018/2019 Council Events

- Event ideas and schedule will be discussed at the next meeting. Past events that we hope to host again this year include Family Movie Night, Family Fitness Nights, Shrove Tuesday pancakes, garden clean-up, and more. As part of the 91.5 The Beat radio station visit, we received a “fundraiser BBQ” for our school that will also be planned for spring.

Umbrella Project

- A kick-off assembly will be held next week to introduce the program to students.
- The Umbrella Project will replace the Virtue program, as the Umbrella Project program developed for the WCDSB has incorporated the faith aspects
- Council is waiting to hear on the PRO Grant application which would provide \$1,000 funding for a parents night and other supports for the program

Council Email/Website

- Information that Council wishes to see on the Council page of the school website can be sent to the principal. Priority is to make Council information accessible for all by promoting the email address, meeting dates and events. Council events can also be shown on the calendar on the school webpage.

School Transportation

- The Canadian Cancer Society offers a walking school bus program to some schools. It was asked if St. Matthew would be a candidate for that program. Heidi and Kim had asked this of Leslie Maxwell last year, and were advised that St. Matthew is not a good candidate for a number of reasons – notably that we already have a Trailblazer program in place (student-lead walk to school initiative), and also that a very reliable daily volunteer base is needed for a walking school bus.
- Trailblazer program is getting up and running for the year. Training for the student Trailblazers will take place tomorrow (Sept 19)

Update from the Principal

- A new student committee is being formed (potentially named Youth Faith Ambassadors) involving grade 8 students this year and next year grade 7 and 8, to act as a faith leadership team. This group will lead the school at liturgies and masses and lead the outreach programs (food drives, coat drive, retirement home/hospital visits, etc). A core group of students will be commissioned by the Deacon.
- Wildcat groups will continue this year.
- Curriculum and learning - you need to know your students so that you can teach them. Teachers are to complete assessments before any unit. St. Matthew already had good assessments in place, and will be building on that this year. Encouraging a move away from paper/pencil tests, as using this method means missing a lot of information.

- Pathways Program - Need to think about high school starting in grade 7. Grade 8's have been invited to Conestoga College. Grade 7's will be going to St. David's in the spring.
- Police Liaison officer Andre has come in already and continues to have a presence at the school.
- Terry Fox Run to take place on September 28th.
- Orange Day on October 1st.
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There are several initiatives that the Principal aims to implement in the coming years at St. Matthew:

- An additional pizza day each week that will not be through Lunchbox Orders. This pizza day would be run by the Grade 8 students to fulfill financial management criteria in the curriculum. The profit to the school increases significantly by managing the orders directly, and these funds can be used to bring more guest speakers/programs into the school. Ordering would be done online. Target to implement this fall.
- One school mass per year to be held at St. Agnes Church. Gilda has spoken with Father Aleks and he is receptive, they are coordinating a date. Busing costs to transport the students to the church will be paid for by the school.
- Not all education happens in the classroom. Classes to have maximum of two field trips per term and/or in-class presenter/program. In addition, the principal is looking at programs to bring into the school to extend learning and give new experiences – at a lower cost than transporting students out to field trips. Particular programs being considered are Escarpment Adventures, golf, curling. Guest speakers are also being lined up to coincide with key dates (i.e. Catholic Education week, Black History Month); with care not to repeat any speakers that have attended in recent years past.
- There may be opportunity to piggy-back some of these programs/presentations coming into the school with Council-sponsored family events during the evening.

Council Meeting Schedule

- Next Meeting Date: October 16, 2018
- Future Meeting Dates to occur every 2 months on the first Tuesday of the month:
 - December 4, 2018
 - February 5, 2019
 - April 2, 2019
 - May or June date TBD
- All meetings to start at 6:30pm in the Learning Commons (Library).

Adjournment by Heidi, seconded by Kim.