

WTT School Council Minutes

February 8th 2021

Attendees: Lori Peebles Sandra Himann, Kristy Dryland, Robyn Gilbey, Meredyth Hertz, Summer Braunig, Sharon Dunlop, Pam Law, Ramma O

Introduction and Welcome

Guest Speaker Nicholas Aboagye Nicholas was invited to speak about Black History Month. He is the co-chair of the Black Student Union at Cameron Heights and a former WTT student. Nick shared his experiences that started back in his elementary school days at WTT, when he first felt different and was made to feel that there was something wrong with him because he was different. He highlighted the importance of inclusion, and providing diverse role models. He also mentioned the importance of allies, who are people with caucasian backgrounds who haven't experienced racism, but go out of their way to support and include those in the minority.

Following Nick's visit, parents and admin agreed it would be good to think of a way that we can highlight inclusion and have clubs of some sort for senior students at WTT.

Introductions from our "New" Admin

Sandra Himann former VP - Current Interim Principal

Sandra highlighted some of her priorities:

- Equity and Inclusion - right for everyone to learn in an environment without bias. Look for opportunities for everyone to see the possibilities
- See parents as key community partner - involvement in child's education
- Instructional leadership - spent 5 years as a teacher of teachers. Believes any staff that continues to grow can continue to meet the needs of their learners in their classroom

Lori Peebles - Vice Principal

Some highlights from Lori

- Taught at WTT 2003 - 2008. Great to come back to the school.
- Been a VP for 12 years. Enjoys working in collaboration with principals and staff
- Schools need to be a place of belonging for everyone. Kids need to feel like it is safe to come to school. Making mistakes is okay, it is part of the learning.
- Never a problem so big we can't work through. Likes to problem solve together.
- Values communication with parents.

Administrative Report - Sandra Himann

Around the School

- Staff were overjoyed to have kids back at school today
- Had over 180 chromebooks loaned out for in-person learners
- Students were happy to be back at school

- Lori was instrumental to have the Morning Trail announcements that were prepared every day during distanced learning
- Sandra mentioned that staff have been involved in appreciative inquiry for about 1.5 years. Appreciative inquiry involves identifying what the school is doing well and doing it better. For WTT it is building connections with students.

Around the Board

- Webinars have been created to support teachers in new math curriculum and training
 - One math mark instead of 1 mark in each of 5 strands
 - Weekly workshops for staff to stay current on curriculum topics
- Transition dates for change of learning mode will be March 4th and 8th
- Kindergarten registration open
- Phase 1 of French Immersion registration is closed
- Black History Month - Black Brilliance conference - with focus on supporting High School Students
- Equity and Inclusion - bringing in experts into system leaders meeting and panel discussions. Going to continue discussion as "Family of Schools".

Around the Province

- Ministry implement new H&S protocols
 - Wear masks outside when they can't social distance
 - No congregating on school grounds
- Staff have to do COVID screening each day. Parents must do screening for their children each day as well

WRAPSC

- Overall across all school councils, not much going on. A lot of school councils are not holding meetings this year

Nutrition for Learning

- From previous meeting, suggestion for donating to this organization
- Currently we have just over \$20,000 in the Parent Council account
- In previous years we have donated approximately \$7,000 for field trips
- All voted in support of donating \$1,000 to Nutrition for Learning

PRO Grant

- Up to \$500 to apply for each year.
- From WRAPSC, not a lot of schools applying
- Kristy put in application for supporting school garden
 - Would need to figure out the watering solution. From previous years water canister that held water was always empty.

Williamsburg Family Day Event

- Car Scavenger Hunt - go to different locations

- May not be a go if we are still under a Stay at Home orders
- There is a virtual escape room afterwards as well that should be able to proceed regardless of the status of the provincial orders
- Also there is a virtual family paint event

Questions from Parents & General Discussion:

What do admin see as a parent's role on the school council?

- Parents are partners in children's education. Admin value that connection. Need to hear the voice of that community. Support each other.
- Facilitation of events that bring the community together - including those that are the most marginalized. Run events that allow representation from all of the community in the school.
- Fundraising and supporting of the school trips throughout the school year. Makes it so that kids can go on trips and enhance their education
- Lori's previous school did a connection each month with teachers - curriculum areas represented.
- February Family Fun event was highlighted as a great, affordable community event that everyone could enjoy and that brought people together.

How can parents best prepare for the meeting?

- Bring ideas. Share what's going on in the community.
- Bring parents concerns on what they would like to be addressed

How can the school be improved by the parents on the council?

- Bring opportunities for equity, inclusion, wellness
- Organize resources for parental support
- Being the connection to the community

It was noted that events that focused on wellness, internet safety etc. that were organized in the past by School Council were not well attended. School councils struggle with parent engagement.

General comments

- Thought there would be more involvement with meetings online
 - But parents may be having "online fatigue" with being online in meetings all day
 - This might be an opportunity post-COVID

What are the opportunity to increase engagement

- Where kids can be involved - parents tend to be more involved
- In the future possibly a hybrid model part of meeting live, also available online
- Live streaming for people to watch - don't need to sign in, doesn't commit them to anything.

Next meeting is April 12th at 7:00 pm