

# School Council, What do we do?

As a parent we all want to be involved in our child's education and development. The School Council is an advisory body that provides a forum for discussion with administration and other school personnel to dialogue about the education and development of our children.

The School Council is not just about raising money and spending it. It is about programs our children undertake. It is about results and programming on Government standard testing. It is about knowing that you are welcome in the school, when and if you have time.

How do the meetings work?

At the beginning of September notices are sent home for parents who wish to be part of The School Council. The School Council is made up of four executive positions, voting members, as well as Administration and Staff of the school **(You do not have to be a member to attend, All are welcome!)**

- Chair
  - Leads the monthly Council meeting
  - Prepares and emails out the agenda
  - Meets with the Administration to communicate what is on the agenda
  - Manage email list
  - Coordinate with members of Council on fundraisers, events, and committees
  - Liaise with Administration on concerns parents express
- Vice Chair
  - Co-ordinate with the Chair on what is on the agenda
  - Attend Ward meetings and report back to Council
  - Lead any meeting the Chair can not attend
  - Support the Chair
- Treasurer
  - Responsible for all banking for the School Council
  - Write all cheques
  - Keep detailed records and file an audit every year
- Secretary
  - Write detailed minutes of each meeting
  - Have minutes typed and sent to Chair within one week of the meeting
- Voting Member
  - Attend monthly meetings
  - Vote on motions passed

- Community Member
  - Attend monthly meetings
- Principal
  - Monthly report of Administration's choosing on the goings on of the school.
- Vice Principal
  - Monthly report of Administration's choosing on the goings on of the school
- Teacher Representative
  - Report on the activities and events of the school
  - Ask staff prior to meeting if they have any request or comments to the School Council
  - Inform other staff of the outcome of the meeting they attend

The meeting starts with a Call to order, and all present sign in. The minutes from the previous month have been sent to everyone electronically, so we ask if there are any problems or errors, if there are none, we have someone move them. Then someone seconds it, and we vote the minutes in.

After this we go into the Principal's Report, then the Vice Principal's report. These are the ones as council we are usually most interested in hearing as this is when we hear about the workings of the school, exciting changes, education information and fun extra curricular programs and events. Then we have the Treasurer's Report. This is extremely important as it lets us know how much money we have to spend! Either on short or long term goals!

There are a few things that our School Council has always supported and we always keep a \$5000 base to make sure that even if by some chance there was no Council the next year, those things would be taken care of. These include:

- Yearbook for the graduating grade eight class
- Dinner at a local restaurant for the graduating grade eight class
- Treats for the Kindergarten graduation
- Food and supplies for pancake day
- Treats for Curriculum night, holiday concert and spring concert

The treasurer also deals with all banking and needs help in keeping detailed records. There are a few simple rules when you are working on a fundraiser or event that will help make things run more smoothly.

- Receipts must be kept and put into a "cheque request" envelope (kept in the Council box)
- All cheques must be signed by two executive members
- No cash from fundraisers should ever leave the school (we have a safe that the office is in charge of)
- Deposits must be made by at least two people, one of which must be on the executive

- The yellow copy of the deposit MUST be kept and put in the treasurer's box (with what the deposit was for written on top)

Next is the teachers report. We are very fortunate that every month we have a least one teacher come out and tell us about all the amazing things that happen in our school. From special testing, sports teams, clubs, and staff initiatives.

- It is during the teachers report that any staff member who is in need of funds may present it to Council. There is a funds request form that they fill out; they give one copy to the Principal, one to Council and one to the teacher representative to ask on their behalf.
- Examples of previous requests:
  - Cameras for student use
  - Math games for the math club
  - Sports equipment for the gym
  - Special presentations for students
  - Team uniforms

We try to support everything as fairly as possible, in hopes of assisting as many students as possible. If there are major concerns over a fund request we may table the discussion for the following month. We must have a majority vote to pass on any request. Teachers do not always ask for money. Sometimes they need help and support of our time and resources. Ways in which the Council helps with day events (These are usually in co-ordination with the Student Leadership team for donations to Free The Children)

- Pancake Day
- Treats for Curriculum Night
- Treats for The Holiday Concert
- Treats for The Spring Concert

The next thing to review is Council Committees and Events. Every second meeting we try to give each committee/event lead a chance to update the Council on concerns, questions and comments on their work for the Council. Committees and events as of 2009-10:

- Safe and Caring School Action Committee
  - As of now we have one lead and two Council members on this committee. This committee is in the midst of some changes and we will update as we know more
- Lice Squad
  - Three times a year the students are checked for lice. Volunteers are always needed and the public health nurse assists and trains our volunteers
- Magazines Sales
  - An annual fundraiser that goes home at the end of September. Parents who chose to participate order

magazine subscription and we receive an percentage, anywhere from 30-45%

- Fun Fair
  - A huge endeavor that thrills students, parents and staff! Volunteers are needed from everything to large lead positions to a few hours day of. The Fun Fair is scheduled for June 12, 2010
- Spirit Wear
  - A fundraiser that helps to pay for our team uniforms. T-shirts, hoodies and varies other items are sold to students
- Holiday Baskets
  - At the end of November themes for each class are handed out. Each student is asked to bring in a \$5 item in relation to that theme. Then all those items are wrapped up in a fabulous basket! These are raffled off at the Christmas concert. This is a tremendous fundraiser as our cost is minimal
- Treat Committee
  - At school events we coordinate with the Student Leadership Team to provide bite size snacks and juice for the parents. We ask parents to bring in donations for our un-going charity donations to Free The Children
- Movie nights
  - Occasionally our Council has movie nights in the gym! Fun filled Friday nights where we sell popcorn, treats and students watch a movie in the gym!
- Pizza Lunch
  - On the last Thursday of every month the School Council offers pizza lunch. Forms go home the week before; students bring back their orders. The day of pizza lunch the students eat in their classroom.
- Pancake Day
  - For Shrove Tuesday. Parents are invited to come into the school and flip pancakes! (1000 to be exact.) Each student is asked to bring in a \$2 donation for Free The Children. Council pays for the supplies, Griffith laboratories has donated the pancake mix three years in a row.
- Council Blog
  - A place for parents to find out what's going on in the school from a School Council point of view. Updated regularly, it lets parents who can't attend monthly meeting know the on goings of the Council.  
<http://clairleacouncil.blogspot.com/>

These are just a few of things we have now. We are always open to new events and Committees. All we ask, is please consider your idea carefully, please research any questions or concerns that may arise when you bring it forth, and please be prepared to be the lead on the event or committee. We are all willing to help with new initiatives! Volunteers are always welcome! We try to include new business at the end but we do frequently run out of time. An hour and half goes by very quickly.

Those are the basics of how we run a meeting. There is so much more involved, so many behind the scenes activities that we want and need your help with everything! This is a fabulous place to be. You will meet extraordinary people, all who have an influence on your child's education.