

George R Gauld JS Parent Council Meeting

Tuesday, October 5, 2021

7:00 pm, via Zoom

Welcome and Introductions - Emily Marsland, Co-Chair

- Emily welcomed everyone to our last meeting of the 2020/2021 school year. These meetings give the GRG Community an opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns that they may have as well as to stay informed on all the latest GRG happenings
- The meetings are open to virtual and in person families and to the entire GRG community
- The goal for this year's Parent Council is to continue to keep our GRG community engaged, supported and informed. All meetings will be held via Zoom, unless Covid protocols change and we can resume in-person meetings

Current School Council Executive for 2020/2021 - Emily Marsland, Co-Chair

- Emily introduced the current Parent Council Executives:
- Christy Heath and Emily Marsland, Co-Chairs
- Melissa Marshall, Treasurer
- Amanda Andal, Secretary

Principal's Report - Marian Wall-Ryel, Principal

- Marian introduced herself. She loves her new role and the GRG community
- There are currently 211 students in person at GRG which is 80 more kids than we had last year
- There are 14 students in virtual school
- We are not required to re-organize which means no staff will be lost! It's a huge relief. Each class is a nice number and we are very lucky
- There will be a possible shifting of the grade 1 / 2 split classes to make the numbers a bit more even as one class is a bit smaller than the other two
- There are many work orders active for our beautiful old building
 - Mr. Hogan is the new caretaker at GRG this year
 - Many TDSB school buildings are from the same era which means a lot of repairs are happening at the same time.

- There are Heppa filters in each classroom. (Marian will confirm that there is a Heppa Filter in the library.) There are also Heppa filters on the stage, in the gym and in the hallway which is great news
- The Wellness room is Marian's office
 - She sanitizes the chair students sit in and runs the Heppa Filter in her office
 - She follows all of the public health guidelines
 - She is the only one who can run the wellness room therefore it made more sense that the wellness room be her office rather than the portable outside
- Social skills issues are happening and they have both proactive and reactive strategies to handle these situations
- Supervision on the yard has been increased due to having more zones
- Up to 50 students allowed in an outdoor cohort
- Marian has ordered orange vests for yard attendants so that they are more visible to everyone
- Marian wanted everyone to be aware that the main door may not be answered during Ms. Andreachi's lunch which is from 11:30am - 12:25pm
 - If you have a child that needs to be picked up during that time, please let them know ahead of time
- Masks off voices off during lunch policy
- Budget will be discussed at the next meeting
- The Terry Fox walk was amazing. Marian was amazed at the amount that we raised which was \$4,856
 - The walk went really well and was well organized
- Pizza Days will not be happening as of right now. Marian was in discussion with Mr. Dundas regarding pizza days and they have a plan on how it will work, but Public Health guidelines have recommended that Pizza days should not occur
- Sick kids Covid testing program is being utilized. It is a confirmatory test. GRG started with 100 kits and Marian has given out many of them
 - A Sick Kids courier picks them up right from the school
 - Allows children and families to get their results sooner which means those with a negative Covid test can return to school sooner
- There will be an online curriculum night. They have made a template on google slides, there will be a quick zoom to say hello. This is what our classroom looks like, etc
- As for technology, all grade 5 students will be provided with a device
- School photos on hold again, photographers must be vaccinated and the Photography company is currently working on complying with that mandate. Stay tuned for more information in the future
- Feel free to email Marian anytime, Marian.Wall-Ryel@tdsb.on.ca

Questions from Parents

1. Why are there 3 grade ½ splits?
 - a. It depends on the number of grade 1's and 2's
2. With no pizza lunches, will we be able to do LunchLady?
 - a. No, no third party lunches allowed
 - b. Nutrition snack program will continue
3. Antigen testing for some schools, do we fall under this category?
 - a. No. Rapid antigen testing is not recommended for symptomatic children. Only to be used for asymptomatic students in certain schools
4. Budget topics, is there any information about updating the playground, improving the zones?
 - a. Some money has been set aside for playground updates. Will be talking to staff and the school council. Need to figure out how much we can spend and then start the consultation process
5. Will there be an opportunity for new parents to see the building? New JK parents especially would like to see the building their children are going into everyday
 - a. The main goal at this point is to keep everyone safe so it's very hard to say, but most likely no at this point
 - b. Emily recommended a Youtube video that was created last year and will work on distributing. The video showed what the classrooms and building looks like inside. She will send it to you upon request
6. Will we get our rainbow sidewalk back after the construction?
 - a. Marian said perhaps the grounds improvement fund could pay for it. Have students do it, could be a yearly tradition. She will look into it

2021/2022 GRG School Council Executive change over - Emily Marsland, Co-Chair

- Christy Heath has graduated
- Emily Marsland is happy to continue as Co-Chair
- Amanda Andal is happy to continue as Secretary
- Melissa Marshall is wishing to step down as treasurer and move into the co-chair position that's been vacated by Christy
- Treasurer, Social Media and Volunteer positions are currently vacant
 - Stacy Karachu volunteered to be Treasurer
 - Marian mentioned adding the parent council account as a line item to the school budget. Before the school spends the money they discuss it with Parent Council. To be discussed further
 - Golnar F. has volunteered for the Social Media position

- Sabrina Scurti volunteered for the Fundraising role.
 - Discussion took place regarding the types of fundraising that could possibly be done, but will need to be revisited at the time
- Nayana's Mom - offered her help with anything parent council may need assistance with

Other business

- Discussed options for a pumpkin carving event, pumpkin parades, etc.
 - At this point, no in-person gatherings. TBD depending on public health guidelines.

OPAL Program

- Emily King (Parent) Proposed the idea of GRG participating in the OPAL Program.
 - Boredom during recess is leading to scuffles and social issues
 - The OPAL program provides kids with a bunch of loose parts, such as tires, ropes and tarps. This allows them to have something to focus on and use their minds to be creative as well as to become great problem solvers
 - The teachers act as facilitators in this program
 - Financially lower barrier play, would not cost the school a lot of money
 - The keys to getting it going is staff support and openness to trying this

The following links provide more information:

- <http://transformlab.ryerson.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/OPAL-Report-Final-2020-Revised2.pdf>
 - <https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/fairbankmemorial/OPAL>
 - <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-schools-putting-real-play-back-into-playgrounds/>
- Marian suggested that perhaps it could be piloted in one zone, or as a club. It would be better to start in manageable chunks so that we know it will be successful
 - Marian will bring it up at the next staff meeting and will see how much support and modification would be needed to start in a successful way. We need to make sure the staff are on board as well as ensure that there is adequate storage space for the items that would be required for the program
 - Marian will report back to Parent Council after she has discussed with staff

Next Meeting

Monday, November 1, 2021 at 6:00 PM