

Islington Junior Middle School
School Advisory Council Minutes
February 11, 2019
Minutes recorded by Lauren Tedesco

Welcome & Introductions

- Co-Chairs kicked off meeting with welcome remarks and introductions
- Approval of minutes from December 10, 2018 meeting – carried

Principal's Update – Rocco Coluccio

- **Introduction** of new Vice Principal, Ms. Faraone
- **Winter Weather:** bus cancellations, freezing temperatures, limited outdoor time for students in limited areas due to ice buildup but using sand and salt where appropriate
- **Black History Month and Asian Heritage Month:** activities taking place across the school including Bag2School fundraiser by the Eco Team in support of Operation Smile
- **Parent Teacher Interviews and Report Cards:** taking place this week
- **Family Breakfast:** all students and families invited to attend on February 13 at 8am
- **School Messenger System:** successful implementation, emails go out to all families notifying of school events, weather updates and reminders
- **New Outdoor School Sign:** still on track to break ground in spring
- **Islington Circle Student Newspaper:** launched by students, online only, encourage participation/submissions
- **Living Wall:** in the school foyer STEAM and Eco Team are going to be developing a solar powered watering system for the living wall, fully student led and driven
- **Toronto Public Health Series:** continue to work with Public Health social worker and nurse to organize parent workshops as past ones have been well attended. Next one on February 28, "Raising Resilient Children"

Teacher Communications App

- Presentation and demonstration provided by students and a teacher
- Google Keep is the recommended app for parent-teacher communication authorized by the TDSB
- App provides ability to share photos and student work, create notes, add collaborators, schedule reminders and can be class-wide or with an individual parent/guardian
- **Principal Coluccio:** teacher learning sessions have taken place and will continue to help staff onboarding however, important to note that the choice of app is at the discretion of each teacher
- **SAC suggestion:** based on hearing feedback from the school, would be worth leading the effort on assigning a parent rep for each class in the school for coordination (on this topic as well as improve communication and classroom support on topics as well)

Student Ministry Update

- Recognized Bell Let's Talk and African History Month in the school through activities
- **T-shirt Contest:** will be asking students to participate, identify student advocates, looking to get the contest going before March Break and will provide an update to SAC offline

Teacher Survey:

- Principal Coluccio administered voluntary survey to teachers, received eight survey responses
- **Summary:**

- Question 1 - Critical classroom needs: more resources for drawing, sensory, math, literacy and alternative workspace options (bean bag chairs, rugs). Reimbursement for out of pocket expenses, qualified adult to support special needs students, more time, smaller class sizes.
- Question 2 – Ways SAC could support school: increase parent engagement, find resources in community for families, fundraising, educational partnerships.
- Question 3 – Critical need for extracurricular activities: parent volunteers, more coaches/leaders, more variety of activities, make timing more inclusive for those who take the bus.
- Question 4 – Any additional feedback: need higher parent involvement in classrooms and activities, more insight into where funds from fundraising are directed, more playground equipment (balls, games, etc.).
- **SAC suggestion:** as noted in earlier topic, SAC to lead effort in ways to identify a parent rep for each class with the goal of increasing communication and engagement

Volunteer Engagement Discussion

- School staff and SAC to update SAC email – needs to be running in order to accept volunteer forms
- Next school newsletter include section on how to become a parent volunteer
- Parent recommendation: use school messenger system to send out a message to parents

STEAM Event – May 9

- School hosts annual event during Education Week (evening)
- Space could be offered to SAC to host tables/booths

Next Meeting Dates:

- April 15 and May 13

Updates to be presented at April meeting:

- **School spirit shirt:** update on contest (Principal Coluccio and Student Ministry)
- **Teacher communication app:** status update on rollout (Principal Coluccio)
- **Parent engagement:** update on efforts to recruit parents and identify classroom reps (SAC)
- **STEAM event:** updates on planning (Principal Coluccio and SAC)