

SAC Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 31, 2022
Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

34 participants online

SAC Chair:

Thank to everyone, keep working together, stay positive

Principal Report:

Enrolment Update:

We have as of today 37 students who are opting to stay home on a short-term basis, 8 who are online out of our total enrolment of 648.

Staffing:

We have had a number of staff taking short leaves of absence. Ms. Glass has extended her leave and Ms. Petropoulos continues to fill in for her. We have been juggling our LRS during January with a number of absences. Our caretaking staff was one short for the whole month of January but the fourth member has returned as of Friday.

System/School Update:

- We have received notification that our mini roof replacement project (including the rooftop deck) will likely go ahead in the late spring/summer. As soon as we have specifics, we will communicate these with members of our community. As far as our fence is concerned, we have been informed that the tree protection zones will be established once the project moves forward. The plan is to shore up the bottom of the fence on the Brookdale side to prevent soil erosion and run-off.
- Grade 3 CCAT (Universal screening) took place in November and for those students who met the first criteria, additional steps will be taken in the coming month. All parents whose children are moving forward in the process have been notified.
- We have received a system update that individual Grad photos (no group picture) may go ahead once all safety protocols are in place. A system decision on the possibility of Graduation Ceremonies has not been made yet.
- Covid Protocols: Parents are reminded that current TPH guidelines and TDSB Operational Procedures as guided by TPH are still in place and will remain so until we are informed that they have been loosened. These include masking inside at all times, cohorting while inside and outside, masking outside IF social distancing is not possible (for example when students are lining up in close proximity to enter), no field trips, no outside food deliveries, sports or instrumental music (band)/singing indoors. They do not nor have they ever included: masking outside IF social distancing is in place; staff telling students to go home for lunch (although this does provide students a break); students being told they cannot speak in the classroom while wearing their masks. During the course of lunch, masks are removed and as per TPH's guidelines, conversation should be kept at a minimum as they present the highest point of risk exposure. Parent volunteers are still permitted providing they are triple-vaccinated and their presence in the building is approved by the Superintendent in advance.
- Provincial Progress Reports will be sent home on Feb 16th. Virtual interviews conducted through various formats will take place on the 17th/18th (PA Day) or at another mutually agreed-upon time.

Responses to questions from SAC:

Can you please give us an update on the Equity Committee's Strategic Plan...has it been finalized? Can it be shared?

[Response from Ms. Hunter-POR for Equity and Anti-Racism]

Here are some highlights of the Equity Committee's work so far this year:

- Last June, we selected approximately \$2000 worth of books to add to our library collection with an Equity focus. They arrived and were cataloged in late September.
- At the beginning of the year, we discussed trying to further our knowledge, understanding and awareness of Indigenous issues and focussing on highlighting them throughout the year as a first step for our school. We have shared resources with classroom teachers to help them promote Indigenous perspectives within their classrooms.
- We have invited teaching staff to sign up and to take on the responsibility for sharing learning linked to the various TDSB Heritage Months that is going on in their classrooms with the rest of the school through the creation of displays or morning announcements. For example, during Indigenous Education Month Ms. Ng's class shared their learning around the names of Canadian cities and how many actually come from Indigenous languages. Mr. Gaunt's class recently shared their learning about the Holocaust on Holocaust Remembrance Day. We continue to encourage this initiative but understand that due to the ongoing "pandemic stress" that educators are facing, this is an extra ask that is only adding to their workload.
- We are looking to host the Power of One Exhibit later in the spring.
- We continue to share resources with staff aligned with each of the TDSB Heritage Months. We were very lucky to have Yollanda Zhang, founder of Panda Mandarin, share a wealth of resources for the upcoming Lunar New Year. We are hoping many of our classes will watch the TDSB live stream on Tuesday, February 1st to begin the celebration of African Heritage Month in the TDSB.
- The TDSB has started an initiative called Broadcast Learning Experiences which brings experts into our classrooms through various live streaming learning opportunities (kind of like a virtual field trip). We are sharing these links with teachers and hoping that they share them with their students.
- We are hoping to have some school-wide activity or initiative in May/June. It may be something like a mural for the foyer but with COVID restrictions/cohorting it is somewhat difficult to plan.
- Due to the fact that our Teacher-Librarian is a prep provider and has very little time to program in our library, the Equity Committee is supporting teachers by making sure that there are read-alouds and activities available for classroom teachers to use during their library visits that are linked to our Heritage months.

Creating a healthy school environment through this challenging time is critical for everyone...How much mental health supports are there at the school for teachers and will/have teachers incorporated this in the curriculum for students?

[Response from Mr. Sturm: POR for Mental Health & Wellness]

The school setting's environment has a major impact on the well being of its staff and pupils. The administration has worked hard to build a culture of trust where staff feel valued, can be open about their health and well being and know how to access support if they need it. The leadership team models good mental health and well being behaviour and practice. We are all looking at our own mental health and well being alongside that of our students. All staff have different needs and allowing them the freedom to determine their best course of action gives them the freedom to seek help if they need it. In addition, staff share: links from inspiring sources, humorous emails, or sounding boards to vent when needed. Despite being very isolated by the safety protocols of covid, they are still finding ways to stay connected and support each other.

Incorporation of support into classroom/school practice: The school had a spirit week just before the holiday break to increase student morale and is planning a similar event/week in the near future. It certainly helped the students to have a common, uniting purpose. Staff are working hard to return their classes to established routines. The more normalcy and stability that can be part of students' lives, the more it will feel as if things are on the right track.

Staff also utilize DPA, extended recesses, gratitude journals, mindfulness moments, school resources (such as library and gym) to add variety and fun to a typical day. The best that we can all do is to create a safe caring environment within each class so that students feel welcome and valued. This builds trust and allows students who are struggling to ask for help.

Lastly, the educators have established strong connections with the homes. As partners caring for the children, we are vigilantly making certain that the children are getting what they need most. Formats like Google Classroom allow access to the classroom content easily and let children who are not in class catch up and know what is going on. Also, many of the parents are taking mental health days for their children and the teachers understand and support these decisions.

I heard from my child that the boys' bathrooms are very dirty and messy. Are these being cleaned on a regular basis?

We had some challenges during the last month as one of our caretakers was away and there was no replacement for him. This, coupled with the fact that snow removal and salting is the number one duty of our caretakers, presented challenges in cleaning more often than twice a day. We also only have one caretaker at school until 2pm daily. The good news is that our fourth caretaker has returned so additional cleaning can be carried out at night.

Can you explain the process and timing for junior kindergarten registration. Do we need to register in person?

[Response from our office staff (Lily & Patricia)]

We register all grades of new kids online here <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Find-your/School/Registration>. Before registering their kids parents have to check if they reside in JWPS catchment area here <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Find-your/School/By-Address>.

As I receive a new online registration notification I check it out and if it looks good contact parents to email me following documents:

- Student's Passport.
- Student's Immunization Record.
- Student's Health Card.
- Two pieces of proof of the family's residency.

After I see all documents and everything is alright I migrate online registration to my Trillium and create a OSR for the new student. There is no need for parents to come to school.

Have we had any Covid cases at John Wanless since the return to school?

As pointed out by TPH as well as in our discussions with the senior team, we rely on the honour system as far as parents and reporting of confirmed positive cases are concerned. We have only received our first confirmation of a positive case from a parent today. We also have not had any positive cases among our staff.

Fundraising update

- Spirit Wear - because of supply chain issues, working through the final orders, thank you all for your support
- Poinsettias - great success, plan to offer next year, it was a great fundraiser for us
- Woodward Meats - still going. Link sent by Peter in his weekly updates, it's posted by SAC on the facebook page too. We receive 6% of each order. So far we have raised \$500 for our school. Still going until June - use the link to place your orders.
- Spring fair - starting preliminary conversations, holding June 11th, working with vendors
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Grad committee update:

- All our sub-committees have been busy planning so things are well underway.
- Unfortunately hoodies are held up at customs and delivery is delayed again. Expected date is the end of Feb. As soon as we have them we'll communicate date for group photo
- Yearbook sales have started; and kids have started their work on yearbook with Mr. Sturm
- We will try to have minimal outreach to parents for fundraising but will still need their support so look for emails/more info coming soon from that group
- We are planning for in person events but also thinking of plan B options just in case

T-Ball Update:

Planning for t-ball this year, if we can. We will start registration march break with t-ball hopefully starting in April. We will apply for permits for the field for all 5 days - with friday being family events.

Treasury Update

We have enough money to provide teachers the funding for the class allowances this year. Thanks to fundraising, we can meet those commitments to the teachers for their classroom grants

Chair Closing

End of the term for Eric, Heather and Andrew - we want to find parents who want to take over these roles. We are looking for new ideas, new fundraising ideas - it's a clean slate to do whatever you want with a great community.

As a take-away it was recommended that we look at adding previous chairs as voting members on council.