

Minutes for School Council Meeting
September 24, 2018

1. Call to Order & Introductions (7:00 pm)

Paul: Previous Chair sends regrets. Great to see so many Grade 9 parents

Parents in attendance: Laura Pillsworth, Kimberly de Witte, Khaleel Mohammed, Donna Maiato, Sarah Blackstock, Farhia Warsame, Jackie Marrie, Richard Villavicencio, Lisa Truant-Tan, Melanie Boyd-Brown, Lucy Coyle, Ahmed Mani Meheridaza.

Administration in attendance: Paul Edwards (Principal), Joseph Pollice (VP), Michelle Robinson (VP), Karen McCrimmon (Teacher Rep).

2. Student Update (Harsimran Gulri):

RUSTCO elections are next week

Sports teams are up and running but other clubs are still starting up

ME to WE Let's Scare Hunger Campaign

Breakfast Club is a great way for students to get volunteer hours

THRIVE (mental health awareness group) meets on Fridays

Arts Council is taking

RUSTCO will have a parent liaison position who will come to these meetings

3. School Council Elections:

- a. Co-chair: Donna Maiato & Khaleel Mohammed
- b. Treasurer: Farhia Warsame
- c. Secretary/Communications: Kimberly de Witte
- d. Ward 7 Rep: Lucy Coyle & Laura Pillsworth
- e. Fundraising: Jackie Marrie & Farhia Warsame

4. Principal Update:

I am so pleased with the parent participation over the last few years.

We have 552 students this year (down a bit from last year). Allocated 3 administrations, one on medical leave (Maria) and Marlee is taking over those responsibilities along with temps.

There is a new head of Caretaking. Teachers are amazing; lots of experience and very caring. The idea for Meet the Teachers for Grade 9 parents came from the teachers.

So many clubs including Robotics and a focus on mental health with THRIVE. It's a great school for your child.

There have been no major incidents here, but note the following: Mountview Alternative School is a primary school of about 100 students focused on environment and social justice. They are currently JK-6 with it going up to Grade 7 starting September 2019 and up to Grade 8 in September 2020. This school will be moving into RCI by September 2019.

There will be a transition team forming in the near future and the hope is that this Council will be involved. We haven't been able to speak with our Trustee yet to know what pillars need to be in place for the transition to go forward. We may want to consider how our Parent Council can help The Mountview parents feel welcome as part of the transition. It is a great community of students and parents.

Khaleel: Has any of the construction started yet?

Paul: No construction yet. I expect construction to start after March Break

Michelle: It won't impact our ability to increase our enrolment up to 700 students.

Joseph: This is a good experiment for the Board (becoming a school of JK to Grade 12) and they will give us help to make it successful

Discussions ensued:

- There will be designated spaces delineated between the two schools, allowing for shared experiences, convergent opportunities.
- Transition plan for our students who will now be sharing with little kids – maybe opportunities for volunteer hours (tutoring, reading buddies)

Jackie: Do the teachers here have a wish list for the fundraising goals?

Karen: Joseph worked with Home Depot to purchase fans and got a really good deal, so the funds donated by the School Council last year went farther than expected. THRIVE will have some suggestions for other help for the warmer months. The classrooms with 30 kids will need 4-6 fans ideally. The transition is supposed to move or supply us with another water bottle refill station that is currently in the area that Mountview is going to take over.

Karen will speak to the teachers about their needs and will bring suggestions to our next meeting.

Paul: Regarding the boarded up windows: the TDSB supervising team says it should be finished by early November 2018. The east and north sides are being replaced, going back to the original size and will open and with blinds. A bit of renovation on the roof for leaks and stress tests on the metal bars on the West side. The Mountview renovation is estimated for \$1.2 million, so the TDSB is putting a lot of work into this building.

Jackie: is there anything you want from us?

Paul: in addition to speakers on topics that parents want to hear, one important topic would be responsibilities for School Council, as well as helping when we need parent assistance would be appreciated.

Grade 8 Open House – Wednesday, November 14 – we would love to have parents involved with this.

Kimberly: Has the PRO Grant been awarded yet?

Paul: Not yet. Another item:

The Program Review Committee (PRC) is looking at programming being offered at RCI. The PRC is made up of RCI teachers with Lucy Coyle as the parent representative and Harsimran Gulri as the student representative. The PRC is working on having any new Grade 8 offerings before the open house.

Lucy: very enlightened with how the teachers are not being protective of what they offer, but rather what is best for the students. **Paul:** One example is the forensics course being offered for Grade 11 students. It's great that our teachers are that forward thinking, such as looking at partnering with Ryerson to help prepare student to populate their new Science of Sports program. **Michelle:** There are a lot of great things happening in that room and they work well with each other, but they also are thinking about these things outside that room as well. They are putting a lot of effort in. We're meeting next week so there will be something to report at our next meeting.

5. Topics for Upcoming Meetings:

In order to get parents to attend School Council meetings, we discussed potential meeting topics.

Lucy: I got in touch with Robin Pilkey about having someone speak with us about the responsibilities of School Councils. She connected me with Michelle Munroe from TDSB Parent and Community Engagement and she is willing to come to our next meeting to deliver a presentation. All agreed to having Ms. Munroe at the next meeting.

- a. October 29 – Expectations of Parent Council & Open House & Program Review Committee Update
- b. November 26 – Helping your Student Manage the Move – Into High School or Out of It (Overview of My Blueprint & a Primer for Post-Secondary)
- c. January 14 – Helping Your Student Manage Test Anxiety
- d. February 25 – TBD

6. Other Business

Donna: is there anything for the parents of Grade 12 kids around how the application process works, preparing them for leaving home, etc?

Karen & various admin: Guidance coordinates having universities into the school for the Grade 12s. Nothing for parents, but we could consider including them. Perhaps a presentation around deadlines, scholarship opportunities, all the options - university, colleges, apprenticeships and military. Looking for ways to partner parents and teachers. Ways to help kids live independently, financial literacy, etc. Who could be a speaker for November 26? Carla or Wilma for the My Blueprint overview, **Kimberly** to look for other speaker.

Kimberly to include dates for University Open Houses in the Newsletter

Karen: Right to Play – group of students that went to George Syme to help kids get along and learn to play last school year. Four RCI kids won scholarships worth \$10k each for this program!

Jackie: An info-graphic showing these kinds of things would be great for the Open House.

Daniella Fernandes (ACL for Special Programs) has created a program Grade 11 Masters students mentoring the Grade 9 Masters students (mixer at lunch today). Parents commented on how this was well-received by their student.

Discussion around the change to Periods 3 & 4 this year (flipping these periods between Day 1 & 2 to make sure students in extra-curricular sports and activities don't continually miss one particular class) Hoping students and teachers will get used to it. **Kimberly** will add the explanation in next Newsletter to communicate the reasoning to parents.

7. Adjournment (8:50 pm)