

Minutes- Weston Memorial JPS

Tuesday May 28, 2013

In attendance:

Ron St. Germaine, Marco DelZotto, Maurizio Dodaro, Rosa Fracassa, Denise Murphy, Dean Gray, Lia Dell'Angelo Green, Sandra DiVincenzo, Pedro Malone, Leanne Bellec, Jorge Ramos, Marl Tranter

Welcome and Introductions:

- Everyone introduced self
- Minutes from last month accepted by all

Principal's Report:

Acting Principal Ms. Marl Tranter read notes from Karen Madarasz's principal report.

Ms. Madarasz's notes below:

- our 4 kindergarten classes enjoyed their Scientists in the Schools experiences on April 30 and May 1
- Ms. J. Hayes (Gr. 3) has booked Scientists in the Schools for June 4
- Spirit Days began the first Wed. of May and have continued each Wed. (Hat Day, Wacky Hair Day, Favourite T-shirt Day, PJ Day, Backwards Day)
- Thank you to School Council for organizing the Wednesday Pizza Lunches and for their patience throughout the process of collecting money, ordering, organizing, etc.
- Our Track and Field Meet was very exciting! A large group of students attended on May 1 (Centennial Park), coached by many staff and it was nice that many parents were able to attend
- Ms. Di Natalie and Ms. Russo's classes went to Warren Park for an Outdoor Education experience on May 6
- our EQAO information night on May 9 was well-attended and informative
- the Vision and Hearing Screening took place in the gym on May 21
- Welcome to Kindergarten Night was held on May 23. It was organized by our Kindergarten team and well-attended! The students and parents rotated through 4 different learning centres, based on the information provided in their WTK bags from the Learning Partnership. Thank you to SAC for purchasing the bags for our families!
- We are ready for EQAO. The students are well-prepared and the assessment began today. We have a 2-week block to complete the assessment in case students are absent or need extra time.
- our Character Education Assembly is May 30 at 9:15 a.m.
- the Grade 1s go to Kortright Centre the morning of May 31.
- the Gr. 5s will visit CR Marchant on June 4 at 9:30 a.m.; there is a parent evening (same night) at 7 p.m. at CR Marchant-Mr. Malone will be sending home information
- we are very excited to be participating in the June Fair on the 6th, and want to thank SAC for their hard work to support this!

Re: Health and Safety:

-our staff parking lot might be undergoing some repair work so it will be closed off for a few days
-staff will have permission to park in designated areas on the street
-after the June Fair-please take the gas tanks (SAC Members) attached to the BBQs and store them in a safe place-we cannot house them at school-there is a Health and Safety regulation that they cannot be stored on school property

Note: Ms. Madarasz requests that the BBQ propane tanks need to be removed from the BBQs after the June Fair and stored off premises, perhaps by a committee member / volunteer parent. This is due to the Health and Safety policies as per the TDSB. (Ron St. Germaine is going to be taking them home after the June Fair.) The BBQs belong to the school and are stored at the school.

Treasury Report: by Jorge Ramos, Treasurer

- 2 sets of financials were reviewed.
- April financials closed
- Note: for the March / April report the only change made was the cost for the Lunch room transformation. It was an art project done by an outside company with the students –Arts for Children.
- Motion to approve financials, Maurizio Dodaro first motion. Lia Dell’Angelo Green, second motion to accept financials.
- Another note: Plant sale brought in a bit less money than last year. Feedback given was that there is a lot going on in May, for example, Spirit month with the Pizza lunch and it is also on the heels of the June Fair, perhaps this affected Plant Sales --so should consider this in future planning.
- This is the time of year when the money raised begins to get used up, for example, through trips, and school bus fees. Money from this year that does not get used will be carried over to next year. Normally money is not carried over, that is, most is used during the year. However, because this was a different kind of year, some of the money did not get used (\$3000 from the Art Fund.) This can be carried into next year, or there can be discussion on how to use the money, since there will be an additional allocation of \$3000 for the art fund next year. The other option is to carry over the money and with the art budget of both years work on a more prominent art project. (The Dance program from last year is one example.) Another suggestion is a drama group coming in to perform for the students. Can also consider allocating the funds according to divisions, ex: primary and junior, so each group can have a different art project. Should also lean on subject matter experts (parents) / teachers in this area.
- Conclusion is that there is a good healthy budget with which to move forward.
- Jorge wants it to be noted that the treasurer’s budget binder is available for all to review. Available in the office.

Grade 5 Graduation: Pedro Malone

- Mr. Malone is working on the Grade 5 graduation.
- Contacted Mr. Baglione for files on last year's June Fair.
- He will be looking at the files for last year's detailed notes for this year's graduation.
- Last year's graduation included: trip to E-zone in south Etobicoke (play place), pizza, etc. SAC already allocated money for this in their budget.
- Mr. Malone will get back to everyone with more details on graduation once he has had time to review the file notes / fine tune plans for the event.

FUND RAISING EVENTS:

1. Spirit Pizza Month:

- Pizza distribution had a little hiccup in the pizza distribution on the first week, but it was resolved for the rest of the spirit days.
- Mr. Bui does a great job with the pizza. Everyone is appreciative.
- Grade 5 students have been very helpful in helping to distribute pizza to the younger students. This was a great help, it also helped to provide a leadership opportunity to the Grade 5 students.
- Suggestion was to think of eliminating the juice box piece for next time. There is not a large profit margin on juice boxes, and all kids come to school with a drink in their lunch, it is also another item to distribute to the children, especially when there are different flavours of juice. So perhaps leave it to just the pizza.
- Suggestion: In order to keep the Plant Sale in May, (see comments above about having too many fund raising events in the month of May) it may be a good idea to consider moving Spirit month to a quieter time, for example, in the past it was also scheduled in April. Moving it to a less active month may work, so that parents can still participate in Plant Sale in May and in June Fair. (It is difficult to move the Plant Sale to another month, but perhaps a bit easier to move Spirit month.) Another point is that May has 5 weeks, which allows for 5 spirit day themes – good idea to also think of this in the planning process. This should be a consideration brought up to Ms. Madarasz for next year.

2. Plant Sale:

Comments and suggestions about plant sale were discussed above as they came up in the budget discussion and the pizza fund raiser discussion.

3. June Fair Update:

- Theme: Building Dreams
- Ms. Sestito is working on a list of staff volunteering for the Bake Sale. The staff will be looking after the bake sale table for the June Fair.

- Will have high school students volunteering for the June Fair. Also, there are 3 students from CR Marchant that want to volunteer for the June Fair, how do they go about putting their names on the volunteer list? Ron will look into this and get back to everyone.
- Grade 5 students are also welcome to help with one of the games / activities. This is an opportunity to students to volunteer / this is not required --but is definitely an opportunity for students to be involved and build leadership skills.
- Teachers working with their class to create artwork that will be decorations for the June Fair. This is going well.
- This year there have been many parent volunteers working on the June Fair, this is great!
- What happens if it rains? Some of the games will be brought inside the gym and the two lunch room areas. The bouncy castles are too large to be brought indoors.
- Need to check if the indoor spaces are on the permit request. Ms. Tranter will speak to Ms. Madarasz to ensure these spaces are included in the permit request.
- All are working very hard, and hoping for great weather for a very successful June Fair!

New Business:

School Grounds / Greening : Marco DelZotto

- Has worked on Greening committee at his workplace. There are many possibilities for improving grounds and greening/ improving the school yard space.
- Fence art work might be an interesting beautification project. Can also apply for various grants for improving these areas.
- A plan had been drawn up in years past for the school grounds. This should be revisited.
- Ms. Madarasz also suggested that perhaps a portion of the next lottery proceeds can go towards school grounds.
- Applying for grants can be a very involved process, including a naturalization plan, survey of parents, students, staff, a maintenance schedule and plan.
- The beautification of the grounds is an issue that has been raised before.
- Note: A request was made to the Councilor's office to meet with the City Forestry, a meeting was held in the fall with Mr. Baglione and a representative of Forestry, and parents, plus staff. We just received word that the City is going to be planting 10 trees on the grounds. At the time of the meeting, Mr. Baglione requested the trees be planted in the junior yard, along the pavement, spread out along the edge of the field area. This will keep sight lines open for staff, the field available for the students to use, and will create a shaded area so that when children go outside there is a shaded area on sunny days. Two parents have committed to watering the newly planted trees.
- There have also been some donations for the Kindergarten area, and from a plant sale held at the farmer's market to raise money for the grounds.
- Committee would like to note the grounds as an agenda item for September. Marco can definitely be a major part of this committee.

- Another suggestion is to perhaps bring in high school students to work on a fence beautification project with the students. This might be a great partnership –sort of like a big brother, big sister idea.
- Concern: Key to open the external watering hose was requested by Gemma La Regina (Liz LaRegina’s daughter, Gemma is also a Weston graduate.) [Liz LaRegina passed away a couple of years ago. She used to plant and water the garden through the summer. Gemma would like to take on that role during the summer months; she would be responsible for watering the flower box.] Ms. Tranter will let Ms. Madarasz know.

Walk to School program: Maurizio Dodaro

- Last night at the school there was a community meeting, with a presentation by chief City Planner, Jennifer Keesmaat. Interesting to note that she also did a Ted Talks called Walk to School. Good video to watch.
- Some interesting points: parking around school area is very congested at pick up / drop off times. Also, the issue of idling cars is an important one. Mr. Baglione would note these concerns in the newsletter, perhaps a good idea to remind parents of this concern again.
- This has also become an issue at City Hall, by law is being passed. There will be signs posted in the area and in future cars are going to be ticketed.
- Suggestion: Have a Walk to School Wednesday –students who would walk to school would be recognized with a little shoe certificate they could put their name on. The class who had the most was able to keep a “shoe plaque” in their classroom for the month. [similar idea was used for the clean classroom.] The winning class could be recognized in an assembly.

Have you filled someone’s bucket today: Jorge Ramos

- A program where students read “Have you filled someone’s bucket today?” Then can receive an “entry” / voucher when they fill someone’s bucket. They can put this voucher in a large bucket kept in the main office. At the end of the week, can pick out a name and read their name during announcements and recognize the good deed.
- This helps to build community and good student citizenship. Recognition for children is great idea.
- Jorge also spoke to Chris Tonks, school trustee, about the TDSB organizing a parent award, where the teachers / principal can recognize the parents for their volunteerism / contributions to the school. Chris is going to bring this forward.

Fund Raising for the Future: Denise Murphy

- In the past the fund raising chair did not head each fund raising event. Instead, they oversaw events, helped work on them with other parents, but did not lead each event. This year, the fund raising chair has been heading almost every event. It should be noted that for next year it is important to have others head each fund raising opportunity and have the chair help to oversee or guide each event. It is too much for one person to take on such a large role.

- Perhaps for next meeting can come up with a list of events that plan to have next year and then ask for volunteers to head the various events. It is not easy to recruit parents to volunteer, but important to do, so that everyone can have a less stressful role and more parents can participate.
- Note: Kids are also often very good at recruiting their parents, so it might be good to remind students to include parents in school events.
- Good idea to have a list of events for the June meeting so can plan for next year.

Music Room: Dean Gray

- Musical instruments also include more than just traditional instruments. Would like to see this more developed, perhaps by including more technology based instruments. Not sure if the music room will need to be dismantled for next year due to the rising enrolment numbers. Will know next month.
- Would like to add to the music collection for future.

Raffle Account: Jorge Ramose

- It should be noted that the raffle ticket bank account was closed so that bank fees are not incurred during a period of inactivity. Financial details for the raffle are also closed.

June Fair: Ron St. Germaine

- Volunteers for June fair are still needed. Any parents that are able to volunteer for set up or during the June Fair, please come forward and let us know –love to include you!

Ron St. Germaine: Thanks to everyone for attending the meeting!

Meeting Adjourned.