

John English SAC Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, April 7, 2014

Principal's Report

- Our Movie Night was a great success. There were so many people involved; the parents supported the school by putting items in baskets and by buying raffle tickets and movie night. Mr. Howe sincerely thanked everyone involved.
- The school population projections have been released to the schools. There is legislation that insists on a cap of students on primary class sizes. So if there are 30 students, then there is a class of 20 and a split class with the remaining 10. There must be a minimum of 4 students per grade in a split class. Mr. Howe then showed the numbers for the next year on the screen. The kindergarten classes have an ECE assisting so because there are two adults in it, it allows some flexibility with class sizes. There is no cap on the number of students in classes between grade 4 and grade 8. The projected total for the school for next year is 877 students. This new projection will mean new staff will be allocated to the school. The school had 45 staff in September, with 2 staff joining in December. There will 47 staff allocated for next year. There will be a new vice principal joining the school, who will also have teaching duties. A parent asked if the planning department would be adding portables to the school; however Mr. Howe noted that the school is officially equipped to hold up to 1000 students before portables are considered a requirement.
- The school celebrated Pink Day. Students were made aware of how bullying happens and they are encouraged to stand up against bullying. An assembly took place with all the school population and the students were encouraged to wear pink.
- Kids in grades 4 to 6 have participated in a school climate survey. The students have completed the survey in class with their teachers. There was a form that went home that outlined the survey and asked parents to participate online (www.schoolclimate.ca). To access the survey you will be required to insert the following survey code specific to our school: 6-YAP-363

Teachers Report

- [Fibonacci mathematics contest](#) took place at the school with 50 grade 5 students and 50 grade 6 students.
- Miss Keenlyside (teacher) encourages all students and their families to participate in the [Healthy Schools Walk](#) at Downsview Park in May 24. Click link for more information.
- Intramural Badminton is underway. Over 100 students are involved in Grades 5 – 8.
- Soccer and track and field tryouts are currently underway. Students should listen to the announcements for dates and times of tryouts.
- We need help promoting the musical “Once on This Island” – May 7 & 8 at 7:00. Tickets available in the office.
- Recorder recital for grades 4 and 5 on Monday, April 14 from 9:15 to 10:15
- Dental screening has been taking place in the school (permission forms went home for this)

- The Spring Concert will be held on May 28. This concert will focus on the Grades 6, 7 & 8 band and strings, as well as the Ukulele groups.
- A question from the floor regarding teaching staff and how some recent changes have occurred. Mr. Howe explained some of the TDSB rules around hiring staff that he must adhere to.
- A discussion then took place regarding occasional teachers which opened the subject of Bill 274. Currently, schools hire short term teachers from the occasional list. Those teachers who have been on the occasional list longer have seniority. They therefore get the contract teaching positions due to their experience. If you oppose this practice, there is a website for you with further information: <http://www.repeal274.com>.
- For volunteers who work at the school on a regular basis, police checks are done. Occasional helpers are not required (according to Mr. Howe) to get a police check. A parent floated the thought of how checks are done? Are they required in multiple schools if you have kids in more than one school? This seems to be a grey subject around the board from school to school.
- A parent asked about the policy about communicating with teachers? A parent commented that the system by which to contact a teacher is very archaic and frustrating for working parents (no voicemail, teachers who prefer not to return phone calls outside of school hours). Mr. Howe confirmed that while there is no formal policy on email response or telephone contact, he encourages parents to contact him if there is an issue and he will speak directly to the teacher involved.

Board Business

Programs

Schoolyard Committee

- Sand toys have been given to kindergarten classes, and the committee would like to extend this to the older kids. They have worked out a system for having them available and then locking them up at the end of the day. This will commence on Monday.
- Balls and other items for each classroom (for sign-out) is a goal of the schoolyard committee. They would like to purchase a standard number of balls for each class. Mr. Howe will collect information from the teachers as to what they need for their classes before proceeding.
- A spring clean up and planting event has been planned for Saturday, May 31st. Children are invited, and people are asked to bring donations of plants and flowers as well as their own tools to work with. The committee has spoken to Canadian Tire about getting donated plants and flowers and there may be a possibility. The committee will send a letter requesting donations and perhaps we shall receive some items.
- The committee has had some feedback about asphalt only days. There are a lot of people in the school yard and there is a little concern with how busy the area is with all the students. Collisions take place due to many, many children in a small place. Mr. Howe has requested the lines to be repainted for basketball courts etc so it is more visible for the kids. Mr. Howe is going to look into ideas of how to make it better (e.g. expand the earlier recess etc). The gyms are being used by teams and intramurals, so that is not an option.

- A question was raised regarding whether we can do anything further with projects for Eco-Schools. Mr. Howe will report back.

Healthy Bites

- The program is going well.
- The committee is looking for volunteers still; parents and seniors are encouraged.
- Movie night was a great success for Healthy Bites.

Ukelele

- There is a fundraiser event coming up on Sunday, June 1st to support the Healthy Bites and the JE Ukulele program. This will be held at The Rockpile (across from Cloverdale Mall). The Rockpile is an all ages bar; this will be a family event and will have a professional ukulele trio as well as our own Ukulele groups. The event goes from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. The reason for the fundraiser is to recoup the “buffer funds” for the Healthy Bites budget. This buffer was depleted on a new oven and a new dishwasher that had to be purchased this year. The committee feels it is wise to keep money available in case of equipment failure that could present difficulty in delivering the program. More information will be posted soon!

Community

- Party in the Park – has its own Facebook page. It will be held on June 17th at John English. Jim Sanderson came to the committee to get help with the insurance and the permit. Mr. Howe is trying to get through to the school board to get the permit. There is a thought that if SAC sponsored the party in the park, perhaps it will be easier to get the insurance. Mr. Howe spoke to the TDSB Risk Management department and the permit department and both departments indicated that the organizing group was responsible for permits and liability insurance.
- Jim is looking for new volunteers for the committee. It will be held at April 24th at the Presbyterian Church at 7:00 p.m.

Events/Fundraising

Movie Night

- The event raised \$4200, minus the expenses
- Lori and the popcorn machine will need to be replaced in 2015.

Dance-athon

- This event will take place on April 25th, all day long (classes attending at different times)
- Pledge forms will go home on the weekend so the children can start collecting
- There will be a prize for the class that collects the most pledges
- Volunteers are welcome! Contact the committee

[PRO – parents reaching out grant](#) (click link)

Ontario's Parents Reaching Out grants encourage parent engagement at the local, regional and provincial levels. They are designed to support parents in identifying barriers to parent engagement in their own community and to find local solutions to involve more parents in support of student achievement and well-being.

There are two types of grants:

- School councils of publicly funded schools in Ontario (only) can apply for Parents Reaching Out Grants for Schools.
- Parent organizations, Parent Involvement Committees (PICs), publicly funded school boards, non-profit organizations and postsecondary institutions operating in Ontario can apply for Parents Reaching Out Grants for Regional/Provincial Projects.

We are looking for a parent who might have a good idea for a grant for a parent seminar.

Deadline for grant proposal: May 16

Next SAC Meeting will be held on May 14