

SAC Meeting
Wednesday, September 9, 2014

Marie Cook, Chair of SAC, welcomed the group and introduced current council members holding positions. The meeting was full with every seat in the library occupied!

Principal's Report

Mr. Howe reminded the group of the ways to keep informed such as the [school website](#), [SAC website](#), Twitter feed ([#John English JM](#)).

The school is growing! We now have 870 students. Many staff changes have taken place so you will see some new faces around the halls. For a full teachers listing, click [here](#). New Vice-Principals Becky Jenkins, and Ashwin Parvatam introduced themselves.

There has been some construction over the summer as follows:

- A new fenced area for kindergarten students to safely wait prior to school start/after dismissal. This area can also be used as an activity area during the day. This fenced in area provides a level of safety when the street is busy.
- The lower gym floor has been repaired.

Reorganization of classes can still happen at this stage (to balance the classes due to students joining the school after the school start date). However, Mr. Howe expects that no classes will need to be changed. He is waiting to get final confirmation from the TDSB staffing department.

Full day Kindergarten has gone much more smoothly this year in the second year since it was introduced. Entrances and exits are understood by both parents and teachers, the program changes are clear for the teachers, and the lunch system has been practiced over the first year. Things are going well.

Curriculum night is next Thursday, September 18. There will be a community services carousel offered in the cafeteria. Public health, Toronto Police, Toronto Public Library, social services, LAMP, YMCA, air cadets, Parks and Rec, Healthy Bites, Canadian Parents for French will all be on hand in the cafeteria. There will also be pizza served from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and a bake sale. This is followed by the teacher's open house in each of the classrooms.

To keep you informed, a monthly calendar and newsletter is sent by email. It goes to the teachers to circulate electronically. Some teachers communicate by email, some use phone or agenda. Establish at meet the teacher night which method works best for them.

Regarding school safety

The building is shared with Parks and Recreation and Next Door Family Resources services. All doors between the two areas are locked each school day at 10:30 a.m.

Therefore, when dropping off your children:

- On time: back entrance or the door that has been identified for drop off
- After school has begun: please enter through the front entrance.

If you are volunteering in the school, please sign in at the front office and get (and wear) a volunteer badge.

If your child is absent, please call into the safe arrival line to report a student's absence. If you do not, there will be a call to the first and/or second contact from the office.

Safe Arrival Program: we have had a very robust "Kiss and Ride" program. There is one teacher who is on duty, but the council is really in need of a few parents who could help organize volunteers to help. Please contact the office if you are able to volunteer.

Parent Reaching Out grants 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. As a result, coming up at George R. Galt School will be a "Homework strategies" workshop. This will be held on September 25 (in the gym). A Parents Reaching Out grant has also been granted to John English school in the amount of \$1000. We need to now think about how to spend that money (workshops, seminars). Contact the council if you have topics you would like to suggest. sacinfo@johnenglish.ca

Lunchtime programs: Pay to play programs are available at the school; which are run by outside agencies. Kids Fun Factory, Chess, PALS (games program combined with a student leadership program). These are normally focused on the Grade 1 – 5. A poll was taken in the room to gauge interest. It was met with a positive response from quite a few parents. Information will come home about these organizations.

Questions from the floor:

School communication; how are things communicated? Morning announcements, once made, are posted in the cafeteria for the students to read. Most items about sports tryouts and club meetings will also be in the newsletter, which should include the teachers name running the program on it. Please post at home for your child to refer to.

What is the philosophy on homework? Home is usually unfinished work from class, and some review. The rule of thumb is 10 minutes per grade (this not necessarily true of older grades). If things become excessive (child taking too long to do homework, or if you feel there is too much, please contact the school).

Teachers Report

- Madame Mazelet is recruiting school safety patrollers. This program is supervised by the Toronto Police Service. 10 minutes per week is required for new patrollers.

- Mr. Sylvester is running Study Hall, which is open every day from 3:15 pm – 4 pm for Grade 7 and 8's. It is located in Room 228.
- Madame Piper is looking for donations: fabric, notions, buttons, ribbons, etc.
- Family Studies is in need of bowls, cutlery etc. donations are graciously welcomed. This is also Madame Piper.
- Football and softball teams are starting next week.
- JEL (John English Leadership) team is starting next week
- There are many more teams coming later in the year!
- The Terry Fox walk is coming up on September 19.

Class Rep Network

We are looking for a few new parents to take on the role of parent rep for their child's class. Please speak to one of the SAC members or the front office.

Curriculum night: The SAC will be selling pizza and baked items, as well as drinks on curriculum night. So, SAC is looking for volunteers for baking items, or selling and serving items on Thursday night. Please see a SAC member or email sacinfo@johnenglish.ca.

Treasurers Report:

Terry Durette (SAC treasurer) went through the balance sheet and explained the various fundraising activities throughout the 2013/14 year. Total raised was approximately \$25,000. Expenditures balancing will not be fully completed until later in the fall, however they are expected to be approximately \$17,000, so there expected to be a surplus. At the October meeting, we will discuss and address options for the surplus.

Healthy Bites

This is a Lunch program for Grades 1 – 8. There are currently 212 students enrolled, which is the maximum (215). The program is looking for volunteers to work 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. shift and 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. shift (Monday to Thursday). Volunteers can do a few shifts a year, or up to 3 – 4 shifts a month. To contact Lisa or Jenn, email healthybites@johnenglish.ca. Also, Grade 7 & 8 's can volunteer their time, there will be announcements for the kids coming up.

Ukulele Program - No report

Fundraising

The fundraising contribution letter will go home shortly, where families who would like to forego any other fundraising throughout the year can make a donation (or can be in addition to, if desired).

Dance-a-thon

There was some negative feedback on the Dance-A-Thon regarding the sale of items that are not environmentally friendly (glow sticks and other plastic items). This was parked for discussion for another time.

QSP (Magazine sales fundraiser) begins October 2nd

There was general discussion about the council's fundraising ideas. The group will meet to further discuss at next month's meeting.

The SAC Organizational Chart was reviewed and some of the open positions were discussed, particularly the school yard enhancement committee, parent safety program, community representative, health and safety program. If you are interested in any position on the council, please contact us at sacinfo@johnenglish.ca.

There was a brief discussion of Grade 8 graduation. More information will be coming up in future meetings.

Meeting adjourned.

Schedule of meetings for the year:

October 8, 2014
November 12, 2014
January 14, 2015
February 11, 2015
April 8, 2015
May 6, 2015