

John English SAC Meeting Agenda Wednesday, November 14, 2014

Principal's report

Staffing changes:

- Madame Piper is on leave and will be replaced by Madame Davies
- Ms. Chow will leave as Ms. Laruccia will return next week

Teachers have been learning how to create websites for their classrooms. They use an external site called Shutterfly which has a calendar of events, photo area and announcements. The parents would have to sign up for an account with Shutterfly and be given access to the class website (which is secure). However, it is a great way for teachers to communicate fully with parents in an interactive way and in real time. Classes that have their own class sites/blogs can be found through links on the JEJMS website, under the teachers link.

Additionally, the school is moving away from printed newsletters. They will be available online. Parents *can* get a paper copy if requested it through the teacher.

Itinerant Strings and Band program is up and running. Mr. Howe explained how the program works. The students are withdrawn from class to attend this music. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they are getting their schoolwork done. (They will miss 10% of class time). If they are struggling with the class work, the homeroom teacher will have a discussion with the parents about whether the student can handle the extra work and stay in the music program. There is a waiting list and a 2 month trial for students in the program. This year, the music program went to a lottery due to being over subscribed. Mr. Howe is looking for ways to expand the exposure of the program to more students. One idea is to reduce the music hours per class or to have children share instruments (by purchasing extra mouthpieces, etc). These types of changes would not take place this year, however. All students do receive a music curriculum (even if they do not play) and is delivered by the classroom teacher or the vocal music teacher (Ms. McCleggan).

School Property: there are issues with local family dogs coming to the yard and running off-leash or in two instances, biting children. The school put up signs that say "No Dogs Allowed" about 5 weeks ago. Some discussion arose around the fact that there is no "off leash" dog park in the area (confirmed by Mary Bella of Mimico Residents Association), and that an area is being sought for this purpose. This may relieve the instances of the school property being used.

A ward Forum entitled "Maximizing school council with maximum parent engagement" – by Pamela Gough is scheduled for November 21.

Mr. Howe motioned to move all SAC meetings to Wednesdays due to scheduling with Parks and Recreational use of the school library.

Ms. San Vicente spoke about social success and academic success initiatives (supported by the Board of Education) that are underway within the teaching faculty. They would like to increase the level of student inquiry (i.e., they want to move to critical thinking and students that are responsible for their own learning). Parents should see some evidence of this initiative soon in their children.

The dates of the school production “Once on this Island” will be May 7 and May 8, 2014.

Teachers’ Report

Remembrance Day ceremony on Monday was a wonderful ceremony with a lot of involvement from children around the school. Some parents attended and commented on how much they enjoyed it.

There were four field trips scheduled over the week during the study of government. The trip was moved from a trip to city council due to recent events (for the safety of the children) to a trip to the city archives building.

The Book Fair was on during the week for the students and in the evening for families.

The Holiday Concert is scheduled for December 12. This concert is focussed on Kindergarten to Grade 5 students. The spring concert focuses on the older grades.

“Friend in Need” is a performance that is shown in an assembly on how to get along, cooperation November 19 in conjunction with Anti Bullying Week.

Mr. Murray and Mrs. Connor are taking their classes to the YPT to see Annie.

Mr. Murray is looking for Halloween costumes for the drama class (Kindergarten). Please contact the school if you have something to donate.

Anti-bullying week is next week.

- Pink Day is in April (shirts are \$10 and will go on sale in the New Year)
- There will be a Grade 6 – 8 cyber safety presentation put on by the Toronto Police
- A survey will be taken to poll students on bullying in the school
- The students will design and paint boards with anti bullying messages

News from the Equity committee: There was a thank you letter received for donation for Quizno lunch event. It was the most money ever raised by a school over \$750.00.

Also underway currently: the Co op games, volleyball, basketball, ukulele and scientists in the school

Board Business

There was a fundraising discussion that took place by the committee. First, Tania took the group through the fundraising plan which is forecasting to raise close to \$20K this calendar year. With the budget announced, the committee made decisions on committing funds to initiatives with current money (in bank) as well as funds expected to be raised.

One parent mentioned that with respect to the budget, that perhaps there should be amounts of money for indoor (technology, sporting equipment, programs) and outdoor areas (landscaping, property improvements, bike racks, etc) earmarked both for short and long term projects. She made a suggestion that there be more long range planning and equal budget across areas of the school (inside and outside, academic and athletic, etc). This comment was accepted with agreement.

There is no athletic budget (perhaps there could be), for a John English banner for tournaments or a tent for cross country running teams, pinnys etc. Gym uniform sales can go towards children who can't afford a gym uniform, but also a bit for the athletic program items above.

Together with a list of wanted/needed items compiled by Mr. Howe on behalf of the faculty, annual programs/expenditures were put forward for budget approval. (the wish list will be given to secretary/chair for future publication) Through motions by Terry Durette, seconded by Heather Smith (parent), and votes by SAC members present, it was decided that the entire list could be covered by this year's budget when the surplus is incorporated into the forecasted budget.

Technology was raised as a possible future SAC gift. Mr. Howe has some school budget set aside for items such as iPads and smartboards. A parent suggested that a long range plan might want to be put together so that the SAC can commit money on a yearly basis.

Healthy Bites

Equipment: a new oven has been purchased through money raised from fees and Healthy Bites grant money. Other items being purchased are new trays, cutlery, etc. The fridge will need to be replaced this year, and there is budget to cover this too.

207 students are registered in the program. Sometime this year Healthy Bites will do a fundraising for the program (it will likely be an event, outside of school fundraising efforts).

Communications

The communications team is looking for a volunteer to work on the committee to help with social media (Facebook page) and e-news, and also to represent the team at SAC meetings. Please contact Mary Bella if you are interested.

Community

A new parent to the school, Janet Connolly, has offered to head up the Community Committee. She is doing work elsewhere with 22 division and started a neighbourhood watch program (11th street).

Donations of books welcome for classes/library. Madame Salama, our librarian asks that the books be relatively current with a publication date after 2005. Please bring them to the school/office.

The date of the next meeting is Wednesday, January 15, 2014.