

École Van Wallegghem School-Parent Council

Meeting Minutes

Date: October 10, 2023

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: École Van Wallegghem School (Library)

PC Executive Members in Attendance: Colleen Peluso, Wil Hedges, Wendy Schultz, Shelley Bertrand-Meadows, Michelle Chay, Anne Meszaros, Jen McPhail, Rochelle Reynolds

Regrets: None

Administration in Attendance: Tori Patzer (Principal) and Carrie Lourenzo (Vice-Principal)

Members at Large in Attendance: Salma S., Demyan H., Wendy S., Hyesun K.

Call to Order: 7:02 p.m.

-A motion was made to adopt this evening's agenda. Moved by Jen, seconded by Wil. All in favour; no one opposed. Carried.

-A motion was made to adopt the minutes from the September 12, 2023, meeting. Moved by Anne, seconded by Michelle. All in favour; no one opposed. Carried.

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A. Administration Report

-Tori and Carrie first took us through a visual walk-through of the highlights from the month.

Safety and Wellbeing – We are so proud of our students in the way they have embraced our culture of safety and care. As we transition to a new school year, teachers and support staff are teaching, modelling, and reinforcing routines. Supporting positive early school experiences is a priority.

School Plan Priority Areas: • Academic Achievement: Numeracy and Literacy • Well-being and Well-becoming: Inclusive Practice and Indigenous Perspectives • Student Engagement: Belonging and Oral French

Staffing Update: Ecole Van Wallegghem School welcomes Mr. Doug Allen to the grade 5/6 team. Doug is known to the VW community as a term teacher and recent substitute teacher. He has a passion for STEM teaching and is excited to reconnect with students, families, and staff.

Terry Fox: Van Wallegghem participated in a Terry Fox walk on Friday, September 15 in support of the Terry Fox Foundation. We did so to raise funds for cancer research and to commemorate Terry Fox and his Marathon of Hope. Our community raised over \$700.00!

National Week for Truth and Reconciliation: Each year, September 30 marks the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The day honours the children who never returned home and the survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities. It is important to acknowledge the tragic and painful history and ongoing impacts of residential schools. Learning the truth and finding ways to participate in reconciliation is important for everyone. Senator Murray Sinclair and the Manitoba Teachers Society call on Manitobans to wear an orange shirt in the spirit of reconciliation. VW honoured residential school survivors throughout the final week of September by learning through literature and representing evidence of learning in creative ways. Friday, September 29th –Orange Shirt Day at Ecole Van Wallegghem School Heart gardens honour residential school survivors and their families. Van Wallegghem School's Heart Garden was set up along Lindenwoods Drive. All students wrote messages of hope. Thank you to student and staff leaders for their time in installing this project for community. On Friday, VW students and staff Walked for Wenjack along our Heart Garden path. Chanie Wenjack was an Anishinaabe boy from Ontario, who was sent to Residential School in Kenora in the 1950s. Gord Downie, from the band The Tragically Hip, brought Chanie's story to life through his album The Secret Path. Students were invited to wear orange and to donate \$1 for the Wenjack Fund. We raised over \$200.00 from the VW community. Our path forward... Each classroom will consider their role in reconciliation and commit to an action (big or small) that shows their commitment to this work. Classroom commitments were shared with the school community on our welcome bulletin board. Representations and evidence of this learning will be gathered over the course of the year and shared at the divisional celebration of learning in May, and on our school website. We are thrilled to be working with mixed media artist Jessie Jannuska this year through an Artists in the Schools grant. Her work with students is anchored in the mentor text, Be a Good Ancestor by Leona and Gabrielle Prince. In the words of Cree author, David A. Robertson, "The world won't change all at once – reconciliation is a long-term process – but each step means something".

Walkathon: We are excited to announce the return of our traditional Walkathon at Ecole Van Wallegghem School where proceeds support and enhance our curricular and extra-curricular programming. The walkathon will occur on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, with a rain date of Monday, October 23, 2023. We will be walking on the path behind our school to the pagoda near Linden Meadows School and back.

Cool 2 be Kind Campaign – Thursday, October 19: VW has been chosen as the Kickoff School for the Winnipeg Police Cool 2 Be Kind Campaign. This comes with funding for a kindness project, led by Mme Baxter and the Inclusive Practices School Plan Team. The assembly will run from 10:30am until 11:00am in the Big Gym for all students and staff.

Class Profiles: In the month of October, we are reviewing our Strong Beginnings information to develop class profiles. Using this information, we determine how to best support student learning needs and develop plans that are responsive to all.

Tri-conferences: Our conference evenings will begin the evening of Thursday, October 26. They will continue the morning of Friday October 27. Our goal during the first conferences is to focus on well-being, work habits and student goals. More information on format and scheduling will come soon. If you have questions during the year, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

Remembrance Day and National Aboriginal Veterans Day Assembly: Our assembly will take place on November 10 at 10:30am in the gym. The highlights of this event will be band performances, and student presentations to highlight commitments to peace.

Sports: The VW cross country season was a great success and is wrapping up this week. Thank you to parent volunteers and staff members who supported supervision outdoors. Intramurals continue at VW and volleyball season is in full swing.

Band Camp: An annual experience is offered to VW grades 7 and 8 band students at Camp Assiniboia. This year's camp is October 16 and 17. Students will gain small group instrument-specific instruction with clinicians and engage in whole-band play.

Colder Weather: As the weather starts getting colder, we remind students to please dress warmly for recesses.

Communication: Our school website will begin to transform each month to highlight our various learning initiatives within the school. Please stay connected to the monthly calendar for sports information and special events. We will send out weekly emails (VW News and Information) with updated information that is not included on the website. Visual communication can be found on our new Instagram feed @ecole_vw_school.

First Term Events:

Friday, October 20 PD Day – No Classes

Wednesday, October 25 Grade 6 Immunization Clinic Thursday

October 26 Tri- conferences (evening) Friday, October 27 Tri-conferences AM – PD Day PM
No Classes

Thursday, November 9 Picture Retakes

Friday, November 10 Remembrance Day Assembly

Friday, November 24 PD Day– No Classes

Thursday, December 14 Winter Concert

Friday, December 22 Last Day of classes before the break

B. Parent Council Initiatives:

1. Chair's Report-Colleen Peluso

- i. Thank you to everyone for your hard work and for being kind as Colleen continues to learn more about her role. Please reach out to her if you need something or have questions at any time.

2. Vice-Chair's Report-Wendy Schultz

- i. Wendy worked on coordinating a Grade 8 Farewell fundraising meeting. It was planned for today. Wendy was unable to attend due to illness but Tori and Andrea Robert (Grade 8 teacher) attended in her place. According to Tori, there was a lot of interest from parents. There will be 3 "Campaign Leads" for different fundraisers. The group received divisional information about fundraising guidelines in PTSD.

3. Lunch Program Report-Shelley Bertrand-Meadows

- i. There was a change in the Lunch Program staff that was not anticipated to occur at the beginning of the school year. After 14 years of service, Kathy McTavish resigned at the end of September. Lindsay Nosworthy, who is currently the School Secretary, has been hired and assumed the Lunch Program Coordinator responsibilities effective October 1, 2023. She has experience as an Adult Lunch Supervisor.
- ii. There are currently 26 registrations that are outstanding regarding fee payment (18 Families), which is a significant drop from last month.
- iii. Shelley is in the final stages of closing the books from last year (just awaiting a final invoice) but was able to provide a reconciled revenue and expense summary of the past six years for review. Based on current operating projections and a desire to keep \$35,000 as a cushion in the program, there is approximately \$32,000 which could be looked at for possible guaranteed short-term investment. Action: Shelley to get last years' books closed off. Action: Wendy and Jen to look at interest rates for possible investment of the \$30-32,000 in a GIC.
- iv. A proposed budget for 2023-24 was presented. The budget would normally have been presented to PC for review in the spring but due to extenuating circumstances, this was unable to occur.

Question: Some families get reductions in registration fees for having multiple children in the school. Do we know the current number of students at the school, and can we use this to set fees?

Answer: This variable is incorporated in partial payments as well as those who cannot afford to pay for the program (or can only pay for part of it). The number of students is always changing with students leaving and moving into the neighbourhood.

Comment from Parent: Questioning why the budget wasn't adjusted to reflect real numbers now.

Answer: It was explained that the budget is an estimate of revenue and expenses and that it is customarily prepared in advance. Any significant changes would be adjusted for in the following year.

Question: Regarding what sort of program equipment did the Lunch Program need? (See budget). Answer: 6 walkie talkies need to be replaced. They are no longer holding a charge (cost is approximately \$400 each).

Question also about the line item for recognition. This is for Adult Lunch Supervisors and Student Lunch Monitors. It was explained that usually, a token recognition occurs twice a year at Christmas and End of School for staff. Also, some money was to be used as a farewell gift for Kathy (to be added to any other contributions up until \$250). It was suggested a motion should be made for this to be approved.

- v. *Motion: Shelley moved to accept the budget as presented. Seconded by Wil. All in favour, no one opposed. Carried.*
- vi. *Motion: Wil moved to put \$250 towards a gift for Kathy McTavish. Seconded by Anne. All in favour, no one opposed. Carried.*
- vii. Further information was presented/discussed regarding last year's deficit budget. History: The program tends to be run conservatively. Funds have historically always stayed in the program and any surplus applied to the following year to keep fees down, and this is how it has always been run. Up until the spring of 2022 when the Pembina Trails School Division (PTSD) indicated it was going to assume responsibility for all lunch programs. At that time, Parent Council voted to move excess funds into another account which was to be restricted so the funds would remain with the Parent Council. PTSD did not end up taking over the program at that time, although this is still a possibility. There are a variety of reasons for surpluses (reduced number of Adult Lunch Supervisors/chronic understaffing, Student Lunch Monitors not being allowed to work during Covid times, school shutdowns, etc.). This is the fifth year in a row that we have not had to raise program fees.

Question: What happened to the Milk Program?

Answer: The program was discontinued during Covid when we were not allowed to distribute milk. It has not been reinstated and the school does not have enough space in their fridges to store it. There was also a lot of waste as the students often didn't drink it. No plan is in place to reinstate it.

Question: What happened to the extra cash from the last two years. What do we have?

Answer: We are currently sitting on a surplus. As previously mentioned, the PC did not want to surrender these funds (that came from VW families) to the school division, but rather wanted it to stay with the school or be used for a capital project that would benefit

all families in the community. The money was moved to a restricted account. It could be re-transferred to the Lunch Program if it was needed for operational expenses. Some was left as a cushion. Last year's surplus was eaten into by \$10,000 as the goal is always to eat into it (though it has not disappeared). Approximately \$21,000 was left over last year. This could either stay in the program or be invested in a short-term deposit. It is recommended that \$35,000 be left in the account. If we go below this amount, the bank fees end up going up quite a lot (we pay very little right now by maintaining this \$35,000). Question: Could we make more money investing part of this \$35,000 versus keeping it in the account? It was suggested that the investment would have a better rate of return outstripping any adverse increase in bank fees. **Action: Shelley/Wendy/Jen to look into this possibility further.**

Question: Can we write an official document/statement of intent for the future to show where we want the surplus Lunch Program money to go?

Answer: Yes. **Action: Demyan H. was tapped to create a draft for next meeting.** FYI: Money is always restricted and controlled by the Parent Council. We have agreed that the surplus Lunch Program money should go toward funding the future play structure, as this is a way to benefit all families who had already paid into the program and who may no longer be involved in the school (it benefits the entire community).

Question: What will happen to the program next year when Shelley is no longer a parent at VW? Answer: We are looking at succession planning. **Action: To be discussed next month.**

4. Social Chair Report-Vacant

- i. **This role is still vacant. Please consider taking it on!**

5. Linden Woods Fall Classic Race-Rochelle Reynolds

- i. The race took place on October 1, 2023. It was a great success with only a few small hiccups. We had local community members who took part in addition to elite runners in the city.
- ii. The race has raised amounts varying from \$2000-\$13,000 on average in the past. In the end, we spent approximately \$6800 and raised \$4000! This was above what we were hoping for in terms of a profit.
- iii. We were in a rebuilding year and originally this was meant to be a farewell event. We focused on creating a solid race sanctioned through the MRA and did not put too much focus into sponsorships or "extras"
- iv. Rochelle would like to thank the entire committee once again and is very proud of everyone's work. A huge thanks also to Tori and Carrie who came out to support

the race, Brian Pennycook (school caretaker) who got up early to open up the school, Dominique Allard (Phys. Ed teacher) who served as the Might Mile Lead, and Leslie Duhamel (Phys. Ed teacher), who communicated information to the staff.

- v. There seems to be interest in now reviving the committee for good. **Action:** Rochelle will meet with the committee to see who is interested in returning next year as we need a functioning committee to make this event happen. Rochelle is willing to return as Race Director.
- vi. **Action:** At the November PC meeting, a vote must be taken in order to determine if the race will take place again in 2024. The running season starts in early January and the committee needs approximately 9 months to plan the event.

5. Treasurer's Report-Jen McPhail

- i. Jen presented five documents: Statement of Changes in Fund Balances 09/01/2022 to 08/31/2023, Multi-period Income Statement, Income Statement 09/01/2022 to 08/31/2023 (comparative 09/01/2021 to 08/31/2022), Balance Sheet as at 08/31/23 (with comparative as at 08/31/2022), and the Fall Classic Summary 2023
- ii. Here are our current bank balances as of August 31,2023

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Pembina Trails	0.00
TD Mutual Funds	0.00
Undeposited Cheque	0.00
TD Chequing	28,272.21
TD GIC 6641-8019072-02 (unrestricted)	17,034.52
TD GIC 6641-8019072-01 (restricted)	66,397.25
Total Current Assets	111,703.98
Total Assets	111,703.98
LIABILITIES	
Current Liabilities	
	0.00

Deferred Revenue	
Total Current Liabilities	0.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES	0.00
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted Operating Funds	30,981.45
Internally Restricted Funds	
LWFC	14,325.28
Play Structure	66,397.25
TOTAL NET ASSETS	111,703.98

6. Education and Communications Chair Report-Michelle Chay

- i. Three educational evenings are still planned (how school boards work in Canada with the ward Trustees, online safety, and IEP planning).
- ii. First up will be the evening by invitation only for students with an Individual Education Plan (or IEP). The Student Support Services team has sent out personal invitations to these families. The presentation will be led by the School Social Worker, School Guidance Counsellor, and Michelle. The video link will be in the school newsletter in order to make the presentation accessible to those who cannot attend.
- iii. There was an idea to have Grade 8 students serve as babysitters for the evening but it was decided this may not be a good idea for students with special needs.
- iv. Idea for Communications: Create a bullet list of jobs available on the PC and approximate number of hours required. Parents can sign up based on what time they can commit. Another idea is to feature a different PC Executive member each month in order to showcase who we are ("Meet the PC"). **Action: Tori to touch base with Michelle regarding these posts.**

7. Site Report Chair Report-Vacant (Anne is helping to fill in this role for the time being)

- i. We are currently waiting for the school division to go through their next steps and approve the lease/site for the play structure. We cannot do anything at the moment.
- ii. It would be nice to create a story or narrative on the "why" behind why we need a new play structure and help the community to understand the history of what happened to the old play structure.
- iii. There was some confusion/discussion about how far ahead we are with the actual design of the structure and company. Anne stated she has not gotten any sketches or information, despite repeatedly asking for the information. Shelley, Wil, and Rochelle remember that the previous Site Chair had gotten quotes and different

design options (and were therefore further along in the process). Action: Wil and Rochelle to look through previous emails/minutes to see if this information can be found. Anne, Colleen and Wil to review what was provided by previous chair and ensure anything missing is requested from previous chair.

8. Fundraising Chair-Anne Meszaros

- i. Subway Fun Lunches will continue again this year! Anne will volunteer for the first lunch on October 25. FYI: The Fun Lunches were never intended to be a fundraiser with all of the money going right back to the school. It is more of a service we provide to families. It did, in the end, provide a profit of a few thousand dollars.

Question: Can we try other lunch options like Munch a lunch or Boston Pizza?

Answer: Pizza has not been reliable and is messy.

- ii. We will not do the Gift Card fundraiser this year as it does not give us a good profit. We will continue with the Glenlea Plant Fundraiser in the spring. Lacoste can do a winter fundraiser. Action: Anne to get information out. It would be nice to support local businesses.
- iii. An idea is to consider collaborating with other schools.
- iv. Anne put a call out for a subcommittee but did not get any responses.
- v. Some questions about the information in the fundraising report that did not get addressed and ought to be discussed at the next meeting. Specifically, members expressed confusion about how the fundraisers were quantified in general, and whether the fundraisers used (Subway and Glenlea in particular) are actually legacy projects that we just keep because of connections or if there are other reasons.

9. Other Business

- i. Meeting Protocol/Order: There was an idea to have PC members submit reports ahead of time and ask for questions at the meetings. Problems with this method: new members will not understand what is happening and could feel left out, it could be hard to vote on a motion if one does not understand what has been going on. Some members feel writing reports is more work and it is a lot to expect of volunteers. Another idea was to try to have the administrators go first rather than the PC Executive. Problems with this: we may feel rushed, the point of PC is for us to be able to discuss our business (while admin report is more of a bonus and not the true purpose of the PC). Agenda: Some new members at large would enjoy seeing the agenda ahead of time in order to determine if they would like to attend. Action: Rochelle to start sending out agenda to the entire community on the Thursday or Friday before the meeting.

Executive Portion Adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

*****NEXT MEETING: NOVEMBER 14, 2023*****