

Kanétskare School Council April 18, 2024 - Meeting Minutes

Members present:

Megan Evans - Chair (Secretary & Treasurer)

Joanne Hall – Principal

Janine Durajlija – Teacher Representative

Cindy Stranak, Jen Castle-Timms, Jen Walsom, Louai Moghrabi, Esme Rambert, Kathy Hollands -
Voting Members

Joanne Hall started off our meeting with the principal's report. The school and the superintendent have set the staff needs for next year. They are anticipating having 400 students next year (enrollment typically fluctuates between 390-410) and full-time teaching staff will increase to 20.7. There will be 16 classrooms total (up from 15 this year); 10 English classrooms and 5 French immersion classrooms (down from 6 this year). The average class size will decrease from 31 to 25. The school will also go up to 1.5 full-time learning resource teachers (up from 1 full-time). Enrollment in French immersion has decreased.

Council voted to use all the direct donation funds raised for new musical instruments. We agreed that next year, we would like to do another direct donation campaign to benefit the learning commons (library). *After the meeting, we received an updated balance of direct donation funds raised and council members were notified via email: \$3,235.

Plans for the grade 8 trip have been finalized and an info letter was sent to parents. The cost per student is \$113. Out of 130 grade 8 students, 115 students have signed up for the trip. The principal reached out to each student who declined to make sure that cost wasn't the reason. Enough donations came in to support 6 students' trip fees as well as subsidize transportation costs for all students going on the trip. Parent volunteers are needed. Please email the principal if you are interested in chaperoning the trip.

Progression meetings are happening later this month to discuss students' transitions to Westdale high school. Teachers are making sure information about student accommodations are being passed to the new school. The same is happening for students transitioning from EK and Strathcona to Kanetskare.

Grade 5 students will be invited to visit Kanetskare in May and those students and their parents are invited to the Kanetskare Open House on May 8th.

EQAO testing for grade 6 students has been scheduled for May 20-31. The Gaust math competition will be held on May 16th.

Megan has assembled a sub-committee to handle the planning of the Kanetskare café on May 8th. They will get to work next week and communicate with Janine to prepare.

A sub-committee to plan the grade 8 graduation party has been formed as well. It was brought up at the meeting that school council used to hand out an award to one student from each grade 8 classroom at the commencement ceremony. Students were chosen by their teachers based on leadership and initiative. The chair of council presented each student with a \$25 gift certificate. Joanne will talk to the grade 8 teachers to see if we want to bring this tradition back.

Finally, we intend to write up a draft fundraising plan for 2024-25 at our final meeting this year so that the council next year has something to discuss and vote on at their first meeting. The fundraising plan has to be filed with the school board in October which doesn't give the council time to prepare and discuss it. We think the top priority for fundraising next year should be the learning commons (library) and possibly tech as well.

Cindy shared a PIC Update from their last meeting where there were 3 presentations by Specialized Services, Roots of Empathy, and Communications.

Specialized Services presented how they support students in the classroom through various programs. The programs can be found on the HWDSB website at Special Education | Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board ([hwdsb.on.ca](https://www.hwdsb.on.ca))

Roots of Empathy is a program for elementary school children that independent research shows increases empathy, reduces aggression and bullying, and increases caring, kindness, and inclusiveness. 28 schools at HWDSB are offering the program this year. It involves a volunteer family with a newborn baby who visits the classroom 9 times during the school year and a Roots of Empathy Instructor who visits 27 times per school year (visits are roughly 30 mins in length).

Communications presented that the translate feature on the website has been fully implemented and that they are currently working on a review of their social media usage including X, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

The next school council meeting will be Thursday, May 23rd from 6:30-7:30pm.