

Kanétskare School Council

Meeting Minutes

October 17, 2024

Members present:

Chair: Jenn Walsom

Vice-Chair: Cindy Stranak

Secretary: Katherine Hollands

Principal: Joanne Hall

Teacher: Janine Durajlija

Regrets:

Treasurer: Carly Felton

Eisham Abdulkarim

Natacha da Silva

Tiffany Herron

Voting Members: Helen Burnett-Nichols, Jennifer Castle-Timms, Jennifer Coon, Megan d'Andrade-Bush, Meaghan Eisenberg, Pam Ekins, Tom Flood, Louai Moghrabi, Esme Rambert, Darina Vasek, Jennifer Wallace

1) Welcome, Land Acknowledgement & Attendance

Jenn Walsom started off our meeting by welcoming everyone and reading the land acknowledgement, which will be read by a rotating list of members going forward. She then briefly introduced herself and members around the table followed suit. Attendance was taken. September minutes were distributed prior to this meeting. Pam Ekin made a motion to approve the minutes, Helen Burnett-Nichols seconded the motion, and the motion was passed. There were two additions to be made to tonight's meeting agenda regarding fundraising: the Book Fair and the Book Drive.

2) Meeting Agenda

Cindy Stranak moved to approve the agenda, Megan d'Andrade-Bush seconded the motion, and tonight's meeting agenda was passed.

- School Council email: kanetskareSC@hwdsb.on.ca

Jenn Walsom updated council that the school council now has an email address as a single point of contact for any parents that might have questions or concerns. The email has been set up and will be fully up and running shortly.

- Meeting Dates for the rest of the school year

School Council meeting dates have been set for the remainder of the school year, as follows:

Nov 28th at 6pm

Jan 16th at 6pm

Feb 20th at 6pm

Mar 27th at 6pm
Apr 24th at 6pm
May 15th at 6pm

- Parent Reaching Out Grant (PRO Grant) – due November 22

Cindy Stranak provided an update on the PRO Grant, which is offered through the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and is an opportunity to apply for \$1,000 of funding from the schoolboard. This grant specifically encourages parent/caregiver involvement in student learning, participation, engagement, and an understanding of the school curriculum. Cindy brought back some ideas for events to encourage engagement among students & their families, including:

- Math Night – bring in a facilitator to either train parents so they are better equipped to assist their children with schoolwork, or host a math workshop after school
- Math Focus Home Support Package – this could include materials such as a laminated copy of the multiplication tables to help with schoolwork at home
- Social Media Awareness – other schools have brought in Paul Davis who runs social media workshops around safety and awareness. This workshop costs \$1,600 so would either require additional fundraising or pairing with another school to share the cost
- Child International Learning Centre – this organization could provide a workshop featuring hands-on explorations of cultural artifacts, crafts, etc.
- PhysEd Clinic – a workshop focused on developing skills around basketball, soccer, or another sport in which students show interest
- Meaghan Eisenberg reported that the Earl Kitchener School Council has worked in the past with the McMaster Children and Youth University (MCYU) around social awareness, as another option for a workshop

- Fundraising

- Book Fair

Jenn Castle-Timms reported back from the Book Fair event, which took place at the Open House earlier in October, and raised \$2,752 in funds, \$742 of which is redeemable in Scholastic funds.

- Book Drive

The goal of the book drive is to help create a novel study area containing multiple copies of popular novels that students can use for novel studies. (Ideally 5-6 copies each of 5 or 6 different novels.) These books could be sourced by reaching out to Kanétskare families for used copies to donate, or by buying second-hand copies. There is also an additional \$160 in funds to be transferred over from last year's Grade 5 fundraiser at Earl Kitchener. This amount can be added to the Scholastic funds to assist in purchasing more novels. Esme Rambert will spearhead this initiative and will follow up with Joanne to get a wish list of books from staff.

- Music sound equipment installation: Poinsettia & Domino's Pizza sales

Esme and Michelle Hau have been in contact, and Esme is waiting for further details on the Music Department's plans for their fundraising efforts.

- Library: Indigo Literacy Grant Application, opens November – due January
Cindy Stranak has been looking at the application for this grant, and Pam Ekins and Casey Rovinelli have offered to help source the information required to complete the application. Some of the demographic information can be provided by the School Health Nurse. If obtained, this grant money could not only help stock the library, but also help to fund the book drive to ensure all classrooms have access to an appropriate number and selection of books for novel studies.
- Direct Donation – rebrand or drop?
Jenn Walsom asked whether Council feels a Direct Donation request letter should be sent home to families this year, since so many of the school activities are fundraising-related. After some discussion, council decided that yes, it is a good idea to continue to send this letter out this year, as some families who may not have the time or inclination to volunteer are still able to contribute to the school community with an online financial donation. Jenn offered to create a draft of the letter, indicating the funds will specifically be spent on the Library and Technology. Meaghan Eisenberg offered to help edit the draft letter.
- 50th School Anniversary celebration

Joanne Hall introduced the topic of the school's 50th anniversary celebration, and the inherent complications around what to celebrate and how to market the event given the required name change that has happened so recently. Perhaps the annual Café fundraising event will be included as part of this overall celebration, which is expected to take place during Education Week in the month of May. Some initial thoughts around the celebration include celebrating the building or address rather than the former name of the school, having an evening or weekend event, perhaps a bbq, perhaps including a popcorn or cotton candy machine. Once a Committee has been created, it can decide on the event's format, timeline, marketing and communication. Joanne also noted that the School Board's Communications department can help with the branding of the event. Esme Rambert offered to chair the School Anniversary Committee with the following council members also sitting on the committee:

Katherine Hollands
Helen Burnett-Nichols
Jenn Castle-Timms
Darina Vasek
Pam Ekins
Megan d'Andrade-Bush

3) Principal's Report

Joanne provided the principal's report. Meet-the-Teacher night was a great success and had a great turnout. As a result of recreational equipment donations that came in that night, the school now has 3 complete bags of equipment for classes to use for DPA.

Joanne also reported that the school's Spirit Wear and Graduation Wear are now available to be purchased online.

Joanne plans to discuss the School Improvement Plan (SIP) at the November Council meeting.

Joanne brought the council's attention to the posters around the library that students had created. Janine Durajlija and Ms Zacharidis created class teaching around Kanétskare's slogan of "be you, be excellent" and linked it to the traditional indigenous 7 Grandfather Teachings in an effort to address and embrace Indigenous learning at the school. Joanne mentioned there may be an opportunity to partner with another school in the nearby Six Nations. More details will follow as this is looked into further.

Joanne spoke about after school homework clubs, specifically targeting Grade 6 math intervention, run by 2 teachers. Joanne has also met with a group of McMaster Students involved in Empowerment Squared, a charitable organization whose goal is to ensure that marginalized and newcomer youth have the opportunity to succeed in school, to investigate the possibility of also starting a homework club with them. Letters will be sent home shortly to Kanétskare families about this opportunity. There is also a possibility that Kanétskare could run this homework club as a Pilot Project within the School Board. Joanne will provide an update on this at the next council meeting.

4) Teacher's Report

Janine Durajlija reported that the year has got off to a great start, and all the teachers and students are very happy to have clear expectations and communication from the principal's office. Joanne outlined some of the upcoming trips happening this year, including a Music trip, a Year-End trip for each grade, a movie trip on December 19th for all grades, and band trips that Ms. Hau will be planning. Details around additional trips have not been confirmed at this time.

5) PRO Grant

This was discussed during the fundraising discussion.

6) Trustee to Visit

The school trustee will be visiting this school year.

7) Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.