



WESTGATE SCHOOL COUNCIL MINUTES

Thursday October 7, 2021

Virtual Teams Meeting, 4:30 p.m.

Present:	Coral Klein, Jeff Upton, Dave McCallum, Laura Bortolin, Carlos Santander-Maturana, Giselle Little, Delfina Trevisan, Melissa Hrabok, Jennifer Koval, Jenny Diaczun, RodiLynn Kinisky, Samantha Vance, Anna Sampson
Regrets:	
Welcome:	Introductions of all members
New Business:	<p><u>Election/Appointments to Council</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHAIR – Delfina Trevisan • VICE-CHAIR – Jennifer Koval • SECRETARY / TREASURER – (TBD) still looking for a volunteer • STAFF REP (TEACHING) – Laura Bortolin • STAFF REPS (NON_TEACHING) – Carlos Santander-Maturana & Giselle Little • STUDENT REP – future SAC President (TBD) • ADMIN REP – Coral Klein • COMMUNITY REP – (TBD) *still looking for volunteer <p><u>School Council Mandate</u></p> <p>School Council is an advisory body that works collaboratively with the school. Meets a minimum of 4x per year.</p> <p>KEY GOALS?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote a positive school environment • provide input and suggestions to enhance students’ educational experiences • share and receive information • address issues and challenges • encourage and improve communication
Correspondence:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
Reports	<p><u>Staff Report (Non-Teaching)</u> – Carlos Santander-Maturana</p> <p>It has been a difficult but rewarding year for all support staff in the school. People are quite pleased with the fact that life is being normalized little by little and that they can come to work and do what they do best: work to move forward our great school community.</p> <p>Custodial Staff. It has been a grueling year for custodians in the school. The workload has increased several points. Custodians were cleaning classrooms on alternate days and now, due to the COVID-19 demands, they are cleaning every day. Even with the added Cafeteria workers working the floor, it’s still tough for them to keep up with all the needs. Custodian staff also reported that they have very little time for doing maintenance because all their time in the school is dedicated, by necessity, to do thorough cleaning every day.</p> <p>Office and Clerical. Once again, the office administration staff report an increase in the workload, mainly due to the introduction of a new software platform to carry out the administrative portion of running a school with all the added complexities under Covid-19. Personnel are devoted to the school system and are putting an extraordinary effort to</p>

ensure that operations run on time and smoothly. The only complaint is that a small number of parents are taking their frustrations out on the front line workers and becoming quite abusive on occasion. This matter for sure, is raising the levels of anxiety and stress of an already difficult situation for everyone involved.

Support Staff Professionals. Everyone is glad to be back in the school and working directly with the vulnerable students that they serve. Working in person in education cannot be beaten. The Special Needs/Multi Needs SSP identify lack of space as one of the main areas of concern for the group. The inability to improve social distance, especially at arrival, departure and during the lunch time was identified as the highest area of concern for them. They also understand that it is almost impossible to, under the present circumstances, get more space to reduce the personal contact among students.

Staff Report (teaching)– Laura Bortolin

Teachers are very happy to be back in the building full days with kids. However, it has been a bumpy start. Tech issues relating to the board's new electronic database system (*PowerSchool) have presented some challenges. Things are getting better now. The new school day Week 1 – Week 2 format has also required some adjusting. The weeks that teachers teach 2 courses has made things like contacting home a challenge. The week gap is also impacting student retention of learning.

Principal's Report-Coral Klein

- Week of August 30th – staff engaged in training on the PD days on topics like anti-racism, mental health and pandemic safety
- September 2nd and 3rd - Grade 9 Open House. Very different this year. Self-guided tours during the day as opposed to a large-scale evening event.
- Great (but busy) start to the school year. Very happy to be back to in-person learning full days but there have been some challenges (ie. “Devious Lick” TIK TOK challenge, bus cancellations).
- Early September– No Grade Assemblies this year. Relied on classroom teachers to take the kids through the STUDENT HANDBOOK. That handbook is accessible online (via EDSBY and/or Westgate's website). **Copy of Handbook will be emailed to members of School Council with the meeting minutes.* No Grade 9 Welcome Luncheon this year either.
- September 16th - Picture Day. Retake Day will be November 5th.
- Fall Sports are in full swing ... ☺ (Boys volleyball, Girls basketball, Football, Golf, Cross-Country Running, Competitive Cheerleading)
- September 29th – School participated in the Terry Fox Run for a Cure. Raised approximately \$3000 for the cause.
- September 30th – National Day or Truth and Reconciliation
- Upcoming October Events? Parent-Teacher Interviews (October 14th). Will (for the most part) occur virtually or via phone again this year. However, if a parent/guardian wishes to meet in person, they are welcome to do so. Progress Reports will be given to kids by Friday of this week.

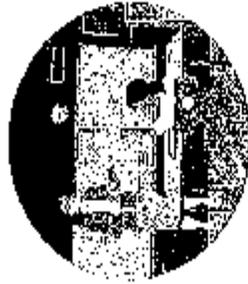
Student Report – N/A

<p>New Business and General Information/ Updates</p>	<p><u>School Profile and New School Structure</u> - Coral Klein</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 133 staff • 1056 students • 68 students are still “fully virtual” and learning from home • 14 classes currently overcap (by just 1 or 2) out of approx. 207 running • school calendar and bell schedule shared. <i>*Copies of both can be found in the STUDENT HANDBOOK that will be sent with the minutes</i> <p><u>Covid Update, Pandemic Protocols, Pilot Project</u> – Coral Klein</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have had 2 positive covid cases since the outset of the school year that impacted 4 senior level cohorts. Health Unit response to positive cases is very different this year. Students who are in the affected cohorts but are fully vaccinated (and asymptomatic) are no longer required to quarantine. They can continue to attend school as per usual. Only those not fully vaccinated must quarantine in these circumstances. • Westgate is one of the schools in the province selected to participated in a Covid Self-Testing Pilot Project. Westgate has been provided with covid tests that are to be distributed to all fully vaccinated students in any classes that experiences a positive covid case. Westgate collects back the specimens and sends them off for analysis. This occurred with Westgate’s second case and we are pleased to say that no new positives emerged from those tests. <p><u>EDSBY and DATA VERIFICATION PROCESS</u> – Giselle Little</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitations to access EDSBY have been emailed to all parents who have email addresses on file. Letters will also go home (to ensure those without email addresses receive the information). All parents are encouraged to join EDSBY as it will enable them to monitor their children’s progress in each of their classes and communicate with teachers. • Having accurate data (ie. address, phone #s, emergency contacts and so on) on our students is critical. Students will soon be provided with copies of what is currently on file for them in order to make any corrections and/or additions. If information requires changing, the form will need to be returned to the main office. <p><u>EQAO – OSSLT</u> – Coral Klein</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test will run again this year. Grade 12s are exempt, but grade 11s and 10s must write it. This year, we have administration “windows” in each semester so students will be writing the test on different days within a prescribed time frame. Westgate will be starting with grade 11s in November and students will write the test electronically with their PM cohort. Administration of the test to grade 10s will occur next semester.
<p>Questions/Issues?</p>	<p>Q: Will there be an ACHIEVEMENT NIGHT this year? As a result of on-going pandemic restrictions, we are still unable to host events that encourage large scale congregations of individuals. Westgate will still recognize the achievement of students from the 20-21 school year in-house with smaller scale celebrations in the kids’ cohorts.</p>

	<p>Q: Is it possible to “ban” cell phones from classrooms? The board has a BYOD (“bring your own device”) policy that permits the use of cell phones in classes for “instructional support.” Cell phones are powerful handheld computers that, if used appropriately, can greatly enhance a student’s learning experience. The challenge for educators is ensuring that phones are being used for the appropriate things.</p>
Adjournment	<p><u>Next meeting?</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8TH 4:30 PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MEETING WILL AGAIN OCCUR VIRTUALLY VIA TEAMS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">All parents on Council will receive an email reminder and meeting link closer to this date.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thank you again for supporting Westgate’s School Council! 😊</p>

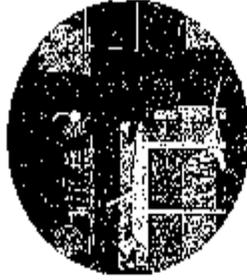


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