

West Prep School Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes: March 5, 2024

Present: Anthony Levy (Principal), Mrs. Lee-Anne Gershater (Teacher's Rep)

2023-2024 SAC Executive Committee:

Co-chairs – Sonia Leith and Lindsay Stubbs

Treasurers – Leanne Botting and Lauren Davis Landau

Communications – Sarah Chris, Zoey Fiksel, Annemieke Wade

Ward Rep – Naomi Kramer

Secretary – Alisha Kurji

Parent Engagement Coordinators – Jill Shuster and Karen Wharton

1. Opening Remarks

Co-chairs kicked off meeting expressing heartfelt gratitude for all the hard work done this year for the school.

2. SAC Business

a. Events/Initiatives Recap

i. Book Fair was a great success!

- a. Credit card transactions alone amounted to around \$3,000\$4,000, with a pending inclusion of cash transactions.
- b. Scholastic offers two options: cash back or scholastic points. Mr. Levy has done the assessment and identified that scholastic points go much further to restock library shelves than cash back.
- c. Mr. Levy restocked library shelves using scholastic points, and also purchased coding book sets for kindergarten classes

2. The book fair was held in the library. Suggested using a grade six classroom to setup future book fairs since it is larger. We cannot use the gymnasium for this purpose, unless the book fair is moved to the beginning of the school year, when the weather is still warm. Having a larger space would help logistical challenges. For example, deliveries could be dropped off directly in the room. The school could potentially use a portable next year, provided the school receives one. School will also consider timing the book fair to overlap the grade six trip.

ii. Danceathon

1. Kids had an amazing time! Event was well run, organized, and had an excellent DJ.
2. Unfortunately, it did not make as much as previous years.
3. The marketing strategy will be adjusted in an effort to raise more money next year. Key takeaways include:

- a. Ensure the children know that the classroom that raises the most money gets a prize. This is canvassing donations, not necessarily personal donations.
 - b. Kick off assembly for the school.
 - c. Provide additional prizes, such as one for class with the best dance performance.
 - 4. Organizing team will write down summary of what went well, and how the event can be improved for next year
 - 5. Consider giving children an envelope to raise donations from the community
 - iii. Wine and Cheese Event + Ulrica Jobe Speaker
 - 1. Speaker was fantastic
 - 2. Excellent turn out, engaging presentation
 - 3. Grant was approved and partially covered this event. SAC approved the \$400 difference between grant funding and cost.
 - iv. Hot Chocolate & Cookie Sales for Grade Six Graduation
 - 1. A big thank you to the Feldman family and TOBEN Food by Design for their generous donations to make this happen!
 - v. Freezie Sales will begin in March
 - vi. Skating Event was cancelled due to weather this year.
 - vii. After 4 Programs:
 - 1. Chess, Roseneath, Kindergarten Soccer, Multisport, Robotics had good enrollments.
 - 2. Trying to bring Four Cats art program to the school
 - 3. Flag football will be coming in the Spring through TFL
- b. Upcoming SAC Events and Initiatives
- i. **June 21, 2024: Grade Six Graduation.** Grade six parents will be invited this year. In previous years parents were not included in this event.
 - ii. **ii. April 3, 2024 at 6:30 pm: Paul Davis** will be speaking about social media. Grade 4-6 will join the afternoon session. There will also be an evening session at 6:30 pm for parents/caregivers.
 - 1. Communications will send out a save the date
 - vii. Professor Pricklethorn will present at the school in April. Date TBD. He is an educator and an arborist and will discuss the importance of trees.
 - viii. April 4 – Lice Check in the morning.
 - iv. Bagels Ordering Program: this is similar to how Pizza Lunch works. School would collect from Hot Lunches. This initiative enhances lunch offerings at the school and helps fundraise for future SAC initiatives.
 - v. Silent Auction
 - 1. The silent auction will be online this year, and kept separate from Fun Fair.
 - 2. There can still be an area at the Fun Fair to auction off other items, such as Principal for a Day.
 - 3. Silent Auction will be held right before Mother’s Day & Father’s Day

4. Volunteers are needed to reach out to local businesses to get donations for the silent auction. SAC has a letter that can be used to bring to local businesses. Outreach has already been divided by street, so efforts are not duplicated.
 5. All donations welcome – even toy donations are welcome!
 6. Need to get people to sign up for the auction site. QR code will be posted, and teachers will send out information in emails. Emails can be forwarded to friends and family.
 7. People will need to pick up items from the school. No deliveries.
 8. Bid parameters need to be set up still.
- ix. Kernal Sales
 1. Could do this once a month, or keep it as a one time event.
 2. Could pair this with freezie sales
 3. For future, Kernal Sales can be held on the last day before March Break or Winter Break, and could be paired with pajama + movie event
 - x. Spring Concert
 1. Bake Sale for Grade Sixes
 - a. Remove noisy items from sale, or put them up for sale after the concert. For example, children would play with the chip bags and plastic bottles, and it was disruptive.
 - xi. Fun Fair
 1. Fun fair will be held on June 13, 2024
 2. There will be 11 rides at a cost of \$20,000. Each ride must be staffed individually, the cost of which is included in the fee. Last year, the school spent \$18,000 plus cancellation fees due to wild fires. Deposit in the amount of 25% to 50% must be paid now to secure rides.
 3. Lora Sloan an individual outside of West Prep asked to have a booth at the Fun Fair for neighbourhood advocacy: Upper Village and Cedarvale
- c. Finance Update
- i. Currently have \$29,000 in the bank
 - ii. Made \$2,700 at Danceathon in sales, with a profit of \$1000. Last year we made \$7900.
 - iii. Pizza Fundraising: Made \$10,000 in profit so far, this year
 - iv. Cashback from Pizza Ordering: Made \$3,400
3. Principal Update
- a. Announcements
 - i. Student council is running announcements. Grade Six students are in charge of announcements now.
 1. As an example, the children played songs for Black History month as part of announcement engagement.
 - b. Parking is still an issue. School urges parents and caregivers to abide by traffic rules, to ensure children are safe.
 - i. Kiss and Ride too expensive and not an option given entrance procedures in yard
 - c. Field Trips
 - i. Skiing trip was successful

1. Date was changed due to weather. Staffing was short as a result since other schools were there. Organization could be improved. Some children never got a lesson due to poor organization and unclear instructions.
- ii. TTC just announced that adults can ride for free if going with Field Trip
- d. Updating Calendar in the upcoming weeks
 - i. Grade Six Graduation – June 21, 2024. Graduation will be open to family of Grade Six grads.
 - ii. Spring Concert – Kindergarten will be in the afternoon – junior and primary will happen on the same night.
 - iii. Fun Fair is
June 13
 - iv. Track and Field
to start in spring
 - v. EQAO – new program uses an algorithm that propagates new questions based on whether previous questions are answered correctly or not. This helps reduce incidences of cheating, since students will have different questions. Dates for Grade 3 and Grade 6 testing TBD
 - vi. Grade Six Trip will take place from March 25 -27 in the Mono Cliffs Outdoor Education Centre, which is owned and operated by TDSB and is subsidized. Next year, the school will aim to go later in the year when the weather is even warmer.
- e. STEM – teachers are using STEM in the classrooms. Ms. Shefsky is doing STEM projects with a lot of primary classes plus one junior classes. Spent about \$7000 for iPads, Chromebook Computers and Building Materials. Kids are thriving and exploring. New research indicates STEM training should be prioritized for future employment opportunities.
- f. Staffing numbers for next year will be coming out in the next few weeks. The school currently has around 530 kids. Mr. Levy will work on the models for next year. It does not make a difference if it is a straight grade or split grade, both offer excellent learning opportunities for the children. Learning has become more project based to accommodate different grades in split classes.
- g. Talk to your current teacher about trying to make accommodations for next year's classes (i.e., if certain kids do not get along)
- h. Last year TDSB offered the school a portable.
- i. Buzzers will be changed to swipe cards if we end up getting a portable.
- i. **Reminder to register for students entering Kindergarten as soon as possible so the school can have more accurate numbers**
- j. Snack program pilot has been successful and well-organized. Snack program will continue for the rest of the year on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Cherry-Ann has been doing an excellent job. Funded by grants.
- k. Student council has been doing an excellent job.
- l. Staff shortages have been challenging. Have not had to cancel music at all thankfully. Unfortunately had to cancel French for the first time this term. This has been an ongoing problem across TDSB.

- m. Mr. Levy acknowledged how wonderful the teachers have been and expressed gratitude.
 - n. Lost and Found has been cleaned up, and racks have been set up.
 - o. Student council has helped select recess bags
 - p. School ordered more fan for classrooms in preparation for warmer weather
 - q. Three Smart Boards have already malfunctioned.
 - i. SAC can fund non-fixtured items in the school. SAC is allowed to fundraise for smart technology upgrades. Estimated cost per classroom is around \$3000-4000.
 - r. Teachers are getting updated laptops.
 - s. Teachers are getting Bluetooth speakers. Fundraising from parent council.
 - t. Working on house leagues for sports
4. Teacher Update
- a. **March 27 + 28, 2024: drumming workshop** for all grade JK-6. Eighty drums will be set up in the gymnasium, and classes will rotate to experience the workshop.
 - b. Parents were very appreciative of coaches, who were very supportive, and got children to learn hockey who had never experienced the sport before.
5. Parent Q&A for Principal/Teacher
- a. Field Trips
 - i. March 6, 2024: Several grade 4-5 classes are going to the ROM & Science Centre. Concern came up that a few classes were not going on field trip. **Mr. Levy is aware and encourages teachers to take field trips.**
 - b. Bathrooms
 - i. Vandalism has been a problem in the bathrooms: clogged toilets, toilet paper mess, water left on. Mr. Levy is aware and working on resolution.
 - c. Water Fountains
 - i. Complaint that water fountains have not been cleaned thoroughly. Mr. Levy will address issue.

The next SAC meeting will be held on May 7, 2024

Contact Us 

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