

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
Tuesday, December 1st, 2020 (Virtual Meeting)**

PRESENT: Dina Bastounis, Martien De Vletter, Annick Giguère, Bruce Kemerer, Pippa Brotherwood Brady, Jayne Hill, Sarah Musgrave, Robert Lavoie, Karen Allen, Robert Green, Robert Christie, Kristen Jane O'Sullivan, Jeffrey Kosow, Laetitia Kachmar, Demetra Droutsas, Christopher Turner, Matthew Shapiro, Blair Lalonde, Bianca Falcone, Fabienne D Gregoire

ABSENT: Rose Wagner, Corinne Langridge

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

On motion duly made (Ms. Karen Allen) and seconded (Mr. Jeffrey Kosow).

2. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF MEETING ON November 3rd, 2020

On motion duly made (Mr. Robert Green) and seconded (Mr. Bruce Kemerer).

3. BUSINESS ARISING

No new business.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Principals Report

Presented by Ms. Demetra Droutsas

- Mid-year formal examinations were cancelled by the EMSB.
- We are presently organizing the assignment of lockers for our students. Since COVID-19 cases are increasing in Montreal, for the time being, students can remain in their boots but must bring running shoes to school on their physical education days. Carpet has been placed in various areas of the school for students to wipe their boots and shoes as they enter the building. We have also begun installing carpet strips in classrooms.
- We received new directives from the MEQ. All high school students will follow on-line classes from home on December 17th and 18th and will continue to follow on-line classes from home during the week of January 4th to January 8th. Students are expected to sign into their Google account at 8:30 a.m. for attendance on these days.
- The Ministry of Education granted schools three additional pedagogical days. The additional days are scheduled for November 19th School Ped Day (already took place), January 15th (Board Ped Day), and February 19th (Board Ped Day).
- Term 1 will end on January 11, 2020 and our term 1 reports will be available on the Mozaik parent portal on January 22nd.
- Pajama day was lots of fun for our students and staff. November 30th and December 1st also launched our Food drive to support local charities such as the Generations

Foundation. CJ Turner is organizing the food drive along with our student council. They are also organizing food baskets for approximately 25 WHS families. I would like to thank CJ and our student council for organizing and supporting this wonderful event.

- Family breakfast has been a cherished tradition at our school. The pandemic was not going to prevent us from organizing the event on December 15th and 16th. Planning for our family breakfast has been taking place with CJ Turner for the last few weeks.
- The Prefects have planned a holiday activity for our students in secondary 1. They presented the activity to our students during period 4 on December 1st. Students will have the chance to decorate a Holiday Sweater on their classroom door.
- We have also scheduled a workshop for our students in secondary 1 and 2 that will take place on December 8th focusing on cyber bullying and staying safe while online.
- I wanted to thank our PPO for generously donating coffee to all our staff members on November 17th. Everyone was truly appreciative of this gesture.
- To support our staff during this difficult time, the administration has ordered polar fleece jackets with the WHS logo and staff indicated on them for all our staff members. They will receive them during the week of December 14th.

4.2 Regional Delegate

Presented by Corinne Langridge

No report presented as Regional Delegate was unable to attend the meeting.

4.3 Teachers Report

(Presented by Mr. Robert Christie)

- Remembrance Day was observed on November 11th and despite some internet lag, all interested teachers had access to the ceremony which was broadcast over the internet.
- Simulation day took place on November 13th and was designed to test out technology and procedures for all teachers and students in the school. All class periods were held remotely.
- Parent interviews were held on November 19th, remotely. The scheduling and the sitting of the interviews, by and large, passed without major problems.
- Even though these events were taking place in a virtual setting that was completely new to everyone involved, there were very few problems. This is largely due to the knowledge and planning by the administration, particularly the vice-principals *Mr. Matthew Shapiro* and *Ms. Laetitia Kachmar*. It should also be mentioned that many teachers have been volunteering their time and expertise with the technology required to make these events happen to help other staff members who are less comfortable.
- The three pedagogical days in November were well-used by teachers, allowing us to catch up time needed to better prepare lessons and give good feedback to our students. The PED days have also allowed for communication between teachers about various aspects of student progress.

4.4 Students Report

(Presented by Ms. Bianca Falcone and Ms. Blaire Lalonde)

- Simulation Day/Beginning of online learning Online learning began Wednesday, November 11th. Simulation day was Friday, November 13th. Students have been stressed due to the same workload being required, but less time allocated to cover the material as the students are online and are not able to do as much work. The consensus is that the students are having difficulty concentrating because of the lack of communication between student and teacher due to the demands of online learning. Unable to replicate the classroom.
- There was a canned food drive organized by the Student Council for the whole school. Since the beginning of this week, the student council has been collecting cans. Competitions between base classes of the school as to who would collect the most canned goods and it ends next week on Friday, December 11th.
- The Prefect students had an event for the grade 7 students (The Ugly Sweater Decorating Event). The project was introduced today, grade 7 students decorated a paper cut-out of a sweater. Sec. 1 Base classes are competing to win, it is judged by the prefect board. This ends on the 9th of December the winners will be announced on the 11th of December.
- The Student Council & Prefects are writing holiday cards to 300-400 seniors who are alone or simply to give a little happiness for this holiday season. The letters were given to an old age care facility and were written in French and English. This was organized by *Mr. CJ Turner*.
- *Ms. Karen Allen* and the social services department set up meetings for all grade 11 students and their parents to assist in CEGEP applications. How to process the application and begin planning for college. The goal is to ensure the students have a plan in place before February and are prepared.

4.5 PPO Report

(Presented by Ms. Martien De Vletter, received via email by Ms. Wagner.)

- The PPO met on November 12th with Ms. Droutsas kindly attending.
- Members discussed maximizing school ventilation to decrease risks of aerosol transmission of COVID-19 in the building environment for students and staff. Ms. Droutsas noted that the school uses the combined mechanical and natural ventilation systems approach. The school has a working ventilation system that undergoes regular maintenance checks throughout the year. In addition, 2 school windows were being opened to allow added air circulation. When the weather gets colder, the top windows will be adjusted so that students are not freezing cold and cannot learn. Parents voiced concern that the rooms were too cold. Jackets can be worn. A fine balance must be kept between keeping the classroom warm and air circulation reducing the risk of air born COVID-19 particles.
- The PPO discussed fundraising for air purifiers in each classroom. Members decided to wait for the EMSB decision on whether they will purchase air purifiers at the Board level before making a further decision with Mrs. Droutsas.
- Secondary 1 parents discussed the lack of movement by students in the classroom between classes. Students can get up and move around between classes before the next class starts and are encouraged to do so. The idea of having some structured exercises over the school intercom was suggested. Mrs. Droutsas agreed and would follow-up.

- PPO members wanted to show their support for our wonderful teachers and staff by providing a coffee morning. Thank you to Susan Finch who organized coffee, and to Mrs. Droutsas for providing guidelines for distribution following pandemic protocols.
- In the interim, the PPO is reviewing their mandate as printed in the Westmount High School Agenda. "They help to organize many annual events at the school. These events may include a series of evenings for parents at which guest speakers address issues of particular concern for parents, the PLUK, teacher appreciation and a fundraising dinner.
- Westmount High School welcomes parent volunteers in the tutorial program, and as guest speakers in the classroom. Parents are also needed to work as coaches for sports teams, as club advisors and as resource people." (WHS Agenda 2020, pg. 12)

5. QUESTION PERIOD

No questions presented.

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Report on Meeting with Top Marks

Presented by Ms. Demetra Droutsas

- Annual meeting update meeting discussing what items are popular and which ones were not preferred by parents. Happy to announce that we will not be removing anything from the uniform list.
- There was some debate last year regarding the Skirt VS Skort and we are surprised to see that more Skorts were sold VS Skirts however that could be contributed to the new Grade 7 students. Both items will continue to be made available as part of the uniform.
- Top Marks is now preparing for the next years order.
- The sweatpants and hoodies have been selling out beyond the stores' expectation.
- Top Marks will be offering a new pant and we will inform the parents if we select the pants.
- Top Marks will be developing an app to help parents measure the sizes adequately and it will be available in the coming months.

6.2 Parent Teacher Interviews Term 1 (Pedagogical Day)

Presented by Ms. Demetra Droutsas

- The original date PED day was scheduled for February 26, 2020 however will be rescheduled to the beginning of February due to the Ministry changing the terms from 3 in a school year to 2. Parents will be informed as soon as the date is confirmed.

6.3 Letter to the Ministry of Education

Presented by Ms. Martien De Vletter

- A draft copy of the letter to the Ministry of Education prepared by *Ms. Martien De Vletter* and was emailed to Governing Board members for their perusal and input. *Ms. Dina Bastounis* will assist *Ms. Martien De Vletter* in preparing said letter with the collaboration of *Mr. Robert Christie* and *Mr. Robert Green*. The final version will be presented at our next GB meeting.

7. ADJOURNMENT AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

On duly motion by (Ms. Karen Allen) and seconded by (Ms. Annick Giguère)

- Adjourned at 7:02 PM
- Next Meeting scheduled on Tuesday, February 2nd at 6:00 PM. OR Tuesday, February 9th, 2020 as PLAN B.
- Details will be sent via email closer to the proposed dates.

Meeting minutes prepared by *Ms. Dina Bastounis*

Please contact Dina by email for spelling or content errors dbastounis@gmail.com