

Willingdon Governing Board

Meeting Minutes

September 28, 2021

18h30 via Zoom

Present: Carmen Nicolas, Michael Creamer, Maya Doughan, Laurice Morcos, Nick Batzios, Kathleen Usher, Monique Imbeau, Lara Belinsky, Cornelia Mandoiu, Aurora Flewwelling-Skup, Lucas Reindler, Laura Primeau, Matthew Follett, Tracy Lyall, Eric Lamoureux, Karen Negrete (Home and School), Margo Stewart (H&S), Virginie Chambost (PAC)

Guests: Kristin McNeill

Regrets: Joseph Lalla

1. Principal's Remarks/Welcome/Appointment of Secretary
Carmen welcomed the group. Dr Kat did an excellent, student-generated Land Acknowledgement. Eric volunteered to take minutes.
2. Approval of Agenda
Eric moved and Lara seconded the approval of the agenda as presented. Unanimous.
3. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting.
The minutes of June 10, 2021 were approved with the following amendments: Monique Imbeau was present. Also, for the point on the Update to the Bike Proposal, it was suggested to add "Therefore GB did not write a letter for that group." Moved by Aurora, seconded by Kathleen. Unanimous.
4. Elections
 - a. Chair. The following were nominated for the position of Chair: Aurora, Tracy, Laura, and Lucas. All declined except Aurora. She was elected unanimously.
 - b. Vice-Chair. Given changes to EMSB rules, this position has been abolished.
 - c. Treasurer. Laura was acclaimed as treasurer.
 - d. Secretary. Eric was acclaimed as secretary.
5. Business Arising
 - a. COVID response update. Carmen explained that the school's task force met before school began. It decided to keep the existing bubbles, with the yard and entrances divided according to cycles. Now within the class bubble, students can work together.

The school has had 5 cases of COVID to date, 3 in the same room and 1 was a sibling of one of the 3, leading to the closure of a class. Students and classes are told to isolate for ten days. Public Health guidelines are constantly changing, making it hard to tell parents what to do. We are trying to be more strict on sanitary measures. There is a feeling that Public Health needs to move more quickly to give directives, especially given the delta variant. The Task Force will meet again this week to review measures and responses.

Kindergarten classes are told to shut down with only one case, because they do not wear masks.

Parents are told to get tested as well, on Day 3 and Day 8.

We might revisit and reuse the FAQ sheet GB created last year for COVID, or even remove it if it is no longer relevant.

6. New Business

a. Internal Rules for GB meetings

The existing document was circulated. A typo was noted in that “tabbed” should read “tabled”. Discussion was held about including a clause about the conduct of the GB e-mail address, but nothing was changed. It was agreed that at a future meeting, GB would discuss the creation of a communications manager. Approval of the amended rules was moved by Kathleen and seconded by Nick. Approved unanimously with one abstention.

b. Meeting Schedule:

Carmen shared the dates for the GB meetings for the year: Sept.28, Oct.26, Nov.30, January 25, March 22, May 3 and June 7

c. Meeting format: virtual vs in person

Carmen explained that Public Health guidelines now allow for in-person meetings. Several members expressed that their other meetings were all being held virtually and that they were uncomfortable meeting in-person. Eric moved that GB continue to meet virtually until the public health situation improves. Tracy seconded. Unanimous with one abstention.

We need to ensure that the public can easily access the link to such meetings, to ensure transparency. This could be sent via the GB e-mail address. This will be further discussed at a later meeting.

d. Field Trips 2021-2022 Approval

Carmen explained that the complete list had not been finalized. Lara presented one trip, a Grade Three trip to Arbraska on October 18. Eric moved and Tracy seconded the approval of this trip. Unanimous.

7. Question Period

No questions

8. Reports

a. Principal

Carmen explained that this is her last year as Willingdon principal and she is working to ensure a smooth transition.

The school is currently at 589 students, with 4 kindergarten classes, down from 6 last year. The school is still healthy at this level, with 2 campuses required. Most classrooms are being used. Attestation is September 30. We still need to find a sufficient number of French teachers, with 2 lacking. We are working hard to solve this problem.

Now administrators, and possibly secretaries, must also administer rapid COVID tests, but only to children who have symptoms at school, with parental consent. Consent letters will be sent home soon. This increases the paperwork for the administrators enormously, not to mention the fear of mishandling the tests and causing undue stress. Also, regardless of the results, parents will still be told to get a proper COVID test for their children and they must still pick up sick children, even with negative tests.

Given that it was 8:15 at this point, a motion was required to continue the meeting. Eric moved that the meeting continue until completion Kathleen seconded. Unanimous with one abstention.

Parent-teacher meetings and Open House will be virtual this year.

The RESPECT campaign has begun well. All are focussed on it and it has attracted much positive attention to the school.

b. Vice-Principal (Junior Campus)

Michael is adjusting to the new school.

c. Vice Principal (Senior Campus)

Maya explained that the library has re-opened. Tutors have started as well. Twenty new laptops were bought.

d. Home and School

Karen explained some upcoming events: Photo Days October 19-20; Halloween coming; Book Fair for students only without parents; pizza lunch and froyo returning; Mini-Bistro lunches too. Fundraising will be minimized this year due to COVID circumstances.

e. Teachers/MTA

Kathleen explained that the union has voted: the intersectoral agreement has passed by 89%.

The union was approached to ask if teachers would volunteer to help with COVID testing in schools and it refused.

Kathleen's Science classes are working well, including work in the YMCA field. Parent volunteers have been helping. Green Committee is going well, dealing with composting by mid-October.

Monique explained that back-to-school went well. K teachers helped their alumni move up to Grade One. Thanks to H&S for playdough given for the K welcome. A tutor will give time to each K class, as will a resource teacher for students needing extra help.

Nick explained that he has started Grade 4 and Grade 5 choirs, as well as a Grade 6 Music Club.

Laurice explained that Grade 5 likes the Senior Campus.

Lara is happy to back as a Gym teacher. The RESPECT campaign has focussed on indigenous peoples so far. A new fundraiser has a goal of \$10 000 for the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal, expected to wrap up by Hallowe'en.

f. EDP

Nothing to report

g. PAC

Virginie has reached out to people to see what can be done. She also wishes to know how it has worked in the past.

h. EMSB Parents' Committee Representative

Tracy had nothing to report.

i. School Commissioner

Nothing to report

9. Varia

Nothing

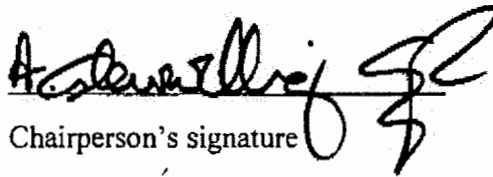
10. Adjournment

Adjournment occurred at 8:38

Respectfully submitted by Eric Lamoureux



Principal's signature



Chairperson's signature