

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

19 JANUARY 2021 / VIRTUAL

ATTENDEES

Caitlin McIlveen
Tanya Thomas
Crissy Hallock
Marianna Connors
Lana Parris
Ashley Maltais
Sherwyn Solomon
Sun Semerjan
Victoria Poulsen
Margaret Crosier
Bonny Butt-Stone
Jennifer Leung
Carolyn Madore
Alex Cundy

AGENDA

1. Introductions by Council Chair, Co-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary were made for new attendees. Overview of Council goals were presented.
2. December's money motions were summarized. Please see the Appendix at the end of the meeting minutes. Of note was that the families who received the gift cards in lieu of hampers this Christmas season were very appreciative and overjoyed to have received them. Council participants agreed that gift cards are hugely appreciated over food baskets and that putting aside a sum of money to carry over for more years of this initiative is a great idea.
3. A discussion was had on parents' experience with their children and Online Learning. The following comments were made:
 - Managing breaks has been difficult for parents, especially with multiple children and breaks that aren't at the same time. It is also difficult while managing with parents' work schedules. However, the online

experience is overall better this year than last school year, as there is teacher directed learning, and teachers had time to prepare and more directives from the School Board.

- Google Classroom is a satisfactory platform but some parents are finding it hard to navigate. For instance, it is hard to track assignments and know what assignments are due. Furthermore, parents would like more communication from teachers generally outlining more clearly how things are going, lists of what is due, what the priorities are, and some coaching on how to navigate the platform and establish deadlines for families. Additionally, some work needs to be done inside the platform, while other assignments are easier done when printed off.
- A few tips were shared:

If work is saved for the week under the classwork tab, users can then click on view your work and can see what has been turned in. Also, the platform is a lot easier to navigate if items are due, organized by date vs. just classroom activities (which is work that is not due, so parents don't have to focus on these items). In addition the "View All" link is helpful to know what is due vs. what has been turned in.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Sherwyn advised that Google Classroom is the platform mandated by the board and that it manages students' privacy well compared to others out there. A benefit is that personal info is not being shared. A challenge is that Google Classroom is being used by elementary students and all the way to and including secondary students. Some of the latter find it too elementary, and the elementary students find the language and implementation a bit too difficult.

One idea is to have a Parent Orientation / Parent Workshop put on by teachers or Council. Sherwyn will reach out to the central department to see what can be offered. Another idea is to have kids working with each other, such as in Google Hangouts / Groups to teach each other on various aspects of the technology they are using.

Evaluation - from a parent's perspective, it is hard understanding how students will be evaluated this year. Parents are requesting guidance.

Sherwyn advised that Report Cards for Term 1 will be available around mid - February online. Furthermore, he explained a teacher's perspective of assessment and evaluation. In particular, "assessment" for teachers is for practice (ie: there is no score kept, the work / samples are used to give feedback to the student). That said, it is still necessary for children to be part of these assessment activities so they can improve their learning. "Evaluation" is seen as taking the most consistent level of performance of a student. Teachers need a snapshot at some point, so that is evaluation. They use products,

tests, assignments, quizzes, conversations, they ask probing questions, or use observations (ie. rubrics or checklists while watching a child do a task).

If you take the first Report that came out in November, it was primarily focussed on assessing students. By the February report card period, there will be more evaluation pieces as there has been more time for students to learn and therefore look for the most consistent and most recent evaluation. For some students, they may not get a concept by January, but they may get it by June. A key thing to remember is that students learn at different rates and that evaluation is just a snapshot in time. Students at the elementary level are marked on what they do produce / work that is completed which provides evidence of learning. They are not, however, penalized for what they did not do / submit.

One change parents will see is that with the new math curriculum, math is rolled all in vs. before teachers reported on all the separate math strands. Also, if parents see an "I" designation on their report card, it means insufficient evidence to make an evaluation (ie. if someone breaks their leg, and cannot do gym class for instance, or in the case of the pandemic - some curriculum cannot be done online and therefore teachers lack the tools or technology to measure the learning.)

Sherwyn added that he is happy to do a report card workshop if parents are ever interested.

Support for Learners / Chromebooks

There is funding in the amount of \$200-\$250 for families via the Support for Learners program. Caitlin sent this information out on a few occasions, and she has heard from families that they are receiving their funds. Le Phare is encouraging families to take advantage of it, as it is easy to access.

Many families are seeking to put this money towards Chromebooks for their children, and have questions as to the best place to buy these. Some options include Bestbuy or Amazon. Parents are advised that these devices have no hard drive, as everything goes on the Cloud. Everything that is web enabled should be accessible on a Chromebook. More expensive Chromebooks will have better hardware or a touch screen. When they break, it is more costly to replace so it is more economical to discard and get a new one at this point - they are not as robust as laptops. The recommendation is that a high end Chromebook is not needed for the purposes of online learning. In contrast, Amazon tablets are not a good option as they are not user friendly, although inexpensive comparatively.

Construction at Le Phare is happening right now. The school is open (not to the public), and work is being done to meet various technological needs. The custodial staff and Sherwyn are at the school. The custodial staff is doing lots of maintenance right now, including making sure the snow hill is safe for

when students return. Lindy is continuing to manage school purchases. There have been no updates as to when students and staff will be back to school. Sherwyn finds out this information at the same time as the media releases it.

A shout out was made to all staff working with special needs students, given the constraints with online learning.

NEW BUSINESS

Fundraising

LePhare is receiving \$500 from the OCDSB for Parent Engagement, so staff and Council can determine what we put that toward. The PRO Grant has been cancelled - it was originally given to school boards however the parent involvement committee has decided to deliver it to only certain schools. As such, Council is not sure at this time if Le Phare will get PRO Grant money this year.

Financial Report:

Council raised \$240 in toilet paper sales. The goal is to raise approximately \$1500. Cases are \$40 each. We are down to about \$11 000 in funds as of January 2021, however this is an approximate amount as some statements are in transit. We received all fundraising funds for last year, including Mable's Labels, Lunchbox orders (about \$1000), Booster Juice, toilet paper, Fundscrip, and Pita Pit (\$77).

Some additional funds will be coming from the Auctria website via Stripe that processes the credit card payments. We are at \$940 - our goal was \$1000, and we are hoping to raise more.

We are seeking additional fundraising ideas to supplement the lost funds we would normally generate from school lunches etc., that would be simple and online. One suggestion was to team up with local businesses to do a virtual pizza party whereby parents could get their pizza and Council organizes a virtual party, perhaps on a monthly basis. The Le Phare community would then be supporting local and perhaps the school could get a percentage of the money from the purchased pizzas. We could reach out to our regular Pizza Pizza supplier or others.

Supporting and Engaging families at Le Phare

Jennifer Leung engaged Council on a discussion of supporting families at Le Phare. The promotion by Council and Le Phare to encourage families to access the provincial funding goes a long way in helping families. A discussion was had about families whose first language is neither English or French, and/or if they are newcomers to Canada. These factors can be barriers in accessing essential programs.

One example provided was that families may not know about breakfast club, although the school administration advised that they do reach out to families in need. Sometimes the administration will engage their Multicultural Liaison

Officer (MLO) to help with translation, or use the email translator service to also assist with ensuring all families can access the information being sent out. The MLO speaks Arabic and is shared between schools. For other languages, the school can reach out to the school board for assistance.

Council discussed other ways to support new families / families who may be struggling, including personal invitations to join Council, peer pair ups whereby a parent at Le Phare could pair up with another family to ensure they are getting the information communicated by the school and know how to follow up on it. Teachers could also identify students and link them up with other parents which can be less intimidating to navigate school issues, new systems etc.

Council also discussed doing more hampers to support families in need who are badly affected by Covid. It was agreed that this would be helpful as there are several families who could benefit and some are currently accessing the Food Bank at this time.

There have been several families new to Le Phare and Canada over the last two years. While some may no longer be considered “new”, they may still need help navigating various systems as they lack a network. We discussed factoring in the Carson Grove school community as we reach out with support.

To support these initiatives, Council still has funds in our Community Fund. While Council still has other financial commitments, it will consider saving for certain goals such as this need.

ACTION ITEMS

1. How to support new / struggling families at Le Phare (ie. ensuring they receive the messages coming from Le Phare and know how to act on them, that they have a network to navigate various systems, and how Council can also provide some material support for those in need.
2. Communicating more about school work and assessment vs. evaluation expectations, and how to navigate the Google Classroom platform.

NEXT MONTH'S MEETING

February 16, 2021

Annex:

e-motion tracker -- November/December 2020

Motion #1 - hampers gift cards; Option 1 \$500 or Option 2 \$750.

PASSED \$750 via email.

Yays

- 1) Bonnie
- 2) Marianna
- 3) Tanya
- 4) Farhan
- 5) Ashley
- 6) Caroline
- 7) Crissy
- 8) Lana

Nays

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Option 1 \$500 (Le Phare)

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Option 2 \$750 (with \$250 to Carson)

- 1) Bonnie
- 2) Marianna
- 3) Farhan
- 4) Ashley
- 5) Caroline
- 6) Crissy
- 7) Lana

Motion #2 - Snowshoes max \$6,500

PASSED max \$6,500 via email

Yays

- 1) Bonnie
- 2) Marianna
- 3) Farhan
- 4) Tanya
- 5) Ashley
- 6) Caroline

7) Crissy

Nays

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Motion #3 - Auctria launch and fees max \$540

PASSED max \$540 via email

Yays

- 1) Crissy
- 2) Lana
- 3) Marianna
- 4) Caroline
- 5) Bonny
- 6) Ashley
- 7) Tanya

Nays

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Motion \$250 Decathlon gift cards: \$150 for Le Phare, \$100 for Carson (save \$30 for later)

PASSED

Yays

- 1) Crissy

- 2) Lana
- 3) Marianna
- 4) Caroline
- 5) Bonny
- 6) Ashley

7) Tanya

Nays

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