

Westmount School Council Meeting – April 2021

Date: April 14, 2021

Location: Video Conference

Time: 7:00 pm

Chair: Baljit Singh

Council

Vice-Chair: Roti Akinsanmi

Treasurer: Navdeep Kailey

Secretary: Ameet Kooner

Communications Director: Kathy Good

Fundraising Director: Kim Anthony

Parent Engagement Director: Ashley Wilford-Matthews

Special Events Director: Thomas Chan

Director-at-Large: Kelly Poon

Director-at-Large: Dawn Courtman

Administration

Superintendent: Joe Frank

Principal Elementary Campus: Hal Curties

Principal Mid-High Campus: Graeme Finlay

Student Council representative: Parthiv M.

Other

Board Liaison & Community Liaison: Peter Khu

Note: Video recording of this meeting is also available online

1. Call to order and approval of the Agenda

Baljit Singh called the meeting to order

- Adjustment to Agenda – none.

Motion to approve agenda: 1st Ameet Kooner, 2nd Kathy Good, carried.

2. Chair's Remarks – Baljit Singh

Two topics for discussion with Administration today. "Latest" breaking news.

1. New Curriculum in Alberta – Pilot

2. Calgary schools' grade 7-12 moving to online Monday April 19, 2021.

School council executives commit to continue supporting the learning of our children and supporting administration. We commit to our collaborative and partnership approach yielding positive results. Secondly, the school council executives continue to explore the topic of diversity and inclusion. Focusing on ways to work with parents and administration to remove any barriers.

Next school council meeting on May 12, 2021 will be the Annual General Meeting with an election for school council executive positions.

Clarification – positions available for election:

1. Communications
2. Parent Engagement
3. Special Events
4. Secretary
5. 2 x Director At Large

3. Approval of minutes from March 10, 2021 School Council minutes

Motion to approve minutes: 1st Dawn Courtman, 2nd Shayle, all in favor, none opposed, carried.

4. Student Council - President: Parthiv M. absent

Mixed feelings about moving to online schooling. Some have more of an advantage than others working from home. AP exams may be impacted.

Held a big E-Sports event. Very successful.

- 19 teams, 100 players, included alumni and 7 teachers. 82 games played. During spring break. Thank you to parents for their permission forms to attend this event. All proceeds will go to Canadian Mental Health Association – estimated at \$300.

Sticker and Water bottle design competition wrapped up.

- 3 sticker designs and 1 water bottle design finalized. Over 400 voters online from Mid-High.

One more major event by end of the year.

Elections to be announced at the beginning in May.

5. Superintendent's update – Joe Frank

1. New provincial budget allocation – no change. Held to the same funding as previous year. No indication for additional funding in the fall. Stable budget. Good news for now.
2. Curriculum pilot – new draft curriculum reviewed and as a school decided not to be part of the pilot process. *See email by Joe Frank April 14th, 2021.* Concerned about timing and pressure already on existing resources as well as content of the new curriculum. Administration will provide feedback. Encourage parents and staff to respond to initial survey by Alberta Education.
3. Covid update – Westmount does not fall under CBE, although we are both publicly funded. Joe will talk to Alberta Education Minister's office to determine "base line" covid cases for requirements to move to online learning. At this time, CBE has made the decision to move grades 7-12 to online learning, not all school boards must follow. We await direction from AHS.

Note – a quick survey was conducted with attendees of this council meeting for information only.

Question: what will happen students that have diploma exams if we go to online learning? (G.Finlay) spring writing of diplomas are underway this month. School admin would reach out to impacted families directly to coordinate writing of June diplomas. There are so few writing that they would likely be ok to come into the school and write the exams as scheduled.

Question: What percentage of our students are currently quarantining?
(G.Finlay) last quarantine was about 3 classes/approx. 80 students so estimated 10%

Question: Has there been a grade or range of grades that have to quarantine repeatedly?
(G.Finlay) has been within various grades but predominantly in our High School age students.

Question: Is Westmount contemplating the daily rapid testing anytime in the school year?
(J.Frank) AHS would determine if Westmount would be eligible.

Question: Can we confirm how many cases we have had at the Mid-High? Is it 12?
(G.Finlay) as a jurisdiction we have had 12 cases. Majority at the mid-high. 2 cases at the elementary.

Question: What if I decide to keep my kid at home due to the increasing COVID cases, can I contact the teachers for work to do from home?
Elementary (H.Curties) - This would be difficult as in-school learning is more active learning and not so much of a paper trail. Given the circumstances, teachers will continue to support where they can. It may not be exactly what is happening in the classroom.
Mid-High (G.Finlay) – We are not really set up for individual online learning. Work is available through PowerLearn only. Assessments would be challenging. Follow along would be ok but limited access to teacher for learning.

Question: Have any of the COVID cases in our school been the variant?
(G.Finlay) We have no stats on this information.

Question: If the school reviews the curriculum, will they share their analysis with parents or just the government?
(J.Frank) We will know more by next meeting. Overall summary for K-12 may be shared. It is a huge undertaking. We hope to share our concerns and constructive ideas with parents.

Question: Will there be an online option to choose for next year?
(J.Frank) This will depend on the Provincial Government and Alberta Education. Right now it's hard to speculate.

Question: Will there be staffing issues if we continue to attend school in person? Including Mental Health for the staff.
(H.Curties) Our teachers are tired, but in a positive place. it has been exhausting but school is a good place, they are feeling positive about the experience.
(G.Finlay) Similar situation. Moving online is not less stress just shifts it, not alleviate it. Substitution teachers has been managed well.

Question: Can we get an update on an action plan regarding barriers created by a specific Math teacher for some high school students.
(J.Frank) This question should be addressed directly with Greame Finlay in a different forum.

6. Reports from Council

a. Parent Engagement Report – Ashley Wilford-Matthews

- Coffee talk (to be recorded)
 - Mid-high April 23rd at 10am; Elementary campus on Friday April 29th at 9:15am
 - Discussions and engagement with Principals.

b. Treasurer's Report – Navdeep Kailey

- March monthly reconciliations complete.
 - Balance approximately \$48,000
 - YTD – update to be provided next month
 - PayPal donations for this quarter: \$2,828. YTD Donation: \$22,500

c. Fundraising Report – Kim Anthony

- Planning
 - Stampeder parking – waiting to see what happens with the football season – will there be fans in the stands for us to park their cars?!
 - Bottle drive will be June 3, 2021 at both campuses. In the meantime, you can contact Skip-the-depot directly if you wish to donate your recyclables to Westmount.
 - WestJet raffle underway. Thank you again Roti for working with WestJet to arrange for the voucher. First time ever online with Raffle box. Click on link and sign up. Raffle box will send out the link for you to buy and share with others to buy. Closes May 25th. Draw will take place at Westmount 25th Anniversary virtual celebration on May 27th. Hoping to raise \$13-14K. Please share your feedback.

Thank you to Parent Fundraising Society for the raffle and all their help.

Thank you to everyone for donating, volunteering, and sharing your ideas. If you have any ideas, please email schoolcouncil@westmountcharter.com

7. Principals' Reports: – Mr. Hal Curties and Mr. Graeme Finley

- [EC Principal's Report](#)
- [Mid-High Principal's Report](#)

8. Additional Questions

Question: Will Grade 1 students be able to their “cap and gown” pictures as they missed them last year at the end of Kindergarten.

(H.Curties) will make a note and see

Question: Do you have a Grad update?

(G.Finlay) Will be virtual, similar to last year. Planning underway.

Question: How can we as parents continue to support schoolteachers and do you need any supplies?

Elementary (H.Curties) - Constant and consistent thank yous. we are good for supplies. Love to hear thank yous and encouragement for our teachers.

Mid-High (G.Finlay) – same. Physical thank you cards go a long way.

Question: are we allowed to provide baked goods to say thank you to staff?

(H.Curties/G.Finlay) No concerns with parents providing baked goods. Admin will manage how to serve to all staff. They will set up so everyone can handle individually. Please list ingredients if you do bring in baked goods.

9. Response to online Survey

56 responses

- 11 people say no grades should go online; 15 say all grades should go online
- breakdown: 7 elementary should go online; 22 mid-high campus should go online; 33 high school campus should go online.

Question: Will we be conducting another survey for those parents that were not in attendance tonight?

(J.Frank) no plans to do so at this time. Moving online will be at the discretion of Alberta Education.

A special thank you to Derek Teterenko for hosting the zoom meetings – without Derek, all these online school council meetings would not be so smooth!

10. Meeting adjourned

DRAFT