

# Westmount School Council Meeting - April 2023

**Date:** April 19, 2023

**Location:** Video Conference

**Time:** 7:00 PM

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Chair: Roti Akinsanmi

## **Council**

Vice-Chair: Kim Anthony

Treasurer: Navdeep Kailey (absent)

Secretary: Thomas Chan

Communications Director: Kathy Good

Fundraising Director: Laura Teterenko (absent)

Parent Engagement Director: Ashley Wilford-Matthews

Special Events Director: Ameet Kooner

Director-at-Large: Terri May (absent)

Director-at-Large: Melissa Wolsey

## **Administration**

Superintendent: N/A

Principal Elementary Campus: Hal Curties

Principal Mid-High Campus: Graeme Finlay

Student Council Representative: Nathan Chung (President Student Council)

Note: Video recording of this meeting is also available online ([link](#))

### **1. Opening Remarks, Approval of the Agenda**

Land Acknowledgement (Ashley) - Westmount is situated on the traditional territories of the people of Treaty Seven and the city of Calgary is also home to the Metis Nation of Alberta Region Three. Since we all live, work, and play on this land, we're all tied to the land and we're all treaty people. That means we must all contend with the history of our treaty as part of our land acknowledgement. I'd like to invite everyone here to take a moment, and in your mind, commit to something that you might do to participate in Truth and Reconciliation. One way of doing that is to continue our journey of learning. As a start, I would love to share a recent local Calgary group podcast that I listened to, that delves into what it really means to live on Treaty Seven territories ([link](#)).

Kim Anthony motioned to approve the agenda, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley. Agenda approved.

### **2. Approval of minutes from February 8<sup>th</sup> and March 8<sup>th</sup>**

Thomas Chan motion to approve February and March minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> Kathy Good second. Minutes approved.

### **3. Student Council Report - Nathan Chung**

- An Easter egg hunt will be held the last week of April, that will include a scavenger hunt with riddles and chocolate eggs as prizes.

- May, events are still being discussed, but nothing has been finalized yet.
- Student council elections will be held later in May, but the dates are still being decided.

**Comment (Ameet): Special Events Director, requested that June 9<sup>th</sup> be noted for the year-end celebration and expressed that the school council and student council can work together again this year to put the event together.**

#### 4. Principals' Report

[EC Principal's Report](#)

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

##### a. Elementary Campus Update - Hal Curties

- **Happy Eid for our Muslim families and Sikh Heritage Month** - The Sikh community has been in Canada since the early 1900s. And the Calgary is the now the third most diverse city in Canada.
- **Elementary Campus** - The theme of this month is trustworthiness.
- **Coffee Talk** - Had a wonderful coffee talk last Friday, where topics such as Grade 4/5 transition, school supply lists, and regrouping for math and language arts, were discussed. The next coffee talk is on May 12<sup>th</sup> and will be held in the staff room of the Elementary Campus.
- **Professional Development** - Had a great session with the Center for Sexuality. Spent the morning talking about sexual health for Kindergarten to Grade 4 students. Looking to see if the presenters can do a parent session. Had a non-instructional day on Monday, where the morning was spent talking about work-life balance, which is always tricky in this profession. In addition, the teams spent some time looking at the new science curriculum.
- **Casino** - They thanked the casino committee for their generous donation allowing for the "You Are Strong" curriculum for friendship development. Because of COVID-19 many students missed out on developing their social skills. Westmount has seen some unexpected behaviour. The "You are Strong" curriculum will provide a full set of resources, including three sessions at the school and a parent session.
- **Jump Rope for Heart** - Want to de-emphasize fundraising and really emphasize the students setting goals for themselves and achieving their goals.

##### **Question (Thomas): Any update on the traffic situation?**

We plan to approach the Parkdale Community Association, Alderman's office, Calgary Police Service, and the City of Calgary to suggest moving the crosswalk back from the corner of Fifth Avenue and 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. A recent video from a parent showed a child almost being hit by a car when double parked cars blocked the driver's view. We will work with School Council to kick off a campaign to address this issue. Though this issue is common in the city, we will try our best to make a difference and ensure road safety. Asked for a parent volunteer that could help with the outreach.

**Question (Kathy): Will the students in Grade 3 that have never been to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor ever have any classes upstairs?**

No, they will stay downstairs. They current Grade 3/incoming Grade 4 will stay downstairs and the incoming Grade 3 will be upstairs next year.

**Comment (Ameet): I appreciate the comment from Hal, acknowledging Sikh Heritage Month. If anybody has questions, I am willing to have a conversation, answer any questions. I am a practicing Sikh, so I just wanted to share that tonight.**

**b. Mid-High Campus Update - Graeme Finlay**

- **Japan trip** - We had a successful Japan trip, but wait until students provide presentations before going into additional detail. We are planning for trips to France and Spain next year.
- **Course Fees** - Last year we decided to keep course fees the same but anticipate there will be an increase next year. We had a healthy amount of donations thanks to our many parents and alumni. However, the cost of venues, transportation and personnel has all gone up. We had a meeting with the Parent Fundraising Societies, to see where we can potentially mitigate increases. We will have a full list of all the course fee changes in our May council report.
- **Course Selection** - Right now we're putting together all the different courses. Usually takes most of April and then we put in the computer. Then we print off every single student's schedule and we look at each individual one to make sure it's balanced. Early to mid-June is when those schedules are distributed. Students also have an opportunity to come in for a course change request. It's a big process and we heard great feedback from the rolling schedule.
- **DEI** - Our diversity council and learning commons coordinator are sharing information about Sikh Heritage Month and we acknowledged World Autism Day and Ramadan Mubarak. Our Muslim Student Association decorated the school and educated staff about Ramadan. We have created no food spaces for students during this month. We also acknowledged Easter and Passover and invite families to let us know if there are any cultural events we missed.
- **Mathematics** - Students in Grades 6 to 8 participated in a math league and our school finished as the top school in the Province. Our Grade 7s finished second in the whole country out of 140 schools. Amazing work by our students.
- **Band** - Our school's bands performed exceptionally well at the band festival, with all grade levels receiving gold awards and the senior concert band receiving the Adjudicator Choice award, the top honor in Edmonton. Our directors, Dr. Tonga and Dr. Freeman, deserve recognition for their hard work and dedication, especially in keeping the band going during Covid without any shutdowns. Our school's band program is thriving, and our numbers are increasing every year.
- **Sports** - Our rugby season has started, with boys, senior girls, and a junior team. There's no league for rugby, so our teachers organize competitions and

tournaments with other schools. Our junior league is developmental and offers friendly and coaching games for kids who are passionate about rugby. Track and field is underway, and we hope for good weather during the upcoming events.

- **Guest Speaker** - Ryan Straschnitzki, a survivor of the 2018 Humboldt Broncos bus crash, gave a presentation on resilience and mindset to students in Grades 5 through 12. The presentation was well received and students were engaged. It was a wonderful opportunity for students to hear from an amazing young man.

## 5. Reports from Council

### a. Special Events Report - Ameet Kooner

- **Year-End Celebration** - Will be held on June 9<sup>th</sup> from 2-5 pm, with activities including bouncy castles, face painting, raffle and a place to buy knickknacks. Volunteers will also be notified in the coming weeks. Open to ideas and contributions from parents. You can email the School Council at [schoolcouncil@westmountcharter.com](mailto:schoolcouncil@westmountcharter.com)

### b. Fundraising Report – Kim Anthony

- **WestJet & 50/50 Raffle** - Both raffles are underway, and tickets will be sold until May 8th. The draw will be on May 10th at the School Council AGM. Those who signed up to sell tickets last year do not need to register again, Raffle Box has automatically sent the link to sell tickets.
- **Bottle Drive** - Bottle drive schedule for April 27th. You can contact Skip the Depot directly if you can't make the bottle drive and donate directly.
- **Healthy Hunger Lunch** - Upcoming Healthy Hunger lunches on April 28th (Mucho Burrito) and May 26th (Subway). Reminder that the deadline to order is four days before the lunch. Kindergarten parents are reminded to order for the correct day their child is at school.
- **Stampeder Parking** - The pre-season is starting in May. We need seven or eight volunteers each game. More information to come soon.

### c. Parent Engagement Report - Ashley Wilford-Matthews

- **Coffee Talks** - The coffee talk for the Elementary Campus was held online last week and the recording will be available in this week's newsletter. The Mid-High coffee talk is happening in person this Friday on the second floor in the staff room. The next Elementary Campus coffee talk will also be in person on May 12th. The coffee talks alternate between in-person and online every month.
- **Parent Engagement Sessions** - Looking to get the Center for Sexuality to come and talk to parents before the end of the year. In addition, other parent engagement events are also being planned for the end of the year.

### d. Alumni - Kim Anthony

- Kathleen Shykula has been posting information on the alumni Facebook group. We are also working with the administration and plan to send out a survey to alumni to gather their feedback on how they would like to be involved.

## **6. Closing Remarks**

Roti - Next month is the Annual General Meeting for the School Council on May 10th, from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Nominations will be accepted for any open School Council positions. The meeting will be online and use the same Zoom link as this one.

**Meeting Adjourned - 7:50 PM**