

# Westmount School Council Meeting - June 2023

**Date:** June 14, 2023

**Location:** Video Conference

**Time:** 7:00 PM

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Chair: Roti Akinsanmi (absent)

## **Council**

Vice-Chair: Kim Anthony

Treasurer: Navdeep Kailey

Secretary: Thomas Chan

Communications Director: Kathy Good (absent)

Fundraising Director: Laura Teterenko

Parent Engagement Director: Ashley Wilford-Matthews

Special Events Director: Ameet Kooner (absent)

Director-at-Large: Terri May

Director-at-Large: Melissa Wolsey (absent)

## **Administration**

Superintendent: Joe Frank

Principal Elementary Campus: Hal Curties

Principal Mid-High Campus: Graeme Finlay

Student Council Representative: Nathan Chung (President Student Council Outgoing) & Shaheer Wasif (President Student Council Incoming)

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

Land Acknowledgement (Nathan Chung) - I would like to acknowledge the land that we live in, in the spirit of reconciliation. We acknowledge that we live, work, and play on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy, Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, Tsuut'ina, Nakoda nation and the Metis Nation of Region Three, and all the people who make their homes in Treaty Seven region of Southern Alberta.

Kim Anthony - Thank you to Hal and Graham, the whole administration and the teachers at both campuses for everything that you do to make it such a great experience for our kids. Thank you to Joe for your commitment to Westmount. And then thanks to Simon and Peter from the board for your engagement with school council and the really important information that you are providing to the parent community. Thanks to all our volunteers, we couldn't do everything that we do without you. Thanks to all the School Council Volunteers, all of our volunteers that helped put everything together, like our raffles, Stampeder parking, the year-end event that we just had.

Ashley - Kim asked if I would say a few words, so I did a little teeny tiny speech Hal. About seven years ago, we were on the hunt for the right school for our daughter. The psychologist we saw had recommended Westmount, so we decided to attend an information night. The principal got up to speak and I immediately said to my husband, "That guy was my junior high Language Arts teacher and he was one of my favorite teachers". I remembered him as being very funny, compassionate, smart, and the kind of teacher who really cared about his student. Mr. Curties gave us some great information that night that convinced us that Westmount would be the right place for our daughter. Part of that decision was also that I

knew her school principal would be amazing, and I was right about that too, because he was still very funny, compassionate, smart, and the kind of principal who really cared about his students.

It's been such a privilege to get to know him in these last few years of his career as a principal. But the reality is that for these past seven years, Hal has continued to be one of my favorite teachers because he's taught me so much about giftedness and what it means to parent gifted children. He's truly an incredible resource to westbound parents. I know that Hal has still so much wisdom and knowledge to share with the education community about giftedness, and I'm glad to know that his retirement will at least in part include more of that. But we also hope he makes time for rest, reading, music, grandchildren, and more, less, because he absolutely deserves it. He's left behind a legacy at Westmount, and we want to thank him tonight for his outstanding service and everything he's given to our school, and we wish him all the best.

## 2. Approval of minutes from April 19<sup>th</sup>

Thomas Chan motion to approve April 19<sup>th</sup> minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> Kim Anthony second. Minutes approved.

## 3. Student Council Report - Shaheer Wasif

- Nathan introduced Shaheer as the incoming Student Council President
- Bought and distributed freezies for high schoolers. Planning on distributing freezies to mid-schoolers during their sports day
- Ran a lip synch contest for the mid-high.
- Results from the Student Council elections were announced. An integration meeting was held for new members, so that they can get an understanding of how council works.
- Help to promote and volunteer for the year-end event.

## 4. Principals' Report

[EC Principal's Report](#)

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

### a. Elementary Campus Update - Hal Curties

- **Elementary Campus** - Finished our latest round of teacher interviews and all teaching positions should be filled. Students will be informed of their teachers through their report cards, especially if they are not looping. Next year, we'll have 420 students. Timetable remains largely unchanged, though we're adjusting the length of some blocks to fit in more activities. School start and end times are the same. Will continue the looping system: current Kindergarteners will get a set of teachers for Grades One and Two.
- **School Supplies** - A supply agreement has been established with a local company. School supplies have been kept at a price point of \$65 or less this

year, despite rising costs. The company offers multiple payment methods and will deliver school supplies to your home. Alternatively, parents can choose to shop for supplies with their children.

- **Drama** - The play "The Adventures of Robinhood" was a major success, especially the participation of kids who might never have thought of auditioning. Special thanks to Robyn Hamilton and Heather Lofthouse for their dedication since rehearsals started in September.
- **Year-end Celebration** - Another great year end celebration. Grateful the dunk tank was not open for the whole time. Thank you to Julie Jansen and other teachers that participated in the dunk tank. Nice to see parents engaged with each other.
- **Retirement** - ~100th School Council report, which seems like a lot now when you think about it. Lots of thanks to School Council for everything that they do to help the school and to enrich the opportunities for our students. Very grateful to the parents for carrying us through COVID. The positive encouragement we got from parents in those two years really made a big difference. Looking forward to being retired. Going to do some work with Ambrose University supervising student teachers. Deep, deep gratitude for the, the privilege and the joy of working at Westmount.

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

- **Course Fees** - Inflation is hurting. Notable increases in fees, primarily due to inflation affecting transportation costs. Had donation this past year to help subsidize fees. New field trip (geoscience). School supply fee for Grades 5 & 6s.
- **Exams** - Busing will be available during the exam break. Students can study or consult teachers during exam break but should confirm teacher availability. Students must return textbooks; misplaced textbooks may lead to additional fees.
- **Student Achievements** - Had students in a junior high math contest, where Westmount finished second overall and out of the top 50 positions 11 of them went to Westmount students. Have a chess award and debate championship. The senior boys rugby team won the Provincial Championship, a first for any sport at the school. Thank you to Jamie Good, Alan Crooks. The girls team also made it to provincials, but had a tougher draw.
- **New Art Installation** - A transformed storage container, painted with the Westmount Pegasus head by a student artist.
- **Graduation** - Congratulations to all the graduates! Last Thursday, we had a fantastic graduation ceremony at the U of C. A special thanks to Brandie Sedore and her team for orchestrating such a memorable evening. The photos showcase the transformation of our students, who now resemble young adults rather than students. It's truly incredible to witness their growth and readiness for the future. A particularly poignant moment was when, instead of the traditional practice of gifting the student photos to the principal, this year we presented them to Ms.

Cole. This gesture was especially significant because the graduating class was her Grade One class.

- **Closing** - A heartfelt thank you to the school council. Each member is remarkable both individually and as a group. Your unwavering support transforms Westmount into more than just a school – it becomes a community. Acting as a bridge for parents, providing input on ideas, and consistently offering support are invaluable contributions. Having worked at various schools, I've never experienced the level of support I have here. It's astounding to see the difference you make in every classroom, benefiting every student. Even our staff, when informed of your efforts, are left astonished by your impact. I hope everyone has a splendid Summer.

## 5. Reports from Council

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

- **Coffee Talks** - One more coffee talk this year at the mid-high. On June 16<sup>th</sup>. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor in the staff room. Next year we will remain with the hybrid model.
- **Parent Engagement Sessions** - Will a few sessions in the Fall. Look out for that.

### b. Fundraising Report - Laura Teterenko

- **Stampeder Parking** - Had our first one this year and made about \$800. There will be five Stampeder parking this Summer.
- **Bottle Drive** - During the Summer continue to contact Skip the Depot directly.
- **Healthy Hunger Lunch** - Will start that back up in September. Used that to support our Grade 2 raffle winners. Will probably have one per month.
- A huge thanks to everybody who's contributed to our fundraising efforts this year. We had a successful year and that's all because of the contributions and efforts of the parents in the community. Thank you very much for that and look forward to more of the same next year.

**Comment (Kim):** Wanted to add a thank you to Jill Foreman who has been volunteering for many years with.

### c. Treasurers Report - Navdeep Kailey

- **Direct Donations** - We had \$295 for the month of May. A huge thank you to all the parents and generous contributors.
- **Expenses** - School Council hosted a parent engagement with session with the Center for Sex Education. The speakers were free, but the School Council donated \$500 to the center. School administration allocations, which are shared expenses between mid-high and elementary include classroom support and pizza for parent-teacher nights totaled \$15,749. Mid-high expenses consist of invoices for Kamp Kiwanis, field trips and staff wellness totaled \$9,581. Total

expenses amount to \$25,830. Additional invoices are expected from the school around mid-August.

- **Bank Balance** - As of May 31st is \$37,831.

**d. Special Events Report - Kim Anthony (for Ameet Kooner)**

- **Year-end Event** – Thank you to all the volunteers, particularly Nathan and the Student Council and the teachers who participated in the dunk tank event. Dunk tank with teachers, especially Hal, was popular among students. There were concerns about potential rain or thunder showers, but the weather was favorable. Feedback for the event can be sent via the school council's general email. Would also like to thank Ameet, who organize the event.

**6. Closing Remarks**

**Meeting Adjourned - 7:45 PM**