**Feb 15 – SAC meeting minutes**

Attendees: Janet Theunissen, Mark Duwyn, Frances Anderson, Shah Ruby, Kara Dawson, Jose Jimenez, Kate St. Cyr, Sydney & Dave, Sarah Charters, Jennifer Black, Anita Davis, Annick Cardinal, Tiffany Niles-Chamberlain, Carla Southward, Simon, Carla Arasanz

1. Land acknowledgement – video from Chef David Wolfman
2. Introductions
3. Updates from M. Duwyn

* Report cards go home tomorrow, parent-teacher conferences to follow
* Virtual/in-person switch occurring shortly
* Board looking ahead to next year, school admin trying to keep parents updated via weekly email that goes out on Fridays
* VP Xandi Neville currently out with injury, receiving some coverage from former admin Greg Martin
* Also receiving some coverage for office/secretary staff
* Experiencing some staffing challenges but no classes have had to move to virtual as a result (this has occurred in other schools)
* A shout out to Janet for fielding things that parents might not feel comfortable going to school admin about
* Questions from parents about can we open up cohorts at recess – not yet – this is driven by Toronto Public Health and the TDSB. Hoping for some changes in the spring.
* Same thing for co-curriculars – hoping for movement soon
* Some lunchtime activities within cohorts were being offered in Nov/Dec; this to continue
* School of 530 kids means lots of opinions about masking/cohorts/vaccination – need to hear/respect all opinions but ultimately follow TDSB guidelines
* Willy Reads is ongoing – opportunities to tie in with Black History and Chinese Heritage months; also sharing videos of celebrities reading (e.g., Chris Hadfield, Barack & Michelle Obama; etc).
* Safety – teachers trying to get students outside as much as possible but current icy situations and cold weather pose challenges
  + Outdoor time is limited when temp falls below -20C

*Questions about M Duwyn’s updates*

Dave: notation in weekly bulletin about Holocaust Remembrance Day – does the school receive any guidelines about if/how elementary schools/teachers should discuss it from the TDSB?

M Duwyn response: No real guidelines that he has seen, but will look into it and report back

Tiffany: re: Black History and other heritage months – is it possible for a parent/child to initiate discussion/activities/programming/etc to ensure awareness isn’t limited to a heritage month?

M Duwyn response: yes, contact teacher re: classroom-level initiative or himself re: schoolwide

Mme Cardinal addition: very interested in creating a parent-teacher partnership, and can think of other teachers who would be interested – Janet to connect Mme Cardinal and Tiffany

Anita: do we know how many students are switching from virtual to in-person? Is there potential for large increases to class sizes?

M Duwyn response: Roughly 3-5 students moving to in-person, about the same going to virtual

1. Anatomy of a report card (M Duwyn and Mme Cardinal)

M Duwyn: kindergarten report cards

* examples of report card templates available on Ministry website (<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/kindergarten_report.html>)
* No letter grades, mostly a lot of narrative with examples
* 4 components: belonging and contributing, self-regulation and well-being, demonstrating literacy and math behaviours, and problem solving and innovation

Mme Cardinal: grades 1-6 report cards

* Most of the emphasis goes on the learning skills – here to learn how to learn vs. mastery of subjects
* Things shouldn’t be too easy – fine balance between hard and attainable work
* Teachers aim for students to get Gs and Es – very rarely give all Es – always room for improvement
* Not about getting all Es, rather getting good feedback that carries forward to future grades
* Ss and Ns – encourage spending time with the student and teacher to see what is it that we really need to work towards
* Most important: try one thing at a time, goal isn’t to improve all skills to an E – pick one specific area for improvement and create a concrete, attainable plan
  + We’re not all born with all of these skills – they need to be taught and learned – can’t assume that students know how to organize themselves, for example
  + Being on same page as teacher is how we’re going to improve these learning skills
  + Not always continuous progression – what’s being assessed for organization in term 1 isn’t always what is being assessed in term 2 (e.g., neat duotangs progresses to do you recall how to access a website with your password?)
* Try to let students know what they’re looking for each term – otherwise difficult for students to attain
* Encouraging students to practice advocacy – if your student is not satisfied with their G, encourage students to go to teacher with question about what can be done to improve
* Teachers try really hard to take the content from the expectations and incorporate what they’ve actually been doing in class, and then add modifiers to reflect marks (e.g., with some help, independently)
* Next steps are the other really important part of the report card – aligns with what’s being told are next steps in class

M Duwyn: bottom of report card encourages students to make goals – want junior students to be involved (in goal setting, in any conferences with teachers)

* Take a look at next steps and set some goals for next report card, even if not meeting with teacher
* Find what works for each kid – all kids different

*Questions about report cards*

Tiffany: any mitigation strategies for students not meeting goals as a result of the covid-related challenges as they move ahead into next grade?

M Duwyn response: have seen some of that impact – TDSB goal = all kids reading by the end of grade 1 – more challenging when in virtual school

* Looking at strategies to help mitigate
  + EA helping out in classrooms – giving teachers opportunities to work with students who really need it

Mme Cardinal addition: mixed grades are difficult but positive aspects that go along with it – younger students learn from the older ones in terms of learning skills – another strategy that might help close existing gaps

* Also can’t forget what we’ve learned through covid – embracing the idea of using technology in the classroom (e.g., IXL math) – helps teachers manage a smaller group of students doing something else – this can be seen as an advantage that might help close some of those learning gaps

Janet: big thanks to teachers for their efforts throughout the pandemic to minimize learning gaps

M Duwyn: appreciation to parents for their efforts to work together and keep the school safe while we all navigate the challenges of the pandemic

1. Council updates

Equity committee (Kara) – Indigenous book club with Michelle Aarts (trustee ward 16) – open to anyone involved in the ward

* 2 meetings in so far, a third scheduled; all by zoom
* 3 books assigned: Braiding Sweetgrass (Robin Wall Kimmerer), Truth & Reconciliation Committee Calls for Action, 21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act (Bob Joseph)
* About 25 people on both calls, primarily trustees/administrators/members of SACs
* Continues to be open if others associated with ward 16 are interested

M Duwyn addition: staff are also doing a book study (Desmond Cole’s The Skin We’re In); principal group (principals across our area of Toronto) also reading Braiding Sweetgrass

* One of the pillars of our school improvement plan is Indigenous learning – any new resources invested at Willy aimed at updating materials; want to not just celebrate heritage months, but extend that learning/acknowledgement/celebration throughout the year

Kara: Bowmore has a large Indigenous student population and Wandering Spirit school (Indigenous school in Toronto) – perhaps future opportunities for partnerships

1. Other council updates (Janet)

Read-a-thon: whole month of February, all student reading logs submitted go into a draw for Ella Minnow; combined with a fundraising attempt for council initiatives this year (2022-02-22)

Also started a mask recycling bin at school to try to divert masks from landfill

1. Council bylaws (Janet)

TDSB has mandated that all SACs submit bylaws

These will be made public and then we will vote on them at the next SAC meeting

* The TDSB provided a template; most sections are mandatory, some optional
* Some examples:
  + Membership: at least 5 parents on SAC; this year we have 12
    - In previous years, we haven’t capped – it sounds like they do want a number of at least 5 – Janet proposes we stick with 12 (current number)
  + Also recommend student reps (maybe for older grades)
  + Council needs to be elected within 30 days of a school year- we typically have fewer parents putting their names forward than spots available so no elections in recent history
  + Executive offices – needs to be a chair or co-chairs
  + No payment to SAC executives allowed
  + Meetings need to be accessible to all and achieve a quorum (51%)
  + Voting for all motions need to be accessible
  + Financial minutes and records need to be kept for a minimum of 4 years
  + Social media – may be used, no photos without consent, everything approved by principal prior to posting
  + Can’t enter into long-term agreements or loan arrangements
  + Guidelines for conflicts of interest and conflict resolution
  + Annual reports about fundraising activities required
  + Bylaws need to be reviewed every 3 years

*Questions about bylaws*

Kara: suggested 1 council member per grade, per stream

Tiffany: have we, or can we, look at fundraising to celebrate Frances – maybe her birthday?

Response from Janet: administrative professional day is in May – video made last year, but Janet to connect with Tiffany to brainstorm other options for this year

Anita: can the link for the bylaws and the read-a-thon fundraiser be included in the next SAC email?

Response from Janet: school cash-online sends link directly; seems some parents not receiving school cash online emails – Janet to follow up with Frances