

PENDING APPROVAL JFSS Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 6th, 2023
Location: John Fraser Secondary School
7:00 – 8:30 pm

1. Roll Call/Call to Order

Meeting start time: 7:07 p.m.

Meeting opened and chaired by co-chair Adnan Ghani

Attendees:

Principal Ms. Karen Thomas, Teacher Mr. Paul Gresch, three SAC executives
Parents/Caregivers (Approximately 20 in attendance)

(Before commencing the meeting, Adnan invited the School Parents Council executives to introduce themselves)

2. Land Acknowledgement

Land acknowledgement read by Adnan.

3. Approval of previous minutes (Meeting held on October 4th, 2023)

Motioned by Ruchi Ambike

Seconded by Ali Raja

Motion carried.

4. Student Activity Clubs (SAC) Updates

Fear Week

- Held in October, in conjunction with Spirit Week
- Highlight was the annual “Haunted House” (more on this in Principal’s Updates)
- Volunteers across the school gave their time to make Haunted House a success.
- An opportunity to raise money through ticket sales and donations at the door.

Mosaic Lunch

- Student-led activity, held in the cafeteria, featuring booths where food items from different cultures were sold (with recipe cards).
- An opportunity for students to dress in their cultural/ethnic attire.
- The lunch was an opportunity to introduce “Fraser Ticketing”, a new e-payment portal. (Fraser Ticketing will be used for other events and not just for SAC activities)

Semi-Formal

- Held in November
- Fraser Ticketing was used for this event.

Food Drive

- Update on plans for a student-led food drive (Dec 11th – 22nd)
- Food collected will be given to the Mississauga Food Bank

Fraser Festive Week

- Week of Dec 18th – 22nd
- Another Spirit week (students can wear special attire, etc.)
- Food drive-related activities

5. Principal's Update

Haunted House

- Principal spoke about the resounding success of Haunted House and acknowledged the valuable contributions made by staff sponsors and staff volunteers who gave their time and support to Haunted House
- Mentioned that she has not seen anything quite like Haunted House in the 23 years that she has been an educator.

Festivals

- Updated attendees on various cultural activities organized by students which showcased their diverse cultures, for example "Diwali Celebration".
- Principal said she hopes that Semester 2 will have more of such events, where different cultures and traditions can be celebrated.

High School Musical

- A musical event/gala put on by the students, planned for Dec 7th (for students) and Dec 8th (for parents and public)
- Principal mentioned that this will be the first such musical event at JFSS in 21 years.

Musical Night

- Will be held on Dec 11th
- An opportunity for students to perform and show their musical talents.

Food Drive

- Principal reiterated the importance of the food drive that is being planned by the students (refer to the above SAC update)

Course Selection

- Virtual workshop on course selection is being planned for students, parents, and caregivers.
- Workshop will be led by Ms. Leigh McComb, Head of Guidance at JFSS
- A opportunity for all concerned to learn about “My Blueprint” a web-based platform for students and parents/caregivers to review, identify, and select courses.
- More details will be provided soon.
- Principal encouraged all parents and caregivers to attend, especially those with Grade 10 and 11 students who are planning to attend post-secondary institutions.

Winter Care

- Principal invited Mr Paul Gresch to speak about Winter Care, an initiative that JFSS has been involved with for around 20 years.
- Social Workers in our community work together with schools in the PDSB, including JFSS. These social workers are “paired” with JFSS students (typically students from single-parent homes and/or whose parent(s) may have been laid off).
- During the festive season, these social workers give our school lists of wants and needs of the students they are paired with.
- Mr Gresch shared how difficult it might be for these students to ask for items that the more fortunate usually take for granted, for example a winter jacket.
- Mr Gresch and Principal encouraged all to consider donating during this festive season. A Communicate has been sent to JFSS families regarding Winter Care

Grade 12 Graduation

- Update on various fund-raising initiatives related to Graduation 2024
- Approximately 400 JFSS students will be graduating in Spring 2024
- One important event is Grad Breakfast, an event leading up to “prom” and the actual graduation ceremony. Voting for “Class Valedictorians” usually takes place here.
- Principal called for volunteers who might be interested in giving time and/or other resources towards the Grad Breakfast

Board Improvement and Equity Plan (BIEP)

- Important compliance requirement from the Ontario Ministry of Education
- The BIEP provides the framework on which to establish strategies aimed at improving quality of education and equity in our schools.
- The strategic planning process has begun, priorities have been identified, goals have been set with respect to improving the quality of education at PDSB.

- Stakeholders, which include the broader community, i.e. parents and caregivers, will have a chance to provide input and feedback as the strategy is developed. Parents/caregivers can look out for this in the weeks to come.
- Draft plan (with Stakeholders' feedback) expected to be completed in February 2024
- Multi-year strategic plan presented to the Board for approval in April 2024
- New Multi-year Strategic Plan expected to be implemented in September 2024
- Related to the Board's multi-year strategic plan, JFSS and all other schools in the PDSB will have their own improvement and equity action plan, i.e. our school's specific initiatives related to the BIEP. (Note: These specific initiatives were formerly contained within the "School Success Plan")

Quality of Education Improvement

- Aim is to re-evaluate how traditional modes of assessment accurately predict/reflect success in, for example, post-secondary settings.
- Curriculum expectations will not be compromised nor watered down – they will however be evaluated through "multiple lenses."
- Are there alternatives that can provide a better balance between assessment and success predictability? Are there assessments other than the traditional examination format? (Principal mentioned the "Balanced Assessment Plan" (BAP) is one of the items linked to the BIEP)

Safe and Welcoming Learning Environment

- Started in September 2022 and aimed at helping students re-enter and acclimate to the school community after the Covid-19 Pandemic lockdowns.
- Principal shared that some students don't even know the names of their teachers.
- Progress has been made – the large number of active clubs has played a positive role in helping students re-adjust to the in-person school community.

Code of Conduct

- Principal brought up various issues addressed in the School's Code of Conduct such as bullying and cyber-bullying.
- Everyone in school, including students, is expected to contribute towards ensuring a safe and healthy school environment.
- Students have been reminded of the appropriate use of washrooms, i.e. no vaping, no hanging out, etc. To this end, washroom doors have been fitted with magnets to hold the doors open (Note: this initiative is board-wide and not only at JFSS)
- Principal shared that the instances of inappropriate behavior in washrooms have dropped significantly since the introduction of the door magnets.

Equity and Human Rights

- Principal shared about the student-walkouts related to events in the Middle East
- An opportunity to talk with students more broadly about Human Rights in general.

- Students were encouraged to place respectfulness and safety as high priorities.
- Principal has liaised with the PDSB Equity Team to provide further guidance.

6. New Business

Fundraising Committee

- Call for volunteers to help in the Fundraising Committee (for general fundraising)
- Principal shared one possible use of funds: - refresh the cafeteria to encourage students-usage -- perhaps also create more outdoor eating spaces.

PDSB Parents Involvement Committee (PIC) Funds

- The PIC administers various funds which are available to schools including JFSS.
- Parents Engagement Fund: no application needed; requires discussion with Principal. Up to \$500 available
- Parents Reaching Out Fund: application to the PIC required. Up to \$1,500 is available if as a collaborative effort by several schools.
- More details will be provided by the PIC/PDSB in early 2024.

Course Selection

- As a follow-up to what was said earlier, Principal reminded all about the upcoming webinar which will be led by Ms. Leigh McComb from the Guidance Department.
- Key to be mindful of: - there are many options available to students.
- Principal highlighted “dual credit” courses which allow students to earn high school credits and also attend college or university classes to experience various post-secondary environments.
- Parents/caregivers are encouraged to talk with their children and attend the webinar.

Transportation Options

- Some families who live outside the JFSS boundary are exploring various transportation options. This may also be of interest to students who regularly stay late for various after-school activities, etc.
- The principal said she will speak with “Giselle” who might be able to connect families that are interested in exploring transportation options. The main challenge is that the school is precluded from sharing personal information due to privacy issues.
- The principal also mentioned that she will check how Cawthra Park SS managed the transportation issue for their Regional Arts Program.
- Bus options are not very feasible due to cost (approx. \$3,000 per year per student) and bus availability issues.

7. Question and Answer Session

- **Question** regarding the “school calendar” in the JFSS website. This has been a valuable source of information in the past but for some reason the school calendar is no longer accessible and/or updated.
Answer: The principal will look into this.
- **Question** on whether the school announcements can be made available in printed format and posted on bulletin boards or similar platforms. Due to noise issues in classrooms when the announcements are broadcast, some students might miss important announcements.
Answer: The principal will look into this and mentioned that Vice-Principal Merkel is already exploring various options.
- **Question** regarding the magnets on washroom doors, and if the level of inappropriate behavior that has decreased also includes vaping.
Answer: Principal replied that vaping has decreased to almost zero, i.e. close to a 100% drop in vaping incidents. The existence of QR codes (to assist in reporting vaping incidents) has also helped.
- **Question** on whether the school is aware of students being asked by other students to sign various petitions related to the Middle East conflict, and whether the school is doing enough to ensure that students are not pressured or coerced by other students to sign petitions. Having their names and signatures on petitions might have consequences for these students in the future.
Answer: Principal will discuss this issue with the student-walkout leaders concerned and will enquire about the various petitions. Principal also assured the meeting that the school does not sanction any student-led walkouts. Students are not even allowed to advertise these walkouts on school property.
- **Question** on pros and cons of online learning.
Answer: Principal confirmed that the Ontario Ministry of Education has mandated the availability of online learning in the school curriculum, However, students can choose to “opt-out” of online learning. Principal presented her views of the various advantages and disadvantages of online learning. A recent Royal Bank of Canada study on this subject was cited which appears to give, on balance, the edge to live in-person classroom learning. An important asset for new graduates when entering the job market is “inter-personal skills” and these skills are practiced more in live classroom settings compared to online classes.
- **Question** regarding who to contact at school once the Parents Council’s fundraising committee has formed.
Answer: Principal suggested that the best option would be to work with her once the committee has formed and is ready to move forward

- **Question** regarding official school council email accounts which, for the JFSS School Council, might come to an end in January 2024.
Answer: Principal will look into this and said that the school will figure out a solution.
- **Question** regarding the “sign-in” sheet at the back of the room containing names and contact details of meeting attendees, and whether the Parents Council can use these names and contact details in their various communications.
Answer: Yes.
- Meeting attendees were asked if anyone of them would be interested in joining the Fundraising Committee (general fundraising). Some participants expressed interest in getting involved. They were asked to provide their names and contact details.

NEXT MEETING DATE – Wednesday, March 6th, 2024

Meeting adjourned at: 8:22 p.m.

Minutes of meeting recorded by: Sin-bee Han, Co-Secretary

Student club contacts

Student Activity Council contact:

Email: johnfraserstudentcouncil@gmail.com

Instagram: @johnfrasersac

Linktree: <https://linktr.ee/Johnfrasersac>

Website: www.johnfrasersac.com

Google Classroom: i725i36

Arts council:

Instagram: @jfssarts

linktree: <https://linktr.ee/jfssarts>

Fraser Athletic Council:

Email: athletics.fraser@gmail.com,

Google classroom: ihagerd

Instagram: @jfssathletics

Linktree: <https://linktr.ee/fraser.athletics>

Peer Mentoring

Instagram: @jfsspeermentoring

Linktree: <https://linktr.ee/jfsspeermentoring>