

St. Andrew's Regional High School

Local School Council

DRAFT Minutes

January 25, 2023 – approved March 1 2023

Present: Angela Grohovac (AG), Victor Araujo (VA), Renee Derksen (RD), Steve Pearse (SP), Euan Skinner (ES), Katherine Thiessen-Wale (KTW)

Principal: Glen Palahicky (GP)

Guests: Ciaran McLaverty (CM), Manuel Achadinha (ICS board representative)

Quorum achieved. It was noted that Council member Pete Rose resigned from LSC.

Call Meeting to Order: AG at 6:35 p.m.

Opening Prayer: GP

Approval of Previous Minutes: Motion by ES, seconded by SP to approve November 2022 minutes. Motion carried.

Approval of Agenda: Members agreed to proceed with Buildings and Grounds Report early in the meeting, and to make an addition to the agenda as per request of GP - discussion of possible Grade 8 no-phone policy. RD moved to accept agenda as amended, seconded by ES to approve. Motion carried.

Reports:

Buildings and Grounds Report :

- ES reported that remediation of remaining deficiencies is coming along well, and maintenance of various kinds has been completed recently, including the sound system for the gym. Gym floor refurbishment undertaken over the holidays is complete and looks great. A replacement for the hot water tank is needed (upstairs sink and office); the problem seemed to be the pump and a quote is in progress. A few other deficiencies need to be completed, including ventilation in the band room and office. Blinds are on order and will be delivered. The canopy over the roof was repaired to allow appropriate drainage. Construction deficiencies will be addressed without cost.
- CM noted that other issues to be addressed (not related to construction) include improvement of the lighting by the gym door.

Recent Success:

As an aside, CM reported that the students' results in recent provincial assessments were outstanding. Provincial assessments are made in Grade 10 numeracy and literacy, and in Grade 12 literacy. Literacy assessments were conducted in November, with numeracy to be held in April. Scores are reported in a range of 1 to 4. The provincial average for Grade 10s reflects 71% of students obtaining a score of 3 or 4. The SARHS Grade 10 students beat this by 17 points, with 88% of students obtaining a score of 3 or 4. As well, 89% of Grade 12 students obtained a score of 3 or 4. SARHS students did better than students of other independent schools, and this reflects strength of the school's language arts programs. It also points to success of the elementary schools' (St. Patrick's and St. Joseph's) preparation of students for high school. Congratulations!

New Business:

Upcoming meeting dates: When planning meeting dates for this year, it was recognized that the February meeting would have fallen on Ash Wednesday, so the February meeting was moved a week earlier, to February 15. It is now noted that this year, February 15 is a Pro-D day with staff to be offsite. It was determined that the upcoming February meeting should be moved to early March, *i.e.*, March 1. There is no other LSC meeting that month, due to the March break.

Grade 8 no-phone policy: GP indicates that the existing policy of having students' phones "off and away" in class works well most of the time. Currently, the teacher can ask for students to use their phones in class for research, but then that the phone be put away; this policy allows students to have their phones on during periods of transition between classes and lunch. This normally doesn't result in phones interfering in students' interactions with each other. However, it is noted that the "off and away" policy doesn't work as well for Grade 8 students. Grade 8 students are coming here from schools that do not allow phones at school, so they are finding it novel to have access to their phones at school and some are using it irresponsibly during class and/or all the time. Many Grade 8 students are not socializing with each other, but appear glued to their phone.

Staff are considering whether it would be possible to have a "no-phone" policy in place for Grade 8 students effective September 2023 in order to promote better socialization among students, especially considering they are new to the school. It is important for students to be able to connect face to face and focus at school; it is likely that there would be less opportunity for cyberbullying, and less problems for teachers and administration. This would mean that students would not be allowed to have their phones out at school, but could bring it with them to school, as long as it was kept in their backpacks/lockers during school hours. This would parallel the policy on phones at the elementary schools. Possible downsides of the policy are that students need to use their phones to sign up for focus blocks, and this is usually done while at school; it is also possible to use computers to do this, however. As well, some parents like to touch base with students at lunch, etc., and not allowing phones at all during breaks could potentially impact communications for valid purposes. If implemented, this would mean that there is a transition to phones being permitted in Grade 9; this is not likely to pose a problem as the students are socially more integrated with each other by Grade 9 and not as likely to be distracted by their phones; there is a noticeable difference in maturity level between Grade 8 and 9 students.

Council members discussed pros and cons of the policy, and questioned whether there would be consistent enforcement of the policy, consequences if the policy is broken, and whether it would be possible to allow phone usage in a gradual way over the course of the year. There was also discussion of how this would compare with other schools' policies, what parents' views would be, and what other technology options could be used to replace phones (e.g., iPads, laptops, or other). It was agreed to table this item for continued discussion at the next meeting.

Old Business:

PIP hours: RD raised the matter of the need for a co-ordinator to do the work of recording information relating to the PIP program on site at the school now that the PIP form is up on the website and parents have been informed of the need to enter their volunteer hours into the form. It is essential that this be done on site, rather than from home, as the cheques submitted by parents cannot be removed from the school. This is a fair amount of work, and requires careful attention as accounting may be audited. RD noted that at the elementary schools, this work is typically undertaken by a Parent Support Group volunteer, rather than by the LSC or school staff.

Council members discussed possible ways to manage the program so that it would be easier to administer. It was agreed that there should be consideration of the possible amount of funds, and whether the PSG Treasurer may be able to facilitate this work; AG will ask. This will be discussed further at the March meeting.

Reports:

Chairperson's Report:

- AG reported that she attended the Y.E.S event in December, hosted by the Marketing class, where many very interesting ideas, and positivity about entrepreneurship, were on display.
- As PSG Liaison, AG reported that fundraisers are going well this year. The Cheese fundraiser will be offered to either the Student Council or Grad committee to run. The Grade 12 class is opting out of having the fashion show.
- Parent Education Night will be on February 13, and focus on assisting students with preparation for entry to post-secondary programs.
- The Music Department held its Advent concert in December; by all accounts it was wonderful. Mr. O'Reilly had several students from the choir go to the home of a former teacher to sing to him after some health issues. The Music Dept is also very actively preparing for Catholic Schools Week.
- The Sports department is a very busy place too. Junior and Senior Girls and Boys Basketball are in full swing with both the senior teams representing the Sabres at tournaments and in league play, including on the new gym floor, where the Junior Girls won the first game played after it was refinished.
- The Sports Council and a creative parent have been working on a new Sabres logo and a final design has been agreed upon. Uniform orders for the teams had been put on hold while this was underway and now orders are in. Plans are to repaint the Sabre in the gym.
- There are many items on the Sports department wish list that both the PSG and Sports parents are going to try to tackle via fundraising. Approximately \$20,000 to \$30,000 of equipment is the goal.
- The Tri Council met on January 4, with a full complement of members from all three schools' LSCs. They met the new ICS Superintendent Mr. Paul Rosetti. The next meeting will be on March 17, 2023.
- The Tri Council would like to host a large scale gala event for all three schools, for both community building and fundraising.
- To assist both St. Joseph's and St. Patrick's schools in retaining their Grade 6 and 7 students there is a suggestion to identify a specific sport, with students from both schools being bussed to UVic at a time when SARHS students are training; this would allow opportunity for the younger students to have mentorship with the high school coaches, and meet and see SARHS students in action. Similarly, it was suggested that representatives of the Music and Drama departments attend and support the elementary schools' concerts and productions.

AG left meeting at 8:03 pm.

Principal's Report:

- Catholic Schools Week begins this week; Thursday night event from 7-8:30. At the end of the week, there will be approximately 35 students heading to Camp Homewood. Face to Face Ministries will be here Wednesday and put on a retreat.
- Report cards will be published on February 10.
- Staff will participate in a two-day Pro D event on February 16 and 17.
- A new EA has been hired, but there are no staff changes for the coming semester.

Teacher Rep's Report: No report.

Human Resources: No report.

- RD can probably assist with the HR portfolio given PR's resignation.

Finance Report:

- SP reported that he reviewed finance report with Lise Derzaph of ICS and minor adjustments are required to reflect errors, but all is well SP will advise Lise the LSC meeting in February will be moved to March 1 and request that she prepare numbers in time for that meeting.
- GP noted that in the new year, it might be necessary to acquire a new bus. Nice used buses can be obtained from SMUS for around \$40,000.
- RD requested that there be a reminder included in the newsletter early in the next school year asking parents to identify ICS as their preferred charitable donation.

Policy Report:

- As above, the PIP program was discussed.

International Liaison:

- VA reported that Mr. Durkan took the international students to Mount Washington recently.
- Currently, the connections between ICS and agents recruiting international students are good, and the outlook for the program is healthy. Securing home stays remains the biggest issue.

ES moved to adjourn; SP seconded.

Adjourned at 8:30 p.m.