

Welland Centennial Secondary School

Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Monday November 18, 2013

**In Attendance;**

Sherrill Roberts, Elizabeth Maltais, Deb Braun, Cathy Alakas, Ann Lalonde, Shelley Cutts, Sara Vloet, Dan Saint Laurent, Joy Reaker, Paula MacKinnon (principal), Norbert Kuebeck (vice principal) Darcy Feagan (Prime Minister), Sue Barnett (trustee), Cole Fast, Jessica Wilson

Regrets: Pam Swick-Janjac, Tara Lundy

**Meeting Start 7:03 pm**

**Welcome**

Deb welcomed parents “old” and new” to our third Council meeting of the year.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from last meeting (October 21, 2013) were approved.

**Students’ Council Report**

Darcy and Cole discussed the school’s first dance and about 300 attended. The next dance will be December 12, and it is planned to be a Winter Wonderland. A DJ has been booked, and council is to decide if they will be doing it as a black light dance.

Spy VS Spy went well. The whole school participated. Every student is given a name tag of a different student and they have to find the person with their name. The person with the most name tags wins. It was similar to a scavenger hunt. There were 3 winners, and they received a \$50 gift certificate for the Pen centre.

Student Council Leadership Conference (OSLC) was held in Niagara Falls. They have ideas to run by council to do in the school and students hear about the possibility to bring in various speakers.

The Centennial Students’ Council video was nominated and won the best video contest and council received 2 free passes for next year’s conference.

Grandparents’ tea will be held on December 6, 2013. The music department will be doing a performance, and pictures can be taken. The Christmas tree will be up. Grandparents are recommended to arrive around 1:15 pm, tea time starts at 1:30 pm.

The talent show will be December 19, 2013 (last day of school).

Coffee house is being postponed.

Centennial sang O' Canada at the OSLC (student conference).

### **Chair's Report**

Nothing to report.

No meeting in December. Next meeting in the New Year.

### **Professional Development**

Mrs. Val Brennand (Guidance and French/Spanish Teacher) discussed the Student Exchange Programs available.

The purpose of exchanges is for language acquisition and cultural awareness. The various options have been advertised to students via announcements and in class for a 3 month exchange.

There is the Canadian Education Exchange Foundation which is 3 months or 1 month in the summer. Cost is \$2599.00. The International Student Exchange is 3 months or 1 month in the summer. Cost is \$2,650.00. The third option is Rotary Youth Exchange. The cost is \$2,500.00. The Welland Rotary Club sends only one student at a time, age range from 15 – 18. For all options, students participate in class time, however they do not earn credits.

Canadian students are given 2 courses, usually language and either pal or co-op. They only earn 2 credits while on exchange and need to make the other 2 credits up. A plan for this is made with each student when they apply for exchange.

Summer exchange; Canadian student goes to the host family, first and comes back with the European student.

Rotary is different; it is 1 year long and only 1 student is chosen for the Welland chapter. The student chosen can pick whatever country they want to go to. They should have a basic knowledge of language of the country they are going to. They are expected to go to school and do community work. They can stay with one family or 2 or 3 families within Rotary. This is a great opportunity. Rotary has also hosted international students here who attend Centennial while here.

Other opportunities for student travel are run through companies / volunteering. The cost is higher and usually over the summer. DSBN also does international build, last 2 yrs in Vietnam (Habitat Home build), a DSBN staff member goes along.

Benefits to going on exchange: language improves; the student matures due to handling things on their own; they develop personally. They can experience many things, i.e. getting to school, traveling with host family. They have the possibility to make long term friendships, including developing friendships with host family members.

Being a host family: you would take them around to see sights etc. and be sure they keep studies going.

You can pick your exchange partner; they do not have to be same sex.

It is important to remember the student is not looking for a best friend, just the experience.

There is a lot of paperwork involved in the application. Students applying need to think about what they are writing, and all adults living in a household hosting a student need a current police check.

### **Administrator's Report**

The girls' basketball went to SOSSA, hopefully they go to Windsor for OFSSA. The fundraiser event tonight at Wendy's is going well so far.

Grade 8 day is November 19. Grade 8 students will be visiting from feeder schools. They will be exposed to arts, physed, technology and business. They are getting t-shirts, the current grade 9s wear their shirts all the time. Incoming students will have a different colour.

There will be an assembly Friday. Vocal students are participating in "A Taste of Handel" and singing with a professional group and orchestra. This is being done by Mr. Braun and this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Also there are 2 concerts on the weekend, both are open to the public.

There is an Open House January 15 from 6:30pm to 8:30 pm, parent council will need volunteers. Different clubs etc. will be there too.

Christmas food drive is December 9 - 13 (same as dance).

School improvement plan; a "working copy" gets developed every fall, 3 components Actions/Strategies, Resources, and Professional Learning.

#### **Highlights:**

Literacy test results reviewed last meeting, want to improve to 86%, hoping to increase applied level learners. The practice literacy test is coming up.

Numeracy: off to a good start, identifying students that need assistance. Moved a few from academic to applied. Students came up with a problem solving strategy.

Students will be given EQAO practice questions on December 6. One big change, moving to one day EQAO test on Thursday January 16 (will be written in morning).

After hour's numeracy program: applied class is doing well.

Goals: around 67% in A/B mark range - mid semester, team will be reviewing mark distribution. Looking at the Semester Progress on credit accumulation from November, feel students will reach target. Things are going well, and should be on target at the end of the year. Each student who is not reaching goals has faculty tracking and helping.

Safe School Meeting: had 2nd meeting and trying to focus on top priority. We will be practicing lock down drill at the next staff meeting.

Priority is student stress, anxiety and mental health issues that come with it. There are 75 students using services i.e. youth counsel, doctor, and medication. This does not include the ones who haven't come forward. 1/5 of all youth experience mental health concerns.

There will be a newsletter going out with mid terms with the signs of stress etc. and how to reduce and support them. We will be having a survey to see what the stressors for the students are. We are hoping for the near future and will be whole student body participating.

We will be brainstorming what are stressors students are facing? What are some ways we (as a school) can reduce these?

Mental health support system coming to do talks to students, 3 classes 2 presentations per day (will be in December and January).

The staff will have presentation first at November staff meeting. Mental health and well-being concerns are becoming epidemic. What is good for those students in need will help all students.

As a school we must be vocal to get assistance from school board.

Mid-semester report cards are going out in the mail. A voice message will be going out.

## **Round Table**

What is going on with the field repairs? The job is out to tender. As of now we have not received the final plan. Work won't start till the spring and will not take much time to complete. Repairs will be the field, and students can still use the track. If needed students have use of the side field.

Updates on athletic fitness centre? Nothing new has been completed in terms of major renovations or fundraising. It has been 5 years or so since last discussed. Some new equipment has been put in and a sound system. They're looking into a projector. Fitness classes are using the equipment. There are more weights. There is a workout club after school (everyday).

The school has been hitting the paper a lot. The Mayor's Gala, Alan Doan, and 3 students did the Mid Gala Entertainment. The funds raised go to support youth in Welland.

Tribune Tournament Gala coming up.

The Board Art Show, more art from Centennial than any other school, there is also art that has been submitted from staff including a custodian and a family.

Can the gym floor be cleaned more? When it is dusty students slide on it.

The students complained about the volleyballs.

Is there a float in the Santa Claus parade? No, just in the Rose Festival. Could consider for next year.

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:19pm**

**Next Meeting January 20, 2014, 7 pm.**