St. Gregory Catholic School

Parent Council Advisory Committee Meeting

February 21, 2017

Parents Present: Nikki Crenna, Chair; Catherine Sinclair, Secretary/Treasurer; Jason Sweet; Deborah Maycock; Sheena Cassidy; Kate MacNaughton; Todd Lichti; Justin Venslovaitis; Mary Mascarenhas; Dawn Stafrace; Natalie Venslovaitis; Danita Norton; Abby Watson

Staff Present: Melanie Taylor; Kevin Dorey

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

2. Opening Prayer

Mr. Dorey lead the group in prayer.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION PC06/17, THAT the agenda be approved.

Moved by: Todd Lichti

Seconded by: Mary Mascarenhas

4. Approval of Motions from the Parent Council Meeting of January 26, 2017

MOTION PC07/17, THAT the motions from the meeting of January 26, 2017 be approved.

Moved by: Catherine Sinclair

Seconded by: Justin Venslovaitis

5. Approval of the Minutes from the Parent Council Meeting of January 26, 2017

MOTION PC08/17, THAT the minutes from the meeting of January 26, 2017 be approved.

Moved by: Mary Mascarenhas

Seconded by: Justin Venslovaitis

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

7. Financial Update

Catherine noted that the Little Caesar’s Pizza fundraiser had $7,223.00 in sales and that $5,618 was due

back to the company, so in the end we made $1,605 in profit. As there was a delay in the delivery, a

parent called the company and they promised a $100 refund.

Next she noted an email motion from February 13, 2017 which was:

MOTION PC09/17, THAT a request for payment be made available for Thursday, February 16, 2017

in the amount of $500 payable to the Regent Theatre for movie for Grades 4-8.

Moved by: Nikki Crenna

Seconded by: Jason Sweet

(Mary, Todd, Dawn, Kate, Deb, Cath all replied to email vote).

However, she continued, the actual invoice was $570, which was paid. Catherine asked for a motion to

cover the outstanding funds:

MOTION 10/17, THAT an additional $70 be released from the Parent Council coffers to cover the full

cost of the movie.

Moved by: Jason Sweet

Seconded by: Justin Venslovaitis

The outstanding funds for the Balloon Tree was discussed next. A parent thought there were a good

number of donations and that the group likely only needs to contribute $100-$150 to cover the

outstanding amount. Mr. Dorey noted the school did receive the invoice so Catherine will communicate

with the school to find out the exact amount needed.

MOTION 11/17, THAT no more than $200 be released to the school from the Parent Council coffers

to cover the invoice for the Balloon Tree.

Moved by: Justin Venslovaitis

Seconded by: Todd Lichti

8. Review of the Proposed By-laws

The group was told that the By-laws have been finalized. There were no additional concerns/comments

from the group regarding the proposed by-laws.

MOTION 12/17, THAT the St. Gregory Catholic School Council Constitution and By-laws, February

2017 be approved.

Moved by: Todd Lichti

Seconded by: Mary Mascarenhas

9. Proposed Age of Majority Fundraiser

The group was informed that the Board is not in favour of a licensed event and therefore funds from Parent Council could also not be directed towards such an event. There was a lively discussion amongst members which included a possible alternative event that would just be a dance for school aged children. The Chair decided to table the discussion until a later date.

10. Nutrition Rocks Event

Mary noted that chef Michael Hoy overcommitted himself and is no longer available for the event on February 28th. She reminded the group that the school (not Parent Council) receives a $1000 grant (Pro Grant) which must be used for an event for parents on topics ranging from mathematics to literacy to healthy eating. Mary was directed to go back to Michael Hoy to see if March 28th would work.

11. Teacher Requests

A parent told the group that one of the teachers was asking for black-out curtains/blinds as it is very challenging to see the new smart boards on sunny days. There was discussion on Board versus school responsibility, and over who could do the installation. Also, a parent asked if there were other alternatives that could work and wondered what solution the teachers might prefer. Mr. Dorey stated he would ask the teachers and this topic would be on the agenda for the April meeting.

12. Principal’s Report

Mr. Dorey noted that the school has 261 pupils.

He indicated that the Fresh Grade system is up and running well and that all the issues seem to be resolved.

He spoke again about Ms. McDougall’s trip to Rome where she took the school cross to be blessed and also returned with an artifact; both items are now on display in the front hallway. This brought the discussion around to First Communion which will be on May 7th and First Confirmation on June 7th.

A staffing update was given next - Ms. Amber Carrigan joined Ms. Leavitt’s class and Ms. Kate Hulton is expected to fulfill the role of secretary until the end of the school year.

Mr. Dorey was happy to report that Literacy Day on January 27th was quite successful with many special visitors including Clifford the Big Red Dog, Geronimo Stilton, the MP, the MPP, the Chair of the ALCDSB and the media. Other successful events included the Balloon Tree for the Kinders-Grade 4’s and the movie day (Hidden Figures) for the Grade 4-8’s for Black History month and Women in Science. Other upcoming events include: Public Speaking on February 23rd; March Break starting March 13th; Science Fair on March 30th with the Quinte Regional Science Fair on April 1st; graduation mass on June 23rd.

13. Other Business

The Chair noted that there will be an upcoming event for Grades 6-8 called Women in Careers and will feature women from the school community talking about their unconventional careers and/or feature women who hold positions that are typically held by men. She noted that so far, she has a Sound Engineer, an Architect, a Journalist, and an owner of a winery, just to name a few.

A parent asked if the Spring Fling will still be happening to which she was told there will be an event in the spring but it will be re-branded as not to duplicate the ‘Welcome Back BBQ’.

14. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be April 11th, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

MOTION PC13/17, THAT the meeting be adjourned.

Moved by: Nikki Crenna

Seconded by: Catherine Sinclair

**St. Gregory Catholic School**

**Parent Council Advisory Committee Meeting**

**October 18, 2016**

Parents Present:              Catherine Kinnear, Chair; Nikki Crenna, Vice Chair; Todd Lichti; Kate MacNaughton; Mary Mascarenhas; Jason Sweet; Abby Watson; Deborah Maycock; Catherine Sinclair

Staff Present:                   Melanie Taylor; Kevin Dorey

The Chair, Catherine Kinnear called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.  and the agenda was approved by the group.  The minutes of September 21, 2016 were approved; however, three corrections were noted.  There was no additional business arising from the September minutes.

Catherine S. then handed out a financial print-out that was prepared by Shannon Guay.  The group had a lot of questions about the figures, however recognized that this was a good starting point.  The group asked that Catherine S. go back to Shannon for clarification on several items.

Mr. Dorey began to address the roles/duties for Parent Council stating that he will post the minutes on Facebook/website.  Catherine S. added that there is detailed information in the Parent Council binder that she keeps, noting a duplicate binder is kept in the main office.  It was thought that Justin wanted clarification on certain items, including items for the media but as he could not attend the meeting, this topic would be discussed once Justin was present.

Next, a parent spoke to the Thanksgiving Luncheon.  There was a lot of positive feedback from parents/teachers noting both good food and a well-organized event.  She stated that there has been discussion amongst some Parent Council members that volunteers need to be contacted sooner, the date set earlier and that a summer meeting is likely well deserved. She further indicated that there was a lot of food leftover (turkey, corn, potatoes) which led to a discussion about the number of turkeys versus the size (weight) of the turkeys.  There were additional comments made about the desserts and that many are store bought and "may contain nuts".  The Grade 7 & 8's were recognized for a great clean-up job!  Additionally, the group recognized that having a luncheon the following day for all the children/teachers that missed the event due to a soccer tournament was an excellent idea.

A parent noted that perhaps an activity station is warranted for the younger children during the luncheon.  A parent stated that perhaps paper table-cloths would be beneficial so that the children could 'doodle' during the event.

A parent moved the discussion to the group's fundraising efforts and that as a group she noted that we need to clarify exactly what we are fundraising for and what our goals are and in knowing that, we need to communicate it and sell it.  The group was told that from a fundraising perspective, the Spring Fling is the least advantageous event/activity we do.

A parent asked if we need a separate steering committee for fundraising to which another parent answered that perhaps for larger events/activities that we could.

Mr. Dorey stated that over the last couple of years that the fundraising efforts went towards the learning commons and the outdoor learning spaces but he then noted that perhaps one focus is best.  A teacher then added that there is a focus from the Board towards outdoor learning.  Regardless what the outcome of our efforts are, a parent reiterated that we need to actively communicate the goal.  This led to a good group discussion of topics ranging from the two book-end events (welcome back BBQ and Spring Fling) to the spaghetti dinners, to the raffles and gift baskets.  It was then decided that all funds raised would be targeted towards the outdoor learning spaces.

***MOTION PC02/16, THAT the Parent Council target all fundraising efforts to the outdoor learning spaces.***

***Moved by:         Catherine Sinclair***

***Seconded by:    Kate MacNaughton***

A parent then spoke to the possible need for a sports equipment drive/swap where parents could bring in equipment that is no longer needed in their household for another family who may be in need.  The discussion was focused on soccer (cleats/socks) but it was suggested that all types of sports equipment/clothing be available.  Mr. Dorey was going to seek clarification from the Athletic Association regarding cleats for elementary students (are they permitted or not).  The group liked the idea and thought it best for a spring event.

An idea resurfaced from last year from a parent who thought it would be good for discussion again this school year.  The idea was to have 'class parents', a parent advocate for each classroom.  Their role would be to enhance communication between the teacher and the parent group.  The teacher representative at the meeting said she would bring the idea forward at the next staff meeting for their discussion.  Mr. Dorey added that he would like to define the role better before going to staff with the teacher commenting that it would be beneficial to determine what the teachers need.

Christmas fundraisers and the Christmas Wishing Trees were discussed next.  The idea of a used housewares drive was also brought forth.  This would have the parents donating used items from their homes and the children would 'shop' for items (less than $5) for a present for mom and dad.  A parent asked if this would be another expense for parents right at Christmas time – gift baskets, wishing trees, raffles and now this.  Another parent also noted it would be an added cost at a very busy time of year.  A parent suggested that the gift baskets stay as a Christmas fundraiser, while another noted the housewares drive could be a better option in the spring so that the children could shop for Mother's Day and Father's Day.

Principal's Report

Mr. Dorey informed the group that the school's enrollment was up to 260 children.  He told us that 3 students from Queen's University have been working with the Grade 7's using Lego robots and that there are 3-4 sessions left.  Mr. Dorey stated that the first meeting regarding First Communion/Confession went well as well as the first spaghetti dinner.  He was proud to announce that the school Trustee and the Superintendent were very happy to attend the Thanksgiving luncheon and noted they enjoyed themselves.  He then spoke to the soccer tournament that some of the children attended and lamented that it's too bad that our school cannot host such an event, but that the possibility was there to host cross country at Macaulay Mountain perhaps.  The 'Rainbows' training (on loss and bereavement) was provided to several staff and parish members said Mr. Dorey.  Next, he told the group that the school applied for and received funding from the Health Unit to install hydration stations and that so far one unit had been purchased and installed.

Mr. Dorey noted several dates of interest: safe schools drill on October 25th; spaghetti dinner on November 1st; picture retake day is November 3rd; progress reports home on November 8th with parent teacher interviews on or around November 10th; and a bus safety presentation would occur on November 28th.

The group learned that the 'Fresh from Farm' fundraiser raised $380, although a bit disappointed with this effort, Mr. Dorey and the Parent Council decided to see how the quality of the items are and that likely attempt this event next year as most appreciated the concept.

A few classes had or will have field trips soon including to: Terra Cello Winery; the new emergency services building in Picton; the Junior Faith Conference; the Toronto Aquarium; Bats of Ontario at Macaulay Village; and in addition, some high school students from Nicholson were going to be visiting the Grade 7 & 8's.

Mr. Dorey questioned what was the best way to communicate with parents – newsletter/emails/website?  He briefly touched upon 'Fresh Grade' which some teachers used last year; however, he noted that there seem to be issues with it for this school year that the Board is still trying to solve.  Most preferred email and it was noted that all emails should provide a link to the new school website.  A parent noted this could also circle back to the discussion on class parents.

A parent brought forward a new fundraising idea which was a Christmas catalogue with items such as Christmas cards and wrapping paper.  A parent volunteered to research this and get back to the group with the findings.

A parent made note and reminded the group that last year the Parent Council forgot to donate a wreath for the Remembrance Day event.

***MOTION PC03/16, THAT the Parent Council contribute $25 to the purchase of a Remembrance Day wreath.***

***Moved by:         Mary Mascarenhas***

***Seconded by:    Deb Maycock***

A parent asked if the raffle for front row seating would occur for the Christmas concert and she was told no, not this year.

A parent noted that last year the school science fair did not occur.  Mr. Dorey stated this year the Bay of Quinte Regional Science Fair would be on April 1, 2017 at Loyalist College.

The next meeting of the Parent Council will be on Tuesday, November 22, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 7:40 p.m.​​

**St. Gregory Catholic School**

**Parent Council Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

**September 21, 2016**

Parents Present:              Mary Ann Valiquette; Patricia MacNamara Stenning; Justin Venslovaitis; Todd Lichti; Susanne McKerral; Nikki Crenna; Dawn Stafrace Middleton; Kate MacNaughton; Danita Norton; Sheena Cassidy; Natalie Venslovaitis; Mary Mascarenhas; Jason Sweet; Catherine Kinnear, Abby Watson; Catherine Sinclair

Staff Present:                   Stephanie Byrne-Shaw; Daniela Auciello; Melanie Taylor; Kevin Dorey; and Father Chisholm

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. and the group was lead in prayer by Father Chisholm.

There was no agenda for this meeting.

The first order of business was to complete elections and the results are as follows:

Co-Chair – Catherine Kinnear

Vice-Chair – Nikki Crenna

Secretary/Treasurer – Catherine Sinclair

Media Relations – Justin Venslovaitis

Teaching Position – Melanie Taylor

Parish Representative – Father Chisholm

Support Staff Representative – N/A

Non-Teaching Staff Representative – N/A

Principal's Report

Father Chisholm was welcomed by Mr. Dorey.

Mr. Dorey then told the group that there are 259 students this year in 12 classrooms.  He stated that there are more support staff than last year even though the overall numbers are down.  In addition, he said the school has two Loyalist students on Wednesdays thru Fridays, some co-op students, and that the school is always looking for more volunteers.

Mr. Dorey stated that this year the school improvement focus is on numeracy.  He then provided a technology update by noting that all classrooms have new digital projectors; K-6 classes are outfitted with Apple TV; primary classrooms have iPad kits and teacher iPads; junior classrooms have teacher iPads; junior/intermediate classrooms have 5 laptops; and the learning commons has two iPad kits.  Additionally he noted that the school and the Board have new websites.  Further he noted that all students have a Board email account which includes access to electronic resources.  The account stays with the student for as long as that student is with the ALCDSB.

Mr. Dorey informed the group that school fundraising efforts goes to support excursions, upgrades to the learning commons, and to the outdoor learning spaces.  He explained that the school will host several spaghetti nights in support of fundraising efforts and that the school is trying a new fundraiser - fresh farm to table.

Finally, Mr. Dorey spoke to the production of Peter Pan which will occur during Catholic Education Week which is the first week of May.

A parent asked about the production of Peter Pan and it was stated that it is not musical but rather involves participation from the audience.  The play will require approximately 30 cast members and crew and will run approximately 45 minutes in length.  Shannon Guay has started the initial organization of this endeavor.

A parent asked about the costs associated with its production and the parents were assured that the costs should be covered by ticket sales as it is a low budget production and not a traditional play.

A parent asked about the farm to table fundraiser and wondered if the Board arranged it or the school.  The Principal noted that several schools in various Boards have done it and that St. Gregory's was excited to try it, noting that the school gets 40% of the sales.

A special 'thank you' to Mary was expressed as she started organizing the annual Thanksgiving luncheon which will be on October 5th.  Her efforts included sending several letters to community members in search of donations.  Mary then said that costs were up as the County did not support our request for funding so the hall will cost us around $400.

There was then a discussion about this cost and possible alternatives such as the Elks or the school gym and the limitations in overall size and kitchen facilities that came with each of those venues.  In the end most agreed that having everyone dine together in one sitting provided a sense of community and that $400 was a small price to pay, noting that the kids love it and it's a great tradition.

A parent asked who pays for the turkeys and they were told that the parish generously donates the turkeys every year.

***MOTION PC01/16, THAT the Parent Council approve the $400 expense for the hall for the annual Thanksgiving luncheon.***

Moved By:        Sheena Cassidy

Seconded By:    Jason Sweet

During the meeting, a parent arranged with Hagermans to provide decorations (pumpkins/gourds) for the luncheon.

A parent questioned allergy concerns for children and how that would be addressed during the luncheon.  It was expressed that concerned parents could provide a lunch to the volunteer kitchen staff that would ensure that it is delivered.

Father questioned health concerns for people cooing turkeys at home to which Mr. Dorey replied that he  contacted health unit twice in the past about this concern and received no response.

A parent noted that the Pro Grant for $1000 was received and that it must be used for a healthy eating night for a guest speaker in November and that the funds must be spent by June 30th.  Further the group was told that only 10% of the grant was allotted for food and in addition there was a very small marketing budget.  It was suggested that a committee group be organized for this particular event.  Mary Mascarenhas was interested in this committee and she noted that Brie Seeley was as well and another parent suggested that Scott Royce might be interested.

A parent informed the group that the school has started a fundraiser with Mabels Labels.  The school will earn 20% of all sales.

A parent also informed the group that the QSP (magazine fundraiser) is not officially running but that parents could still place an online order.

Next a parent asked how do those types of fundraising efforts work at the school to which she was told that information is placed on the school website, on the voice mail delivery system for the school and/or via school email.

Finally there was a brief discussion on the Spring Fling and it was suggested that it not be one of the major fundraisers for the school; perhaps it could be something smaller or completely different.  The group decided it was a discussion to be had at a later meeting.

**The next meeting of the Parent Council will be on Tuesday, October 18th at 6 p.m.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.