

École Intermédiaire Lawrence Grassi Middle School Council
Thursday, November 8, 2012 – 7:00 PM
Meeting/Staff Room LGMS
Minutes



LEARNING COMPONENT: Bullying Prevention (Wednesday, Nov. 14th, 7 – 9 pm at CCHS)

INFORMATION: Bryan Wityshyn, Leanne McKeown, Alison Rob, Lori Wynn, Shari Worobey, Betty Mah, Alison Carter, Adrienne Lawlor

1. Call to Order & Welcome Any New LGMS Council Members and Guests
7:03 pm
2. Adoption (Amendment) of Agenda - Alanna has asked to table the procedures to December's meeting.
-A question about class sizes over at CCHS is to be added to tonight's Agenda (See question posed by Alison Carter in Section 8).
3. Confirmation/Approval of Past Minutes – The agenda was approved by email.
4. Reports
 - Principal's Report (Brian Wityshyn)

-On October, 11th, 2012 author, Rachel Hartman visited CCHS to present and to speak about her book, "Sarahina: la Ragazza con il Cuore di Drago." Some of LGMS kids attended this entertaining session.

-Scholastic Book Fair on Oct. 17-19, 2012 was successful and \$4500 was raised.

-Parent-teacher interviews and goal settings occurred on Oct. 18-19, 2012. Learning Clicks were set up at this time to display career planning information and to educate kids regarding preparation for the job force.

-The end of volleyball season is around the corner...There has been great turn-out and participation with LGMS students: 4 girl's teams and 4 boy's teams competed! Thank-you to Derek and Andrea!

-Halloween was fun! The annual parade took place at LGMS. This year, Rhonda Krasnodemski's and Ms. Williamson's classes shelled out treats (while in costume) to the businesses and to kids on the streets as a "thank you"/ philanthropic activity. Due to its success and the positive feedback received, this may become an annual tradition. Perhaps do this at Christmas?

-Brian has received positive feedback about kids going downtown at lunch. Most kids are respectful when visiting businesses at lunch and many are grabbing their lunch and running back to school to take part in the clubs and activities at lunch.

-In music, the Vic Lewis Festival on Nov 1-3, 2012 was very educational and entertaining. Kids were nervous as they were being judged, but they learned a tremendous amount of information from their clinics, from coaching received, and from playing with other students. About 850 students from across Alberta were in attendance.

-During the Remembrance Day ceremony at LGMS a variety of performances were noted: a Veteran spoke, poetry was read, singers preformed, and Ms. Murphy organized the band.

-National Anti-Bullying Week Nov. 13-16, 2012. Bill Belsey will speak on Nov. 14 from 7-9 p.m. at CCHS. Activities at LGMS will include educating and coaching kids regarding the definition of Bully Awareness Week: what is it? Students will take a pledge regarding their commitment to/action plan regarding bully awareness/prevention and display these pledges in a peace sign. Brian displayed wrist bands that say, "Stop Bullying," and is hoping all the kids will "band" together when they wear these. There is going to be a "Blue Day," in which the theme is "Celebrate the change." Blue symbolizes peace. Nov. 13, 2012 from 7-9 p.m. is a

"Bully-Free Alberta, cyber-webcast" for those who can't make it out on Nov. 14. You can visit the following website: www.bullyfreealberta.ca or www.bfree.ca for more information.

-Term 2, new option courses start next week. Some options introduced include: Drama 8 and Elite Endeavors (This is provided for those who are busy outside school. It is like a study hall in which students are given extra help or support with organization etc.). Avalanche Training is coming up for students in grades 7 and 8.

-In the next few weeks, up and coming events include: Poinsettia Sales, Quebec trip, and Xmas concert on Dec. 11th.

- **Treasurer's Report: (Alison Andrews)**

-Not much has changed, just money is going out for pizza.

-Brian spent \$900 of the in-school reserve fund of \$2300. There is still about \$1400 left over from what council has set aside for school wishes. Brian mentioned a big screen for the gym could be an option for this fund. He mentioned that \$2000 is what it may cost.

-\$300 is dedicated for daily physical activity. Leanne mentioned the possibility of getting a foosball table for kids to play with. Adrienne mentioned that we should look at purchasing these second hand. It was suggested to put this in the newsletter as there may be some used/ not used foosball tables out there that families want to get rid of.

-Dishwasher from foods room: It was asked if this has been fixed.

5. **Mental Health/Emotional Intelligence Proposal: (Adrienne Lawlor)**

-Adrienne was amazed with the number of activities that were taking place at LGMS and she wanted to communicate the effectiveness of this to parents. She wanted to share how great the school is, how keen kids are to attend LGMS, and to incorporate "expressing gratitude" and develop "social/emotional learners" in our students.

-She explained a bit of history/background to her idea: Multiple projects were created across AB in the "Right From the Start Program." She has initiated socio-emotional learning called, "Inner Cool Kids," to BES and ERS. This involves partnering kids, and teaching them relaxation skills and gratitude thinking. These components are from the program, "Mind Masters". She was trained in the "Mind Up" program which was created by Goldie Hawn, (in partnership with UBC), and which had the middle school curriculum in mind. "Right from the Start" has begun to use the "Mind Up" program.

-Adrienne mentioned that this was prime time to have socio-emotional strategies in the classroom. Deep breathing was a core mindfulness practice which involved ringing a chime and listening to deep breathing. (She mentioned that teaching was third most stressful occupation.) Adrienne wondered if she could inject some of this research and her training into the school. She asked: "What are the next steps for implementing a curriculum like this in the school?" Alison Andrews suggested we weave this into the "Habits of Mind" program. Leanne suggested we add it to a weblink that Alison Carter is setting up to get the info out to parents. Leanne also suggested we combine it with the monthly values that are being taught and talked about in assemblies.

-Adrienne handed out a sheet which mapped "6 Habits of Happiness Worth Cultivating."

-She mentioned how the kids last year raised money for Ryan Carrington and how proud they were. She also suggested the kids at LGMS start giving back to the community to develop happiness.

-Adrienne performed a "mindfulness" activity with a chime: She rang the chime and we listened to see how long we could actually "hear" the chime.

6. **Telus Update**

-Brian, Dave McKenzie, Ken Riorden, Chris MacPhee, and a Telus representative met with interested parties about safety, measurements, etc. with Telus. Telus is going to have a public open house and try to relocate the tower. They have a site in mind for relocation, but they have to secure it. It still takes a month or two until they can take the tower down. They are also in the process of putting up two more towers, but need property on which to erect these. They are now thinking about having a public open house. Telus explained that the

more towers, the less electromagnetic radiation power emitted by each, so having more towers in the area will be less harmful. Brian explained that we are looking at the safety for our children, and the community has questions that need to be answered. Readings will be taken at our school; inside and outside the school, and by the Daycare. It was noted that the CRPS Board of Trustees sent out a letter earlier in the process saying they did not support the tower initially.

7. Council Initiatives

-Leanne thanked those involved with preparing the Rotary Club grant: If approved, it will be used towards purchasing audiovisual appliances for the school gymnasium.

-Council websites: The question was raised regarding whether or not a link for parent council website existed. Alison Carter put one together in the summer that is pretty generic at this point: gro-i-ro.weebly.com. Brian will look into this and will contact the tech department.

-Pizza Day: Brian will make an announcement for kids who have signed up "only" for the second day to avoid confusion during the next pizza day.

-Alison C: There's a school in Calgary that is looking at coming to the area for Geocaching. She will let Brian know if anything progresses.

-Iron Chef: This is coming up in the future and internal volunteers are needed to help run it, to get the kids keen, to look through recipes, to shop for ingredients etc.

8. Board Meeting with School Councils – Liz & Leanne

-Leanne and Liz attended a board meeting with the trustees in which they listened to Chris MacPhee and the Board's plans/ mandates. The focus included educational learning, financial planning, communications, and policy review.

-One focus was grade configuration and infrastructure. – Council discussed school capacity and declining enrolment and how they were going to move forward with options to address these issues. -Architects from Dept. of Ed. will tour all 3 schools to discuss options.

-Other issue: New Education Act is mandating the bussing issue be discussed among the Catholic and Public Boards.

-Further news:

-A partnership is being formed between BES/ BCHS and the Banff Center.

-CCHS approached seniors who wrote a Christmas wish and hung it on a tree. Students will pick a tag with a senior's wish and will give it to them.

-Shared technology with another school district to reduce some of the problems the district is experiencing.

-Alison Andrews asked a question about Hearts and Hands program at LGMS...she wanted to know if it was still continuing. Brian explained that unfortunately it isn't as teacher organizers have other responsibilities and lack of time. It is one of the chosen school charities and she would like it to be addressed.

-Alison Carter asked if the school had ever thought about Christmas caroling over at the Senior's Center. Adrienne mentioned that the Adult Day Support Program run by Alberta Health Services at the hospital may be interested in this.

-Brian addressed/ added more information to the issue of declining enrollment in schools and possible school closures: one suggestion that has been discussed with CRPS board of trustees is to reduce the portables, reconfiguring schools instead of closing schools. Another alternative is to offer more credit courses at high school by creating more programs. French Immersion program could be in one school and an English school at another, integrating grades 7 to 8 with the high school. Brian mentioned that Mr. MacPhee had voiced in the Board meeting that there will be opportunities for parent involvement before any decisions are made.

-Alison Andrews said that Mr. MacPhee had stressed that kids tend to do better at a k-12 school. Transition to high school during a diploma exam year may add stress i.e. grade 9 so it may be best to switch to a school first.

*Note: There are many options and no decision has yet been made by CRPS School Board. Discussions and brainstorming sessions are presently being held by all stakeholders.

-Alison C asked about class sizes at CCHS as a parent had brought her attention to CCHS class sizes of 42 this year, and these may be larger next year. Alison C. phoned CCHS and was put through to the CCHS Career Advisor, who said that CCHS did have some large class sizes, but was adamant that the quality of education, exam results and the wide variety of options offered at CCHS was excellent, and showed class sizes were not detrimental to students' learning. Also, class sizes can be much smaller than 42 because students are set up in different options. Parents may call or meet 1:1 with the career advisor to discuss any concerns.

9. Hunt Memorial/Award –Alison Andrews hasn't talked further to the parents as she is waiting on options for awards or suggestions. Perhaps a subcommittee who knows the parents gets set up. Brian suggested that the high school awards this so that Andrew's peers either give this or put together criteria for this award as it may have more meaning there...we need to talk to the high school about this. Leanne said she would be meeting with the high school parent council chair and would see if they were interested in taking on this project.
10. Reporting Procedures - Descriptors VS. Marks regarding student assessment – Alanna: Tabled to next meeting
11. Learning Component – Brian is trying to get Bill Belsey to come and talk to LGMS students in the future.
 - Perhaps for January we could get an RCMP officer come in to talk about drugs: what is out there etc..
 - Alison Andrews suggested having roving council members during parent-teacher interviews so that we could get more parents involved...This idea will be discussed further in one meeting.

Meeting to be adjourned at 9:04 PM

Date and time of next meeting:

December 12, 2012 at 7:00 PM