

William Aberhart School Council Meeting minutes Oct. 28, 2013-10-31

Meeting called to order at 07.04pm

Attendees: Laurie B, Michelle D, Gena H, Shelley M, Patricia S, Maureen W, Sheila T, Kevin W, Gerty W, Lauri K, Rick C, Deanna H, Susan T, Jennie K, Mr Baldwin, and guests

Minutes from September meeting approved by Gena

Parent Council now has its own tab on the Aberhart website so it is easier to access. Laurie is building a database of Council Members. Please note if you do not want your e mail listed.

Guest speaker Guidance Counsellor, Gisele Kreuger. Gisele taught for 10 years and recently went half time in her Counsellor role. In her introduction Gisele reinforced that the staff welcome parent interaction and truly appreciate when parents get involved with their children at school.

Most of their activity tends to be with Gr. 10 building their profiles and Gr 12 students as they find themselves stressed re exams at the end of their High School chapter. Gisele then outlined the self assessment process that they do with each grade 10 student. Out of approximately 500 Gr. 10 students only 70 to date have not completed their assessments. The students complete their personal learning profile on D2L. Some of the questions addressed by the students include: How do I learn? How am I smart? As in what do I excel in? How do I express myself? What do I want to achieve this year? Or any year? In school, in life. There is focus on the student's capacity to learn, and if not getting needs met how does this manifest itself. Once some of these questions are addressed it gives the student a better sense of themselves and consequently allows them to feel that they have regained some control of their school life and consequently results. One of the exercises that focuses on the mind looks at all the subjects the student is taking as well as other areas that are important in their life. The student is asked to rate each area on a scale of 1 – 10. This can help identify areas of bias, concern, opportunities to learn and grow. This is intended as a brief summary and if parents or students are interested in learning more please reach out to your counsellor.

Kevin Willms, Fine Arts, High School Band. Kevin came to shed some light on the past history around fundraising, casino and the breadth and scope of the Music Associations fundraising. The music group is an Association as well as a Registered Charity at a Provincial level. Changes were made approximately five years ago when parents decided this was to be a program of enrichment. The students have regular sessions with clinicians, extra travel and opportunities. This type of program was costed out and the parents of the music students do an annual contribution of \$225.00. Due the high volume of work to manage the funds WAMPA made the decision to hire a full time book keeper, which adds expense. There are opportunities to fundraise through the Flames (and McMahon) for students and parents. WAMPA does keep 10% of the money raised to help pay for the costs to run the financial side of the Association. The Aberhart music program is the second largest in the Province, after Western Canada High School, and they are very proud of their standing. Past purchases by WAMPA include satellite

phone for use on field trips, lighting and supplies. WAMPA has opened up their fundraising efforts to others who are interested. Casinos work well and silent auctions. Discussions about how to engage sponsors to participate eg Western Canada High School partners with Husky Energy, CIBC and Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. Laurie asked how can we better manage communication regarding the various fundraising opportunities eg Flames and McMahon opportunities.

Susan Tomecek with Volunteer Parent Alliance of Calgary Schools (V-PACS) spoke about V-PACS. One of their mandates is to lobby the current Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission (AGLC) ruling of one casino licence per school regardless of per capita or programs offered. They would also like to see the membership expand from music to increase legitimacy and spectrum of the membership and groups supported through fundraising. To learn more Susan can be reached at 403-241-8440. The Parent Council decided that more discussion was needed around this especially on how to push change with AGLC. Ideally we would like to have a Gr. 10 parent join V-PACS eg Friends of Orange

8.20 pm Principal's Report G Baldwin

Jacques Ferguson is now off until January 2014.

Project Courtyard: Deanne's father (architect –Rick) attended the meeting. We need to involve the end users (students) for their input as to how they would like to see the space utilized better. It was suggested that Giselle's group of Counsellors may be able to include this in their discussions with the students. Apparently many do not use the area due as it is so dependent on the weather. They have said they would appreciate more seating. Deanne raised the idea of having the art students doing a project as part of their program and that would be to decorate the benches. They could even be redone every 3 years with new students making their mark. Gord will talk with Sharon Marriott the art teacher to see if this might be a feasible plan over winter. The same goes for the canvases if that is the way we go. They too could be decorated by the students. The need for robust heaters was discussed. Due to building regulations the structures will have to be stand alone. Gord wanted to make sure that the classrooms around the courtyard do not lose their natural light access. Susan Tomecek (403-241-8440) volunteered her husband's services as a structural engineer.

8.38pm Gord attended a high School Redesign meeting in Red Deer today. There are eight key areas of focus with the goal of curriculum redesign in the next 2 – 3 years. This idea for change came out of a literature review and is available on the website (www.education.ab.ca/highschoolcompletion) There are 350 High Schools and Alberta and 162 of them are started playing with the ideas and working on how to incorporate them.

Laurie Baines announced that they need homes for Home Stay for International Students. There is a \$750.00 per month honorarium for taking these students from January – June. Information is on the Home Page of the William Aberhart website, under 'Information on Hosting International Students'.

Thursday November 7th there will be two Remembrance Day services, one at 10.00am and the second at 11.00am. All welcome to attend.

Meeting adjourned at 08.50pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sheila Tomlinson (sheiladt@shaw.ca)