Parent council – January 11 2023

In attendance:

Tamara Schmelzle

Andrea Gabriel

Nikita Sonigara

Stacey Toohey

Liz Weber

Steve Reist – interim Principal

Michael Kopysh

Minutes

WEFI – Waterloo Education Foundation Inc

Marty Raymond to return as interim principal until February 20

Opening

Fundraiser update:

- $500 made through poinsettia sales
- Winter pizza – 888 slices per week for winter session
    - Gary (parent volunteer) and Andrea able to continue running
    - Approximately $700 a week made from pizza, forecast $7,000
    - Will continue Spring pizza (May June) so orders sometime in April
- Seasonal fundraising discussion
    - Targeted end of March fundraiser – Chocolate – Reids & Rheo Thompson inquiries to be made about program logistics and special request accommodations

Schoolyard enhancements:

- WRDSB procurement group is standing by to support efforts once we have the money to spend
    - $50,000 is absolutely a reasonable target for the enhancements under consideration

- We will get a subcommittee formed to get grant-writing underway etc
- We will establish a survey for the community to understand preference of outdoor enhancement focus
    - Rolled out to the staff community for input separately
        - Derive options for broader community survey from this result
- Tamara to follow up in understanding what it would take to enhance the “backyard” with turf, and potentially structures similar to those in front of the YWCA operated daycare

- Gaga ball pit grant request: No update
- There was at one point $2,000 ear-marked for a scooter rack
    - While there are some scooters which make their way to school, this may not be the best allocation of funds
    - Potentially re-allocate fund in the event the gaga-ball pit grant is un-successful
- It was determined that greater transparency into the fundraising efforts would help drive success, ensuring the community can see how their commitment will be utilized

Tamara update:

Pink shirt day and random act of kindness, "Safe caring and inclusive schools"

- Counsel and community should be aware of considerations to safe caring and inclusive schools
    - Character and leadership development, safe and healthy schools, equity and inclusive educations, student engagement and parent / community engagement
    - What's coming in Safe caring and inclusive school initiative
        - February being recognized as Black History Month
        - Friday prior to family day weekend – Random Act of Kindness Day
        - End of February – Pink Shirt Day
- We have teams dedicated to Assembly's, Safe Caring and Inclusive Schools etc
    - There is cross-functional effort underway to understand how they can work together and drive home the SCIS messaging
    - Safe Caring and Inclusive Schools team does require a parent participant
        - Opportunity for a parent from the community to participate

Voice of community update:

- Feedback has come from the broader community that we do not feel engaged with the school
    - Lack of opportunity such as winter concert to connect with student peers and parents
    - The "post-pandemic" community (those with students who joined since 2020) has had a very different experience, and feels arms length from what goes on
        - Planned events year have included/will include:
            - Welcome to kindergarten (prior to school beginning)
            - Meet the teacher night (early school year)
            - Track and field (end of school year, including parallel primary event)
- The re-implementation of assembly is a broader discussion amongst the team
    - VP Tamara discussed a thoughtful approach to re-implementing assembly, noting that it doesn't make sense to gather K-6 and expect order for the duration of a 45 minute session
        - Additionally, Remembrance day was not deemed the appropriate "return to assembly" subject matter (the Council agreed)

- Michael Kopysh (on behalf of outside community input) noted that while this is understandable, eliminating their existence altogether creates siloes where there should be school-wide communication and alignment, and contributes to the overall lack of community feeling amongst the school and parents