

Ecole Secondaire Ste. Marguerite d'Youville, 51 Boudreau Rd. St. Albert, AB.

School Council Meeting Minutes - September 5, 2023

Call to order at 6:31pm

Meeting Attendance

Monique Aultman - Principal, Michelle Sestito - Assistant Principal/Teacher

Suzanne Morton - Chair, Rachelle Cyr - Secretary

Meghan Sievwright, Candice Crandall, Helen Jamieson, Jackie Froment, Stacey Jost, Genevieve Gray, Corinna Dooley, Christine Loiselle, Tanya Boutin, Rachel Virani, Katherine Milliken, Kari McKnight, Michelle Kitsco, Megan Davis, Danielle Kuzyk, Kathryn Richmond, Mary Ellen Green, Kim Ahing

Acknowledgement and Prayer - ESSMY Administrators

Approval of the Agenda (as amended)

Approved by Candice Crandall

Seconded by Helen Jamieson

Approval of the May 2, 2023 Meeting Minutes (as amended)

Approved by Meghan Sievwright

Seconded by Stacey Jost

Chairperson Report - Suzanne Morton

Welcome Back:

Welcome back to ESSMY! Our AGM will be held October 3, 2023, and will be followed by a Regular Meeting. Elections will take place at this time. ESSMY currently does not have a Treasurer, as the school does not have a fundraising arm. This may change throughout the year, as establishing a fundraising arm will continue to be explored and discussed by ESSMY Administration and School Council. Should this change occur, we will need to amend our SOPs. The current SOPs can be found via the ESSMY website at: <https://www.essmy.gsacrd.ab.ca/download/310965>. The SOPs must be accepted as is, or amended annually at the AGM, so please take a few moments to review them prior the October 3rd AGM, and submit any amendments ahead of time to: ESSMY.council.school@gmail.com

Alberta School Council Association:

Free virtual parent education session - 4 part series called "Thriving in the Digital World".

Begins Sept 7 and you must register via the ASCA Event Calendar:

<https://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/about/calendar#list>


Parents/guardians should feel free to check this site monthly for educational opportunities.

Alberta Parent Engagement Grant:

As far as we know, every School Council in Alberta will once again be receiving a \$500 grant to be used toward engaging the parent community. Suzanne learned at last year's ASCA AGM that the criteria for use of the grant money will be amended to include conferences and workshops.

In past years, the School Council Executive would construct and disseminate to families a survey to determine areas of interest for using the grant money, and take the survey results back to the School Council to be discussed. In the past, ESSMY School Council has secured parent presentations on mental health/emotional regulation and social media awareness. We have partnered with other schools to afford high quality presentations, and are proud to have been a leader in our school district when it comes to helping other GSACRD schools secure excellent presentations and value for their grant money.

Trustee Report - Lydia Yeomans

Lydia was unable to attend. Please see board highlights  [Good_News_Aug._26,_2023_](#)

Administrator Report - Monique Aultman

1. **School Fees** - We will be sending out school fees shortly. School fees will follow the fee schedule that was approved by our School Council earlier this Spring. Option fees will be sent out each trimester. Fees can be paid via PowerSchool under the "school fees" tab.
2. **Staffing** - With the formation of our new middle school, we welcome ten new staff members to our school: M. Kaptouang,(Grade 5) M. Shabani,(Grade 5) Mme Sestito,(Vice-principal) Mme Keown,(Grade 5) Mme Thera-Seguin,(Grade 6) Mlle Ford, (Grade 6)Mme Doucet,(Grade 8-9) Mme Fry,(Grade8-9) M. Jobin (Grade 7/9) et Mme Matkowski.(librarian)
3. **Faith Theme** - This year we begin a new three year faith theme in our Division. Growing in the Trinity: Love, Mercy and Grace. This year as a school we focus on love and so our theme is "Growing in Love with the Father". We encourage our students to become actively involved in their faith and come to a deeper relationship with God the Father.
4. **Recess** - We acknowledge that there may be concerns about the upcoming changes to recess for all students, and it's important to us that every student feels a sense of unity within our school rather than division; additionally, recognizing the importance of fresh air in supporting physical and cognitive development, boosting immune function, and reducing stress for their overall health and well-being, we are committed to trying this approach and sincerely hope everyone will be willing to give it a chance.
5. **Large classrooms** - Thank you for sharing your concerns about classroom sizes. We understand the importance of smaller class sizes for the quality of education. At this time, due to budget constraints and staffing limitations, we are facing challenges in reducing class sizes further.

However, please know that our dedicated teachers are committed to providing the best education possible for your children, regardless of class size.

6. **Volunteers** - At ESSMY we welcome parent volunteers. We ask that you always sign in at the office so that in case of an emergency, we are aware of who is in the building. We remind parents who volunteer in our school that we require a criminal record check to be completed on an annual basis. For those parents who may be coaching students or in small groups or one on one situations, they are required to have a criminal record check with the vulnerable sector. These letters need to come from the principal as specific dates and times are requested by the RCMP. At present, we are looking for parent volunteers to help us in three areas: Healthy Hunger, Yearbook and Sewing prayer clothes.
7. **Field Trips** - We are looking forward to having more field trips this year. Individual teachers may be booking these field trips according to subject areas, but we also have our annual ski trip to Marmot. This year we are also going to try arranging ski trips closer to home as well. We will keep you informed as we know further details.
8. **Upcoming events:**
 - Sept. 5-6- Junior Boys and Girls Volleyball Tryouts
 - Sept. 7- Opening Mass at 9:00 am @ Holy Family Parish
 - Sept. 8- Picture Day!
 - Sept 11-15- ESSMY ESPRIT activities
 - Sept. 13- Fun Run at Muriel Martin 4:00-5:00 pm
 - Sept. 15- Pep Rally in the gym (pm)
 - Sept. 16- MCHS Senior Volleyball Tournament
 - Sept. 20- Cross Country Fun Run @ Joe Demko School 4:00pm
 - Sept. 21- Terry Fox Run starting at 10:10 am
 - Sept 21- House Color Day
 - Sept. 22- Staff Meeting/PD Day- no school for students
 - Sept 22-23- SAPEC Volleyball Tournament
 - Sept. 25- Grade 7 Retreat- Division Wide
 - Sept 25.- Thanksgiving Food Bank Drive begins
 - Sept 27- District Race at Hillgrove School 9:00 -11:00 am (20 top runners) for Grades 5-6/Junior high Districts
 - Sept. 29- Orange Shirt Day
 - Oct. 2- Day in Recognition of Truth and Reconciliation Day- no school

Unfinished/Ongoing Business

a) Yearbook:

Meghan will be stepping down this year

Mme Aultman, Candice & Mme Fry will set a meeting date to discuss

The committee is still looking for a photographer for school events

b) Staff Appreciation Committee:

Coming to middle school from elementary school can be daunting for parents who want to acknowledge staff. This committee (composed of any parent who wishes to help out) provides a survey to parents at the beginning of the school year to determine where collected funds will be spent at Christmas and the end of the school year. As ESSMY configuration has changed this year, ie. now a grade 5-9 school, there will be a 2 part survey to determine interest in the current format, and to gather new ideas.

c) Parent Community Facebook Page:

Suzanne Morton and Helen Jamieson are Admins on the page. Lots of new families are joining. Mme Aultman has included our information in the weekly newsletter. Reminder that if you are inviting new families to join, please tell them so they can answer the screening questions. Once families no longer have students at ESSMY, they are asked to remove themselves from the group in the interest of keeping the group current, relevant and to allow some level of privacy for current members.

d) Other: Q & A**Healthy Hunger:**

Q: Will there be Healthy Hunger Hot Lunch this year?

A: Possibly. In order for this to happen, parent volunteers are needed. Possible parent volunteers: Stacey, Genevieve, Jackie and Helen

⁵/₆ Split Class:

Q:How big is the class and what is their morning schedule?

A: The class has 25 students. Grade 5s have 8 and Grade 6s have 17. They have phys ed, religion, health and options before the split in the afternoon.

Essmy Newsletter:

Q: Why did some parents not receive the Friday newsletter?

A: Mme Aultman is unsure and will look into it. It was discussed that the Friday Newsletter is very helpful to keep families informed of upcoming events.

Class sizes:

Q: What is being done about class sizes in grade 8? And who can parents contact/write to, to voice their concerns?

A: Class size concerns can be directed to:

GSACRD - Dr. Clint Moroziuk, Superintendent

GSACRD - Board of Trustees - direct to Chair, Lydia Yeomans

UCP MLA and cc the Official Opposition MLA for St. Albert

Minister of Education and cc the Official Opposition Education Critic

Attend the GSACRD Regular Board Meetings (scheduled on GDAFRD website). Criteria for submitting questions to the Board in advance of their meetings can be viewed here as well.

Sports Academy Bus Drop Off:

Q: Can something be done with the sports academy bus drop off point? Some parents feel this could be potentially dangerous to students crossing the road between the two schools.

A: Mme Aultman will be speaking to the bus driver for possible solutions.

Sports Academy and Mass:

Q: Will Sport Academy students be missing all mass celebrations this year?

A: There will only be two times this year that mass will unfortunately be missed.

Reason: ESSMY students attend 9am mass, this is their designated time.

Snack:

Q: Are students eating snacks during pause or are they eating during class?

A: They are going outside for pause and then eating snacks after in the cafeteria. Snack is not part of their pause/recess minutes.

Traffic:

Q: Can more directional signs be placed to help calm traffic in morning and afterschool?

A: Possibly, admin will look into this. There was also a suggestion that the front of the school could become a "hug and go" instead of parked vehicles to cut down congestion.

Student Council:

Q: Will there be a student council this year and what grades will be involved?

A: Yes, student council will begin next week led by Mme Shervey. The grades are yet to be determined.

Band Teacher:

Q: Will the school have band this year?

A: There are currently no applicants for a band teacher position.

Meeting adjourned 8:56pm

Next Meeting Date: AGM October 3rd at 6:30pm. Regular meeting to follow