

F.R. Haythorne (FRH) Junior High School

Parent Council Meeting

Wednesday, September 13, 2023

Attendance:

Lana Lastiwka - Principal	Rejeita Kumar - Chair, Grade 8 Parent	Trina Boymook - Trustee	Carri Douglas - Grade 8 Parent
Mark Wever - Assistant Principal	Sivanthy Suntharalingam - Vice Chair, Grade 8 Parent	Melanie Jimmy - Family-School Liaison Worker	Adreinne Svelzle - Grade 7 & 9 Parent
Brad Smilanich - Assistant Principal	Charmyn Thompson - Secretary, Grade 8 Parent	Cynthia Cassidy - Grade 7 Parent	Guy Martin - Grade 8 Parent

1) Call to order/introductions - 5:00 p.m.

Welcome to our new Principal, Lana Lastiwka; Assistant Principal, Brad Smilanich; and our new Board Trustee representative for FRH, Trina Boymook

2) Land and People Acknowledgement

3) Approve Minutes from last meeting (May 24, 2023):

- a) Approved - Rejeita Kumar
- b) Seconded - Charmyn Thompson

4) Approve agenda:

- a) Approved - Cecile Palm
- b) Seconded - Rejeita Kumar

5) **Executive Election, Secretary - Nomination for Charmyn Thompson**

- a) Rejeita Kumar
- b) Carri Douglas
- c) Voted in

6) **Trustee Report**

Trina Boymook:

After ten years, I decided to step away from the Board Chair position at the end of my term. At the August 24 organizational meeting the Board elected Cathy Allen as the new Board Chair and Susan Miller as the new Vice Chair.

Board approved in the spring a \$208M budget with minimal use of reserves. The Board will use reserves to extend the Career Pathway work for an additional year and to cover our commitment for year 2 of the Student Mental Health Strategic Plan. We are also reintroducing leveraging student achievement funds that will be made up of any surpluses that is turned back to the division by the schools to be redistributed through this initiative. 2023-24 is a tight budget with \$6.5M of additional funding that are targeted grants with the remaining \$2.2 addressing inflationary pressures. The Board received \$858K for classroom complexity. \$354K has been allocated to Early Learning and \$504K has been allocated to Specialized Supports for Schools for the following Items:

- a Speech Language Pathologist Assistant
- a Speech Language Pathologist Assistive Technology
- a Reading Specialist Consultant position.

It is expected the recommendation for secondary French Immersion will be coming forward at the October 19 Board meeting. Parents will be notified once the report is uploaded to the website under Board meeting packages. Thank you to those that completed the most recent survey that went out mid-June.

The Board will be identifying areas of focus for the Board's work and advocacy for the

2023-24 at our upcoming Retreat on September 18 and 19.

The Board will be having a meeting with Sherwood Park MLA Kyle Kasawski on September 20.

The Board will be kicking off the first Committee of School Council meeting of 2023-24 school year, with a Mix and Mingle being held on Oct 4 in the Boardroom where pizza will be provided to school council representatives and their principal starting at 5:15. I encourage you to send a representative to these meetings as it is a great way to learn from other school councils and to have a voice at the district level. The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m..

7) Administration Report

Lana Lastiwka, Principal:

- Start up, new student orientation
 - A very welcoming beginning for new Principal and new students
 - August 31, 2023 the school gym was packed for the new student orientation

- Brightspace
 - Brightspace continues to be the online platform parents and students can log into to see what is being covered in classes, and stay informed as to what assignments are due, and overdue
 - Parents present in today's meeting have shared that they have had access issues logging into Brightspace. Information is forthcoming to assist all parents with this issue, via the next Hawks View update. Contacting the office for assistance in troubleshooting is also a viable option.

- Staffing Updates
 - Tina Lewis is teaching band and English Language Art (ELA)
 - Chenoa Roberts is covering for Heidi Solez
 - Brad Smilanich is a new assistant principal
 - Lana Lastiwka is our new principal

- Communications - Hawks View
 - The Hawks View is the weekly newsletter from administration, accessible on the F.R. Haythorne website
 - It comes out every Friday, or on the last instructional day prior to the weekend
 - Parent requests for better communication - such as time, dates and locations for athletics as well as menu items and associated costs to the Hawks Nest (concession). Parents have conveyed their desire to be better informed as their children are not effective at communicating this to them at home.

- Question: What would you like to see from the school?
 - Parents and students are encouraged to reach out with ideas and suggestions to enhance the learning experience at FRH.

lana.lastiwka@eips.ca

- During the meeting a parent-led discussion was had, expressing a mix of support and outrage by how much focus is on sexual orientation and gender identity within the school. This included the mention of the in-school recognition of Pride month, visible signs in the school foyer asking “What are your pronouns?” and “All genders welcome”, and concern that the support in schools that are intended to focus on inclusion, is also promoting and validating what children are seeing and hearing on the internet.
- Feelings shared ranged from: Implementation of a shared vision - a “blanket of inclusivity for all”, with the focus on whole-person identity, not sexual identity; to letting the children who identify differently, to continue to have their flags, posters, word of mouth group gatherings, and their month to bask in “rainbows and glitter” during Pride Month.
- Trustee Boymook, weighed in on the subject stating that ongoing talks and best practices surrounding these “hot topics” are ongoing. Specific articles in the Superintendent Administration Procedures guide speak to how these are to be handled, and were shared for parents to read on their own time. (Articles 205 and 206)

Brad Smilanich, Assistant Principal:

- Athletics
 - Volleyball tryouts were hugely successful, with lots of interest shown.
 - Cross country running will be starting up soon.

- Terry Fox Run
 - Will be held on Friday, September 22, 2023
 - Grades 7, 8 and 9 will run at staggered times throughout the day

- OHS- Bus Evacuation
 - All students will participate in the upcoming bus evacuation drill to prepare them in the event of an emergency.

- Saffron - Upcoming Presentation regarding social media
 - Grade 7 students will be watching this online presentation focusing on social media safety by the local non-profit organization that supports victims of sexual violence.
 - Saffron is working on providing materials for students to take home, to continue this discussion with their parents or guardians.

Mark Weaver, Assistant Principal:

- Mental Health Capacity Builder - Asma Ammouneh
 - Asma is in her last year of her contract with the school, as our Mental Health Capacity Builder. Asma offers counsel and supporting students in mental health education and providing fun ways to engage students such as the cotton candy social, on September 18th and Mental Health Monday.
 - Efforts are being made to create staff resources to continue the strategies and positive impact of Asma's contribution to FRH students upon her departure.
 - "Yukon" is an animal therapy dog that has visited the school in the past, and will make another visit on October 4, 2023. He is

used as a fun icebreaker lending interactions with him to delve into topics such as consent, while interacting with students.

- Cohorts/Options
 - The placement of students in cohorts for core subjects is teacher driven, to ensure that learning potential is maximized while minimizing potential disruptions.
 - Option classes have had some leniency, granting some changes to accommodate peer preference to *some* degree.

8) Staff Reports

Melanie Jimmy, Success Coach:

- School counselors and support staff introduced themselves to classes at the beginning of the school year, to familiarize themselves among the students.
- The Hawks Room has been well utilized as a safe environment to decompress, catch up on missed work, or need some extra support. Students that are expected in class must notify their teachers. Shannon Fessenden (aka “Mama Fess”) oversees the Hawks Room, and makes sure everyone is okay.
- The school does provide snacks for students that may find themselves at school with a hungry belly.
- The Hawks Nest - cash-only concession, provides the opportunity for students to work behind the counter, while providing staff and students hot lunch options at very reasonable prices.
- It has been requested that the Hawks View newsletter post prices and food options for parents to be aware.

9) Adjournment

Motion to close meeting - 6:02 p.m.

- a) Motion: Rejeita Kumar
- b) Seconded: Charmyn Thompson