

Earl of March School Council Meeting
Monday, February 26, 2024
7:00 pm
Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Melissa Adams, Anthony Anderson, David Che, Josephine Davidson, Louise Foley, Teisha Gaylard, Joanne Greenwood, Tom Holloway, J. Huang, Mante Molepo, Roop Mukherjee, Sathy Paskaran, Natasha Rastogi, Ara Salazar, Maria Short, Makhdoom Siray, Kathryn Smith, Yaron Starosta, Cheryl Szebedinszky, Shannon xw, Jeffrey Zhang, Xian Zhang, Emilie ?

Regrets: Steve Collins, Megan Cornell, Tracey Frost, Jaime McDonald, Caitlin McIlveen

Call to Order: 7:03 pm

Welcome and Introductions - Louise Foley, Co-Chair (Secondary)

Review of Agenda

Melissa Adams moved to approve the agenda with no changes. Roop Mukherjee seconded. Motion carried.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Yaron Starosta moved to approve the January minutes with no changes. Mante Molepo seconded. Motion carried.

Student Council Report - Jeffrey Zhang

- Valentine's Spirit Week was a success - students could purchase and send candy-grams.
- Student Trustee elections are happening tomorrow (Tuesday). These positions are a way for the student voice to be represented.

Secondary Admin Report - Cheryl Szebedinszky, Vice-Principal

- Learning updates (progress reports) will be issued March 19, 2024.
- Parent-teacher interviews taking place March 27, 2024. An email will be sent with a link to book an interview.
- Grade 9 reading assessments were conducted on February 9, 2024. Results will help to identify where help is needed. A presentation will be given about the assessments and the findings at the March school council meeting.
- At the recent district-wide science professional development day, Dr. Kim Hellemans from Carleton University gave a presentation about academic resilience and mental health. Both Steve Collins and Cheryl thought inviting Dr. Hellemans to deliver this presentation at EOM could be a good use of the Parents Reaching Out (PRO) grant that the council received from the school board. The fee for Dr. Hellemans would be \$500.
- Knowledgehook is being piloted in Grade 9. Can be useful for diagnostic testing and data collection.

Question from Roop Mukherjee - Would the presentation on resilience be for adults or for kids?
Answer from Cheryl Szebedinszky - Could ask Dr. Hellemans to tailor it.

Senior Staff Report - Anthony Anderson

Presentation about Business, Technology and Co-op

Business

- A comprehensive selection of business courses is offered at EOM. Grade 9: Intro to Technology; Grade 10: Intro to Business; Grade 11: Accounting, Marketing, Business Technology; Grade 12: Accounting, International Business, Organizational Leadership, Economics. Economics is a course that Anthony really likes as it covers all the situations we've seen happening in the real world.
- The school has a vibrant co-op program run by two exceptional teachers. Students are placed in a variety of co-op positions. For example: Canadian Tire, Shoppers Drug Mart, Nokia, Lépine Construction, tech firms. Recently, one student did a placement at Barry Hobin's architecture firm.

Technology

- There are 250 students enrolled in the Grade 9 Intro to Technology course, putting it at capacity. Students learn basic skills in woodworking, design and metal fabrication.
- In the senior grades (10-12) students specialize in manufacturing, which involves metal fabrication and welding. The design course teaches design principles and students build projects from wood.
- Equipment available includes a metal lathe, small CNC, wood CNC, and a professional grade CNC machine. CNC stands for Computerized Numerical Control.
- Anthony showed photos of projects done by students in all grades.

Question from Yaron Starosky - What about software engineering?

Answer from Anthony Anderson - Within Tech, we offer computer hardware course as well as media creation with music and video.

Question - What is the time allocation for a co-op placement?

Answer from Anthony Anderson - It is a two credit course, meaning students attend the placement for a full morning or full afternoon for one semester.

Question from Maria Short - Can students do co-ops that are not in technology or business?

Answer from Anthony Anderson - Yes, for example many students do co-ops at local elementary schools.

Intermediate Admin Report - Caitlin Abdo (Intermediate Vice-Principal)

No report as Caitlin was not able to attend the meeting.

Intermediate Staff Report - Tracey Frost (Grade 8 teacher)

No report as Tracey was not able to attend the meeting.

School Council Report - Louise Foley (Co-Chair)

- Jaime McDonald has offered to help organize a Parents Reaching Out (PRO) grant event. Louise and Jaime will meet to discuss and will come back to the council at the March meeting with options. It is likely that the event will be held in late April or May, when the weather is better.

New Business

- A parent stated that she has concerns about intolerance at the school. Louise replied that the topic warranted dedicated time on the agenda and should be an item at a future meeting. Louise asked the parent to identify what outcome she would like to see from a discussion at the school council level. The parent replied that she is looking for data to be collected and action taken. She went on to cite a specific example about students being uncomfortable due to an assignment about their heritage. She stated that the assignment made some students targets of intolerance because of their background.

Cheryl Szebedinszky replied that it is the first time that she has heard any negative feedback about this assignment. She assured the parent that no student would have to do an assignment that made them feel uncomfortable and/or targeted and that there are other ways to assess their learning. Cheryl noted that these situations should be brought up with the classroom teacher. If the response from the classroom teacher is felt to be inadequate, it should be brought up with the school administration.

- Question from Ara Salazar about summer school registration.
Answer from Cheryl Szebedinszky - Since summer school courses are not usually announced until April, which is past the EOM registration deadline, students should register for next year's classes in Xello and then if confirmation comes that a course is being offered via summer school, as soon as confirmation of the grade/credit comes through, advise EOM guidance. They might not respond over the summer but they do read the messages and make revisions to schedules.
- Question from Yaron Starosky - Why is there no meet-the-teacher night for second semester?
Answer from Cheryl Szebedinszky - It is a contractual issue for teachers. They are contractually required to offer one in the first semester. In the second semester, interviews are offered. Cheryl encouraged parents/caregivers to reach out to their student's teachers at any point to introduce themselves and talk about their student's progress.

Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) Report - Tom Holloway

- The most recent OCASC meeting was held on February 15, 2024. Items discussed at that meeting included approval for PRO grants, access to information on school operating budgets and inviting Director of Education Pino Buffone to speak to their councils.
- Next Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting is March 5, 2024. It is an in-camera meeting. Discussions will be about facilities renewal and the school year calendar.
- Menstrual Equity program (free products available in OCDSB schools) - the partnership with Shoppers Drug Mart is set to expire this year.

- Question from Melissa Adams - Has there been any follow-up from last month's meeting with the school board representatives on EOM overcrowding? Are there plans to send a letter from EOM School Council? Melissa stated she has written to MPP McCrimmon, MPP Ghamari and Minister of Education Lecce.
Since no action has been taken, Melissa was asked to draft some key points that could be shared with the group to include in their letters. Louise stated that personalized letters garner more attention than form letters.
Tom Holloway suggested that local publications/community newspapers could be contacted to write about the issue.
Melissa noted that the issue was raised at the February meeting of the Stephen Leacock Public School council. Maria Short indicated that it had been raised with the council at W. Erskine Johnston Public School as well.

Motion to adjourn the meeting moved by Roop Mukherjee. Seconded by Maria Short. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:16 pm.

Next Council meeting is Monday, March 25, 2024 at 7:00 pm in the Library.