

School Council minutes for March 3, 2021

Present are Alison, Chrystina, Lisa, Jenni, Erin, Gina, Jan, Jennifer, Jody

Meeting came to order at 6:03pm

#### Minutes from last meeting

Motion to approve: Erin      2<sup>nd</sup>: Lisa

#### Financial Report

The current bank balance is \$1394.00.

#### Teacher's Report

Not too much to report. Everyone is keeping on, doing our best to stay positive, getting used to the idea of March Break being moved to April. We have moved into the season of mud and wet. Kids seem to be doing well, for the most part. As always, we appreciate our amazing administration. Personally, Chrystina found the wellness sessions interesting; took away suggestion of being mindful of what you're doing while you're doing it. Trying to take that practice into the classroom. Be present.

#### Principal's Report

It feels like we have gone backwards with COVID procedures; similar to September when 1 symptom will get a child sent home. There have been a few hiccups, but much smoother than the first of the year. Parents have been very supportive, being super cautious. We do have improved protocols for teachers and staff as well. Masks, shields and goggles are being used a lot more. The upside is there have been a lot less sickness overall.

We are hoping the yard dries out soon. As soon as the yard is not so muddy and wet, we will be pushing to be back outside. The weather looks really promising for the next couple of weeks. Hopefully when they are outside and able to stay apart, then masks can come off.

Wellness is an ongoing focus is focus. We need to meet the basic needs before children can learn. Some kids are really struggling, hopefully outside time will help. Looking for different intervention opportunities. Play therapy, making the kids feel safe and seen. It seems like the primary kids are struggling more than others, so we are looking for different ways to support that particular portion of our school community.

We did get our \$5500.00 funding, so we have ordered 75 sets of Keva Blocks, 200 blocks per set! Staff will be brainstorming different plans and ideas for using the blocks. The goal is to have days sets to be signed out for science projects.

Natalie Nizio will be posting a week of spirit days for the weekend of March 15-19. or indoor recess.

#### Fundraiser Report

The wellness yoga sessions went well, with an average of 20 attendees each night. Francesca uploaded a link to the Facebook/Instagram accounts for children's yoga for children, which was requested a lot. There was more request for meditation, so that is online too.

Our next bottle drive is March 20<sup>th</sup> from 9-1. We have tables but leaf bag frames would be helpful to count the cans. And pre-counted bags of cans would be helpful, but not required. We do need more volunteers; Jan can come this time, and high school students can collect volunteer hours. 2 more people to do drop off would mak it so much faster. Erin's email will be added to the newsletter for people to contact to volunteer for the drive. Erin's email into the newsletter to volunteer.

Colobri reusable bags fundraiser will still run April 6-19, to coincide with Earth Day. Sandra is organizing this.

Karne and Jenni will be running more yoga sessions; 4 in total. The sessions will be scheduled for April 21 & 27 and May 5 & 12, and split into 2 groups, JK-Gr 3, and Gr 4-8. People will have to register for each session separately.

### Regional council meeting

- On December 8<sup>th</sup>, the Council met and Kris Koster-Lilley was the guest speaker. She is the Acting Executive Officer of Professional Services and Mental Health for Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB. Her presentation was about **Supporting a Mentally Healthy Return to School for KPR's Students and Staff**
- She began with some key numbers: 33,000 students, 21 Mental Health Clinicians, 6 School Psychologists, 4 Psychoeducational Clinicians
- Mental health services within the board include Mental Health Promotion, Individual and Group Psychotherapy, Crisis Intervention and Safety Planning, Psychological Assessment and Diagnosis of Learning Disabilities and Mental Health Disorders
- During March of last year, the team did a very quick pivot to providing virtual services to our students
- Prior to the pandemic, approximately 27% of the referrals were made due to concerns reported around anxiety-related symptoms, followed by mood symptoms at 20%, and family conflict which accounted for approximately 9% of our referrals; during the pandemic, there was a significant increase in referrals due to anxiety-related concerns (those referrals went up 14%); we also saw increases in referrals due to mood-related symptoms (an increase of 6%), and an increase in referrals due to family conflict (of about 5%).
- Summer mental health services included: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Groups for students from grade 3 to grade 12, Individual counselling support to students, Parent Consultation and coaching to assist them in understanding their child's special education; Summer Mindfulness Camp; Sessions to support Grade 9 summer school students as they are preparing to transition to high school
- 5 Key Messages to the Staff:
  - 1) Mental health and well-being is our priority
  - 2) We lead with compassion and empathy
  - 3) Schools are an excellent place to promote and protect mental health
  - 4) We have strong mental health foundations to build on
  - 5) We need to work together
- Unique considerations for remote learners: to create mentally healthy spaces for them in their virtual school, to think about all of those things that happen in bricks and mortar schools to help kids feel connected, safe, and that bring joy to them, to connect with their families and establish healthy and positive working relationships.
- Equitable access to mental health supports.

### New business

1. Going to form playground subcommittee. The approach going forward is that it is open to anyone who wants to join in. The first meeting is scheduled to take place right after this Council meeting.

Motion to adjourn: Jenni