

St. Joseph Catholic School Fergus

Attendance:

School Representatives: Claire Alexander, Linda Cotnam, Lori Ferber, Kelly Harness, Cristol James, Mary Catherine Lago, Leah Landriault-Relf, Heidi Locher, Clare Male, Joanie Nemes, Matthew Pakula, Frances Palermo, Shaun Redmond, Teresa Ricci-Oliveira

Administration: Mike Glazier

Trustee: Sebastian Dal Bo

P/VP Representative: Bryan McMillan

Community Representative: Father Dennis Noon

Presenter: Focus On Nature: Simon Bell, Roseanne Morris, Bob Crosby
Cathy Chaput (Program Co-coordinator)
Jeff Cummings (Digital Resource Teacher)

Recording Secretary: Reanne Miller

1. **Welcome** - Heidi Locher

2. **Opening Prayer** – Mike Glazier

3. **Greetings**

M. Glazier (Senior Administration) – Greetings on behalf of Senior Administration

-Noted location was selected to provide greater accessibility to all CSC reps.

-Discussion about the partnerships between school, family, Parish and research around the benefits of involving families in the education support system.

- The four pillars of the Board's new Strategic Plan were shared. Updates to the CPIC members will occur throughout the year.

S. Dal Bo (Trustees) – Welcomed everyone on behalf of the Trustees.

B. McMillan (Principal/Vice Principal Council) – Welcomed everyone on behalf of the Principal/Vice Principal Council

Rector D. Noon (Community Rep) - Welcomed everyone. Thank you for their contribution to Catholic Education.

4. **Focus on Nature Presentation:** (Simon Bell, Roseanne Morris, Bob Crosby)

- Roseanne presented a slideshow of student work through the Focus on Nature Program.
- Simon thanked the Wellington Catholic District School Board for the support of the Focus on Nature program and allowing students to connect to nature through art.
- The Board allows each school to run the program in each school for all grade 5 students. Simon invited the parents to spread the word about the program.
- Simon described a typical 1 day program with Focus on Nature. Classes learn about the things to focus on when looking at the world and receive a tutorial on the use of the camera. Classes head to a local park or natural area. Students take pictures and explore. The pictures are loaded onto laptops. In the afternoon, students go through different stations that include a station where they edit some of their photographs. At another station they create nature sculptures which are photographed. About 2:00 they show a slide show of everybody's pictures. Each child has a chance to speak about 1 of their pictures, and show pride in what they've done. Teachers are provided with a list of activities that they can do to extend the program into the classroom.
- For more information contact: Simon Bell at simon@focusonnature.ca

5. **Introductions**

- Everyone introduced themselves and noted the school that they represent. A common theme that parents expressed was “How to get parents involved in the school community.”

6. **Approval of Minutes**

- Moved by Shaun Redmond – Clare Male seconded that the May 26, 2016 minutes be approved. Carried.

7. **Approval of Agenda**

- No additional items.
- Moved by Clare Male – Teresa Ricci-Oliveira that the agenda be approved. Carried

8. **Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Back Ground and Purpose**

- M. Glazier explained role of CPIC as an advisory committee to the school board and as a committee to encourage meaningful parent involvement in schools. Parent involvement is needed when developing strategies for learning at school and at home.

9. **Nomination for Treasurer**

- Matthew Pakula volunteered.
- Anyone interested in being a part of the CPIC Executive for 2017 can email M. Glazier at michael.glazier@wellingtoncdsb.ca.

10. **Renewed Math Strategy**

Cathy Chaput, Program Coordinator for Math, Religion & Family Life, Science and Social Studies presented on the Renewed Math Strategy - “What Parents Need to Know”. Content included:

- Kids today tend to define themselves as good or as bad at math. Educators want students to move away from this labelling.

- Math Foundations – Cathy shared the 5 strands of Math: Number Sense & Numeration, Geometry & Spatial Sense, Measurement, Patterning & Algebra, Data Management & Probability. According to our curriculum document, these strands
- For most parents, the Number Sense and Numeration strand is most like the math we remember learning.
- According to the curriculum document, in addition to the expectations within each strand, we have process expectations.
 - These are:
 - Problem solving
 - Reasoning and proving
 - Reflecting
 - Connecting
 - Selecting Tools and Strategies
 - Representing
- Math Facts are Important - Our approach to math facts has changed
- Facts “involve small numbers... (and) remain important because they are fundamental both to estimation and any other calculations.” (Marian Small) We used to think that the best way to learn facts was “drill and kill” or to memorize them.
- New research (Bellock, Boaler) tells us that facts are stored in our short term memory, and that when we are anxious, our short term memory is impacted. This means that even for children who know their facts, being nervous or being anxious about speed will actually make them less likely to remember. A student with a good understanding of math facts can answer in 5 seconds. The race to answer is not necessary.
- We recognize that because we are unique individuals, we won’t all find the same strategies helpful ... so we try to expose students to as many strategies as we can.
- Balancing time spent on different math instructional approaches throughout the week is a methodology undertaken by some educators.
- Parents can contribute to our children’s math learning by identifying and talking about the many ways we use math every day.
- The more often children hear negative comments about math, the more deeply- rooted their dislike of math can become.
- We may plant seeds of math anxiety by talking about our own challenges and bad experiences with math. Anxiety about math actually interferes with performance both at school and in daily life, and has been proven to cause low achievement. Early math anxiety can snowball over time – children may grow into adolescents and young adults who avoid math courses and may close many doors to career choices involving mathematics.
- Everyone Can Learn Math - With the right teaching and right messages, everyone can be successful in math.
- Inspiring your child to learn and love math. Online resource http://www.ontariodirectors.ca/parent_engagement-math/en/
- Jo Boaler - you cubed website with math resources for parents <https://www.youcubed.org/>
- Book by Jo Boaler – “What’s Math Got to Do With It?”
- Cathy is available to go to Parent Council meetings to discuss the Renewed Math Strategy and to discuss with parents how to help their children with math at home.

11. Homework Help

Jeff Cummings – Digital Resource Teacher

- Homework Help is a joint project with TVO providing free math tutoring for each and every grade 7 to 10 student in Ontario. The online tutors are qualified teachers from Ontario.
- In the “Ask a Tutor” chat room, students can work in the program, save their work, and save their chat with the teacher in their "locker" and share it with the class next day.
- There is anonymity on both sides of the chat so that students don't feel any sort of stigma. Kids are registered by OEN number.
- Homework help also provides 24/7 resources and sessions on particular topics that would help many students. There are also interactive tutorials that are more like games to learn.
- The website also has 30 minute listen & learn videos that can be used by teachers and students.
- Students can also use the online glossary area that defines key math concepts.
- The WCDSB goal is to ensure that each student in the board will have access to their homework help account. The Board is working with a Homework Help Ambassador who spends time in each classroom, to register students, and to familiarize them with the site.
- Teachers are using Homework Help in their classrooms.
- The hope is that as many as students as possible will become familiar with the system and will use it.
- There will be information coming home to parents regarding homework help.
- Jeff offered to go to parent council meetings to speak about technology and/or homework help. He can be reached at jeff.cummings@wellingtoncdsb.ca

12. Catholic School Council Updates

Our Lady of Lourdes - Focus on diversity and equity. They are hoping to bring in a guest speaker. Parent Council is hosting a bake sale at parent night. Proceeds will go to the breakfast club

St. James - Grant monies will be used for student hand books. They have a new Principal and are still working on new processes together.

Sacred Heart Guelph – Shaun gave advice; the key is building an “appropriate cadence”. Try to spread the parents participating across the grades to get many perspectives, and to avoid whole council graduating at once.

St. John Arthur – Focusing on Healthy and Active Living

Dance-a-thon instead of chocolate fundraising - introducing multicultural activities and outdoor activities to make the dance-a-thon a whole day of activities.

St. Ignatius – Using the parent survey that they did last year to guide them. They are hosting speakers on different topics for parents at parent council meetings, along with the meeting. Their grant will be used to have a guest speaker to speak about child behavior.

St. Paul – There is a major fundraising initiative underway. The focus has been on an outdoor classroom. Currently need to re-route funds and find activities to raise funds. They are working on a communication plan to let parents know what is going on.

St. Mary Elora –The focus is on looking at balancing focus on fundraising as well as parent engagement.

St. Joseph Fergus – Their grant will be used to have a speaker on raising resilient children. They also have a speaker coming to speak on internet safety.

St. John Guelph - Did a chocolate bar fundraiser, and a fundraiser with Fresh as a Farm. St. John is considering Facebook as a way to promote engagement for their school. They have a Parent Council Facebook page with 100 followers. Seem to have more volunteers and more people at school council meetings this year.

St. Peter – Their application for Pro Grant was for a Mental Health Topic. Parent Council uses the school newsletter to explain what the money parent council raised will be used for, new fundraisers, spirit days etc.

St. Peter has an annual Christmas Day with tasting booths where families bring food for others to sample, and there is also a live nativity scene. This event is not a fundraiser. Parent Council is trying to raise funds for more technology.

Sacred Heart Rockwood – They are exploring fundraising options, exploring milk and lunch programs. The school is holding nominations for a school team name. The school had a successful school opening. Their Terry Fox walk went through the village of Rockwood.

Bishop Macdonell –At their meeting they hear reports from students and staff. The Head of Guidance, Heather Yates, will be at the meeting next month to talk about career pathways and to talk about college and university applications. Twitter is a successful source of information at Bishop Mac.

Mary Phelan – The school is currently holding their annual family campaign asking families for donations. This is the school's major fundraiser. After this they will do small fundraisers such as popcorn days. Council is focusing on community building activities, such as, bowling days. Hoping to use council meetings as information sessions.

13. **Adjournment**

Moved by Clare Male – seconded by Leah Landriault-Relf that the meeting be adjourned at 9:36 p.m.