Rothesay Elementary School

Parent School Support Committee (PSSC) 2015/16

Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, December 1, 2015

1. Meeting Called to order at 6:35 PM

Members Present: Charlene Carroll (Principal RES), Wendy Romeo (Co-Chairperson), Kim MacDonald (Co-Chairperson), Amanda Higgins (Secretary), Glenda Munro (community and parent representative) and Jonathon Kierstead (faculty representative).

Members Absent: Kristy Mark (parent representative), Natalie McClune (parent representative)

All parents are invited to sit in any of the PSSC meetings to listen to the discussions regarding the School Plan. Only members of the PSSC are able to vote on issues. Individual issues should still be addressed by either the student’s teacher or the principal, not during these meetings.

Kim is going to touch base with Kristy Mark to see if she is receiving the emails of when the meetings are happening and if she is still interested in being on the committee for this school year.

2. Review of last Month’s Minutes

Minutes were sent by email to each member. A few errors were identified. These have been corrected and will be posted on the website in the next few days.

3. December School Report

There was a scheduled PD day on November 27, 2015. One of the sessions focused on Positive School Climate. A presentation was supposed to be available to kindergarten to grade two teachers and educational assistants via videoconferencing, but there were technical difficulties. The teachers were still able to receive the information and they shared tips with the rest of the staff. The presentation focused on mental health wellness for children and to make them feel welcomed in the school community. Staff is going to try and deliver praise to students on a daily basis and to build on individual strengths. These tips will help children to feel they belong in the classroom and they belong in their school. The Grade 3-5 teachers participated in a presentation given by Darren White titled “New Spotlight for Science”. He reviewed websites and tools teachers can use to build students’ skills within the science and to gather information to answer science related questions.

There is a new grade 4 teacher, Melanie Hughes, taking over for Mme. Leblanc’s maternity leave. She started last Wednesday.

The school is selling themed baskets again this year. It has been a successful fundraiser in the past. They will be on sale starting next week.

A refugee family from Pakistan will be joining the community in December. There are two children in the family who will be starting school at Rothesay Elementary January 5, 2016. One will be in grade 3 and one in grade 4. The children will have a chance to visit the school in December before starting in January. The family is being sponsored by a family in the community. Contact with the host family has already been made. A representative with the newcomers association and an EL tutor will be available to work with the staff, the children and the families with this new transition. This will be a big and exciting learning opportunity for the community.

December 15 will be the Christmas Concert involving all grades. It is a Musical and will be held at Our Lady of Perpetual help Church at 10:00 AM and 6:30 PM. The children will be bused to and from the church on Monday for the rehearsal and Tuesday for the 10:00 AM concert time.

December 18 is the last day of school before the break, and it is a full day of school.

The school playground was disrupted this week and unfortunately the school was not notified of the plans. Scheduled work to upgrade the power supply to the school started this week. Children and other community groups will have limited access to parts of the property at the back of the school and one of the doors leading into the school. Even though the school staff were not prepared, school and routine has been minimally affected. This Saturday the transfer of power should occur and soon after the playground and back entrance will be safe to use again.

4. Attendance Sign Update

The sign to help with the attendance matters plan was purchased for $345.00. Charlene was unable to confirm if other schools would purchase a similar sign to help bring down costs. There was another company but they could not make a sign of the same size as the one purchased. The sign has been in place since last Thursday. If parents are late dropping off their kids for school the sign says to please accompany the child inside and sign them in. Since the sign has been in place more parents are coming in with their children. 15 letters have been sent out for children who have either missed 10 days of school or have been late 10 times. There has been no feedback from parents about the use of the sign. The school is able to keep really good records now on missed or late attendance. The district is also talking to organizations (hockey, dance etc) that require students to miss school days to attend competitions or tournaments.

5. School Improvement Update on Goal #1

By June 2018, RES students will increase the overall mean score on the math screener assessment tool from 74% to 85%.

Strategies to achieve this goal: every teacher will be trained on how to do Guided Math and classes will have some form of guided math instruction. Each grade level uses a list of common language for mental math strategies. Teachers will make mental math strategies discussion a priority once a month in the professional learning community meetings. (Example all grade one teachers will talk about mental math strategies.)

Teachers are using a system of teaching called BUILD. Teachers work with individual students who are missing key skills in their math level. At this time the English math strategies are more developed than the French program. Grade 5 teachers are not using BUILD but are doing flexible grouping guided math instruction.

At this time 19 out of 23 classes at RES are using guided math instruction. This is about 80%. At least two grade levels are using same language and teaching same skills for mental math strategies.

Indicators of Success: Mrs. Carroll walks through the classes looking for guided math instruction or BUILD buckets; Mrs. Carroll receives minutes from the professional learning community meetings. Teachers are sending letters home to parents talking about guided math strategies and encouraging parents to use these concepts and skills at home.

6. New Business

There have been a lot of negative phone calls coming into the office. Some parents are calling in to complain about how the school is managing their children’s education. The staff is distressed about the number of negative comments and this is hard on morale. Staff would love to hear some positive feedback. Even if there is a concern, it would be nice to also offer in the conversation something that you feel is working or that has been a positive experience.

8. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting closed at 7:27 PM. The date of the next meeting is February 2, 2016 in the meeting room at RES.