Rothesay Elementary School

Parent School Support Committee (PSSC) 2015/16

Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, February 2, 2016

1. Meeting Called to order at 6:34 PM

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

Members Absent: Kristy Mark (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 and/or Natalie 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

Members of the committee had not received minutes from the December meeting. Amanda will forward these minutes to the committee members ASAP. Please review the minutes and let Charlene know if there are any concerns or errors.

3. December School Report

Mrs. McLenaghan, Grade 4 teacher, has taken her mat leave early. Mrs. Guest is replacing her until the end of the year. Mrs. MacNeil has left RES to pursue a job at district office as the new elementary literacy coordinator. She is on a two year leave. Her replacement is Nicole Blissett, she will be joining the school in September. April Vincent will be filling the position from now until June. Mlle. Roberts (grade 3 FI) will be coming back from her mat leave right after March break. There are a few more staffing changes that will happen later in the school year.

February is “Sweetheart” month. Lots of fun activities planned for students each Friday in February. These activities are being planned and lead by Grade 3 and Grade 4 students. This is part of building leadership skills, encouraging a sense of belonging in the school and building school spirit. There is a musical presentation by Donna and Andy of Feb. 5. This group was well received by staff and students last year.

Grade 5 students started taking the English component of the Intensive French program on Feb. 1. Mad Sciences started last Thursday and run for 6 weeks. There is one for k-2 and one for 3-5. Teachers will have a PL session on assessing project and problem based learning projects by one of the resource teachers.

Safer Internet Week is from February 8-12. Grade 3-4 will receive booklets that they can take home and review with their parents. Grade 5 will be learning tips in the classroom with their teacher.

There are a lot of project based learning opportunities going on in the school. One Grade 5 class is working on how to help their community and they are focusing on the SPCA. A Grade 3 class is working on French Culture and how they can experience this culture. The Grade 2 students came together and brainstormed on what physical activity they could do instead of skating. These are just a few examples. Children are learning to organize, brainstorm ideas, problem solve and build on leadership skills.

4. School Improvement Update on Goal #2

By June 2016, teachers will be provided with monthly professional learning opportunities to expose teachers to examples of and data supporting the concept of stretch learning.

Strategies to achieve this goal: have monthly professional PD opportunities having to do with stretch learning and staff to share ideas about how they have incorporated stretch learning techniques in their classrooms.

This was the year of exposure on this subject of stretch learning, but teachers at RES have embraced the idea and have already started to incorporate into the classrooms. Staff has not had a chance to meet on the subject every month, but stretch learning was discussed in meetings in August, October and January. In October, Mrs. Rackley gave a presentation at the staff meeting about stretch learning techniques. There is a bulletin board available in the school for teachers to post and share with other staff how they have included stretch learning in their classroom. Charlene is hoping to have another chance for teachers to meet and discuss stretch learning before the end of the school year. Along with stretch learning teachers are trying to subject their students to guided questions. One example: Grade 3 project: What can you do to protect Humpty Dumpty from falling to the ground and breaking into pieces? Students went home and thought about what structures they could build to protect a falling egg. They demonstrate their structure in the classroom. They then have the chance to discuss what worked and what could have been done differently.

5. Tell them from me survey data

Grade 4 and 5 students participated in a survey between November and December 2015. 136 students participate (66 grade 4 and 70 grade 5) This survey was trying to measure students perceptions of their experiences in school. The experiences included themes of Bullying and School Safety, Student Engagement, Social Engagement, Institutional Engagement, Intellectual engagement, and early signs of disengagement.

Bulling and School Safety – most episodes of bullying are being seen outside the school (playground 57%, bus 27%) and hallways 8%. Of the bullying the most frequently observed is social bullying at 34% and this would involve teasing, mean comments, exclusion from groups. Physical bullying was 21% but involving a very small population. Cyber bullying was reported at 6%. A message being sent to each other at home via devices, but it then carries over into school time.

Students reported: 70% teachers can tell when it happens, 88% teachers step in quickly, 80% there is safe ways to report bullying, 85% students know consequences of bullying, and 68% there is adequate supervision. This last one is what the school is focusing on. There are a least 4 teachers and EA on the playground at recess and lunch. Some ideas being looked at – more supervision needed outside in the morning when the buses arrive, re-visit if teachers should wear an identifying vest when on duty, hold a forum with a group of grade 4 and 5 students and see why this was scored low.

81% feel safe at school, 84% feel safe going to school, and 87% feel safe on the way home from school.

Social Engagement – questions from the survey focused on if students felt they belonged, they were able to participate in sports and clubs, and students were making positive relationships in school. All three categories were at least 89% and equal to or above the national average.

Institutional Engagement – questions focused on how students felt about the importance of school (value schooling, positive school behaviours, and homework behaviours). Scores were high and equal to the national average. 95% believe school will benefit them personally and economically.

Intellectual Engagement – questions focused on interest and motivation, effort and quality instruction. Again students scored these ideas high and above the national average.

Because RES grade 4 and 5 students had high engagement responses this showed there is a very low percentage of students with early disengagement with school. Grade 4 was 4% of students and grade 5 this percentage was slightly higher.

A couple of other questions that the school is going to focus on with student focus groups from this survey:

* Only 6.5 out of 10 students feel there is someone who consistently encourages them on a daily basis.
* 7.1 out of 10 students thought that positive classroom learning is interrupted by student disruption.

6. New Business

There are some new to Canada students at RES.

2 Students from Pakistan

2 Students from Syria

1 Student from England

All students are doing well with their new transitions so far. The school is receiving support to help the students with picking up the English language and adapting to new cultures.

8. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting closed at 8:04 PM. The date of the next meeting is March 1, 2016 in the meeting room at RES.