Graham Creighton Junior High School

Student Advisory Council

October 23, 2024

Present: Larissa Lee (Parent & Chair), Latifah Bundy (Parent), April Provo (Parent), Leigh Redstone Chambers (Parent), Gale Downey (Community Member), Marcella Arbuckle (Teacher), Matt Conner (Vice Principal), Jay Jarvis (Principal), Josh Balah (Parent) and Amanda Hayre (Teacher)

Regrets: Charmaine Willis

Meeting Start: 5:30pm

1) Call to Order

* Welcome and opening remarks by the Chair.

2) Approval of the Agenda

• Motion to approve by Gail Downey, seconded by Leigh Redstone Chambers.

3) Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

* N/A

4) Principal’s Report

* There have been three (3) bomb threats in the school in the past few weeks. Each incident has been taken seriously and the school was evacuated.
* There will be a Halloween themed school dance on October 24th. DJ RS Smooth will be providing the music.
* Administration is finalizing the Imhotep Legacy Academy.
* The school has received math support through the African Nova Scotian Achievement Grant. Lex Bizzeth will be at the school on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
* Cindy Cain will be putting on a Kwanzaa talent show which will be open to all students to participate.
* Administration is reaching out to teachers to help support a Remembrance Day tribute.
* A scheduled bus evacuation procedure was planned for today.
* Staff PD Day took place on October 17th and the focus was on the Student Success Plan.
  + Literacy – goal is writing
  + Math – focusing on problem solving and sticking with tough problems and not quitting.
  + Student Well-being – work on getting to know the students.
* The last staff meeting looked at the attendance tracker. Teachers are reaching out to homes after a 5% of absence.
* “Know the Signals” – [Know the Signals](https://www.ednet.ns.ca/acs/files-acs/docs/knowthesignalsweb.pdf) is a guide for selecting resources that value Black Students’ Lives to ensure curriculum fit and developmental appropriateness. Teachers are using the bias evaluation tool. The document is available online.
* Update: the school website calendar has been updated and the [Student Success Award description](https://gcj.hrce.ca/gcj/news/2024/student-success-awards-description) is posted.
* Sports team uniforms – The school is looking for new team uniforms. The school has received a quote which was too expensive. For now, the student-athletes will wear the old uniforms. There are many missing uniform as they are not returned. Mr. Crawley is the new Athletic Director.

6) New Business

Funding Proposal by Marcella Arbuckle

Ms. Arbuckle is seeking funding to purchase two (2) books that celebrate Indigenous culture. The books support literacy and have been approved by the Halifax Regional Centre for Education. The books are “Swift Fox All Along” at $10.99/each and “Sweet Grace” at $12.95 each, local authors. Ms. Arbuckle is requesting 15 copies of each book for a total of $359.01.

* Motion to approve funding request by Josh Balah, seconded by Latifah Bundy.

Grade 8 Assessment

The math assessments are available, and Mr. Jarvis will look at the GCJH results in comparison to the provincial results, and provide an update at the next SAC meeting.

GAGA Ball Pit

Larissa Lee met with Mr. Jarvis to discuss the GAGA ball pit. The pit gets very mucky when wet. Larissa has a contact who will provide a quote and offered to donate the labour costs to upgrade the pit. A quote for the supplies will follow.

8) Community Engagement

* The SAC is looking for ideas to increase community engagement.
* The brief, regular emails from the school are helpful.
* There may be a new community member from East Preston.
* We want to look at having the school become a community hub.
* Suggestions:
  + Social
  + Vendor Night
  + Large bake sale
  + Kareoke Night
  + Community clean up, students can wear their Wildcats t-shirts. Proposed date: Earth Day.
  + Offer a “kids zone” during parent-teacher meetings, next meeting is December 5th.

9) Other Items

* SAC Conference Update
  + Attended by Jay Jarvis and Gale Downey (for Auburn High School)
  + Topics included: SAC spending guidelines, available grants, math & literacy, lunch program.
  + The free lunch program will be available to GCJH next year, as the school is in the final year of their contract with Mr. Smooth.
  + The Code of Conduct will be under review.
  + There was a Smudging Ceremony
  + Keynote: Dr. Strang
* Cell phone policy is working well, and there has been better student engagement.
* Fundraising ideas: pie in the face (teacher/principal)
* SAC Funding = $5,000 plus $1.00/student, approximately $5,300 for 2024-2025; in addition to the amount carried over from 2023-2024, approximately $3,500. Mr. Jarvis to provide a budget at the next SAC Meeting.
* The GCJH School SAC Agreement to be reviewed.

10) Next Meeting: November 20, 2024 at 5:30pm

Meeting Adjourned.