

**Westmount School Advisory Council Minutes**  
**Meeting**

**February 27, 2017**

**1. Present:**

Chair, Natalia Diaz-Insense

Staff: Principal, Lesley MacInnis

Parents: Stacie Rimmer

Community Members: Nadine Smillie

Regrets: Acting Vice Principal; Ian MacRae, Mark Harnish, Helen Totton, Marie March, Joan Malay, Joan MacNaughton

Resignations: Parent and Vice-Chair, Torquil Duncan

Meeting called to order at 6:05 by Natalia Diaz-Insense (Chair)

2. Considering the lack of a quorum present for the meeting, all matters on the agenda requiring a vote were adjourned to the next meeting. The meeting proceeded since there had not been a SAC meeting since November, 2016.

3. Natalia informed that in January she received a written notice from Torquil Duncan that as his son is no longer a student at Westmount he has resigned from his position on SAC as a parent representative. The announcement was circulated to members of SAC after the work to rule was discontinued. This creates a parent representative vacancy on SAC which needs to be filled. (see New Business item (a.) below)

4. **Correspondence:** none to discuss

5. **Principal's Report:** (Provided by Leslie MacInnes)  
(covering period from Nov.to present)

**Book fair:** Despite challenges created by the school cancellation on Dec 5th, the book fair was a big success. There was \$3,500 made in sales which will result in approximately \$2,000 in new books from Scholastic Books for the school. A special thank you to Natalia for her years of running this event. Natalia will be passing the reigns on to new organizers next year but she has offered to provide some support with the transition.

**Staffing:** Vice Principal Thomas Cleary is on a deferred leave. Ian MacRae is acting Vice Principal in his absence. Mark Harnish is stepping into Mr. Cleary's position for the full Grade 5 class. Virginia Hynes has been hired in a 80% position to cover Mr. Cleary's Grade 2 and the Grade 5-6 split responsibilities. Ms. Hynes has worked at the school previously and her return is welcomed. Three student teachers have just started at Westmount. They will be assisting in Blandford's 2-3 class, Doucette's 3-4 class and Totton's 4-5 class.

**Student Registration:** February is the official registration month for new students. The registration for Westmount has been slow, which might be partly because of the weather. Registration can continue all year but early registration is important for receiving the correct resource allocation. Staffing levels are determined based on the registration numbers which are available in March and April.

**School Bell and Announcements:** A decision has been made to maintain a recent change to the school bells to encourage more active unstructured playtime and improve student attention levels.

8:35 AM bell marking teachers on duty, outside supervision begins

8:40 AM (no bell) outdoor playtime continues

8:50 AM bell marking time for students and teachers to come into school

8:55 AM bell marking official start to the school day

Supervision levels during the extended outside time is equal to the recess supervision levels. In bad weather, the doors will be open at 8:35 AM bell and students will come directly into the school.

Because of the shortening of the time available between the entrance into the school and the start of the school day, announcements have been moved to the period of time immediately after the morning recess. This allows for more preparation time for those announcements.

**Work to Rule:** Work to rule was discontinued when the Provincial government imposed a contract through legislation. It will take some time for people to recover. There is some dissatisfaction with the process. Throughout the job action, Leslie commented that the Westmount staff continued to provide excellent teaching and there was excellent learning.

HRSB Superintendent has identified some priorities following the work to rule action and legislated contract. The priority is to address any issues with school culture. Later this week the Principals will be meeting to discuss the return to other tasks which teachers had been performing. This will be a journey and it will take some time. Teacher's union have provided a list of the required and non-mandatory activities. Teachers enjoy teaching and will make individual decisions on what extra activities they take on. Some activities may not restart at least until the new school year.

## **6. Old Business:**

*a. Student Transportation Policy (Update) (Natalia)* Natalia provided the feedback from the SAC in writing to the school board in October 2016. She attended meetings of the school board in November, January, and February when this matter was on the agenda. Natalia is also monitoring this policy for the Ecology Action Centre. In January, a new version of the policy was prepared which reflected feedback provided by the SACs. The SACs identified concerns with safety, special needs students, equity, and active transportation. The revised policy draft stated that "HRSB will support schools to implement initiatives regarding active transportation". After the January meeting, the policy was changed again with respect to the active transportation aspect. The policy now states that the school board will communicate with schools to promote initiatives to encourage active transportation. The policy will be on the school board agenda again and the target completion date for this policy is April.

## **7. New Business:**

*a. SAC Parent Vacancy (Natalia)* Because of Torquil's recent resignation there is a vacancy for a parent representative on the SAC. The SAC by-laws require that notice of a vacancy and a request for interested parents be provided. Leslie will include the notice in the March newsletter to all parents. The usual term is 3 years. Natalia's position will be open as of the start of the next school year. To avoid having both these positions coming to an end at the same time, the position vacated by Torquil will be advertised as starting immediately for the balance of this school year and for the next 2 full school years. Natalia's

replacement will be for 3 full school years starting in September 2017. The request for interested individuals will go out in early March and then at the March 27 meeting of the SAC decisions can be made on whether or not a vote on the candidates for the positions will be required.

8. **AOB**

Conflict of interest guidelines discussion adjourned to next meeting.

Meeting adjourned without a motion.

9. **Next Meeting Date is March 27, 2017 at 6pm**