Markham District High School
Accepted School Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday April 14th 2010

In attendance: Janice Amenta, Marina Baran, Marg Clarke (P), Kathleen Corry, Pippa Gingras, Laurie Henry, Sara Larson, Shelley Lieuw-Kie-Song, Bianca Mason, Doug McLaren, Lorna Samsoondar, George Voumvakis (V.P.)

1. Marina Baran welcomed everyone and thanked them all for coming.

2. Marina confirmed Quorum of voting members.

3. Cassie Tooley (student council) was unable to attend. There was discussion about the need for consistent representation at our meetings by student council. In the past, the chair has sent another rep. in his/her place to keep the parent council informed. We need to make sure that next year’s student council understands their responsibilities to attend our meetings.

   - Marina talked about our need for a new chair and co-chair for next year as her daughter is graduating and she will no longer be at the school. Janice may be interested in Chairing; - we still do not have a Co-Chair for this year. If you are interested in the position please talk to Marina and she can fill you in on the duties involved.

   Cassie sent the following e-mail after the meeting:

   - Student Council Elections are currently underway for next year. April 23rd - Nomination Forms are due, April 26-30 - Posters and proposals for all campaign events are due, May 3-6 - Blitz Days (Posters are up and campaigning begins)
   - May 7 - Elections Assembly followed by voting. 2010-2011 Council will be announced over the p.a. at the end of the day.
   - Friday April 15th: Wacky Hair Day (Spirit Day)
   - Friday May 14th: May Day
     * All clubs will have booths set up outside in the back field to raise money for their club
     * SAC will be running a BBQ with: burgers, chips, pop and water
     * There will be entertainment (music, dance team etc)
     * There will be Air Bounce rides and games
     * Money raised from May Day will possibly be going towards the Markham Stouffville Hospital (to add to the money raised at the auction)
     * May Day will take place during regular lunches, as well as during an extended common lunch in the middle. (Therefore, classes will be shortened on this day)

4. The minutes from the February meeting were reviewed. Marina made a motion to accept them without change, Sara seconded. All in favour.

5. Treasurer’s Report – Janice told us we have $1,808.20 in the bank. Less the commitment to the award plaques of $650.00 leaves us with $1,158.20 for the year. There was discussion about how much the service charges are costing us ($124.80 per year). In the past – the interest from the GIC has covered this but that was not the case this year. At most schools, the parent council account is held in the schools account. We still control the expenses and the money is just transferred from school council to the school as expenses are voted on. There is no charge for this. Marina made a motion that we close our account and transfer the funds to the schools account. Pippa seconded – All in favour. Janice will arrange with the school secretary how this is done as soon as possible.

6. Marg Clarke (Principal) – talked about the staffing process, at the present time there are approx. 1,356 students enrolled for next year. The numbers of gifted grade 9’s is up, but next September, 2011; Markville S.S. will be running a gifted program as well and will take students that live in their area. Staffing numbers should stay about the same, she will know by next Friday if we are in a surplus situation – she is not anticipating any loss of staff

   - The school is in the process of taking things down and many of the staff are staying for a special dinner and packing tomorrow night. The board has given the school 2 days for packing on June 25th and 28th.
   - There are still 70 grade 12’s needing to complete their community hours – many have not handed in their completed forms – they can earn hours by helping with the packing too.
   - Prom plans are coming along – next Tuesday there is a “safe prom” assembly. Graduation is on June 29th at the Markham Event Center. Marg is looking for helpers to hand out diplomas and gather gowns from 9.30 – 10.30 on that night. If you can help please contact Marg.
George Voumvakis (Vice Principal) gave the council an overview of "Moodles"—Moodles are interactive web sites that teachers set up for their specific courses. **Students** can access missed work, due dates, smart board lesson plans, course expectations, and the like. In the future, the board is hoping to be able to allow parent's access to a portion of the site for information important to them.

- Third term mid term marks came out today; this is a printed sheet of paper showing the students exactly where they are and helps to guide them through the last half of the semester.

- There have been some amazing trips—some students went on a combined trip with Thornhill High School to Barcelona and Paris. They were all really well behaved and had a great experience. The business studies group also went to New York City.

- The music department has two trips coming up—one to Washington D.C. and the other to Boston.

- Marg introduced the new draft of the "Guidelines for the appropriate use of technology" policy. The council felt it was a much more positive message and feel it will be well received by students. The only area there was discussion about was the use of cell phones in the hallways. It was felt that allowing the students to use them in the cafeteria and the main forum would give them plenty of opportunity for access. Use in the hallways could disrupt classes and students taking tests. The Department heads and students will get a chance for their input before it becomes policy.

- The school will be holding an open house on May 27th from 3.00 pm until 9.00 pm. This is open to all Alumni and present students and families. There will be memorabilia available, display tables, the music department will be performing, food etc. will be available. It will be a chance for everyone to have a last walk around the old building. Anyone who would like to help out man tables, please contact Marg or Dianne Moore.

7. **Pippa talked about the parent night the council will be hosting on May 19th**—this presentation will be in the pit from 7 pm – 8.30 pm. A flyer has been sent out to the local high schools and feeder schools encouraging all parents to come. You can view the flyer on our web site under "late breaking news" Please let Pippa know if you are able to attend. Pippa asked for some money to cover the cost of refreshments. It was felt that just cookies and drinks were enough to offer. A $50 budget was approved. Pippa made the motion, Sara seconded. All in favour.

- Pippa has been in contact with Chris Vollum—the Facebook guru—to arrange a presentation for next year. Until the school's calendar is finalized, this cannot be booked. The presentation involves students during the day and a parent session in the evening. The cost is $750.00 which we will apply for the PRO grant to cover. We will book it as soon as we can as the dates available fill up quickly.

8. **Mr. McLaren and Ms. Corry** told us about some of the important things going on at Markham—The focus in April has been Literacy. The grade 10's wrote their OSSLT on April 8th—the test went very well with a modified day for all the students. Results are usually available in May/June. Prior to that, the grade 9’s worked on practice activities to prepare them for next year. A group of teachers has been working with the Library and will be offering a variety of workshops based on literacy on April 21st. Teachers can sign their whole classes up or students can attend individually. Workshops will range from careers, surfing, gladiators etc.

- On the professional Development front, the French department recently attended a conference to help them with differentiated teaching practices; there is also new P.D. money from the board that will allow for digital literacy in the language departments.

- On March 26th—the school celebrated Earth Hour. Eco Markham are working on raising funds towards installing the living wall in the new school. Mayor Frank Scarpitti presented the school with $10,000 towards this goal. At the present time, each student has a booklet of coupons to sell to hell raise funds also. Please contact Dianne More for any further information on Eco Markham. A suggestion was made that we install one of those “thermometers” to keep track of how well the fund raising is going.
- The Battle of the Bands was cancelled this year – items donated for the silent auction were offered in the pit to staff and students on that day. $500 was raised for the Markham Stouffville Hospital expansion. Council asked that it be informed when changes like this happen for events they were asked to support. If we had been informed, we could have encouraged more people to come out during the day time auction.

- Cabaret is being put on by the music department on Friday night – tickets are $10 – all welcome.

- The L.E.A.D. 2’s are putting on their Cancer campaign on April 21st – this is a door to door campaign in the neighborhood – community hours can be earned and there are lots of prizes and fun.

- MDHS recently hosted the Certamen Classics competition – over 200 students from 13 schools across the province came. It is like a game show with questions about Roman life, mythology etc. There were lots of positive comments on how well the students organized such an event. Our teams came in first and second place in all age groups. Coming up on May 6th – 9th is the Classic’s competition in St. Catherine’s which is another huge competition.

- The Law team also competed in the Bar association “playdowns” and came in 3rd over all.

- The curling team did really well and made it to the Provincial ¼ finals.

- The science department recently took place in the science Olympics and placed really well in all ages and sections.

9. The Alumni Award – There have been no nominations received for this year’s award in spite of all the leg work done by Gillian and Elizabeth to promote it. The council was asked to think about whether they think we should dis-continue the award. It has been hard to find nominees for the past 8 years or more. Please think of the direction you think it should go – become a bi-annual award, or an award that is given to a selected individual chosen by council, or shelve it for now as it has run its course. BRING YOUR IDEAS TO THE NEXT MEETING.

10. Other Business. – Question: why has the student council chosen to lessen its numbers next year which will exclude some groups for having a voice in student council decisions? – Answer: The student council voted on this idea and decided they thought it would be easier with fewer members. Next year a designated rep. will make sure that all departments are approached to give their input into student council such as music and phys. Ed.

Question: - How will the present students get orientation to the new building. Answer:- The pre-registration will be done in late August and at that time the students will have a chance to walk the new halls with a map to find out which departments are where.

11. Marina thanked everyone for coming out and apologized that we ran a little late. Marina made a motion to end the meeting, Sara seconded. All in favour.

Our next meeting is the parent information session with York Regional Police that we are hosting in “the pit” on Wednesday May 19th from 7 – 8.30 pm. (A short update by Marg may be done at the end if time permits)

Hope to see you there!