

Harwich Raleigh Parent Council Meeting
Wednesday, October 7, 2020 @ 6:30 pm -Microsoft Teams

Attendance: Ann Balkwill, Bev Warriner, Kristen Newman, Paula Deboer, Alli Vander Pol, Nicole Janisse, Deb Roberts, Devon Core

Minutes: Devon Core

- Ann Balkwill started the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and giving praise to our “healthy” parent council committee. Everyone took a moment to introduce themselves to the group.
- Nomination forms were available for submission for chair and secretary position for the committee. Bev Warriner was nominated as chair and will hold the position. No one was nominated for secretary and it was suggested the attendants rotate the duty each meeting. Devon Core volunteered for minutes for this first meeting.

Safe Schools–

- Lots of enhanced cleaning happening
- Cleaning high touch surfaces on a regular basis
- Hand sanitizer available outside all classrooms
- Each classroom has a sink with soap and hand washing is encouraged for students as the best defense against COVID
- Kids sanitize hands a lot also
- There are 10 wall mount sanitizers in the school with more coming
- Kids are doing a great job with washing and sanitizing
- Staff and parent reinforcement really seem to be working and making an impact on students

Cohorts-

- Cohorts are defined as 50 or less kids
- Cohorts mean that 2 classes can join outside in same area
- All HRPS cohorts are <50 students
- Cohorts were designed based on age appropriation
- Ensuring there is enough time on shared spaces (gaga ball, equipment, etc.)
- Kids doing great job in cohorts and taking seriously

School Visitors-

- Only essential visitors in schools -board personnel, Chatham treatment center, etc.
- Parents in school by appointment only -following screening assessment tool, use of mask, signing in log book etc.
- Parent meetings to be done virtually or by phone when possible

School Organization-

- Discussion of school organization and population
- Numbers may change if parents decide to switch from virtual to classroom study

- Board provided times for the opportunity to switch delivery options and they coincide with reporting periods. At this time, not likely possible to switch delivery options before these designated times

September Start Up-

- Discussed the of focus of PA days that were at beginning of September with staff. Topics of the PA day discussions were listed- Health and Safety, Mental Health Strategies, New Math Curriculum, Anti Racism and Anti Oppressive Education, Importance of Effective Feedback.
- A major focus was the importance of all groups getting on board with Seesaw or Google Classroom and to get set up in case there is another shift to online learning. All classes in the school are set up with one of the two platforms.
- Question about technology if have to switch to online learning -will students be able to borrow technology, or should parents consider purchasing their own? Principal discussed how she can now distribute devices from school inventory of the devices in the school. Schools will most likely be able to distribute devices if we go online again. Since September about 20 families are borrowed devices in the virtual world.
- Discussion about how platforms worked in the spring? What platforms worked well at the end of last year? Challenges? Parent mentioned some difficulties with Google Meet and the connectivity though has heard good things about Google Classroom.
- Seesaw is what the board recommends for JK-Gr. 4 then Google Classroom after that. Question about the difficulty for parent knowing difference between Seesaw Family vs. Class and challenges switching between the two. Scanning codes work better than alpha codes for getting signed up. Tools worked well though but sometimes not a lot of space for students to write.
- Great to see the comfort levels of families changing over time last year as they became more familiar with the programs.
- Discussion of the teacher side of Seesaw, they just have one App Seesaw but parents seem to need Family and Class to get the messages and the school work. Principal mentioned she would discuss with someone from IT to see if there was an easier way.
- From teacher perspective -once kinks worked out in Seesaw then it seemed to work well. Just too bad the two (Family and Class) couldn't be linked together
Discussion that last year they tried to keep the school community feel while virtual learning was taking place by having principal and various resource teachers, rotary teachers, EA's popping onto the different platforms to comment on student work- acknowledge students' efforts.
- Parent mentioned it is nice to get notifications when new material is posted and to have one area for students to check (even if multiple teachers) so that you don't feel like you need to sit by your computer all the time. It is nice when teachers communicate the times that students can expect to find posts from them (again, so they don't need to be checking all day and waiting for something). Staff did find that it is better to have all shared instructors in the same virtual "class" instead of each having their own for a particular group of students.

COVID 19-Protocols:

- Parents asked to do screening with their child/children every day before coming to school
- Then follow directions based on outcome of screening
- Have a new flow chart from public health since starting school. When in doubt parents can consult Public Health. Working through the process with parents. Parents seem to be proactive

and this has been helpful. Absenteeism will likely vary over the year. Parents have been great about calling in and working through concerns they may have regarding the screening tool.

What happens if child sick at school?

- Each school has designation isolation room
- Students go to this room until parents can pick up. Room cleaned well after student has left the school

Emergency Drills

- Need 3 fire drills in fall and spring -Fire Marshall changed this year -modified procedure for conducting. Principal goes on PA system to let students know about the drill, sounds the alarm while on the PA system but students do not go outside. Done to ensure all students know what the alarm sounds like. Then later teachers would replicate the sound (alarm on cell phone or something) in their own class during the day and practice with students. This was done to avoid congestion but still allowed students practice. Students told, if ever Principal doesn't come on PA system and they hear the alarm, then it is a real drill and to go outside without worrying about congestion, etc. Teachers said drill went very well. All three fire drills are now done for the fall. Do still need to do lock down and tornado drill -will practice with their own class during the day so they know what it looks like and feels like without the congestion of all doing at once though

Picture Day

- popular event in fall -on hold due to safety and hygiene concerns right now. LKDSB Exploring how it can happen this year (if possible).

School Council Treasurer's Report

- Parent Council has a healthy budget, even though no spring fundraising last year -\$4237.00 Not a lot of funds were spent last year. Have funds to spend this year. Parent Council is encouraged to spend the money each year unless saving for something big.
- On another note -School now has two more gaga ball pits-VERY well received! Great investment of school funds.
- Parent asked if there are fundraising ideas or strategies we should be looking at? Ann mentioned that the Flower Bed Greenhouse had asked if we were interested in the Fall mums - were feeling a busy at the time so declined for the moment. Also explained that when fundraising, must inform community what the money is going towards so it was likely the best decision to put the fall fundraiser on hold since there are currently no scheduled class trips happening or such.
Chair asked if there anything the school needs that parent council could provide with our budget or fundraise for? Principal will ask staff to see if there is something they are thinking they need and let us know.
- Parent -asked if any COVID related supplies were needed? Masks, etc.?
- Currently the school has been provided lots of extra cloth mask if students ever need one -staff know they can send kids for them as required.

Food days/Hot lunches

- Not able to have at this time. Dr. Colby will look at it later in the fall to see how things are going and if they might be an option. More to follow...

Gatherings/Events

- Not able to conduct at this time. Impacts character assemblies and sports events. Hoping these limitations might change on these events in the future. ROARS was discussion as staff. It will look differently this year but still being done. Teachers will do presentation in the class for the character traits. Maybe doing a slide show so that students are be able to “see” each other (students in other classes) and share with students only (not parents at this time as all consent for student pictures haven’t been returned).

Thoughts for the year

- Only need 4 meetings for parent council for the year but normally we meet 6 times. What does everyone prefer? Night? Time?
- Wednesday seemed to work well for most in attendance at 6:30 pm.
- 2nd Wednesday of the month was decided
- This information will be advertised in the newsletter

Final Comments or Questions?

- Newsletter -Parent asked for a reminder from teachers when the newsletter is posted to the website. Newsletter normally posted to website by 1st of month. Ann will remind staff again to send reminder to parents when newsletter is posted – teachers can post through their classroom platform. Paper copies available in the office for any families needing them- teachers can pick these for those students at the office.
- School council meetings will be held virtually through Microsoft Teams and the date will be in the newsletter. Any parents wanting to join can call the school before the meeting and ask to be sent a link to the meeting (if not existing member this year).