

**St. Rita Advisory Council
Minutes of 5th Meeting
Thursday May 23, 2024**

Attendees: Michelle Assenza, Steven Quartarone, Joanne Pereira, Lucy Ferreira, Maria Castrucci, Sophie Tyrrel, Jenn Geerts, Lisa D'Amico, Charlene Battershell-Smith, Mario Magnone, Steve Gardiman, Inez Bertao, Jessica Watt, Francesca Petryshyn, Jessica Lourenco-Pruitt

Regrets: Jennifer Vieira, Lesley McGougan, Shelly Neves, Victoria Miele, Norma Infusini-Flynn, Linda Di Geronimo, Jule D'Ambrosio

Welcome

- Michelle Assenza opens meeting at 6:33pm
- Michelle begins today's meeting with prayer intentions for members of our school community who have lost a loved one, and council members who are dealing with health issues.

Opening Prayer

- Lisa D'Amico led us in prayer

Land Acknowledgment

- Mrs. Castrucci led the land acknowledgment
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Approval of May 23, 2024 Agenda

- Amendment to agenda- Diana Carlesimo, OAPCE Director Dufferin Peel is unable to attend tonight's meeting. Her presentation is to be removed from the agenda.
 - Lucy Ferreira- motion to approve
 - Charlene Battershell-Smith- seconded

Approval of January 29, 2024 Minutes

- Joanne Pereira- motion to approve
 - Mario Magnone- seconded
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Teacher's Report – Mrs. Castrucci/Ms. McGougan

Catholicity

- The virtue for the month of May is acceptance; we respect the inherent dignity and rights of all. The virtue for June is fairness; the ability to act in a just and fair way.
- May 6-10 was Catholic Education Week. This year's theme is "We Are Called to Love". Students and staff enjoyed a variety of activities: Monday: the French Cafe for grades 4-8 students; Tuesday: the primary classes participated in an outdoor activity with an older grade;

Wednesday: virtual Mass with Most Rev. Gerard Bergie, Bishop of St. Catharines. Also on Wednesday, the Black Excellence student leaders put on a production for the school; Thursday: schoolwide Catholic Meditation, as it is also Mental Health Awareness Week; Friday: praying the Rosary as a school community.

- May 22 was the Feast of St. Rita. The students had a Crowning of Mary prayer walk. Students visited various stations and prayed parts of the Rosary.
- June 20 will be the final school mass. Father Nosan will be presiding. All are welcome

Sports

- April 9- Intermediate Boys Basketball team participated in a mini tournament. The team did not advance. (Coaches Caronzo and Waller).
- April 10-Intermediate Girls Basketball team participated in a mini tournament at St. Rita. (Coaches Waller and Cunanan)
 - April 16- the team also participated in the family of schools tournament.
- May 2- Junior Boys Soccer tournament was held at the Save Max Centre.
- Thursday May 23- Junior Girls Soccer tournament was held at the Save Max Centre.
- June 3- Intermediate Soccer teams will attend a tournament at the Creditview-Sandalwood Fields.
- May 23- Softball tournament was held. (Coaches Waller and Caronzo)
- May 2- Floor Hockey tournament at St. Alphonsa. St Rita are the returning champions! (Coaches Cacciola and Murray)
- Track and Field Day was held on May 15th. Grades 5-8 students tried out for the Track team. The family of school track meet is June 12th at Chinguacousy Park and the Boards Meet is June 20
- May 22- Co-ed intermediate Flag Football tournament was held at Robert F. Hall. (Coaches Cunanan, Murray, and Waller)
- June 25- Beach Volleyball tournament. (Coaches Waller, Caronzo, and Iannuzzi)

Eco Schools:

- St. Rita celebrated Earth Month in April with a used battery drive. Eco School application was submitted to Eco Schools Canada

Other news

- April was Autism awareness month. Mrs. Bonello and her students shared information about autism over the announcements.
- Friday April 5- Chess Tournament at Guardian Angels. St. Rita came in 4th place!
- April 26- Mrs. Forgette's class went on a trip to Claireville Conservation center. This trip was funded by the Outdoor Education Grant.
- Friday May 10- Intermediate students participated in the Quiz Bowl at St. Isaac Jogues. They placed third out of 9 schools.
- The Makerspace in the St. Rita library is now open. Mrs. Selvaggi and Mrs. Ferlisi with the help of Mr. Dosono our custodian, collected donations from staff for the space (microscopes, arts and crafts, a sewing machine, robots, games, puzzles, etc) teachers can sign up time with their students
- On May 24 there will be a Virtual Shield presentation for grade 7 and 8 students. The guest speaker is Ray John Jr. Ray John Jr. is a Child Youth Worker who works with high risk-students. His message, based on Indigenous culture and teachings, centers around respect for others, positive leadership qualities with peers, being a role model for younger students, and taking care

of each other and our surroundings.

- On May 28 the kindergarten classes will take a trip to Play Town.
- On June 17, grade 3 students will take a trip to Peel Safety Village.

Principal's and Vice Principal's Report- Mr. Quartarone

Catholic School Improvement Learning Plan Update

- Mr. Quartarone gives council highlights of the work done this year by the Catholic School Improvement Learning Plan team. The work done by the team supports all divisions in the school. Highlights include
 - **Believe:** Focus is on faith formation activities, Catholic Social Teaching, and sacredness. Looking forward, the Catholic School Learning team plans to have an assembly each month (open to parents to join). June 21 is National Indigenous Peoples Day. Activities are planned in the school to celebrate Indigenous excellence and joy. Next year Adam Thrasher, an Indigenous Education consultant will be working with the primary grades and staff to develop a land acknowledgement.
 - **Excel:** Focus on literacy and numeracy.
 - Numeracy- the professional learning focus is on supporting the grades 2 and 5 math program. The Board consultant as well as digital resources have been used to support the new math curriculum. The math PLC will continue next year.
 - Literacy- continued focus on early reading based on the Science of Reading. Primary teachers have received training on the new reading screener. The new screener will be implemented in the Fall of 2024.
 - **Respect:** Focus on cultural equity and belonging so students see themselves in their school. Some intentional actions undertaken this year include: diverse guest speakers and new inventory of diverse texts in the classroom. Plans to develop a new student voice team, with a focus on the intermediate division.
 - **Thrive:** Focus on well being, the school environment, and mental health throughout the school year. We continue to find ways to increase school spirit and sense of belonging. We hope to create a sacred space in our school in the future.
 - **Trust:** A continued focus on community engagement and stewardship. Activities this year included parent guest speaker Paul Davis, the Christmas concert, school masses, and the Black Excellence Assembly, as well as several eco initiatives.

Updates

- The Air Conditioning replacement for gym is scheduled for this summer
- The 2023-27 Multi Year Strategic Plan Survey was sent to parents. Feedback is due June 14, 2024.
- Included in the budget items is a Funds Request to cover the remaining cost of invitational tournaments this year
- In the process of refreshing the school logo as a part of St. Rita's 20th anniversary. We are planning to share information with the school council by the end of this year.
- Grade 8 Graduation:
 - Parent council funds are going towards decorations for the gym, transportation for

graduation lunch, and to help with the cost of the graduation lunch.

- Parent question regarding extra-curricular sports: Why is there a lack of sports for primary grades and, can there be better communication regarding dates for trying for sports? Mr. Quartarone addressed these questions:
 - Primary tournaments are not common in Dufferin Peel but the school will investigate the possibility of running intramurals for these grade levels as an option for next year.
 - The administration will give parents a general timeline of when sports and club programs run through an email sent out at the beginning of the school year

Brampton School Safety Site Review Update

- Rationale: At a previous school council meeting, parents from the Caledon Anthem community discussed concerns with dangerous driving in the sub division, particularly during school bus drop off and pick up. They cited drivers speeding past buses, running stop signs, and ignoring bus lights and signs. They wanted to inquire if there could be a crossing guard placed in the community.
- At the request of Mr. Quartarone, a Traffic Safety Review was conducted at the Caledon Anthem site. The safety officer observed that the bus was using lights and a stop sign 'arm' and there was compliance by drivers. They advised that a crossing guard is not posted on bus routes.
- A School Traffic Safety Review was also conducted at St. Rita (parking lot and kiss and ride areas). Observations from the school inspection were recorded and a report was sent to Mr. Quartarone at the school level. Safety concerns were raised by the inspector, mainly, incorrect use of the kiss and ride area, double parking of cars, crossing at unsafe areas, etc. Mr. Quartarone noted that the school is looking into providing safety education to parents and students in the new school year.

Other Updates

- The DPCDSB Dress Code Expectation Cycle survey was sent out to parents in May. Parents were invited to share their opinions regarding potential changes to Dufferin-Peel's dress code policy.
- Parent question: What does the Professional Learning Cycle look like?
 - Response: Grade 2 and 5 teachers, and administrators from our family of schools gather for professional development and sharing of best practices. Hattie's Model was followed as a strategy to review learning/teaching needs. A key focus at St. Rita is the Thinking and Application learning categories (for example: solving word problems that apply mathematical concepts). Teachers brought back lessons to their classes and implemented strategies with their students. Then the staff reconvened with their Professional Learning Community to analyze and reflect on these results, and then used this information for further professional development and setting next steps.
- Parent question: Is there a possibility for a soft entry in the morning at St. Rita?
 - Response: This question was not on the agenda so we are unable to give a response at this time. We can revisit this at a meeting in the future.

- NEW! Religion and Family Life Curriculum 2023
 - Dufferin Peel as a Catholic Board is required to follow the Ontario curriculum. This curriculum is taught through the lens of faith.
 - Religion and Family Life Curriculum focuses on 6 strands of learning.
 - These resources are used in Religious Education in elementary schools:
 - Growing in Faith, Growing in Life, Grades 1-8- Creates strong links between home, school, and parish. A parent portal is also available for use at home (more information below)
 - “In God’s Image” and “Sowing Seeds” resources used in the Kindergarten programs. Teachers also use learning kits for lessons.
 - The Family Life Education program has been in place for 40 years.
 - In 2023, the family life curriculum was reviewed by the Catholic Bishops of Ontario with the Institute of Catholic Education (ICE)
 - The updated Family Life Education Curriculum is now available on the ICE website.
 - The new curriculum will be implemented in schools in September 2024
 - New Program “Blessed and Beloved” will supplement the Fully Alive family life program for grade 1- 8 students.
 - The new family life education touches on subjects like: loving families, being made in God’s image, human dignity, vocation education, relationships in families, the gift of children, consent, boundaries, forgiveness and mercy, mental health.
 - The goal of the family life program is to know God’s love, and it encourages students to express themselves to parents, friends, and trusted adults
 - New Family Life Education incorporates the latest Health and Physical Education curriculum expectations.
 - Parents can access curriculum documents, Fully Alive parent letters outlining topics covered in each unit, parent guides to family life education books, and the frequently asked questions document on the The Institute for Catholic Education website
 - Website URL is www.iceont.ca
- Parent Question: In what ways can teachers deliver family life curriculum by keeping in mind the diverse families in the community?
 - Answer: Mr. Quartarone would like to meet with this parent to discuss this matter further.
- Question: Are parents needed to help set up for graduation?
 - Answer: no help needed as of now

COMMITTEES and UPDATES

Budget Update- Shelly Neves- reviewed by Michelle Assenza

- As of April 30, the balance is \$21,857.
 - Some cheques have not been cleared. We have \$14 319.09 in our account once all cheques clear and expenses are paid.
 - Pending cheques: Paul Davis invoice, Spheros balance, lunchbox fees.

- Funds need to be held for outstanding items like the parent council banner, decodable books, 2024 Open House in September.
- Council members voted to cover the remaining cost of invitational tournament fees, totalling \$355
 - Motion passed and carried
- Council members voted for a \$250 donation towards families in need within our school community:
 - Motion passed and carried

Fundraising Committee Update- Lucy Ferreira

- Upcoming fundraising:
 - Toonie Tuesday cookie fundraising has been successful. The final week for cookies is May 28.
 - 5 Frozen Fridays begin May 24.
- Fundraising has been very successful this year but it is quite a bit of work. Proposal for 2024-25 fundraising: 1 major and 2 minor fundraising.
- The following options for next year were discussed: Krispy Kreme Donuts, Five Frozen Fridays, Popcorn, Terra Cotta Cookie Dough, World's Finest Chocolates, Popcorn sales at Open House.
- Council members voted for 2024/2025 school year fundraisers:
 - VOTE: Terra Cotta Cookie Dough (Fall) as a major fundraiser
-motion passed and carried
 - VOTE: Krispy Kreme Donuts (Spring) as minor fundraiser
-motion passed and carried
 - VOTE: Five Frozen Friday's as minor fundraiser
-motion passed and carried
 - VOTE: Farm to Table Popcorn offered at September Open House BBQ
-motion passed and carried

Lunch Program Updates- Lucy Ferreira

- Current Lunches:
 - A&W Burgers will begin on Mondays in June
 - Pizza on Tuesdays (Council initiative)
 - Subway Subs on Wednesdays (Council Initiative)
 - Harvey's on Thursdays
 - Pita Pit begins Friday May 24
- 2024/2025 school lunches will begin on September 30
- Council members voted for 2024/2025 school year lunch options:
 - VOTE: Venezia Pizza as a lunch fundraiser
 - Motion passed and carried
 - VOTE: Subways as a lunch fundraiser
 - Motion passed and carried

Parish Update- Lisa D'Amico

- April 13: Grade 2s received the sacrament of the Eucharist at St. Leonard Parish. Students received a necklace as a gift.
- May 7: Grade 7s received the sacrament of Confirmation. Students received a wooden cross as a

- gift.
- Suggestion: next year can the parent council gifts be given to the students receiving sacraments at a special ceremony? This will be reviewed next year.
 - More gifts need to be ordered in the fall.
- Totus Tuus Camp registration is still open. The camp runs July 29- August 2 at St. Leonard for grade 1-6 students. Forms can be picked up at the church. Cost is \$70 for the week.
- St. Vincent de Paul bundle weekend is June 1 and June 2. Gently used and new clothing and household items can be dropped off at the parish parking lot.

Community Information/Updates- Jessica Watt

Brampton Update

- May 25 is the 2nd Annual Police Community Fun Day at Save Max Center.
- 2,500 Explore Brampton Youth Passes available to Brampton youth, ages 12-16. Pass holders will have free access to Brampton Transit services and recreation drop-in programs including swimming, skating, and select sports from July 1 to September 2, 2024. Applications can be found on the city of Brampton website and are due May 31, 2024.
- The City of Brampton is offering signal blocking pouches to all who qualify. Sign up is on the City of Brampton website.

Town of Caledon Update

- Bike the Creek is happening on June 8. This event encourages cycling in the community. Participants can meet at Jim Archdekin Community Center as early as 6am. The ride goes until 1pm.
- Movies in the Park Caledon begins June 22 and runs until October 25. Schedule and locations can be found on the Town of Caledon website.
- A Community Traffic Safety meeting will be held on May 29 at Southfields Community Center.
- Outdoor movie and food trucks in Lina Marino park will be on June 28 at 7pm. More information to come.

OAPCE Information/Update- Sophie Terrell

- OAPCE conference was held on April 13, 2024. Events included guest speakers, mass, and a gala.
- OAPCE social media accounts have been updated:
 - Instagram @OAPCE85
 - X @OAPCEONTARIO

OTHER ITEMS/BUSINESS

OAPCE CSC Process updates – Diana Carlesimo, OAPCE Director Dufferin Peel

- Diana was not able to make this meeting; no update provided.

Lina Marino Award- Michelle Assenza

- This award, sponsored by the St. Rita Parent Advisory Council, is given to a graduating student for volunteerism in their school and greater community.
- A \$500 cheque will be given to the award winner in memory of Lina Marino, a former parent council member.
- Students can submit their application and essay by June 3rd.
- A panel of voters will meet to judge student essays on Tuesday June 11 at 1:30pm.

September BBQ- Michelle Assenza

- The BBQ will be held on either September 19 or 26 (date to be decided later).
- \$1000 from this year's budget will be held for chips, beverages, and other items for the event (previously voted on)
- Donations of buns and condiments will be requested from local grocery stores.
- Popcorn will also be for sale on that evening via school cash online.

Other business:

- Linda Geromino, who has been a member of the parent council for many years sends a message of thanks to the council. The message is read by Michelle Assenza.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:48pm- motion passed and carried

Meeting concludes at 8:48pm
