**Welcome & Opening Remarks**

* Introductions made around the table

In attendance: Mr. Doug Ouellette – Principal

Mrs. Sarah Stratton – Vice Principal

+ approx. 20 parents (see sign in sheet)

* Today’s meeting will follow an agenda but will mostly be a general discussion to create a plan for what this council will look like, what it wants to do and how best to move forward.
* Mr. Ouellette will lead today’s meeting

**What is the Ryerson PAT/School Council**

* 2001 – per Ministry of Education, every school needs a school council
* School Council is an advisory board to advise the school on all topics
* Can take on many roles such as fundraising, organizing community nights, co-ordinating volunteers, etc.
* Each school’s Council may look very different – up to the individual school to determine what their council wants to do

**School Council Start-Up Session & other supports from the School Board**

* 2018 School Council Start-Up session coming up on Thursday, October 18, 2018, 6-8pm at Waterford District High School (flyer passed around).
* Some operating money is available from the school board:

$200 for supplies

$300 earmarked for activities centered on parent engagement

**Review of Old Council By-Laws**

* General operating procedures that council will follow such as how to become a member, voting member rights, election process, etc (photocopies passed around) – an early course of business for this council might be to review and update these by-laws
* In addition to the council by-laws, it is also important to follow all Grand Erie policy & procedure – notably around finances. Please don’t go spend money & bring a receipt to school for reimbursement.

**Confirmation of PAT Executive**

* Chair – Barbara Myltschenko
* Vice-Chair – Jen Tosh
* Treasurer – George Myltschenko
* Secretary – Christina Selluski

These parents/guardians accepted nominations and been appointed to these roles & will fulfill the job duties as outlined in the school council by-laws (photocopies of job descriptions passed around). Especially important to have minutes recorded accurately. We will need to follow Robert’s rules & procedures for making and passing motions.

**Establishment of Voting Members/Non-Voting Member**

* Our current by-laws don’t really offer much distinction between the two. Mr. Ouellette’s experience has been that parents/guardians who attend council meetings regularly have voting rights. Whereas, someone who shows up for one meeting doesn’t necessarily have voting rights. This is something the current council will have to discuss (specifically Mr. Ouellette & Chair) to determine how council should handle voting rights. The assumption is that everyone in attendance today has the intent of being a voting member. If you don’t want to be a voting member please let the Chair know.

**General Rules for Operation**

* Please be on time
* Stick to agenda and timelines
* Listen to each other and each other’s ideas
* Have a facilitator (Chair) to manage discussion, conflict

**Information Sharing**

* Mr. Ouellette looking for information on how best to communicate to this council but also to the Ryerson Heights school community (eg. Facebook, Twitter, school website, Remind)

Group discussion:

* + parents in attendance like Remind and Twitter (all the teachers & the school board seem to be using Twitter also)
  + an email distribution list will be created for all in attendance at council meetings to advise of upcoming meetings and distribute meeting minutes
  + there is a Ryerson Heights school council Facebook page but it’s current structure doesn’t work (it is currently set up as a person instead of a page or group) and needs to be deleted or corrected
  + re: communicating council business with school community at large – council information on school website is very outdated but if it can be fixed so that parents/guardians could trust that the information was current it would probably be used. Suggestion to advise on Remind that new meeting minutes (or other council updates) are posted on the website (with a link to the website) so parents will know to look at the website

**Future Meeting Dates**

* School council is mandated to meet at least 4 times per year
  + Mr. Ouellette and Chair will meet to work out a tentative meeting schedule to share out to the school community
* Schedule will mostly be dependent on what this council decides to do business-wise

**General discussion of things school councils can do**

* Default position of most school councils is fundraising – BUT, need to have a clear idea of what we want to do before starting a fundraising campaign. We need to be mindful of how much we ask from our community – we have already started the school year with the chocolate bar fundraising campaign and Terry Fox walk.
* Organize community type endeavours
  + Examples from other schools–family skating night event at the ice rink on property, guest speakers, community resource nights
* Co-ordinate volunteers for school events such as track & field
* Grant writing
* Being an access point for other parents – as council members we may have more insight into how things get done, how we operate, events that are happening. We can disseminate this information out to school community through word of mouth

**Break-away (5 minute discussion) – small groups to talk about: Why you’re here? What you want out of school council? Any questions for Mr. Ouellette? Then share ideas with the larger group!**

* Want this council to have a larger presence in the school community…maybe by having a community fair with community providers showing our school community what services are available to everyone such as Victim Services, Contact Brant, Arnold Anderson Sports Fund
* Many parents are missing the Fun Fair that stopped happening a few years ago
  + Mr. Ouellette’s response: unfortunately board policies and rules and regulations really get in the way of the fun in fun fairs. Eg. bouncy castles can’t be done anymore because of insurance and liability issues. Doesn’t mean we can’t do a fun fair but it would look different than what we have had in past years…we would need to figure out what we can do. Maybe something like an “old-fashioned” carnival with games (many of which are still in storage on school property) and prizes.
* Re: Fundraising – where does the money come from and where does it go? Example: Lunches (pizza, subs, pitas, etc.) – where does this money go?
  + Mr. Ouellette’s response: doesn’t know where all that money goes at this time (would have to look into). Chocolate bar fundraising is largely going to support a new audio-visual system for the gym (a $30-40K, multi-year fundraising project)
* Movie night or Game night (reaching families who never even come inside the school, something to break the ice)
* What other volunteer opportunities are available to parents who want to help out but have other commitments that prevent them from helping during the school day?

Next meeting date will be set by Mr. Ouellette and Chair and notifications will be sent out to school community of the meeting.

Meeting adjourned.