

Maurice Cody Family & School Association

Tuesday December 8, 2020, 6:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome and introductions – Natasha Golding

Natasha welcomed everyone, along with our Superintendent, Mr. Andrew Howard who attended the meeting.

2. Approval of November Minutes

Michelle Wagland made a motion to approve the minutes and Tracy Allardyce seconded the motion.

3. Finance Report – Tracy Allardyce

- Revenue - the virtual chess event brought in \$605.
- Big expenditures included investments in software (Raz Kids, IXL).
- Money was spent on safety school initiatives such as orange pylons.
- Teachers are spending money for their classrooms.
- Music investment included the purchase of ukuleles.

4. Safety Report - Michael Healy

- Crossing guards – There have been some issues with crossing guards leaving early from their post, unaware of the new staggered entry time change with the school. These times have been noted and the crossing guard schedules have been adjusted.
- The Kiss and Ride banner was taken down as it was in poor condition and we are not currently running the program. It will be replaced with a new one.
- Roehampton Shelter and Community Safety meetings – Information is being provided to the school on a weekly basis. The school is being well patrolled. The community safety team have been good partners in terms of what has been going on and trying to keep families safe.

- Mr. Nigro noted that the security has been fantastic and very visible. He made note to them to also monitor the kindergarten playground areas. We'll keep monitoring that regular checks are happening to ensure all areas around the school are looked after.

5. Parent Reps

- We were still looking for parent reps for Ms. Peters and Ms. Van Schoor's class but have found volunteers. Thank you to everyone who volunteered.

6. FUN and Fundraising – Natasha Golding

- Chess Tournament – The virtual chess tournament went really well. We had 30 students participate and raised \$605. The kids wanted to keep playing so we'll try to do it again in the new year.
- Trivia Night hosted by Camp Onondaga – Camp Onondaga have been big supporters of Maurice Cody and have offered to host a school Trivia Night. A few families participated in a trial and it went very well.
- We have scheduled a school-wide trivia night for Wednesday, December 16th at 6:30pm. Stay tuned for details and a link! This will be a fun community event. Thanks to Kate Young and Raviv Israel for helping make this happen.
- Maurice Cody Toques are on sale again – Instructions on how to purchase a toque will be posted on our website and social media pages.

7. Principal and VP Report – Mr. Nigro and Ms. Helpert

- Thanks to Mr. Howard for taking time to come today. Our public health nurse was unable to attend but she should be available in January.

Ms. Helpert's School Update

- Remembrance Day – It was different this year without being able to hold a service in the auditorium, but we had our version of an assembly over the PA. Our staff did a great job within their classrooms.
- Progress reports – Staff did a great job communicating with guardians and doing interviews by google meets or by phone. Communication should be ongoing throughout the year. If you have questions, please contact your teacher directly and then Mr. Nigro and Ms. Helpert if required.
- Enrichment - teachers are still providing enrichment opportunities and they have submitted proposals for the new year. We will collaborate with the FSA to work out funding.

- We received 71 new chromebooks so we have a total of 102 at our school to support our 4/5 students and students with special needs.
- Other grades are using iPads.
- Spirit week - we have things planned for next week to celebrate as a school and will share information in the weekend bulletin.
- Winter donation drive - Teachers and students are very excited. We will be speaking to you about how to donate, stay tuned.

Mr. Nigro's School Health & Safety Update

- We know these are stressful times, but we are trying to keep things as normal as possible for the students.
- Everyday I'm confident, we are in a caring school and a safe school. But, we can't forget we are in a pandemic. It hits home when things happen in our school. We are here to listen and provide feedback.
- What we are doing to keep our staff and students safe:
 - o Staggered entry – different times and entry points
 - o Screening before the day is started with teachers and staff
 - o Maintain recess zones and cohorts
 - o Staff have their PPE and are well trained with wearing their PPE
 - o Students are wearing masks and parents and caregivers have been very compliant when on school grounds
 - o Within school the students are hand sanitizing multiple times.
 - o Washroom schedules are in place to make sure kids are using the washrooms with their cohorts
 - o Public Health Nurse plays an active role in our school
 - o Equipment is sanitized between uses
 - o Since Friday we have a new safe arrival procedure. We have added that when students are away a parent/guardian must call the office and let them know the reason. We want to understand the reasons why a child isn't coming to school so we can guide the parents better.

Questions

In light of the most recent email regarding the staff member who tested positive, are other staff members thinking to get tested now? Public Health would encourage them to get tested if they are symptomatic. We are not at a point to do mass testing yet.

Comments from Mr. Andrew Howard - School Superintendent

- The school administration is on top of things and is doing everything that should be done. We can't force anyone to get tested unless guided by public health.
- Public Health can make a request for testing for a cohort who may be affected.
- School-wide testing – There is a provincial-wide pilot project taking place in Ottawa, Toronto, York and Peel – They have identified 4 of 5 schools under my jurisdiction. Some schools are closed during the investigation. Marc Garneau is in the midst of determining their results as well as Lawrence Park.
- Investigations by Toronto Public Health have found that Covid is not being transmitted within Maurice Cody. If that was happening and was considered an outbreak it would be different. Covid cases are coming into the school from the outside community.
- The outbreak we had identified was due to 2 or more cases within a 14-day period. This is different than having a school-wide outbreak.
- Schools would close due to the nature of how covid is being transmitted, it is not necessarily based on the number of cases. Toronto Public Health would be responsible for making this call.

There is confusion regarding outbreaks. Could you clarify the terminology in an email? There was a letter sent from Public Health to parents. We will review the letter and can look at providing more clarification from Public Health.

Are teachers gathering in the lunchroom?

Some teachers may share common spaces such as the Lunchroom, but they maintain a physical distance or keep masks on.

If a child needs to self-isolate what does it mean for siblings in other schools? We send siblings of the close contact home to self-isolate until we get direction from public health. Siblings would not need to self-isolate, so long as the close contact does not have any symptoms. Siblings can go to school if they are asymptomatic.

Are there any protocols in terms of students/parents communicating to the teacher who is self-isolating? Mr. Howard – we need to be careful in this situation as it's a confidentiality and privacy issue, we can't name the teacher (or student). If a teacher is asymptomatic, the teacher will continue teaching remotely. It can be problematic if the teacher is symptomatic. Mr. Nigro will communicate with the class with how online learning will happen and whether there will be a supply teacher.

For children in childcare, do both health screening forms need to be filled out? Childcare has their own screening process and it is very similar. Please fill out the school health pass everyday just in case.

Some parents have concerns about lack of social distancing in childcare, who should they talk to about this? This should be discussed with the childcare operators. Our school policy is if physical distancing is not happening outside, the students need to wear their masks.

Can you clarify details about the two cases found in one class? Public Health deemed that even though there were two cases in one class it was found they were not transmitted within the school.

Since community spread is happening in homes, is TPH able to liaise with the parent community to remind them about following guidelines? Mr. Howard – that should be clear based on all the messaging from Public Health. The Public Health Liaison nurse may be able to take the time to provide more information to the community, but not likely before the holidays.

Are teachers keeping track of their contacts in terms of eating lunch etc. I see the same staff, usually eating together, or in their classrooms. The TPH investigator talk to whomever tests positive and will identify other people who may be a close contact. This evening we shared a positive case of a staff member in room 120. Information was shared with the investigator and another staff member who is a close contact will need to self-isolate. This staff member is in room 121 but the students in that class will continue to go to school as they are not considered at risk. The investigator was very clear. It's the same line of thinking that goes with siblings. So long as siblings are asymptomatic, they can go to school.

The TDSB website isn't showing updated resolved cases? Mr. Howard noted that there is a number for the principal to call to confirm resolved cases. Mr. Nigro will look into having this updated.

Is there a way to deal with Lost and Found? This is tricky. Returning items has been successful overall as we haven't had that many lost items. Our hope is that items are brought to the office right away and an announcement will be made. We can't keep items in a congregated area.

There is a lot of confusion about how the sibling policy aligns with the screening, can you clarify this? Mr. Howard – if someone tests positive then the sibling must go home and isolate for 14 days. With the new screening tool, if a child goes home with one symptom, their sibling must go home too. This is different than being a sibling to a close contact. There are many layers to the sibling policies. These are Toronto Public Health guidelines:

- o If you are a close contact are you required to self-isolate – Public health will send information. It's strongly encouraged to get tested. Regardless they still have to stay home for 14 days.
- It's also important to not come to school if you're waiting for a test.
- It's recommended to wait 4-5 days after the last date of contact to get tested.

Do you expect an extension of the winter break? As of now, there is not going to be an extension of the winter break. If there were to be an extension, school would move to virtual learning for that duration of time.

If my child is in a class that is sent home, but is asymptomatic does he/she need to self-isolate for the full duration even if the test is negative? Yes, even if the child tests negative, they need to self-isolate for the duration of the time.

How is the morale of staff? They are working diligently. They are tired but are united and they get their energy from seeing the happy faces of your kids. We appreciate the parent support. Several teachers have been off for different reasons, but they've been happy to pick up and help with online learning. It's a team effort. Our staff are committed to you and your kids. Our door is always open if you need to call or email.

- ***Ms. Helpert reminded parents to complete the screening pass every day. Office staff is spending a great deal of time following up with parents for kids who didn't have their pass filled out.***

What if parents have symptoms? The tool does not specify what to do if a parent is symptomatic. It does not indicate if the child needs to stay home. It would be up to the families to make that decision (unless the parent tests positive).

Comments

- The online learning has been great for the kids in classes that are self-isolating. It's very hard for the teachers to pivot that quickly and is great to know how well they're doing.
- Congrats to the staff and to Rob and Kelli for ensuring this transition has been positive.
- In the event of seeing a mass number of children home waiting for testing we are looking at creating resources for parents to help out with programming.
- Natasha Golding - on behalf of all the parents, thank you! We know how hard the staff and teachers are working and we appreciate everything you are doing to help keep our school safe. Happy holidays to everyone.

8. Adjournment

Michelle Wagland made a motion to adjourn and Sarah Farrugia seconded the motion.