

CKSS School Council Report Card

Background:

Craig Kielburger School Council is made up of parents and guardians of students at CKSS. School Council meets monthly during the school year to discuss developments within the school community, to provide feedback to the school administration and to, generally, help CK continue to provide a great educational experience for all students.

Early in the 2016/17 school year, the School Council published a survey to solicit feedback, preferences and guidance from families in the school community. The intent was to raise awareness of the School Council, to identify barriers that were preventing parents and guardians from becoming engaged and to suggest ways to remove or manage those barriers.

Responses totaled 119 which was considered to represent approximately 15% of the student families.

The following scorecard identifies the key responses from the survey and the status of actions taken during the 2016/17 school year.

Meeting Dates:

- There was a strong preference for Wednesday (43%) or Tuesday (30%),
- The 2016/17 schedule of Monday evening meetings was established in September, prior to the first meeting, to allow prospective School Council members to determine if they could attend meetings on a regular basis. As such, a schedule change for the current year was not realistic,
- Meeting dates need to accommodate school administrators' schedules,
- Preferred days will be discussed at the first meeting in September 2017. All interested parents and guardians are encouraged to attend and help ensure the most effective meeting dates and schedule is established.

Meeting Times:

63% of respondents preferred a 7 PM start as opposed to the scheduled 6:30 PM start, Meeting start times were changed to 7 PM effective for the January 2017 meeting.

Meeting Duration:

There was a strong consensus that the scheduled 2 hour duration was a challenge for many families,
Scheduled meeting durations were changed to 90 minutes (7 to 8:30 PM) for the January 2017 meeting,
Sometimes meetings do run overtime but the meeting chairs try to maintain the 90 minute schedule.

Agenda in Advance:

This has been common practice but to make the Agendas more available, they are now posted in advance of the meetings on the School Council tab of the CKSS website:

<http://cks.hdsb.ca/school-council>.

School Council is investigating other ways to get information to families in an easy to use and timely manner. Stay tuned.

Minutes Available:

Minutes of the School Council meetings are posted as above.

Conference Call in Ability:

Ability to attend in person was identified as a barrier to engagement for some and access via conference calling utility was suggested,

For up to 2 callers, access can be arranged via a standard cell phone conference calling feature at no cost to the School Council,

If greater than 2 people require remote access, School Council has provision for the use of a conference calling utility. This is a fee based service and the School Council cost is based on the number and duration of participants,

A conference call-in option was offered at 2 meetings in the Spring of 2017 with limited use,

Because meetings use a cell phone as the conference hub, the user experience is not the same quality as a typical professional boardroom set-up.

Information Sessions:

Information sessions were identified as a good way to provide value to school families, Wednesdays and Tuesdays were the first and second choices for evenings, respectively, School Council hosted an evening on May 11 featuring testimonials and presentations on Mental Health and Bullying. Approximately 17 parents attended and were treated to engaging speakers and quality information,

Experience has shown that the most effective sessions are co-ordinated with other school activities (e.g. Parent Teacher night). Council will be exploring this model for the 2017/18 school year.

Survey respondents provided a list of topics – we now need volunteers to co-ordinate the information sessions.

Minutes in other Languages:

Respondents ranked this as a low priority,

As such, it is not a current initiative but families are encouraged to contact the School Office if they require assistance in this area.

Conclusion:

The School Council survey provided a number of ideas that resulted in action during this past year. It is both the hope and expectation that taking these actions will help more parents and

guardians get involved and support the educational experience that their students are getting at CK.

A School Council Enrollment Notice and Form will be circulated in mid-June. Please look for this communication, complete the form, send it in to the school office and plan to be part of the 2017/18 CKSS School Council.

Best Regards,

Cindy Nicholls
Co-Chair

Bruce Whitehouse
Co-Chair