

Vanier Catholic Secondary School Council
Wednesday, December 12th, 2012
VCSS Library
7:30 pm

Minutes

Attendance

Members:

Paul Flaherty
Dianne Tait
John Berg
James Mooney
Terry Prenolso
Yolande Cherepak

School Administration:

Ed Frison
Kyle Janzen

Guest:

Marguerite Kuiack

1. Opening Prayer

In recognition of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Bishop Gary led Council with a special prayer to Our Lady, as well as the Hail Mary Prayer

2. Adoption of Agenda

Moved by Dianne, seconded by Terry to approve the agenda with the following additions: Education Act Changes, School Calendar 2013/14, Review of draft letters (November 28, 2012 meeting), History of enrolment at Vanier, Hiring policy for teachers/staff. Carried

3. Adoption of November 28th, 2012 Minutes

Moved by James, seconded by Dianne to approve the minutes as presented. Carried.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

5. Principal's Report

Ed highlighted items from the Principal's Report (attached).

Ed noted that the Teachers Union turned down VCSS' request for a \$3000 donation for the David Wells presentations in April 2013. Bishop Gary suggested reducing their request to \$2000.

Ed distributed VCSS' School Growth Plan 2012/13 (attached).

Two of the added agenda items were addressed at this time:

History of enrolment at Vanier

John inquired as to why enrolment has gone down in the last few years.

Action Item: Ed will review enrolment trends over the last five years and report back at the next Council meeting.

Hiring policy for teachers/staff

The YG Department of Education's hiring policy is available on their website.

Ed outlined how he and a panel select and hire teachers from a list established by the Department of Education.

Bishop Gary outlined his role in the hiring procedure as it pertains to receiving and reviewing pastoral references for Catholic applicants and sending his recommendations on these applicants to the Department of Education.

Kyle reiterated that any concerns about staff/teachers should be immediately brought to the attention of school administration so that any problems can be addressed in a timely manner.

6. Discussion with the Bishop

Bishop Gary described the history of Catholic schools in the Yukon as it relates to the Yukon Act.

He also outlined the Bishop's role in overseeing the Yukon Catholic Schools in regards to: hiring, curriculum, religious formation (student manual, catechetical programming, mission statement, etc.), governance, reflection of Catholic values in Department of Education policy, and communication with the Superintendent and Minister of Education.

There was also a discussion about the percentage of Catholic students in the Catholic system, as well as the effect of immigration on Catholic school enrolment.

Addendum (see Jan. 16, 2013 minutes): French programming was discussed again. School administration is committed to inquiring about the possibility of adding an additional French monitor to the staff.

Bishop Gary will be meeting with the Minister of Education next week. On behalf of Council, he will ask for an extension of the January 11th, 2013 deadline for written feedback on School Calendar options.

Paul suggested organizing a Catholic Schools public meeting with Bishop Gary in order to give parents/the general public the opportunity to share concerns and gather information. Bishop Gary was in agreement.

7. Catholic Education Association of Yukon Update

Terry and Dianne are co-chairs of CEAY.

They are presently working on finalizing an MOU with the Department of Education in order to access additional funds for the hiring of an Executive Director. A job description will be developed for the ED position with the primary role being to implement the new strategic plan.

There was a discussion on whether the ED should be hired by the CEAY or the Department of Education.

8. Education Act Changes

The Council is in agreement with the four proposed changes as listed in the letter from the Minister of Education (attached).

School Calendar 2013/14 Changes

Council and Administration discussed the proposed School Calendar changes (attached) and agreed that coordination of the school calendar, especially within Whitehorse, will help address such issues as: childcare, absenteeism, and unauthorized student visits from other schools.

Ed noted that Yukon High Schools are no longer tied to the BC final departmental exam schedule which will allow Vanier to set their own exam dates. He also asked Council to consider teachers, as well as students and parents, when providing feedback on the School Calendar changes.

The options presented do not indicate when the terms will begin and end.

Action Item: Paul will ask Lori Choquette about term end dates.

Council would like to solicit input from parents about the proposed School Calendar changes via an on-line survey. Notification of the survey will be in the next VCSS newsletter, the survey will be implemented the first week of January, the results will be summarized and reviewed at the January 16th council meeting, and Council will send their written feedback to the Department of Education by January 18th, 2013. It was agreed that the deadline of January 11th is too short a time-frame to properly consult with parents.

Action Item: Bishop Gary will ask the Minister of Education for an extension until January 18th, 2013.

Action Item: Kyle will notify parents about the survey in the VCSS December newsletter.

Action Item: Paul will lead a committee to determine survey parameters and desired outcomes.

9. Review of draft letters

Council reviewed two draft letters prepared in response to: 1) a Council meeting guest, and 2) a parent's letter to Council.

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 pm