



**John Cabot C.S.S.  
School Council Meeting  
Monday, February 22, 2021  
-Minutes-**

**Attendance:**

Present: Victoria Burazin; Frances Campese; Carolyn Esvelt; Mark Gandin; Vesna Gandin; Lori Gencarelli; Doreen Giansante; Dorota Jakubowska; Diane Kowalski; Elizabeth McGee; Mario Pascucci; Stefano Pascucci

Regrets: Mary Jo Ferreira; Cindy Flandes; Reem Abu

The meeting commenced at 6:35 pm.

1. **Opening Prayer and Land Acknowledgement:** Ms. Esvelt (Chaplain)
2. **Agenda:** approved with no changes; Lori moved and Vesna seconded
3. **Minutes:** were received
4. **Update:** Board Trustee Mario Pascucci
  - No specific updates were provided; rather a general discussion was held
  - There was some discussion about whether video should be turned on during class meetings; Frances summarized the school protocol (attendance is taken but videos may be off based on student comfort)
  - There was further discussion that sometimes teachers' videos aren't on (the example was not from John Cabot but anecdotal from elementary schools). Mario indicated he would be following up on Board protocol
5. **Principal's Report:** Frances Campese
  - Ms. Campese spoke on the subject of the School and Board plans and the Director's annual report.
    - o A focus this year is on inclusion and equity and anti-black racism initiatives. Teachers and administrators are undergoing proactive training and review on subjects like reconciliation, colonialism, anti-oppression, equity, and inclusion as part of our Catholic faith; bias; etc.
    - o Introducing more culturally responsive textbooks. Example new novel, *Interment* (this novel is reflective of the life of a newcomer).

- There are new course offerings on these subjects in the Arts (e.g., grade 9 NAC1) – Expressions of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Cultures)
- There are also supports for student achievement and opportunities for student voice, ex. Student Council, Debate Club, Writers, Club and Black Futures Committee
- The School psychologist and social worker have both been seconded to the Board under the mental health and well-being portfolio; both are a loss to the school but it's an honour that they have been chosen for this secondment. Replacements are in their place.

**6. School Council Chair:** no update

**7. Treasurers report:** no update

**8. Secretary report:** no update

**9. Parish report:** Elizabeth McGee

- The Church continues to be closed, but Father John sends out updates on activities such as Ash Wednesday.
- The Squires' group is hosting Stations of the Cross Friday nights at 7pm (currently limited to the first 100 participants) every Friday during Lent via Zoom. If you would like to attend, the virtual call is accessible through this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81372386566>.

**10. Chaplaincy report:** Carolyn Esvelt

- The retreat program for this quadmester is starting this week. It is all done synchronously and the theme this quadmester is "how we are stewards for God's creation." There will be an Awe walk; cohort C will be able to participate in virtual walks (the school is working in partnership with Riverwood Conservatory. Students are being provided with rocks on which they can add a message and deposit in the Peace Garden at John Cabot
- Other initiatives this quadmester include rosary on Tuesdays; Way of the Cross on Fridays; Life chain (an interactive youth ministry with a current theme of racism). These are usually held 11:30-12:30
- The school-wide Lenten sacrifice this year is the "Cabot Cares" campaign. Students and staff are contributing personal hygiene items, or donations through School Cash On Line; all items are going to families in need
- The Chaplain, Librarian, and CYW provide a daily mental break in the morning for staff and students; this has been well received.

**11. Teaching staff report:** Lori Gencarelli

- Eco team: going well; we are hoping to achieve Platinum this year (only 40 points away from Gold); hosted events like sweater day (add extra layers and turn down thermostat)
- Intentional professional development: attending PD sessions and bringing information back to staff meetings (e.g., colonization, bias)

- Black Futures Committee: putting forward an anonymous survey to provide students with a voice and understand their experiences and perspective, then share with staff to work toward collaboration for a positive climate
- Writing club: going strong
- Future Business Leadership Association: 27 students participated virtually; students placed well; one is moving forward to international competition
- Virtual wellness room: updated the room, which is available to all students; yoga, mindful meditation; resources for mental health are available on John Cabot Instagram accounts
- “Day in the life:” developing virtual tours to show Grade 8s what Cabot was like pre-COVID

**12. Student report:** Victoria Burazin

- Student Council is focusing on trying to get the school community to be more connected with each other during COVID
  - o Grade 9 pen-pal opportunity was a success – paired up students with Grade 9s (who didn’t have the “getting ready” opportunity) using a form that identified common interests, elementary school, etc.; majority of participants really enjoyed it; some conversations have continued and larger groups have formed
  - o Testing out new initiatives – virtual game night using Discord (where you can play games and chat at the same time); virtual live cooking class on Shrove Tuesday; Valentine’s day Kahoot; Friday Kahoots (hoping to get small prizes to encourage students to participate)

**13. Update:** Board Trustee Stefano Pascucci

- Stefano offered kudos for the personal hygiene initiative (sometimes a change from food drives is required); it’s in keeping with the Lenten season
- Technology roll out should be complete at schools; he is available to assist if there are issues

**14. Upcoming Meetings:**

- April: still tentative, especially with March Break moving; Council members will vote if they choose to forgo April’s meeting due to the break.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 8:35 pm

**NEXT MEETING:** May 17, 2021