

# School Council AGM-20251125\_184143-Meeting Transcript

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So as you know, at this time of year, this is where we receive our data back from last school year's report cards as well as we get our provincial achievement test results for our grade Nines. We also do look at our Grade 6 results of our incoming sevens to help us make some plans.

We typically have three-year cycles, understanding you can't reinvent things you don't really solve.

- Problems of practice shifted to looking at a three-year cycle. What do we really need to be focusing on? What are those specific learning intentions and what kind of data are we going to be using to inform us about our practice in line with our CBE three-year plan.

Last year we set the goal of looking at the intentional design of the learning environment to improve literacy and numeracy skills.

- how we welcome kids, how we look at our seating plans, that can be creating opportunities for kids to be working independently and in pairs as well as in groups
- we want to have student engagement and literacy and mathematics to improve.

So we are looking at student achievement and reading comprehension.

- we know if you can't read a lot of the tests that we have our kids take; they can't do well on them because a lot of them are based heavily in reading as well as just having good numeric understanding.

- a focus on disciplinary literacy and what that means is understanding the language of each discipline.

- So there is language to math.

- There is a language to looking at things as a historian or somebody looking from a historical perspective, what kind of language do we require to be looking from it from that as a historian?

- Maps, timelines, personal histories, historical events, cultural understanding of people over time, etc.

- From the perspective of a literary lens at looking at parts of speech and literary techniques, etc.
- Science and looking from that lens, examining data, subject specific vocabulary

Secondly, looking at student interest in achievement will improve by engaging in challenging problems in rich tasks.

- the way we design tasks and have them approach the work in a non-threatening way gets students to move beyond themselves within recursive cycles of learning
- each year we make sure parents are informed of how students are doing in our schools, share results and talking about what our intentions are for setting the groundwork for with regards to our professional learning.

We look at multiple sources of data, track all of our report card results looking at how kids are doing in terms of their academic achievement over the course of the year, provincial achievement test results.

- o capturing our grade nine students from the previous year is a snapshot of data that is important because it gives us an opportunity to compare with the province, compare with how the students did last year.
- o Perception data is a really important piece: surveys throughout the year. Every fall we do the our school survey that is for grades 7-8 and nine, and that one is a big one because students across Canada write the our school survey, comparing to Canadian norms. In the spring, we run the CBE student survey, for grade eight and nine students and
- o the Alberta Assurance Survey, which is for grade seven students and so great students in grades four, seven and 10 write that survey in Alberta every year.

As a staff, we gather together and we break into groups and we spend some time looking at all of those different sources of data and we spend time looking at literacy based data. So our

- English language, arts data and language to data to do with language acquisition, reading, writing, student perception of their learning in that area.
- We spend time looking at numeracy data, so our mathematics results and student perception data in terms of how they're feeling with their numeracy skills.

- Our well-being data: the reason why we chose engagement in our wording with our goal is because a big part of engagement is how students are feeling in in our school. So, sense of belonging, sense of safety, students feeling comfortable, students feeling positive at being in our school impacts how they how they do and their amount of success.
  - o well-being data as an indicator of how they're feeling and and how that then impacts their learning.
  - o really excited about this data:
    - First off, student sense of belonging and that goes that goes beyond just feeling welcome at school. This year we observed an 11% increase in students. This is coming from several years of us really intentionally work on helping students feel safe here at John Ware
      - changes that we've made in our supervision and our day-to-day routines and norms to try to help students feel like this is a safe place to be.
      - seeing that number climb and that has been a really, really big win for us.
- Sense of belonging has decreased just slightly 1% since last year. That's after a big increase from the year before. And when we compare it to norms across Canada, we're still well above the Canadian norms.
- Students feel staff and teachers within the building create a sense of feeling welcome whereas belonging or a feeling included, often as a peer-to-peer thing, and one of the things that we know about this age and stage is that it can be tricky; we know that kids feel very strongly their teachers care, that we always ask the kids if they have at least one key adult that they can come to and speak to about anything. If they were having a tough.
  - We have put some intentional pieces and using student voice and they had recommended they wanted to get to know each other better between the grades. So for the last since probably last January, February we started multigrade cross grade activities where they get to know each other the 1st Friday of every month. They crave it. They want to know each other. Back up. Remember we only positive feedback. Yeah, we're all about positives. Yeah, we were really, really excited. And even, like, positive relationships were a little bit below the Canadian norm last year. This year, we're back up above the Canadian norm and you can feel it like the vibe around the hallways.

- an example, we had a staff member who had worked here previously as an educational assistant a couple years ago and she's like, I can't believe how calm the building is. She's like, this feels like a different school because a couple years ago we had a larger group of kids that needed a lot of supervision; now kids are just doing what they're expected to be doing and coming and going. It's a beautiful thing, but it doesn't just happen.
- we did work last year where we surveyed the kids on a smaller survey and this one wasn't anonymous. And we explained to them why, asking about the clubs they're involved in, what sorts of opportunities would you like to see that you're not seeing? And having a key adult in the building that they connect with, and so for students who said that no, they still didn't have a key adult. We actually then listed those kids and intentionally planned for one of our teachers to try to attempt to connect with them and check in with them and tried to learn about their interests
- Our literacy data, we kind of divide it into two parts.
  - o first looking at our perception data around literacy, so the survey data and what students are feeling about their literacy skills as well as report cards.
    - definitely some discrepancies across our data for literacy.
    - celebrate student perception around literacy has increased
  - o In their reporting they understand what they're reading, they're interested in what they're reading.
    - report card data showed our work to push the level two kids to a three and the three kids to a four, not only focusing on students who have large reading gaps, of course, we also want to help the students who are who are at a grade level of reading. We want to push them forward as well. A
    - Noticing the level threes and level fours are increasing, which is what we wanted
- something that we noticed was that we have a larger number of the indicator on our report cards, that is NER, which is no, not enough evidence recorded to be able to give a grade.
  - o This might happen because a student is absent for a lot of the time, and we're working to try to increase their attendance and they haven't been at school enough to demonstrate their understanding, or they're reluctant to

engage in their tasks or submitting assignments, so there's a variety of reasons.

- This year, dig into why that's happening and make sure teachers are able to gather evidence of a student's understanding, maybe in a variety of ways
- Another thing that we noticed is that there's a discrepancy between what our report card data is telling us and what provincial achievement test data is telling us
- there's a lot of different factors that can impact how students are achieving on a provincial achievement test compared with regular assessment in in grades 7, 8 and 9.
  - o decrease in our data this year for reading.
  - o Alberta in general also saw a decrease. This particular cohort of grade nine students struggled a bit more with the test, and so we have to kind of dig in a little deeper now to the test itself and look at well what areas were students struggling with and how can we target those areas to make sure we're really intentional helping students build those skills,
- Numeracy Results:
- report card data and school perception data: still want to really focusing on kids' understand why we're including problem solving in our daily routines, and that's something as we look across our math teams, because we have a goal to try to increase student engagement in challenging problems.
  - o Teachers use activators, so starting every class by presenting the students with a problem and having them, work on whiteboards around the classroom, working in groups on the problem together. Maybe they're working in pairs, but teachers are trying to give time every day for problem solving
  - o looking at our survey data where we noticed the number of kids who are reporting they enjoy working on challenging problems has decreased.
  - o want to increase their confidence, increase their practice so they can gain experience in problem solving application, in general being able to solve problems later on in future careers.
  - o we saw an increase in our level threes and fours on our report cards, which has been good, as well as our issue of having a higher number of students with no evidence recorded, we'd like to bring that number down in both literacy and math,

- take a look at how much of that is based on attendance versus kids who are coming in and out, and not engaging and either maybe like handing things and finishing things and then really trying to tease out when kids are not accomplishing what we should be expecting from them, do they need to be working with adapted work so adapted work would be two or more grades below grade level, how do we look at those parallel tasks? So if we're say looking at fractions, so parts of a you're looking at part you know you're looking at.
- also science and social studies
  - notice our students working on English as an additional language achieved higher than students across the province, so that was an area of success
  - EAL students are doing well
- Our goal is increasing student engagement in mathematics and in literacy and our specific outcomes is again looking at increasing our disciplinary literacy across all subjects.
- problem solving can certainly be embedded into any subject
- continuing to focus on student sense of belonging safety because we know that's going to increase student confidence.
- with that comes a professional learning plan to build capacity in our staff, in working toward these
- Calibration of assessment - continuing to make sure teachers are working together to align their assessment practices so they're understanding if a student is working at a level 2 in this area, what does that mean? What sorts of skills are they demonstrating that tells the teacher they're at a Level 2 and making sure that understanding is consistent across our teachers

#### Reporting

- our last day of semester one at the end of January
- we will have our report cards coming home at the end of February

#### Staffing

- Miss Williams, Nancy, has been seconded to a position within the area.
- we had Mr D'andrea coming in who ended up getting another position at another school.
- we have Mr Goodall now, who was a student teacher here with us last year with Mr Lafferty.

**Question: Following the strike, what has been the impact on teachers, students?  
How will the year's material be covered, or will they miss things?**

Good question.

- We're fortunate in Alberta because we are able to be designers of learning and so you can create pretty rich tasks that hit a number of learning outcomes in the same activity. We can even do things from a multidisciplinary space; you can have both social studies and English language arts outcomes worked on and developed and assessed at the same time within the same kind of project.
- we have asked our staff that rather than trying to jam it all in is to take a step back and look at what are those enduring understandings that we want kids to come away with.
- outcomes will be very easily accomplished through dovetailing through that intentional design and so kids shouldn't be feeling like they're missing out because the teachers will be able to spend more time on key learning outcomes
- we make sure that they're being presented through a variety of spaces so the kids have the exposure that they need

**Finance: Treasurer, Iain Kelly**

- update since the last time we were talking so last May,
- June we sent our financial statements to the Government of Alberta. That happens every year.
- they're just really looking to see how much is in our bank account and we're spending our cash on.
- AGLC has a more robust requirements where we send out the financial statements for just this casino account and casino expenditure, but we have to include all the receipts.
- I sent a request in regarding our artists in residence, so I've provided them a lot of information. I'm just looking really to see to get a green light. No response yet.
- these are the financial statements for the school year.

Gary, can you see it? It says I'm sharing.

- Casinos are on an 18 month turn around.
- we received \$5 300 this year other forms of cash in is our healthy hunger cheques.

- our total expenditure was \$32,000 with the caveat we have about \$25,000 of expenses coming in as well, which we have pushed on to the following year, so the largest expenses is technology
- Paying for Southern Leisure Centre for the contribution to equipment and for the use of their facilities
- we do have casino charges in there and then we have field trip expenses as well from the general account.
- casino payments are every 18 months and our next casino date is in the end of April 2026
- We have reduced our use of SLC quite a bit and so Dan is in conversation with Danya over there to talk about what reduced fees; we have had an arrangement for a number of years that we would give them about \$5 000 to purchase equipment for the SLC.

### **Dates for Meetings**

- The next item on the agenda we have the dates for 25-26 school year meetings, I don't think we came up with dates and times. We had a couple of options like one of them was to.

### **Artist in Residence**

- our student, our indigenous student success Learning Leader, Sheila. Miss McCracken applied for an Alberta Foundation of the Arts Grant for working with an artist, so I have worked with Eva Senyaka a number of times in my career and been very, very fortunate to work with her.
- having a multi day residency (27 days) students discovering art making in the practice of inquiry and depiction, expression and reflection, talking about relationship in the in natural and built environments, talking about where we are in place and space, land based learning and our interconnectedness.
- Eva would be at the school multiple days a week.  
We want to open a space for her to have a kind of an open studio space so kids can see her in action as an artist as well and then work with different groups of students.
- what are those kinds of experiences of looking at our curriculum? So in say Grade 9, science or Grade 7 social studies, what are the opportunities for us to be working with Eva?

- Use art as the lens through which we look at our understanding of curriculum and looking at that piece around our natural and built environments, there's going to be tons of connections to all different disciplines.
- Different classes and different disciplines to be working with the artist and then our ultimate goal would be to even have us able to work with some indigenous artists like we've got Keegan Starlight, who is very well known artist through Tsuut'ina - he's done things for ATCO, Petro Canada. He's done beautiful installation work in the area and he actually is a community member, so we're quite lucky. And so that would be the ask. And so when you have an AFA grant, you're asking for is half of the total cost, and then there would be cost matching. So we would need to have some cost matching from a source to be able to make that program possible within that scope.
- trying to look at like where would our priorities be in shifting potentially within those experiences to make us still even in within our budget?  
from the financial point of view, parent council's contribution is still that 12K,
- Once we have our new elected executive, it would be a good opportunity for them to have the context. And I can certainly once we know who all those players are, I can certainly share that summary again or can attend the beginning of a meeting to kind of give that context.
- we're fortunate for is the fact that we have been so well equipped amongst so many other resources within our building. We're looking at different kinds of opportunities to be bringing learning experiences to kids and this one's a bit different because sometimes in junior high we don't have the same kind of artist in residence.

### **Second Meeting: AGM**

one function that AGM is that we need to elect the roles chair Co, Chair, Treasurer, Co, Co Treasurer.

### **Gary Gevorgyan**

- I can put my candidacy again if we have someone else who wants to chair the meetings. By all means, it's not mandatory. We need treasurer for sure. And if we have someone else who is interested to be a Co treasurer at this time and then Ian passes it to that person, we do have a couple of more roles.

- We have a previous casino coordinator who can come to the meeting so that she can pass the knowledge experience to the next person. I kindly asked her to wait with that until we identify someone who can.
- we need a minimum number of people so this means we don't want to get in a situation where the parent Council is no more and there is like advisory. It's just, you know what we have so many kids at school
- we would need a secretary - able to just kind of track those minutes
- we would like a key communicator and that's a non-executive role, but they do have communications that come from the system that go out to families.

Question about the limited turnout - Is it typically this small of a turn out in general? I've never participated in a Council meeting that was so small so just curious if this is just a lack of people's ability to attend this one? Or is this a typical meeting?

- We had quite a few grade nine families that always graduated at the same time, so they all left roles at a similar time. We have never really had the cast of thousands. We try to encourage every family attending at least once during the year in hopes people will sporadically attend outside the core group.
- we did get our engagement funds from the Alberta government and so they do give \$500 a year - What we've often done is figured out a way to use that. I think we've used it for the round dance. We'd used it for a couple of years to go towards a speaker so if you have any ideas of how you would like to engage families, I know some schools have done a movie night where families have come into the school and they've watched the movie Screenagers.
- An opportunity to be able to build some engagement from families, but it can't go towards things like prizes or food, even though we know that food brings everybody.

Student Council: We actually had elections this year and so our student council is doing some work this year in wanting to be a part of building some positive school culture

- Our goal is to have students and parents working together this year. Your assistance would be extremely beneficial to our school. If possible, we'd love to give feedback on any ideas, thoughts or concerns.
- Asking for \$500 seed money for school council events – I told them they could start with \$300 and to track their spending

- Approved by council

OK, sounds good. Thank you very much. That's all for today. And we don't have a meeting in December. As a reminder for January, we will send the additional information about the meeting.