

Notes from PAR Meeting – November 15th, 2018

Present:

Associate Director Wendy Dowling, Trustee Sue Lawton, SOE Paul da Silva, Principal Cheri Riddell, School Council Reps Jan Rodman & Donna Skells, Architect Joginder Dhanjal, and Ben

1. Welcome from Principal Cheri Riddell

2. Student insight from SOE da Silva

- quiet space for students, no issues have occurred with the second floor closure, conversations with students have been great.

- shared conversations with students; love shorter day, strong friendships, day goes quickly. Student like the quiet space.

- students miss the Skylight experience, want activities they could access, wonderful relationships with teachers, it is evident that teachers that stayed there wanted to stay there and that they have a passion for these kids.

3. Cheri Riddell discussed unexpected glitches that have been resolved that could not have been foreseen.

- after 3 – 4 weeks now gelling, staff have come together

- Ben shared experiences and recognized the efforts of the Principal and SOE to assist and ensure that issues were resolved quickly as they arose.

- Ben discussed culture, activities, opportunities for students, upcoming events, and shared a slide show created by a student. Numerous examples were shared.

4. Parent insights – GF North students are saying nothing.

- South site – Great advantages to the physical space, no sensory overload, safe space, teachers are phenomenal and caring, many leadership opportunities for students.

- Negatives – not enough washrooms, cafeteria not continuing – should not be shared with students as this is an adult conversation, lack of course options, student re-engagement i.e. what next? Lack of communication, no info online about GF South, enhanced program is the only info on the Spec. Ed. tab, no updates and no info anywhere online about the South site.

5. From Jan Rodman – The PAR is moot at this point because perception is; Spec. Ed. can be relocated by the board to any school. Question raised regarding new regional program at West Credit.

- Response by A.D. Wendy Dowling – spoke about new programs offered at West Credit and the parameters around entry into the program and the impact on the enrolment. She indicated the board is watching very closely the Vocational numbers across the board. Committed to students and programs that will provide a positive school experience.

- Indicated that the timeline for appraisals is a concern; education sector in general, is experiencing delays around funding in numerous areas. The focus needs to be students and although the current situation may be richer in terms of opportunities, they may not necessarily be in terms of curricular programs.

- Looking ahead, the board is collectively looking at all options for students for the upcoming school year, "Plan B". Important to explore all options.

- The board is going to arrange an information evening for parents at the South site, (tentative date is set for Monday, November 26th).

6. Update from Architect Joe

- in the process of approval

- waiting on Approval to Proceed (ATP)

- Joe and his team continue to work on the project, even though awaiting ATP

- Submitted for Site Plan Approval

- Permit drawings are almost there, 99%

- Site Plan Approval could take up to 6 months, we are half way there

- Best case – Early 2019, Worst case – Mid 2019 to begin construction

7. Meeting Adjourned as School Council Meeting to begin