

**Westboro School Council  
Meeting Minutes  
September 18, 2019**

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Called to order 6:30 pm (Krystal Gibson).

**Present:**

Karry Biri, Matthew Bissett, Leah Canning, Amy Churchill, Veronica Dierich, Krystal Gibson, Crystal Herbert, Don Irwin, Debbie Klita, Mike Lastiwka, Michael Schnell, Kim Scott, Jacquie Surgenor, Chantel Werner

**Approval of Agenda:**

Jacquie Surgenor moves to accept the agenda, Amy Churchill 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favour: “Yes”.

**Approval of Minutes from Previous Regular Meeting:**

Karry Biri moves to accept the minutes from April 24, 2019, Matthew Bissett 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favour: “Yes”.

**New Business:**

**A.) Logos Report**

Michael Schnell, president of the Elk Island Logos Society Board, shared an infographic [see page 6] on what the Society is and how it works closely with each school’s parent group. Theresa McKenzie will be the Logos rep for Westboro, Jenn Wolfe is the Logos fundraising director, and their contact emails can be found on the Logos website at:

<https://www.elkislandlogos.ca/elk-island-logos-society/the-board/>.

Monthly chapel dates can be found on the school website calendar at:

<https://www.westboroelementary.ca/school-calendar#/month/2019/09>.

**B.) COSC (Committee of School Councils) Report**

COSC is the umbrella group for school councils in the Elk Island Public School (EIPS) district and Jacquie Surgenor represents Westboro at the monthly meetings. Their first meeting is Wednesday, October 2, at EIPS Central Administration Building Boardroom. It will begin with a Mix & Mingle event starting at 5:45pm with the scheduled meeting to begin at 7pm.

COCS has partnered with Parents Empowering Parents (PEP) to produce PEP Talks, articles which schools can share in their newsletters. Watch for these in the Westboro monthly school newsletter at:

<https://www.westboroelementary.ca/newsletters>.

More information about the PEP organization can be found at:

<https://pepsociety.ca/>

More information on COSC and their monthly meetings can be found at:

<https://www.eips.ca/parents/committee-of-school-councils-cosc>.

### **C.) ASCA Update**

The Alberta School Councils Association (ASCA) is the provincial voice of parents through school councils and is one of five provincial education partners providing input on education to the Minister, Alberta Education and each other. The other 4 are the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA), the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) and the Association of Alberta School Business Officials (ASBOA). ASCA sits on the major committees and provides input into education initiatives and ideas, both to Alberta Education and to their partners.

ASCA is funded in 3 ways:

Membership fees – EIPS buys memberships for each school council. This funds ASCA's Board of Directors to advocate on behalf of the members.

Alberta Education Grant – This buys the membership services that ASCA provides to support school councils, ie. staff to answer questions and coordinate PD sessions.

Miscellaneous – This is a very small portion of fee for services (when fundraising societies want a session as ASCA is not funded for that) or conference fees, resource gallery, etc.

A few years ago, there was a change from a 3 year grant to a 1 year grant. The Alberta Education Grant ran out June 30 and ASCA has not yet received word whether the new grant will be successful. As such, ASCA would need to stop providing sessions and services after October.

ASCA is encouraging school councils to contact their MLA and the Minister of Education and share their story if they have found ASCA helpful.

### **D.) School Council Engagement Task Force**

Throughout the school year, ASCA will send questions on a pre-determined topic to bring to school councils for their discussion and feedback. By participating, it is another way for Westboro School Council parents to communicate and help advocate at a provincial level.

Krystal Gibson started the conversation about the September 2019 request for input regarding “Choice in Education”. Please see page 7 for the details and to follow the hyperlinks for further information. If you have any questions about this process or want to provide your input, please contact her at [westboroparents@gmail.com](mailto:westboroparents@gmail.com). We will be submitting our feedback as a school council to ASCA by November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### **E.) What can parents do to support teachers in the class room?**

Krystal led the discussion on how parents can provide more in-class support to our teachers during this time of budget uncertainties. Mike will talk with staff about ideas of how they could utilize more parent volunteers besides fieldtrips. He also encouraged parents to contact Erin Tomkins, our literacy consultant, to get more information about the training for providing small group reading support.

### **F.) Open Questions**

After the spring online survey and discussion at the April 24<sup>th</sup> school council meeting, what was the decision about how to pay for fieldtrip fees? Fieldtrip fees for this school year will be paid in full up front. A letter to parents will be going home in October showing each students’ list of fieldtrips for the year.

As a follow-up from the April 24<sup>th</sup> school council meeting, will families be able to view Friday morning video announcements outside of the school? Mike has taken over the video announcements for this year and is developing his process. He is working towards having that option in place.

What work was done on the school this summer? Furnaces were replaced.

Do we have a school policy on the use of YouTube during class time? No.

Does the personal device policy stay in effect during offsite fieldtrips? Yes.

Is Battle of the Books going to be offered again as a school activity? Yes.

Is the October grade 5 blanket exercise done with parent permission? Yes.

Where does the conversation start to make the grades 5/6 gate access in and out of the west playground a safer walking surface? Concerns can be emailed to Mike who will pass it on to the appropriate maintenance agencies.

Is a hand-held game considered a personal communication device? If the device can connect to the internet, it is considered a communication device. Parents will need to use discretion for items like this.

### **School Reports:**

#### **A.) Admin Report**

Mike Lastiwka reviewed portions of the School Education Plan and also talked about building resiliency in our Westboro students this year.

Chantel Werner shared the following report.

- Westboro has 3 new staff – Mrs. Wieler is the 5L teacher and Mrs. Matyjanka and Mrs. Sutton are education assistants in the PLACE classroom.
- Mrs. White is running a student contest to name the dragon in the new mural in our school library.
- First fire drill of the year went well.
- Welcome Back BBQ was very successful.
- When the office marble jar is filled, the entire school will take a fieldtrip to attend a Sherwood Park Crusaders hockey game scheduled for Wednesday, November 6.
- Chantel and the grade 6 teachers are working together on a weekly reading workshop.
- We are no longer having Monday afternoon circles. Instead, 2 grades at a time will have either Mike, Chantel or Dianna Graziano (school counsellor) cover the classroom once per week to allow teachers prep time.
- Across grade activities will be happening once a month.
- Chantel and Mike are organizing a student council with grades 5 and 6. Each teacher was responsible for the process to choose student reps.
- Chantel is very excited to have 40 AMA Patrollers sign up!

#### **B.) Teachers Report**

Leah Canning, our 3R teacher, shared the following report.

- Erin Tomkins has organized another family literacy event on Wednesday, October 9<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-7:15pm. This year it is open to students of all grades and their families and so far, she has 150 participants signed up. The event includes a book swap and Erin will also be accepting book donations.
- It's the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Reading Week running this year from October 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>. Some of the Sherwood Park Crusaders hockey players will be coming to read with our students. Erin is looking for volunteers and can be contacted directly at [erin.tomkins@eips.ca](mailto:erin.tomkins@eips.ca) for further information.

- Courtney Richard, our music teacher, says THANK YOU for the new barred instruments for our music room!!

### **C.) Trustee Report**

Don Irwin shared the following report.

Welcome back to another exciting school year and thank you parents for being involved in your children's education by being by being a member of the parent council at your school.

The school year began for the trustees on the Thursday before the long weekend with the trustees cooking breakfast for the central Administration staff followed by our organizational meeting for the year.

We have met a number of times in September including our annual board planning Retreat which we just completed September 17 and 18th. Major discussion points during these days included facilities and student populations including Sherwood Park and Fort Saskatchewan which both face challenges with growth in the communities in coming years.

In our meetings we have reviewed the current the new policy for the use of electronic devices which seems to be working very well we are getting good replies from parents and school administrators. We are also getting inquiries from many other boards in the province and across Canada for information on the policy as they want to create one for their school divisions.

The trustees met with the new education minister earlier this month and received updates on the budget process which should be complete by October 31st. Lack of a budget has been a major problem for all divisions as we are uncertain as to our funding so that we've had to budget very conservatively until we know the details. Thank you for patience and understanding.

I look forward to working with you this year. I would encourage each Parent Council member to feel free to send me questions or requests for information at anytime. Email is preferred but text or phone are fine too.

[Don.Irwin@eips.ca](mailto:Don.Irwin@eips.ca) 587-986-3900

**Next Meeting Date:** Wednesday, October 16, 2019 at 6:30 pm

**Adjournment:** Karry Biri moves to adjourn at 7:45 pm.

# WHO IS THE Elk Island **LOGOS** Society?



**Formed in June 1997 and currently in our 23rd year!**



**Partners with EIPS in the formation of the Logos Christian Alternative Program**

Westboro Elementary

Sherwood Heights JHS

**ACTIVE IN 3 SCHOOLS!**

Brentwood Elementary

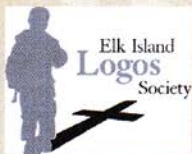
## Main Purpose

As a society, we meet, plan, pray, fund raise, and serve in order to support the teachers as they develop their classroom environment to fit the distinctive of our alternative program. We want to have classrooms that nurture spiritual formation and growth based on Christian principles.

So you're a parent group for the Christian classes?



No, Logos parents and students are not apart from the school they are in. We get involved in school events, fundraisers and everything else. We also focus on adding faith to our every day learning, and add some extra resources and support to that "alternative" emphasis across all our schools.



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www.elkislandlogos.ca

## **ASCA School Council Engagement Task Force - September 2019 REQUEST FOR INPUT**

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Thank you for participating in the *School Council Engagement Task Force (SCETF)* for the 2019 – 2020 school year.

The feedback your school council parent representative compiles and submits to the ASCA is greatly appreciated by the Board to assist in their considerations on education issues in Alberta.

*The Board utilizes information gathered to inform the advocacy work of the association. This may include advising at external committee meetings, sharing with appropriate Ministries or provincial education organizations, and the potential for Board sponsored Advocacy Resolutions.*

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Request for input regarding “**Choice in Education**”.

*Background/context:*

It is known that the Minister of Education will begin work on the promised *Choice in Education Act*, for tabling in the spring of 2020. The Minister has indicated that consultations will be forthcoming, and it is highly anticipated that ASCA will be asked to contribute to consultations related to the contents of the *Act*.

At this time, ASCA has no distinct Advocacy Policies that represent Member perspectives related to *Choice in Education*. It is also possible that ASCA Member School Councils are not aware that greater access to alternative programs, like languages, sports, and other disciplines, is not likely what is intended with the *Choice in Education Act*.

The United Conservative Party (UCP) outlined in their [election platform](#) (page 57-60) a detailed [commitment to education](#) including one of 13 items, the following which indicates:

**10. Affirm parental choice through a Choice in Education Act.**

Alberta has a strong legacy of diversity in education. A UCP government will uphold the established right of parents to choose the education setting best suited for their children including: public, separate, charter, independent, alternative and home education programs.

[Click here for the entire excerpt](#)

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*Please submit feedback to ASCA by **November 2, 2019**.*

1. What does “**Choice in Education**” mean to your school council/community?

Does your school council have any additional thoughts or concerns you would like the ASCA Board to consider in any discussions it may have with Alberta Education on this topic?

School Council Name: \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank you for your input!***