

Sir Winston Churchill School Council

Annual Report 2020/21

About our council

Sir Winston Churchill School Council is a volunteer group of members from the school community dedicated to strengthening and supporting school initiatives and programs. The council acts as a voice for parents and guardians to present concerns, problems and solutions and collaborate with school staff to improve student outcomes. We continue to have a strong and vocal council and are proud of the achievements made within this report for the benefit of the SWC community.

Note from the Chair/Vice Chair

The 2020-2021 school year was another unusual year as students and staff adjusted to new COVID-19 protocols for in-person learning from September to December 2020, made the switch to virtual after the winter break, returned to in-person learning until mid-April and finished the year with virtual learning. Council meetings were held virtually using Google Meet. Fundraising was limited as we had no pizza program and no movie nights and major events such as multicultural night and our end-of-year celebration, Fun Night, were cancelled. However, our council still had regular attendance by a committed group of parents, got creative in fundraising virtually, and organized some fun virtual events.

Our largest expenditure was staff requests for materials to support learning. This varied list included everything from Forest School supplies for kindergarten students, to bicycle helmets for our BIP and Autism programs. We also purchased approximately \$1,000 in new books for our library and supported a Scientists in the School experience for our students. Council supported our staff with individual gift cards to spend on enriching learning experiences and supported a student fund to assist children with any costs that would be a barrier to participation in school activities. Council voted to reserve approximately \$3,000 for the 2021-2022 school year recognizing that we had limited capacity to raise funds and there would still be needs to support at our school.

The year was challenging for staff who were teaching in person while providing learn-at-home activities to students isolating due to COVID-19 regulations, and then adapting entire classroom back and forth to virtual learning. On behalf of SWC School Council, we would like to sincerely thank all members of the school community – parents, guardians, volunteers, staff, and students – for their participation, and support during this past year.

Major achievements completed

- **Fundraising efforts:** Ran a variety of fundraising events and activities (see below). SWC Council also ran two virtual fundraisers (one in December and one in June) in support of the Ottawa Food Bank, raising more than \$2,000 to support families in need in our community.

- **Community-gearred events:** Ran a Scientists in the School virtual Family Science Evening, funded by the PRO-Grant and booked centrally through the OCDSB. Additionally, SWC Council offered Family Fun Friday virtual tours with Little Ray's Reptiles as a fun and educational event that families could attend together.
- **Transport arrangements:** Council supports safe pick-up and drop-off times at our school through an annual traffic safety blitz in September. Parents on SWC Council organized a letter writing campaign to advocate for safety improvements to support a safer walking/cycling environment.
- **Transparency:** Regular communication with parents through emails, a public Facebook page and a regularly updated council website.
- **1% challenge:** SWC council supported other students in our city by donating 1% of our fundraising to the Education Foundation of Ottawa.

Summary of key fundraising completed

- **Flipgive:** A portion of proceeds from online shopping supported council initiatives.
- **Toppers Pizza:** Toppers Pizza made a donation to SWC Council for every order of CinniMinis made on Tuesday evenings throughout the year.
- **Labels:** Sold personalized labels to help keep track of kids' stuff, with a portion of proceeds supporting school council
- **Direct donations:** Council offered an option of direct donations through School Cash Online for parents who are not interested in purchasing items, but would like to support council programs.

Summary of activities funded and supported

- **Academic support:** Council voted approximately \$6,700 to requests by teachers and staff. This included a wide variety of requests, which supports initiatives that enhance the learning environment and promote the academic success of our students. We also purchased approximately \$1,000 in new books for our library.
Examples: Scientists in the School, Tarps so students could learn outside more comfortably
- **Student support:** Council gave \$2,000 to this fund, which allows the principal discretionary funding to support students to participate in activities that would be otherwise financially prohibitive such as field trips and in-school presentations.
- **Classroom support:** Council purchased almost \$2,500 in gift cards so all teachers, ECEs, LSTs and other staff could have the freedom to plan an activity requiring additional supplies without spending out of pocket. This fund is a symbolic gesture, which acknowledges that staff frequently purchase items for students from their own funds.
- **Parent involvement:** SWC Council used our parent involvement grant to offer Family Fun Fridays, which was a series of virtual tours of Little Ray's Reptiles zoo. These fun and educational evenings brought our community together virtually while schools were closed to in-person learning.
- **Administrative support:** This is the operating fund for council, and this year was limited to a subscription to manage virtual event registrations and the 1% challenge.

Summary of financial information

Opening balance of all reconciled bank accounts, investments and cash on hand on August 31, 2020

\$15,609.72 opening balance of all bank accounts (no investments, no cash on hand)

The amount raised by school council during the year September 1, 2020 and August 31, 2021

\$3,666.77

The amount spent by school council during the year September 1, 2020 and August 31, 2021

\$12,956.23

Closing balance of all reconciled bank accounts, investments and cash on hand on August 31, 2021

\$6,320.26 closing balance of all bank accounts (no investments, no cash on hand)

Portion of above amount raised which was collected through the school's School Cash Online program

\$0