

# WOSS School Council Highlights of 2004-2005

## **Mission Statement**

Designed our mission statement to parallel the school's mission statement

## **Goals**

Established these goals for the year:

### ***1. Communication***

Enhance communication between the school and parents in order to:

- Develop an awareness of and promote school activities and events, both curriculum-related and extracurricular
- Help with the transition between Grade 8 and Grade 9
- Invite parents to become more involved in School Council activities and ultimately increase parent representation on the Council

### ***2. Fundraising***

- Develop and initiate fundraising strategies that raise funds for the School Council and the school, contribute to the school climate, and promote the school within the local community.
- Develop policies and procedures for spending Council funds to support school needs and student activities.

## **Attendance and Membership**

Had a small but loyal group of people who came out regularly, averaging about 8 people at each meeting.

## **Financial Support**

***Supported the following clubs/teams/activities:***

Robotics

Drama

Debate

Grade 8-Grade 9 Transition Committee for Welcome Week and their mentorship program

## **Web site**

Designed and went on line with a web site dedicated to the WOSS School Council (accessed through the school web site). This was done with the help of two staff members (Mary Jane Page and Glenn Rogers) and a student (Ahmed Abbas). The site contains pages on:

- WOSS School Council Mission statement and Goals,
- general info on School Councils in Ontario,
- Meeting dates and location, Minutes (PDFs),
- Monthly E-News (PDFs),
- Parent links of interest, and
- Links to a staff directory and to the School Board.

## **Communication**

### ***E-mail address list***

By handing out forms at parent nights and sending forms out with Semester 1 report cards, we were able to create a parent e-mail address list of about 100 parents. We sent out monthly messages (see *E-News*), sent out a few quick information messages, and made the occasional, and successful, request for volunteers.

### ***WOSS E-News***

Sent out monthly news briefs to parents in our e-mail list, which highlighted key dates for the month and reported on individual student and student club/team/group achievements, upcoming events, etc.

## **Family of School Meetings**

Attended two Family of School Meetings this year and

- shared school council issues and concerns with the other schools in our “family”
- was enlightened about professional learning in the board, and
- brainstormed ways to help with the Grade 8-Grade 9 transition.

## **Fundraising**

### ***Charms***

Designed Italian charms (large and small) with the school logo on the larger charms (which link 2 bracelets) and “WOSS” on the smaller charms. These are now for sale through the office. Student groups/clubs/teams also have the option of designing their own charms and selling for a profit for their groups. This will be an ongoing fundraiser.

### ***Coffee sales***

Sold coffee at the Halton Skills Competition and raised funds for council, Robotics, and Drama (about \$500).

### ***Bingo***

Since two of the key people running the School Bingo are also Council members, Council received some funds from Bingo proceeds over the year.

### ***Donation Letter***

Designed a donation letter to go home in the summer package asking parents to donate (money or items) to the Council and receive a tax receipt from HDSB. The letter allows parents to specify where they want their money to go (specifically to students clubs/teams/groups/activities).

### ***“Retirements”***

Four key council members are retiring this year after many years on council (Erica Gilby, Francis Showers, Helen Hassan, and Linda Hill)

### **School Council, Conference**

Attended the School Council Conference in April and went away with these three key ideas:

- Don't let fundraising distract you from your mandate as an advisory group – your main goal is to advise the principal as representative body of WOSS parents and find ways to enhance parent participation in their children's education.
- Don't focus entirely on getting parents out to council meetings – there are other ways to involve parents. (and many parents do want to help but not sit on council.)
- High school councils – the best way to fundraise is by creating alliances with student groups, e.g., athletic council, drama council, etc. and helping them fundraise.

### **Plans for Next Year**

#### ***Constitution***

Revise our constitution (from 1997)

#### ***Parent Nights – Speakers***

- Speakers for two parents nights, one each semester:

- Semester 1 (October 13) is about *Helping Youth Make Good Career Decisions* with Phil Hedge (Ontario Guidance Counsellors).
- Semester 2 (April 6) is about *Parenting Adolescents* (“Brain-based” parenting) with Garfield Gini-Newman (OISE).

#### ***Grade 8-Grade 9 Transition***

- Invite our feeder school Grade 8 students and/or parents to events at WOSS, e.g., our Parent Night speakers, and Debate, Drama, and Band presentations

- Continue to send our *WOSS E-News* to feeder schools on a regular basis.

#### ***Fundraising for Council***

- Continue with selling WOSS charms. Hopefully sell a number at Grad time (October).

- Consider some new ways to raise funds.

#### ***Student Fundraising***

- Create a fundraising manual for students and teachers that would serve as a reference for more effective fundraising at WOSS.

- Bring in a fundraising expert to work with student leaders of the various councils and clubs/teams and supervisory teachers about fundraising.

#### ***Communication***

- Continue to add e-mail addresses to the Council E-mail list (send form home in the summer mailing)

- Continue monthly *WOSS E-News* messages

#### ***Council Membership***

- We need to increase parent representation on council, as we are losing some key members. We also need council members to take on specific responsibilities: treasurer, secretary, web site updating, *E-News*, fundraising committee, etc. We also need to enlist a community rep for next year.