School Council Meeting

Our school council is a large group of very involved parents from the community. I found that it really did not seem to consist of the demographics that would generally make up our school.

There wasn’t a large agenda but a of the issues that came up were around how funds would be spent within the school and comparing our school to what other schools in Guelph have or are run. One of these issues was that at a recent cross country meet that out athletes did not have a school tent and were rained on all day. Most other schools had tents. Why did our school not have one? As a coach for this team I was personally happy to hear about this issue. The council said it was needed to have a tent for teams and my principal agreed.

Another item that was brought up was that one of our vice principals was recently moved into the principal’s pool. Parents were wondering if there were any ideas around when he would be leaving the school and who would be his replacement. Of course our principal had no idea for this and said that it was up to the board and but that there would only be the one change in admin over the next year to try and make sure that there is consistency within the school. I thought she fielded this well and made the parents feel like it would be a minimal disruption to the running of the school.

Two items to me came up in how these meetings were run around the principal. The first is that I didn’t find the chair of the parents to be the bossiest of the group as I thought they would be. It was 2 other parents that really seemed to be adamant about issues. This I thought was a good point because it kept them more on task. The pushy parents also of course were looking out for more of the best interest of their kids and didn’t have as good a grasp of the whole school ideals. The chair did seem to have a bit better grasp of it and was more interested in what is the best for our money – so not a bad person to have. Of course they still wanted the principal to open her wallet but it was about trying to bring the school up the level of others and not about we need these unreasonable items. Maybe that happens more in elementary or at the beginning of the year.

The second point is that my principal can be pretty hard headed about an issue when she wants to be. She was fairly successful in staying away from this train of thought during the meeting. She stayed very positive and used many of her go to phrases (outstanding and phenomenal) when talking about school culture and the work of the teachers. She really did do a good job of making the school look like a well-oiled machine when it in fact isn’t at times. I can’t see any of the parents leaving this meeting thinking poorly about the school. She did agree to most requests by the council but I believe mainly because there was nothing unreasonable. I am curious to see what would happen if there were greater differences of opinions within the room or large money issues came up. Overall I thought she steered the meeting well and was a good representative of the school.