

General Vanier Parent Council annual report on the 2018-19 school years activities

As the General Vanier Parent Council submits an annual report to the Ottawa Carleton District School Board and our community, we would like to use this opportunity to thank our parents, family members, staff and community members for selflessly sharing their energy and time to benefit our students and their families. We depend on your support and you are what makes this school the amazing place that it is.



In addition, this year's most special thanks goes to our outgoing principal, Jeremy Nowiski, who leaves the school after 4 years of tireless cheerleading and endless support for the General Vanier students and families. We wish him all the best at Carson Grove- we know the kids there will be richer, just like we are, because of the years spent with him. GV on three, Mr Nowiski!!!!

This was another dynamic year for the School Council. We were able to continue and expand many of our traditional community, fund-raising, and family events and introduce a few new initiatives in an effort to support the school and foster a positive experience for all of our children.

2018-19 School Council Members

Chair Maja Strika

Treasurer Faten Fawaz

Secretary Catherine Burke

Member at Large Nor Hasimah Abu Hassan

2018-19 Meeting dates

The School Council met 7 times during the 2018-19 school year. The elections were held during the first meeting. Meetings were held in the school library on the following dates:

- September 20, 2018
- October 18, 2018
- November 15, 2018
- January 10, 2019
- April 14, 2019
- May 16, 2019
- June 13, 2019

What did Council do last year?

School Council at General Vanier organizes school community-building and fundraising events, to provide financial support and deliver numerous programs for students each year. The Council also provides supports communication between parents and school staff and addresses important issues in our school community. Our main events this year included:

Two Family Movie Nights: It is always fun to welcome our families in the school gym for a fun night of movie watching. The kids always make this event brighter by wearing their pyjamas, bringing their blankets and stuffed toys. This year we enjoyed the Storks and WALL-E, combined with raffles, used book sale popcorn and juice. Movie nights have become a fun tradition and they will continue this year. We look forward to welcoming all of you again at least two times during this school year. Money raised: \$785.50

Used Book sale: We were happy to continue the tradition of used book sales for the GV family. The book sale was organized to coincide with the parent teacher interviews in November, giving both the kids and parents and guardians an opportunity to browse and purchase something new for the whole family to read. The books were also available for purchase at Movie Night events. This popular sale will continue this year, starting November 14, 2019. Money raised: \$640.40

Multicultural Bread Festival: This events get bigger every year and remains our signature event, renowned throughout the community. Students, families, community members, our municipal representatives and the media pour into the gym to break bread together and celebrate our multicultural family that represents over 40 countries. This year we enjoyed Mexican Hat Dance, traditional outfit fashion show, and a medley of traditional Serbian folklore dances. This event remains free, but we do have a raffle and welcome donations. We look forward to welcoming you and the community again this year! Money raised: \$247.50



Pizza Program: Dedicated council members with help from a community volunteer and staff run our pizza program smoothly. We have continued to offer pizza every week with great success. Parents are able to enjoy a “day-off” from lunch- making, as the kids enjoy the yummy pizza, while their school and activities benefit from the proceeds! Our pizza provider remained Riverside Pizzeria, offering us real Italian homemade pies. This win-win program will continue in the 2019-20 school year. Money Raised: \$8,895



Fundscrip Gift Card Program: The gift card purchasing program has been running at the school for few years now to a varying success. The program allows for easy purchasing of gift cards on line with a percent of purchase value going to the school. The community is able to purchase gift card, pay for them using on-line banking, like they would pay any other bill and have the cards shipped directly to their house. As this is an easy to run program which has a potential to benefit the school with no cost to the parents or any other community supporter, we will keep this activity going next year.

If you would like to find out more or become a supporter through the Fundscrip program:

1. Visit <https://www.fundscrip.com/>
2. Click on Support a Group and
3. Enter General Vanier code **UKBP8P**.

If you have any questions on this program, please do not hesitate to contact Maja Strika at maja.strika@gmail.com or 613-606-8754. Money raised: 244.69



Whole Kids Garden Grant Program: This year the Council was successful at applying and receiving the Whole Kids Foundation Garden Grant valued at \$2,000 USD. The enabled us to purchase two Tower Gardens which will be installed in the school during the 2019-20 school year. The initiative will be headed

by Mrs. Pereira. The kids will be able to learn all about growing healthy vegetables using this indoor aeroponic system, while they also apply what they have learned in their science, math and health and art curriculum. If you would like to learn more about the Tower Gardens, please visit <https://www.towergarden.ca/school-gardens>. We are hoping to engage the whole community as we see the veggies and microgreens grow so please stop by and see the progress throughout the year. Wouldn't it be cool if the kids were able to prepare the salads for the Bread Festival this year? Grant amount \$2,664.40



Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant: The Council was successful again in securing a PRO grant from the Ministry of Education. The grants are specifically dedicated to increasing parent engagement with the school community, while helping kids learn more in one of the key initiative's designated by the ministry. To this end, the Council was able to organize two Aboriginal cultural performances by MASC and one performance by the National Arts Centre orchestra at the school gym. Both events were well attended by the parents as well. Remainder of the funds was used to replenish some of the Math Bags supplies that go home with our Grade 1 to 3 students every week and showcase some of the reading and math curriculum kids are covering in the classroom. Grant amount \$1,000.

How did we spend the money raised?

Every year council distributes funds to the school for various activities and supplies. These expenditures are voted on by active council members and are re-visited and re-considered each fall or as they come up. Among other things, this year we are happy we were able to:

- Purchase a new **full size electronic keyboard** for the school performances in the gym
- Bring in a **We've got the Beat** performance by the world-renowned **National Arts Centre (NAC) Orchestra**. It was a fantastic musical experience for the kids and families.
- Bring in **Daniel Richer with two Papoose Aki MASC Aboriginal performances and storytelling** which was a very unique experience for the kids and the families.
- Support having **Scientists in the Schools presenters** for every classroom who did hands-on curriculum related experiments with the children
- Support annual **School Play** costumes and decorations purchase and equipment rental to make this event children work so hard for a resounding success.
- Support the **Leaving Ceremony** for the Grade 3s with the purchase of cakes for the kids and their families.
- Refresh the **Math Bags supplies** so that the math inspired story books and items can continue to come home every week.
- Purchase **two Tower Garden indoor aeroponic systems** with regular and microgreens extensions for even more healthy plants grown from next school year and on.
- Support **two University of Ottawa Coding Workshops** which have successfully introduced many of our Grade 2 and 3 students to a wonderful and creative world of computer programming.



Plans for the current school year

General Vanier School Council always strives to improve and grow year over year. In 2019-20 we look forward to working with our new principal, Mrs. Christina Rathier to keep our school the best and most welcoming one. We are sure Mrs. Rathier has already fallen in love with GV energy and kindness that lives inside.

Our main focus for the current school year will be to maintain and improve our finances to ensure a solid footing to be able to enrich the kids' school experience this and in the future years. This will enable us to undertake bigger projects like increasing the maker space or adding on a learning commons for collaborative learning in the future.

We will support many of the ongoing activities you have come to know at the school. We also have a few new initiatives we are hoping to have at the school.

- **School Garden:** As mentioned, the Council has secured the Whole Kids Garden Grant and will build an aerologic tower garden in the school. This will extend the kids curriculum while teaching them about where our food comes from, importance of good nutrition and whole foods in our diets, food growing and preparation, and exposing them to new vegetables to try.
- **More Coding workshops:** Year after year, students have shown great interest in Coding Workshops, working with University or Ottawa, in the Maker Space and with various tools like Ozobots, Scratch and Sphero. This year, we are hoping to help the school increase the number of coding workshops available to the children and ensure all classes can experience them. These activities develop science, technology, engineering and math skills of our students, preparing them for the challenges of the future.



To accomplish this, we would love to make sure we continue to see all of you at our events and fundraising activities as well as introduce some new ones like a donation-based Snow Suit Exchange. To this end, we always welcome new School Council members and our families' suggestions for what you would like to see the School Council support. Please consider getting involved in with the Council, at our meetings, or at any events you feel you can support. The experience will go a long way in supporting your child's school and will give you a whole new view into their learning and friendships.

School council meetings are open to all. We meet every third Wednesday of the month and dates of our meetings are communicated in the newsletter. Meetings are held at 6:30PM at the school library. Please feel free to contact Maja Strika at maja.strika@gmail.com or (613)606-8754 with any comments or questions about the Council.

Statement of Operations and Financial Position of the General Vanier School Council

As submitted to the OCDSB in September, 2019

School Name General Vanier Public School; School Council Chair Maja Strika

Opening balance of all reconciled bank accounts, investments and cash on hand on August 1, 2018	\$5,952.77
The amount raised by school council during the year August 1, 2018 and July 31, 2019	\$15,276.09
The amount spent by school council during the year August 1, 2018 and July 31, 2019	\$11,543.36
Closing balance of all reconciled bank accounts, investments and cash on hand on July 31, 2019	\$9,693.75

Submitted by: Maja Strika, 2018-19 Chair of the General Vanier School Council

maja.strika@gmail.com, (613) 606-8754