

Black River Public School Council Minutes
Monday November 2, 2020
(Meeting held via Gotomeeting)

PRESENT:

Brian Harrison, Principal	Tanya Potter, Co-Chair
Mike Kanis, Staff Liaison	Glenda Healy, Secretary
Sarah Bates, Staff Liaison	Laura Joudrey, Parent Member
Sarah Spatz-Breault, Parent Member	
Jennifer Lindsay, Co-Chair	Emiko Balazik, Treasurer
Christine Wallbank, Parent Member	

Meeting started at 6:15 pm

1. Welcome and Introductions

Brian welcomed everyone to our virtual meeting.

2. Election of Council Positions

Co-Chairs: Jen & Tanya (will also check emails)

Secretary: Glenda

Treasurer: Emi

Social Media/Facebook: Christine (lead), Jen (assistant)

3. Grant Updates:

Tanya has applied a for a few grants:

PC grant, approved for \$1000

Green Apple grant, waiting for reply

Walmart Community grant, denied but has applied again

Tanya can forward information to council members willing to help with applications and offered to help with how to fill out the applications.

Mr. Kanis let us know of a contact he has (Michelle from Food for Learning) who has been helping navigate the grant system and access funds. She continues to help access money to support the snack program fill out the monthly reports to account for the money given for student nutrition. In recent years she also helped to secure money for a new fridge.

4. Outdoor Playground/Outdoor Classroom Update

The new accessible playground that was to have been installed this summer has been deferred until next summer. The building's roof is being resurfaced and there will also be some improvements made to the tarmac so it was recommended that the playground installation be postponed until all the other work is done.

Brian suggested the money we had set aside for the outdoor playground until construction starts and we know if additional items, such as enhanced seating, are needed.

5. Treasurer's Report

We have just over \$5400 total in all accounts

Brian mentioned that there will be no cost sharing this year because technology funds have been redirected to make sure families online have access to technology and that the schools who have had a disproportionate amount of computers sent to online students have enough for the students in school. Black River has been sent 55 new Chromebooks with potentially 30-40 more on the way. Brian mentioned also that the families who have been loaned technology have been appreciative and are taking care of it. There is a possibility that cost sharing may not be required/offered next year.

6. New Business

Ukulele Club: Prior to Covid shut down, everything was set up to start ukulele lessons with students with Connors Music. Arrangements have now been made to offer 2 six week programs virtually through Connors Music (\$900 for a 12 week block). In keeping with Cohorts, 20 students from the Junior/Intermediate will have the opportunity to take part (1st come, 1st served registration). Students can access the lessons via their Chromebooks. Primary students will be offered an opportunity later in the year. The school will be purchasing some ukuleles so students can borrow them. (Money was approved in the spring.) Lessons will be offered to the students free of charge as the cost of the program will be covered by funds from parent council and the school budget.

School/Graduation Photos: School photos are currently deferred, not cancelled. Christine inquired about having a local photographer offer photos outside of school hours. Brian said that we are unable to have a Black River School sanctioned photo session with non-board approved photographers for a variety of reasons, including liability.

Grade 8 Graduation: Last year's graduating class will be having a virtual celebration closer to the end of the month. A framework is in place to have an in-person graduation for this year's class (inside or outside), depending on government regulations regarding gatherings at the time.

Spirit Days: October 30th was orange and black day. Mr. Kanis is trying to help organize a special day every 2-3 weeks.

Spirit Wear: Spirit wear may be offered later this year. There are provisions in the budget to purchase something special for the graduating class.

Christmas Concert: The question was asked if there was a potential for a virtual Christmas concert, possibly live streamed or pre-recorded for families to watch at their leisure. Brian said he would bring it up to staff members after progress reports have been written.

Staff Wishlist: Jen asked if there was a wishlist of things that staff need updated or replaced. Brian said there is a carry-over from last year's budget that can help with that. He said that in the last 3 years, \$1000-\$2000 has been spent to update Phys. Ed. equipment such as primary equipment, new volleyballs and basketballs. Music and art equipment/supplies are also being replaced. Mike and Sarah said they will ask staff if they need anything.

7. Fundraising Initiatives

The question was posed as to whether or not we can hold any fundraisers this year. Brian said that at this time, we are going to pause any fundraising as we are in good financial shape and we are trying to be mindful of our families who are struggling at this time. In the spring we may be able to look at doing something related to the new playground.

Tanya suggested we look at getting some concrete ideas for fundraising so we can "hit the ground running" when we have the okay to fundraise again.

8. Principal's Report

School Enrolment: There are currently 156 students attending in-school and 44 online. A few students will be returning to in-class learning in the near future. (It is Principal's discretion as to when students can move from virtual classes to in-person classes.) Families wishing to move from in-class to virtual, will need to complete forms in November for a February placement.

Progress Reports and Parent/Teacher Conferences: Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held virtually, parents can sign up for a time through Edsby. Progress Reports will be sent electronically AFTER parent/teacher conferences.

25th Anniversary Committee for the multi-use facility: St. B's parent council has started a 25th anniversary committee and have issued an invitation for Black River parents to join. Interested parents can contact Brian who will assist in connecting with St. Bs. The school board has funds for special anniversaries that we can access and the town will support the anniversary celebrations as well.

Breakfast/Snack bin Program: Black River and St. Bernadette's have teamed up this year for the program. In addition to providing snacks, staff at both schools are aware of how to access meals for students who need them.

Family support: Brian mentioned that supports are in place with various local and regional agencies to help Black River families in need of assistance in a variety of areas including nutritional.

9. Next Meeting Date: Monday December 7, 2020 at 6:15 pm (Virtual)

10. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 7:24 pm