

GPS School council minutes: Oct 20, 2021

Meeting Commenced: 7:09pm

Attendees: Heather Purcell, Loretta Lee, Darshna Mistry, John Paul W, Queenie Shang and Philip Cheung, Peter Wong, Sophia, Mark Quan, Beverley Maybury, Lorne Boyle, Yvonne Tan, Shanaaz Yaseen, Jaime Lee, Jaina Negandhi, Carla Leo

Minute Taker: Jaime Lee

1) Indigenous Land acknowledgment

We affirm that we are all treaty people and acknowledge that the York Region District School Board is located on the lands of two treaties. These treaties are signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the First Nations of the Williams Treaties who are: the Mississaugas of Alderville, Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Scugog Island; and the Chippewas of Beausoleil, Rama, and Georgina Island our closest neighbour and partner in education.

To honour this agreement we will take up our responsibility to be respectful of their traditions, knowledge, and inherent rights as sovereign nations. We will respect their relationship with these lands and recognize that our connection to this land is through the continued relationship with these First Nations, and we acknowledge our shared responsibility to respect and care for the land and waters for future generations.

2) Principal's report:

- a. Today was take me outside day: the weather was good, some outdoor learning and activities. Will be a week of activities
- b. Curriculum night last week: 50 people joined, informal Q & A, next month will be meet the teacher night (Nov 18 evening, and Nov 19<sup>th</sup> daytime)
- c. Crosswalk: continue to work with 2 crossing guards. Continue to request police presences.
- d. Orange day: Sept 30<sup>th</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> year that we had Canada's National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Board had an assembly.
- e. Student council: election is tomorrow. 28 kids running. Minister of culture and Minister of environment are new roles.
- f. Kiss and ride: continue to monitor traffic and usage. Looking to make improvements. Launched changes this past Monday – pylons up the center of the 2 lanes to better control traffic, created a stop sign at the end of kiss and ride to prevent cars on the road. ECE's to help with receiving kids from cars and directing them and helps with flow. Have noticed a decrease in traffic overall. Seems to allow cars to move quickly and seems to be going well. They have noticed that some cars are parked in front of the kindergarten pens. This is a fire route and therefore a safety issue.
- g. Parking lot: Cars continue to be parked in the staff parking lot which blocks staff cars. Staff will increase presence in parking lot to help increase awareness to parents: to refrain from parking in the parking lot or along the lanes as this is a fire hazard.
- h. Extra curricular activities and clubs: hoping that as pandemic restrictions reduce that there can be more extracurricular activities offered. Expect to be starting soccer sign ups soon.

- i. Mental health: continue to monitor mental health of students and staff, will continue to do regular check-ins.
  - j. Computers: have been given approval for this one school year to be able to use student generated funds to spend on computers or chrome books, as there is a need by the students.
  - k. Photo day – scheduled for Nov 17<sup>th</sup> which will include in-person and online learners
  - l. Fundraising plan: we do not have anything planned as a staff, so looking for fund raising ideas from the school council. Take into consideration the financial hardships during the pandemic. Message is that participation is optional for families. Would like to increase outdoor play material and toys. Would like some parent participation in school yard greening – as an attempt to increase outside activity. Suggestion was made to try Oliver’s labels or Mabel’s labels as a fundraising idea.
  - m. Outdoor wildlife/safety: there was a coyote sighting on school property. Safety protocols were followed, kept students in till the coyote left, and staff helped ensure safety. They did report to the City of Markham. Hoping the board can put out a new policy on protocol specifically related to coyote sightings. It was also noted that there have been sightings in the early mornings of an older woman on school property. Concerns that she may be homeless. They have and will call non-emergency police as necessary. Description of this woman has been given. Admin will continue to monitor the situation. Description: blue hat, patterned pants and light jacket.
  - n. New storage bunker – in front of the west side kindergarten pen there is a storage bunker – they are looking to purchase another bunker so that additional outdoor play equipment can be purchased for the kindergarten classes. Additional bunker will be placed outside the pens.
- 3) People bringing their own pets on school property when picking up their students. Students get excited, and some people are fearful of dogs, wondering about safety. Admin will send out a reminder that if you are bringing your pet when picking up your child, please be mindful of others comfort and safety, please remain on the sidewalk area, not on school property.
- 4) Previous minutes approved by Queenie and Shanaaz
- 5) Treasurer’s Report: no change, \$1820.95
- 6) Traffic light: Queenie and Shanaaz will draft a letter to send on behalf of the school to Ward 5 Councillor requesting that the installation of a set of traffic lights at Bur Oak and Alfred Patterson be added to the school budget. Crossing guards will be interviewed and their stories included. Encouraged parents to advocate if possible. Heather shared that the traffic light has been approved for the 2022 budget, however for the safety of the students, sooner would be better.
- 7) Outdoor environmental piece. Shanaaz has a contact, if anyone else has contacts or wants to be part of the committee to volunteer to increase greenery at the school. Will take donations. Suggestion was made to have a community garden.
- 8) Teacher support: Shanaaz and Queenie will be drafting a letter to connect with co-chairs from other school councils. Hoping to discuss issues and concerns regarding hybrid model of teaching/learning, to present to Trustees to share what the experience of teaching in a hybrid model is like. Acknowledged the challenges with teaching in a hybrid model.
- Next meeting: Dec 8<sup>th</sup> @ 7pm-8:30pm, Adjournment 8:28