

Henderson Avenue Public School

School Council Meeting Minutes

February 23, 2023

7:00-9:00 PM

In Attendance (via the virtual platform - Microsoft Team due to inclement weather)

Azi (Chair of council), Zahra, Shiva, Agnes, Dorna, Parisa, Monireh, Heather Zaitlin (Principle), Katie Moore, Catharine Green, Craig Watterworth, Sara Joane Alford Khajeh-Hesamedin, Lydia Laceby, Mansour Sharif Manesh, Connie, Anita, Sean, Samira, Joy , Chung Chan, Frank Rakhshan,

Regrets:

Sami, Roxana, Azita, Sheree

Opening:

Azi welcomed everyone and posted the agenda in the chat box. Azi also reported that Hanako has resigned from council while Azi thanked her for all her work and said that council was sorry to see her go.

-Approval from the last meeting in the minutes was discussed and since the final draft wasn't ready it was discussed to be sent to Mme Zaitlin by email for final approval.

Principal's Update

School improvement plan (aka SIP) is a 3-6 for student performance, and focuses on math, writing and mental health.

Math

School has been sharing best math practices in the form of book review, math network, as well as sharing ideas during lunch and between and during staff meetings. Weekly memos shared among staff in the form of pdf.

Writing

Also a focus based on Report Card grades. Strategies to improve student writing will be shared at staff meetings and through weekly teacher memo

Student mental health

The wording of kindness has been shared which promotes kindness, and positivity amongst and between students. Reflection sheets have been suggested by a teacher to self-reflect guided by some key questions when a child has made a poor choice. This is also used with parents and in both progressive discipline as well as restorative practice.

The reflection sheets are used with the Henderson touchstone. Discussions on the reflection sheets may involve examples such as whether the child has acted according to the principles as listed in the Henderson touchstone, and how to make it right. These sheets are not kept in students' files.

Ms. Zaitlin explained that principals may change the School Improvement Plan as they see fit or when there is a change over of the school administrator.

Physical improvements (i.e roof repair) are not considered as part of the SIP.

It was mentioned that fixing of the roof at the front entrance is planned for summer 2023 given that the current weather/frost prevent the repair on the tar effectively. Also, the kindergarten playground has been repaired but the same problem persists and Sara Jane reported that a drain continues to be missing leading to the continuous problem at the playground.

Azi raised the question of where Henderson is in terms of the time frame of our current School Improvement Plan. Mme Zaitlin replied that it is not on paper but is continuously moving forward, for example, improving math. The plan is reportedly updated on 3-6 year cycles. The focus is on math, writing and mental health, and we are halfway through the first year. Improvement for math is for all students (gifted and regular stream).

Updates from Ms. Moore

Student band will not be performing in the winter concert but in the spring concert.

There will be 7 groups who will be performing for the winter concert next Wednesday; some primary classes are involved, there is also the junior/intermediate choir performing. Older students will be working on stage management and acting as MC as well.

Principal's Profile and Constitution

Azi talked about the Principal's Profile and the Constitution being uploaded on the chat for review. The 2 documents can be reviewed by those in attendance and approved by council members (during the next meeting).

Parking Update

Parisa reported the parking situation has improved with the pylons blocking cars from entering the bus lane – thank you to Mme Zaitlin.

Questions on Forest of Reading - Zahra

It seems there aren't enough books for the Forest of Reading Program (FOR). Zahra approached the teacher librarian (Ms. Gasior) to offer council funding to purchase additional books as needed. The teacher librarian thanked Zahra and declined to purchase additional books for FOR as these books are rotated so additional purchase will not be necessary.

Mme Zaitlin reported that she also approached our teacher librarian offering to buy books while it was declined as well. Mme Zaitlin suggested that it makes

more sense to buy a variety of books instead of purchasing many copies of the same books.

Fundraising

Movie night was a great success (Azi). After doing the research, Sami suggested fundraising through moms pantry and suggested having this fundraising initiative in the spring. Sami will circulate the forms for the council to decide whether to proceed in perhaps March/April.

Sara Jane suggested additional fundraising ideas such as; Mable's label and Seed packets. She will share additional information on the seed packet as it can be fun and used with Narooz and Easter with both flowers and vegetables.
(<https://makeitsow.com/>)

Avi suggested, MacGregor meat for fundraising.

Lydia Laceby suggested the greeting cards through;
<https://www.amazingfundraising.ca/>.

Teacher Appreciation lunch - Agnes

Teacher appreciation date was set for June 13, 2023 which she will start organizing in April 2023.

End of year BBQ

Sara Jane can help with the silent auction. Zahra said GARA is open to helping out again this year. Sami can help co-lead with Parisa. Azi can help lead with guidance. It was suggested by Agnes to check with GARA as well for date selection, either on weekend or during the week. Mme Zaitlin suggested holding the event on Wednesday June 7 but open to other weekdays during the first week of June. Council members agreed to follow up with GARA to determine whether to proceed with weekends or weekdays.

Graduation Planning

Photography

Mme Zaitlin mentioned that our photographer has been booked for the grad ceremony and can do a group shot for \$10/student and provide a 8x10 the next day. The photographer will show up 30 min before the graduation ceremony (in June). The grad photo with gown and diploma is going to be done at school already. The cost of the ceremony/dinner will be around \$50/student for about 53 graduates.

Graduation Ceremony

Mme Zaitlin shared that the refreshment served for the parents attending the ceremony for grad 2022 were wrapped cookies that were sold during student fundraising last year. Ceremony is in the same hall for dinner. There is a foyer outside of the room where a cake can be set up as per Mme Zaitlin's previous experience.

Sara Jane recommended Cakes by Robert , very reasonable priced. Starbucks can be served as she can ask her previous employer. Mme Zaitlin said that the hall likely will charge for refreshment instead of allowing us to bring outside food and drink (e.g. Cakes by Robert / Starbucks). Mr. Watterworh recommended Costco Cakes though they are not always nut free.

Graduation clothing

Mme Zaitlin mentioned that Ms. Cheng has found a deal for the graduation hoodie for \$26 including grad class name and the Henderson logo. This hoodie is an optional purchase and is not included in the graduation package. Mr. Watterwoth said the T-shirt was included in the graduation package for a number of years as one of the parents was an owner of a clothing store. Parisa raised concerns of equity and suggested to include a t-shirt in the graduation package so that every graduating student will be included in the process. The free graduation T-shirt will be included in the package and is in addition to the optional \$26 hoodie. Ms. Moore will look into the following site which will include something affordable (T-shirt) (<https://www.evas.ca/what-we-do/print-shop/>).

Quebec Trip for the current grade 7 and grade 8 (This item was not on the agenda for the month of February, but was brought up again.)

Parisa asked about the dates for the current grade 7 for their Quebec trip next year. Mme Zaitlin reported that she booked a tentative date with the agency for the Quebec Trip though she is not able to share that date as she will need some flexibility with the dates to allow easier planning among staff for 2023-2024.

Parisa asked if Mme Zaitlin can at least share if the graduation trip for the current grade 7 will be in spring and not in winter as observed in the current year. Mme Zaitlin shared that the tentative booking of the trip is in the spring and reminded those in attendance that there is no “graduation trip” as all school trips need to be related to school curriculum.

Parisa asked Mme Zaitlin for reasons for no Quebec trip for the current grade 8 as the graduation sub-committee has suggested some solutions for the issues raised in the last council meeting by the superintendent. Parisa pointed out that the current grade 8 students have missed a lot during the pandemic year. Mme Zaitlin reported that this conversation has been exhausted and she will not be discussing any further about having the Quebec Trip for the current year as the superintendent has already explained the rationales in the last council meeting.

Parisa said that with this communication pattern, the school is not left with much hope that the Quebec trip will happen next year. Mme Zaitlin responded by reminding the Council that the trip is at the discretion of the principal. Parisa explained that the council has resolved the barriers and Mme Zaitlin explained that they had not been resolved. Parisa said the barriers were the money, the supervision and Bill 21 Quebec. Mme Zaitlin did not reply.

Parisa said she still doesn't know why the current grade 8 s can't go on the Quebec trip this year and Azi agreed. Mme Zaitlin said after the Lake St. George trip with the grade 8 students, the teachers have told her that 'Thank God, we didn't go to Quebec, or we would have been kicked out of the restaurant and/or out of the hotel.' Azi reported that this is not the same feedback received from the teachers at the beginning of the meeting. Mme Zaitlin said that yes they had fun and they were able to be kids. Mme Zaitlin asked Parisa to forward questions on this matter to the superintendent going forward and put herself on mute.

Azi said that we have been advised that Quebec trip needs to be planned in April of the previous year and reasons put forward for not starting to plan the Quebec trip have been changing through-out the course of the current school year.

Treasurer's Report - Zahra

- Per funding requested in Oct 2022 (\$2400) - Mme Zaitlin reported that various workshops have been completed including the following
 - Prologue (for 6 classes) - \$900 (with a \$1000 deposit) – on March 23/23 the K-Grade 4 students will be watching the Magic Flute.
 - Scientists in the Classroom - \$600 – for Grade 4- 5 while the parents were charged a minimal fee.
 - Grade 6-8 - the funding hasn't been spent on classes grade 6-8
 - Items spent are summarized in the Treasurer's report.
- Sara Jane was concerned on limited activities available (such as clubs) for primary students. Also, certain grades/classes are not allowed to be playing with each other as her son is in grade 2/3 and is not allowed to play with the grade four students. Mme Zaitlin replied that the youngest are not going to the big field while the primary area is close to the intermediate. Mme Zaitlin will discuss further with Sara to follow up privately.

Extracurricular activities for primary students - Mme Zaitlin

Dance club for grade 2 and 3 has been running.

Primary choir has been put on pause because students are not yet showing interest.

Budget Request by Mme Zaitlin

Money raised by the council should be used for the students and therefore, it is highly recommended that the following funds are approved. Zahra indicated that while all funds are spent for students, the distribution should be equitable between different grades.

Ms. Moore - Instrument

The following has not yet included the music educator's discount

- Trombone \$809.99 or \$929.99
- Alto Sax Case \$184.99
- Rhythm Sticks Set of 24 \$49.99

- Boomwhackers Class set of 27 \$134.99
- Trumpet 1 \$829.99*

Commented [1]: I'm not sure what this means and don't have a recollection of it being discussed 😊

The budget request for music was approved by the council for \$2000.

Mr. Watterworth – Lego Robotics

This initiative is to be used for grades 4 to 8.

Lego Spikes, which replaces the previous generation called Lego Mindstorms (for the last 8-10 years) will be used for both junior and intermediate competitions in April/May, The Robotics club has 40 students of Grade 6-8. It was suggested to start with the club then integrate in the classroom. With primary students, the school is exploring a primary robotic club, involving coding. A request of 5 kits (\$560 per kit) was made.

It was suggested by Sara Jane to borrow from Markham Camp, which she will liaise and make inquiries. Sara also suggested charging \$5 or \$10 to join the Lego Robotics club OR request for donation to help fund one of the kits.

The budget was approved for \$2000 for Robotics.

Mme Zaitlin - Lake St. George Trips (Jan+Feb 2023) for the current grade 7 and 8

Mme Zaitlin requested a total of \$1333 (minus the \$500 approved from last meeting) – i.e. \$833 for the Lake St. George Trip for grade 8. Funding request was approved by council members.

Ms. Green - School play - Mulan

The school Play Mulan will occur in the last week of May or June while grade 6 to 8 are involved. She has requested help to do the sewing of the costumes on day 2 and 5 during lunch time. Shiva, Agnes and Monireh can help with the sewing.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:30 pm