

HENDERSON AVENUE PUBLIC SCHOOL
School Council Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2022
7:00-8:30 P.M

In attendance: Heather Zaitlin, Agnes Hwang, Parisa Rahmani, Zahra Parhizgari, Ali Chendri, Azi Sanai, Sheree Kyte, Roxana Balescu, Mona Hashemian, Sogol Alae, Monireh Atae, Hana Thies and about 10 other parents not in the sign-in sheet

Regrets: Sami Sanai, Azita Moarefnia, Donia Kiani, Shiva Petersoo

Communication

- Advisory role of School Council
 - Heather played a video on YRDSB website in relation to the role of a School Council (link included:
<https://www2.yrdsb.ca/schools-programs/school-councils-0>)
 - Heather explained that the rationale behind the School Council is that when the parents are involved in their children's education, they would tend to do better; also parents make themselves aware of what's happening at the school, so they potentially put forward their best efforts. There are many initiatives where parents can get involved at the school level.
- Process for airing concerns
 - Heather shared a copy of a document called *Meeting Norms*. She then addressed them as per each point included, and gave potential examples of topics that could be addressed during a School Council meeting, in a manner that is respectful, positive, and beneficial to the school . Ultimately, it should support the students' experience and learning. Council members are expected to stay on topic and focused, and the Council decisions are to be aligned with the School Improvement Plan. She also indicated that people not present in the meeting should not be spoken about. A copy of these Meeting Norms is attached to the minutes. (I suggest that we include all of the items on the meeting norm here. She spent a lot of time going over the items during our meeting).
 - Azi raised a few points about building relationships, the voice of the community, which Heather addressed individually.
 - Heather mentioned that, if there is a topic to be raised that's not included on the Agenda, it may be time at the end of the meeting; The meeting is not a 'Town Hall' and our role is not to hear other people's 'grievances' during a Council meeting.

- Roxana asked about the source of these norms, and Heather clarified that she has received it from a colleague. Roxana raised the issue that any of the *Meeting Norms* not included in the Council Constitution should be discussed in the interest of reaching a mutual agreement, in case there are amendments to be made in the Constitution.

Approval of October minutes

- Zahra suggested adding a paragraph that was removed by Heather about the termination of duties for a long-time community member as an assistant. She indicated that it is important to show that the Council/community appreciates the efforts that the community members put in the betterment of our school.
- Agnes read the text removed from the last meeting Minutes, and it was agreed to be added back.
- The minutes were moved by Zahra and seconded by Parisa.
-
- Heather felt to add that the discussion taking place during the last Council meeting appeared to be a gossip, as the person being mentioned was not present. She suggested that if a person not present is to be discussed, they need to be advised ahead of time.
- Heather explained that the BBQ was cancelled at the Curriculum Night due to lack of preparation time, since it happened earlier in the school year. Heather expressed her concerns of having a poor reflection of her leadership if the BBQ came to fruition but was unsuccessful. If the community wishes to continue the tradition of having the BBQ on the Curriculum night, it can happen, with planning beginning in the previous school year such as May or over the summer.

Principals update

Extra-curricular Activities:

- Grades 4-8 are involved in Cross country
- Volleyball club takes place at lunch hours
- Dance club for grades 2-3 is also at lunch time
- Chess club for grades 4-6 takes place at lunch, and it's run by a teacher
- Student leadership initiative involves grade 7-8 students
- Approximately 11 teachers are busy at lunch time, leading activities
- A teacher wanted to discuss an Art club being offered
- Spirit wear - different pieces of clothing with Henderson logo
- The school photographer has extended the deadline for ordering pictures
- A student initiated an idea to raise funds for Holiday Heroes charity, in collaboration with York Region Police
- The school is also supporting "Out of the Cold" offered by a community church

- Heather shared how parents can access the school website and the Community Calendar - events community-related and also school-related.
- The school will continue a Book study/club at lunch hour learning a variety of instructional strategies to better reach all students.
- Peer tutoring taking place for grade 6 and under, offered by grade 7 and 8 students, on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- Winter concert + Band (Ms. Moore) - teacher couldn't join tonight's meeting due to illness, but she wanted to mention that having a school band with mostly beginners in instruments is very challenging; there are plans to organise a concert later in the winter, and another one in the spring.

EQAO:

- A Ministry-run organisation that requires students in grade 3, 6 and 9 to write standardised assessments; studies have shown over time that students who do well in grade 3, also do well in grade 6, and subsequently in grade 9; the results are used in context, to recognize that one piece of data is not enough. Henderson is a small school, so there are relatively few numbers, so some poor results can influence the average. Grade 6 results are also influenced by the Gifted program's students. The format was multiple choice, which was newly introduced in this testing process.
- Heather provided a summary of the results. Values presented at the meeting reflected Provincial averages in terms of percentage of students being at or above expectations, as follows:
 - Grade 3 results: 73% reading and 65% writing (Levels 3 and 4), , 59% mathematics
 - Grade 6 results: 85% reading and 84% writing (Levels 3 and 4), 47% mathematics.

* Following the meeting, Heather shared Henderson's results in her school-wide email on Nov 15 2022 - as Grade 3: Reading- 85%, Writing- 77%, Math - 69%; Grade 6: Reading- 94%, Writing-94%, Math- 88%.

- The individual reports should be sent home in approximately a week, since the Board has advised so far to hold back on them.
- Heather exemplified how a report would look like. She also mentioned that the school will take steps to address the gaps in students' knowledge and try to improve results in the future. The school has not received the second results, which is a breakdown of the results based on individual questions.
- Heather will then sit with lead teachers for maths to determine where the issues were; during PA days, some teachers could share some strategies with the other staff to potentially know better how to teach students some topics.

Trips:

- Grade 8 trip to Blue Mountain vs Quebec - teachers advised Heather that enquiries would need to be placed in April the prior school year; a presentation to Grade 8

families would need to happen in September of the grade 8 school year, so the parents are given an opportunity to raise any issues;

- There were requests from students of multiple grades for a trip to Lake St. George
- In relation to the trip to Quebec, teachers raised concerns about time constraints, difficulties in handling misbehaviours considering the distance from home, cost, there are also teachers with young children, so it could be difficult to make arrangements at home.
- Azi suggested that the Council can help with planning the trip to Quebec, e.g., inquire about costs; drafting a survey to gauge interest in a trip to Quebec versus Lake St. George, etc.

Fundraising

- Halloween Dance was a success (Thanks to Parisa! - clapping, cheering...)
- Graduation fundraising committee (Azi solicited for volunteers to help out; a few ideas were shared, like selling hot dogs)
- Bingo night \ movie night (Community engagement) - Sheree mentioned that we would need prizes; last 2 years we organised Bingo night online, but in the past there were donations, which were a main attraction; Parisa will look into pricing for a movie night; volunteers are going to be needed.

Activity planning

- Community skate with GARA
- Chess with Ms. S - used to come after school hours, and offer a program; Azi will look into pricing
- Lice (Jan/Feb) - a person was contacted, but they retired
- Teacher appreciation (early June) - Agnes could be available, and get involved; June 13 was proposed as date
- End of year BBQ/Carnival - TBD

Budget

- Potential purchases: chess sets approved and purchase; bussing for the Cross Country; presenters for all grades - Tour for Humanity Bus already paid for
- Update from Sub lunches - invoicing still happening
- Currently there is a profit from pizza lunches, total profit should be around \$1800
- Fresh from the Farm - profit of \$495

Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant

- Volunteers to head up
- Ideas to bring forth to next meeting
- An application would need to be made

Other Business

- A group of grade 2-3 students' parents attended the meeting to discuss a class issue. Heather advised that this is not a council item and a Zoom meeting could be organised.

Next Meeting: Jan 12 2023

Meeting Adjourned at 8:30.

