

HENDERSON AVENUE PUBLIC SCHOOL
School Council Meeting Minutes
October 11, 2023
6:30-8:00 P.M.

In attendance: Heather Zaitlin (Principal), Mrs. Green (Gr. 7/8 teacher), Mrs. Moore (Music teacher), Mr. Cohen (French teacher), Ms. Gasior (teacher/librarian), Parisa Rahmani, Betty Chang, Agnes Hwang, Fred Pan, Katy Babakhani, Dorna Kiani, Cedar Zhang, Yan Yi, Angela Buk, Soha Ghodonssifard, Cristina Lisita, Kiumars Arnirahmadi, Farzaneh Javan, Stacey Whiler, Kathleen Breau, Neusha Nourizadeh, Monireh Ataei, Sara Alford, Roxana Balescu

Agenda Items:

1) Review School Council Handbook and YRDSB expectations

- Heather presented copies of the SC Handbook developed by the YRDSB, outlining different expectations that involve School Councils: roles and responsibilities, SC meetings, elections and Operational Constitution, fundraising and administration of funds, engaging in learning, SC communications.

2) Review School Council Mission/ Yearly Goals

- Heather explained the mission and the next steps in creating a School Council
- Heather explained that at the end of the school year she came to know that the funds carried forward by the School Council would be dedicated to rebuilding the school's playground, as the current one is not very accessible
- There is \$10,000 in our budget dedicated to supporting a new playground
- The school had an Inspector the past week visiting the Senior Intermediate playground, and they documented multiple safety concerns, so an order was placed for expanding the ground area around the structure, but playgrounds are not the first tier of priorities; there were other safety concerns as well, like the plastic on the steps of the structure, or the pylons of the structure; the Primary (smaller) playground is even in worst shape than the Senior (bigger) playground
- Heather explained that there are some options in terms of revamping the smaller playground, either replacing some sections, or bringing in new sections
- Dorna mentioned that she had contacted the Municipality in relation to safety concerns of the Sr playground, she was advised that the area beyond the fence around the school would be City's responsibility
- Parisa explained that based on her understanding, in the past years, it was always known the playgrounds to be school's responsibility
- The School Council can have a sub-committee to gather ideas how we can improve the playground situation and work together to accomplish some decided goals
- Heather explained that the school gets monthly/regular safety inspections

3) Principal Report

- Class Parents - Mrs. Gasior provided again her suggestion from the last School Council meeting, at the end of the previous year, that each class can assign a parent to be the connection between the class and the school; she can work with the Communication officer, part of the School Council, in order to accomplish this.
- EQAO results are embargoed until Oct. 12, and individual results/summary reports will be released to students currently in Grade 4 and Grade 7, for Reading, Writing and Mathematics, on paper; the general school results will also be communicated.
- Field trips are happening in each grade (will be shared to each grade) - as per the feedback received from the parents in the past, there is a strong desire to organise day field trips, and overnight trips, related to the school's curriculum; there will be a grade 7 overnight trip to Lake St. George and a grade 8 overnight trip hopefully in Ottawa.
- Playground update - discussed above
- Terry Fox walk - it was well received by the students, they walked the grounds on a nice sunny day
- Extra-curricular activities: volleyball, basketball, X-Country happening now, art class, video games club, chess club, music choir, band
- School Improvement Plan - current focus is on writing, as the teachers had the most concerns on idea generation and adding details in writing pieces; another area of focus is students' mental health, which has been discussed on an ongoing basis, like greeting kids by their name.
 - 4) Appointment of School Council and Committee members: (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Officer)
 - Heather indicated that there will be 4 formal School Council meetings during the school year, also sub-Committees that could meet more frequently depending on the events or issues they would need to address
 - Heather also explained the main roles in the Council, which are elected, and also showed the Nomination forms already completed; there can be a maximum of 12 Council members, and the elected positions will be decided out of those members
 - Heather called the names of the parents who have already submitted Nomination forms, and 7 were present in the meeting, so 5 additional parents were able to express an interest in joining the Council
 - Elected positions: Neusha - Chair; Cedar - Treasurer, Roxana - Secretary, Farzaneth - Communications officer; SC members: Parisa, Agnes, Fred, Dorna, Yan, Kathleen, Monireh, Sara

(** Committee members may meet outside of Council times and share with the Principal prior to finalizing ideas.)

a) Graduation sub-committee - there is a potential date for Graduation on a Tuesday in June 2024, at the location used last year, although it wasn't the best it could be; Shangri-La, the previous years' location, has not reopened as of yet; there are already parents who have expressed an interest to join the Committee.

b) Halloween dance - Heather hasn't received a response from the DJ who has come in the past, in relation to Oct. 25 potential date for the event, since the gym is only available on Wednesdays; if there are other options, we would need a DJ; Ms. Moore suggested that we could actually purchase a sound system/speakers, since the school already needs one, and play music at the dance; we can also have an older student playing music chosen by kids, for example. A sub-committee of parents will discuss the possibility to organise the event.

c) Year end events - TBD

d) Teacher appreciation - TBD

e) Sara presented some options for fundraising in school, and she could send the links to Heather; other ideas: Fresh From The Farm; Dance-A-Thon; Gingerbread houses.

5) Fundraising Plan

a) Last year update, this year's goals

b) Pizza lunches - the current volunteers are only able to help on Fridays.

c) Subway - Parisa offered to take over handling this lunch option.

d) Activities: (Halloween, other) - Council members suggested that we could look at various other expenses and prioritise the budget

6) Budget requests (Principal):

a) Gr. 5-8 "Get Real" Presentation: \$800 - beginning of Nov. (an organisation that offers presentations related to LGBTQ issues) - the Council members voted against funding this presentation (8 votes in total rejecting the request)

b) Bus to Cross-Country - 140 kids: \$735 for multiple buses - the Council members agreed to support the cost for the X-Country buses from Council funds

c) Playground implementation - discussed above - a sub-Committee will be involved in further discussions and exploring solutions

7) Other Business

- Winter concert - Ms. Moore shared the date as Dec. 20

- School Council meeting dates: Nov. 29, Jan. 24, April 17, May - TBD

Meeting adjourned @ 8:30PM