



**James Robinson School Council Meeting Tuesday, September 21, 2021
6:30 pm to 8:00 pm – Google Meet**

In Attendance:

1. Carolyn Lamy - Principal
2. Laura Meffen - Co-Chair and Treasurer
3. Heather Bramer
4. Danielle Botha - Co-Chair and Treasurer
5. Erin Stokes – Secretary
6. Ivy Wang
7. Tina Bravos
8. Sarah Ali
9. Soraya Mangal*
10. Jenn Brosz
11. Arsalan Siddiqui
12. Sarah Kennedy
13. Jeanette McLellan
14. Debora Manni
15. Georgia Diekeos
16. Mehul Shinde
17. Danielle Cassalha
18. Lisa La Marca
19. Tara Davies
20. Nina Zhao
21. Paul Almedia
22. Shaneand Julie
23. Caroline Campbell
24. Parvis Suleman
25. Soraya Mangal

Sending Regrets:

Meeting Started at 6:35 pm

Business

1. Welcome and Introductions
 - Laura introduced old Exec and new Principal Mrs. Carolyn Lamy and Ms. Lisa La Marca
2. Review and approval of minutes of June meeting – Heather approves, Danielle and Tina second
3. Treasurer’s Report
 - Closing of \$35 559.64 in account. Will be left with about \$4000 once the balance of the playground is paid for
4. Playground and EcoSchoolyard
 - Deb Manni and Jeannette McLelland present the history of the Eco Playground
 - Strong Eco Team to sort waste
 - Maintenance and needs on the Eco Playground:
 - To be looked at in the future
 - Outdoor classroom was conceived of 15 years ago
 - Design ideas were researched
 - Design ideas were asked for from all students, neighbours and parents consulted,
 - A universally accessible playground would meet the needs of all students, inclusivity, anti-bullying (stuff to do at recess)
 - Students were invited into the ME class to work on scale models
 - Components: shade trees, accessible front garden, path, “little rooms” help reduce anxiety, bumps in the trail indicates a change in the path, Trembling Aspens are for sound sensory, native trees, sand pit for track and field, curved lines for calming, allowed ME class to more easily access the playground, outdoor playground can accommodate 2 groups (reading buddies, room for the whole ME class), outdoor stage, imaginary and dramatic play, natural elements for play, rollercoaster bumps in the path, kettle rocks to collect water, shade tunnel over the path for sensory, Loose Parts (tarps, ropes, eavestroughs, tires, milk crates, pots, planks, buckets...) learns about risk management and imagination, OPAL (sp?) Training for use of Loose Parts, sand pit is granitic sand, black o-pipe for kids who are transferred out of their wheel chairs to lean on
 - Students have traditionally been involved in the care of the playground (looking forward to involving kids in the future)
 - Some Loose Parts are being used
 - Some Kindergarten classes are spending afternoon outside
 - Learn real world skills out at Loose Parts and lots of curriculum connections (grade 3 soil unit, fitness circuits...)
5. Goals for 2021-2022 School Year
 - Lunch Programs (on hold for now)
 - Pizza (needs parent volunteers) and sub lunches
 - Traditionally starts on October
 - Heather asks if there are other options for pizza for less handling and if parents even want pizza lunches

- o Double check the protocol to be sure we can do lunch programs
 - o Laura asked Lisa and Carolyn into look into the policy so Laura can look into options
 - Community Events
 - o Community Engagement events
 - o Last year we had the Scott St. Marie technology online seminar
 - o Need for a bit of fun and community building this year
 - Fundraising
 - o FlipGive used for fundraising last year (\$700 raised)
 - o Further discussions at next meeting
 - Pro Grant
 - o Look at how to use it
 - New Family Ambassadors
 - o New idea to have “buddy parents” to bounce questions off of, to ask questions about norms, how to get involved, a bridge person for those with language barriers, to make people feel welcome
6. October Elections (Oct. 4)
- Laura reviewed all the responsibilities for Council Members, Chair and Co-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Fundraising Chair, Equity Chair
 - Addition of Communication Chair
 - If exceed 13 voting members will have to have a secret ballot
 - 3 consecutive absences will constitute a resignation from Council as a voting member
7. Principal Report
- Started with Land Acknowledgement
 - Staffing new staff and returning from EVS, new EAs, Principals, CYW
 - Transition from Gillian to Carolyn, worked together over the summer to lessen the bumps
 - 390 students registered, 99 remote learning, 1 going remote, 9 going F2F
 - Expect opportunities to move between the remote and F2F learning throughout the year
 - Small reorganization coming; only those students who are affected will be notified
 - Professional Learning: Mental Health, Hybrid model learning, Covid and compliance training, Anti-Racism, Anti-Black Racism (Laura: can some of their training come to Council too? The Strategy is available on the YRDSB website), Autism Spectrum training
 - Mr. DeAndrew CYW putting together opportunities for small groups
 - Use screening tool before attending school for the day
 - Waiting on final inspection for the new Playground
 - Terry Fox run is Friday
 - Orange Shirt Day Oct. 30th (Laura question: Is there a way for kids who don't come with an orange shirt that day; do they have a way to participate? Buttons? Georgia suggests stickers)

- EDSBY River: a means for the school and the Principal to communicate; to come (Laura question: Would there be an opportunity for parents to learn how to navigate Edsby?)
- Snack Program starts Monday (Deb mentioned the issue of waste; with Covid restrictions it is difficult.)

Meeting Adjourned: 8:31 PM

Next Meeting: Oct. 4

*FYI: update on the OPAL Information (Outdoor Play and Learning). There are now 42 OPAL schools in Toronto!

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

Between 2016 and 2018, EcoKids worked with 6 school communities in the Toronto District School Board to implement the OPAL pilot program. The Transform Lab, led by Dr. Raktim Mitra, Associate Professor in the School of Urban and Regional Planning at Ryerson University, evaluated that pilot project. The researchers found that the OPAL program led to more engaging, inclusive, and imaginative outdoor play, and students were happier when playing outdoors.

Read the full report [here](#).

The program was expanded to over 40 schools between 2017-2020. Read updates on the [OPAL program here](#).