



Blossom Park Public School  
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OTTAWA-CARLETON  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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## **Blossom Park School Council Minutes Wednesday, November 20, 2019**

### **In Attendance:**

Susan Fattal (Co-Chair), Naoko Nakamura (Co-Chair), Ashleigh Calberry (Treasurer/Secretary), Caroline Thériault (Principal), Colin Halsall (Vice Principal), Susan Al-Riffai (MLO), Kirsty Vince (Teacher Rep.), Shanaz Sabir (Student Council Rep.), Mohammad Alotaibi

**Review of Minutes** from October 16, 2019. Approval of the minutes was moved by Naoko and seconded by Ashleigh. Approved.

### **Chair's Report:**

- Pizza Program update: November pizza forms - "full name" instead of "student's name" helped
  - more parents using School Cash Online
    - 39 in Sept, 48 in Oct, 58 in Nov
  - a few parents wondering about subsidy - maybe they've had that help at other schools?
  - one parent noted that they paid with School Cash Online but there was no record
  - Susan went ahead with these for now
  - discussion about other lunches (e.g. hotdogs - fundraiser for grade 8 trip)
    - maybe make sure parents are aware of where the funding is going, so they may be more likely to support
- School was not eligible for the November 67's game subsidy, so funding approved last meeting was not used
- \$500 PIP Funding for School Council provided by the OCDSB - free to use it as we want; will need to mention it on year-end report
  - PRO Grant - no longer available
    - Jess Bokhout has applied in the past and we bought books with it last year, for \$900
  - another grant is also on hold and being reviewed
- Highlights from the 2019 School Council Training Day on Sat. Nov. 9
  - OCDSB reps were there, open discussion about ideas, asking questions
  - area of main need in all OCDSB schools: math
    - 2019 policy will include council, parents, teachers, students - hear from all, doing research to help
  - EQAO - grades 3 and 6
    - Caroline: one of the parts of the partial withdrawal of services upcoming is not participating in ministry initiatives (many of which are focused on math right now)
    - would love to have a math morning/afternoon open house for parents to come work alongside children at math centres, would include takeaway things for people to take home (timing may not be right now) - school in Waterloo hosted it on a PD day in April
  - variety of school councils represented - big and small, parental advisory body at some schools with no school council

- CFO - school councils are not allowed to fundraise everything (things that OCDSB is supposed to finance, e.g. carpet, AC units), but some things can be done in collaboration with OCDSB
- school council websites - Brenda Christie will give training session; do not encourage having a separate website for security reasons; school council email will be available through OCDSB
- suggested cleaning up school's website; Colin: school staff have reached out to take a leadership role there and would like input on how to reach needs of parent community

### **Principal's Report:**

- staffing updates
  - another new teacher in Behaviour Unit: Erin Trotechaud - program reset, hoping for reduction in number of secure schools
  - Joel Gibson - half time support in mornings, advocating to have him full time
- partial withdrawal of services from the teachers' union
  - strike vote 98% in favour: levels of withdrawal of services (partial withdrawal, do only what is in contract, walkout/full strike)
  - starting Tuesday (none aimed to impact children directly, just Ministry initiatives):
    - not engaging in Ministry of Education professional learning, Fundamentals of Math Strategy, MOE online training, EQAO-related activities, math-proficiency test for faculties of education
    - no data collection (other than what is needed in own classrooms)
    - no school board activities on PA days, committees, writing teams
    - report cards - marks and a comment submitted to admin
  - more information: [https://www.ocdsb.ca/about\\_us/labour\\_negotiations](https://www.ocdsb.ca/about_us/labour_negotiations) and <https://etfocb.ca/strike-protocol-work-to-rule-phase-1/>
- 9 new Chromebooks for students - board is working towards 1:4 ratio of devices for students
  - new Chromebooks for teachers (34) so old teacher ones are available for student use as well
- math - grade 3s: basic operations
  - $\_\_ + 7 = 11$  they can do;  $11 = \_\_ + 7$  is hard because it's backwards; even  $4 + \_\_ = 11$  is difficult for them
  - showed it to grade 6 teachers for multiplication and division
  - need to work with children to memorize the basic facts, something for parents to help with when they're asking for more homework/practice
  - our school has lots of support for students who need it (e.g. Kirsty supports Mr. Porter's class)

### **Teacher Representative's Report:**

- Mme. Shohdy had an art group last year and wondered about funding for the group, has provided receipts in the past
  - discussion about setting a maximum amount we can fund (maybe \$150-200); Kirsty will check in with Mme Shohdy about what she's looking for

### **Student Council Representative's Report:**

- Sept-Oct, lots of activities for intermediates
  - Remembrance Day assembly - veterans came to talk to students
  - dance - approx. \$400 raised (grade 8 trip)
  - baking - approx \$200 raised (band)
  - grade 4-8 Student Vote
  - gr 8 MacSkimming trip
  - gr 8 rugby - learned to play and watched tournament at Ridgemont
  - economic for success in classes (learned that approx. \$2000 is needed monthly to cover bills to live independently)

- gr 8 girls - STEM program; gr 8 boys will attend this month
- upcoming:
  - Nutcracker performance on Dec 4
  - tomorrow, gr 8 going to Canterbury for arts and music
  - hotdog day next week
  - gr 8 girls Trades Day
  - Eric Walters (author) coming to school to talk about his books
- lots of activities for the younger grades as well, council is just more aware of the older classes

### **Treasurer's Report:**

- The account stands at \$4867.31 currently
- We owe the school for pizza orders. Between School Cash Online that we are owed, and money the school paid for each pizza order in Sept, Oct, and Nov, actual amount is \$3785.07
- \$500 (PIP Funding) needs to be reserved for whatever we decide to spend it on
- Still trying to grow the account and come up with new fundraising ideas

### **Other Business:**

- \$500 PIP Funding - discussion about how to spend and benefit as many families as possible
  - Naoko looked into entertainment that we could have come into the school
    - local singer/entertainer Derek McKinley \$250-300
  - science workshops for kids (e.g. Scientists in Schools)
    - Faculty of Engineering at uOttawa - \$60 per workshop on campus (max. 35 students), \$100 if they come to the school - May and June availability (university student-run)
  - workshops for parents with presenters
    - possible topics: sleep, nutrition, technology, health curriculum
    - could be at school, or out in the community
    - could set up babysitting, maybe with high school students earning volunteer hours
    - Public Health nurses? Jewish Family Services?
    - Susan A can get volunteers in to translate to Arabic
  - Colin: intermediate students struggling with online interactions - reached out to organization to teach students about online safety; maybe we could set up a similar thing for parents
  - MASC - arts/music performances for schools
- FundScrip fundraising (as discussed last meeting) - sell gift cards and we get percentage back
  - will try it for a month with paper orders (dates TBD)- parents and staff can participate
  - ask parents to choose whether to send cards with student or pick up at school themselves
- Discussing issue of giving all students equal chances to participate in field trips and fun activities
  - some teachers are more active with trips than others
  - different classes and boys vs girls
  - very girl-heavy trips and opportunities lately, so they're focusing on boys trips too
    - research shows girls' interest and confidence in STEM drops drastically around grade 7
  - administration can't force teachers to do field trips, just encourage and help fund
  - grade 8 yearbook needs some improvements from last year - more MFI vs English pictures and activities; misspellings
- next month's agenda: Shanaz suggested math workshop for students with stations from about 6 years ago that was a lot of fun

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, December 17, 2019 at 5:00 pm in the library