

Blossom Park Public School

School Council's Meeting Minutes

Tuesday December 15, 2020

Location: Virtual Rooms through Google Meet

Prepared by: Nejm Eddine DOUKKALI
Susan Fattal

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Blossom Park Public School

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1. In Attendance

The Meeting started on Wednesday December 15, 2020 at 5:00 pm.

In Attendance:

- Susan Fattal as Chair
- Naoko Nakamura as Treasurer
- Nejm Eddine DOUKKALI as Secretary
- Yewande Adelaja as a member
- Colin Halsall as the Vice Principal
- Kirsty Vince as the Teachers' Representative
- Sherean Muhaisen as a parent
- Dina Edrees Sais as a parent
- Mahmoud Farhat as a parent
- Sedra Albajab as a parent

All the participants belong to the Blossom Park Public School.

2. Opening, Welcoming and Chair's Report

Susan started the meeting by welcoming everyone, and presented the agenda and the November minutes for approval.

In her report, Susan mentioned that Naoko and Susan had purchased the compasses, chalk, and bubbles from the teachers' wish list. Utility balls and rubber dots would be purchased by the school under sports equipment. The school already has a volleyball net.

Naoko and Susan went to the bank and got a limited-access bank card to be able to view the account online.

Teachers and Staff Appreciation Day went as planned on December 2nd and was appreciated by everyone at school.

Susan investigated a new popcorn fundraising project; the popcorn is healthy and fresh, but the price is still a bit high for our families. She'll try to find other options.

Susan sent a Google Form to families for the last day of March pizza refund. We got eleven responses. Four parents requested a refund while seven parents gave the amount to the School Council as a donation. Total amount to be refunded is \$20.

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3. Treasurer's Report

Naoko reported that the use of the new banking card is very convenient and helps her see the account online easily.

Both Naoko and Susan got reimbursed for the purchases they made. The current account balance stands at \$5930.96.

4 Teachers' Needs

Ms.Hoekstra asked for 10-20 headphones (non-sharable) for students to use inside school while using Chromebooks. The School Council decided to finance the headphones.

Also, tarps from the list can be supported by the Council now, while we will work on providing funds for larger items such as seating arrangements and a canopy or wooden roof later by seeking donations or grants and by fundraising if possible.

Kirsty talked about the effort the school makes to support students and families in need. Teachers recently worked on a fundraiser including raffles and cash donations to provide funds. Seven families were supported as a result.

School provides food to kids by observing the content of their lunch box. Also, families may be contacted privately to see their needs.

5 Fundraising

Naoko's suggested food fundraisers of cookies and donuts are still pending; we need to learn more about the school's nut-free policy and try to see if the prices are suitable for our community. Naoko will make an effort to find less expensive items for possible fundraising items.

So far, we think that it's still very difficult to implement a fundraising campaign based on food (Popcorn, cookies, donuts...) this year with the current restrictions.

One of the issues to consider when fundraising with food items is to have nut-free products. Some items are nut-free but the environment they are prepared in is not guaranteed to be 100% nut-free.

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There are around 30 students who have different allergies at school. Some students are allergic to eggs, milk, or peanuts.

We will try to include everyone in our future food fundraising activities. In case we can't provide a 100% nut-free item, we can provide two food options to accommodate the allergic students. We can also alternate items to include different food allergies.

In all cases, parents will be notified of the food ingredients in an email.

6 How We Can Support Students in Need

In her PowerPoint presentation, Susan explained that the issue of supporting kids who come from low-income families often rises when we talk about School-Council-related fundraising activities when pricing our items. Then she gave us an idea about what other schools in Ontario are doing in this regard, and presented some points for discussion.

The main questions are how to find out who the students are discreetly and know which families need monetary support, and whether we can currently afford to subsidize some items when needed, especially that we don't have new fundraising programs running to support our account.

When we did the pizza program, we constantly supported the kids who weren't able to pay, but we did that without a formal structure.

One suggestion was to ask families who need subsidy to notify the school directly. The problem is we are not sure how many need help to make sure we can fund that! Naoko suggested rotating the subsidy. For example, every week we can support a number of students if needed.

It is also suggested we need to find ways to bring money from the community into the school rather than from the families in the school.

7 COVID-19

Colin is working with the superintendent to make sure physical distancing is maintained at school (according to the size of the class room), in case other students joined the in-person learning.

The maximum a classroom can handle is a group of 25 (Twenty-Five) students.

OCDSB has notified teachers to take their materials home with them in case the winter break got prolonged or students transitioned to online learning as a result of a possible COVID-19

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lockdown. It is important to note that currently all students are expected to come back to school in person on January 4, 2021 unless asked to do otherwise.

Colin reported that more teachers are deployed in the yard to ensure kids respect the needed physical distancing and to minimize interaction. He also pointed out some new stress behaviours are being observed recently.

Colin also talked about The Kiss and Ride pick-up, which is going more smoothly now after asking the transportation vans to pick up the kids from the front of the school. However, some parents are still double-parking and not following the rules. Naoko suggested to keep reminding parents about parking and safety rules.

8 Initiatives and Suggestions

To support students' well-being and spread awareness among the families in the school, Susan suggested distributing a monthly newsletter to parents, focusing on one well-being topic each month.

Another thing we can think about is to have a wellness week to engage parents, teachers and students to raise awareness and promote healthy life both physically and emotionally. However, this suggestion might be challenging during this time and all the restrictions.

Towards the end of the meeting, Colin gave us a quick tour in the school to show us what the school currently looks like. Nejm-Eddine suggested that the school can prepare a short video for the parents to show them inside the school and what measures the school is implementing during Covid-19; this can help reassure parents and give them an idea about the big effort made to ensure the safety of everyone.

9 Next Meeting

The suggested date for the next meeting is Wednesday January 20 at 5:00 pm; we'll verify by email.

The meeting was adjourned around 6:45 pm.