

## **Blossom Park School Council**

### **Minutes of Meeting-September 21, 2022**

#### **Present:**

Susan Fattal: Chair

Tracy-Ann Johnson-Myers (Parent Member/Secretary Elect)

Nabi Habibi: Treasurer

Fatma Mahmoud: Parent Member

Caroline Rassi: Principal

Carmelina Falcucci: Vice Principal

Tammy Draper: Teacher Representative

Parent Participants: Fatma Burhanu, Sara Hamdy

#### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

- The meeting was called to order at 5:01 pm by the Chair.
- Susan welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced herself to the new members.
- Attendees, including the Principal and Vice Principal, introduced themselves.

#### **2. Approval of agenda and minutes.**

- The agenda and minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

#### **3. Chair's Update:**

- Both the annual and financial reports of the School Council have been submitted to the OCDSB. The financial report was submitted by the Treasurer and Chair in the form of a Google form.
- A message was sent out to parents last week, asking them to join as members. Two new parents expressed an interest and have joined. They are Tracy-Ann Johnson-Myers and Fatma Mahmoud. We have a minimum requirement of 5 parents.
- There are \$610.95 cents owing to the school for the pizza program. The cheque was signed by Susan and Nabi and submitted to Sarah, the office administrator. Sarah will inform Susan as soon as the cheque is deposited.
- Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils, OCASC, contacted Susan to ask if a representative from Blossom Park School Council can join their monthly meetings. Susan is unable to join but encouraged interested parent members to join if they are available to do so.
- The School Council web page has been updated and now includes a News section.
- The School Council is preparing for the launch of the pizza program: The Chair is awaiting class name lists from the school. The proposed date for the pizza program is October 4<sup>th</sup> or the second week of October.

#### **4. Treasurer's Update:**

- Nabi is no longer available to act in the capacity of Treasurer of the School Council.
- There is currently \$5956.04 in the School Council's bank account as of September 21<sup>st</sup>.
- \$610.95 (cheque from the School Council) is to be deposited into the school's bank account by Sarah (Administrator).

Susan provided a break-down of money in the School Council's account:

- \$200 has been set aside to assist in creating an outdoor classroom space
- \$8000 with the school to create an outdoor classroom space
- The Council received a \$500 PIP Grant in 2020 and 2021 (a total of \$1000). The Council could not spend the grant money due to the closure of schools and the imposition of social distancing measures stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The PIP grant is intended for activities that encourage parental engagement.
- If the Council receives an additional \$500 PIP grant this academic year, it will bring the total grant money to \$1500
- \$4145.09 in the School Council's coffers can be spent right now.

#### **5. Description of Council Roles and Election of Executive Officers**

- Blossom Park School Council has been in operation since 1994. It is an advisory body to the principal and board. As a collective unit, we are expected to make recommendations on school and board activities, student achievements and learning involvement.
- There are currently no by-laws governing our operation. Susan is working on a set of by-laws for the Council to vote on.
- Until we establish by-laws specific to us, we remain guided by OCDSB policies, which regulate how school councils function, in addition to Ontario Regulation 612.
- The OCDSB general rule is that there needs to be a minimum of five (5) parents on the School Council and that parents form the majority of members. We haven't been able to attract that number of parents but will continue to encourage parents to join. We operate without the total number of members, but we continue to operate and continue to encourage parents and members to join.
- Parent members of the School Council cannot be OCDSB employees; otherwise, they cannot be voting members.
- The Council also comprises members of the school staff: Vice Principal, Principal, or both; a teacher representative; a non-teaching team and a student representative.
- The Principal, VP and student representatives are non-voting members.

#### **Role of Council Executive:**

- Chair: prepares agenda, communicates with community and school; keeps documents
- Secretary: Records notes during meetings and creates minutes of the meeting. Minutes of the meeting are vital for certain activities such as issuing cheques. The issuance of cheques must be backed by a receipt or documented in the meeting minutes.
- Treasurer: responsible for accounting, banking, financial receipts, and documentation of financial activities.

- Teacher Rep: Ensures a two-way dialogue with the teacher community in the school and raises issues the teachers might have, per our advisory role and in consultation with the Principal.
- School Council members are protected by the Board's liability insurance. We receive this protection around January of each academic year.
- All members are expected to attend meetings. Absence from meetings must be reported in advance to the Chair.
- Absence from three consecutive meetings without prior notice will result in loss of membership from the Council.

### **Election of Executive**

- Chair: Susan (re-elected)
- Treasurer: Susan (Nabi is unable to resume his position as treasurer this year)
- Susan was elected as Treasurer for this academic year.
- Nabi remains as co-signing authority
- Secretary: Tracy-Ann Johnson-Myers (elected)

### **Principal and Vice Principal Update**

- The Principal congratulated and welcomed the new Council members.
- The Principal expressed her interest in continuing to have increased and open communication with the Blossom Park School community, as communication makes people comfortable and reassured.
- Weekly updates are sent home every Friday at 4:30 pm. These updates detail what happened during the week and outline upcoming activities for the weeks ahead.
- Meet the Teacher night on September 29, 4:00 pm-5:30 pm
  - The Meet the Parent Sessions will take the format of an Open House
  - Parents will be able to visit their children's classes
  - The child leads their parents around the class and the school
  - At 5:15 pm, all families still in the building and staff will be called to the gym for a complete staff introduction
  - The evening closes at 5:30 pm
- Our focus and priorities for the school continue to be communication, safety, emergency procedures, our facility, and staff development.
- Communication - Principal's Weekly Update, Homeroom teachers' Google Classroom
- Safety and emergency procedures: Review best practices and policies and procedures with staff
- Facilities: Working closely with the chief and the Area Supervisor - maximizing the space we have and addressing priorities

- Staff development: Best practices to implement, alignment of practices, how to best meet the needs of various learners, literacy and numeracy coach support for transition years (grades K,1, and 8)

**Staffing update**

Through the staffing process,

**Six (6)** new teachers have been welcomed on staff (June-September)

Three (3) new Educational Assistants (EAs) have been hired

The School is in the process of interviewing for another EA vacancy

**School Organization:**

There are 19 classes at Blossom Park. The biggest classes are Kinder A and B, with a combined total of 22 students.

Primary classes capped at 20

The provincial cap is 20, but OCDSB schools can have classes that are above 20

In the junior division, the biggest class has 22 students

Intermediates: the biggest class has 21 students

<b>Class #</b>	<b>Homeroms</b>
22	Kinder A
22	Kinder B
20	R1A
18	R1/2A
20	R2/3A
18	R3A
21	R3/4A
22	R4/5A
21	R5/6A
21	R6/7A
21	R7/8A
21	R8A
14	MF4A
15	MF5/6A
17	MF5/6B
14	MF7A
21	MF8A

7	R4/5/6A
15	G7/8A

### **Engaging activities coming up**

- Mr. Torrito will run Cross Country running club for Junior and Intermediate students until mid-October
- Mr. Werden and Mr. Heisler will run a Dance club for Juniors this Term on Tuesdays
- Ms. Murch and Ms. Falcucci will lead Girls on the Run starts this week (week of September 19<sup>th</sup>) Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- Ms. Shohdy and Ms. Chivot have begun planning the Art Show for January
- Ms. Dineen will be running the Glee Club/Choir on Thursdays
- Ms. Piribauer and Ms. Rice are leading the Terry Fox run for the school

Terry Fox Run date has been changed to September 26<sup>th</sup> instead of October 5<sup>th</sup> as previously advertised.

### **Report from Teacher Representative: Tammy Draper**

- No update

### **Matters for discussion**

- Dates and times for future meetings: The Principal suggested to the Chair that the monthly Council meetings be moved from the third Wednesday of each month to the first Tuesday of each month.
- One parent member of the Student Council cannot make the meeting on Tuesdays.
- The Chair conducted a poll of members to ascertain their availability, and a decision was made to maintain the current meeting time and date (the third Wednesday of every month)

### **Susan (Chair): Plans for the upcoming year**

- Continue to work with and support the school
- Attract and engage more parents
- Continue with the pizza program as our main fundraiser
- Council members were encouraged to submit or share their ideas for fundraisers
- Oliver's Labels online fundraiser is still up and running. As of today, we have around \$23 in our account. Link to the council's Oliver's Labels fundraising page is on our webpage.
- Direct financial support to the council is possible through the School Council's Micharity donation page that we created last year; link to the page is on both the school's website and School Council's webpage
- Communication will continue with the principal, school, teachers and school councils
- Hoping this year to spend our \$1000 PIP grant
- The Council's intent is to create a Twitter account to communicate with parents

- Welcome ideas that bring fun to the children; ideas on healthy eating, etc.
- We are awaiting an email from the City of Ottawa regarding the Tree Grant to have 7 trees planted in the schoolyard.

### **Questions/Concerns/Suggestions**

- Tracy (Secretary) questioned the possibility of receiving updates from homeroom teachers so that she and other parents can have a better idea of what their children are doing in their respective subjects in school.
- The Principal explained that while it is not feasible for teachers to send weekly updates, parents are encouraged to connect directly with their child's teacher for updates on their child's progress. Kindergarten teachers generally communicate more frequently with parents and most teachers provide monthly communication. The principal indicated that she will share the curriculum links in the school's weekly update moving forward.
- Tammy Draper (Teacher Representative) explained that some teachers use Google classroom for weekly updates. Emails are usually sent to both parents and students, so parents can keep abreast of what their students are doing in school.

**Date of next meeting:** October 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm via Google Meet.

The Chair ended the meeting by thanking everyone for their time and input.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 pm.