

Blossom Park School Council
Minutes of Meeting-October 19, 2022, at 5:00 P.M.

Present:

Susan Fattal: Chair/Treasurer

Tracy-Ann Johnson-Myers: Secretary

Caroline Rassi: Principal

Fatma Mahmoud: Parent Member

Dina Edress Said: Student Representative

Taimi Fitzsimmons: Student Representative

Absent: Nabi Habibi, Carmelina Falcucci and Tammy Draper

1. Welcome and Introductions

- The meeting was called to order at 5:02 pm by the Chair.
- The chair introduced and welcomed Student Representatives Dina and Taimi to the meeting.
- Susan invited all eight students interested in joining the council to a quick virtual meeting yesterday. Dina, Taimi and Phebe attended. Susan gave them a brief idea about our council and what is expected of them as Student Representatives.
- Fatma questioned whether teachers are responsible for ensuring kindergarten students wear their jackets and hats when they go out to play at recess. She understands teachers have many responsibilities and is working with her child to ensure he can dress and undress himself. Still, she wonders if the teachers could check to ensure kindergarten children wear their jackets during outside playtime, especially in the cold months.
- Caroline thanked Fatma for raising the issue with the Council. She assured her that it is part of the practice for teachers to teach specific transitional skills to their kindergarten students—removing their jackets, utilizing their cubbies, putting on their splash pants and shoes etc. Over the past week, Caroline has spent time in the kindergarten classrooms supporting the teachers in these transitional practices. The teacher and the EAs usually check each student before they go out to play. However, once outside, the children might remove their jackets and hats etc., for various reasons. The teachers' primary focus on the playground is to ensure the children are playing and interacting safely with each other. It might, therefore, prove challenging for them to ensure that all children are appropriately attired while at play. She encouraged Fatma to contact her directly or her child's teacher if she was still concerned.

2. Approval of agenda and minutes.

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

3. Chair/Treasurer Update:

- Pizza program: The pizza program is going well. We have had three pizza days so far.
 - Domino's, our pizza supplier, has increased its prices by 10% due to market changes and inflation. They will also now charge a delivery fee of \$5.99.
 - Due to these changes and slight hiccups in their service, Susan has decided to try another supplier, Pizza Pizza, for the month of November.
 - Pizza Pizza has a fundraising program in place. They are reasonably priced, and while they charge a delivery fee, it is less than Domino's. After November, we will decide whether to continue with the new supplier or return to Domino's.
- The Ottawa 67s' game will be on Tuesday, November 15th.
 - Ms. Kelly Dykes has suggested shifting pizza day for that week or the entire month to avoid confusing parents, some of whom do not send an extra snack for the second nutrition break on pizza days. Since we are moving to Pizza Pizza, we have the flexibility of moving the pizza day to Thursday.
 - Forms will go home with students on Monday, October 24th and Susan will let them know that for November, we will move pizza day from Tuesday to Thursday for the entire month.
 - Susan was contacted by Ms. Kelly Dykes, who informed her that Ottawa 67's is hosting a School Hockey Game Day at the Canadian Tire Centre on November 15th. The original cost of the trip was \$20 per student, but she received a discounted price of \$15 per student. She requested a donation from the School Council to further subsidize the cost of the trip. The available options were:
 - A. \$3/student **\$651**, which means students pay \$2 to attend the hockey game.
 - B. \$2/student **\$434**, which means students pay \$3 to attend the hockey game.
 - Due to the time-sensitive nature of the request, it was circulated to the School Council for their opinion and vote on the matter. Tracy and Fatma responded by approving the subsidization of \$434 from the Council. Susan also approved the \$434 payment. Once we determine the exact number of students, we will issue the cheque.
 - Each cheque paid out by the council is backed by a receipt, so we will receive a receipt from the organizers once we make payment.
- Ms. Brookes Milsom from the City of Ottawa attended the school on October 18th to review the suggested location for planting trees in the schoolyard. We applied for a tree grant, which was approved.

- Concerns were raised by Anita (Chief Custodian) about the location of the trees, so we have decided to plant them at new locations in the yard. The locations will be shared with the Council once Susan receives the map from Brooke.
- We were approved for seven (7) trees but can only accommodate six (6).
- The trees will be planted in May or early June.
- We can apply for other grants in the future to add more trees to the schoolyard.

Treasurer's Update:

- At the last Council meeting, we had \$5956.04 in our bank account.
- The pizza money (\$1763.10) was deposited into the account
- Our total is now \$7719.14
- In September, Nabi and Susan signed a cheque for the school in the sum of \$610.95 that was owed to the school for June pizza. The school has not yet cashed the cheque.
- We have \$200 for an outdoor class project fund. We also have \$8000 set aside in the school account for this project.
- We have a \$1000 PIP grant from the OCDSB to go towards a parent engagement activity. We might receive another \$500 this year.
- We have not yet paid over the money for this month's pizza sale—an estimated \$853. We will hand over payment after our final pizza day on October 25th.
- We have \$5000 available to spend.

4. Principal Update

- Staffing Updates
- Enrollment numbers have changed from the May planning projections, which have resulted in the reduction of the MF5/6B French Junior class.
- Through the reorganization process, the MF5/6 students were distributed across three (3) classes: all five grade 6 students moved to MF6/7A, six grade 5 students moved to MF5/6A, and six other grade 5 students moved to MF4/5A.

We lost Mr. Heisler but are ecstatic to welcome:

- 21% Fr vacancy for the Core French class. Someone was interviewed for this post. The new hire's name will be announced in the principal's weekly update to parents once the rest of the school staff has been informed.
- 41% contract English Vacancy for coverage
- 40% LTO for ESL support
- LST LTO
- 1 Term EA for the Behaviour Intervention Programme class

New School organization:

	Homeroom	Teacher	Student #
1	Kinder A	Ms. Myers	22
2	Kinder B	Mme. Shohdy	23
3	R1A	Ms. Hoekstra	20
4	R1/2A	Ms. Parise	18
5	R2/3A	Ms. Trotechaud	20
6	R3A	Ms. Sharma	17
7	R3/4A	Ms. Young	22
8	R4/5A	Mr. Ruth	22
9	R5/6A	Ms. Draper	22
10	R6/7A	Mr. Rowe	20
11	R7/8A	Mr. Parsons	21
12	R8A	Mr. Porter	20
13	MF4/5A	Ms. Hadibi	20
14	MF5/6A	Mme. Vallis	21
15	MF6/7A	Mme. Sahraoui	20
16	MF8A	Mme. Chivot	20
17	B4/5/6A	Mr. Werden	7
18	G7/8A	Mr. Gibson	15
Total			350

Blossom Park Principal Profile

- In October, the board asked the school to provide a School Opening Documentation, due by November 11. This documentation requires the school to submit its emergency and safety processes and procedures that we have at the school, means of communication and timetable etc.
- Another requirement is for the principal to collaborate with the School Council on a Principal Profile.
- Caroline has put together a Principal Profile which she has shared with the School Council's Executive Committee for their review and feedback.

PD Day Debrief

- Engaging in discussions around creating good conditions for learning
 - Creating a belonging classroom
 - Building healthy relationships with students
 - Providing culturally relevant and responsive programming (CRRP)
- Breakout sessions to delve deeper into division-based learning
 - Kinder teachers focused on alphabetic knowledge and phonological awareness
 - Grades 1-3 teachers focused on foundational literacy skills and structured literacy programming
 - Grades 4-8 teachers focused on differentiated instruction for reading comprehension
- Overview of the new science curriculum

Upcoming Engaging activities at BPPS

- Wellness presentations for grade seven (7) students and Stress Less presentations for grade 8 students on October 17 were a great hit.
- The city of Ottawa planted three (3) new trees near the kinder yard, and a bench will be placed near the trees (provided due to May 24 damages).
- Junior Achievers presentations to grade 8 students this Friday, October 21
- Lunchtime Monitors (grades 5-8) are underway (extra help in Primary classes every 2 months)
- The courtyard has been cleaned up and classes have begun using this fabulous area as an outdoor learning space
- OPH clinic for grade 7 and 8 students October 24 - (Hep. and HPV vaccines)
- Halloween activities are being planned
- Grades 4-8 Trip to 67's hockey game on November 15

Staff Requests:

- Ms. Sahraoui - funds for recess equipment such as basketballs, soccer balls, footballs
- Ms. Dykes - [Makerspace presentation](#)

5. Student Representatives

- Both students are having a good experience at school so far. They, however, raised concerns about their classroom being too cold. Caroline promised to look into the matter for them.

6. Matters for discussion

Teachers' Request

- Madam Shohdy and Hadibi are seeking assistance for the Garden Club. They need to plant some Tulip and Hyacinth bulbs in the flower bed in front of the school (\$60-\$80).
- Susan contacted four garden centers to see if they could donate or give us a discount for these plants. Only one garden center (Richies) expressed an interest in contributing but, when contacted again, did not respond.
- The best prices online are at Home Depot; one pack of Tulips with 30 bulbs for \$14.98, Hyacinth bulbs for \$14.98 (10 bulbs x 2). The total would be \$50.78
- Susan asked Caroline to communicate with the teachers and let them know that before requesting funding from the School Council, to check with the school first to see if the school's budget can support it.
- Caroline indicated that, based on her experience at other schools, garden enhancement projects are usually supported by School Councils. Still, she will look into it and see if there is a budget for these enhancement activities at the school level.
- The Council voted in favour of the School Council offering the Garden Club a fund of up to \$60, should the school not be able to fund this activity.
- Mme. Sahraoui requested funds for recess equipment (soccer balls, footballs etc.) for outdoor use. She did not indicate a specific amount of equipment or monetary value. Along with Mr. Porter, she cleaned out the gym and equipment room and discarded broken or unusable items.
- Ms. Dykes is seeking to revive MakerSpace to be used by as many students and classes as possible. She is seeking donations—bins, toys, craft items, building items etc.
- She compiled a presentation which Caroline delivered to the Council.
- Caroline indicated that this could be a collaborative effort with the Council. Susan is okay with collaboration if the school cannot fund all of it. Caroline will ask Mme Sahraoui for a more detailed/elaborate list and estimates of the requested recess equipment so we can make an informed decision.

Student Representative Project:

- Dina presented to the Council her idea for a Halloween dance
- Supplies for the dance: snacks, candies, music
- Furniture: ones already at school (blue tooth speakers, tables etc.)
- She also proposed selling candies, chips, etc., at the dance to raise funds.
- Trick or treat at school for the younger students
- Suggested activities: Guess the jellybeans and costume show-offs

Caroline welcomed the idea of the Halloween dance and suggested to Dina that she connect with a teacher willing to take the lead on it.

- Caroline will see which teacher can take the lead in the Halloween dance
- The School Council will be updated and can help if needed.

Caroline expressed concerns about the sale of food at the Halloween dance due to food-related allergies among the student population. She, however, suggested that we could sell individually packaged chips and nut-free Halloween candies. A Safe Food Policy is in place at Blossom Park to monitor what items are brought into the school to be shared among students. There are many children with life-threatening food allergies. Caroline will communicate with the lead teacher on the Halloween dance to determine what items can be purchased for resale.

Caroline also wanted to know what would be done with the money raised from the Halloween sale. Any fundraising activity at school must go towards a specific purpose. We cannot collect money from students at school unless it is for a particular purpose or activity.

Questions/Concerns/Suggestions

Date of next meeting: Suggested meeting date is **Wednesday, November 16, at 5:00 pm**. The date is to be confirmed by email.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:28 pm.