

Blossom Park School Council
Minutes of Meeting-January 18, 2023, at 5:00 P.M.

Present:

Susan Fattal: Chair
Tracy-Ann Johnson-Myers: Secretary
Caroline Rassi: Principal
Carmelina Falcucci: Vice Principal
Phebe Oyetoran: Student Representative
Dina Edrees Said: Student Representative
Rana Ghandour: Parent

Absent:

Fatma Mahmoud: Parent Member
Fatema Al-Hasan; Malak Saleh; Tammy Draper; Nabi Habibi

1. Welcome

- The meeting was called to order at **5:01 PM** by the Chair.
- Susan pointed out that Nabi had missed several meetings. She contacted him to see if he was still interested in staying as a voting member. He hadn't responded yet. It is a requirement that members attend the majority of meetings.

2. Approval of agenda and minutes

The agenda and minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. Chair's Report

- **Honey Fundraiser:** Susan delivered the remaining jars of honey to parents who could not pick them up at school.
- **Tree Grant Approval:** Blossom Park School Council applied for a schoolyard tree grant from the City of Ottawa in June. The project has been approved.
- The plan is to have six trees planted by the Spring of 2023. We have concluded the first stage of the process, which is to get approval from the City of Ottawa.
- Brooke Milsom, a representative from the City of Ottawa, contacted Susan to say that if there are no changes, the Council can go ahead and contact the OCDSB for the commencement of the project.
- Susan emailed Daniel Fornier in the OCDSB to seek the Board's approval. She included the proposed map with the suggested tree locations and species. The Board approved the project.
- The OCDSB will not be responsible for any vandalism or replacement of any trees. Ultimately, BP is responsible for the maintenance and protection of the trees.
- The trees are expected to be planted by the end of April.

- Susan will contact Anita to get an idea of items we will need to maintain and protect the trees: carts, buckets to transport water, cages for the tree etc.

4. Financial Report:

Susan shared the financial report document with the members: [January 18 Financial Report.](#)

5. Principal and Vice Principal's Report

- Caroline congratulated the School Council on a good honey fundraiser.

Activities Debrief

- Winter Ball was a great success
 - Students provided song choices before the dance
- January 9 assemblies were effective.
 - Reminders provided about safety expectations
 - Bullying was called out, and students came forward following the assembly.
- Grade 8 students are in the process of selecting courses for Grade 9 via Xello
- Junior ball hockey is a fan favourite, thanks to Mr. Parsons and Mr. Ruth.

Upcoming Engaging Activities at BPPS

- ArtShine for select grades 1-3 students will be held every Thursday at 2nd recess for six weeks starting the week of January 23.
 - Thank you to the Education Foundation for subsidising this program for our students
- Select grade 8 students will visit Ottawa Technical Secondary School (OTSS) on January 26
- Virtual Kindergarten Information Night on January 31 at 7:00 pm
- OYAP (Ontario Youth Apprentice Program) to provide workshops on trades to grades 2-4 students on February 13
- We received a grant to have local author, Timm Holmes, work with Primary and Junior students. Mr Holmes will work with us on March 7th, where grades 1-5 students will participate in a Start a Story workshop.
- Art club is starting up soon for Junior students thanks to Mme. Chivot and Mme. Shohdy
- Winter Carnival in February

- Girls on the Run will start again in the Spring.
- Carmelina added that no date has been confirmed for the winter carnival. However, she would like the Council to get involved by requesting a donation of hot chocolate from Tim Horton's or contributing the hot chocolate from the Council's coffers.
- After the principal and vice principal's report, Susan lauded Caroline and Carmelina on their efforts to handle the issue of bullying at Blossom Park.

She also lauded the efforts of the Art club and indicated that the Council would assist should there be a need for any art supplies etc., that the school can't cover the cost of.

Student Representatives Update

Highlights:

- Dina said the winter ball was a success.
- Phebe asked if the children will be charged for the hot chocolate for the upcoming winter carnival, and if so, how much?
- Susan will consult with the Council Executive members and respond at the next School Council meeting.

6. Matters for Discussion

Suggested School Activity

- Susan suggested having Scientists in School (Virtual) Workshops for grades 1-3 students since our primaries did not go on the Ottawa 67's game trip in November.
- There should be at most 30 students in each workshop. Each workshop costs \$235. In addition, science kits will be delivered to classes based on their chosen topic.
- Scientists in School offered us up to 3 free workshops if we could match with three (3) user paid workshops.
- We can have three (3) workshops to cover the primary classes. The extra workshops can be used for the kindergartens or other classes that want to participate.
- Caroline lauded Susan for the initiative and for planning an activity to include the primaries. However, she noted that having an activity at the school differs from having the children attend an event off the school grounds. She suggested a field trip to a museum as a possible alternative. She also suggested consulting with teachers in the primary grades to determine whether they would prefer to have Scientists in School or a field trip for their students.

- Carmelina and Tracy also suggested having a field trip for the primaries and revisiting Scientists in Schools at a later date.
- Some teachers are already thinking about planning a trip to the Science Museum. The council might be asked to cover part of the cost once the prices are determined.

Pizza Order:

- Pizza order forms will go out the week of January 23, and we will accept payments for February and the first two weeks in March. This takes into consideration the March Break and the beginning of Ramadan.
- Special arrangements will be made for students who cannot afford two months of pizza payments. The Council will also subsidise or cover the cost of pizza payments for as many students as needed who cannot afford it.
- Susan asked Sarah (Admin Office) to obtain a phone number from parents who contact the office regarding School Council matters so that she (Susan) can contact them directly.

Maple syrup fundraiser:

- We will revisit the maple syrup fundraiser in Spring.
- Carmelina suggested we have it in early-mid March should we decide to go ahead with the maple syrup fundraiser. Parents are more likely to purchase maple syrup when it is fresh in season.
- Tracy is okay with the School Council having a maple syrup fundraiser but suggested it be done on a small scale, similar to the honey fundraiser in December. Based on the response from parents, we can decide whether to have the fundraiser on a larger scale.

School Council Parent Survey

- Susan presented her idea of a School Council survey similar to the one used in the past to gain responses from parents on issues or challenges they or their children might have encountered during the school year.
- Susan explained that the purpose of the survey is to give our parents the chance to express themselves and provide feedback. The survey results can help our council plan future initiatives, workshops or activities and give us and the school administration a direction as to what areas need more attention.
- Tracy questioned whether parents are pointed to resources, etc., based on the survey responses.
- Carmelina warned against asking specific questions or requesting certain information from parents on a survey, as it might be too sensitive or private.

Instead, she suggested the Council communicate with herself and Caroline to better understand the needs of the parents' community and get pointers on what they think our parents and students need.

- Susan clarified that we never collect parent emails in these surveys.
- Caroline suggested changing the negative tone and approach of the survey. For example, instead of asking parents about the challenges faced, the Council could use a more engaging tone and ask them to indicate two great things about the school year and the school or two great things they would love to see brought to the school. She would also like an opportunity to vet the questions with Carmelina and the School's communication team.
- Susan expressed to Carmelina and Caroline that the Council is open to assisting parents should the need arise.

7. Questions/Concerns/Suggestions

8. Suggested date for the next meeting: The proposed date for our next meeting is February 15, 2023, at 5:00 pm via Google Meet.

9. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:17 pm.