

Blossom Park School Council
Minutes of Meeting
Wednesday October 18, 2023

Present

Susan Fattal: Chair and Treasurer
Fatma Mahmoud: Parent Member
Mohammad Rasool Nasrat: Parent Member
Caroline Rassi: Principal
Carmelina Falcucci: Vice Principal

Seerein Al Khashab: Parent
Latifa Marzwa: Parent

Absent

Tammy Draper: Teacher Representative

1. Welcome

- The meeting was started at 5:00 pm by the Chair.
- Susan welcomed everyone.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The agenda and minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. Chair's Report

- **Schoolyard Trees**
 - Anita Sloan, our chief custodian, contacted Susan and told her the two trees affected by Japanese Beetles in summer have pushed out new leaves and seem to have new buds set for next spring.
 - We might need to spray them or treat them in spring to avoid having the same problem.
- **Family Pizza Dinner**
 - Pizza forms have been sent home. The payment will be either in cash or by cheques.

- 23 families have registered. We will be ordering 28 pizzas for the families and 12 pizzas for the staff.
- The council has approved covering a portion of the HST for the family order, while the school will be paying for the staff order.
- **Pizza Program**
 - The launch of the program this year has been pushed to November in order to avoid any confusion with the family pizza dinner.
 - Pizza forms will be distributed next week. The first pizza day will be November 2nd.
- **Family Conference**
 - All OCDSB families have received an email today inviting them to register and attend this year's Family Conference (previously called Parent Conference) taking place in Brookfield High School on November 4th.
 - Before the pandemic, half the day used to focus on parent workshops, while the second half was dedicated to parent volunteers and school council members, including school council workshops, resources, and Q&A sessions with the Board members.
 - Susan expressed her disappointment that the format of the Family Conference has changed. The conference used to focus on building community across all levels of parent participation.
 - Susan still encouraged all parents who have the time to register and attend.

4. Financial Report

Susan shared October financial report with the council: [October Financial Report](#)

5. Principal and Vice Principal's Report

October has been a busy month for us. While preparing to reorganize the school and modify class lists, teachers were also trying to get to know the students to create their IEPs and send them home on the October 16 deadline. As per true Awesome Blossom form, we worked together and got through the challenges of the first 3 weeks of the month!

- **October 6 PA Day Debrief**

- It was great to meet collectively with staff and engage in discussions about student well-being and achievement. We began our learning with a discussion about the school climate.
- We explored various resources around the conditions for learning and focused on the practice of Community Circles for conflict resolution.
- We then delved into Literacy and explored several resources to support English and French educators as they implement the new Language Curriculum.
- Finally, we explored the Mathematics curriculum and explored high impact strategies to further student achievement.

- **School Wide Expectations**

- We collaborated together as a staff and have put together these expectations for students. All teachers have explored these expectations with students and we all follow the same guidelines for consistency.
- We are sharing these with families so they are aware of the school expectations and we ask them to review them with their children at home:

[Copy of School Wide Expectations](#)

- **Activities Debrief**

- The Terry Fox run September 26 raised \$276.45. We are proud of the students and thankful for the generosity of our families.
- Youthnet Wellness presentations on Oct 5 for gr 7 and 8 classes: We all have mental health, so let's learn about what that is. The goals for this workshop are for youth to understand what mental health is, understand the stigma associated with mental health, and to learn about what to do if one notices changes to their mental health and where to go to ask for help.
- Junior Girls Soccer Tournament October 12- came in 4th place
- Dairy presentation for gr 7 and 8 classes October 17: The presentation explores healthy habits, including food choices, that can contribute to overall health. We also look at outside factors that can contribute to negative health (stress, eating, lack of sleep and exercise).
- Bus safety videos for all classes
- Art Club started on October 17 and will run at 2nd recess every Friday with Mme Shohdy (grs 5 & 6) and with Mme Chivot (grs 7 & 8)

- Ms Saharouui and MS Piribaurer's class welcomed a coding/stem presentation through Carleton University yesterday

- **Engaging Activities Coming Up**

- Canterbury coming to present their Arts program to grade 8 students on Oct 19
- Grade 7 immunization Oct 20
- Luv 2 groove for all classes November 6-8
- Mr Parsons and Mr Ruth are leading the Junior Boys Soccer team in preparation for their tournament on Oct 19.
- Ms Dykes and Ms E. Jehan will be leading the Intermediate Student Council this year

6. Matters for Discussion

Family Pizza Dinner:

- The parent members have approved a payment of up to \$150 to cover free drinks for the families who ordered pizza. This is to encourage more parent engagement since it is our first family event in a long time.
- Caroline and Carmelina are working on a plan for the gym table layout. Each family will be sitting at one table. There will be name cards on each table to make it easier for the families. One or two chairs will be added to each table so that teachers and staff can join the families while they are having their pizza dinner.
- Mohammad supported the idea and thought it was a great plan.
- Fatma asked if the parents who did not order pizza would still be able to attend.
- Caroline clarified that all parents will be invited to the gym at 5 PM for staff introduction. Then only the ones who ordered pizza would be asked to stay and have dinner together.
- Susan encouraged Fatma to stay after 5 PM if she had the time. The event is an opportunity for us, as School Council parent members, to connect with other parents. Also, we might need some help handing out the pizzas to families.
- Caroline asked Susan if it was already too late to add one more pizza to the staff order.
- Susan will contact Domino's and ask them to add one more pizza box.

Teacher Requests:

a. Luv2Groove Dance Workshops:

- Ms. Erin Jehan has booked Luv2Groove for grades K-8 Classes for three days (November 6-8). The cost is \$1243
- The school will ask the students to bring a toonie.
- Caroline asked if the council could cover a portion of the amount. The school would then cover the difference.
- Susan reminded everyone that last year the council covered \$739 for the workshops, and suggested approving up to \$500 as a reasonable contribution, depending on the amount the students and the school would cover. We might increase the amount to \$700 if the school can't pay the difference.
- Caroline thanked the council and pointed out that not all students were expected to bring in toonies. The school would still be able to pay the difference.
- Both Mohammad and Fatma approved allocating \$500 for the workshops. Fatma said that \$500 would be a good amount if the school would be able to cover the difference.
- Susan asked if there is going to be a Luv2groove student performance in the gym like last year, where parents were invited to attend.
- Caroline responded that there would be no performance this year. The offer that the school subscribed to included hiring two dancers who would train and rehearse with the students without a performance. Also, the workshops needed to end on November 8th because of the Remembrance Day assembly scheduled on Friday November 10th.

b. Ottawa 67's Game:

- Ms. Kelly Dykes asked if the council would be able to pay for a portion of the Ottawa 67's game trip for grades 4-8 on November 15th.
- The ticket price is \$5 per student. The council could cover \$2 or \$3 per student. There will be around 205 student attending.
- Last year, the council approved a payment of \$2 per student. Susan suggested doing the same thing this year. The cost would be \$410.
- Once the exact number of students is determined, the council will issue the cheque.
- Fatma strongly supported the activity and approved paying \$2 per student. She also mentioned that she has heard a lot of good feedback from students and parents about the Ottawa 67's game trip.

- Mohammad supported allocating up to \$410 for the trip.

c. Giving \$50 Per Educator:

- Mme Shohdy asked if the council would be giving \$50 per educator that she said they used to receive.
- Caroline asked if it was a School Council practice to give that amount to every educator at school.
- Susan replied that as far as she knew, the council did give that money in the past when there were sufficient funds; she wasn't sure, though, if it was per educator or per class.
- Susan did not support the idea of doing that this year. She clarified that if we decided to do it per class, that would mean freezing the amount of \$850 by putting it aside in the account, regardless of whether our teachers would choose to spend it or not. Instead of breaking the amount into smaller \$50, we would continue to support our educators and encourage them to send us their requests. We would review and support the ones that are within our mandate when sufficient funds are available. This would be done little by little during the year, in addition to our support of other activities such as field trip buses and projects focusing on student achievement.
- Fatma agreed with Susan and said that \$50 doesn't make a big difference by itself. Reviewing and approving the teacher requests one by one would be a better approach.
- Mohammad pointed out that \$850 is a big amount to set aside. The amount would be better used to support bigger projects. We would still welcome teachers' requests.

Setting Aside a Budget for an End-of-Year Family/School Event

- Susan said that before the pandemic, we had a yearly end-of-year Fun Fair. We are still not sure what this year's end-of-year activity would be like (e.g. Fun Day, Family Picnic Day, etc.). We used to allocate \$2000-\$2500 for it. Susan suggested putting aside \$2000 for the activity to make sure we have enough funds to cover it in case we decided to have it. She encouraged everyone to share their suggestions and ideas.
- Both Mohammad and Fatma approved the amount.

7. Questions/Suggestions

- Fatma asked about the EQAO results and if parents could have access to their children's results.
- Caroline said the results have been printed out today, and that they would be sent home to all families by mid next week in confidential envelopes since the results were private.
- Carmelina suggested that we reapply for another City of Ottawa Tree Grant. Our yard could still take more trees.
- Susan explained that we originally wanted to apply and have 12 trees planted in the yard. The number went down to 6 based on the recommendation of our chief custodian due to location restrictions. The matter needs to be discussed first with Anita before we apply for any other tree grants. We need to make sure there is an approved space for any new trees.

8. Next Meeting:

Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday November 15th at 5 PM.**

Susan thanked everyone for their time and participation.

The meeting was adjourned at **5:45 PM.**