

**Blossom Park School Council**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Wednesday December 20, 2023**

**Present**

Susan Fattal: Chair and Treasurer

Fatma Mahmoud: Parent Member

Caroline Rassi: Principal

Abdi M. Hassan: Parent

Iman Bashir: Parent

**Absent**

Mohammad Rasool Nasrat: Parent Member

Carmelina Falcucci: Vice Principal

Tammy Draper: Teacher Representative

**1. Welcome**

- The meeting was called to order 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**

- **Teacher Requests**
  - Susan contacted Ms. Trotechaud regarding her suggestion to have a one-day school-wide pizza sale to accommodate the students who cannot afford to pay for the whole order. Susan clarified to her that due to the logistics of collecting the pizza

- forms and payments, it might be hard to do that just for one day especially that we have a pizza order going.
- Families can always reach out to us through our email or by calling the school regarding their pizza requests and we do our best to help as much as possible. On pizza day, we always order some extra pizza boxes, and students can come to the breakfast room and purchase the pizza for \$2.50 per slice.
  - Susan also contacted Ms. Sow regarding her financial literacy project. She had reached out for us seeking arts and crafts item donations for her class project.
  - We sent out the information to parents in the weekly update message. All went well! The project was a success, and the students learnt a lot from it.
- **Luv2Groove Payment**
    - Susan and Mohammad signed a \$500 cheque for the dance workshops after Caroline confirmed the amount. The cheque was submitted to school.
    - The cheque amount hasn't been withdrawn yet.
  - **Annual Liability Insurance**
    - We have received this year's insurance covering the period between November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 and October 31, 2024.
    - The insurance is provided by the Board annually to cover the School Council's sanctioned events.
    - Susan gave a quick explanation about the difference between sanctioned, non-sanctioned and 3<sup>rd</sup>-party events.

#### **4. Financial Report**

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

#### **5. Principal and Vice Principal's Report**

##### **Activities Debrief**

- The Girls on the Run final event was on Sunday Dec 2nd - the girls did a great job and students were featured on CTV news.
- Floor Hockey for Junior and Intermediates - Mr. Parsons and Mr. Ruth
  - The big finale was a fabulous staff VS students today, December 20.

- Not all students participated but those who couldn't join the game had a chance to watch it online.
- Glee Club and Band continue with Ms. Dineen.
- Holiday Concert tomorrow, December 21. We are excited about the Canterbury Band coming to perform for our students
- Holiday Spirit Week has generated lots of excitement

### **Upcoming Engaging Activities at BPPS**

- YOCISO will continue in January and we will add 2 Intermediate groups (boys and girls)
- All Grade 8 students will select course for Grade 9 via Xello in the new year.

### **Ongoing Behaviour Concerns**

- Frequent use of inappropriate language used by students
  - Towards other students
  - In relation to each other's parents
  - Occurring on yard, bus, in the community
- We have been reminding students to:
  - stop using inappropriate language
  - ignore and not retaliate
  - tell a teacher and talk to their parents
- Our messaging has been that these words are meaningless, they are not true, and that it is better to not respond and not give them value, that parents do not need you to defend them. We also encourage students to get help instead of addressing the problem themselves. Lately, these incidents have been resulting in physical fights.
- Our process **when we become aware of an incident:**
  - Connect with the affected student to ensure that they feel safe;
  - Inform their parent that we have been made aware and that we will investigate, with the reassurance of a follow up once more information is available;
  - Investigate the incident by interviewing all students involved and witnesses;
  - Bring the students together for a restorative discussion around the following impactful questions
    - What happened?
    - What were you thinking at the time?

- Who is impacted by these actions?
    - What will you do to repair the harm?
  - The parents of all involved are updated;
  - The incident is documented in our Progressive Discipline binder.
- Ongoing Education/Awareness efforts
  - Students are always encouraged to inform teachers and any other adult in the school when they see or notice something wrong;
  - Our consistent messaging on the announcements and as we interact with students is: “if you see something, say something”;
  - All staff on duty wear their vest/sash and Carmelina is outside at every recess as well as before and after school;
  - Students typically hesitate to come forward - this is why we provide daily reminders and provide safe spaces for students to share their concerns;
  - When the staff or a member of the administration becomes aware of any incident, it is addressed right away and parents are always called.
- Caroline asked if any of the attending parents have heard about the behavioural incidents at school.
- Both Susan’s son and Fatma’s daughter have brought the issue to their attention.
- Fatma felt sorry the staff had to go through this every day. She did not understand why the students were disrespectful to one another. Based on what she heard from some of the parents whose kids reacted to other students calling them names or saying negative things about their parents, the kids were just trying to defend themselves.
- Susan suggested bringing this up in our next meeting as the main topic for discussion. We will try to come up with ideas to help both the school and the parents deal with the issue.

**6. Matters for Discussion**

**PRO Grant Options**

- To apply for this year’s PRO Grant (up to \$750), we need to come up with a project/activity that engages the parents and builds up their capability in areas such as anti-black racism, anti-oppression, human rights, mental health, etc. The application deadline is January 12.
- The purpose of the activity is to enhance belonging, awareness and well-being.

- Sawmill Creek School Council chair contacted Susan to exchange ideas. School Councils can collaborate and have one PRO Grant project.
- Susan contacted Jump2Math to learn more about their family math nights. Unfortunately, there are no facilitators in our area. Hosting our own family math night is a possibility; however, their activities resource kits are too expensive!
- Based on our previous experience, our families are more likely to engage if accompanied by their kids.
- Caroline suggested learning from our previous Family Pizza Dinner that took place on Meet the Staff Day; it was a successful event. We can host a similar event with a speaker addressing the topic of appropriate discipline. We can offer babysitting and beverages.
- Susan agreed with Caroline and suggested finding out more about the possibility of hosting such a night regardless of whether it is part of the PRO Grant or not.

## **7. Questions/Suggestions**

- Susan suggested adding the phrase (Parent Council) after “School Council” when we address our parents in the weekly update message to make it clear for our parents that we represent them and to avoid any confusion.
- Caroline suggested doing it the other way around and putting “Parent Council” before “School Council” as this can make it clearer. Susan agreed with the idea.
- Susan noticed the GLPA and BIPA classes were more involved in hands-on activities (such as baking) than other classes. She asked why hands-on activities and life skills did not seem to be part of the curriculum of the regular classes.
- Caroline explained that hands-on activities are part of the program of those classes as a requirement. Students in the GLPA and BIPA classes are taught life and survival skills like the GLPA students’ monthly OC Transpo field trips and shopping in a grocery store, as they are not able to learn these skills on their own in their life.
- Our school is lucky to have these programs! We have several teachers who engage in these activities. Typically, students who fit the profile to be accepted have a direction and need to be taught those skills.
- There are no barriers for other teachers to do similar activities with their students. It is just based on the interest of the teacher and their comfort level. It might be challenging as these activities are not part of the curriculum; they used to be in the past.
- Fatma asked why our school did not provide student clubs such as baking club or reading club to help the students who have those interests.

- Caroline explained that those club activities can happen only during lunch time. Therefore, they are dependent on the availability and interest of the teachers who would like to be involved. We already have a lot going on such as the sports clubs, the arts club, the music band and the glee club. They are all voluntary activities, and the teachers need to feel comfortable managing them. For example, the Student Council is managed by two teachers.
- Susan asked if the school needs our financial support for a school-wide outdoor activity this year.
- Caroline said that last year's outdoor activity provider has relocated. She contacted another company and will try to extend the time to 6 days instead of last year's three days. She will let us know once the amount is determined.
- Fatma thanked Susan for the flexibility and help with her son's pizza order and for running the pizza program, and thanked Caroline for the wonderful efforts at school.
- Mr. Bashir thanked everyone and commented on the confusion that the phrase "School Council" causes and that it was clearer for him now that the council had parents in it.

## **8. Next Meeting**

Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday January 17 at 5 PM.**

Susan thanked every one and wished them a great and successful new year in 2024!

The meeting was adjourned at **6:00 PM.**