

Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 11, 2022 7:30 pm

Meeting held via Zoom

In attendance: Erin Charnish, Alexandra Lopes, Marina Scott-Wickens, Marc Green, Hayley Mitchell, Simon Kwong, Danielle Sweeney, Shalini Ray, Jen Ger, Kristen Heredia, Salimah Nasser, Jackie Cage, Amy Jones, Michelle Yan, Azadeh Kushki, Lisa Schmalz, David Rosenblatt, Frazer Howard, Melissa Jacobs (late)

Approval of Minutes

Erin puts forward motion to approve minutes. Michelle and Simon seconded.

Principal's Update - Marc

- Staff are so happy to have kids back in the school after a short virtual session
- Balmy is starting to allow a few more activities within the school
- Staff are working closely with Ms Lombardi to make sure kids are starting to have fun at school again
- Melissa Jacobs and Keri Buck are now official office staff
- It would be nice to reach out to Susan and Kelly to recognise them and their years of contribution to the school
- It would also be nice to reach out to Ms Routley and Ms McCubin
- When we can, we need to recognise retired staff and show them some appreciation
- Ice on sidewalk - the school only has one care taker at a time, melting snow off of the slope along Pine Avenue onto sidewalk is making it difficult to clear, but the TDSB should be sending a crew to help clear it
- Heating elements are working to decrease icicles along south side of building, working toward having something similar put in along the north side too
- Report cards come out next week, parent teacher interviews happen next week too
- Gaps in learning are a bit bigger than usual, Mr Green is working with each teacher and Ms Gillan to make sure those gaps get closed
- Olympics at Balmy
 - Ms Lombardi is the best Phys Ed teacher in the TDSB!
 - The Balmy Olympics are the most inclusive school olympics activity Marc has ever seen within a school
 - Classes have chosen their own country, made their own medals, there is a complete schedule of activities, and all classes are participating
 - Wonderful to see the kids having fun and getting a break from the usual routine
- We are celebrating African heritage throughout the month of February
 - Balmy will have a live website at the end of the month showcasing all the work that is being done to celebrate
 - Teachers are still using and talking about the anti racism workshop from the fall
 - They continue to discuss indigenous culture too (ie. looking at land acknowledgement and what it means) as well as gender identity to make sure Balmy is an inclusive space

- Valentines cards are allowed this year
- Projected numbers for next year are 40 students short (mostly in kindergarten) this will impact staffing

Enrichment – JungleSport - Marc and Melissa

- Jungle Sport is currently not approved to be in TDSB schools
- All vendors have to reapply
- TPH has to decide what is/is not allowed
- Hoping it will be allowed to happen with proper cleaning/sanitizing

Fundraising – Recap of Winter fundraiser and Spring fundraiser update - Hayley

- small winter fundraiser made \$3500
- Did not quite meet goal of \$5000
- Should send a follow up letter

Balmy Fun Week - Hayley

- Hayley would like to organize a small spring fundraiser to mimic what we did with the hot chocolate morning
- Working with a lemonade stand idea for the spring
- Nice to tie that into Balmy Fun Week
- Possibly end of March, early April
- Balmy Fun Week could include a School Colours day, Staff Appreciation, the Mini Fundraiser, Choose your Own Adventure day for each class

Eco Calendar and Eco Activities - Kristen speaking on behalf of Laura

- Council would like to offer students and families ways to engage the kids at home in environmental awareness through small micro movements and activities
- Use the new eco calendar, but could focus in on one activity
- International Polar Bear Day happens at the end of this month, we will come up with ideas to celebrate that
- Balmy used to be an Eco School Gold level, school was evaluated based on their eco activities (turning off the lights, recycling, paper use, etc...)
 - Teacher run, build committees with the student body, make posters, talks in classes, however there are no extracurriculars right now
 - This could be an amazing stepping stone back toward becoming an eco school
 - Azadeh asked if it's possible to have a vegetable garden. There are some challenges, but Marc would be open to it.
 - The butterfly garden is also a possibility
 - Council can work on a proposal for it
 - Get kids involved in maintaining it

Callout for Parent Class Reps - Michelle

- One or two parents from each classroom who are the line of communication between the classroom and council
- About half of the teachers have a parent rep
- Class reps are to liaise between council and classrooms
- Michelle to email all current class reps with info about their role

Callout for Grad Committee - Hayley

- Hayley has reached out to Nancy to get some information about last year
- Hayley will reach out to get volunteers
- Plan A and B, hoping for outdoor event, but proceed with a covid safe plan for now

- Melissa will connect with Hayley to help her get in touch with parents who have run it in the past
- \$2000 has already been approved

Q&A session

- Is there a meal program within the school for those who need it?
 - There is no hot lunch program because of covid
 - There is a council fund that helps with paying for trips, pizza day etc...
 - Some schools have been identified as priority schools by the TDSB and they have a nutrition program but Balmy is not one of those schools
- Is there any way we can get some photos from inside the school?
 - Slideshow coming tomorrow!
 - Marc is going to send some photos that Kristen can use in her communications
 - New parent welcome initiative, create some more parent engagement
 - Used to have a Welcome to Kindergarten Night - maybe we can do something outside this year
 - Could possibly do an outside BBQ
 - Start thinking about how we can plan around our covid protocols, but still proceed with community building and parent engagement initiatives
- Kristen, Marina, and Salimah volunteer to help push through some social committee ideas
- Next meeting is March 24 at 7:30 pm