

## **RAPT MEETING MINUTES - NOVEMBER 27th, 2023**

Program	Rippleton Association of Parents and Teachers (School Advisory Council)
Purpose	Second Annual Meeting of 2023/2024 School Year
Meeting Date	November 27th, 2023
Meeting Time	Start time: 6:05pm and Adjourned at 7:33pm
Meeting Location	Rippleton PS - Staff Room
Meeting Facilitators	Dimitra Skandalis And Mr Manny da Luz
RAPT 2023/2024 Council Attendees	Dimitra Skandalis, Co-Chair Amanda White, Co-Chair Whitney Wong, Co-Treasurer Shabnam Shokoufi, Co-Treasurer Paris Asghari, Secretary Irshad Mankrod, Executive Member Alice Zhang, Executive Member Ramisa Fariha, Executive Member (Absent) Mary Lambiris, Executive Member (Absent)  School Staff: Manny da Luz, Principal Merren Meijer, Teacher Representative
Minutes Prepared by:	Paris Asghari

Agenda
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Welcome and Introductions</li><li>2. Principal's Report</li><li>3. Treasurer's Report</li><li>4. RAPT Report</li><li>5. Grade 5 Grad Report</li><li>6. Other Business/Q&amp;A</li><li>7. Set Date for next meeting</li></ol>

**1. Welcome and Introductions:**

The meeting began with Dimitra welcoming everyone and informing all that this year we have 9 members on the council. The members were listed as well as their position on the board. *A motion to approve the meeting minutes for Oct 18th was approved.*

**2. Principal's Report:**

**EQAO Testing**

Results were discussed. Specifically, we are looking at reading, writing and math to provide us with an indication of how students are doing academically.

- 97% of students in the school participated
- 16% of students are in special education programs at Rippleton PS
- 10% of students have been in Canada for less than 3 years

Results indicated that 90% of children are achieving at or above the provincial standard with the board standard being 73% and the provincial standard being 73%. Our students are on the higher end of achievement when it comes to reading skills. Writing skills were at 81% and math was at 77%.

In comparison to last year the numbers are about the same. We have received more students coming from other countries which may be affecting the numbers due to language barriers which can be affecting the overall scores.

Alice inquired what our overall percentile was for the school to which Mr da Luz responded in the higher percentiles of tdsb schools.

**Code of Conduct:**

The school's code of conduct was discussed pertaining to where it applies and who it applies to (teachers, students, volunteers, parents etc). Students can be reprimanded and/or expelled and parents can be reprimanded if they breach the code of conduct, so it is important to ensure that all staff, students, parents etc have familiarity with the expectations.

Some of the basic expectations are treat each other with dignity and respect - other families, kids, and staff.

There will be signs placed around the school that will remind everyone to respect each other and be kind. Everyone belongs, our kids and parents etc and there is zero tolerance for discrimination etc.

Fundamental values of our school were discussed — all members treated with respect, conflicts resolved in a civil manner etc. Respecting differences in people and always treating others with dignity and respect. Treating others fairly regardless of their characteristics and

respecting the rights of others and the importance of being kind to one another.

### **Caretaking:**

TDSB decides how many caretaking staff we be employed at every school. At the end of last year it was decided we were going to lose half of the caretaking staff. Unfortunately, Mr Gary is no longer here at Rippleton. That position has been filled by a part-time position.

Although Rippleton PS is a small school in numbers, we occupy a large space with a large outdoor field, many areas that need to be snow plowed, we also have a daycare facility that opens earlier and closes later than the school itself, so we have many staff and students present for long hours which requires a lot of clean up. We have been lucky so far that we have someone that is a temporary person for a full-time amount of hours in order to get all the work done. If that is taken away from us there will be a noticeable impact. We are very thankful for our caretaking staff and we will continue to advocate for them.

### **House Keeping Items:**

The blue benches in the hallway have been moved outside and chained to tree for now. The plan will be to cement the into the ground however we have to wait until the Spring when the ground is thawed.

### **Parking and traffic rules:**

Mr da Luz reiterated that parking enforcement does come by once in a while and it is very important not to block the schoolbus route during drop off and pick up times. The school parking lot is available up until 8:15am for parents to use to drop off their children. After 8:15am the parking lot is reserved for staff members only and the areas designated at the side of the school should be used for drop off and pick up. We will continue to remind everyone so as to keep the students, staff and parents safe.

### **Book Fair:**

Ms Meijer informed the attendees that scholastic book fair is happening next week. The parents will be provided with a list of items and books that the students are interested in purchasing, this does not mean all items need to be purchased. The school will get coupons when students make purchases. Teachers will also be doing a wish-list for the classroom if parents would like to purchase for the class. It's a wonderful event but a lot of work. We thank Ms Meijer for her hard work and dedication.

### **Holiday Clothing/Toy and Food Drive:**

Thank you to Irshad who has taken the lead on this wonderful event this year. We will be collecting items for The Neighbourhood Office (TNO) for the holiday drive.

Irshad discussed that Flemington Park is the biggest area of poverty in all of the GTA with

the most dense population as well. The Food Bank is running very low in that area. The TNO helps to provide funds and food for those at need, low-income homes and immigrants. Since 1985 they have been organizing all sorts of events such as food drives, hockey drives, newcomer services etc. Families predominantly use these services and it's a great way for us to support and give back to the community. The Giving Tree will be set up very soon to start collections.

Denise Cochrane informed everyone that the toy drive from Rippleton Roadsters will also go towards TNO this year. There is a list on the website that will allow you to see what they need.

Dec 1st to Dec 20th — gives us a few days to deliver before the Friday. Empty large boxes are also needed. All of this information will be provided in the newsletter.

**Grade 5 Update** - raffle baskets will soon be available for parents to view and purchase raffle tickets. This is a great way for our grade 5 students to feel involved and empowered in working towards their graduation. The grade 5 graduation committee will be putting together themed baskets and more details will follow.

**Sports** - Boys and girls volleyball/basketball teams are well underway. These teams cannot happen without the amazing coaches and teachers and we thank them.

**Guest Speakers** - This coming Wednesday our social worker will be doing a Zoom presentation about social media and families. This is an important Zoom to watch as the use of social media and smart phones is becoming more prevalent in our student populations and at an earlier age.

### **Important Dates:**

The week of December 18th is our holiday spirit week. There will be different themed days to show school and holiday spirit. We also have our Festival of Lights event on the 19th which will start around 5pm. We will have a bake sale, hot chocolate stand, spirit wear for purchase as well as a lovely performance by the students.

The moratorium on lockdown drills has been lifted and there will be one in the next couple of weeks.

Dec 8th is a PA day.

Last day of school before holidays Dec 22nd

First day back Jan 8th.

### **3. Treasurer's Report:**

Whitney discussed the financial report update.

In the last two weeks we have signed all of the new forms for bank account access (Shabnam, Whitney and Dimitra). We were also working on budget plan for next year. A chart was provided that demonstrated budget and costs for last year and projected budgets for this year.

Updates on what was spent. Since the last meeting spent approximately \$1300 has been spent. \$1000 on pizza lunches (should last the rest of the year). Our bank account did a big deposit from pizza lunch and used book sale profits. Whitney hasn't been able to access the account yet but if she had to hazard a guess it is likely over \$30,000, and we have some funds from the school cash account online.

**2024 Budget Plan** - We will look at what was spent last year to decide what we will spend and what each program requires (eg outdoor spaces, performances and workshops, sports and arts clubs etc).

Last year we had budgeted \$23,3000 and spent just under at \$22,147. \$6000 carried over was not from the 2023 which was not included.

**Performances and workshops:** this includes people coming in to talk about bullying, guest speakers etc.

**Enhancement of school life experience:** \$5000 allocated to this but could be more depending on what we want to do at the end of the year. We will need to assess parent and volunteer involvement to have a better idea of budgeting. Denise kindly offered to combine forces with the school to do one big BBQ at the end of the year (Rippleton PS and the Roadsters) - details TBD.

**Sports arts club:** nothing budgeted yet. Jerseys for the teams are the big purchase that will be considered for this category. Estimated a couple thousand dollars.

**Caring community fund:** Giving Tree and Holiday Drive- amount unchanged from last year.

Teacher allowance - not all teachers spend the allotted amount given. Recommended \$200 per teacher to be repeated again this year. The funding goes towards classroom supplies.

***Members voted and motion was passed to allot \$200 per classroom.***

**RAPT Budget:** Includes services such as Nitwits. We will not be using their services again this year. Regarding lice - if a child has lice the family is contacted and asked to please come pick them up as soon as possible. A letter is sent to all the families in the classroom to let them know that someone in the class was affected. Denise informed that with Roadsters they are required to send the student home if they have lice (parent must arrange to come pick up the child). Child will be checked before re-entering the school. Cost of Nitwits was \$900, recovered \$450 so not worth repeating again this year.

**Annual predetermined commitment to grads:** last year we donated \$1000, with increased costs of goods we will be donating \$2000 to that fund this year. This will remove some pressure for the parents trying to raise funds for the kids. DJ is a large cost in this area (\$1800 for DJ) adding in food, decorations etc it will add up quickly. Now doing "pay it forward" - eg grade 4 families will get involved and help this year, and then when are graduates next

year the grade 4's will help them.

Teacher allowance and Grad will go ahead, and we will hold off on everything else until we have more precise numbers.

#### 4. **RAPT Report:**

Amanda discussed **toonie treat day**. The second one coming up will be Thursday Dec 7th. The order was placed today so it should arrive next week. Options will be vanilla snowman cookies (nut free) and then there will be egg free vegan (chocolate chip) cookies for other children with allergies. Flyers are printed and will be dispersed around the school as reminders for the parents.

**Winter clothing drive** - was already discussed in length.

Spirit week - was discussed by Mr. da Luz and will be included in the newsletter.

We will be providing hot chocolate for the Festival of Lights event and we will need approximately 1-2 volunteers. The grade 5 students will be managing the bake sale portion of this event.

**Innovation Grant:** Dimitra mentioned that at the last meeting we had applied for this grant to go towards special speakers on special topics. We received a rejection email on Friday, so unfortunately, we did not get approved this year. Dimitra received an email stating that while we met the criteria for the grant, there were over 290 applications and not enough funding for all who applied. Will try again next year.

**Hot Lunch Days:** we are looking at possibly adding some hot lunch days via the Lunchbox company. This would be done through school cash online so no parent volunteers needed. The food choices offered are Subway, Mr. Greek and Hero Burgers. Pizza is also offered however we will not select this as we have our own pizza days. 50 cents of each order goes back to the school. Kidssentials is another hot lunch catering services that utilizes the same kind of platform where the parents order. Will be looking into that to see which is the best option.

Circling back to **toonie treat day** - Dimitra would like to do another one in January as it is a slow month for RAPT and the school. Possibly the 17th or 18th of that month - to be determined.

**Fundraising in the new year** - next big event will be the Valentines Dance-a-Thon. Kids enjoyed it a lot last year and it was very successful. Will need to plan as soon as we get back from the break.

Once the Valentine's Dance has finished, we will begin planning for the Fun Fair.

#### 5. **Grade 5 Graduation Report:**

Mary was absent so Kathy spoke on her behalf.

The primary meeting for the grade fives occurred recently. Currently they are finalizing the raffle baskets so they can be wrapped and put on display. They will be displayed at the front of the school near the office. We will need to decide if the students in grade 5 will be running the raffle or if it will be run by adults (teachers, volunteers).

We will be looking into the graduation trip in the New Year.

We may also be doing a movie night to raise funds - this is TBD.

#### **6. Other Business/Q&A**

Discussions were underway to determine the best way to get pertinent information to the parents. Mr. da Luz informed that the meeting minutes are located on the school website. The RAPT website is no longer functional, and the meeting minutes will be posted by Mr. da Luz on the Rippleton website for those who would like to read them.

There were also discussions surrounding the best way to get volunteers for our Festival of Lights event. Can we put it into the school calendar as a sign up for parents? Denise mentioned that it would be a great idea to get the preschool families involved in these events as their kids will be joining the school program.

There were also discussions pertaining to whether having a class representative (parent) disseminate important information to the other parents. The problem with this plan is that the other parents must consent to giving their email addresses. May be best to approach this at the beginning of the year when parents are more excited to be involved.

- 7. Next Meeting Date: TBD** - will decide once we have a better idea of everyone's availability in the New Year. This meeting can possibly be held via Zoom.

***Meeting Adjourned: 7:33pm***