

Rockford School Council

rockfordschoolcouncil@gmail.com Twitter and Facebook: @rockfordcouncil

Minutes for Tuesday, January 25, 2022

Time: 6:30pm

Attendees: 26 virtual participants including: Beverly F, Delia J, Aliyah H, Moin H, Nashaw S, Grace A, Roger Y, Tamar K, Debbie P, Trisha Jane B, Swati, Olha C, Victoria N, Coleen R, Dorcina N, Alissa P, Charlotte B, Dima M, Sylvia K, Chris M, Michael, Alexandra B, S. Gauthier, K. Irving (2 unknown participants).

1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Delia welcomed everyone and asked the School Advisory Committee introduce themselves.
- b. Rockford's new Vice Principal, Kin Irving was introduced.

2. Review of the School Council Code of Ethics

The review is a reminder about respect for all members of council and to ensure everyone is aware disrespect of any individual will not be tolerated. The first warning will be the member gets muted. If the inappropriate behaviour is continued, during virtual meetings and while members are collaborating on tasks outside of meetings, they will be banned.

3. Approval of Minutes from November 30, 2021 Meeting

Motion – Alissa Park, seconded – Alexandra Birioukova – All in Favour - Approved. The minutes were approved and will be posted on the Rockford website.

4. Principal and Vice-Principal's Report

a. Snow on and around Rockford

Mr. Gauthier addressed the impact the snow had on Rockford Road and the school property. Because the snow hadn't been cleared, on the first day back after the break, teachers had to park at the plaza on Bathurst and walked. Staff were amazing, and we are thankful. We are very proud of the staff and grateful the community understood.

Chairperson - Delia Jarczyn Treasurer – Ivana Lukic-Miloloza
Secretary - Beverly Fortune Fundraising – Sylvia Kim Cota
Members Without Portfolio – Alexandra Birioukova, Alissa Park and Kate Borg-Lacey

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b. Snow Removal on City Property

Snow removal on city property has become a concern because students are walking to school. Some areas of the city have not had snow removal. Some of the sidewalk in our area were not paved and unfortunately, it has put people in a position to walk on the road. Mr. Gauthier received an email informing the school about access to the sidewalk from the crosswalk. The caretaker was kind enough to shovel city streets to make sure they are safe. The school isn't aware of the road/sidewalk conditions. If anything like this comes up again, please inform the school.

c. Covid Cases

Covid cases will be shared with classes but no longer with the community. There have been 5 classes (as of today, January 25, 2022) that have received letters. That is not an accurate number of cases because there are some families that have not returned since the break. Thankfully families are calling to let us know if their children have tested positive. The school is not required to send letters home to those classrooms that those students are in. If there is no exposure, there is no reason to send the letters. There are some staff that have tested positive and have not returned since the holiday break but will be returning once their isolation period is over.

d. Staffing

Staffing has been a very big concern for Rockford, as it has been throughout the province and closer to home, TDSB. There have been many days jobs are open and those jobs picked up. We don't know how this is going to look moving forward. As more teachers and their family members become infected and required to isolate, Ms. Irving and Mr. Gauthier will continue to manage getting the classes covered. We are constantly calling supplies to see if they are available. Every school is short staffed. There is an absence reporting tool. If there is 30% absence in the province, more specifically the TDSB, our school will be listed. Our school doesn't have 30% absence right now because our numbers are so high. Rockford currently has 659 students enrolled. It will take a lot of students and teachers to hit that number. However, it impacts our routines when we have a fair number of staff and students away. The staff have been amazing and have been very flexible and willing to cover. We are very thankful for the teachers on being so understanding and working collaboratively for the better of our students.

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Our resource teacher, Ms Janet Russell will be retiring from teaching. She has been teaching for 31+ years and she has been at Rockford for a long time! She has been a pillar of the community of Rockford, so supportive as a teacher, and as a colleague. She has always given 110% and we appreciate the time we have had to work with her, and the community will miss her and be sad to see her go, but excited for her next journey and what retirement brings for her. Head caretaker left and the position been posted but has not been filled. Current caretaker, Omar is amazing and staff thankful to have him. Extremely responsive, the teachers love the way he communicates and hopefully we will be able to keep him.

5. Rockford Community Safety Issues Update

a. Snow/Traffic on Rockford

Asking parents and caregivers, driving and walking, to be extra vigilant with bringing kids into the school. Be cautious of large snowbanks.

b. Drifters in parking lot

Caretaking staff was asked if there had been activity. There has been no evidence of anyone on school property during the break and no vandalism was reported. This may be a seasonal issue (summer/fall). An arm is not an option at this point, but they will continue to put the chain up.

6. School Council Update

a. Slido

We've been using Slido as a way for parents/caregivers to post questions. There have been a lot of parents asking if they can get the answers before the minutes come out. We decided to start posting the answers to the questions on Slido, just after the meeting. This way parents will be able to get the answers (not in real time) but within a couple of days after the meeting. This will start as of this meeting.

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b. Spirit Wear

Spirit wear is clothing with Rockford Rockets logo on it. They are hats/toques, bags, t-shirts, sweatshirt, sweatpants available. Delia went through individual items, colours and pricing. The link will be posting on Google Classroom, and email will be sent to parents. The website will run from February 1 to February 14.

c. School Council By-Laws Template

TDSB has created a by-laws template. They've made sections that are mandatory. There are two options: Adopt their new bylaws entirely and fill out their template, or you can keep your existing by-laws and just adopt the mandatory sections. We have until May 2022, to decide.

d. Online Safety Presentation

Mr. Gauthier informed there was still a pause on online presentations. Online presentations must be carefully vetted and must be approved by executive superintendent. Mr. Gauthier will follow up. The online safety presentation is a one-day online presentation for our children during the day on online safety and what to look for online and how to keep safe. The presentation talks about how children can expose can themselves and what they need to look for when online. There is an evening presentation for parents.

e. Staff Appreciation

Honouring the work of the school staff, SAC set up Tim Horton's coffee and donuts for teachers and support staff outside main office. The staff enjoyed the sweet treats and were very appreciative.

7. Slido Questions & Answers

- Q:** I really hope that our children will not be forced to be vaccinated against the will of their parents. Children should receive their knowledge in any case.
- A:** At this point an answer cannot be given. We are currently unaware of what the government's plans are and how they are going to continue to manage this. However, there has been a hospital that has reached out regarding a clinic at the school, which we are currently in discussion about that. The decision is ultimately up the board and the school. At this point there is no plan at Rockford to host a vaccination clinic. That may change, but at this point there is no clinic that will be hosted.

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Q: My child says the washrooms are always dirty, this has been an ongoing issue since my oldest graduated from Rockford last year. Why are they not maintained?

A: This is a problem at many TDSB schools. Rockford is a large school with not enough washrooms. There is one caretaker during the day. The setup is to have the primary students in one area and the juniors in the other. The students are the ones putting items that don't belong in the toilet in the toilet, the students are taking the toilet paper rolls off and throwing them around. Students are reminded on a regular basis about bathroom etiquette. We have proactive actions in place. Some children think it is funny and unfortunately it is something that we continue to deal with. The caretaker staff do a wonderful job taking care of our school. We would like our families to communicate with their children and remind them about keeping our school clean.

Q: Would extra rapid test be available to students? After usage of the two inserted individual test have been given.

A: We won't be receiving any rapid tests any time soon because the supply is not there. We received the tests in bulk, and we had to de-kit them. One of the two are given, that is it. There are no extras. They are only to be used if a child is symptomatic. There is no information on if the school will receive more.

Q: Will families in impacted classes be informed when there is a positive case with a rapid test?

A: Yes, they will. Once the parent notifies the school, we will notify the class.

Q: Can we have a Caribbean day school wear? Ex: All Rockford student, teachers and staff dress up representing their best Caribbean attire.

A: This can be brought to the social committee. Always looking to increase school spirit.

Q: My kids art teacher never answers my email, and my friend says she never got an answer neither. Don't they have to use them now? How else we can talk to them?

A: You can contact your child's teacher to go through the prep teacher. As a last resort you can email the admin team and then the email can be passed along to the appropriate teacher.

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Q: Has there been a change in school starting time? The morning bell has been ringing at around 9:15; at which time the teachers come to take the students inside.

A: There's a ticket in for the system. The system loses a minute every couple of months. The bell has been ringing at 9:14am and 3:44pm. (The school start time is 9:10am and dismissal is 3:40pm). A work order has been put in place that needs to be completed by the facilities team.

Q: Why is Rockford's school absence % data missing from the website?

A: Not all schools data are posted. We are still trying to figure this out.

Q: Why are parents not notified if there are not substitute teachers available for virtual classes?

A: The expectation is that they are to communicate with families if we do not have a supply teacher. If a virtual or prep teacher knows they are not going to be there, the expectation is that they provide asynchronous work. We do our best to try to have supply teachers.

8. Other Business

No new business

Meeting adjourned: 8:19pm