

# Minutes of the Thorncliffe Park Public School (TPPS) Council Meeting (November, 2023)

Location: TPPS Office  
Date: November 29, 2023  
Time: 9:15 AM

## Attendees

- **Council Members:** Dr. Saida Sadath, Anjum Fatima, Anjum Sultana, Uzma Iffat Karim, Sijal Sarfaraz, Sumaira Afeef Khalil, Jan Andiwal, Nosheen Khan, Nahid Akhter, Shazia Javaid, and Saleem Khan
- **School Team:** Christine Harvey Kerr and Chris Fabbri
- **Community School Worker (CSW):** Mona Khan
- **Community Representative:** Trudy Watts
- **Teacher Representative:** Ms. Syed
- **Settlement Worker:** Nasim
- **Child care provider:** Farkhunda Attiq
- **Number of attendees:** 40

## Introduction

- Council members were introduced to the Parents. It was explained that purpose of the council is to contribute to the improvement of student achievement and school performance, and enhance the accountability of the education system to the parents.

## House Rules

- Dr. Saida Sadath briefly explained about the house rules and requested all members to respect each other opinions. All members have equal rights to speak and express their voices through collaborative approach. House rules will apply for every council meeting.

## Financial Updates

- Treasurer explained about the financial updates of School Council funds.
- School Council has a total budget \$ 1500, out of which \$ 1000 has been allocated for school council operation and \$ 500 allocated for parent engagement. Approximately \$ 125 has been utilized for the first council meeting.
- Council funds will be utilized in an accountable manner and accordance of TDSB financial rules and procedures.
- It was assured that council funds will be used for school specific initiatives that will enhance parent participation in school matters and student success.

- Every expenditure will be documented and reported in a transparent manner to the School and TDSB.

### **By-laws**

- School council reviewed by-laws, roles and responsibilities of council members, council processes have been discussed through professional and council communication flow charts.

### **Innovation Grant Updates**

SC is still waiting for approval of innovation grant application. Regardless grant application approved or not, council will still work on some initiatives from our meagre resources that will help our community.

### **Parents/Caregivers concerns**

- Bullying of grade 1 and 2 kids by grade 4 and 5 kids during recess time. Parents concerned that no response have been shown even after repeated complains.
  - Principal explained that for most of the day, grade 1 and 2 classes have their own recess. At lunch, most grade 1 classes play in an area dedicated to grade 1 students. Students in grade ½ and 2 classes do share space with grade 4 classes. Teachers have been supporting grade 2 students who have concerns with grade 4 students. School has over 1300 students that poses great responsibilities and challenges during lunch time.
  - Principal and Vice Principals, lunch supervisors and teachers are outside to support the children during lunch time. We all are working hard to solve problems that occur between students.
  - However, parents were requested if they can take some of their children home for lunch that will relieve some pressure on the school.

**Ex-Co chair** suggested that school should work on the issue of bullying as this school has a more diversified community and parents showed concerns at different levels about the students bullied.

One of the parents suggested asking the children to articulate their reasons for bullying and to detail their actions. This reflection is done with students and the Principal or Vice Principals when referred to the office for support.

### **Washroom Issue:**

- Washrooms are not clean, no supply of hand soap and bathroom tissues. Children are avoiding using it as it can create some serious health issues. Kids are bullying in the washroom and not allowing peers to use washroom.

- Principal said that challenges school face is to make sure that washrooms remain clean. Washrooms in the morning are cleaned and we make sure paper towel are available. But unfortunately, some students put paper towel in the toilet.
- School is cognizant about students use washroom as closest to their classrooms and they take their responsibilities for those washrooms.
- Principal and vice principals do monitor those washrooms that have problems.
- If a student has a problem, then first talk to the class teacher if issue is not resolved then principal and vice principals will help solve those problems.
- One of the parent suggestions that a letter be sent from the school to all parents requesting parents to ask their children to use washrooms properly.
- Some of washrooms door locks have been broken and work orders have been issued and it takes some time to receive.

### **Ethics Education**

- Parent suggested that if the school can arrange moral ethics class once in a week that will help improve their behavior. As student listen to teacher better than parent.
- Principal shared that learning about making good choices is done as part of character education – like empathy during November and last month was responsibility.
- All parents’ concerns will be discussed during staff meeting to work with student behavior. However, it requires collaborative efforts of all to inculcate in students the culture of responsibility and ownership.

### **Pod classes and overcrowded classes**

- Parents of pod classes are concerned for the space and disturbances among the classes.
  - It was informed teachers and support staff are doing their best to provide safe and comfortable environment for student learning. Teachers have not expressed concern with disruptions to learning in pod classes.
  - The school is operating at 86% capacity and all the school space is judiciously utilized.

### **Team Teaching Classroom**

- Regarding team teaching classroom, Principal said that classroom has large space and two teachers are assigned to provide to support the students. Each teacher has their own class.

### **Clarification about school timing**

- Principal provided clarification about bell times and door closing time in the morning. Learning begins at 8:45 am. Times were listed in the November newsletter.

### **Academic Success**

- Parents would prefer to know the weekly class schedule for each grade in advance so they can help children at home and concerned for low EQAO results.
  - The principal assured the community that school will support the student learning need. If needed the parent can consult teachers for the topics of coming weeks. Communication will also be discussed with teachers at staff meeting.
  - Regarding EQAO 2022-2023 results, principal informed that indeed these results are low but we are working hard to improve it.
  - There are some reasons for EQAO results– more specifically Covid 19 and unfinished learning, a number of students are learning English or have had limited opportunities to attend school. School attendance is also a factor due to reasons including travel that affect student learning.
  - Reading is an ongoing work that TDSB provides continuous support. We are working with math learning partner to help improve our teachers and student learning skills.
  - School has learning resources that will help our teachers and students learning needs and there is a lot of work done during the past few years.
  - It was also suggested that parents are encouraged to share solutions while raising any concern or issue to the forum.

### **Mental Health Challenges**

- Parents raised concerns about the increased mental health challenges within the community due to trauma and children have different learning needs.
  - Principal explained that if a student is struggling with anxiety or mental health issue, the school has a support team to provide support.
  - TDSB shared resources with communities and online resources can be accessed for mental health and well-being.
  - If the student has anxiety or struggling academically with learning then school has special education team and administration will suggest strategies and plans, how to better support students.
  - School has a team of psychologist, social worker and speech and language pathologist to help students learning needs.

While concluding the meeting, Co-Chair offered thanks and gratitude to all the parents, school staff, support staff and community school worker for attending the meeting.