



## 2019-2020 Wilkinson School Community Council October 7, 2019

### Meeting Minutes - Approved

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The 2018-2019 Chair, Angelina Diassiti called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

### Agenda

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Approval of October Agenda</li><li>2. Approval of September Minutes</li><li>3. Principal's Update</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Committee Updates<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Executive Election</li><li>- Finance</li></ul></li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. New Business<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Volunteer Process</li><li>- Ward Rep</li><li>- OPAL</li><li>- Funding Requests</li></ul></li><li>6. Adjournment of Council Meeting</li></ol> |
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### Attendance

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#### Present:

Kim Jensen (Principal)  
Jenny Georgiou (VP)  
Angelina Diassiti (Chair)  
--- (Treasurer)  
Shanna Breslin (Secretary)  
Batya Levy (Staff)  
Sophie Barbier (Staff)  
Lindsey Matheson (Staff)  
Anthea Moreau (Dandylion)  
Emmeline Hobbs  
David Alexander  
Jordan Kanner  
Michela Pasquali  
Fernanda Perdikaris

#### Elizabeth Manafò

April Moon  
Brenda Ohngemach  
Lindsay Reimers  
Champi Sevathiar  
Shirin Shahrokni  
Dayna Tekatch  
Julia Warrender  
Lisa Zivontsis

#### Guests:

Norah Shaughnessy  
Arun Ramani  
Angeli Mehta

#### Regrets:

Corey Fruitman  
Jennifer Stiff  
Rob Jefferson  
Lilian Ling  
Stephanie Lamb (Vice Chair)  
Michael Ross

#### Absent:



### 1. Approval of October Agenda

- Dayna and Michela approved.

### 2. Approval of September Minutes

- Michela and Julia approved.

### 3. Principal's Update: Kim Jensen

- We had a beautiful day for track and field last week. We know there was some conflict with the climate strike, but with the CUPE job action we would have not been able to participate on Monday > a few activities will have to be rescheduled as a result of the job action.
- Staffing: We closed a 3/4 class, opened a new JK/SK class, and added a fifth Extended French class > a new permanent French teacher started today.
- OPAL ([Outdoor Play and Learning](#)): We had our first meeting, which was an overview of the year.
  - This program is paced purposefully to ensure the safety of our students and the longevity of the program > it takes about 1 year to fully implement.
  - We did a yard audit to figure out how we can utilize our space > the Learning Garden, outdoor classroom, Kindergarten yard, ball court, field, and soccer nets can all be brought into the program.
  - We will accumulate items and need to store them for play > storage sheds cost about \$6000 and we are looking at either one big one or two small sheds.
  - OPAL is being incorporated into the schoolyard revitalization program.
  - We discussed the readiness of our staff > we are still in the development stage and are ready to learn.
- Lindsey Matheson (Kindy Outdoor Ed teacher and on OPAL committee): Often our best memories of play involve outdoor messy play that is self-directed.
  - Kids today get much less of this type of play and this program aims to recreate that within the structure of the school system.
  - Safety and healthy risk taking are big parts of the plan > kids learn to trust their bodies and instincts.
  - The program also aims to teach the teachers to stand back and let the play unfold, but be present and watching.
  - The program relies on loose parts > we'll need the help of parents to collect items.



- How will we gather our materials and what will we gather?
  - The program is supposed to be essentially free, relying on donations of things such as old tires which are clean and in good condition, pots, pans, milk crates etc.
  - We need to think creatively about everyday items, but want to make sure they are safe and low-risk (e.g., not interested in ropes but are interested in costumes).
  - The items should inspire creative and cooperative play.
  - If any parents have contacts that can help us acquire goods, please contact [Vice Principal Georgiou](#) or the [Council](#).
- We will need help funding the storage. OPAL program storage was mentioned during the revitalization planning, but we are not sure if there will be any funding for it.
- Some items will deteriorate with wear and weather and we will need to ensure that we can maintain and replace them.
- We will need more information about the sheds and what is going on with the schoolyard plan > *Jenny has submitted a funding request for the November meeting and the next schoolyard meeting will take place that month as well.*
- Comment: the Outdoor Education equipment has come from donations and facebook posts etc. > *a sample list will be provided.*

#### 4. Committee Reports

Committee members provided an update of upcoming and ongoing initiatives.

##### Executive Committee Elections: Angelina Diassiti

- The current Chair and Secretary are happy to stay on unless someone else would like to try either position? No interest.
  - 2019/2020 Chair: Angelina Diassiti.
  - 2019/2020 Secretary: Shanna Breslin.
- We are in need of both a Vice Chair and a Treasurer. Truly, the Council cannot function without a Treasurer this year and Council policies mandate that a four-person Executive is necessary each year.
- Angelina has been filling in as Treasurer but this cannot continue > the Chair should not be responsible for Council funds (accountability), and she is leaving the school at the end of the year. We need to get new people in while she is here to train them.
- Vice Chair: In an ideal situation, the role would be divided between the Chair and Vice. The two people can decide how to split the responsibilities, which include preparation for meetings, approval of the agenda, the minutes, the School statement of Needs (SSON), the AGM, and our weekly communications.



- The current Chair has made a point of physically being in the school for meetings, events and volunteering, but different people may have a different approach.
- Chairing meetings is a must. Approving communications is a must.
- It can be a big job but if we get the committee leads taking on more responsibility for their budgets (i.e., actively tracking their expenses and income), the job will be easier to manage.
- The Executive Committee functions as a team, helping each other.
- Comment: I have been the Treasurer numerous times with no prior experience. It is interesting work that really does not require an accounting background (i.e., you can learn to do it). It can be very enjoyable!
- Comment: I have had similar experiences and can tell you that these roles are doable! The TDSB has treasurer training sessions that are really helpful and make things easy. Treasurer is a necessary role and it is not as difficult as it seems.
- Comment: In the past, the Treasurer has often been a lead on the Fun Fair committee because it is our largest fundraiser. It has been useful to have the Treasurer engaged in the event and truthfully, we need the Fun Fair treasury team to be involved in Council.
- The Treasurer's work is very well documented. We have shared spreadsheets - it has all been set up! We will help you! It sounds more daunting than it is!
- The Treasurer role mostly involves keeping up with the TD transactions to make sure that amounts match up and writing cheques so that people are reimbursed and program invoices are paid.
- We need a Vice Chair and a Treasurer in place before June.
- Would the Treasurer be required to stay on for more than one year? I may be interested, but my schedule could change. The ideal situation is to have someone on for a few years so they have a real understanding of our finances. Also the TD registration process for signers can take a while.
- The time commitment is about 20 mins on cheques per month. Account reconciliation after events takes longer, maybe a few hours (e.g. pizza registration).
- Time requirement for Co-Chair: The weekly role involves proofing and approving all communications (20 mins). This can depend on the person and how much they want to invest in proofing. The Communications team has been working together now for 5 years so we have a good flow, and can reuse a lot of information (i.e., our copy is not always brand new). Proofing the minutes after each meeting takes about 1 hour. Reviewing the agenda each month takes maybe 5 minutes. Proofing and adding to the AGM and SSON take a bit longer.



- The Chair/Vice also act as liaisons with the school on numerous matters. This can involve meeting with the Admin, but this can also be done via email or phone.
- Our processes and documents have been tidied up significantly over the last 4 years > many things are in place for new people to take over.
- It could be possible to share the role of Treasurer > one person does the bank side and one person does internal reconciliation.
- Please take the time to think about it and [let us know](#) if you are interested.

#### **Finance: Angelina Diassiti**

- 2019-2020 Budget Approval: the event leads were asked to approve their projections for the year and the commitment to the school was revisited with the admin.
- New funding proposals: Included are the things that have been approved already.
- Our event spending amounts are conservative targets.
- We came into the school year with \$20K in the bank. As long as our fundraising and expenses go as planned and considering everything already approved, we should have \$19K to spend this year.
- If new proposals come in, they will get added to the budget once approved.
- JungleSport: The HPE team feels that this should happen every other year so we will look at bringing it in again next year.
- Schoolyard Revitalization: We talked about smaller purchases potentially being funded by the Council. Is that still the plan? We have not had another meeting yet so things have not progressed, but that is still the plan. Because our next schoolyard meeting is scheduled for November after the Council meeting and the Council does not meet in December, we will try to circulate the minutes from the next schoolyard meeting to the Council after that meeting takes place.
- Vote to approve the budget. ***Approved. It is posted on our website with the approved AGM from last year.***

## **5. New Business**

#### **Volunteer Process: Jenny Georgiou**

- The school is now implementing the TDSB police background check process for anyone who volunteers at the school during school hours in contact with children.
- Volunteers should come to the office to get the police form > requires a certified cheque for \$20 made out to "Toronto Police Service".
- Bring the completed form back to the school and it will be submitted. The form will come back in 4-8 weeks to your house.



- Once received, bring the original to the school and they will send it to the TDSB Police Reference Check (PRC) office. That office will update the school list. Ask the office to ensure that you get the original back.
- Once the process has been completed, there is a yearly renewal process which involves completing an offence declaration > meet with the Principal or Vice Principal to do this at the school.
- Does the policy apply to field trips? The school prefers that all parent volunteers go through this process, but it may not be reasonable if parents only come in once per year for field trips. Adults who come in more often are required to comply.
- Does it include Council events where events take place on school property outside of school hours? No. This process is only for volunteering during school hours.
- Note that adults who volunteer to drive kids to and from sports events need this as well as a volunteer driver form (e.g., to cross-country meets).
- We will circulate this to the community > *it will be added to a Monday Update and to the Parent Handbook.*

#### **Ward Representative: Kim Jensen**

- Often Parent Councils have a Ward representative who attends monthly Ward meetings with the Principal and reports back at Council meetings. Is anyone interested in this?
- Principal Jensen always hosts at least one Ward meeting at the school (our first one is on October 17th).
- Usually, at the meetings there are administrative members from every school in the Trustee's catchment area > can go up to high school.
- There is often representation from the upper-admin as well (e.g., the superintendent).
- It's a good learning experience. Ward meetings are in the evening.
- It does not necessarily have to be a Council member.

#### **Eco Products: April Moon**

- The EcoTeam ran a contest last year for students to design a logo about phasing out single-use plastics.
- The plan is to use the logo on eco-friendly products which align with this goal.
- We researched product ideas and came up with reusable silicone pouches (they replace Ziploc bags).
- The project will not be a money-maker, but will support the [student-led initiative](#) to phase out single-use plastics at the school. It would cost roughly \$2333 up front for 500 bags. We would sell 2 bags for approx. \$10 or 1 for approx. \$6. They are sandwich size.



- We need the money up front and will hope to recover this cost.
- The EcoTeam will manage the sales etc.
- Note: We should store them off-site.
- We sent out an interest survey to Wilkinson families and there was a fair amount of interest.
- We were aiming to have the bags in time for Fall Fest.
- If we sell all 500, we would make tiny profit. Perhaps the money could go towards EcoTeam projects and initiatives.
- Comment: Can we add a line for "Name: \_\_\_\_\_" as there will be tons of these around the school? *Update: We are working with the supplier on this.*
- What is the pricing with no logo? With the logo is about \$4.96, but we did not price them with no logo as the whole point of doing this is to support the contest and the plastics initiative.
- Maybe, in order to increase sales, we can do a raffle for a donated prize? We could put a raffle ticket in each pouch. *Dayna and April to look into theatre tickets.*
- Things get lost a lot. Has the school noticed an increase in reusable containers littering the yard? In the classrooms, yes, but not around the schoolyard. It can be frustrating to invest in these things and have them get lost. Comments: these fold and someone already using them has had success with kids bringing them home as they can easily go into pockets.
- Any strong objections? No
- Motion to approve funding the project (\$2333, tax and shipping included). Seconded. *Motion carried.*

#### **Other: All**

- There is a province-wide walk-in scheduled for Oct 10. The challenge in organizing this event is that we have not been able to publicize it via email. I understand that sending the information could be viewed as taking a side politically. I am of the view that we are simply informing the community and allowing people who are interested to attend. How do people feel about this? In some schools there is a wide spectrum of ways that the Council is involved in the event, including organizing it.
- Since the cuts were announced last year, we have been inundated with requests to send out external information (i.e., information that is not about school or Council initiatives).
- Sharing this information poses a number of challenges:



- The nature of our list (like any other email distribution list) is that there are rules around what we can send (CASL, Anti-Spam Legislation). When people subscribed, they subscribed to receive information about school and Council events. They did not opt-in to receive external information.
- When information comes from us, we have to be prepared to answer questions and send updates if the details change. We are not equipped to do this with external information and events.
- We have gotten many complaints from parents who are not interested in receiving political or external information and who feel that it is a misuse of our contact list. Our community has diverse opinions and our newsletter isn't sent on behalf of individuals, but rather on behalf of the Council, the school, and the community.
- There are also issues of labour and logistics. Sending out our communications is a huge amount of work. We are unable to properly deal with the number of external requests that come in. We don't have the ability to vet them, and there are too many for us to distribute. In addition, our account has limits around the number of messages we can send in a 24-hour and in a monthly period. We are careful to schedule our messages in any given week so that we don't go over the maximums. For example, last week we could not have sent another message. In June, we went over our monthly send limit two weeks before school ended and with three emails left to go out. Depending on what's going on at the school, we are often physically unable to send additional emails. Our priority is communicating school and Council activities, so we need to ensure that those messages get out.
- Because we can't send all of the external requests we receive, we aren't in a position to decide which messages should or shouldn't be sent. As a result, we've had to limit our newsletter to school and Council activities and information.
- We suggest that people post external information on our Facebook page in the Community section, and have included a message on that page pointing people there. As long as messages are not offensive, we will approve them for posting.
- We also have another suggestion. You could take the lead on setting up a Political Action Committee (or use a name of your choosing). The committee could start an opt-in newsletter to distribute any non-school and non-Council information (e.g., political, community events, meet-ups organized by Wilkinson families, etc.)
- Comment: This committee would have to be separate from the school and the Council.
- The Council cannot put any funds toward this project.





- The newsletter could take the form of a Facebook page or you could set up a free Gmail account and link it to a free MailChimp account.
- Comment: You would have to set up rules for what you'd like to share because this would likely open up to many other requests and you would have to manage comments.
- The Communications Committee is happy to help you set this up and will pass you any related requests that we receive. We will also advertise the newsletter for a few weeks in the Council newsletter. *Update: We have sent instructions for how to set up a Gmail/MailChimp newsletter.*
- Question: Why is there a limit on how many messages we can send? We have a free MailChimp account and the limit is decided by that account. The limit was actually lowered in May, which is why we got blocked from sending further messages in June.
  
- What is the Walk-In? This is a parent-led initiative happening throughout the province. It's specifically about the cuts to public education, taking money out of the education system, and the increase in class sizes. Groups of parents have been organizing it (West End Parents 4 Public Education, East End Parents 4 Public Education, and there is a walk-in website).
- The aim is to get as many schools involved as possible. There is also a goal to keep these issues in the news. This does not have to do with contract negotiations, but is in support of the public education system as a whole.
- Comment: I am on the Parent Council at my child's school and although we voted to share the information, the organizers had to plan and make posters off school property.
- The Walk-In is on Thursday, October 10th from 8 to 8:30am in front of the school.

## **6. Council meeting adjourned at 7:48pm**

**The next meeting of the 2019-2020 Council will be held on  
Monday, November 4th, 2019 at 6:30pm in the Library.**