

D. Roy Kennedy
School Council Meeting
October 27, 2015
Minutes

Present: Sara Lytle, Catherine Donnelly, Marc Laliberté, Eva Matyas, Ingrid Viktorinova, Jena Cameron, Krista Grey- Donald, Jackie Collins Kelly, Valerie E. Martelock-Crawford, Paz Blundell, Carrie Stotts, Asha Kurian, Catherine Nedd, Stephanie Houser

School Trustee Report: Since Theresa Kavanaugh wasn't present, see previous report for the latest update.

Principal Report: Catherine Donnelly spoke about the strike action and the start of phase four on the coming Wednesday. This would entail the cancellations of all extra curricular activities, incl. all the clubs. She indicated that the focus of the Principal and Vice-Principal is: keep the school open, safety and learning. Response time to questions through email may be delayed.

Though the latest class splits seem to be working smoothly for most of the classes, there are some concerns about the Grade 3/4 class. The number of students has increased from 16 to 26 students and there's a significant imbalance between the number of girls and boys. As of this week there will be extra help in the classroom and due to the two smaller MFI4 classes, it is not expected that more students will need to join this class.

Asha asked how to address the feedback/review about the process of rearranging classes. Asha shared with the school board that, in her opinion, their current process is not satisfactory as it brings along changes to children when they have just adjusted to the new teacher and class mates.

The question of security at the school was brought up again after a news article was published earlier in the month concerning an incident at the school a couple of years ago. At the time, parent recommendations were made for increased safety at the school. Feedback was requested. One of the proposals was to move the office, so they would face the entrance through a glass window or door. This possibility was explored by asking for a quote on minimum renovations necessary. The costs would vary between \$40,000 and \$60,000. The Principal indicated there is no budget for that at this time.

The second option, a security system with a camera and buzzer would amount to \$10,000. Jena will investigate what parents prefer, maybe by using a survey.

There were some questions about the 50/50 French program starting in Kindergarten next school year. One of the questions is what the impact will be for MFI schools, but for now it remains uncertain. French will be taught either on specific days or 50/50 on a daily basis. Since subjects vary throughout the day, there will not be a specific language for each subject. It isn't clear yet how this will affect teachers but the ECEs will stay on and learn French as they go.

The Vice-Principal's Report only mentioned the 50/50 English/French for Kindergarten subject and a link to a report by Marc Laliberté will be placed on the DRK website.

There are concerns about the awareness of the nut-free policy at school and it has been decided that the policy will be added to the school handbook. Teachers receive an annual, mandatory session with a nurse from public health to learn how to use an Epi-pen.

The update on head lice: there has only been one case in the last month and that it is still being monitored.

There was a short Autism Awareness debrief. Students appreciated the mini presentation with video and now know they need to reach out and say 'hi' to children with a learning disability.

Teacher's Report: Mme Beatty starts off with telling about the Assembly and the different clubs that have started at school that are a success. The clubs that gather during school hours will continue during the phase 3 of the teacher's strike.

Financial Standing: The position of funds to date is distributed among the attendees and the question arises if the Parent School Council wants to make their annual donation of \$100 to the teachers to use in their classroom as they see fit. All voted in favor. Current count of teachers is 25.

Another question that comes up is whether it is possible to have 'fieldtrips come to the school', since teachers can't go on fieldtrips. The Maker bus (science) is used as an example. One of the four strands of science can be picked for a session of 2h15 in the library for a group of max. 30 students. Other possibilities that are mentioned are art (Museum?) and a field nurse coming in.

This year no money will be set aside for the refill of mulch on the playground.

Recess Rescue: The playground inspection was not satisfactory. There is not enough mulch and it has not been stamped enough. The playground can't open yet and the opening ceremony has to be put on hold.

Holiday Celebration: The Holiday celebration will be held on December 10th. The gym has been booked. There's a need for an alternative show/ entertainment, since the Cow Guys have increased their price.

There will be a snowsuit event/swap, but last year's results show that better communication/advertisement is necessary. Now is also the time to ask parents to set things aside for this event. Krista will send an article on the snowsuits event to Catherine for the next newsletter.

Krista will also send information on the Holiday celebration for the DRK website.

Fundraising Committee: The motto for this year is less selling & more convenience. Today was popcorn day, which went very well but an extra batch to sell will be made next time. The Bagel forms were handed out today; selling of movie tickets is going very well.

Bike Racks at South End of School (near compost bins): Stephanie asked if it was possible to have a bike rack at the other end of the school yard for children who use that school entrance, so it won't be necessary to walk across the school yard. Students can then bike over Benjamin to the Church to approach school from that side. This is no problem since one rack is currently not being used. It was suggested to move it to the other side of the school yard.

Parking Lot: There's a safety concern about the parking lot being used as a drop off spot and the drop off lane being used for (short term) parking. No decision yet on how to address this point.

OCASC : Still looking for a volunteer, request to all to think about it.

Additional Subjects: The review of school boundaries is still a question. The idea is presented to work together with the Council of Woodroffe and Whitehaven. It was suggested we need to voice concern to the board.

Council will communicate to parents about the boundary review.

School budget for this year is \$28,829. Since teachers cannot meet yet because of the strike, last years' priorities will be maintained for now. One of those priorities is increasing the number of Chrome Books. Now there is a mobile lab with 24 Chrome Books. Ideally there will be 4 to 6 Chrome Books per class.

Next meeting will include information on Google docs.

Next Meeting: the next meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 24th at 6:30 PM