

Minutes of Battalion Park School Council Annual General Meeting Wednesday, May 22nd, 2019 at 6:00pm

In Attendance:

Stephen Beatty
Brent Bromley
Stephanie Aitchison
Brian McKinnon
Nancy Hadady

Philip Moir
Rolé Swiegers
Maryam Ahmadi
Heather Risdahl
Ana Castro

Holly Moir
Jessica Moran
Chad Benson
Wendy Karl
Chermaen Lindberg

1. Call to order: 6:04pm.
2. Opening Statement:
 - a. Introductions: The members of the executive introduced themselves to the group.
 - b. Expectations: Stephen welcomed everyone and read the Council's mission statement and the guiding principles of the council meetings.
 - c. School Council would like to celebrate the following:
 - i. The Staff Appreciation Lunch.
 - ii. A well-attended a successful Volunteer Tea.
 - iii. Parents who are volunteering in and out of the classrooms.
 - iv. The continuing success of the Fun Lunch Program.
3. Approval of Agenda: 1st Kiley Bromley, 2nd Phil Moir, all in favour.
4. Approval of Minutes from April 24th, 2019: 1st Ana Castro, 2nd Holly Moir, all in favour.
5. School Report (Principal Jeff Campbell, and Assistant Principal Barb Adams):
 - a. Barb Adams discussed the following:
 - i. The factors that influence how the class lists are made up each year. The goal is to have each child in the best situation for learning and development. Some of the factors that are considered are (in no specific order): learning needs/styles, gender balance, ELL skills and numbers, special needs, social skills and existing friendships.
 - ii. This year's Kindergarten orientation is the evening of May 23rd from 5-7pm. There will be many new families coming to learn about Kindergarten and Battalion Park. This is a great event to introduce ourselves, the school council, and what we do.
 - b. Jeff Campbell discussed the upcoming provincial education budget. Typically, the CBE has this information in April/May of each year for the next school year. However, because of the timing of the election and the new government being elected the education budget for 2019-2020 has not been released yet. No official budget information has been released but the CBE is not optimistic about funding levels. They are anticipating a roll back to 2017-2018 student funding level although enrollment is projected to rise. What does this mean for Battalion Park? We have 22.1 teaching units based on the Sept 30th, 2018 enrollment of 430 students. We are now at 460 students. Next year, we have 480 students enrolled but due to the anticipated funding reduction we are only expecting to have 21.6 teaching units. This is a 0.5 teaching unit reduction. On Friday past, the staff met and discussed several different scenarios to around staffing and class sizes. They narrowed it down to 3 choices which Jeff presented to the group and asked for our feedback.

6. Parent Engagement: The attendees broke into smaller groups to discuss three main options for class configurations for the next school year. The options were compiled by the teaching staff.
7. Student Council: Holly Moir delivered an update.
8. BPSC Committee Reports:
 - a. Fun Lunch Committee: Chermaen Lindberg delivered the report on behalf. The Fun Lunch and Fun Snack initiative is projected to have raised about \$16,000 for this school year. Thank you to all the volunteers and their hard work.
 - b. Social Committee: Brent Bromley delivered the report:
 - i. The Spring Picnic will be on June 13th, with June 20th as a backup date in case of inclement weather.
 - ii. The Staff Appreciation Lunch was a huge success. Thank you to everybody who volunteered and contributed to the event. The scrapbooks will be completed soon.
 - c. Student Engagement: No report.
9. SHSES (Signal Hill School Enhancement Society):
 - a. Phil Moir delivered the report. The SHSES AGM will take place on June 12th. A number of current board members are leaving, and new volunteers are needed in those spots.
 - b. Rolé Swiegers delivered the financial report. The casino account balance is \$45,522.41, and the unrestricted funds balance is \$6,959.55.
10. Executive Reports:
 - a. Treasurer: Chad Benson delivered the report. The current account balance is \$28,203.26, and the projected year-end balance is \$29,215.32.
 - i. Brent Bromley made a motion to donate the \$347 collected from the Skating Party bake sale to the CUPS Foundation. Holly Moir seconded, all in favour.
 - ii. Holly Moir made a motion to approve funds to match the contributions collected by the Grade 6 students for the CUPS Foundation up to a maximum of \$500. Phil Moir seconded, all in favour.
 - iii. Phil Moir made a motion to approve a maximum expenditure of \$500 for incidental expenses incurred by School Council. Holly Moir seconded, all in favour.
 - b. Key Communicator: No report.
 - c. Chair: Stephen Beatty delivered the report.
 - i. Stephen provided feedback from the Happy, Healthy Volunteer engagement session at the last meeting. The notes are added to the end of these minutes.
 - ii. Stephen provided a summary of the meeting with CBE Trustee, Lisa Davis.
 - iii. Stephen provided a short update on the iPad donations for the summer reading program. Ana Castro made a motion to approve a maximum expenditure of \$500 to purchase an iPad for the summer reading program incentive rewards. Kiley Bromley seconded, all in favour.
 - d. Vice-Chair: Brent Bromley delivered the report.
 - i. There are still various vacant positions on School Council that have to be filled for the next school year. Please contact Brent if you would like more information.
 - ii. Stephen Beatty as Chair, Chad and Melissa Benson as Treasurer, and Rolé Swiegers as Secretary are all stepping down this year. Brent thanked them for their contributions to School Council.

11. Executive Elections:

- a. Brent Bromley made a motion to elect Jessica Moran to the role of Chair for 2019-2020. Phil Moir seconded, all in favour.
- b. Phil Moir made a motion to re-elect current Vice-Chair Brent Bromley, Key Communicator Maria Ivanovic, and Teacher Representative Holly Moir. Kiley Bromley seconded, all in favour.

12. New Business for next agenda:

- a. Fill and elect vacant School Council, and committee positions for 2019-2020.
- b. Discuss the courtyard and grounds enhancement project.
- c. The Fall Picnic – schedule the first School Council meeting earlier in September to allow more time to plan the picnic. Jessica Moran made a motion to approve a maximum expenditure of \$400 for the Fall Picnic expenses. Holly Moir seconded, all in favour.
- d. Hold a volunteer drive in September/October 2019.

13. Phil Moir made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Holly Moir seconded, all in favour. Meeting adjourned at 8:22pm.

Feedback from Parent Engagement Session on April 24th, 2019

School Council would like to ensure we are effectively communicating volunteer needs, creating a culture of supporting one another and sharing the load, and valuing all of our volunteers.

Four questions were asked at the meeting as well as sent by email to Social & Fun Lunch committee.

Q1: How could we reach out to parents when volunteer needs arise?

- Could we have a general idea for over the year? What events? When? Skills needed?
- Communication of what does the school year look like for volunteering? Put this out at the beginning of the year? Get information out to parents earlier.
- How do we get parents to feel comfortable for signup.com? Could students make a how to video?
- Email
- Clear on # of people needed & what exactly is needed.
- Can we communicate via text?
- We like the paper communication.
- Sooner – the year's schedule in advance.
- One place to look e.g. Fun Lunch website?
- Emails with details & links.
- Classroom vs. big event – clarify whether clearance is needed.
- Everyone commit to 1x volunteering/year.
- Encourage parents to get a volunteer clearance. After school have people hand out "flyers" with bold print saying "We need volunteers ". Please get your clearance done!
- Post the positions available in the school on the wall.
- Talk to the kids and tell them we need more parents to volunteer!! Kids will then go home and let the parents know :)
- Let the parents know that this is urgent or we won't be able to have picnics and dances etc.
- Tell parents to team up with a friend or buddy to volunteer together.
- Get each person at the meeting tonight to talk to 2 people that they think they could get to volunteer.
- Get the teachers to send out an email to parents explaining we need more parents to get the volunteer clearance. Coming from the teacher they might feel more pressure!!!

- Talk to the high schools and ask for teenager volunteers.
- Quarterly send out an email asking: Have you had your volunteer clearance done yet?
- Put up sign in front of school. Volunteer parents needed.
- Get kids in the class rooms to write a letter to their parents explaining that we need volunteers and if they can help to let the school know!
- Reach out to parents: maybe this paper sent home with them is the way to go? Everyone gets so many emails they get lost. Paper copy, dates we need volunteers, parents fill out their contact info and send it back with the kids.
- Is there a difference in communication this year? This year it feels like it is all over the map. Classroom activities and school events come to parents in a variety of forms. Let's be consistent... one website.
- I think we need to communicate via an app and less email. I know that Class Dojo is approved by the CBE and I am sure we can send out messages that way...somehow...or there is a better alternative app out there that other schools are using. Not only that, but the ease of communicating with your class teacher increases immensely with an app like class dojo. I personally love school communication apps.
- Finding a way to have a form or website to let parents check* off "I'm interested in":
 - Social committee
 - Halloween Dance
 - Volunteering in the classroom
- *Parents can check on/off at any time for each need as their availability changes.

Q2: How could we coordinate responses and organize teams?

- Important that you can see who else has volunteered – make groups with parents to increase comfort level.
- If there is a clear picture of need & an idea of what skills you have as a parent we can capitalize on our skills.
- A web page.
- If key positions are filled on social and fun lunch, hopefully that will be the organization we need. Might be helpful to have an overall volunteer coordinator? Who can connect people who are working together on committees etc.?

Q3: How could we support balance and health with existing volunteers?

- Could we get an idea of how many hours for each family? Could also include time needed from teachers (trips, readers, etc.).
- Could we get Grandma's and Grandpa's involved?
- Need someone to support and check-in with volunteers.
- Doing more supporting and checking in sooner. How are you doing?
- How do we get people using the strengths they have so it's enjoyable?
- We just need more volunteers. I know we can't say that volunteering is mandatory....but what if it is a "suggestion" at the beginning of the year that each family should plan on volunteering 2-3 hours in the school year (or whatever the number be...maybe we need to do a tally of how many volunteer hours we really do need!) I think we have some positions/events that can be done when parents aren't working. Maybe we need to prioritize things we need volunteers for...if we don't get enough maybe certain events are let go? And I think we need to clearly communicate that with ALL parents - that if we don't get enough help, things can't continue to run.

- Most of the parents volunteering are super busy behind the scenes managing young kids or other obligations. I know I have burnt myself out a few times this year. I think by getting the word out to the parents that more volunteers are needed, like the paper sent home should help alleviate the strain on the current volunteers (fingers crossed). As is with most volunteers, it is always the same ones, I did like the idea that Jeff had about approaching parents who are not engaged and chatting with them and hopefully sparking a desire to volunteer. Do we need to ask in a more personal way, maybe from the teachers, when parents come for parent teacher interviews?

Q4: How could we show value to all of our volunteers?

- A Thank-you from the groups!
- Tokens of appreciation.
- Recognition through advertisement.
- Send out a letter afterward.
- Maybe a gift card.
- After a parent volunteers for Teachers Pet, send them pictures of the event.
- Honestly by not asking them for back to back to back events etc...that to me is taking advantage of the volunteers we do have, not showing them appreciation.
- I feel valued; I know that my help is making a difference for others. Sure, the more I volunteer the longer it may take for me to find 'balance' in my home life but I know that I have support with the other volunteers if I need to have shifts covered, etc.