

Elizabeth Ziegler (EZ) Public School Council Meeting

Thursday, November 27, 2014 – Meeting Minutes

ATTENDANCE

VOTING COUNCIL MEMBERS

X	Ingrid Bachmann	X	Donna Martin	X	Heather Read
X	The Nam Long Doan	X	Sean McQuillin	X	Jacob Shelley
X	Rebecca Guzar	X	Pamela Mulloy	X	Carrie Stevenson
X	Sairin Hayes	X	Nancy Lua Poulsen		Ingrid Wessel
X	Cher Mamuza	X	Adam Purkiss		Charlotte Woodley

NON VOTING COUNCIL MEMBERS/GUESTS

X	Lynne Green (Principal)		absent (teacher)		
X	Lori Peebles (Vice Principal)				

1. WELCOME (Jacob and Carrie Co-Chairs)

- Agenda distributed electronically
- Quorum of 8 met for meeting

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

- Meeting Minutes distributed electronically
- **Motion #1** to approve Oct. 23, 2014 EZ PS Council meeting minutes.
Motion moved by: Adam
Motion Seconded by: Sean
Motion passed by all members of school council in attendance

3. FINANCIAL UPDATES (Adam Purkiss – Treasurer)

Balances

General Account: \$2486.84
To Performing Arts = - \$858.80*
GST Rebate = \$82.38
(*\$500 still allotted to speakers*)
Total: \$1710.42
**\$100 more than allotted, offset somewhat by GST rebate*

Greening: \$3305.51
Words Out: \$1106.35
Notebooks = - \$90.40
GST Rebate = \$8.67
Total: \$1024.62
Pizza: \$660.60
School Day = \$3009.23
Pizza Orders = \$80.00
Total: \$3749.83 (*We still need to write a cheque, so this total will be adjusted.*)

Magazines:
(*Magazine cheque should arrive mid-December, net profit approx. \$1240*)

Treasures Book:
Treasures = \$4040.00
School Day = \$841.35
Treasures = \$1637.00

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Pay Treasures = - \$4320.00

GST = \$205.71

Total: \$2404.06

Dance-a-thon:

Deposit = - \$150.00

Total: - \$150.00

4. COMMITTEE UPDATES

(1) Words Out Committee (Pamela Mulloy)

- After missing two meetings (due to PD Day and leaders unavailable) the Writing Club meets again tomorrow
- 15-18 students attended the last meeting, and were split into two groups, one working on ideas, the other writing
- Asking group to think about magazine-sized articles, hoping we produce one this year
- Wondering about readings in the library for the Seasonal Open House?
- Q: will there be any author visits this year?
- A: hopefully – need time to source some people
- Note that magazines were sold for \$4 each (two years ago), and of the 450 printed, 25 were leftover (suggestion made to try and sell those, or put them in the classrooms as an example and incentive for next issue)

(2) Greening Committee Update (Adam Purkiss)

- Forested area clean up did not happen, due to unavailability of volunteers, and bad weather – will try again in the spring
- If it doesn't work out then, we may have to hire a company to do it
- Becki noted that at the last WRAPSC meeting she attended there was a lot of talk about Greening, especially about "Evergreen" and "Earthscape". Evergreen is a national not-for-profit that builds partnerships with groups to restore the connection between Canada's cities and the natural environment, and they helped EZ with our original Greening plans and design. Earthscape is a St. Jacobs landscaping company that work with them. She noted that EZ has done the 'trees' and 'rocks', but there are lots of really innovative ways to make nice outdoor areas, using berms, hills, logs, etc. We could have an outdoor theatre, or outside education center
- Lynne commented that one of the JK teachers is hoping to attend a school council meeting and present her ideas... they have a mandate for play and teaching outside
- We seem to have lots of space outside for these improvements, but must keep in mind areas designated for football, soccer, etc.
- Carrie noted that there is a request for the kindergarten toys to be replenished

(3) Fundraising Committee (Helen, Jola, Carrie)

- Treasures book sales were better than expected, with a profit of \$2404.06
 - Magazine sales also a pleasant surprise, with very little effort earned \$1240
 - MacMillan's orders will be handed in tomorrow, hoping for \$1700 profit
 - We need to determine the prize for the Dance-a-thon, with some discussion about the reaction to last year's prize of UpTown Dollars to spend in UpTown Waterloo
 - No-one heard anything negative, and Council likes to support the local community
- Motion #2** to approve the Dance-a-thon prize of \$20/grade in UpTown Dollars, with all students being entered in the draw, regardless of their pledges
- Motion moved by: Sean
- Motion Seconded by: Cher
- Motion passed** by all members of school council in attendance

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5. COMMUNICATIONS (Website, School Day, Newsletter, Facebook) – Jacob

- We need volunteers to help with the website (communicate information to Lori), with School Day (communicate information to Joan), and newsletter (communicate information to Donna), as well as the Facebook group
- Lori is open to any feedback about posting info. on website
- Adam asked for a WEFI link (Waterloo Education Foundation Inc.) on the website for direct cash donations to EZ (and get a tax break) – Lori said it's in the left bar
- Communication is important, we need someone to be this link to our parents
- It shouldn't take too much time, let's discuss it in January. Jacob will send an email asking for ideas
- It was noted that we don't want our communication to duplicate info. being sent out by the school
- Lynne said they're phasing out the paper newsletter, moving to School Day electronic updates
- Suggestion made that we put our newsletter pdf on the school's website
- Reminder for everyone to go to the website and enter your email in the left bar where it says "Subscribe by Email". Then you will get emailed when there is an update to the website, so you don't have to keep checking it

6. WRAPSC Update (Rebecca Guzar)

- WRAPSC is the *Waterloo Region Assembly of Public School Councils*
- November's theme was Greening, as described above
- We might want to put some of this info. in the newsletter to generate interest
- They also talked about the Region of Waterloo Public Health department collecting information to compile a database of parent/child communication because our region has one of the highest rates of teen pregnancies and chlamydia
- Q: should we refocus on healthy sexuality (for workshop topic)?
- A: Becki thinks we should move on to other topics, and go back to that in the future
- Becki has a new contact at KW Counselling, for evening workshops on mental health
- Hoping to arrange a workshop for the 3rd or 4th week of January
- Cost is \$400/2 hr. session
- Lynne said it would be valuable to have info. about managing kids' anxiety, as incidents of debilitating levels of anxiety are increasing
- Comment made that it would be good to know how to recognize it and know the difference between "normal" and "extreme" anxiety
- Becki said they could also recommend local community resources for treatment as well as good strategies to deal with it
- Q: is it actually increasing or is the awareness about it increasing?
- A: Lynne said it may have been identified differently in the past, but it is increasing
- Jacob noted that at future workshops we should provide a form for attendees to suggest future topics they'd like to learn about
- Becki said she's also looking for a speaker about nutrition, maybe in March or April, to learn about things to avoid, as well as healthy lunch and supper ideas
- Jacob suggested we distribute some of the info. provided, after the workshops, for those who wanted to attend but were unable to

7. Presentation about Safe Caring and Inclusive Schools Committee (Heather Read)

- Heather is a parent at EZ and on the Safe Caring and Inclusive Schools Committee
- This is a Waterloo Region School Board initiative, at EZ for two years
- There are two teachers on the committee, as well as parents
- Q: Are any students on the committee?

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- A: No, but they will be consulting with the Union of Youth
- Heather attended the conference, focused on “kindness of strangers” and “hope”
- The school board’s mandate is “Promote the Positive”
- This doesn’t just focus on students, but teachers and parents too
- The specific goals are to understand the current climate, create awareness of the committee, and increase the “Safe, Caring, Inclusive School” survey participation
- Heather distributed a summary of the survey results, as well as comments gathered from teachers, parents and students (on the survey)
- The committee will study the results and work to improve them
- They generated visual “wordles” where the size of the word indicated how many people chose it (to represent the school)
- Lori thanked Heather for compiling the data and working on this committee
- Jacob asked Heather what she’d like from School Council
- Heather said she wants us to talk about it, and promote the next survey
- Suggestion made to include info in our newsletter, and provide snippets of survey results from this last one
- Jacob thanked Heather and encouraged her to continue to attend Council meetings

8. Principal Report (Lynn Green)

- Lynne is impressed with the diversity of activities available at EZ (such as volleyball, Open Gym, Spirit Club, Union of Youth, Words Out, choir, etc.)
- December 8-12 are the “5 Days of Giving” with a different charity receiving donations each day
- The EZ Christmas tree will be put up tomorrow
- The Seasonal Open House is Tuesday December 16, 6-7:30 pm. She is hoping to engage the community more, with parents and students participating. The choir will perform, they’ll sell hot chocolate, perhaps have readings as suggested by Pamela
- December 19, the last day of school before holidays, will be a PJ Day
- Lynne was asked for the summary of teachers’ ‘wants’ – she will bring it next time
- Lynne was asked about the status of the sound system in the gym, funded last year. She said it’s ready to go ahead, and on her ‘to do’ list
- Q: Will there be skating for students this winter?
- A: No, it’s unmanageable school-wide, but teachers may choose to go as a class
- Q: Will there be EZ hockey this winter?
- A: Don’t know
- Q: Will there be an EZ ski trip this winter?
- A: Mr. Day and Lynne are working on this

9. CHAIR REPORT (Co-Chairs Jacob and Carrie)

- Starting in January we want to develop School Council by-laws. Jacob will circulate examples and Council should create a draft, to be in place for next year.
- We need to focus on community building and engagement – the key is communication
- Jacob planning to create a Survey Monkey to get feedback from this group, and later from the whole school (Lynne has a good survey from a previous school that she can provide)
- At the Seasonal Open House we should have a School Council table with information
- Carrie has looked into getting shirts made to identify us as Council members at various school events (Donna volunteered her husband Timm to create artwork)

Motion #3 to approve cost of 21 shirts to be worn by school council members at school events (approx. \$200-\$300)

Motion moved by: Adam

Motion Seconded by: Sean

Motion passed by all members of school council in attendance

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- Note that the PIC could be a resource (Parent involvement committee, at Board level)
- Lynne said the most powerful thing is a personal connection
- Suggestion made that we have a “bring a friend night”

10. OTHER ISSUES

- As mentioned earlier, kindergarten winter toy supply needs to be replenished
- Q: Has council always funded this, or is it new?
- Q: Should they purchase higher quality, so they last longer?
- A: They do, but kids are hard on them, as well as the cold weather
- Q: Do the other classes have any of these “toys”?
- A: There are bins in the other classes, funded by both council and the school
- Q: What are our spending targets this year?
- A: Lynne said they’d like to replace their big tiger mural in the gym. They have a budget to re-paint the gym, and the custodial supervisor has just agreed to paint the hallway too, so now the tiger graphic needs to be updated
- Jacob acknowledged the concern about not having a spending goal, but doesn’t want us to rush to spend money, just because the money is there
- He will put ‘spending goals’ on the January agenda
- Becki suggested we determine “principles” for funding, such as ways to keep kids active, arts & culture, etc.
- Carrie reminded us to keep in mind literacy, because there is a need for more home reading books, especially at higher grades
- Comment made that the older students are more picky about the reading genres, and will go to the library for appropriate books
- Reminder that there is also a need for French home reading books
- Q: Can we bring in any “gently used” equipment from home (such as balls)
- A: That would be great, and Lori will put it on the website
- Q: We approved funds for one cultural event at the school (Fana Soro – music/drumming) but when does the second one need to be decided? (The Magic Flute, in eng. and fr.)
- A: It’s not until April, we can talk about it after seeing our fundraising totals
- Suggestion made that magazine fundraising \$\$ goes to home reading books
- Request for a quote to get the tiger re-done in the gym
- Reminder that we considered paying buses for one trip per classroom

Motion #4 to approve up to \$300 for kindergarten toys for winter

Motion moved by: Becki

Motion Seconded by: Nancy

Motion passed by all members of school council in attendance

- Q: Was the November school book fair a success? (the evening was well attended)
- A: Lynne said it went well, and she will get totals for us
- Q: Can we bring in our “gently used” books to the school library?
- A: No, schools are moving away from that, with their automated collections, but they could be donated to individual classroom teachers... ask them

11. ADJOURNMENT (Jacob – Co-Chair)

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm

Next meeting is on Thursday January 22, 2015 (one week earlier than originally planned)