**Hespeler P.S. School Council Meeting**

**MINUTES**

**Monday, February 12, 2024**

7:00 pm

Present: Rebecca Jutzi, Karen Canapini, Cheryl Tawse, Chris Sciascetti, Crystal Bechtel, Tara Delaney, Kristin Lovell, Alicia Young, Melissa Legros-Cronkwright, Rose Kowalczyk, Emily Lord, Jill Bolender, Stacey Lawrence, Claire Black, Carra Myers, Cassie Bolland, Michelle Bush Broga, Jesse Sabbagh, Kyly Miller, Sharon McKeown, Sabina Voisin

Regrets: Rebecca Mills, Marissa Glen, Jaclyn Green, Kara Hall, Darcie Black, Susan Ford

1. **Welcome**

* Sharon noted that we will have some slides to share tonight. This is something we will continue to do as appropriate.

1. **Approval of Minutes from January 15, 2024**

* Approved as read - Jesse motioned to approve, Jill seconded, approved unanimously.

1. **Treasurer’s Report**
   * Opening balance of $83,342.37
   * Revenue in: $2538.83 vendor sale deposit for tables less expenses
   * Expenses out: $4084.36 laminator, $435.64 Richard Rossini magician for social event, $749.62 School-Day fees for term 2 pizza, $47.34 Ziploc bags for pizza, $20 pizza refund
   * Pending expenses/allocations: $6000 fun fair deposits, $412.04 social events, $1000 parent workshops, $500 garden cleanup, $2000 Kindy iPad covers, $2000 gr1/2 Dreambox subscription (5 classes), $200 Kindy snacks for class concerts, $2000 gr7/8 Blue Jays trip subsidy, $15,120 term 2 pizza cost, $2000 Phys Ed pinnies, $1000 white art paper, $275 ACE science kits
   * Pending revenue: $500.00 grant applied, $155.00 additional Danceathon online funds
   * Available balance is $48,692.20
2. **Principal/Vice-Principal Update**

Principal’s Update – Rebecca Jutzi

Council Conduct

* Rebecca reviewed what our school council is and is not, a code of ethics and meeting norms.
* A School Council is:
  + - An advisory role committee only; the ultimate responsibility for the administration and day-to-day school operations rests with the Principal
    - A means to advise the Principal on any matter pertaining to pupil achievement  A voice to provide input to the school Board, when asked for input on policies, plans etc.
    - A channel to address issues affecting all, or a significant portion of the school population
    - Unique for each school and its community
    - A group with a shared interest, working together with parents, students, community members, staff and administration to build a strong school community
* A School Council is not:
  + - A forum to address individual issues pertaining to one student or class
    - There are ways to address individual issues via admin
* Code of Ethics - All members shall:
  + - Consider the best interests of all students.
    - Respect the actions and decisions of the School Council.
    - Be guided by our school and school board’s vision, policies and procedures.
    - Act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of a School Council, as identified by the Ontario Ministry of Education and Waterloo Region District School Board.
    - Respect each member of our school community.
    - Allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.
    - Encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
    - Respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the Council and on what information can be shared. Members are not to disclose confidential information.
    - Limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.
    - Use established communication channels (ie. email) when questions or concerns arise.
    - Declare any conflict of interest.
    - Promote high standards of equity, diversity and inclusion within the school community
    - Not accept any payment or benefit financially through School Council involvement
    - Be punctual at meetings and attend as many as possible.
* Meeting and Communication Norms:
  1. Respectful communication
     + speak politely and respectfully to all members
     + listen attentively while others speak without interrupting or talking over them
     + avoid using disrespectful language or tone
  2. Raise your hand
     + raise hand and wait for facilitator to recognize before speaking
  3. One person speaks at a time
     + avoid side conversations or talking over others as it can be disruptive and disrespectful
  4. Constructive feedback
     + provide feedback in a positive manner, focus on ideas rather than individuals and provide alternatives where possible
  5. Be open-minded
     + Respect and consider different opinions
  6. Confidentiality
     + Respect the confidentiality of discussions and avoid sharing sensitive information outside of the meeting
  7. Stay on topic and respect time limits
     + Stay focused on agenda items
     + Avoid prolonging discussions unnecessarily and be mindful of the time
* We really value everyone’s input and time, and everyone comes to the group with different backgrounds to share. We have a very strong and active parent community. We really want to continue that, and this council is a big part of that.
* We are always open to feedback, please reach out to Rebecca, Karen, or Sharon directly if you have anything to share.
* Around this time each year Rebecca reviews punctuality and attendance reports, and sends a letter home if needed as a reminder/wake up call. Absences/lates do add up and it does make a difference to student learning. It’s meant to act as a reminder to families.
* You also may have received a letter from Region of Waterloo Public Health for vaccination reminders. This has nothing to do with the school, the school acts only as their communication stream. Schools are mandated to act on suspensions if confirmation of vaccination is not received by March 27. You must upload current records to the public health website yourself. Public Health updates the school every day after March 27.
* We are quite low on Kindy registrations so far, please tell anyone you know who has a child entering Kindergarten to register before March 31!
* Erica Coady (gr3/4FI teacher) is now on maternity leave, Ashton Bezanson starts in 2 weeks to cover.
* Mad Science started today.
* We are now approved for the $500 PRO Grant for 2024 in addition to the $500 from 2023 already showing in the treasurer’s report.

Accessible Sandbox

* The Kindies love the current sandbox, however it’s unfortunately not accessible. We’ve got a few options for adding an accessible sand structure. The Kindy team has a preference for a sand/water table that’s portable (on wheels). When classes go to the back tarmac it can move with the class, or be brought inside as well. This is not a council initiative, the school is taking care of it but wanted to supply an update to council as it’s been discussed at meetings. Admin has money in their fundraising account to purchase it.

Vice-Principal’s Update – Karen Canapini

Dates to note

* + Feb 23: Chicopee ski/snowboard day for gr5-8
  + Apr. 17: Blue Jays game for gr7/8
  + Feb. 16: Report cards sent home. Reminder that there are no formal interviews, but you are welcome to arrange a meeting with your child’s teacher if you would like to. Also, there is only one mark for Language now. Bear with us as we’re learning how to assess the various strands as one mark.
* Feb. 16: Gr3-6 are invited to the Black Brilliance Celebration at JHSS. This is for any child identifying as African, Caribbean or Black. We’re going to do teaching about what equity is, and why it’s equitable for these students to go and not others. Karen & Rebecca went around to classes to talk about it. The JHSS BSU runs it and are very proud to be running this for younger students as a celebration of their culture.
* Feb. 27: Sr. Kindy vision testing for everyone unless parents opted out
* Feb. 28: Sr. basketball playoffs are this week
* Feb. 28/29: Jr. basketball tournament
* We had a successful & fun tubing day for gr1-4 and ACE. Weather held out and they had a great time!We could not offer tubing for gr5-8 due to logistical problems with bussing to 2 separate locations due to bus shortages. We had problems with bus timing last year that led to some classes having more time tubing than others. If the bus situation improves for next year, we’re hoping we can offer tubing in addition to skiing/snowboarding for gr5-8 as well. We would likely still keep the grades split up between 2 separate dates.
* Skating trips to Hespeler Arena were a really great time for students, and hope to do it again next year.
* Kindness Club bracelets are on sale right now for $2 each as a fundraiser for Nutrition For Learning.
* Candygram sales are finished and will be delivered to students on Wednesday.

1. **New Business/Fundraising**

Vendor Sale - Crystal

* Crystal felt the event was described incorrectly at the last meeting and prepared a statement in response:

Last month the vendor sale was referred to as inefficient and chaotic, it was described this way by people that weren’t at the event and came to the last meeting with a list of improvements. They didn’t volunteer nor did they come shopping and support the event. I’ve sat on this for a month now and still feel very unsettled that it is on record as being described this way. It was also mentioned there is no subcommittee for this event but that is untrue, Stacey takes on bake sale, Tara picked up coffee and myself and Tara organized the vendors in their space, Sharon and I made lots of decisions (like should we sell coffee, do we expand the sale into the hallways) and Rebecca ordered the tables through the school board. The tables were the only issue we had and no fault of Rebecca’s, the board dropped off small tables and they did not have the time to fix the problem, I pulled in a few favours and on my own time with my husband hauled 100 tables from the arena to the school and with Tara’s husbands help and my kids, they returned them at the end of the day. So, if anyone heard about the table debacle and didn’t know the full story now you do and it’s on record. As for a schedule, there is not one for this event and one won’t be added. Several people reached out and told me in advance they could only work morning or afternoon or set up or take down, or that they were out of town and would send their husband or kids to help. I was told the day of that someone was leaving and cut down a Christmas tree or that someone had to leave and put their child down for a nap, none of these are an issue that’s why we say all hands on deck, the more people that show up the better then if someone has to leave it’s not a big deal, life happens and we all appreciate what ever time can be given, this gives us all an easy day to volunteer, shop and socialize. Sorry to the new people that didn’t understand that I apologize that wasn’t explained clearer.

* Tara supported Crystal’s statements.
* Kristin stated that she thought it was amazing and runs large-scale events regularly so understands that there are always hiccups to solve on the day of events.

LunchBox - Sharon

* A School-Day email for LunchBox orders has gone out. We have a contract with Subway as an initial initiative to try it out. It is an option for the whole school, this has been updated in the ordering portal. We do not have the capacity to save subs if students are absent, they’ll be donated to N4L.
* The office has raised some concerns about how this will run. Subs will be delivered labelled and organized by class, but we need to provide assistance to distribute them to classes appropriately. There are always issues that crop up on pizza day and we can expect the same to happen with this. Any issues that arise cannot be the responsibility of the office staff.
* Sharon has done some troubleshooting with tech issues, but please note that the limited menu will not be expanding. It’s the menu that Subway provides for LunchBox, we cannot add to it.
* Right now it doesn’t look like we have the volunteer capacity to do this more than once a month.
* Marissa has already volunteered to help, please tell Sharon if you can help on any of the planned Thursdays from around 12:30-1:30pm. Chris will also help.
* We don’t have the capacity to advise on or limit school activities from happening on food order days, so it’s been communicated to teachers to advise parents not to order for those days since you don’t have to order until the Sunday before.
* We will evaluate how this goes after a few months.
* If there’s a school closure we can cancel the whole order by 8am and everyone will get a refund.

Parent Workshop: Literacy Evening - Wed., February 28 - Karen

* An email has gone out to the school population about this event for K-gr2.
* 6-6:30pm will be a presentation about the science of reading, and why we shifted to how we’re teaching literacy now. Includes 10 minutes for questions.
* Then the Kindy team is going to have open house time in the classrooms to show what students are learning and what families can do at home to help their students.
* About 6 teachers for gr1-2 will also have open house time geared to those grades.
* Please register to give us a general sense of how many people hope to attend.
* Even for those with kids in gr3, if your child is struggling with reading it would be helpful to come to get background on how/what was taught.
* Karen will think about how to provide info for people who can’t make it as this evening is not in a format that can be recorded. We definitely want to provide resources for what you can do at home.
* The school is providing dinner for the teachers presenting/hosting.

Parent Workshop: White Hatter - Wed., March 27 - Chris

* Chris asked them if we could blend topics - No, due to the in-depth content. They suggested “Digital literacy and internet safety for parents and caregivers” due to us being a K-8 school. It’s valuable topic for all grades. We get an outline of the presentation once we book it.
* If this is well-received, then we can pick another topic next year to do again.
* It is a live virtual event so questions can be asked live, and a recording is available for 48 hours after. You can choose to log in from home, and it will also be presented at the school.
* Emily suggested that we do this type of workshop earlier in the school year, or twice. This is definitely possible going forward.
* They’ll provide materials that can be used, and/or we can make our own flyer. Rebecca M. will do a flyer and a sign graphic.
* Rebecca J. will set up the live virtual at the school.
* Cost is $650, minus $50 discount as repeat school.

Danceathon - Wed., April 24 - Sharon

* We have used Prof. Jamz for many years. We’ve learned over the last year that he’s not an approved vendor, he was in the process of being approved by the board and has now stopped responding to us.
* We’ve considered changing this over the last number of years because of the fee, but he provided the envelopes, etc. so there were benefits. But, it’s also gotten “less” over the last years (ie: no video dance anymore but no reduction in price).
* We are pivoting and Mr. Akgol has offered to DJ this year! This takes away form the cost we have to pay, needing an approved vendor, etc.
* We have some thinking to do in terms of how we’ll collect pledges (School-Day vs. cash or hybrid). There is still a population that prefers to return cash from the people that sponsor them. It’s helpful for some people to still be able to contribute in cash.
* There will be help required to help count money during the day, the latest could be 2:30-4:30 (Rebecca J. can be a bit flexible with that timing if needed), and collect envelopes if we do that. We will still do an assembly after the Danceathon for our top fundraisers to do Principal/teachers pie in the face! Plus ice cream parties for top fundraising classes.
* We’ve chosen the date to avoid Ramadan so that all students can participate.
* Please reach out to Sharon to volunteer to help during week prior to Danceathon (maybe 2 weeks), plus a few people to help during the day for the day of the event. Sharon will send out a specific email.
* Online donations will go directly through WEFI which provides a tax receipt. It’s set up to come back to HPS afterwards. Hoping that people will mostly pledge their students online. There will be instructions provided on how to do this.
* Classes dance for about an hour, based on blocks of grades.
* There will still be some expenses for lights, etc. but will be less than Prof. Jamz.

Fun Fair - Friday, June 7 - Jill

* Board policy revisions: there have been changes on what we are allowed to have on school property. Rides are now included in not allowed, plus inflatables of any kind at all. We’re very disappointed that after 25 years we can no longer have rides.
* It will no longer be called “fun fair”, we’re doing a major pivot and hoping to make it more into a carnival. We have lots of ideas that we’re investigating (petting zoo, carnival games, carnival food, live music/entertainment) but for now the subcommittee is on pause until we figure out our direction.
* Jill will reach out of there’s anything we need help with and we will have more to update at the next meeting.
* Please do not leave the meeting saying there’s no fun fair. Please don’t say anything until we know our path forward. We’re really trying to find a way to pivot to something that is still fun and positive.
* Will need some clarification from admin as carnival games have become partially inflatable side walls for ease of transport. Rebecca will get clarification on if this is allowed, Jill will send Rebecca examples.
* We very likely can’t move this event offsite, as part of the issue is board liability. The risk doesn’t outweigh the benefit of these items. It’s still a school event. Rebecca will ask, but likely no.

Fundraiser/Product Proposal - Emily

* Emily is suggesting that we offer another fundraiser: The idea is to provide something that people are already going to buy and get a return from that. Similar to what we do with additional pizza nights with Dominos. Something that’s low in volunteer labour for us. Ideas:
  + - Big Yellow Bag - not a huge return but very little work. They provide a code for purchases, not limited to our area only, can be for anywhere that is in the delivery area. If you’re already going to be buying dirt, this is a great way to support the school at the same time.
    - Fresh Box produce box - 10% return. Emily is passionate about finding ways to make whole foods more accessible in the community as costs have gone up for groceries. She asked if they would take the 10% off the boxes instead to bring the cost down, but that’s not an option. If we’re passionate about giving back to people we could look at giving that 10% back to people who order (if this works through the school).
* What would your family/friends benefit from? Please give feedback as a council. How can we support families who have less disposable income? Emily feels strongly about trying to use the influence of our council to give back to the community as a whole. Obviously we can’t pivot to this for all of our fundraising, but maybe some?
* Big Yellow Bag can be shared through the community, no incentives to students for sales quantities. Could be very hands off for the school, as this is something that many people order anyway. Easy way to raise some extra money.
* Cassie: Fresh Box would compete with an N4L campaign that exists (she runs N4L at JHSS). We haven’t seen this at HPS. It is a great product.
* Food boxes are available through the Food Bank at the arena, churches, etc.
* Emily motioned to do the Big Yellow Bag fundraiser, Jill seconded, passed unanimously.
* Emily will give Sharon a blurb for School-Day after figuring out the remaining logistics.

1. **Other business**

Social Event - Melissa/Rebecca M.

* Melissa asked council to think about ideas for another social:
  + - Movie night ($700, need a movie license). The school has a licence as long as the movie falls within the parameters we have.
    - Foam party - too messy.
    - Reptile show - would have to be on a weekend morning or afternoon due to the schedule of the reptile zoo.
    - Family craft night company - cost TBD but they can work with our $500 budget.
    - Musical performers: Rono, Erick Traplin (but if we’re having music at fun fair this competes), likely wouldn’t pull enough people as a single event.
* We could run a movie night in the gym ourselves with our license. Or, if we do outside it doesn’t have to be fully dark to start. On the field, screen is inflatable (is this ok?), we’d need the company for that to provide the screen, speakers, etc.
* Propose Thursday, May 30 as the Friday is a PD Day.
* Melissa motioned to increase remaining social committee budget to $1000, Cassie seconded, approved unanimously.

Shade Structure - Sharon

* Sharon has been researching shade structures, this has been an ongoing discussion for the last 10 years as gravel runoff and other issues needed to be addressed first. We weren’t in a position to decide on a plan as we didn’t know what the property would look like after the problems got resolved.
* The trees haven’t worked as hoped to provide shade. Tara is also still working on getting benches near the city-owned red/yellow climber.
* Presented style options from Blue Imp:
  + - hard-roofed gazebo with benches ($14,553 + freight and concrete pad so about $20,000 13’x13’)
    - hard-roofed park shelter (30’x30’ incl. concrete pad $75-90,000 total - we might be able to have the board do the concrete pad)
    - shade sails (problem with sails is that they come down in October and can’t go up until April, $600 each time to install/remove)
* We focus a lot on community and the city-owned climber is great for that, lots of people congregate there in good weather. We want to provide this for the community as a whole.
* Maybe there are grants we can look for since it will benefit the community as a whole.
* Melissa suggested that the larger structure invites more people, where the small gazebos likely wouldn’t have adults hanging out, also might invite problematic behaviour. The larger structure invites the community to use it for a variety of things.
* Picnic tables can be added, either fixed or movable. If tables are fixed it limits what you can do for gym classes, as well as people to hang out. Movable tables can be chained to poles, seating would be nice to have. The concrete pad is key so that it doesn’t become a mud pit. Blue Imp said most schools regret going with a smaller size.
* We still need to get 3 quotes from school-approved vendors.
* The next step is to meet with facilities to determine where we could put a park shelter. Ideally over by the city-owned climber (where the baseball diamond used to be prior to this year).
* Cassie has had some feedback from parents wondering why field trips cost what they do when we do all this fundraising. Is this the best use of our funds? We do sometimes subsidize field trips. Shade has been a topic of discussion for many years.
* Alicia - What happens if/when vandalism happens? We’ve had this happen, and have had to clean it up (new climber, buddy benches), unfortunately it’s inevitable. We’ve also had vandalism on the outside brick walls of the school.
* Karen - What about rubberized flooring instead of concrete? Less inviting for vandalism of the floor.
* Are we as a council prepared to move towards fundraising for a shade structure? Yes.
* Jill motioned that we finish raising the funds needed for the 30’x30’ shade structure with floor type to be determined, Chris seconded, approved unanimously.
* Kyly will investigate grants for this.

Teachers’ Wish List - Rebecca J.

* About $12,000 of item wishes have been provided by staff (not including items that the school was able to check off from ministry funds and some from school funds).
* Insert wish list from Rebecca (no calculators, or outdoor ramps set)
  + - $5000 - 120 track/team uniforms (all jr. students who participate in volleyball, basketball, running club, track & field use these uniforms - current ones are 15-20 years old and in very rough shape) ($35 each)
    - $46 - teachers for planning coding activities
    - $457.50 - 15 math/science coding activities for intermediate students ($26.99 each)
    - $1016.85 - 15 math/science coding activities for intermediate students ($59.99 each)
    - $720.83 - outdoor ramps with pine stands for open-ended outdoor play
    - $677.93 - 6 additional wobbly stools ($99.99 each)
    - $988.75 - 3 class sets of basic calculators for EQAO, can also be shared with other classes when not in use ($125 per set of 10)
    - $3200 - 250 stuffed animal cougars for new kindergarten students (we’ve historically done this and have run out)
* Kyly motioned to allocate $5000 for track/team uniforms (typical turnaround time is 3 weeks), Jesse seconded, approved unanimously.
* Cassie motioned to allocate $1500 for the combined coding requests, Emily seconded, approved unanimously.
* Emily motioned to allocate $700 for 6 wobbly stools, Chris seconded, approved unanimously.
* Emily motioned to allocate $2300 for 200 cougar stuffed animals, Cassie seconded, approved unanimously.

**Council members - remember to wear your yellow t-shirts to all events!**

**We have pinnies to lend, or we have extra t-shirts for purchase.**

**MEETING ADJOURNED 9:15pm**

Chris motioned to adjourn, Jill seconded, adjourned.

**Next meeting: Monday, March 18, 2024**

**(3rd Monday of the month)**

**Meeting Dates:** Apr. 15, May 13 (early to avoid Victoria Day), June (date TBD)