



SANDHILLS P.S. SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

March 8, 2017

6.30pm

Sandhills Library

MEETING CALLED BY:	Beth & Della Co-Chairs
TYPE OF MEETING	School Council
NOTE TAKER:	Katherine – Co-Secretary
STAFF ATTENDANCE:	Principal Silvana Hoxha, Vice Principal Tom Ernst
PARENT ATTENDANCE:	Beth R., Nadina D., Della S., Katherine S., Christian S., Kerri P., Maria M., Kim F., Khaled B., Ashley C.

CHAIR(S) UPDATE

Beth/Della

DISCUSSION

- Due to the late distribution of the February minutes, the previous month's minutes are deferred until next School Council

Change in School Elections

- Beth proposed to move up the dates of school elections (first school council meeting)
- Result: unable to change the model because we need to give parents 30 days' notice of elections from the start of the school year

Fundraising initiatives

- Beth and Della questioned whether School Council should move away from fundraising entirely-school council's mandate is not just fundraising (only a small portion is fundraising). Would like to focus more on building relationships with teachers, ECE, TA and other staff
- Expectations for fundraising: minimum of \$15,000 required
- It takes a lot of work to run 3 fundraisers (logistics, time spent organizing plus time spent distributing cookie dough/chocolate bars). In a school of 700 students, only a couple of parents volunteered their time to help with fundraiser.
- Perhaps we need to acknowledge that it's too much money for School Council to try to raise
- We're not acknowledging that the demographic of the community has changed
- Parents have started to feel burnout from too many fundraisers. Out of 700 students, only 120 order forms for cookie dough was collected

Fundraising options considered

1. Cancel all fundraising for remainder of 2016-2017 school year
2. Continue with planned fundraising for remainder of 2016-2017 school year
3. Change remaining fundraisers to formats that allow for minimal work and time from school council to ease the burden that's being asked of regular rotation of volunteers
4. Email an announcement to parents, inform them of impact that low parent involvement is having (main impact will be the reduced availability of field trip transportation funds, parents will be required to pay for some/all field trips in 2017-2018 school year)

Two alternative fundraising options were presented by Sandra:

1. Gift card subscription: parents order gift card to a store they regularly shop at and get the full value of it. In return, Sandhills gets 3% of gift card value. Parents receive a tax receipt for the amount of the 3% for tax purposes
 2. One time gift card order: typically done before Christmas. Works similarly to subscription gift cards but are purchased in 1 period of the year. Popular retailers' gift cards are available.
- Motion: reduce the number of fundraisers that are time & labour intensive and move towards a model that allows



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for more online contributions and requires less volunteers >> motion passed

- Motion: cancel Big Box of Cards fundraiser that was proposed to start in April >> passed
- An email will be sent via School Day requesting involvement from volunteers for fundraising. Deadline will be April 11th
- Sandra & Ashley will research which gift card options have least involvement and best return on investment (ROI)

SCHOOL UPDATE

Silvana/Tom

DISCUSSION

- Staff Update was to be provided by Mrs. Krista Weltz but she was unable to attend
Principal Hoxha provided school update
- School Events:
 - Swim to Survive is still in progress
 - Safety Village: several classes will be going to the Safety Village over the next few weeks
 - Caribou Math Contest is on April 5th and 6th
 - Mireille Messier French immersion author is coming to Sandhills on April 20. All French immersion students will attend her presentation
 - Danceathon will take place March 29th -still looking for volunteers
- Musical
 - April 26th and 27th
 - Committee has divided parent attendance by last names of students
 - Those with last names A-L may attend on April 25th
 - Parents with last names M-Z may attend on April 26th
 - Students attend both dates
 - Theme is Canada's Sesquicentennial
 - Parents can get tickets (likely up to maximum of 2 tickets per child/family)
- We have a new Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being: Bill Lemon
- Grants
- We have applied for a number of grants
 - We also have applied for the Tim Walker grant (waiting to hear back from Mark)
 - Mr. Wellhauser filled out and submitted the Healthy Kids Challenge grant through the Region. If approved, it will be used for the sensory garden. The grant includes a food forest, edible trails, a cookbook and a mascot
 - Parent reaching out grant: Beth and Della will complete the form.
- School Improvement goals: three year plan
 - Math focus (automaticity), each teacher will work on that 15 minutes daily
 - Parents, staff and students will work on creating a cohesive community
 - School Improvement Planning Committee
 - Will work on bringing back regular assemblies

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Ashley -Finance

DISCUSSION

- Financial update is deferred

GREENING INITIATIVE

Mark

DISCUSSION



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SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

Nadina

DISCUSSION

Dance Night

- We have a new volunteer for parent engagement committee for the dance night
- Nadina will be creating a picture wall
- Draws will be for two prize baskets: Pokémon and Shopkins
- Raffle tickets: 3 for a dollar
- Entry costs \$3 per person, including parents/guardians/all staff
- Della to purchase candy (sour keys are a hit).
- Volunteers: Jessica, Kerri, Sandra, Nadina and Beth, Della, Kim, Ashley
- Professor Jamz is scheduled

Family Fun Fair

- School Council discussed cancelling the family fun fair – it’s expensive (approximately \$3500) and there is a shortfall in fundraising this year
- Additionally, we don’t have enough commitment from parents and teachers. Oftentimes volunteers back out.
- Option: schedule a family picnic where everyone brings their own food and kids get a chance to socialize
- Tom will discuss the Fun Fair cancellation with staff and report back next School Council

PARKING/SAFETY

Katherine/ Leslie Maxwell (Special Guest)

DISCUSSION

- Leslie Maxwell, School Travel Planner from Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region in attendance
- Leslie observed the traffic situation surround Sandhills in late January along Victoria Street and on Westheights
- The mandate of Leslie’s position is to get students to walk and to reduce driving.
- Going forward, Leslie will support Sandhills with the creation of a Walking School Bus (WSB)
- The problems surrounding Sandhills have escalated in the past and have become a safety issue
- If funding is required, Leslie will try to find grants
- There are a couple of schools using a Walking School Bus program. Sandhills can apply many lessons learned from their experiences
- A school in Wellesley did well with their WSB program, it runs year-round.
- In Cambridge, the school worked with Block Parents. They also received support from the Canadian Cancer Society. Cambridge school’s program is suffering because there are boundary issues. A kiss and drop was created which has exacerbated problems.
- According to the survey results, we currently have 10 people who have volunteered. Volunteers will require a background check. Leslie will look into the possibility to fund/waive the criminal background check fee

Next Steps:

1. Determine safest routes, do a walkabout.
2. Determine where to place the stops and build a structure
3. Create a rotation of volunteers consisting of regulars and fill-ins

Katherine, the Team Lead for the parking/safety committee will schedule a meeting with Leslie to discuss next phase

- One ongoing problem throughout the winter is the lack of sidewalk clearing. Leslie will take the matter to the city to inform them of the impact this is having on students walking to/from school
- Additional options to consider:
 1. Establish a Foot Patrol: older students walk to and from Sandhills wear a bright vest with the school name. It indicates to other students that they’re a safe person to approach if needed. This helps makes the neighborhood more walkable. Foot Patrol volunteers would have St. John’s training
 2. Establish a Buddy System
 3. Bike Skills program. This is run by Phil Martin. The program’s goals is to teach students about safety rules to give students confidence. Ideal for students in grade 5 or higher.



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OTHER BUSINESS

Beth/Della

DISCUSSION

Lunch box program

Question posed at School Council: should we continue the program for the last 3 months of the school year?

Vote: yes.

FUNDRAISING SUB-COMMITTEE

Beth

DISCUSSION

- Fundraising was discussed during the Chair update
- Ashley volunteered to be Team Lead for the Fundraising Committee

END TIME:	8:02 pm
NEXT MEETING:	Wednesday, April 12, 2017 @ 6:30pm.