



MINUTES

Clearmeadow School Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: November 8, 2007

In Attendance:

Lynda Hill-Oren, Sophia Mullin, Robynne Hutton, Heather Moffatt, Lynn Conforti, Marnie Clark, Monica Brown, Michelle Finlay, Michelle Rich, Terri Leach, Shelley Langer, Flo Azulay, Ron Clarke, Stephanie S., Abigail W., Holly E., Amrit B., Paula Braithwaite, Ruth Burgess, John Davison, Ainsley Davison, Jackie Ewing, Jan Norwood, Katrina Paivio, Michelle Willemse, Janelle Speers, Mrs. Horner.

Regrets: Lea Calicchia, Jane Macpherson, Kristine Draper

Welcome and Introductions:

The meeting was called to order by Robynne at 6:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

The October 24th Minutes were approved by Ron Clarke, seconded by Terri Leach.

Student Council

Mrs. Hill-Oren introduced our guests to the meeting, members of the Student Council. The Student Council President, spoke about the successful Hallowe'en dance they'd had and mentioned they were arranging to have a holiday dance for the grades 7 and 8 students as well. They meet every Tuesday at lunch to discuss matters. There are 5 student council members plus Ms Chiovitti and Mrs. Afonso. The ideas they are discussing this year are having some spirit days and selling candy canes, cinnamon hearts, and hot chocolate for fundraising initiatives. The funds raised go to the drama club, are used for trips, they make a donation to Sir William Mulock's tech society and the non-perishable food items donated go to the food bank. Mrs. Hill-Oren thanked them for coming and keeping us informed. She also reminded them that if they needed any support or ideas that the School Council was always there for them.

Administrative Update

- Principal Lynda Hill-Oren spoke briefly about our last Council meeting and how it was not like any of our other meetings. She expressed that Clearmeadow is a positive school with a positive environment, with wonderful children and caring parents and teachers. She wants it to remain that way. The role of a school council is to address school issues. If anyone needs to talk about anything during our meetings, they need to speak to a member of the council and have the issue put on our agenda. That way, we can address the issues in a timely and professional manner.
- Safe School Action Team – it is mandated for every Ontario school to have in place a safe schools team. It should consist of at least one student, one parent, one teacher, one support staff member, one community partner and the principal or vice-principal. The committee is responsible for helping schools to develop and implement school-wide bullying prevention and intervention plans. Any parents interested in serving on this committee should contact Jane Macpherson and be available to meet during or immediately following the school day. The first meeting will take place in January.

- Movie Day – as a way of thanking the school population for the successful magazine drive, it was decided to have a movie day. The Primary grades would see an appropriate movie for their age group, as well as the Junior grades and the Intermediate grades. There were several suggestions as to what movies could be shown. Administrators and parents would supervise and pass out the popcorn while teachers could take some extra time to work on the report cards.
- Remembrance Day Assemblies – these will take place November 9th with the primary classes starting at 9:00 am. The drama club will be doing a performance and everyone who tried out, got a role. There will be a Wall of Honour recognizing family members who served in wars or peace keeping missions across the world.
- Staff Professional Focus/School Plan for Continuous Improvement (SPCI) – the focus is on improving student achievement in writing skills. In December grade teams will undertake an in-depth look at a few individual students to address the needs of the class. The staff goal is to generate a writing skills continuum which is currently in draft state to show what a level 3 skill set looks like for the various genre.
- Technology Boost – it was decided to use the \$10,000 from our “non-board account” for this year’s cost sharing program (as well as the \$19,000 given to the school because of the new addition) to augment technology in our school. We will upgrade computers, purchase wireless access points, an LCD projector, 5 laptops, 33 refurbished computers, 6 new computers, 3 digital cameras and some mice.
- Mrs. Davie’s Character Matters presentation was deferred to another meeting.

Co-Chair Update

Sophia spoke about the Breakfast Grant. We are applying for a portion of this from the government. Paula Braithwaite runs the program, checking to see if the classroom baskets need more supplies, making sure they are filled, etc. It has been documented that children cannot learn if they are hungry. A few of the teachers present at this meeting said their baskets are used frequently and the students who miss breakfast greatly appreciate it.

Sophia also mentioned the 4 committees we are forming (Yearbook, Kindergarten Playground, Parent Development and Fundraising) and noted that one council member has to chair each committee.

Heather spoke about the Pro-Grant, Raptor Reading Program. Last year we applied to the Ministry for grants (up to \$5000 was granted per program) and we got money (\$1000) for two programs, where most schools only got one! With the money, we introduced the boys’ reading program as well as the Snuggle up and Read program. Both were received very well by the students and parents alike. We have applied again this year, however the Ministry is only approving \$1000 maximum per program. Heather mentioned perhaps giving a little book or a little whiteboard for the kids and continue the boys’ reading program with maybe a boys’ night out with sports magazines, etc. We are waiting to hear from the Ministry. Lynn said we had to submit a final report last year to give feedback and since we only got the approval from the government in February/March and it was busy getting the programs implemented, and then to get written responses from the kids about how they liked it, it was very rushed. Hopefully this year it will be better because we’ll have more time.

Treasurer Update

Monica submitted three months’ worth of statements. See attached.

Fundraising Coordinator Update

We are excited to be launching two programs in the next few days: Mabel’s labels and Shop and Support. Michelle explained that Mabel’s labels can be ordered all year long and that there were two different times to order for the Shop and Support, therefore making it easier for parents. As

well, on November 23rd, during the student-led conferences, the Entertainment Books would be available for ordering as there would be a table set up where parents could see the books and order them. Letters are going out shortly. One of the teachers at the meeting said she's had experience with the Mabel's labels and they are terrific at staying on things and still being readable.

One of the teachers spoke about the upcoming read-a-thon and voiced her concerns about overtaxing parents in such a short time period. She didn't realize that the times with our fundraising efforts and the read-a-thon would be conflicting. As our fundraising efforts are purely on a voluntary basis, it was hoped that parents would be able to pick and choose which fundraising initiative to support.

Volunteer Coordinator Update

Terri thanked our babysitter, Gillian E. Questions were raised about signing in as a parent volunteer. The yellow stickers seem to be easily accessible and anyone who observes the routine would know what to do (sign in, stick on a yellow sticker to one's shirt). It was noted that the nametags we received as council members were terrific and that perhaps a system like that would work better for parent volunteers who come to the school regularly. Terri did a mock-up brochure with parent volunteer information and the expectations of all volunteers when they are in the school. Monica mentioned the course she is attending once a week at the Aurora Library called "GIVE" (Get Involved Volunteer Event) and that it was very worthwhile for anyone who volunteers in any capacity. They cover topics such as health issues, safety issues, communication, bullying, culture sensitivity, etc. She encouraged anyone who was able to attend to do so.

Community Rep Update

Shelley talked about the forming of the Parent Development Initiative Committee. It will start in January and they are looking for suggestions for topics. It is a small group right now.

Other Business

One of the teachers talked about the outdoor classroom which would be another space in the playground for hanging out, reading, journaling, performing, etc. It would be a circular area with large flat rocks. It is a kid-driven project and they are presently researching the best spot for this in our playground. It will be exciting for the children to take part in this project and hopefully with their participation and involvement, it will be a positive place for them to be. It was noted that if anybody has something that needs to be on the agenda, to please let one of the council members know before the meeting.

Next Meeting

December 3, 2007 at 6:30 pm.

Thank you for coming!