

MINUTES

Elora Public School Council

Feb 22, 2022

Virtual Attendees: Curt McQueen, Michelle Youngblood, Jude Fletcher, Rachel Albano, Alison Negrave, Kim Blair, Catherine Black, Jannilea Ghezzi, Colette Bayani & Chris Jess

1. Welcome and Introductions (Rachel)

2. Attendance

3. Approval of Minutes from Nov 9, 2021 (Kim)

4. P/VP Report (Curt)

4.1 Slow return to sports and activities - Activities are starting up again. There is flexibility in class set-up but kids still need to stay with their class during recess – the school/board is waiting for the province to change their stance on recess procedures. School protocols are not expected to change as quickly as the province restrictions when things open up further.

4.2 Kindergarten registration is going well with 30 JK kids registered to date and this is still growing. This is an increase from past years. It is still unknown if new JK parents will be able to have an in-person visit to the school prior to next year – if it is possible, it will be in June. Overall numbers for next year are down but a bump in numbers is possible before the start of next year.

4.3 Timing of the new school in the Storybook subdivision is uncertain and it is still not known how this will affect EPS numbers and EPS families that live in the new subdivision.

Dates to Note

February 25 - Deadline to fill out WHY survey

March 2 - First day for pizza

March 3 - First day for pitas

March 11-20 - March Break (please note: Friday, March 11 is a holiday - part of March Break)

March 23 - Superintendent Taha visits

April 4 - Grade 8 Grad Photos

April 15 - Good Friday Holiday

April 18 - Easter Monday Holiday

5. Teacher Reports

5.1 Mrs. Youngblood

Equity Books

- \$3000 worth of books purchased through Magic Pebble Books - all but 12 titles have been delivered. Books have been prepped and sent to Terry James Resource Centre for cataloguing. Titles cover a range of topics: Poverty/Homelessness/Hunger, Anti-Racism, Ability & Disability, Mental Health, Women's Issues, Gender Identity & Diversity, Sexuality, Period Equity, Indigenous Education, Body Image, etc.

Staff Equity PD

- weekly tidbits of professional development for staff related to topics in 3 main areas from now until June (Gender Identity & Diversity, Anti-racism focused on Racialized students and families, Visible/Invisible Disabilities)

Allies for All (Student Group)

- focus is to raise awareness of equity and inclusion at Elora PS
- first action item is around pronouns and whether or not we are ensuring staff and students are being referred to by the pronouns that represent who they are

Empowerment Week March 7-11

- Line-up of incredible speakers (virtual) available to students grade 5-8
- Lesson plans developed by a committee of UGDSB teachers

Resilient

- local photographer/author Wayne Simpson did a google meet with one of our grade 8 students about his new book "Resilient"
- students then wrote their own resilient stories that were put together into a collection and gifted to Wayne prior to his interview with CBC The Current

Students Create Change Group initiatives

- 1 Box Initiative targeting Period Equity - beginning March 1st and leading up to International Women's Day on March 8. Students in grade 4-8 are invited to support making feminine products accessible to girls and women in our community by bringing in a box of feminine products that will then be donated to local women's organizations!
- Patrick Anderson Project - A group of grade 7 students will be making a presentation before Centre Wellington Council on Monday Feb 28th @ 1:00 to advocate for CW to recognize the accomplishments of Patrick Anderson - paralympic athlete - greatest wheelchair basketball player in the world. This group of students feel this is an opportunity for CW to be a leader in Ontario by being the first community to focus on the recognition of athletes of all abilities and disabilities through signage like what other communities have for the likes of Wayne Gretzky, etc.

Scientists in Classrooms

- Virtual scientist presentations for many classes from Gr 1-5 have been booked by teachers. Students will have the chance to get hands on science instruction related to the curriculum delivered by scientists across Canada!

Student Presentations to Parent Council

- wondering if Parent Council would be interested in having a couple of student presentations to update the initiatives, clubs and activities going on at school? The attendees on the call thought this was a great idea and will spread the word to other parents to encourage others to attend

5.2 Mr. McQueen

Sledge Hockey

- Grades 4-8 have played sledge hockey or are waiting to do so over the coming weeks. Five classes have participated so far and the school has the equipment. The classes have been using Bissell Park but are looking into the arena as an alternative due to weather.

Spirit Wear

- The new Spirit Wear campaign has been launched and ordering is available until March 7th. There are some great items available from CW Sportswear.

Curling

- 4 sets of indoor curling rocks with targets & sticks for kids in wheelchairs were provided by the Rocks & Rings program for a period of time. It was an amazing experience for all and a great success with the timing during the Olympics.

Snowshoeing

Snowshoes were purchased last year and have been used again this year for a great outdoor activity...

5.3 Mr. Fletcher- The teachers are hoping to have a traditional Grade 8 graduation with a dance, etc. but it is still not certain – they are waiting for the province to confirm. He asked that parent council be on stand-by for decorations, etc. (which Rachel said is possible). The teachers are relooking at the awards so all kids are recognized vs. a select few. More details to follow. Mr. Fletcher is also looking at the transition from Grade 8 to Grade 9 and will be looking for input from kids who are about to transition and/or kids who have recently graduated from EPS and are now in high school.

6. Treasurer Report (Janice & Curt) – The basket raffle did really well this year and the budget is currently as follows...

General - \$407.65
 Fundraising - \$4,865
 Landscaping - \$2,390.44
 Playground - \$40.39

Janet is researching two potential grants...

-Parent Involvement Grant – there are stipulations and it is to be used to bridge the gap between home & school. Parents plan the event and are then reimbursed with receipts and Principal sign-off.

-Grade 9 Transition Grant – Janice will look into further and send Curt the details to determine if applicable to EPS.

7. Fundraising Committee Planning (Alison) – The basket raffle was a success. The fundraising committee is looking to organize an event for the spring but they are going to wait to see what will be allowed at that time. Looking at ideas such as a family BBQ, outdoor movie night, etc. Geddes Market has also approached parent council and offered to sell gift certificates that will result in giving 10% of the proceeds back to the school. Curt mentioned it would be great to organize an event that involves both fundraising and family involvement but agreed that the committee needs to wait to see what is possible after March. At least one more fundraising event would be great for this year.

8. School Yard Update (Rachel) - Rachel has spoken to Mr. Speers as he has experience with building playgrounds and fundraising. According to Mr. Speers, the first step is to decide what the school / parent council want. The majority of the attendees on the video call indicated they wanted the structure to be accessible so ground cover, ramps, etc. will all be taken into consideration. Potential donations/grants to research are the CW Rotary Club, Trillium Fund Grant along with sponsorship ideas for businesses & families (i.e. levels such as Gold/Silver/Bronze). It would be great to involve students as much as possible regarding fundraising (i.e. presentations to potential donors) and design (i.e. voting on final 2 designs). Based on Mr. Speers' past experience, costs for an accessible playground can be approx. \$200,000 and a non-accessible playground around \$50,000. Curt said there is no timeline to replace the playground and suggested the committee consider a phased approach so the playground is completed in stages. The school board has very specific step-by-step guidelines to follow with a list of approved contractors to approach. The committee will need to confirm any board constraints regarding corporate donations, signage, etc. - service clubs may be easier to work with in this regard. Colette mentioned that she has a list of grants that schools can apply for. Chris Jess, Colette Bayani & Alison Negrave all indicated that they are interested in being involved with the playground committee.

9. Other Business – Jannilea asked which volunteers need to provide updated police checks to the school. Curt is going to confirm and report back.

10. Next Meeting Date - The next meeting date is April 12th.