

School Council
Meeting Minutes
October 20th, 2020

Opening:

Karen Kennedy called the virtual meeting (due to Covid restrictions) to order at 6:30pm

Present:

Kimberly Dempsey Jones – Principal
Karen Kennedy – Co- Chair
Lisa Thompson - Co- Chair
Carly Ferris – Vice Chair
Colleen Kee - Treasurer
Amber Gallagher – Secretary
Jen Robinson – Teacher Rep
Jacqueline Clement
Jo Thomson – Parent Member
Jason Thompson?
Meghan Rodwell
Christine Wallace

Absent:

Sean Henderson – Vice Principal – absent due to internet issues

New Business:

Karen started the meeting going over council by-laws. Everyone on the executive agreed they had read and understood said by-laws and recorded in the chat area of the meeting that they agreed to them.

Principal's report: Kimberly stated the school community is missing the parents/volunteers and hoped everyone got a chance to see the slideshows showcasing the changes in the school and as a look into each child's classroom in place to meet the teacher night. She asked that parents visit their child's google classroom regularly as teachers are posting things there frequently for them to see. Kimberly updated that the Compass Run that had been postponed from June was just ran and the teachers and students came together to make it successful. She stated that the board had given the schools the ability to make their own decision in regards to Halloween and costumes, the staff voted in favour of costumes for Thursday October 29th due to a PD day the 30th. She asked all costumes be appropriate, follow the dress code and are inclusive. On the PD day on the 30th the teachers will be focusing on the new math program and creating a cohesive plan with the virtual school for switching back and forth so no child misses or repeats units. Progress reports will be sent home November 20th and the November PD day that is supposed to be for interviews will have direction soon.

Questions arose at the end of the report about the changing of children to and from virtual learning. They were as follows:

Q. Will there be reorganization?

A. Hopefully not. Parents have been reaching out from virtual learning, home schooling and in person learning. However, Kimberly hopes it won't have a major impact. At this point it is too early to tell how Primrose will be impacted but there will be information from the survey soon.

Q. When will you know?

A. Kimberly is hopeful that by the end of the week of Oct. 19th – 23rd that she will know more. There are meetings scheduled Nov. 4th and 5th to deal with staffing and the board should give the reorganizing information by Nov. 9th.

Q. How many students are in the building and participating in remote learning?

A. 470 students are registered at Primrose with 390 in the building and 80 in remote. There are also children starting this week who have moved to the area and there will be more in January as well.

Q. Are there more teachers available to create more classrooms if all the kids come back?

A. Primrose has loaned 3 teachers to the virtual learning and they can be recalled as necessary.

Teacher Report: Jennifer Robinson gave the report and also reiterated that the teachers are missing the parents/volunteers and the reading, breakfast, hot lunch and milk program are greatly missed and appreciated. She stated staff are mentoring each other through these unprecedented times. She stated IEP first drafts were sent home that day, that new computer training online has allowed parents to access remotely in order to learn and help their child. She stated there have been many safety videos about lockdowns, tornado drills, fire alarms etc that the children have been watching as the actual drills cannot be completed due to Covid. She stated that new routines are going smoothly and the kids are doing great! She was asked if OTs are allowed back in the school and Kimberly responded. She stated speech and language are in every Friday but there has been some changes to OT due to Covid. All parents with OT concerns can have a request made by the school, however the access is limited due to the OT now coming in every 4 to 6 weeks and the volume of students the OT could see on those limited days. She stated at best there will likely be about 6 visits this school year. Parents with urgent or complex concerns may want to explore options beyond the school.

Treasure Report: Colleen stated that due to Covid shut downs council didn't really spend much and there were refunds given for programming that did not happen in the spring. As lots of fundraising occurred before the shutdown council is in a good position to help out and has approximately \$20,000. Colleen's report lead to the following questions.

Q. Where is snack bin funding coming from?

A. Out of the breakfast program account. Grants were applied for but due to the generous donation last year and the hard work of parent volunteers fundraising, Primrose has a healthy balance and does not qualify for any grants. Due to Covid restrictions the breakfast program of fresh healthy foods delivered to classrooms every morning cannot run.

Q. How much is being spent per week on the snack bin?

A. Sean Henderson is in charge of that and as he was unable to be present due to technical difficulties the exact number is unknown. Kimberly said she would find out and let the council know.

Q. Has there been any discussion with Food & Friends?

A. Food and Friends is a children's foundation in Guelph/Wellington that helps bring food to ALL children in schools in our area. Their focus is to be inclusive and make sure everyone has a full belly to learn and grow. Their current recommendation is to provide brown bags with food in the office for any child to grab as necessary. Primrose does not want to create stigma around needing food so is going above and beyond with the snack tray for each classroom. It has prepackaged snacks anyone can take. They also are running a breakfast box program due to being unable to provide their normal programming. **Anyone who needs a helping hand right now can still apply and the boxes are dropped on their doorstep. Kimberly or Sean are only a phone call away and can assist with information or you can go to this link <https://www.childrensfoundation.org/what-we-do/food-friends/food-friends-at-home>.**

Q. Was the donation from Bob Donaldson received this year?

A. He sent the money to the Shepard's Foodbank due to the breakfast program not running and the Foodbank taking over during Covid shutdown. The remainder was returned to the school (\$4000).

Other Business:

Kiss and Ride – It was brought up that mornings are getting better but there are major issues with parking in the kiss and ride in order to pick up younger kids from the gym. Kimberly was asked to reiterate that the kiss and ride is not for parking.

Communication from the Principal- Kimberly was asked to reiterate to parents the different platforms of communication so people do not miss out on information. It was also asked that parents be told that the Facebook page is run by council not admin and to direct questions/comments accordingly. Kimberly stated she would send out communication clarifying all of this.

Playground - In March each class was given 5 balls colour coded to a bag, they make it easier at the end of recess to get everything back where it belongs. It was asked that a stock be taken of all equipment for outdoor play so that council can purchase whatever is necessary to keep kids engaged and active during recesses as the play structure remains closed. Collen asked for the invoice for those kits as she was told they were paid but has not seen them yet. Kimberly was going to inquire with Leslie.

Playground Committee Update – Amber gave a quick update that although the committee was unable to get very far last year due to the shutdown that a company has been contacted to help with designing and pricing options. Shawn is currently trying to get a meeting with Evergreen organized and the committee will be restarting with its first meeting Wednesday October 28th virtually from 2pm to 3pm. Kimberly will send out a link and anyone willing to be an active participant in the committee is welcome to attend.

Fundraising – Council asked if fundraising was an option yet. Kimberly stated the board is still saying no but that there is a joint council meeting in the future that it can be brought up in. A few contactless options like gift cards were suggested.

Additions to the agenda:

Teachers are given \$100 every year by council to assist in the purchase of teaching materials above and beyond the markers, glue, scissors etc that Primrose already has in the budget for them. It was motioned by Karen to continue it this year for all teachers in the school not just the ones assigned a classroom. It was seconded by Lisa and Thirded by the remainder of the executive. It was also stated that teachers need to remember to submit their receipts for that \$100 early and that if anything is needed above and beyond that money that council is always available to listen and get what is needed.

Kimberly mentioned on behalf of Librarian Sherrie Anderson that the Forest of Reading Program is starting soon and that she will be looking for support for those books as well as potential other needs. Covid has led to many adjustments but Sherrie is getting literacy through the school by handling book requests, creating book bins and many other tricks on her rolling cart! Council asked Kimberly to get actual number for approval.

Breakfast with Santa – Karen asked that even though it cannot occur this year that perhaps something festive could occur in its place. Nothing further was talked about.

Dufferin Hat Box – Kimberly told council that there is normally a box of winter things donated to each school. Due to Covid that cannot happen. Council asked if it could assist with a donation bin or perhaps the ability for families to donate to cash online and council would purchase the necessary hats/mittens/socks that are well used in the winter. Kimberly said she would check with the superintendent.

Of final note it was discussed that parent members are needed on council and that Kimberly and Council via the Facebook page would try to get a few more people to come out. Council needs voting and non-voting members, all are welcome!

Adjournment:

Karen Kennedy adjourned the meeting at 8:20pm. Next meeting is Thursday December 3rd at 6:30pm

Minutes Submitted By: Amber Gallagher

Minutes Approved By: Executive & Admin.