



School Council Meeting
December 14, 2021 – 7 PM, Google Meet

Minutes

- Chair ~ Varvara Chernogorskaya
- Previous Co-Chairs ~ Sarah Jane Estabrook, Kristin Healey
- Treasurer ~ Michelle Sinclair
- Treasurer (apprentice) ~ Ewa Pyman
- Secretary ~ Kate Raspopow
- Book Fair Chair ~ Joni Hamlin
- OCASC Representative ~ Hart Shouldice
- Grade 6 Committee Chair ~ Angie Wagner
- 100th Anniversary Co-chairs ~ Crystal Holly Amado, Todd Lamont
- Volunteer Coordinator – Marion Siekierski
- Principal, RPPS ~ Heather Mace
- Vice Principal, RPPS ~ Sandra Miller
- Teacher representative ~ Christina Hawley
- RPPS Parent Participants
 - David Mackie
 - John Morales

1) Land Acknowledgement

2) Review of Agenda (5 minutes)

3) Review of November 2021 Minutes (5 minutes)

- Approval moved by Varvara Chernogorskaya and seconded by Kristen Healey

4) Business Arising from Minutes / Review of Action Items (5 minutes)

- a) Student Directory
 - Deadline to submit information has passed. Crystal and Heather will connect to circulate.
- b) Informal in-person Council meet up
 - Agreed to push this the discussion until January to see COVID-19 status.

5) Chair Report (10 minutes)

- a) 2020-21 School Council Year-end Annual Report (TBC)
 - Outgoing Co-Chairs formally submitted the report.
 - *Motion to approve: Michelle Sinclair. Seconded: Todd Lamont. Approved.*

6) Principal Report (10 minutes)

- RPPS parents and staff have questions regarding COVID-19. The school has not received any information regarding school re-opening in January. RPPS has received rapid testing kits, which will be circulated to students Thursday, December 16. Kits are for use on a voluntary basis. This is an Ontario Ministry of Health initiative.
- The RPPS public health nurse does checks in the school regarding COVID-19 protocols when they are there. Contact tracing will take place in staff room. Routines will continue in January.
- RPPS will be hosting a vaccination clinic on December 20th, when school is closed for the holidays. This is being run by Ottawa Public Health.
- Staff will revisit safe snow play with students in January. There is a new company for snow clearing.

7) Teacher Representative Report (5 minutes)

- Shared thanks from teachers for the authors in the classroom, and recognition of the work to make this happen. They were well-received by students, who were very engaged.
- Expressed appreciation for the donations for yard toys and other items received. It was noted they had not yet been distributed, but it will be good for students to have things to do on the yard.
- The volunteer coordinator noted they would like to share back with parents who donated when they are shared.
- The issue with distribution has been a processing issue, given competing priorities for COVID protocols; the teacher representative is working on an approach for distribution. The principal will follow-up.
- It was raised that Council could consider leveraging local papers for adds (and subsequent thanks) for additional community donations. Suggested to hold any action until the new year, as room in the school to receive and store the donations needs to be ensured. Administration will follow-up.
- Question raised on whether thank you cards would be allowed this year. It was indicated that these would be allowed, but aren't necessary or expected.
- It was shared that teachers are doing different activities about kindness, which will be shared. The kindness goals link into Kind Ottawa.
- The Canadian Forces Band sent the recording of their holiday concert.
- 100th anniversary Co-chair raised teacher appreciation, and whether Council could do something before the break.
- The Chair indicated that budget would need to be considered, and suggested a hot-chocolate event. It was decided this could be done the Thursday before break.
- It was mentioned that parents can post holiday messages to the staff, which would be posted on the school/staff message board.

8) Council - Committee Updates (25 minutes)

a) Treasurer

- Highlights: transferred \$3000 to Book Fair; \$300 (net) coming in from Spirit Wear; money spent on website and kinder class equipment.
- The school requested to have money transferred for forest school and literacy. The line item was transferred to the school, instead of per purchase, to facilitate paperwork. The school will update the Treasurer on the specific purchases. The money has been entirely spent.
- There was a discussion on the administrative and bookkeeping requirements for these types of transfers (i.e., how School Councils and Schools share money). Concerns were raised regarding School Council responsibility and accountability for the funds, and record keeping. Also regarding the information the school is required to share with Council.
- The Principal mentioned the detailed accounting the School is required to show (including itemized expenses), which extends to funds received from Council. Funding can only be spent for line item intended, and unused money must be returned to Council. Council indicated they should also have a copy of these expenses for instances of audit, and emphasized the need to follow approved procedures and have proper accounting.
- The Principal will go back to Finance Department to confirm; RPPS Office Assistant will provide regulations to Treasurer. Dave Mackey also shared some information.
- It was mentioned this type of request would only be made for line items that were school, not Council, items that were expected to be fully spent in the immediate term.

- It was requested that, moving forward, the School should identify these line items in advance to Council, to approve by vote at the subsequent Council meeting. If Council isn't comfortable, it won't be done. Good communication to ensure transparency moving forward was emphasized.
- The Treasurer shared that the Treasurer (apprentice) would be taking on a larger role moving forward. The Treasurer will also look into possibilities related to Indigenous learning.

b) OCASC Representative

- Dave Mackie provided the report for the OCASC representative, who arrived later during the meeting.
- Arts Representatives on Council: Given the ongoing threat to arts in schools posed by the double-barrel of budgetary constraints and pandemic realities, Councils are encouraged to add a position for an arts representative, to ensure that such programs retain a place of focus in schools. This isn't as much of a concern at the K-6 level as it is for 7-12, but still something to consider.
- There was some recent discussion about OCASC - which is comprised of representatives from every school in the OCDSB - losing its seat on the OCDSB Committee of the Whole, or COW (so, losing its spot at OCDSB meetings). The thought was that an OCASC representative was going to be replaced by representatives from PIC (Parent Involvement Committee), which is overseen by OCDSB. The concern was that the breadth of representation that OCASC brings to the table was going to be significantly watered down if OCASC representation was replaced by PIC representation. PIC will be added to the OCDSB COW, but an OCASC seat will remain. This is good news for broad representation of schools on OCDSB COW.
- OCASC is looking for feedback on whether individual school councils - including ours - purchase gifts for teachers or otherwise engage in acts of appreciation.

c) Book Fair Chair

- See Book Fair Report agenda item.

d) 100th Anniversary

- Branding has been successful; adjustments to logo based on last meeting have been incorporated. Thanks expressed to the designer.
- Emphasized that there will be a kid-centred approach to activities.
- The Committee is finalizing dates for main events. Working on getting events going and ensuring there's something to celebrate.
- The Committee would like to start reaching out to get names to support activities to take pressure off Council members.
- The role of the 100th Committee has been clarified: to celebrate RPPS' 100 years within school and community. They will raise some money (i.e., through the tulip fundraiser),
- The main Council fundraising activities will be led through the Fundraising Committee, who will coordinate across Council to fundraise for various causes/activities (including money for 100th anniversary events).
- It was shared that the OCDSB has a website regarding Council fundraising. Councils need to develop a fundraising plan for the year, and get approval from school administration to ensure it is in line with any OCDSB regulations. Fundraising should be intentional (i.e., for specific activities and/or purposes, such as the library, enrichment programs, classroom supports).
- Previous Co-chair emphasized the need for a main Fundraising Committee, as needs of subcommittees will differ, and we need an overarching group to coordinate fundraising, create synergies, and have the overall picture. The lead should be a Council member, with additional parent members.
- Previous Co-chair indicated that a challenge for the 100th Committee last year was that alumni rep wasn't interested in helping in fundraising. We need to figure out where RPPS alumni fit into the 100th events/activities to best integrate them and see where they might like to contribute.

e) Grade 6 Committee Chair

- hoping to have discussion with Katherine Nix week this week or early in new year about ideas received on activities (e.g., mural) to see what to pursue.
- 100th Committee Co-Chair inquired about progress on plaques or tree from last year. Supplier has been identified, and plaques have been ordered.
- Reminder that if the Grade 6 students want 'graduation' hoodies, need to be ordered soon.

f) Volunteer Coordinator

9) Book Fair Report (10 minutes)

- a) Questions and comments on the circulated report
- It was raised that the biggest question seems to be storage, and that we need access again. Is there an opportunity for Council support to push OCDSB on this point.
- Book Fair Chair raised that if the book fair goes somewhere else (e.g., to another school that could offer the storage needed), that school would get the money as they gave space and took the risks.
- Lessons learned highlighted included the need to continue to push Book Fair as a positive event for the School. We need to understand how we can bridge over and address any issues. We want Book Fair to be something that parents want to take part in; it's a quintessential part of RPPS.
- The Principal recognized the Book Fair Chair, saying that no one else could have addressed the challenges of the year, and made something happen.
- The Principal share that we are not currently allowed to access Book Fair storage rooms. They shared that later in the fall, we saw secondary schools that were being used for community use. We have no answers in the short term, but will hopefully have them in the long term.
- Other Council members thanked the Book Fair Chair for all of their work, and for bringing the spirit back to Book Fair this year. They emphasized what a big part of the community Book Fair is.
- The Book Fair Chair recognized the support from the community volunteers, and shared that the volunteers had been missing Book Fair and were thankful for the opportunity to get together through Book Fair. The Book Fair Chair emphasized that community members need to know that we thank them. We could create a 'Friends of Rockcliffe' to make other things happen.
- The Book Fair Chair suggested tying Book Fair in with the 100th anniversary, and that it should be part of that message going out. They received a few stories from people involved with Book Fair who were in the school previously.
- Council requested we get the intent, not commitment (given changing COVID-19 restrictions), that we intend to host Book Fair next year.
- Council intention is to support the continuity of the Book Fair initiatives; draw on lessons learned; and strive to move this initiative forward in years to come.
- The Principal indicated the School is committed to work with people who identify as being interested in moving this forward. Still early to identify people to pass the torch to; suggest to consult Book Fair Chair as they know best.
- Succession planning should start in January.
- The Book Fair Chair will meet at the end of January with the Principal and interested Council members. An update will be provide at the February meeting.

10) Fundraising (10 minutes)

- Some discussion on fundraising occurred during previous agenda items.
- a) Needs assessment and identification
 - Before identifying activities, it was recognized that we need the wish list of what funding is required – legacy events, 'keep lights on' items, etc.
 - Marion will start the identification and coordination of fundraising needs in the two buckets.
- b) Potential initiatives
- c) Next steps
 - Heather, Dave, and Varvara will connect offline regarding fundraising guidelines.
 - The Council will present a plan for fundraising for Principal approval.

- It was raised that fundraising could leverage community members; beyond parents.
- 100th Committee Co-Chair recognized that the bulk of RPPS funding typically comes from Book Fair, essentially eliminating the need for additional fundraising throughout the year.
- Council needs to connect with alumni, students, parents, and staff in celebrating the year.
- It was raised again that community papers can facilitate getting in touch with Alumni and other community members. The Book Fair Chair indicated they would be happy to help with this in the new year.

11) Other Business

- a) Newsletter ideas (Kate Raspopow; 5 minutes)
 - suggestions to provide member 'portraits', info on how Council meets and their activities. A 'New Years' edition that would reflect on the fall, and look forward to the winter/spring.
- b) Teacher Appreciation Lead/Committee (TBC; 5 minutes)
 - Deferred until January to identify a lead.
 - It was suggested Council identify a few appreciation dates in advance, the money needed, etc.
 - It was suggested for the Principal to send out a message with positions needed/volunteer roles to be filled and have Heather send it out. Council needs to identify what is essential and prioritize. This could be included in the newsletter as well. Could also draw from the pool of previous parent volunteers.
- c) Spirit Wear (TBC)
 - Spirit Wear was received, packaged, and brought to the School for distribution to classrooms.

12) Adjournment

Next Meeting: January 18, 2022 – 7 PM, Google Meet