

**DRAFT RPPS SCHOOL COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
February 10, 2015**

PARTICIPANTS:

Caroline Matt, Chair	John Arnold, Member at Large
Imbaw Storer, Vice-Chair	Marta Reyes Lipman, Member at Large
Nicole White, Treasurer	Anna Zyzniewski, Member at Large
Abby DeWolfe, Past President	Nabanita Giri, Member at Large
Joni Hamlin, Book Fair Chair	Shari Brodie, Principal, RPPS
Inge Vander Horst, Book Fair Volunteer Coordinator	Joel Berger, OCASC Representative
Ali Asgari, Volunteer Coordinator	Gillian Campbell
Margaret Fudali	Jessica Currie

REGRETS:

Kristi Squires, Treasurer; Abigail Fyfe, Member at Large

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda approved. Moved by Abby DeWolfe; seconded by Joni Hamlin; carried.

2. APPROVAL OF January, 2015 MINUTES

Minutes were approved. Moved by Nabanita Giri; seconded by Abby DeWolfe; carried.

3. CHAIR'S REPORT

- Caroline reported on the second PRO talk by Marian Small, which was engaging, and attended by approximately 25 participants. She thanked the volunteers who help out that evening: Ali Asgari, Abby DeWolfe, and the volunteers from Ashbury.
- Author's workshops are being organized by Christina Leadley and Heather King, who have received interest from all authors that participated last year. The workshops are scheduled to take place on May 6. The librarian from the Rockcliffe OPL branch will do a storytime for the kindergarteners on May 7.
- Caroline requested everyone who is available to stay and count pledges for the dance-a-thon after tonight's meeting.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- Shari led a review of school needs with OCDSB facilities team, including head of facilities Peter Wright. Items reviewed with team were:
 - Kitchen expansion. Next steps:
 - Investigating rework of plumbing, removal of wall
 - Once investigation complete, drawings can be done

- Air conditioning for second floor classrooms
- Replacement of windows on second floor (which are difficult to open)
- Swipe access to be added on kindergarten door
- Doors painted
- New bunker for kindergarten equipment (in the spring)
- The following work will be conducted during March break:
 - Gym painted
 - Book Fair mural wall painted Repair Kindergarten ceiling
- There was a level of acknowledgement from the board representatives that the condition of RPPS has been somewhat neglected; Shari is keeping in front of the board to push for improvements
- Shari reminded the council of improvements delivered last year:
 - Old drapes replaced with new blinds
 - Portables have AC now
- Imbaw noted a thought that was shared on ThoughtExchange (an online tool being used by the school board to prioritize issues important to users) stating that RPPS was amongst the worst in terms of school facilities rating.
- Shari has also had discussions with the board security lead regarding outdoor security cameras and an additional mosquito (noise maker) to deter late-night loitering / vandalism
- Two additional maintenance ideas were suggested:
 - Cleaning of exterior stucco on Queen Juliana hall
 - Fix library lighting (flickering, lights are various colours/light temperatures rather than uniform)
- Update on Kindergarten registration reports slow progress. Sixteen students have been registered to date. While there is no panic at this point, it was noted that there is an impact to late registration in terms of staff planning and allocation of students to classes / classroom sizes. Late registration has historically resulted in a need to rebalance classes after the school year starts, which is disruptive.
- The “student transfer period” was taking place the week of February 9. Students who have moved during the school year outside the catchment area are permitted to remain for the rest of the current year, however they need to apply for a transfer for next year. Students must register at their home school and submit a transfer request. Since RPPS is a “zero cap” school (meaning there is no capacity to accommodate transfers), the likelihood of transfer requests being granted is very low. Circumstances do come into play (i.e., a student originally attending RPPS going into a later grade would take precedence over a new student going into Kindergarten).
- Spirit week was reported to be off to a great start, with plenty of enthusiasm and fun. The Tuesday of the council meeting was crazy hair day and student/teacher hockey game (with the teachers edging the students this year).
- French public speaking contest taking place on February 18.
- Yoga started last week and has been a big hit with 57 students in attendance.
- Sad news was conveyed regarding John the school bus driver. His wife passed away unexpectedly. Shari to share details including donation preferences. Council discussed having a poster done for all kids on his route to sign, in lieu of cards. It was also decided to donate \$50 to the charity identified by the family.

- JK/SK teacher Jessica Currie led a presentation on full day kindergarten, starting with a slide presentation on a day in the life of JK/SK at RPPS. She conveyed her thanks and gratitude for funds provided by council, which have been used to provide outdoor equipment and classroom material. Jessica then provided an update on the implementation of the full day kindergarten program. Full day kindergarten in Ontario is a play-based program featuring purposeful play with stations that meet / bolster the curriculum. There is an emphasis on self-regulation and choice, resulting in a mix of specialists (kids who focus on same activity every day) to generalists who try a bit of everything. Teachers develop strategies to help children to problem solve (“provocateurs” – provoke thought). The day includes teacher-led activities as well, in one-on-one, group and class levels. Teachers tailor the programming based on the interests of the children (inquiry learning), resulting in variation / customization between classes. There are two early childhood educators (ECE’s) per class (one morning, one afternoon) with one hour of overlap where there are three adults in the class. ECE’s form part of a team with the teacher, they are not merely assistants. Based on clear direction from the ministry of education, there is no nap time in the full day kindergarten program, however there are options and space for quiet time for children who require it.

ACTION	WHO
Forward details on FCI rating for RPPS facilities	Imbaw
Confirm that we have high-resolution pictures of the book fair mural	John

4. TREASURER’S REPORT

Nicole provided the treasurer’s update. The New Year has been a quiet period. iPad cases have been purchased. Featured speakers have been paid. Council has received \$473 in commissions from the Mazzola hot lunch program, which is quite encouraging as the revenue budget for Mazzola commissions is \$500 for the entire year. Finally, Nicole reported that the budget for library resources has been spent. Caroline reported that the school librarian submitted a request to Council for additional funds for books. Decisions on changes to budget allocations were deferred to a later time.

5. Committee Updates

BOOK FAIR

- Joni provided the Book Fair update. A Book Fair committee meeting will be scheduled before March break.
- Imbaw has been working on updating the Book Fair website. The site will be implemented using the WordPress web content management system. Book Fair has opted not to use the free/open source version but rather the \$100/yr paid version.
- Reminder that Grandparents Day will take place the week of May 4th, to coincide with the writer's workshops.

MILK / PIZZA

- An unfortunate scheduling mishap due to the February 13th PD day resulted in a missed pizza day for February 12. Parents have been advised and an additional pizza day will be scheduled.
- Anna inquired about the possibility to provide gluten free options for pizza. The current stance is to satisfy gluten-free hot meal requests via Mazzola as they offer a variety of GF options.
- There was an issue with a milk fridge resulting in spoiled milk. Repairs were required. Invoice pending.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR UPDATE

Ali Asgari reported that yoga has started and was a huge success. A discussion point was raised exploring options to procure yoga mats. Consensus was to monitor the program and consider options. Joni discussed volunteer requirements for the Spirit Week dance-a-thon.

OCASC

Joel reported OCASC news as being slow. The OCASC website has not updated since November. The school board has been conducting a survey on its "green policy". Execution was poor; the survey was taken to OCASC with insufficient lead time and with incomplete material.

Grade 6

Gillian Campbell provided an update on the Grade 6 graduation activities:

Funding allocations:

- \$1,000 ceremony
- \$11,000 for end of year trip
- anything above and beyond to be raised with grade six parents

The Graduation ceremony will take place the last Tuesday in June and will feature:

- Decorations
- A Slideshow
- Awards ceremony with diplomas
- Post-graduation hospitality snacks with parents

The grade six party will take place on June 23rd. This year, an informal poll of students indicated lack of interest in a dance. The students gravitated to the option of black light bowling at McArthur lanes. This has been tentatively booked from 5-7pm, with negotiations to reserve the entire facility. Gillian is looking for a committee to help with the organization. Costs quoted at \$9.50 / student (shoes and two games), though reserving the entire bowling facility will add to this cost. Ali will leverage his relationship with the owner of Louie's Pizza to strike a deal on refreshments.

End of year grade six trip destination will be Montréal. Cost per student is \$160.76 (without insurance) and \$193.21 with insurance. Total quoted as \$9,484. Shari mentioned that the board provided guidance on the need (or lack thereof) of insurance. Shari will provide more details. In the end, both options will be offered:

- Pay for insurance
- Sign waiver if no insurance

Ideas for the *Grade Six Legacy* project were discussed at the grade 5-6 parent meeting. The option of a mural for grade the stairwell to the second floor which currently does not have a mural is being pursued, perhaps on "removable canvas". Shari noted that the project needs to be parent driven. Gillian will convene a meeting to discuss options and identify volunteers.

Dance-a-thon

Joni provided a quick update on the Dance-a-thon. Volunteers are in place. The prizes for the top three students by donations gathered will be:

- 1) The Works lunch with Shari for four (donated by The Works Manor Park)
- 2) Digital camera
- 3) Skyzone party

Shari also noted that The Works Manor Park donated an additional 50 milkshake coupons.

Internet safety

Marta and Nabanita provided update on Internet Safety.

- Nabanita contacted community police to inquire about education options, receiving a lukewarm response.
 - Marta found another option. MediaSmarts is an Ottawa-based organization with the mandate to provide guidance and advice to students and parents on traditional /social media to internet safety. They have a great website (<http://mediasmarts.ca/>), which provides a variety of age-appropriate information and resources. MediaSmarts offers workshops in the form of a customized presentation (\$500/workshop with volume discounts). Alternatively, they encourage the download of their material for free to be used in a workshop that we would lead. Consensus leaned towards having MediaSmarts (Matthew Johnson, their director of education) present a session for parents ("Parenting the Digital Generation") and answer questions.
- Caroline reviewed speaker budget versus actual:
 - \$1500 in budget
 - \$1000 spent

- \$500 remaining
- There is potential to get a rebate back from the board based on attendance; a submission was made
- The required funds are within budget hence a vote was not required. The workshop will proceed, to take place in April, and be open to RPPS, other schools and the community.

ACTION	WHO
Logistics and costs for providing additional internet safety session(s) for students	Marta

Kindergarten Play structure

Shari provided an update on the new kindergarten play structure grant proposal. Shari has been gathering more information on options (structures, play surfaces).

Imbaw reiterated the May 1 deadline for city of Ottawa submission for grant. Historically less than 50% of submissions were funded. Unfunded projects go back in queue.

ACTION	WHO
Solicit concrete list of kindergarten playground ideas from teachers	Shari

Other Business

Shari reported that Mathletics (a whole day of math activities in gym for grades 3-6) has been booked for just before March break.

Anna inquired as to whether some form of incentive could be provided to entice a better kindergarten enrollment response (e.g., Book Fair bucks). Shari committed to talk to the early learning department on additional communication options, including real estate on website.

Joni asked if the school is willing to improve our sound equipment options (portable amplification used for events like the end of year BBQ, Book Fair, assemblies). Joni and Shari to discuss and report back.

ACTION	WHO
Report on sound equipment upgrade discussions	Shari/Joni

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 21:05 hours.

Minutes prepared by John Arnold, Member at large