

Essex Parent Council Meeting

Minutes from Tuesday, October 21, 2014

Welcome and Introductions

- Vanda and Jean welcomed everyone.
- Introductions and a hello from all.
- Approval of last month's minutes

Health and Well-Being Committee Report – by Milisa & Idas

- Goal set to work on improving integration and communication between home and school & support teachers & admin
- Currently canvassing teachers to find out their needs
- Committee will meet next Monday at 2 pm at school
- Have spoken with Ms. Revez (who started the playground buddies – will start it up again soon)
- Jean suggested including Ms. Revez on committee

Principal's Report - Jim

- Staffing is complete. Hired Grade 3 teacher – Ms. Pirotsky, room 306. Hired Phys. Ed./Music Teacher– Mr. Gray (shared with four schools). Hired new lunchroom supervisors
- Grade 5 and 6 going to Island School tomorrow
- Grade 7 and 8 working on planning a Montreal trip
- New rotary and change of times is working well in grade 7 and 8 (great feedback from teachers and students are happy)
- Terry Fox run was very successful
- New Entry Procedures in effect November 3. Two years ago, Essex had a buzzer system installed with funding from the MofE. We are now going to use the device. Front door will now be locked– Safe Schools expects that the buzzer system be used if one has been installed. Front door will be locked from 9:15am until 11:30am. Buzz in and office will let you in. Front door will be unlocked during the lunch hour. Locked again from 12:35-3pm. Open until 4pm for pick-up and then locked for the night at 4pm.
- Daycare will also lock their door during the day and will unlock at 3:15pm until 6pm.

Treasurer's Report – Nicole and Samarra

- Budget presented
- Suggested Artists in the School Program may have free funding
- Thinking of extending ski trip to grade 6? Not this year as we would need a second bus which would drive up the cost significantly.
- Can we give unused teacher money to others? – no
- Tech fund- \$3000 towards 40 new computers for Essex (Jim is also looking into a projector and ELMO for each class and USB/ipad/hdmi cords - 75% of classes already have projectors or smart boards. About 85% of school is currently wireless / grade 3 got iPads also. School is doing well for tech)
- Motion to approve budget by Jenny, seconded by Vanda – all in favor

Fundraising Committee - Samarra

- Meeting held on September 24
- Three main events this year will be Bingo (Nov 21, 6-8pm), Garage Sale (April 18, 9am-1pm) and Spring Fling (May 29, 5-8pm)

- Bingo Night:
 - Need Bake Sale Coordinator – Idas volunteered
 - Need 2 people to get bingo and raffle prizes – (no volunteers) -everyone try to help
 - Businesses prefer a formal letter for donations - please see Samarra for one

International Languages Program - Nicole

- International Languages on Wednesday nights (3:30-6pm)
- Harriett is the supervisor
- Classes are in danger of closing due to low enrollment (need 23 students in a class)
- Cantonese and Portuguese are low
- Every year a struggle to get enough students
- Think of including other schools
- Idea – send home newsletters to Hawthorne

Nominations for Communications Committee Chair – not resolved - TBA

- Jack handles blog and is on committee – but does not wish to be the chair
- Need for all feedback forms from parents in Sept. to be processed – along with parent rep requests – organization of class email lists – etc. - **Jenny volunteered**
- Dedicated Essex Bulletin board wanted – Jim offered the board outside the Essex office. Executive Committee to upkeep the board.
- Essex Blog has 149 people receiving the blast (to date)

Entry to School Procedures - Jack

- Why is there a difference between the 2 schools? Essex parents/children wait outside. Hawthorne parents/children waits upstairs in library.
- Jim responded that it is a delicate matter and may take longer to transition a long held Hawthorne tradition around student entry procedures.

CPAC Report – Idas and Jenny

- Meeting was held on October 6 (20 parents from different schools)
- Presentations around engaging underrepresented populations within the schools
- Focus for model schools to help engage community within the school
- Tasks ahead for Essex– get demographics of school and look at how funds have been designated \$15000 from model schools (ear marked for ‘Welcome to Kindergarten bags and parent workshop, \$2000 teacher release for Model School Teacher, prologue performances, etc.)
- Call for parents to coach various sports teams in Essex. Those interested would need a half-day session to get a license and a teacher supervisor.

Model School Update - Michael Papathanasakis

- Met with Jean and Vanda
- Wish to begin first community event – Multicultural Potluck Dinner – Dec. 4 at 6pm
- Bring parent community together and opportunity to introduce self (Mike), council, admin and various community agencies
- Mike will lead the organization of this event

Next meeting is on Wednesday, Nov. 26 at 6:30-8pm

(*Update since Oct. 21st meeting - Sue Hutton to act as Communications Chair)