

Essex School Council Meeting

Minutes from Wednesday, November 26, 2014

Welcome and Introductions

- Attending: Samarra, Vanda, Nicole, Nancy, Anna, James, Lynette, Sue (on phone), Jim (Principal) and Natalie (Vice Principal)
- Approval of last month's minutes

Principal's Report - Jim

- Construction on solar panels have begun (2-3 months to complete - weather permitting)
- Waiting for design consult for a revitalization of the Kindergarten Playground (south-east yard). Looking into more exploratory toys where the young students can discover. Work may begin in the spring.
- Essex is fully wireless now, 100%.
- New automated call out system in place. If your child is absent, you will receive an automated call during the day. If your child was late, you will receive an automated notification in the evening.
- First character education assembly was a success; great student performances around Respect and Responsibility.
- Essex students have experienced 2 Prologue for the Performing Arts shows to date; COC and "BBOYIZM – The Evolution of B-Boying". (One more is scheduled later in the year.)
- The board looked at the north overhang. A leak in the roof over the overhang was discovered and flaking paint was noted to contain lead. Essex is now waiting for a quote, plan, and date for repair.
- Ski trip for Grade 7 & 8 students to Snow Valley (Barrie) is planned for January 12. Sign up will likely be in early December. Bus will leave early in the morning. Student will get in a full day of skiing or snowshoeing/tubing. 5 teachers will go as supervisors. Cost per student is \$35.

Treasurer's Report / Fundraising Report

- Money spent on pizza lunches
- QSP profit totals came in (not as well as last year)
- Discussion around continuing QSP next year (cookie dough not made in a nut-free facility; poor quality; a lot of work for less profit). Will re-discuss later in the year.
- Bingo night was a success (last year \$500-600), this year raised over \$1,800
- Lobby Book sales - \$190
- Next big fundraising event will be the Garage Sale – April
- Start organizing for Spring Fling in January
- Volunteers are needed for the multicultural pot luck (Dec 4. – volunteers are needed at 4pm to help with set-up), pizza lunch, & Spring Fling
- Natalie and Samarra looking into an Essex hoodie and paraphernalia sale in January (maybe through MN nation).
- Jim wanted to confirm money is ear marked for \$1000 for ski and \$750 for Quebec. Samara and Vanda confirmed.

Communications Update - Sue

- Email to classroom parent reps have been sent out & response requested (40% confirmed receipt)
- Concern over parents not receiving email updates from their class parent reps. Why?
- Communications goal reiterated to provide Essex parents with multiple forms of communication (i.e., bulletin board, blog, and parent reps)
- Purpose of Bulletin board clarified (flyers, sign ups for volunteers, etc.)
- Creation of an Essex Parent Facebook Page was suggested. Concerns presented from many. Council will not go forward with this idea at the present time.

Ward Meeting Update – James

September 29th Meeting at Central Tech S.S.

- Some schools in ward hosted events during Nuit Blanche
- Parents from other schools expressed concerns over roofing work
- Parents raised concern about increased requests for Police Reference Checks to volunteer in their child's school, (for ongoing volunteering at this time – not “one off” field trip help), in lieu of the recent Baldwin report.
- Noted increase in French Immersion classrooms in the area. Some schools are reshuffling to try to accommodate the number of enrollments.
- Special Education committee asking for people to join.
- Lunchroom supervision issues were raised.

November 3rd Meeting

- Poor field conditions at many schools were discussed – TDSB looking into how to correct this.
- Solar panels being installed in many schools in our ward.

Hot Lunch Cancellation Re-Addressed

- Jim will follow up (important to include both schools)

Next Meetings Set

- Tuesday, January 27th at 6:30pm
- Tuesday, March 3 at 6:30pm

Please Note: The meeting originally scheduled for Thursday, Jan 29 has been switched to Tuesday, Jan. 27th.