



Hastings Community School Parent Advisory Council – www.hastingspac.ca
Minutes - Meeting 7pm Monday, November 18th, 2013

Members Present: See sign in sheet

Staff Present: Carol Andison and Janis Myers

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Guest Speakers:

Tony, grade 7 French Immersion parent.

- Quebec Dance and Silent Auction – an annual community event and fundraiser for the grade 7 FI trip to Quebec. This is Tony's second time organizing this event as one of the grade 7 parents. It's a lot of fun and useful to observe if your child is in the FI program, as you will be organizing the dance one day. The money is raised for the annual trip for grade 7's - any surplus money raised by the class will be donated back to the PAC/school.

3. Review of minutes from October 22, 2013:

Motion to approve minutes from the October 22, 2013.

M/S/C

4. Hastings Administration Report

Carol Andison – Interim Principal

- School has received 80 tickets for the production, "Frog and Toad" at the Norman Rothstein theatre. Younger primary English division students are going to go.
- Movie night was a success. The school does not charge an admission for the screening. We are not charging admission due to copyright laws.
- Planting day was a success. Thanks to all who came out and helped.
- The dog poo issue has receded. Mme. Natalie's class made funny PSA posters to educate playground users on properly curbing your dog.
- Remembrance Day assembly was a success.
- Volleyball is going well. Carol reminds us to be sure to thank all the teachers who help with extra curricular programs such as this.
- 416 plates consumed at the recent pancake breakfast. The biggest turn out to date.
- Ms. Bion led a "yoga-thon" to support kids going to Camp Sasamat.
- Christmas dinner is coming up, Dec. 5. An RSVP from invitees and families in need are accepted first, then all others hoping to attend may receive a ticket by lottery selection.
- Pro D this Friday.
- Kindergarten registration – it will be done a bit differently and done on line. If you are doing French Immersion (a choice program), you have to register in your English catchment school, and then register in the choice program. The registration is all on line and the time lines will be strictly adhered to. Nov. 1 and January 31 for English. French Immersion will be January 10 – 31.
- The VSB is doing a "Revisioning Project" about inner-city areas. We have been asked to participate to assess the level of vulnerability amongst our student population. The VSB staff went through and analyzed every class with the teacher and the counselling team. They determined there were about 200 students with notable vulnerabilities, which is double what the administration thought it would be. When the description of what defines 'vulnerable children' is available, parents will be given a copy.

- **Foundation Skills Assessments for Grade 4 & 7 students.** Parents can go on line and look at sample questions etc. The FSAs are controversial because the Fraser Institute is believed to skew the results and do not represent the statistics accurately. What the FSAs do offer, is that it gives a child an opportunity to write a formal, standardized test. Also, schools can take the data to see how we are doing as a school i.e., "Math results declining etc". Carol asks parents to think seriously about whether they want to have their kids opt out of writing the exam. She suggests you go after the Fraser Institute instead, and urge them to represent the test scores accurately. The more that people are aware of the "game that they are playing" the better. The province does look at the test score to help determine curriculum, as it is the only standardized test that is administered province wide. Last year 18% of Hastings students did not write the exam. Students and parents need to understand that the results tell us little about how a student is doing at school. Although the test results are meaningless, parents can emphasize doing 'the best you can' and treat it as a useful exercise for test writing. You can opt your child out, but it requires parents to take that action to not participate by writing a note stating your choice of not having your child take the test. There is a website for parents to lobby against the FSA if interested. Pulling bright kids out doesn't help the stats. The BCTF wants to see the test abolished. Carol thinks it is good training for formal test taking but The Fraser Institute is doing an increasingly terrible job of interpreting and reporting the stats.

5. President's report – Janeen Patchell

- We had a successful first executive meeting with the new 2013/2014 members.
- The PAC netted \$440 from the ticket sales to the 60's dance.
- Seth Oldham requested an opportunity to come chat about Templeton School. The deadline for parents to apply for choice secondary programs is in February.
- We are looking at introducing 'Please Mum' fundraiser, for shopping purchases made at their on-line children's wear store. Look for more information about this in the next newsletter.
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6. Treasurer's Report – Diana Bennett.

- Presented the proposed budget for the next year.
- \$2600, total, will be donated from the PAC for each enrolling classroom teacher to spend \$100 on school supplies or class activities.
- Janeen explained that the budget is based on previous year's budget
- Within the PAC budget, there is money available for teachers to make special requests for funding. The form will go out to teachers in Dec. The requests received will be looked at in January and money allocated in February.
- Line Item, Events, are things like spring fair etc. Usually fundraising events. Spending money to make money.

Motion to accept the 2013 – 2014 budget as presented.

M/S/C

7. Playground Report

- Diana P. drafted a letter, and Janeen signed it, to Patti Baccus, VSB chair. This letter was to express our displeasure with the VSB's suggestion to remove the sandbox and replace it with bark mulch. Jim Machino, head of VSB grounds, responded promptly. He thinks the type of sand used was an appropriate choice, and students are now learning to brush off excess sand from their clothing. Sand being tracked into the school has not been as big an issue since the rain started. The sandbox's location close to the air vents is still an issue. VSB grounds have suggested a buffer zone, within the sandbox, to change the proximity of the sand to the vents. We have made it clear that we will not pay any further money to resolve the issue, but we do insist on having a say in the solution.
- We are still required to plant 3 more trees to fulfill the Evergreen grant. We are in a catch 22 situation because there is no VSB personnel available to do the planting. Also, a decision on tree placement should be deferred until the sandbox location and issues are resolved.

- There is a playground drainage issue. Today there was pool forming over the central drain. Diana Bennett cleared the blockage but found it difficult to replace the drain grate. The issue is that there is a basket underneath the drain grate, which gets blocked with bark mulch and thick gravel. Whose responsibility is it to clear the mulch from the traffic area? It is not a custodial responsibility, but more likely a VSB grounds responsibility. Parents and students can help to take care of this by periodically clearing the bark mulch and gravel from the area of the drain.

6. Stream of Dreams

- Two more grants have been applied for (Kinder Morgan and TD). We are still looking for another \$5000 -\$6000 to complete the funding for this project.
- We are booking the project for March 31st to April 4th.
- Pauline G is going to approach a fishing company she used to work for, for a donation.

7. Fundraising

- Meaningful Movies @ St. David's church every third Thursday of the month – Hastings PAC runs the concession, so come out and support the PAC. This month Sara, Katie, and Maia are volunteering. The documentary "What would Jesus Buy" will be screened Nov. 21st.
- "Scrooge – a dramatic reading" will be produced at historic St. David's Church. It's Hastings turn to benefit from the proceeds from this community event. Dec. 17 & 18th, are the purposed dates. There will be a concession and bake sale. This is a very enjoyable seasonal event performed by professional actors. We are really trying to sell out the 2 nights to make a potential profit of \$1200.00. Diana B and Diana P will be selling tickets soon.
- Kids Clothing sale and Book Sale will be done in conjunction with Earth Week. Book Sale will be held as in the past- leaving the book rack out in the foyer for the week and money collected on the honour system. Please start saving your books and kids clothes for these sales.

8. Other Business

- Diana B. suggested parents take their children to "Pencils and Playgrounds/Chalk and Lockers – Tales from schools" which is coming up this week at Strathcona elementary. Very fun performance - retelling of hilarious stories from schools, presented by Raincity Chronicles.

Thanks.

Motion: To adjourn at 8:38 p.m.

M/S/C