

Manor Park School Council and Home and School Association Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2013

MPPS Library

Attendance

Mary Ruth Endicott
Sharon Leslie
Tami O'Dette
Leigh Anne Richardson
Wendy Colthart
Jen Coulas
Ray O'Flaherty
Laura Frappier
Sue Massaad
Melissa Gomes
Nancy Grinberg
Virginia Hall
Christina Kaeser
Kathryn Pizana
Sue Noble
Bruce Devenny
Nikolous Jakubineh
Susan Steele
Donna Muldoon

Manor Park School Council

Meeting called to order by Leigh Anne Richardson at 7:00 pm.

Welcome

Round table introductions.

Minutes

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved. Moved by Leigh Anne Richardson and seconded by Wendy Colthart.

New Council Members

Leigh Anne Richardson – nominated as chair
Wendy Colthart – nominated as vice-chair
Nancy Grinberg – nominated as OCASC
They were all acclaimed.

Principal's/Vice-principal's Report

Please see the Principal's and Vice-Principal's reports.

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Questions for the Principal and Vice-Principal

Question: Can the principal provide some feedback to the board's human resources department regarding the skill sets that are required by the school (beyond minimum job requirements)?

Sue: No, the schools are no longer able to do this.

Question: Are there strategies to implement if testing shows that kids aren't confident in math? To get over the "it's hard" block.

Sue: Kids sometimes find one thing hard and say they are bad at math but math involves various things so we need to help kids be aware that they probably have strengths as well as weaknesses.

Question: Tutors in schools - is tutoring for those who are really struggling or even those who need a little extra help.

Sue M: The tutors will be assigned to the classrooms and will work with the teacher to provide help as needed when reviewing tests or practicing reading.

Sue Steele: The tutors do also target those who are on the edge for EQAO levels.

Question: Regarding the nutritional component of the WITS program - is there a board wide information sheet to give to parents so the teachers don't feel the direct impact of parent reactions to the questions about nutrition?

Laura - plan is to educate the kids about making healthy choices, so that they ask for healthy snacks at home. Also, planning some education about second-hand smoke and the nursing student coming in the winter will help with this project. Another focus will be exercise, what can we do as a school to be more active? Some information will also be coming from public health.

Question: How is this beyond health education in the curriculum?

Laura - This is a whole school initiative but not class specific.

Susan Steele - Thank you for adding Gluten Free to the pizza choices.

Open Forum

Question - school website - what is happening? Will it be updated?

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Sue – something I am hoping to get to but not there yet. Sharon Leslie is going to help out a bit with it and going to update with newsletters and dates. The goal is that by end of the year the school website will be a live site with daily updates.

Question – arrival routines at the front doors due to construction. How is the construction on Hemlock affecting the normal practice of drop-off at the back door^

Sue – We still encourage students to be dropped off at the back of the school before 8:30 am (second bell). Prefer this way to front-door entry because of the way the school handles getting the children to the classes after the bell.

Question – has there been any contact with the city about protecting kids?

Laura – Tim did call the city to get a barrier which was there but has been removed. The school has also advised the children not to go to those areas.

Question – is there still an initiative to crackdown on late arrivals? Last year seemed there was a push to direct parents and students to the office when entering the school as an attempt to crackdown on late arrivals.

Laura – The barriers at the front door (signs directing people to the office) are to get people to sign-in and to stop kindergarten parents from accompanying kids to the classes.

Suggestion – The office door is often closed on Fridays. In order to encourage parents to go to office, it would help if the door was open.

Concern – Know of girls bullying and not sure if that piece of bullying has been covered yet with WITS. Have we focused on this type of bullying – social intimidation?

Laura – this type of bullying came out the most in the survey from the students.

Sue – it would be helpful to ask the teacher whose class is involved to use resources for this type of bullying so that it can be addresses in the class.

Suggestion – A group had Maria Hawkins present Blues in the schools. She was a great presenter about this type of bullying.

School – she has had her before and was pretty good.

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School Goals

1. Continue to nurture a positive working relationship between the Manor Park staff and School Council. This will be achieved by:
 - Regular meetings between the Chair/Vice Chair and the Principal
 - Efforts to communicate with the staff regarding Council objectives and activities
 - Soliciting input from Staff on Council matters, specifically how to best invest our finances to best support the school

Most Responsible Persons: Chair, Vice Chair, all Council members

2. Complement the school's efforts to increase volunteerism and parent engagement by planning initiatives to help parents become more involved in their child's education. This will be achieved by:
 - Communicating volunteer opportunities to parents
 - Reaching out to new parents at the school
 - Coordinating and implementing a speaker series for parents throughout the school year

Most Responsible Persons: Nikolous Jakubineh, all Council members

3. Establish and implement guidelines for Council administrative functions, with specific emphasis on timely communication and updates of standardized documents. This includes:
 - Agendas - send agenda to Council and staff reps at least 1 week prior to meeting (Chair)
 - Minutes - send to Council for approval 1 week after regular meetings (Secretary)
 - Newsletters - issue monthly newsletter at least 1 week prior to meeting (Communications Coordinator)
 - Website - update with the above items as issued. Conduct an annual review of website material in early fall, after new Council is elected and update as necessary (Communications Coordinator)
 - MPSC bylaws - Conduct an annual review of bylaws and update as necessary (Chair)
 - Yahoo email account - twice weekly monitoring of emails, timely forwarding and timely responses to inquiries (??)

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Additional suggested goal:

Get a sense of how best to support the school's goals financially, as identified by SIP (School Improvement Plan), and by the teachers.

Suggestion: I believe we can cover this off by our first goal, as above

Motion that these goals be approved for this year's school council was made by Leigh Anne Richardson and seconded by Sharon Leslie. The motion was carried.

OCASC

It is tomorrow and conflicts with Kindergarten science night.

Nutrition Break Intramurals

Tabled to January meeting

Speaker Series

- Canvassed parents via electronic notifications that were distributed twice directly and once via the monthly newsletter. This was done from early October–mid November.
- 109 responses to survey, lower than anticipated

Feedback:

- Approximately 93% had 1–2 children at MP
- Grades of children at MP was evenly distributed across all grades, with Grade 5 as the lowest represented and Grade 1 the highest
- Over 91% of respondents have children in EFI
- Suggested topics were all well-received and participants provided additional comments as well.
- Over 94% would attend sessions about these topics
- Approximately 66% indicated evening sessions were preferred.
- Preference (60%) was to have smaller, workshop type of sessions vs. small group or large auditorium sessions

Question: What is the ratio of EFI to English Program? Approximately, 75% immersion to 25% English.

There were some direct comments made during the survey not related to this project which will be passed on to Sue Massaad.

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Top choices for topics

Socialization – bullying, respectful citizen – WITS at home

- Maybe someone from the board could give a presentation.

It is important when planning the dates to consider the availability of space at the school and other community event conflicts.

Sue could email all the Principals to get feedback about speakers. The Council will need to work in tandem with the school in planning these events.

Thanks to Virginia Hall and Wendy Colthart for help with the survey development.

Leigh Anne – Would like to set-up a sub-committee to develop, plan and coordinate three sessions from January to June 2014. The budget is \$975 for the project (speaker fees).

Sub-committee members – Melissa Gomes, Virginia Hall, Kathryn Pizana and Leigh Anne Richardson.

Discussion Topics for next meeting

No topics were raised.

Adjourned 8:17 pm

Open Home and School Association 8:18 pm.

Financial Update

The monthly bank statement was circulated and the financial statement was distributed.

Funding Requests

Laura – Reimbursement for the WITS jars would be a total of \$108 approximately.

Question – is there board funding for WITS.

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Laura – They purchased the program for the school for a few thousand dollars. This included the reading resources, pamphlets, pencils, rulers, online training and teacher resources (lesson plans).

It is a program that the board supports because it is research-based. Board invested in some pilot schools.

Motion to fund WITS jars was moved Leigh Anne and seconded by Nikolous Jakubineh. The motion was carried.

Susan Steele – Would like mittens and gloves for clothes closet? – up to \$100
Second-hand – mittens and gloves are great.

Need all sizes but the younger kids are more in need. Need some up front but able to recuperate more through the lost and found.

Motion to fund up to \$100 was moved by Leigh Anne Richardson and second Tami O’Dette. The motion was carried.

Sue will do some careful appeals to the parents and will also advertise the availability of the program.

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Status Fundraisers

Pizza

New offering Gluten Free

Next session starts next week.

Parent concern about what happen with extra pizza – there are some kids who would love to have pizza but can't afford it. This is touchy sometimes – how to do this fairly so that we get this to the right kids.

Laura has a list of families in need – could be used as a resource to distribute. Some schools have frozen leftover for when kids don't have enough lunch. Challenge was short lunch and accessing the heating of the food. The office used to do this.

QSP Fundraiser

Online is throughout the year fundraising.

Scholastic Book Fair

The school sold \$8100 worth of books which translated into \$4500 for the library. The librarian already pulled \$1700 books from the fair and can use the rest of the money to order books throughout the year.

Thank you for all the help from the staff.

Leigh Anne – thanks to Sue Noble for taking over the book fair this year instead of next year as originally planned.

Dance-a-thon

February 7th is the date.

All students will be invited to the gym to dance.

Doing the prep work now to send out information in early January

Kids won't be asked to say which songs they want this year. There will be a set playlist with popular songs.

They need 10 or 12 volunteers which they have already in-line. But will also ask teachers to invite some parents to come with their class.

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New Business

Thank you from Donna Muldoon's class for scientists in the class. Donna presented the council with a Thank You card from her class.

Secretary _____

Chair _____