



Minutes
Runnymede Public School Council Meeting
February 18, 2009 7pm
Teacher Staff Room Second Floor

School Administration: Amelia Dennis, Michael Kanalec, Andrea McPherson, Manon Gardner

Attendees: Alice Bell, Juli Belliveau, Wanda Bussiere, Tanya Davies, Lieve De Nil, Robert Dunford, Sabrina Gonsalves, Suzanne Gordon, Karen Hanna, Hilary Inwood, Becky Jenkins, Andy Johnston, Maddie Johnston, Lynn Kerrigan, Catherine Kirkland, Anne Lakoff, Bozena Lawbrowicz, Brenda Linington, Wendy Lyon, Mary Machamer, Sean MacPherson, Jennifer McIntyre, Fabienne Moureaux, Kathleen Movus, Joan Lash, Marshall Leslie, Mary Machamer, Anne Markee, Nancy Palermo, Kshama Patel, Yvonne Porter, Nadine Singh, Basia Stec-Atherton, Jacqueline Sustar, Kirsten Tenebaum, Jerry Tiessen, Brian Withnell

Regrets:

1. Welcome and Intro of Executives Many parents are in attendance this evening. Manon Gardiner is with us for the meeting.
Rob explains the logistics of the meeting.
2. Motion to Receive Previous Meeting's Minutes **Motion to receive previous minutes: Joan; Jerry 2nd**
3. Motion to Receive Correspondence No correspondence this month
No motion required
4. Administration Report Principal Amelia Dennis outlines to the council some of the details and follow up of the incident that took place on Thursday Feb. 5th:

Events

There was a supply teacher in the grade 7 class that morning, and Ms. McPherson had been in the class first thing in the morning to address the students and introduce the supply teacher. The incident occurred once she left. A student entered the class with a bayonet (looked like half the size of a sword) and held it up to get attention. The teacher acted calmly, talked to the students and convinced the student to put the weapon away. The other students in the class remained calm and let the teacher handle it. The situation lasted about 10 minutes. Another teacher came in and escorted the boy to the office. Mr. Kanalec advised Ms. Dennis of the events. The students were safe. There was no lockdown



necessary, as the situation was contained (the student in question was under supervision). The police were called, as was the superintendent. Safe schools social workers were dispatched within 45 minutes. Once the police were there, they took over the investigation. Mr. Kanalec remained in the classroom with the students. Both Ms. MacPherson and Ms. Dennis went to the classroom later.

Communication

Communications officer came in and helped compose a letter to the families, and phone calls were made to each of the families in the class.

A lunch meeting was called for the staff. Ms. Gardener, and safe schools social workers were there. Students were able to meet with social workers if they wanted, and there were many opportunities for the children to talk.

There was a media release of which, unfortunately, the school was unaware. The boy was formally charged, and court dates and times were released.

Unfortunately, a lot more information was shared at that point (such as a mention of a disabled firearm) - more than the staff and students knew – and it has been difficult. Although The Toronto Police Service had told the administration that they would not be releasing the information to the public, the information was released before the parents were informed. TPS reaction when questioned on this action: “We didn’t think it was newsworthy when we were at the school, but we did at 6:00pm”

Follow Up

Every student came back to school the next day. The grade 7 and 8’s applauded their teachers. The school is a very safe place to be.

The school has had several staff meetings. Ms. Dennis had an opportunity to speak with the Villager, and she thinks the situation was handled well.

The school has had bullying programmes in the past. Ms. Dennis addressed the “code of silence” with the grade 7 and 8’s, and reassured the parents that the school will continue to work with police officers and offer programmes that deal with the larger issues of bullying.

Ms. Dennis reminded the council that the event is still and “alleged” bullying. The administration does not really know what caused it, and they are not allowed to speak about it.



The Administration took questions from the parents:

Questions

What can we do to be proactive?

Is it possible to complain about the way the TPS release of the information?

Superintendent Manon Gardiner: The school and the TDSB act on all complaints of bullying. Ms. Gardner said she has sat down with the school administration and reviewed all procedures.

Is there another person in the school that students feel that they can speak with?

There is a school counselor. He talked to all the kids in grade 7 about bullying.

What does proactive mean?

There have been several presentations to the parents eg. Girl bullying, Sticks and Stones, cyber bullying. There was also a presentation about the language of bullying – an empowerment workshop for the students.

What about the other classrooms? (There was concern that several classes of grade 7's have not been addressed by the school)

Some teachers haven't been talking to the other students in grade 7 who have questions, because they do not feel comfortable addressing the situation. The admin assured the parents that the school counselor would speak with these classes.

A concern was raised about the fact that the classroom teachers did not speak to their students about the events. Why not? Perhaps there needs to be some work around the fact that the students/teachers do not feel comfortable addressing these issues and do not appear to have an open line of communication

Andrea McPherson and Michael Kanalec:

Grade 8 students have finished their high school visits. Grad photos take place on March 7th

All 95 computers that were able to be updated have been given 1GB of memory.

Eight new drops have been completed. The power supplies (5) are being put in to support the new 8 computers. The administrations will coordinate the purchase of the new machines with the completion of the power outlets. The new outlets will be used for the



refurbished machines. The school was able to purchase two new laptops with the money from the Parent Council. The school is waiting for the second laptop to be re-imaged. The remaining money will be used to purchase flat-screen monitors (they give off less heat).

The school Website:

<http://schools.tdsb.on.ca/runnymede>

5. Committee Reports

- Yard

Kathleen has been working with Hilary on “Nature in the City”. The children created a quilt with hand dyed fabric. The project was done in collaboration with the Ontario Art Council. The quilt will be hung at entrance five (by the library).

There will be a meeting of the Yard Committee this coming Tuesday, February 24th at 7 pm in the cafeteria. Earth Day/Yard Day planning is underway underway for Saturday, April 18th

Are we going curtail the use of the play structures and fitness centre during the winters? The message to the children seems to be inconsistent, as sometimes they are allowed to play, and at times they are forbidden. Ms. Dennis agrees that there should be a written policy on this and will attempt to get an official policy from the Board

Ms. Dennis will look into Board Policy the use of play structures in the winter.

- Spirit

Dance-a-thon is next Thursday, February 26th.

Pub Night will take place on Friday, April 24th. The Spirit Committee is looking for donations for the silent auction.

Next Spirit Meeting: March 12th at 7:30 – location TBA

100th anniversary committee

Centennial committee – have been doing searches about history in various archives – work continues.

Communications committee

No official report

6. Treasurer's Report

Not a lot of change in fundraising. The tracking is where we would expect it to be. Dance-a-thon and pubnight still need to be added to fundraising.



7. Ward 7 Report Please see write up in the Runnymede Rapport
Given the circumstances of the last couple of weeks,
Basia asked if there was a possibility that the
administration could communicate with the parents
about the parents' responsibilities during a "lock
down".

Irene Atkinson School will
look into
communicat
ing
lockdown
procedures
for parents
8. Art Finding Motion *Please refer to special proposal*
Motion: Parent Council will fund the Spirit Committee
art project - Nadine; 2nd Andrea
9. Drama Funding
Motion No motion today
10. Any Other
Business Motion (by Hilary) that funds be collected for a legal
defense fund for the family of the child who has been
removed from school to be communicated to the
parent council; 2nd Suzanne
Katherine would collect the funds – a group of parents
from the child's previous school have already
committed to donating to the fund.
MOVED (Hilary): That the councils provide notice
through its website and email distribution list of the
contact information for the "Fund". 2nd- Suzanne

Lynne Kerrigan: daughter with peanut allergy... since
September have met with parents and administration.
Are there other parents who would like to form a group
that we could all put our heads together to educate,
share information, and work together to keep the
school safe.

Perhaps we could put it in the Rapport or on the
website

The administration will work on this.

Council will
provide
notice
through its
website of
the contact
information
for those
intereseted
in
contributing
to a legal
defence
fund.

Admin will
work on
getting the
Rapport
available on
the website
11. Motion to Adjourn **Next Meeting: Thursday, March 26th**
the Meeting

If you have additional agenda items please contact either of the Co-Chairs, Robert Dunford or Kshama Patel at chair@runnymedecouncil.org. If you wish to be included on the email communication list, contact our Webmaster at webmaster@runnymedecouncil.org