

Parents' Advisory Group Inc.
École Robert H. Smith School
DRAFT Minutes of the Meeting – November 3, 2010

Present (based on sign-in sheet): Tia-Alexandra Everitt, Michael Gies, Candace Partyka, Stuart Roche, Trish Wainikka, Simone Smith, Nadine Karpinski, Kevin Gawne, Anji Petruzzelli, Trina Minor, Tara McCallum, Daryla Christie, Sara Man, Dave Leochko, Pam Shay, Brad Regehr, Vicky Watkins, Laurence Broadhurst, Denise Gout-Smith, Cathy Macey, Debbi Lee, Claudette Warnke, Patti Chiappetta-Sharpe, Tom Rossi, Pat McCallum, Alvina Hedgecock, Kathleen Reid

Regrets: Shannon Bowden, Michelle Gaber, Mark Chyzzy, Paula Jasper-Hall, Lisa Emre, Art Jordan, Joseph Partyka

Absent: Dan Orlikow

1. Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m. We have quorum.

2. Review and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- ***Motion to approve the Minutes of the September 22, 2010 PAG Meeting – Moved by Simone Smith, Seconded by Candace Partyka, Carried.***

3. Review of Agenda

- Item number 5, New Business – 2009/10 Fundraising Report, will be tabled to the next meeting

4. Chair's Report – Michael Gies

- We are working on the process to allow parents to vote at PAG meetings. Had a meeting with Sharon Machinsky (note: she is no longer with the Manitoba Association of Parent Councils, but is willing to assist us and is an excellent source of information). The PAG needs to register directors once per year and to add new parents will be difficult administratively and costly. We are considering some options, including allowing parents to request a vote at a meeting or an annual registration deadline.

Vice Chair's Report – Candace Partyka

- There will be a change on the PAG Executive – Lisa Emre will be stepping down as Treasurer. We thank her for all of the work she has done over the last two years.
- We would like to welcome Stuart Roche as the new Treasurer. He will be meeting with Lisa over the next few weeks.

Treasurer's Report – Trish Wainikka for Lisa Emre

- The RHS PAG Income Statement for last year is in the written reports. There were no questions.

5. Unfinished Business – Spring Photos (Report by Mr. Rossi)

- The school has not yet made a commitment with Life Touch regarding the Spring Photos. The school receives \$1 per click (for an approximate total of \$470).
- The school responded to the two major concerns expressed at the last meeting:
 1. Numerous sheets of pictures are sent home for each child – this does not seem to be environmentally friendly and parents are concerned about what is done with the pictures of their children that are not purchased.
Response: Life Touch can simply provide a one page proof this year. All pictures returned to Life Touch are recycled.
 2. Can parents be given the option to “opt out” of spring photos, and not have their child photographed?
Response: This year a letter will go home to parents offering the option to “opt out” of the photos. This allows the school to find out how many families choose not to participate, and then an informed decision about the spring photos can be made the following year.
- Mr. Rossi also indicated that he would be happy to share the “opt out” numbers with the PAG following the spring pictures.
- The PAG thanked Mr. Rossi for responding to the concerns.

6. Unfinished Business – Financial Estimates for 2010 / 11 Fundraising Goals

- Mr. Rossi provided the following estimates:
 1. Purchase of 2 Smart Boards and their maintenance – approximately \$10,000 to \$12,000
 2. Field trips and in school presentations and events (such as concerts, drama presentations) – approximately \$12,000

3. Books for classroom libraries and the refreshing of home reading libraries – not included since all of the funds raised in the two Scholastic Book Fairs will go directly to this item.
4. Communication – approximately \$15,000 (included in this amount is an outdoor energy efficient sign for \$12,000)
5. Sustainable development projects and outdoor school improvement – approximately \$2,500 to maintain the current sustainable development projects such as composting, recycling, and class initiatives
6. Indoor and outdoor recess playground equipment - \$2,500-\$3,000 (including 2 more soccer goal posts)

Discussion:

- A concern was expressed regarding the large amount of funds that are being raised by this school, when schools in other neighbourhoods cannot afford to do this type of fundraising. Is this level of fundraising necessary and does this create two tiers within the public school system?
- Should we consider fundraising for an inner city school? This was attempted at one point and the school we approached was very offended.
- There are numerous funds / grants available to schools in the inner city (from organizations such as United Way, Winnipeg Foundation) – one teacher mentioned that there were more computers in his classroom in the inner city than at this school. The teachers are very appreciative of the fundraising done by parents at this school since we are not eligible for the funding and grants intended for inner city school
- There is a need for the school to move forward with technology because of new provincial outcomes related to technology; smart boards in the classrooms help teachers reach those outcomes.
- There were also concerns expressed about the outdoor energy efficient sign – will it be solar powered, and is this really something that an elementary school needs? The website, newsletter, voice system and email are all very good methods of communication; is a sign really necessary?
- Mr. Rossi indicated that we can suspend the illuminated sign for now and remove this from the goals for 2010/11.
- One parent asked about the process - for prioritization of the goals and for approval of spending related to the funds raised. Since the goals were approved at the last meeting, this gives approval for the funds raised to be transferred to the school and used towards those goals

7. Teachers' Report

- The Read-a-thon later this month will include an assembly, reading activities (in class and throughout the school), a children's performer, etc. and each child will receive a book to take home along with a bookmark. Envelopes and letters will go home to parents next week.

8. Administration Update

- Tri-conferences will take place in November. If parents would like a private, in-depth conversation with the teacher, they can ask for a separate meeting.
- Information on the musical for this year will be out in the near future.

9. Questions Concerning Written Progress Reports / Standing Committees

- The Dance Committee is beginning preparations for the dance.
- Thank you to Cathy Macey (Communications) for all of her work updating the PAG website. The PAG Roster is up so that people can contact any member of the PAG by email. She is open to suggestions of how to improve the website.
- Patti Chiappetta-Sharpe (French Language) mentioned that she is still waiting to hear about a meeting for the French Language directors. This year she will be given the opportunity to talk about our school at the meetings.
- Trina Minor (Fun Lunch) thanked every for assisting with the first Fun Lunch. Preparations are underway for the next Fun Lunch in early December.
- Sara Man (Promotions & Fundraising) reported that approximately 430 magazines (QSP fundraiser) have been sold to date for a profit of about \$5,000.
- Denise Gout-Smith (Staff Appreciation) has planned a fall appreciation event on November 17 – double recess with baking and coffee for the staff. There will be another event in March.
- Nadine Karpinski (Environment) reported that the meeting with Avila School was amazing – the school received over \$500,000 in grant money, did research on how kids play and worked with a landscape company to develop a fantastic outdoor space that includes a guide for teachers. We will begin to explore options for our school.

10. Next meeting – December 1, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the School Library

11. Motion to adjourn the meeting – Moved by Denise Gout-Smith, Seconded by Trina Minor, Carried.