

**Parents' Advisory Group Inc.
École Robert H. Smith School
Minutes of the Meeting – September 22, 2010**

Present (based on sign-in sheet): Tia-Alexandra Everitt, Michael Gies, Candace Partyka, Trish Wainikka, Lisa Emre, Simone Smith, Nadine Karpinski, Kevin Gawne, Ella Steele, Charles Steele, Anji Petruzzelli, Michelle Gaber, Trina Minor, Pat McCallum, Tara McCallum, Daryla Christie, Sara Man, Paula Jasper-Hall, Dave Leochko, Pam Shay, Roger Morcilla, Shannon Bowden, Brad Regehr, Donna Chabluk, Vicky Watkins, Christine McGregor, Laurence Broadhurst, Mark Chyzy, Penny Trudel, Cheryl Holmes

Regrets: Kathleen Reid, Denise Gout-Smith, Cathy Macey, Art Jordan, Patti Chiappetta-Sharpe, Dan Orlikow, Joseph Partyka

Absent: None

1. **Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. We have quorum.**

2. **Review and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

- ***Motion to approve the Minutes of the April 22, 2010 PAG Meeting – Moved by Paula-Jasper Hall, Seconded by Nadine Karpinski, Carried.***

3. **Review and Approval of Agenda**

- There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

4. **Treasurer's Report – Lisa Emre**

- The PAG had \$13,000 in the bank at the beginning of last year, and \$8,500 at the end of last year (which is our opening balance for this year).
- At the next meeting, we will approve the budget. PAG Directors should let Lisa know if they require changes to their budget; if not, the amounts will remain unchanged in the budget from the previous year.

5. **New Business - Fundraising**

- ***Motion to approve the following 6 fundraising goals for 2010/11:***
 1. ***Purchase of 2 Smart Boards and their maintenance***
 2. ***Field trips and in school presentations and events (such as concerts, drama presentations)***
 3. ***Books for classroom libraries and the refreshing of home reading libraries***
 4. ***Outdoor energy efficient sign***
 5. ***Sustainable development projects and outdoor school improvement (including the Adventure Club)***
 6. ***Indoor and outdoor recess playground equipment***
- ***Moved by Candace Partyka, Seconded by Sara Man, passed.***

Discussion:

- There were some questions about the Adventure Club – this is a pilot project for 2010/11, an extra curricular club led by Mr. Leochko (teacher) and Mr. McCallum (parent). It will include approximately a dozen kids involved in different projects such as working on the garden, geocaching, snowshoeing. Kids will be in grades 4 to 6, picked first come/first served based on application form and representation from each of the grades. There may be an opportunity for the Adventure Club to set up activities for other kids to broaden out the possible involvement.
- Are Smart Boards not purchased by the school board? No. In the last 3 years, our school has gone from having 2 or 3 Smart Boards to having about 14 now, primarily due to the fundraising efforts of the parents.
- There were suggestions of how to handle the playground equipment. The school purchased some new equipment already last year with the fundraising dollars, they are colour coded by grade.
- There was a suggestion that the teachers put forward a wish list of indoor supplies (ex. Lego, board or other games) and perhaps donations can be made from school families.

6. **New Business – Family Dance**

- ***Motion to create a PAG Director position for the Family Dance. Moved by Michael Gies, Seconded by Michelle Gaber, passed.***

Discussion:

- The Family Dance is a huge event that was run by the Promotions / Fundraising Directors in the past. Since it is similar in size and scope to the Family Picnic, it seems appropriate to have a PAG Director position for this event.

- Mark Chyzy volunteered to Chair the Family Dance / become a PAG Director; Anji Petruzzelli and Brad Regehr volunteered to sit on the Family Dance Committee.

7. **Teachers' Report**

- Teachers in are doing CAP testing, so there are many "guest teachers" and parents may see teachers in the hall doing one on one activities with the students. If you have any questions, please approach your teacher.
- Toward the end of next week, the grade 6 students will select the charity for the year. This is the charity that will be supported by the Community Breakfast. Kids can talk to families and friends, do research and bring forward information and suggestions on potential charities. Presentations will be made to the grade 6 students and then they will vote.

8. **Administration Update**

- Read-a-thon is a new fundraiser this year that involves the kids. There is no pressure for speed and accuracy, just encourage reading. It will take place on November 24th in the afternoon. A committee of staff and parents will be formed and then the details finalized. Rather than prizes / trinkets, maybe students can receive a new book, possibly from the Scholastic Book Fair.
- Christine McGregor and Paula Jasper-Hall offered to volunteer on the committee; Michelle Gaber offered to make book bags.
- In process of finding a replacement for Mlle Malanik (maternity leave); hopefully there will be an announcement by Friday.
- This year, tri-conference will replace the first parent/teacher conferences for the year. There will be an information evening on October 26th regarding this new format.
- Thank you to the Environment Committee and volunteers for the work at the front of the school – it looks great!
- There were some questions about how allergies are handled in the school. The lunch program has a room for children with severe allergies, but parents have the option to not be in the allergy room. Older kids eat in their classrooms on the second floor. If there is a class where a certain item is a severe allergy for one of the students, then it becomes a class free of that item. So far, it has been working well. The school prefers to err on the side of caution. Families are also encouraged to offer treats that all kids can have (for special celebrations).
- There was a suggestion that the class pictures include the cardboard frame (this was not included last year).
- A few parents asked about the spring photos, wondering if this is another fundraiser that simply disrupts class time and puts pressure on families to purchase another set of photos. One parent was concerned because the photos of children must be returned if not purchased – does not like photos of her children "floating around". Technically the school does not have to do the spring photos; it is not a fundraiser and the pictures are more casual than the fall pictures. Perhaps only proofs can be provided to parents, rather than a full set of photos. There was also a suggestion that parents be given the option to "opt out" of having their child photographed (maybe on a trial basis in 2011 to see how many parents are not interested). The Administration will come to the next meeting with some suggestions / options of how to handle this in the spring.
- The Field of Dreams maintenance was discussed – it was cut and maintained over the summer by the Division.
- There were questions about the funds raised last year and how they were used (based on the percentages that were set by the PAG / Admin through coordinated fundraising). It would be nice to have a budget with estimates of the funds required for each area. This can be addressed at the next meeting.
- Is there a school policy regarding water bottles and food in classrooms? Generally water is allowed, but food is not allowed in classrooms, however some teachers have been allowing it in the fall (before / after recess) because of the wasps outside.

9. **Questions Concerning Written Progress Reports / Standing Committees**

- Simone Smith offered to assist with the website, and Michelle Gaber suggested that her husband could also assist.
- The Environment Committee reminded everyone about Walk to School day. There are some interesting ideas that could be pursued in the future such as the Walking School Bus and Golden Shoe Award, to help with awareness building. There will be an announcement from the school reminding parents of Walk to School Day.
- There were questions about the school bus (division has specific policy on this) and the new roundabouts on Grosvenor, as well as the construction on Oak Street (the school was not informed in advance about this).
- There is a new Fundraising option for parents that do not wish to participate in each fundraiser – "My Fair Share" with a suggested contribution of \$100/child or \$200/family, and contributors will receive a tax receipt. Students will still participate in the walk-a-thon and read-a-thon (but not collect money). The Plant Sale will also return this year. There were some "My Fair Share" questions regarding prizes for the walk and read-a-thons, tax receipts, family dance (which is a fundraiser) etc. These questions will be addressed to ensure that the PAG is following appropriate procedures.

10. **Next meeting – Wednesday, November 3, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the School Library**

11. ***Motion to adjourn the meeting – Moved by Paula Jasper-Hall, Seconded by Sara Man, Carried.***