

Parents' Advisory Group Inc.
École Robert H. Smith School
Minutes of the Meeting – January 25, 2012

Present (based on sign-in sheet): Michael Gies, Candace Partyka, Trish Wainikka, Stuart Roche, Christine McGregor, Art Jordan, Sara Man, Leslie Mondor, Frances Greco, Pam Shay, Sharon Labossiere, Tom Rossi, Janet Zaluski, Andrea Turness, Brad Regehr, Anji Petruzzelli, Ross Stokke, Denise Gout-Smith, Nadine Karpinski, Simone Smith, Tia A Everitt, Dave Leochko, Joseph Partyka, Kerri Lambert, Susan Broadhurst

Regrets: Shannon Bowden, Michelle Gaber, Dan Orlikow, Andrea Robertson, Kali Li, Trina Minor

1. Meeting called to order. We have quorum.

2. Review and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- As a follow-up to the minutes from the last meeting, and the discussion about Math, Ross Stokke shared some additional information (note: both Ross and his wife Anna Stokke are math professors):
 - Manitoba has placed second worst in the country in PCAP (Pan-Canadian Assessment Program). Although Manitoba's results may be impacted by remote areas of the province included in the assessment (and score), other provinces also have remote areas included in their score. Manitoba used to be in the middle of the country in terms of score, and now we are second last. This decline has to do with the system, not the teachers. Basic skills are not valued.
 - Ross and Anna have had numerous meetings, including meetings with the Department of Education, and are pleased that Numeracy and Literacy have been added to the list of education priority areas.
 - Anna has made presentations to both the PC and NDP caucus and is a speaker at the next divisional professional development day. She would be pleased to do a presentation for the PAG and parents of our school.
- Thank you to Ross for the clarification, information and the offer for a presentation.
- ***Motion to approve the Minutes of the December 11, 2011 PAG Meeting – Moved by Sara Man, Seconded by Art Jordan, Carried.***

3. Review of Agenda

- Two items are added to New Business in the agenda – Playground Project and Walk-a-thon.

4. Executive Reports

- Nothing to report at this time.

5. New Business – PAG Support of the Playground Project

- The Environment Committee has been working on the Playground Enhancement Project and has provided information to parents in the form of synervoice emails, open house, posters, etc. as well as discussions at PAG Meetings.
- The goal is to have Phase 1 completed this summer. This major phase of the project includes items such as the hill, aspen forest, rope obstacle course, amphitheatre, basketball pole and hoop, stepping bridge, weather vane, sculptures, etc. The approximate cost of this phase is \$250,000 – funding should come primarily from grants, as well as donations.
- As this is a major project of a PAG committee, it is important to confirm formally the support of the PAG for this project.
- ***Motion for the PAG to accept Phase 1 of the Playground Enhancement project as a PAG Project – Moved by Simone Smith, Seconded by Candace Partyka; Carried.***
- It was noted that this is more than just a school project, it is a community project.
- When will we know if we have enough funds to proceed with this phase? This is uncertain since grant applications are currently being completed and then we need to wait for the approval of these grants. Any fundraising that is done for the Playground Enhancement Project will be specific for the playground.
- One of the grants we are currently applying for requires a bank statement showing seed money; in this case \$5,000. The problem is that we don't have any money specifically allocated for this project at this time.
- At the last meeting, our Fundraising Report showed excess funds (approximately \$12,000) raised from the previous 2 years of fundraising. Can we put \$5,000 of this towards the Playground Enhancement project?
- The PAG Chair asked those at the meeting if they would support allocating \$5,000 of prior years excess funds raised to the Playground Enhancement project (not new fundraising). The vote was taken by show of hands – support was unanimous.
- ***Motion for the PAG to contribute \$5,000 (from excess funds raised in 2009-2011) to the Playground Enhancement project – Moved by Sara Man, Seconded by Christine McGregor; Carried.***

New Business – Walk-a-Thon

- A committee is being struck to plan a fun event, headed up by Sara Man.

6. Unfinished Business

- Two items – Math Presentation and Use of Excess Funds Raised – will be addressed at the next meeting.

7. Teachers' Report

- Mad Science is starting, as well as Robotics enrichment for grades 5 & 6.
- Mr. Mark is the artist working with grades 1-6 in February and March.
- Thank you to parents for support with Christmas Hampers – it was overwhelmingly generous.
- The grade 3 classes are doing Thumbbody Self Esteem Program – thank you to the many parent volunteers.
- Information evening for Grade 5/6 camp will be held on February 7.
- Science Fair is optional for grades 4-6; contact your teacher for further information if you are interested.
- Canspell was a great event – the kids had an opportunity to interact with different teachers.
- RHS Idol sign up sheets will go out next week. We want to showcase as many kids as possible.
- Today was the 75th Annual Celebration of Patrols, with a big event held at the Convention Centre.
- Our community liaison officer is available to do a drug presentation (45-60 minutes) to schools and parents/PAG.

8. Administration Update

- Concours d'Art Oratoire takes place on Wednesday, February 22 for students selected from each class.
- February 17 is Festival du Voyageur Day, with workshops, performance, etc. There will be a call for volunteers.
- The PAX program is being introduced to kids in early years; a good behaviour program for social emotional self-regulation. It is an initiative of Manitoba Health and Manitoba Education. Grande 1 parents will be provided with information.
- "Tell Them For Me" is an anonymous survey being conducted with students in grades 4-6 regarding participation, anxiety, etc. It is an opportunity for kids to give feedback about the school. It is not mandatory. The students will get information and a video so that they can complete the survey on their own. The information goes to the Division, but the school will get some information as well.
- SDAC budget meeting is coming up. Tia and Dan will be attending the meeting, along with school administration.
- Four mounted projectors have been purchased to be installed in classrooms with the funds approved at the last PAG meeting.
- School open houses are coming up. The maximum capacity of our school is just over 500 and we are pretty much full. It will be very tight getting a child into French immersion, even if you already have a child in French. The spots must be given to those in catchment first.
- Has the division ever consider making Robert H. Smith an all French school because there are many English schools nearby? This has been discussed at the SDAC meetings, but it is very difficult to do.
- How many students in our school are out of catchment? About 169 students, the highest ration of any school in the division. It should be noted that catchment is different for French and English. If we lost those out of catchment students, we would lose 5-6 teachers.
- The Community Breakfast committee has been struck. There will be an information session on Winnipeg Harvest for the kids.

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

- The Family Dance committee has been meeting. More volunteers are needed (75% of the slots are filled). There will be a smaller silent auction this year, glam photos, a new DJ, glitter ball, no dance instructor. Thanks to the committee for their hard work!
- A Facebook Page will be developed for the Playground Project. Approval has been granted by the School Board and the school.
- A new Block Parent was added this week. There will be a fundraiser with Salisbury House – if you bring along a letter and eat at Salisbury House, they will donate 20% to Block Parents (over an 8 day period in February). Information will be posted to the PAG website.
- Fundraising – QSP brought in about \$2,800 in profit.
- Fun Lunch in February takes place on the same day as the Grade 5 field trip to Festival du Voyageur. Arrangements will need to be made to bring the lunch to the Festival, or for the Grade 5s to have their Fun Lunch another day.

10. Next meeting – Wednesday, April 4, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the School Library.

11. Motion to adjourn the meeting – Moved by Nadine Karpinski, Seconded by Art Jordan, Carried.