



# Balaclava Elementary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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## Meeting Minutes Balaclava School Council

Tuesday November 28, 2023 @ 6 p.m. in Balaclava School Library

In Attendance: Jacky Small (Chair), Erin Bell (Member), Charmaine Williams (Member), Erin Duncan, Lesley Ardron (Teacher Rep), Kristi Keery Bishop (Principal)

Regrets: Amber Vandenbroek (Member)

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

- Jacky to welcome, introductions
- Approval of agenda – Approved Unanimously
- Approval of October minutes – Approved Unanimously
- Motion by Erin Bell to reopen voting in of members. Seconded by Jacky. Voted Erin Duncan into membership.

### 2. School Report

- Safety – Playground structure advisory and change of practice. Kristi shared playground structures are now closed for the winter months during school time. This is a result of OSBIE (Ontario School Board Insurance organization) deeming them unsafe to use due to cold (ground freezing), snow/ice (increasingly slippery) and outdoor clothing (thick boots and nylon-based clothing make climbing unsafe) and increased risks of injury. Started making announcements for students,

educated staff at staff meeting who will issue students reminders and communicated to families via newsletter. Will re-open when ground thawed and temperatures consistently above 0 again. Won't be roped off since can be used (at own risk) outside of school use with parental supervision evenings/weekends. Questioned whether the advisory impacted other structures (e.g. basketball court, gaga pit), but it does not. Only the metal/plastic play structures that are climbed on.

- Safety – An application was submitted and accepted for a Tastebuds snack program to offer healthy snack items to all students daily. We are on their wait list for funding. At the moment, we have an emergency snack program (when a student doesn't have enough lunch). This is funded by school-driven fundraising (Meet the Teacher BBQ) and funding from outside agencies (e.g. IODE group of Carlisle). Erin mentioned Optimist club could possibly fund. Kristi advised Optimist club already does support us (e.g. recent purchase of musical instruments).
- Program
  - Winter Primary Concert – Dec 20<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon. Parents and families are welcome to attend. Parents/family members can come watch, entry begins at 11:35. Older students will watch the dress rehearsal earlier in the week. Older students will have opportunity to showcase talents in the new year.
  - Food Drive Dec 1 to 15 – Flamborough food bank donations – monetary donations to office and food donations to classrooms and office.
  - Choir gr 4 to 8 performing Friday Dec 1 – performing at the tree lighting ceremony at 6:30 with Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Optimist choirs. Led by Ms. Cuddy.

- Gr 8s going to WDHS tomorrow to attend mass band clinic with other feeder schools.
- Checkers club grades 3 to 8 will begin running beginning in January led by Mrs. Cassidy.
- Facilities
  - New fencing along edge of property. HWCSB funded a fence be built to fully contain Our Lady of Mount Carmel (next door to Balaclava) playground area to support some new student safety concerns. Doesn't impeded Balaclava use of our playground at all, however, did eliminate our school/community garden. OLMC is still our emergency dismissal location and is still accessible to us without having to go on the road.
  - Water testing so far this year. As a well water school, we have daily testing, 3 month testing and 5 year testing. All of the tests this year have come back in the appropriate range. Since September, we haven't had any water shut down days.
  - Busses – Charmaine asked what the process is when a bus is late picking up students in the morning. School gets notified when bus is late by email. We meet bus when it gets here and check to see which students are on it. We contact families where there is unexplained absence. Encourage families to sign up for notifications as well.

### **3. Rural Schools Report**

- Meeting November 22 - Jacky and Kristi attended (online). Told us of bus driver shortage. Talked about budgeting and public report. Balaclava had \$3345 but that we currently \$1791.42. Expenses of \$1553 was spent on line painting on playground that carried over from last June. Last year spent on subsidizing bussing to lower costs for all classes and teachers.

- Discussion about use of rural schools funds. Consider using remaining funds to bring in an arts presentation into the school for all students (e.g. drumming workshops in February) and then request additional funds to support end of year bussing subsidies. Council agreed. Kristi will pursue making these arrangements.
- Question – can schools bring in other options to avoid high costs of excursions? Discussed Prologue of the Arts, Scientists in the School. Robotics/Stem. Home and School could potential raise for and consider funding. Kristi to share some options with Home and School.

#### **4. Home and School Report**

- Erin Bell and Erin Duncan reporting– Fundscrip is still going. Have run two campaigns back-to-back. Having trouble getting back the forms. Was more positively received this year with school also sending out information as well as H&S. Membership has changed significantly. Trying to get more people to volunteer. Working on promos to help understand what H&S does to support the school. Looking at doing a Fun Fair in the spring, and considering a cereal box donation domino event. Looking into Krispy Kreme fundraiser for next year.

#### **5. New Business**

- Pro Grant process and discussion – Jacky – Pro grant is to encourage parent involvement in schools and run by School Councils. Apply for grant \$1000 by end of January. Ideal to get parents involved in the school. Last year did a financial literacy parent/child group. A few years ago did a math night with various centres. Jacky suggesting Leo Barbe (geared gr 5 to 8) to talk about social emotional well being. Can do different kinds of presentations – evening with parents, then some workshop/presenter options. Consider whether can be tied into another event (e.g. Open House in the spring) to capture more of

an audience. Jacky will look into. We'll fill in the application at our next meeting.

**6. Setting of Future Meeting Date(s)**

- January 16<sup>th</sup> 6 p.m.

Meeting adjourned 7:30 p.m.