

Home & School Meeting

September 26, 2023

In attendance:

Kara Jessop, Mike Malysewich, Natalia Gonzalez, Andrea Lawson, Meghan Newton, Hillary Peach, Stacey Brown, Nicol Piskuric, Kristina Cote, Amanda Crossley, Matt Lindo, Lily Huang, Jaime Fallon, Rowyda Zaki, Michael Bianchi

Minutes by: Jean Brown

Motion to begin meeting: Jean

Second: Natalia

Motion to approve agenda: Natalia

Second: Jean

Principal's Report:

- overview of function of school counsel does
- school classes will be reorganized
- EQAO Report: 80.6 (reading) 62.5 (writing) 59.5 (math)
- Introduction of Matt Lindo, new School Counsel Chair

Home and School Membership Overview:

- Assoc. for Home & School Federation formed in the 1920s
- Holds liability insurance which allows off-property events and does not require teacher involvement
- Parent-run bank account
 - school can request money from Home & School
 - Home & School bank balance can carry over (unlike school generated funds)
- Members pay a \$20 membership fee which helps cover liability insurance
- Goal: get a variety of people in the community to help run each event
- Importance of voting members:
 - voting on spending
 - reaching quorum during meetings
- Also supported by Hamilton-Wentworth Counsel for Home & School who meet with superintendent and trustees

Overview of Planned Events

- Chalk and Talk (Sept 22)
 - spent funds on permit, chalk
- Night Hike (Oct 27)
 - carved pumpkins line trail
 - Mac students help with after school carving, monitoring trails, games at Clubhouse
 - parents with police checks can come into school to help carve

- Festival of Lights (end of November/beginning December)
 - last year was first year; did not generate as much money as hoped
 - fundraiser for Food 4 Kids
 - Natalia and Erin to plan event this year
- Skate & Bake (April)
 - Gr. 5 trip and grad fundraiser
 - Gr. 5 parents brought treats for bake sale
 - held at Wentworth, had skates available to borrow
- Book Swap (Date TBD June)

Other Updates:

- Class Parent System
 - aim to have 1-2 class parent liaisons to help assist with communication
 - managed through Home & School
 - also allows teachers to reach out to communicate needs, like for volunteering
- Volunteer List
 - separated by kindergarten and primary
 - help to fill the gap between need for volunteers and parents/caregivers wanting to volunteer
- Spirit Wear
 - Will make available for orders October 26
 - still trying to decide on a local vendor
 - Suggestion:
 - Could Home & School pre-purchase items to sell directly?
 - Community definitely appreciates affordable Spirit Wear
- Outdoor Space
 - got approval to do a Little Free Library and Little Mitten closet
 - we need to purchase the physical structures
 - Grade 4s and 5s will keep them stocked
 - Options for sourcing structure
 - asking Westdale High or other community member to help make it
 - will require principal approval
 - Gardening Club (Natalia)
 - hoping to get some volunteers to garden
 - will involve coordination with Facilities
 - Outdoor play spaces
 - want to improve outdoor spaces
 - administration is considering micro clover for back area; Home and School is willing to help
 - looking to put painted activities on the pavement
 - Suggestion: getting a shed or structure to store play equipment

Secretary Report:

- Jean will collect information from new members

Treasurer's Report

- Brought in ~\$17000 in 2022-2023 school year
- Spent ~\$17000
 - \$3000 for school trips
 - \$4000 in other donations
 - teacher gifts/appreciation day
 - event expenses
- Goal of last year was not to increase the bank account but build community and refocus Home and School
 - also prioritized contributing to community organizations that support Cootes community

Additional Discussion

- The importance of trips
 - Can we create a sponsorship program that families can help pay for other students' trips?
 - School uses school-generated funds to offset costs
 - School Cash Online also allows people to contribute extra money
 - School Generated Funds are to be more transparent this year
 - Home and School has also in the past contributed to having events in school, such as Artists/Scientists in the Classroom

Voting on Executive:

- Anyone can offer name for exec positions
- No other volunteers; executive will remain the same for 2023-24 school year

Meetings:

- Likely 5-6 throughout the year
- Feedback from attendees: 7:30 is a good time, and virtual option is appreciated

Motion to adjourn: Natalia

Second: Mike