

**SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING**  
 Cootes Paradise Elementary  
 (Hybrid – Remote and in Gym)

April 11, 2024

**MINUTES**

In attendance in person: Sara Alves (Vice Principal), Matt Lindo (Chair), Kara Jessop (Home & School Representative), Rosalee van Staalduinen (parent member), Lisa Feinberg (Secretary), Heather Ricks (parent member), Natalia Gonzalez, Andrea Lawson, Kristina Cote

In attendance via MS Teams: Yansith, Amanda C.

Regrets: Lily Huang (parent member), Anneli Thomson (Treasurer), Jennifer Hogan (Principal)

Agenda Item	Comments	Person Responsible
1. Welcome, Introductions, and Land Acknowledgment	Called to order at 6:35 p.m.  Mr. Lindo presented the land acknowledgement.  Ms. Jessop has an ongoing disclosure that she is an employee of the HWDSB.	Mr. Lindo
2. Notice of Minutes from February 12, 2024 Meeting	The minutes from the meeting on February 12, 2024 have been approved by email and were posted online.	Mr. Lindo
3. Review and Approval of Agenda	Mr. Lindo moved to approve the motion. Ms. van Staalduinen seconded the motion. Motion was carried and the agenda was approved.	Mr. Lindo
4. Chair's Report	Mr. Lindo presented the Chair's report. Mr. Lindo reported the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Given that March break occurred between last meeting and this week, there is not a lot to report.</li> <li>• Committee Updates:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Unfortunately, there was not sufficient interest or willing volunteers to put on the Talent Show, so School Council did not go ahead with that event.</li> <li>○ School Council received approval for the Pro Grant/YMHC Mental Wellness Workshop. This event will be going ahead on Thursday May 2, 2024. Mr. Lindo is organizing this event. Ms. Gonzalez offered to volunteer as well as to assist Mr. Lindo.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Mr. Lindo

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ School Council is still considering putting on a resource fair in conjunction with an HSA event, but that fair is still in nascent planning stages.</li> <li>● At the conclusion of Mr. Lindo’s report, the school administration asked how the School Council has monitored its goal of improving communication. Mr. Lindo noted that there has been a significant improvement in communication, pointing to the written reports and the questions being asked of both parties. Mr. Lindo acknowledged that it would be helpful to have measurable targets and that communication is a two-way street.</li> </ul>	
5. Treasurer’s Report	School Council has \$427.68 remaining in the parent engagement fund, less the costs at the April meeting for childminding and snacks. School Council will be receiving the PRO Grant to apply to the event on May 2, 2024.	Mr. Lindo for Ms. Thomson
6. Home and School Association’s Report	<p>Ms. Jessop presented the Home and School Association (HAS) report. She noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Our School’s HSA recently met with HSA Executive Council and reports the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HSA Executive Council is encouraging parents to become members of the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC). PIC is a very important committee and is currently struggling to get parent engagement.</li> <li>○ HSA Executive Council is asking the Trustee for a copy of the HWDSB’s religious holiday accommodations materials, so we can ensure everyone is included in all events.</li> <li>○ PRO Grant process was different this year- Principals have to log in to the system, which delayed money coming out, which makes it harder to plan events.</li> <li>○ The first day of school was initially set to be Wednesday next year but has been changed back to Tuesday.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● HSA’s Skate and Bake event was a huge success. This year, it was moved to Coronation due to price considerations. After paying its expenses, HSA has over \$900 to give to the Grade 5 Grads for their grad trip or ceremony. Mme Titian and Mme Hazell came to the event. Mme Titian won a raffle prize. Kids were very excited for her and cheered.</li> <li>● HSA did two popcorn days so far this year, which have been very successful. A lot of people donated. HSA raised around \$900. HSA will be helping out Mme Wright for the next popcorn day next week.</li> <li>● HSA has a couple more events on the horizon. HSA would like to complete the little library project and needs to talk to Facilities about this. The project is aligned with the summer reading program.</li> </ul>	Ms. Jessop

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HSA is still pursuing its outdoor space initiative. Nicole, Mike and Stacy have been contacting vendors. Unfortunately, Ms. Alves' proposals for funding for the outdoor spaces were denied. HSA is considering writing grants for the fall and other fundraising opportunities.</li> </ul>	
7. Principal's Report	<p>Ms. Alves presented the Principal's Report, which is appended in full to these minutes. Parents are encouraged to review the report for details. Of note, Ms. Alves discussed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates regarding the School Improvement Plan, which included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The School's efforts to continue to purchase MathUp licenses and Knowledgehook applications, focus on small group instruction, math manipulatives and math conversations.</li> <li>○ The School's technology plan is in place, which supports Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assessment goals.</li> <li>○ The School's recent and upcoming events, including guest speakers, character assemblies, and earth week initiatives.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How school generated funds are being used for sensory and self-regulation items, community events, technology, HWDSBe Kind Fundraiser, contribute to the outdoor spaces, etc.</li> <li>• The clubs available to Students at Cootes – In response to a parent request, Ms. Alves agreed that the School would send more information to parents in its newsletter about what clubs are available.</li> <li>• Kindergarten orientation is on Wednesday May 22nd from 4:15-5:00pm</li> <li>• Open House will be on May 8<sup>th</sup> from 4:30-5:30pm.</li> <li>• Various tools and programs available in the classrooms – see the written report for more details.</li> <li>• Ms. Alves reported that her funding proposal regarding the outdoor space was not approved, but indicated that the School is not giving up on this and will try to resubmit a smaller proposal.</li> <li>• The Grade 5 farewell trip is confirmed for June 26<sup>th</sup>.</li> <li>• The Grade 5 graduation is June 19<sup>th</sup>. The rain date is June 25<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Jessop raised an issue about the difficulty of having two potential dates for working parents. Ms. Jessop suggested the Westdale High School Auditorium as an indoor venue and said that HSA could assist with any costs.</li> </ul>	Ms. Alves
8. New Business	<p>Mr. Lindo briefly reviewed the following discussion items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timely Bus Pickup – In response to the notice that went out reminding parents about the need to ensure timely pickup of children from bus stops, Mr. Lindo noted that most parents have experienced the bus being late. Parents were surprised to now</li> </ul>	Mr. Lindo

	<p>be told that they need to be early, because buses are now arriving early. The School administration suggested that parents should contact the bus company directly to address these issues and agreed to provide parents with the contact information for the company in the next newsletter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource Fair – As noted above, this event will coincide with an HSA event in June. The planning is still in preliminary stages.</li> </ul>	
9. Next Meeting Date	This is the final meeting of the school year.	Mr. Lindo
10. Adjournment	Motion made by Mr. Lindo to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Feinberg seconded the motion. Motion was approved, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.	Mr. Lindo

## Requested Issues to be Addressed in the Principal's Report

- Date of School Council Meeting: **Thursday April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024**
- Date Submitted to Principal & Vice-Principal: **Tuesday April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024**
- Date Submitted to Council: **Tuesday, April 9, 2024**

### School Improvement Plan Updates

- We are continuing with: MathUP Licenses and Knowledgehook Application
  - HIP: Narrowing down our specific focuses to three main portions: Extending on the ideas of small group instruction, math manipulatives, and math conversations
  - Technology Order
  - Continuing with well-being through having guest presenters (BRAVE), character assemblies, Earth Week initiatives
  - PD Day focuses on language and mathematics (supporting the SIP)

### School Generated Funds and Funding Needs

- Sensory and Self-Regulation items including wobble chairs
- Community Events
- Technology
- Seed Fundraiser- will be used to contribute to the outdoor space.

### Recent and Upcoming Events (academic, sports, school life)

- Continuing with clubs from the last meeting. See chart below:



## Cootes Clubs (Junior Classes)



Interested in running a club or team for Grade 4 and/or 5 students at Cootes? Please see the list below. Add your name, the club you are interested in organizing and the time that you are available to run it.

Examples: Lego Club, Art Club, Media Club, Board Games Club

Teacher	Club/Team	Grade	Availability / Desired time
Persaud	Open Gym	4	Day 4 NB#1
Persaud	Open Gym	5	Day 5 NB #1
Hazell	Creative Writing	4/5	TBD
Wright/Harrison	Swift Bracelet Society	4/5	Day 4 NB #1
Mastro	Build + Design Club	4/5	Day 3 NB #2
Dubchak	Reading Club (would need a space though)	4/5	Day 1, NB #2

- Cootes Paradise Track and Field: May 29th (Rain Date May 30th)
- Kindergarten Orientation (tentatively) May 14th
- Open House (May 8th) Yes, classrooms will be available/ open for visitors
- Grade 3 Math Club: Day 4, Second NB (will be twice a week)
- EQAO (May 13th-17th), purchasing laptops instead of iPads, Training Programs, prep details, practice, technology platforms etc
- Life Skills, Cooking Classes (Tuesdays and Thursdays)
- Character Assemblies (End of each month)
- Grade 5 Celebrations in June

#### New Learning Initiatives

- Acadience Reading: Universal Screening Tool (Grades K-2)
- Decision-Making Reading Intervention Tool (Grades 3-5)
- Continuing with MathUP, Knowledgehook, The Thinking Classroom, HIP strategies, Lexia Support Reading Intervention

#### Current Safety Issues

- Nothing to report

#### 1-2 Questions you would like Council or Parental Input On

1. How are you monitoring the council's goals of improving communication? We also hope to be as open, supportive, and transparent as possible to improve communication and would like an update on how we feel it is going on your end.

#### Ad Hoc Issues

##### □ **Outdoor area – Please give an update on how things are progressing.**

Unfortunately, we just received notice on Monday that we were not approved for the outdoor proposals. We want to support The Home and School Association and meet halfway to purchase some of the items discussed, provided we raise enough in the Seed Fundraiser for Earth Week.

##### □ **Grade 5 Farewell Trip – Dates and Details?**

We are looking into going to the Alpine Centre Program at McMaster University. Teachers are working on completing the trip package so we can submit it to Superintendent Lee for approval. \*Tentative Trip Date: June 26th

June 20th for Grade 5 Farewell celebration (Rain Date on the 24th) \*Both dates are Tentative

- **End of School Year Trips for all grades. Are plans for other trips/events being made? It was noted that last year some grades did not plan anything. What are the barriers for end of year trips and other external learning experiences throughout the year?**

It depends on individual teachers. Please feel free to connect with your child's teacher to advocate for a specific trip or updates regarding upcoming events from their classroom.

- **Grade 5 Graduation Ceremony – Dates and Details? How can parents of grade 5 students support this? Last year's format raised several concerns that were noted: many parents having to stand, traffic making it difficult to hear student speeches, limited refreshments.**

Drinks and snacks are planned for the grade 5 students only. Due to the gym's capacity limits and fire safety regulations, we need to hold the event outside. We are open to ideas/ suggestions that adhere to safety regulations.

- **School Library Lending procedures – What is the current allowance?**

Update from Ms. Edgar

- **What are ways and opportunities for more interaction between the French, Mandarin, and English students, to make friends and be social outside their stream?**

- Various clubs listed above (Bracelet club, math club, coding club, etc) are open for all streams
- Leadership Group
- Character assemblies where we celebrate and gather as a whole community.
- Whole school events such as Big Crunch, etc
- Diverse representation from the announcement team