

Home & School Meeting

September 19, 2024

In attendance:

Nikol Piskuric, Mike Malysewich, Laura Malysewich, Caitlin Burgess, Hillary Peach, Kristina Cote, Jean Brown, Benjamin Garden, Natalia Gonzalez, Mitch Orsatti, Lily Huang, Meredith Shepherd, Emma Battiston, Ryan Battiston, S.M., Michaela Hornung-Zavitz, Nicholas Gauthier, Rosalee Vanstaaldinen, Heather Reid, Maria Egwakhide, Andrea Ara, Chanti Babu, Hong Jiang Yu, Bill Killorn, Jesse Tomes, Jennifer Hogan (principal), Sara Alves (vice-principal)

Minutes by: Hillary Peach

What is the HSA? (Nikol)

- Parents and guardians at Cootes: volunteers trying to improve the education, health and safety and social well being
 - Done through community events and fundraising
- Who are we?
 - President: Nikol
 - Vice president: Kristina
 - Treasurer: Mike
 - Communications: Caitlin
 - Secretary: Hillary
- What do we do?
 - Run events and fundraise/participate in projects to improve the school
 - Pumpkin hike: Oct 25th, kids carve the pumpkins and we line Caleb's walk, hundreds of people every year
 - Skate and bake: kids come out and we provide skates, for the grade 5 graduation
 - Chalk and talk: welcome event
 - Book swap at the end of the year
 - Spirit wear
 - Popcorn days
- Fundraising is then directed towards:
 - Projects like improving the outdoor space: last year we spend \$14k on the improvements (shed, spray painting, equipment)
 - Subsidizing school trips- request from teachers come in that we can support
 - Donate to families in need: last year we spent \$850 on grocery store gift cards to send home over the holidays
- How does HSA work?
 - Membership fee (\$20) is collected as we are part of the larger Ontario federation which provides us with insurance for our events and the things we do
 - The fee is to be a voting member, not required if you only want to attend meetings and volunteer- you can get your money back by volunteering at one event
 - We fundraise independently from the school- the money that we raise, voting members decide how it is used, what initiatives we want to support (supplies etc) and we work in collaboration with the school (Jen + Sara)
- Questions about membership?
 - Natalya- the \$20 is not meant to be a barrier- if you want to be a member but the \$20 is not possible please reach out
 - Mike- you can still come to meeting and events, but are unable to vote if you are not a member
 - Nikol: if you want to be a member and 20 is an issue reach out

Treasurer's Report (Mike)

- A budget summary from the last year was provided
 - Usually the goal is to run revenue neutral, not trying to generate a profit
 - There was less spending during covid, (online events) and so there was an excess

- Last year we spent on capital projects we thought would be beneficial
- Through the events we ran, made roughly \$9500, spent \$20000 (outdoor space was largest line item)
- For this year planned line items include: popcorn days, events, spirit wear, food 4 kids, class trips, outdoor space
 - \$17500 in bank and \$5000 GIC, total is \$23700
 - We have funds if there are projects we want to tackle
 - We also spend a lot on trips- busses, in class activities- we don't typically say no as long as it is not over the top

Fundraising Ideas 2024/2025 (Kristina)

- Popcorn: previously used Kernels (poor margins), now from Westdale Theatre (Casey is our rep)
 - Previously we used toonies, this year with help of school admin will be using school cash online(!), but can still collect cash on the day of if needed by ordering extra
 - Question is how frequently? Monthly vs bi-monthly
 - Can break it into terms with cash online (Oct-Jan) (Feb-June)
 - Natalia: Can we link popcorn sales to a specific fundraising goal?
 - In meeting with the principal/vice-principal there is a big need in the school community for food
 - Can do gift cards linked to grocery stores (without liquor) or food pantry in the school itself where parents can shop directly- school will provide us with a list of what is needed
 - Not with Food4Kids? No, there are kids on the waitlist and kids not even on the waitlist so trying to help directly through the school
 - Park of meet the teacher will be food drive to contribute to school pantry
 - Laura is available every other week to take over
 - Which day? Cookie day is Thursday, pizza is every Wednesday- maybe better to do monthly? Can always start biweekly this term and pull back if too much
 - Every second Friday
 - Sara: typically kids forget events are happening on Mondays, if they are later in the week you can send reminders
 - Jen: there options through school cash online where you can make a donation to children who can't afford pizza day or cookies or popcorn, we can add that option to popcorn sales as well
 - Can talk to staff about who is chronically not purchasing popcorn
 - Parents emailed HSA that some parents emailed that they specifically didn't want children to order
 - Do we know how many kids can't afford to participate? Too early in the year, we have had many new families and need to determine this
 - Decision: we are going to start biweekly on Fridays and decrease if this is too frequent
- Stickers: vinyl stickers
 - School spirit, cheap spirit wear
- Ideas for fundraisers can always submit

Events for 2024/2025 (Nikol)

- Chalk and talk on the weekend
- Pumpkin hike- volunteers are needed, Oct 25th
- March: skate and bake, date TBD
- June: book swap and staff appreciation lunch, date TBD
- Other ideas let us know
- Staff might plan movie events- popcorn sales?

Big projects for 2024/2025 (Nikol)

- Support school program- food for families, first term of popcorn sales will be for food drive
- Improve the outdoor space- we have money in the bank food this, but it is expensive

- Quotes last year to fix the grounds: muddy kinder pen, grading in the back field, came in around \$55-60K- we have money but not enough to do what we want to do to fix the grounds
- School administrators applied to school board and the board declined
- We can try to apply for grants to get climbers and play structures and fix landscaping issues
- Art club- to decorate the shed, paint a mural
- Eligible grant- if you are good at writing grants please help us
 - TD
 - Tree Canada

What are your hopes for HSA? (Nikol)

- Jean: scientists in the classroom/activities in the classroom, or artists in classroom
 - Nikol has contacts
- Grants to apply for: parent at Chalk and Talk suggested Green Venture which does rain gardens, pollinator gardens

Meetings (Nikol)

- We try and coordinate with school council
 - Tuesday Nov 12, 2024
 - Wednesday Jan 15, 2025
 - Thursday March 6, 2025
 - Monday May 12, 2025
- Plan to start on a Tuesday and then shift one day every time (except Friday), to allow parents who have recurring commitments ability to attend
- Can pay membership today with tap, or email or cash! We need name and home address for insurance purposes
 - If you want to be a voting member, you must pay for your membership at least 30 days before hand, so don't wait

Ended: 7:42 PM