

## SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

Dalewood Middle School

(In Person, Art Room)

November 27, 2024

### MINUTES

In Attendance (13): Katie Hopkins (Principal), Kevin McHarg (Teacher Rep), Andrea Ara (Co-Chair), Bill Heinrich (Co-Chair), Vanessa Alexander (Treasurer), Katie Davidman (Secretary), Natalia Gonzalez (Voting Member), Arun Vijayakumar (Voting Member), Rosalee Van Staaldin (Voting Member), Alison Simpson, Sweni Sabaratnam, Jasmine Gaskin, Laura Waltman

| Agenda Item        | Comments   |
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| Opening            | The meeting was called to order around 630pm with quorum. We opened with introductions, land acknowledgment and the singing of Oh Canada.  |
| Notice of Minutes  | <p>The Minutes for the October 26, 2024 meeting were reviewed live in the meeting and approved.</p> <p>Minutes are posted on the Dalewood School website under School Council.</p> <p>We briefly discussed the process of how to best share and review minutes. Currently, Katie D shares them with Bill &amp; Andrea who suggest any changes and then they are approved and posted by Principal Katie Hopkins.</p>  |
| The Agenda         | The agenda was circulated and approved   |
| Principal's Report | <p>Katie Hopkins Reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gratitude for the Parents Reaching Out Grant work</li><li>• Microsoft Teams for School Council – we'll receive an invite to our own file section for minutes, grant documents, chat, etc.</li><li>• Grade 7/8 Info nights have been happening about the transition to High School. For Grade 8 there will be a number of touchpoint opportunities. My Blueprint is the course selection guide. Westdale will come to the school in January to talk about it, and will host an info night about course selections (Jan 21)</li><li>• School Improvement Priorities are: Wellbeing for every student (belonging data, student-led assemblies); Engagement for every student (student voice e.g. Get Real workshop on affirming identities, others on bullying prevention); Preparedness for the Future, Literacy Achievement (reading tool), Numeracy, School Council, Excursions</li><li>• Auditorium accessibility project delayed</li></ul> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A parent asked about the snacks newly being provided and Katie Hopkins shared about Rodrigo Venturelli freely offering farm fresh food along with a feeling of community being offered at school on Wednesdays and how it's been engaging many kids. We expressed gratitude for Rodrigo and this project.</li></ul> |

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| Teacher's Report | <p>Kevin McHarg Reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trip to see Mamma Mia at Westdale was a success. Grade 8 students should be aware that Grade 11 students who have taken a Grade 9 or 10 drama class are eligible to audition to participate in the play</li> <li>• Math club on day 4 library Mme Parsons</li> <li>• Drama Club weekly meetings Mr. Adeney – thinking about a play or talent night</li> <li>• Choir weekly and performed at Remembrance Day</li> <li>• Choir and Band preparing a pre-holiday / winter concert for last week of December</li> <li>• Dec 13 Westdale Band to perform at Dalewood</li> <li>• Yearbook Team has been newly meeting with Mrs Coburn</li> <li>• Robotics Club starting with M Romanowitch &amp; Mr. Adeney</li> <li>• Junior Boys Volleyball playoffs finished a successful 4 and 4 season</li> <li>• Senior Boys Volleyball currently in the playoffs</li> </ul> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An update on the maker space was requested, see below</li> <li>• A parent asked if the choir could perform for parents and the Principal and Teacher are considering this</li> </ul>   |
| Chair's Report   | <p><b>Maker Space Update:</b> Natalia Gonzalez</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natalia reported that she requested materials on the neighborhood Facebook group and has collected a box of materials.</li> <li>• We now need storage bins, and Katie Hopkins shared that there could be a budget for bins.</li> <li>• Mr. Adeney to come to next meeting to report more</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Item:</b> Natalia G to coordinate with Mr. Adeney to get him the materials she has collected and to find out what kind of storage bins he needs.</p> <p>Discussion: do we need to fundraise so that we have funds for situations like this</p> <p><b>PRO Grant Application Update:</b> Bill Heinrich</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The grant went in ahead of deadline on Nov 21</li> <li>• Gratitude and praise was expressed for the subcommittee members and others who helped make this all happen, it was a big job, so well executed: Bill Heinrich, Vanessa Alexander, Christina Lootsma, Sweni Sabaratram.</li> <li>• Last year grants were dispersed in January so we hope to find out soon.</li> </ul> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See new business below</li> </ul> |

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| New Business | <p><b>Implementing the PRO Grant plans:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We reviewed the 4 projects and then divided into groups according to interest area to begin planning, to be continued.</li> <li>• It was clarified that we will steer clear of food-shaming, diet culture, judgement about good/bad/nutritious food. We will keep the focus on “food is fuel,” and building inclusive and affirming community around food: sharing hacks, recipes, connections between each other, to local farmers / food sources. We discussed that our role is not to prescribe or suggest specific diets or to name some diets as more nutritious than others. We recognized that many people face barriers to choices around food, and that we could inadvertently contribute to people’s fraught relationships with food/ their bodies if we go down the path of moralizing about food.</li> <li>• How can we connect this with the work Rodrigo is doing with the kids? It was named that our focus is the parents / families as per the grant, however, any of these projects could be expended, continued, deepened, linked or repeated. Our immediate focus for this is however to engage parents and their families in these 4 projects (as per the grant).</li> <li>• There was an accompanying document that lists the 4 projects to be housed along with all the documents on the new MS Teams School Council page that is being created.</li> <li>• All of these projects will be unveiled at the final Open House event (project 4)</li> </ul> <p><b>1. Garden Box:</b> (25 families): So far: Arun Vijayakumar &amp; Alison Simpson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a HWDSB guidance document for garden plots, a spot has been identified, Katie Hopkins has put a request for approval into Facilities, we can’t start digging until that step is complete.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Family Kitchen Movies</b> (30 families): So far: Andrea Ara &amp; Sweni Sabaratram</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite families to create short videos to share with the school community relating to food life hacks or favorite recipes (e.g. freezing summer berries for use in winter). Videos will be housed on Teams. We will need folks to solicit the videos, and ultimately edit a final compilation video. One idea was getting a student to volunteer for the video editing.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Newsletter Links</b> (10 families): So far: Laura Waltman &amp; Rosalee van Staalduinen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite families to share food-related tidbits with each other through the weekly updates (aligned with our “food is fuel” philosophy).</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Farmers Market at June Open House</b> (all): So far: Vanessa Alexander, Jasmine Gaskin, Natalia Gonzalez, Katie Davidman</p> |
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|                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showcase local farmers along with all the other project grants (the garden box, a video) in ways that connect families as they come for Open House.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Item:</b> each sub-committee to pick a Lead contact member and to begin meeting and implementation. School Council members who were absent to join one of the 4 groups.</p> |
| Summary of Action Items | <p><b>Action Item:</b> Natalia G to coordinate with Mr. Adeney to get him the materials she has collected and to find out what kind of storage bins he needs.</p> <p><b>Action Item:</b> each sub-committee to pick a Lead contact member and to begin meeting and implementation. School Council members who were absent to join one of the 4 groups.</p>                                       |
| Future Business         | Fundraising Priorities   |
| Next Meeting            | Next meeting: Wednesday January 22, 2025, 630pm  |
| Adjournment             | We adjourned at 7:42pm   |