

Dundas Central School Council Minutes April 7, 2021 via MS Teams

Meeting start: 7:00pm

Present: Bethany Foster (Chair), Elizabeth Hutchison (Secretary), Joanne Di Maio (Treasurer), Courtney Southworth, Megan Combes, Aaron Vanderwal, Donna Nunan, Madeline Van Impe, Majdi Qutob, Laura Bartkiw (Principal) Tammy DiDonato (Teacher Representative); Jennifer Moore (Teacher Representative)

Welcome and Land Acknowledgment recited by Bethany Foster

Business arising from the previous minutes

1. Approval of Minutes (March 2021)

-Approved

2. Financial Update

-Joanne: We don't have any new credit (no spirit wear or Mabel's Labels funds)

-2 more debits to reimburse teachers for \$ spent. New balance is \$2677.61,

3. Parent Engagement Fund \$500

-Can we defer it again until next month or are we too close to the end of the year?

-Let's defer it. Don't know what to spend it on.

-Hopefully something will come up.

4. Paul Tut

-We have invited him to May meeting: **May 5th or the 12th. We haven't heard back from Mr. Tut but will proceed with the hope that he can attend on May 5th or 12th.**

-Can people think of talking points/questions that we are interested in hearing him answer.

-Madelyn will start brainstorming a list of talking points. We would like a Board update, initiatives about the Board. Would like to get an update on the trustee issues. We should aim for the week before the meeting.

-Aaron: a pretty common item for the trustees is what the plan is for accommodation reviews (school closures)

5. Spirit Wear

-there has been 1 order this go around.

-Is there more that we can do to promote the spirit wear? Should we send more paper adverts home? We need to be in their faces.

-At many schools this is a huge fundraiser.

-The best method is probably the paper that goes home...if we do paper next year, we will see an increase in uptake. Other option is to do something through School Cash Online....

-Tammy DiDonato:

-Teachers were talking about it recently. Looking for ways to promote it. Last year at another school Mrs. DiDonato noticed that all of the teachers had Spirit Wear. If the money doesn't have to go directly to the children...perhaps if school council could buy every staff member a piece of Spirit Wear...the teachers become walking advertisement.

-Can we share a blurb for the teacher's websites/Instagram account etc. to share with all of the staff to use/post?

-If we clearly communicate to the teachers and ask for their help to promote it, it can really help to promote it.

-Madelyn: really likes these ideas and will help with it. Would be great to build it around an event (eg. a Sprit Day) early in the year.

-Megan: deadline is April 18th? Additional options were added (long sleeve shirt added?) The limit for free shipping is a little bit high.

-Parent Council has historically not been able to use the funds just for teachers...Bethany will look into it.

-There was a no fundraising rule but it was more about things being 'touched by the school'

-Could we also consider a sort of program where we could purchase spirit wear for those students who can't obtain spirit wear otherwise (student assistance). Bethany will look into it. Other option would be to purchase some from the school to share with students in need for sprit wear.

-Laura Bartkiw: School Council isn't permitted to purchase gifts for the teachers but parents could get together and collectively do a year-end gift.

-Could we do the Instagram post for this sale period for Tammy to circulate to teachers.

-Possibly a display case with samples.

6. Playground – proposed work and funding

-Jennifer Moore

-we began the conversation last month

-did a walk through of the play ground with Madelyn and Bienenstock Group

-Playground committee has been formed by members of staff (representatives of all ages and phys ed)

-they have met to talk about the needs in the playground

-they have had some back and forth on the ideas and needs and the Bienenstock Gorup. There have been some surprising numbers that came in...some things are very expensive.

-Preliminary scope came out around \$9,000.00. The teachers on the committee are so committed to the classroom space...they have said that they will do the manual labour.

-Just waiting for a few more pieces of information before we move forward.

- There are number of parents in the community who are happy to help (even whose kids are no longer at the school).
- It will likely have to be rolled out end of August/beginning of September
- Tammy DiDonato – when it comes time to do some manual labour...all staff would likely be very happy to help out.
- Madelyn – it is very clear that Bienenstock is looking to be very fair and be a team player...seems like they are trying to help us out and give us some discounts. They are actually donating a number of pieces as well.
- Funds Available to go to the Playground:** Home and School has \$4273 available, the Maker Space funds available \$2500, \$742 Student Assistance Fund.
Total of: \$7536.58
- If we do want to apply for an Education Grant, how does it work? Should it be done by a teacher or Parent Council? Jennifer More and Rob Bell have plans to apply for the grant. They will keep Madelyn up to date. It is a long timeline. Needs to be in by the end of June. They will start that process.
- Will be good to have an idea

7. Home and School Report

- Home & School were not members in good standing and so they had to get in the good books with OFSA to be able to write cheques etc. There are no plans to do any H&S fundraising or step on any toes. People are welcome to join the H&S but not sure what they will get out of it at this point. Only meetings will be to approve the requests
- the Faster that we can spend the money the better, once the Bank account is empty we don't need to keep the H&S
- Madelyn: is the intention that next year, there will not be a Home & School? If so, is it appropriate to have both and to have overlapping members.
- Most schools have both and most have overlapping
- Home & School Association is a charitable organization, it is meant to be the philanthropic arm of the parent community. The Parent Council can't do that fundraising.
- Our current dues take us through to September
- Bethany: Not the Parent Council's role to make any determinations about the Home & School, if anyone wants to get involved in those decisions, they can join the Home & School

Teacher Report (Tammy DiDonato)

-Student Teacher from Redeemer (Ms. Bailey) working with Mrs. Gillis' class. Dundas Central has been the most welcoming school with a community that has been the most excited about learning.

-Ms. DiDonato is taking a co-op student from DVVS starting after the Spring Break. Still continuing with partnerships as we have in the past.

-New Program going on with the Board, goal to improve the reading achievement of all students. They are targeting Grade 2s. Students are being invited to participate in reading intervention that takes place in addition to their reading program. Mrs. Gillis sent it home to her students this week.

-Megan: Is the Spark program different from the Learn Literacy program. Are there programs offered at the intermediate and Jr. Level. Empower is still offered at intermediate (put out by Sick Kids) level. Students are flagged by teacher or learning resource teacher.

Principal Report

-Conversation around Home & School and School Council. These discussions are always very helpful.

-if we are looking to top up money for the playground...cheque drive....just asked parents to contribute a cheque/money

-Public Health Measures – we are doing our best to keep up with them...they change daily

-Grade 8 Graduation – we still do not have any updates from the Board. We are assuming it will have to be remote and online.

-Final transition will be May 3, 2021...4 students coming back...no one leaving

-Parent Portal is critical. Please call Ms. McGuire if you need help accessing. It is critical. All of the forms/attendance etc. is there and critical.

-Bethany – is the cheque drive something we should be doing this academic year? Probably better to do it in the Fall...if work is underway it might be a motivating factor.

-Megan's Question: what do we do when we keep our kids home because of COVID but we have missed the deadline. How should we communicate it and is there anything in place for the kids when they are missing school.

-package of work being provided for each grade (2 weeks of full lessons for every grade). That can be sent through the classroom teachers.

-Board is leaving it to families to make decisions about what is best.

Next Meeting – May 5th at 7pm on teams.

Adjournment

