

# Unionville Public School Advisory Council Minutes

Tuesday, April 21, 2009

## **Attendance:**

**Council Members present:** Gary Crosby, JP Gagnon, Tess Georgakopoulos, Catherine Hankins, Lorrie-Anne Lauder, Karen Mitas, Pamela Nitert, Connie Prentice, Hilary Seppanen, Carol Takagi (Vice Principal), Ruchi Vij, Jodi Wilson, Earlene Worrall

**Council Members absent:** Noor Al-Shaikh, Debbie Donsky (Principal), Karen Harvey, Noelle Hunt, Karyn Toon

**Teacher Reps present:** Elizabeth Dyer, Will Stokes

**Guests present:**

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## **A. Welcome**

## **B. Meeting Minutes – Earlene Worrall – March 2009**

- Motion for approval of the March minutes made by Gary Crosby and seconded by Connie Prentice. Minutes approved.

## **C. Financials – Gary Crosby – March 2009**

- \$30,730 in bank now given auction proceeds. Net of Debbie Donsky's wish list and other anticipated expenses, an uncommitted balance of \$8,236 remains.
- Reserves for playground repairs/maintenance (\$3840) and operating expense carry-forward (\$3000) have been set aside. Suggestion to investigate resurfacing the kindergarten playground as part of the playground maintenance.
- Motion for approval of the March financial statement made by Karen Mitas and seconded by Connie Prentice. Financials approved.

## **D. Not-for-Profit Status – Gary Crosby**

- Charitable designation means cumbersome reporting requirements. There is an option to give up our own charitable status, maintain a separate bank account, but have the Board handle the paperwork. The tradeoff is some degree of confidentiality loss, since a Board staff member would process donation data. Charitable receipts would still be provided for donations since the Board has charitable status. Alternatively, we could transition all banking to the Board (ie. not maintain a separate bank account). Many other Councils operate this way.
- It was noted that Council's degree of control over the funds raised would not be reduced as a result of such a change.
- Gary will further investigate options and implications, reporting back for a decision next meeting.

## **E. Principal's Report – Carol Takagi for Debbie Donsky**

- Report follows, with discussion points inserted:

## **Principal's Report—School Council, UPSAC**

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### **1. Volunteering at UPS**

- Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement
- Volunteer Orientation
  - Code of Ethics (Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement)

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- Training in reading programs for primary reading programs
  - Asking our literacy teacher, Jan McGowen-Young to establish parent training
  - Ensuring that all primary teachers have the same expectations around reading programs around the following items
    - All students take part
    - Feedback and expectations are the same from classroom to classroom
- Other ways to effectively engage parent volunteers
  - Junior and Intermediate classrooms) literature circles
  - Elective days organized around parent skills and talents within the school rather than outside field trips
  - Reviewing the skills sets and talents in our community so that we can engage our parents around these areas to benefit our community
  - ECO Team/Environmental Committee...how do we engage more parents and effectively use the support in the school to continue to work of the team?

## 2. Safe Schools Action Team (Carol)

*Goal: To inform and educate students, staff and parents regarding safe schools policies and implement strategies to align with the needs of the school, with the goal of decreasing exclusionary and bullying and/or aggressive behaviour.*

| <u>Parents:</u>   | <u>Students:</u>  | <u>School wide:</u>   | <u>Staff:</u>  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullying Prevention Evening Information Session – Feb.19/09</li> <li>• Survey re: bullying</li> <li>• Parent representation on Safe Schools Action Team</li> </ul> | <p><i>Playground partners</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade 6-8 students were provided with training in communication skills and cooperative games to lead games with groups of students during recess times.</li> <li>• Involves all primary classes.</li> </ul> <p><i>Pitstop</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every Monday morning recess, a small group of students is selected to attend a social skill building session with Denise Leung.</li> <li>• Intent of program is two fold: provides close supervision and builds social skills.</li> </ul> <p><i>Girls' Group</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 staff meets with 12 intermediate girls (on rotation) twice a week during lunch to build positive social relationships with girls in grades 3-6.</li> </ul> <p><i>Peer Mentors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small group of intermediate students applied for and participated in information sessions to learn about Autism. These students are scheduled daily to interact socially with students in our school.</li> </ul> <p><i>Prefects</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students assist with supervising students in the primary division during the lunchtime 12:50 - 1:10pm.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey re: bullying</li> <li>• Bullying Presentation: March 11/09</li> <li>• Posters in every classroom identifying "UPS No Bullying Policy"</li> <li>• Performance (Gr. 4-8): Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh: April 16/09 (focus on inclusionary education)</li> <li>• Books and resources purchased for teachers/students, housed in library</li> <li>• Performance: The Power of One – booked for September 2009</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey re: bullying</li> <li>• Safe Schools Action Team formed</li> <li>• Professional Learning at Staff meetings:</li> <li>• Identification of types of Bullying behaviour</li> <li>• Defining Relational bullying, and specifically as it applies to girls</li> <li>• Strategies for addressing and preventing bullying in the classroom</li> </ul> |

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- Playground Partners program was established as part of Safe Schools Action Team. Seems to have corresponded to a decrease in the number of playground incidents requiring office involvement.
- Focus on bullying prevention has increased awareness and is permitting issues to be addressed.
- An increased level of inclusion is already evident since the information session about autism and establishment of peer mentors.
- Suggestion to include the UPS No Bullying Policy as a page at the front of student agendas and have kids sign it.

### 3. **Technology** (*David*)

- We are looking to add to our laptop/cart/projector/speakers in the school. After reviewing the use of SmartBoards, we feel that money is better spent on the aforementioned combination as most teachers would access that more than the SmartBoard technology. We also feel that it makes more sense to do this rather than purchase new TV/DVDs because teachers can use the laptop/cart/projector/speakers to also show movies rather than a TV/DVD.
  - David will be presenting possible combinations using the Cost Sharing.
- Recommendation re technology investment is laptop/cart/projector/speaker combinations rather than additional SmartBoards. The technology expenditure was previously approved, so Gary suggested (and Council agreed) that Debbie and Carol proceed with the order and take advantage of the Board cost share.

### 4. **Music Program** (*Will*)

- *UPS Arts Night 2009* was extremely well received with lots of positive feedback. Issues of supervision and concert length were solved in this year's format versus the 2007 format
- Arts Night brought in \$4,167.31 from ticket sales
- The instrumental music program is looking to purchase of 2 Ludwig Standard Series Timpani with the proceeds:
  - LKS402FG – Set of 2 (26" & 29") Fiberglas Bowls w/ Pro Tuning Gauges – \$3,995.00
  - L126TP – 26" Timpani Padded Pro Cover Full Drop – Cordura – \$185.00
  - L129TP – 29" Timpani Padded Pro Cover Full Drop – Cordura – \$185.00
  - Total Cost with Taxes - \$4,932.45
- Instrument has many benefits for concert instrumentation. Is also a long-term investment in the school
- Need to secure the balance of \$765.14 from alternate source:
  - Scenario #1: FULL UPS ADVISORY COUNCIL OPTION. May 2009 – Pay Harknett \$4167.31 from "Music-Non Board" Account. May 2009 – Pay Harknett \$765.14 from "UPS Advisory Council"
  - Scenario #2: HALF UPS ADVISORY COUNCIL / HALF MUSIC BUDGET OPTION. May 2009 – Pay Harknett \$4167.31 from "Music-Non Board" Account. May 2009 – Pay Harknett \$465.14 from "UPS Advisory Council." September 2009 – Apply \$300.00 from 2009/2010 Harknett Music P.O. (would require a 21% increase to 2009/2010 P.O. request and approval from Harknett Musical Services)
  - Scenario #3: FULL MUSIC BUDGET OPTION. May 2009 – Pay Harknett \$4167.31 from "Music-Non Board" Account. September 2009 – Apply \$765.14 from 2009/2010 Harknett Music P.O. (would require a 55% increase to 2009/2010 P.O. request and approval from Harknett Musical Services)

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- Potential to progress to B200 level within the next 3 years with our bands (unusual for elementary). One requirement against that goal is to add 2 Timpani (drums).
- Will Stokes recommended purchasing 2 Timpani with the \$4167 raised from ticket sales for Arts Night. At total cost of \$4932, additional funding of \$765 is needed. Expenditure was approved by Council (ie. Scenario #1 as outlined above was approved).

## **F. Fundraising Committee – Pamela Nitert**

- Net proceeds from Silent Auction were \$18,840 (including \$1706 toward grade 8 grad), ahead of objective.
- The majority of feedback received has been extremely positive, with the venue, décor, food and opportunity to socialize all praised by attendees.
- Bids were quite generous, realizing 57% of donor value on average and 70% on class baskets (vs silent auction benchmark of 30%).
- Pamela shared highlights of the event, then Council briefly discussed additional opportunities to optimize for future, including:
  - Better acoustics to ensure that everyone knows when tables are closing
  - More “men-themed” items (beyond sports tickets) as that small table was very popular
  - Slight volume discount if multiple tickets are purchased
  - Ensuring that reduced-price and/or complimentary tickets are proactively offered to families facing financial challenges – tickets were set aside this year for allocation by Debbie, but it appears that families were not made aware
  - In terms of logistics:
    - Streamlining donor sheet and bid sheet set-up via mail merge, utilizing a single number for each item
    - Reminding people to check whether they have won an item prior to departure, to reduce the amount of follow-up required after the event
    - Limiting numbers to 3 volunteers plus treasurer at check-out.
- Optimal handling of grade 8 grad funding requires more discussion (next meeting).
- Silent auction will definitely be repeated, likely as a bi-annual event given the appropriate frequency of donation requests, the novelty factor, and the tremendous volunteer effort involved. Fundraising committee will discuss initiatives for the 2009/2010 school year.
- Topline electronic communication of auction results will go out to parents this week or next (Pamela and Hilary) with a more detailed hard copy summary in May.
- Regarding sale of the poster, many students have not yet had the opportunity to see it. Lorrie-Anne will take it around to classes over the next few days. Electronic communication to go out this week, advising parents of the opportunity to purchase this unique keepsake.

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## **G. Environmental Committee – Connie Prentice**

- Responsibilities fall to a small group of dedicated parent volunteers. Connie stressed the importance of broadening ownership of environmental initiatives at the school, encompassing more parents, teachers who incorporate environmental education into the curriculum, and students taking on leadership roles.
- Council discussed options to address this challenge but opinion appeared divided and no consensus was reached. Some expressed the view that increased teacher involvement needs to be stimulated by a top-down commitment by Debbie and Carol, others think that environmental practices need to originate at home, others see student leadership as the key. Connie requested that Council members reflect on means of broadening involvement; to be discussed next meeting.
- Eco-monitors have been implemented in each class and will help students keep environmental considerations top-of-mind (ie. correct recycling practices).
- For Earth Week specifically, eco-moment announcements are being made each day, and garbage pick-up will take place in the schoolyard.
- There could be an opportunity to incorporate House Colours into environmental duties.
- Volunteering committee will also brainstorm opportunities.

## **H. Community Outreach Initiatives – Tess Georgakopoulos**

- Community outreach initiatives were streamlined this year as part of the effort to reduce the number of monetary requests being sent home. When questioned about Legacy Run, Tess reminded Council that UPS supports Legacy Run as a priority given that it is a local cause with high relevance to families in this school community.

## **I. House Colours – Karen Mitas**

- Suggestion to have a broader group of students determine House Colour Days for next year, rather than the grade 8 reps (given lower participation levels among Intermediate students).

## **J. Other Matters**

- L&D Fun Foods has requested confirmation of next year's plans by mid May. Ruchi again mentioned the potential to switch to Kids Kitchen. As a reminder, a full review of lunch options was conducted last year, and the Kids Kitchen menu was judged more nutritionally sound overall. However, the decision for the 2008/2009 school year was to continue to offer "fun Fridays" since they comprise 75% of the business and to eliminate the other lunches in order to eliminate waste. We will again review lunch programs next meeting and determine lunch service to be offered for the 2009/2010 school year.

## **K. Meeting Adjourned 9:50 p.m.**

**Next meeting May 19th.**