

Unionville Public School Advisory Council Minutes

Tuesday, January 20, 2009

Attendance:

Council Members present: Gary Crosby, Debbie Donsky (Principal), JP Gagnon, Tess Georgakopoulos, Catherine Hankins, Karen Harvey, Karen Mitas, Pamela Nitert, Connie Prentice, Hilary Seppanen, Karyn Toon, Ruchi Vij, Jodi Wilson, Earlene Worrall

Council Members absent: Noor Al-Shaikh, Noelle Hunt, Lorrie-Anne Lauder, Carol Takagi (Vice Principal)

Teacher Reps present: Elizabeth Dyer

Guests present: Diane Loveys

A. Welcome

B. Meeting Minutes – Earlene Worrall – Nov 2008

- Motion for approval of the November minutes made by Gary Crosby and seconded by Catherine Hankins. Minutes approved.

C. Financials – Gary Crosby – Nov 2008

- Motion for approval of the November financial statement made by Karen Mitas and seconded by Karyn Toon. Financials approved.
- Suggestion to deduct the planned year-end reserve from available funds on the statement.
- Gary noted the \$1100 profit from cookie dough sales, directed toward grade 8 grad. Since the grad budget is \$6500, additional fundraising will be required. Earlene mentioned tentative Grad Committee plans to hold a raffle in March and to bring back Freezie Fridays. Council members confirmed that neither violates the UPSAC policy of reducing the number of fundraising initiatives within the school community.

D. Hilary Report – Hilary Seppanen

- We are awaiting approval of the PRO grant. If the grant is approved, a welcome package will be developed for students/families new to UPS, including teacher bios, information about community events, etc. Suggestion to post the content on the school website as well.
- Hilary will again send out the Principal Profile for feedback.

E. School Plan for Continuous Improvement – Debbie Donsky

- Debbie distributed both the School Plan for Continuous Improvement (SPCI) and the Board Plan for Continuous Improvement.
- Intent of SPCI is to provide focus against clear learning goals.
- UPS EQAO reading scores declined by a point for grade 3. Higher order thinking appears strong within our school network, but understanding literal meaning is weaker - an unusual finding. In addition, boys are lagging behind. These facts lead to an overall goal of improving reading comprehension.

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- Strategies encompass instructional practices, differentiated instruction and formative assessment, school culture, and developing a learning community that works collaboratively and shares best practices.
- Council inquired about means of confirming that the objectives are the right ones. External measures such as EQAO help to quantify progress, as do teacher assessments. Debbie mentioned that even the improved quality of dialogue at staff meetings indicates strengthened engagement. She reassured Council that the changes currently taking place will have an impact within this school year.
- Debbie noted that parents/community are not referenced in the current SPCI. There are eight areas around parental engagement in the Board plan. Debbie proposes to involve Council in incorporating those areas into our SPCI for UPS. Moving forward, Council meetings will devote more time to curriculum and the actual functioning of the school, with reduced focus on fundraising and allocation of funds. There is a role for Council to play in policy decisions. Debbie identified the optimal utilization of volunteers as one current issue to be resolved. Communication was offered as another current priority.
- Suggestion that communication with parents be strengthened via class newsletters and/or class websites. It was also suggested that teacher websites and e-mail addresses be posted on the school website to facilitate convenient communication.
- Current SPCI will be posted on our school website.

F. Fundraising Committee – Pamela Nitert

- Pamela shared status of item donations and class basket coordination.
- Some parents do not realize that the Snowflake Soiree is an adult event. Additional communication is required to clarify that kids will not be in attendance. Attendees must also be made aware that York Downs is a cash-only venue (except for members), so attendees will require cash for the bar. The committee is investigating bringing in debit machines for processing the auction items.

G. Environmental Committee – Connie Prentice

- Nothing to report.

H. Community Outreach Initiatives – Tess Georgakopoulos

- Nothing to report.

I. House Colours – Karen Mitas

- Lots of response for Pyjama Day. The Black team is currently leading in points.
- Next event will be Jersey Day in February.

J. Meeting Adjourned 9:25 p.m.

Next meeting February 17.