

Unionville Public School Advisory Council Minutes

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

Attendance:

Council Members present: Gary Crosby, Debbie Donsky (Principal), JP Gagnon, Tess Georgakopoulos, Karen Harvey, Noelle Hunt, Lorrie-Anne Lauder, Cyrus Mavalwala, Zia McGarry, Pamela Nitert, Connie Prentice, Hilary Seppanen, Carol Takagi (Vice Principal), Jeffrey Smith, Earlene Worrall

Council Members absent: Barbara Hockin, Lesley Ruttan, Wendy Wang

Teacher Reps present: David Norquay, Elizabeth Dyer

Guests present: Heather Baker, Karen Mitas, Jasmin Schiralli, Mel Harrison, Diane Loveys, Darla Mitchell

A. Welcome

B. Meeting Minutes – April 2008

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

C. Financials – Gary Crosby – April 2008

- Motion for approval of the April financial statement made by Lorrie-Anne Lauder and seconded by Pamela Nitert . Financials approved.

D. Lunch Program – Gary Crosby and company representatives

- Based upon assessment by a nutritionist (through Cyrus), both companies leave much to be desired (ie. should be lower fat, lower sodium, more aligned with healthy living principles taught in school). However, the Kids Kitchen menu fared better than L&D from a nutrition perspective.
- Prior to the company presentations, Council debated various issues including: nutritional concerns; the objective of offering a hot lunch program and Council's role within that; the potential to optimize menus and the likelihood of parents/children selecting the healthier choices even if they were offered.
- Kids Kitchen: Lots of variety in menu, also lots of flexibility (ie. need to order by 10am day prior and can cancel up to the night before). They do not offer pizza lunches and will not come to the school on fundraising lunch days (no wish to compete). Will customize menu to meet school's objectives (ie. a local Healthy Living school does not offer processed foods such as hot dogs, but other schools have requested that such items remain available given student demand). All food is prepared in a nut-free facility and other dietary restrictions are noted on the sign-up form and then monitored ongoing. Most of the packaging is recyclable, ex styrofoam for soup. An upcharge can be added to meal pricing, for fundraising purposes.
- L&D: Current provider (past 5 years). Strong fundraising component, with over \$10,000 generated for UPS Council over past 5 years. Program has evolved from exclusively "fun" lunches like pizza to add more

Unionville Public School Advisory Council Minutes

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

nutritious offerings. Less flexibility given 3 ordering cycles. Also less variety in menu. Increasing level of control over allergens and will be completely nut-free by September. For other allergens, L&D will provide ingredient lists upon request but their suppliers prefer that at-risk students not order. About 75% of lunches ordered are on the fun Fridays vs 25% on more nutritious Wednesdays. Owners are on-site to address problems and will provide a lunch to a student who is missing one.

- Discussion around mixed messaging, encouraging parents to pack lunches in reusable containers but then promoting waste by offering hot lunch days.
- Council needs to decide what we want from this program. Are we offering a service (and if so, is it to meet the needs/wants of kids or parents, which may be at odds), fundraising, or being socially responsible (in terms of healthy eating and/or the environment)? Ideally we want to achieve all of these things, but we must prioritize since they are contradictory goals. To be resolved next meeting.

E. Playground Repairs/Other Budget Items - Gary Crosby

- Council revisited the budget items discussed last meeting. A vote was undertaken by secret ballot.
- Playground motion passed. Classroom allocation is hereby reallocated to playground repair, in the amount of \$1732 this year.
- Motion to reduce Operating Budget from \$3000 to \$2000 passed.

F. Curriculum Night – Debbie Donsky

- Sept 17 will be the date.
- Agreement to take a similar approach to this year (ie. beverages and snacks as opposed to dinner, presentation in schoolyard in advance of the classroom breakout sessions). Pamela, Karen, Hilary, Karen Mitas and Diane Loveys volunteered to pull the event together.

G. Fundraising 2008/09 – Pamela Nitert

- Concern remains about the number of times parents are approached for money through the year (16 times noted and this is best case as non-monetary contributions such as hamper donations were not included).
- Council has made a concerted effort to limit the number of fundraising initiatives (ie. in past just one, the Investment Campaign, with Dance-a-thon added this year), but there are also multiple community outreach initiatives. Only the fundraising events raise money for our school while the others seek donations for other worthwhile causes, but many parents do not recognize this distinction. They complain that UPS is constantly sending home requests for money.
- Agreed to form a committee to develop a fundraising strategy for next year. Pamela, Lorrie-Anne, Hilary and Karen Mitas volunteered to take the issue away and bring forward a recommendation next meeting.

Unionville Public School Advisory Council Minutes

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

H. Environmental Committee Update – Connie Prentice

- Council agreed to pursue the opportunity with Think Recycle, to have students bring in used printer cartridges and cell phones to encourage recycling while also generating money for UPS. Not considered fundraising, so Connie will proceed.

I. Community Outreach – Tess Georgakopoulos

- Report issued.

J. House Colours – Lesley Ruttan

- Report issued.

K. Principal's Report – Debbie Donsky

- Report follows, with discussion points inserted:

Principal's Report—School Council, UPSAC

Tuesday May 20, 2008

1. *Safe Schools Action Team and Safe @ Schools*

In October 2007, the Government of Ontario introduced a Policy and Program Memorandum (P/PM 144) on Bullying Prevention and Intervention for use by schools across the province. This P/PM includes a definition of bullying:

Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.
[\(<http://www.safeatschool.ca/index.php?q=en/teacher-training/understanding-bullying/what-is-bullying>\)](http://www.safeatschool.ca/index.php?q=en/teacher-training/understanding-bullying/what-is-bullying)

All schools are expected to have a Bully Prevention Action Team that systematically collects data and uses the data to inform practice working towards bully prevention in the school to ensure a safe school for all students and community members. The Bully Prevention Action Team is comprised of school staff, parents and senior students. We are in the process now of compiling surveys for students, staff and parents to be completed prior to the end of the year. These surveys will give us a better indication of what bullying is occurring in our school and where.

As a follow up to the revision to the Safe Schools Act, the Ministry of Education in partnership with the Teachers' Federations in Ontario have developed a strategy called Safe @ Schools www.safeatschool.ca. This strategy provides research, tools and community building opportunities to work towards safe schools. We have a team of teachers working with the initiative. We will be sharing this with our staff at our final June staff meeting on June 27th. It suggest that in order to create a positive school culture we must:

- Reflect* on our situation at UPS (through data collection), then;
- Work on *changing attitudes* by promoting the rights of children, equity and cultural proficiency in the school, and finally;
- Develop *strategies for action* such as conflict management, restorative practices, and a comprehensive school policy.

Unionville Public School Advisory Council Minutes

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

- Safe Schools Action Team will consist of six teachers and a small number of parents. Interested parents should contact Debbie.
- A bullying survey will be fielded, ideally online to facilitate compilation and analysis of data.
- Have begun a program educating all students about special needs students to foster greater understanding. Very well received and making a positive impact in our school community, and the effort will be expanded next year.

2. *School Dress Code*

There is an expectation based on the board policy that schools will determine their own dress codes based on the parameters of the board dress code. I would like to invite the school council to review the board's policy and determine, with the school, what is appropriate. We will need to draft the language

- Language or graphics on clothing will not display provocative, obscene, sexist or racist slogans, or refer to drugs, alcohol, smoking or sex. Clothing which contravenes the Human Rights Code in any way is unacceptable.
- Students will not wear clothing to school that is revealing or provocative. Midriffs and undergarments will remain covered at all times and shorts will be mid-thigh in length. Tube tops, halter tops, and other tops with narrow shoulder straps or "spaghetti" straps are unacceptable.
- Clothing and accessories/paraphernalia depicting violence or death or that identify or promote cults or gangs are unacceptable.
- Head coverings of any kind will not be worn inside the school. Exceptions are made for religious or medical reasons.
- Pyjamas or clothing which look like pyjamas are not to be worn at school.
- Students will wear appropriate clothing for gym.
- Shoes must be worn at all times.

3. *School Organization and Class Placements*

The school organization has had two official changes since January when I was first asked to submit modifications due to changing enrolment. We are bound by ministry caps and collective agreements regarding class sizes. There is an expectation of 90% compliance throughout the board in primary classes. The tentative organization for next year is:

JK/SK am	Grade 4/5
JK/SK pm	Grade 5
JK/SK M/W Alt F	Grade 5/6
Grade 1	Grade 6/7
Grade 1/2	Grade 7
Grade 2	Grade 8
Grade 3/4	Grade 8
Grade 3/4	

We are not taking parent requests. Placements are determined based on Gender and Special Education. Teachers will make informed decisions around classroom placements considering what is best for each student.

Unionville Public School Advisory Council Minutes

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

Teachers work together towards balanced classrooms. As our school population continues to decline and we work towards compliance with primary class size reduction we will continue to have more combined grades.

- Objective is to balance all classrooms, with no streaming of students (ie. no belief that more independent learners should be the students in split classes). Debbie assures us that parents should not be concerned about the large number of split classes. Appropriate support will be provided for teachers meeting the challenge of teaching split classes, and students will benefit from the experience.
- Question raised about social implications for grades that are split both directions (ie. some grade 5 students will share a classroom with grade 4s while others will be with grade 6s).

4. *Playground Repair Cost Estimates (information below from Doug Smith, YRDSB)*

Priority 1

- NA

Priority 2

- Area 2 - rubber coating peeling off platform; platform, \$300
- Area 3 - worn connectors at double ring trek, \$800
- Area 3 - connection rod has slid over to one side, \$150
- Area 2 - splitting and damaged wood surround, 2 locations, \$250

Priority 3

- Area 3 - crack at spiral slide starting platform, see above
- Area 3 - burn hole on one of the yellow barrier panels, replacement, \$550, smooth out hole, \$100
- Area 2 - middle pod climber is loose/unstable, \$150

Priority 0

- Area 1 - recommend installing a double slide hood at the double slide to prevent lateral discharge, \$450

Priority 2 total = \$1500.00

Priority 3 total = \$700.00 (assuming you replace the barrier panel)

Total estimated playground repair costs = \$2200.00

The contractor pointed out that the monkey bars can't be re-installed in the same location, and the existing front playground can not be expanded due to a walkway. There would have to be a new playground area (approx 20ft x 18ft) created for the monkey bars alone. They would excavate the area, add drainage, pea gravel and install the monkey bars for a total estimated cost of \$5000.00.

The installation of the monkey bars included with all repairs taken would give an approximate total cost to the school of \$7200.00

L. Meeting Adjourned 10:15 p.m.

Next meeting June 17th.