

Unionville Public School Advisory Council Minutes

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Attendance:

Council Members present: Gary Crosby, JP Gagnon, Steve Gardner (Principal), Tess Georgakopoulos, Barbara Hockin, Noelle Hunt, Lorrie-Anne Lauder, Cyrus Mavalwala, Zia McGarry, Pamela Nitert, Connie Prentice, Lesley Ruttan, Jeffrey Smith, Earlene Worrall

Council Members absent: Karen Harvey, Hilary Seppanen, Carol Takagi (Vice Principal), Wendy Wang

Teacher Reps present: Jan McGowen-Young (Literacy Teacher), Mary Ellen Edwards (Teacher-Librarian)

Guests present:

A. Welcome

- Hilary Seppanen's name was put forward as a potential candidate for the Vice Chair position. JP will discuss/confirm with her, and advise Earlene so she may post a list of 2007/08 council members on the UPSAC bulletin board.

B. Meeting Minutes – September 2007

- Motion for approval of the September minutes made by Gary Crosby and seconded by Lorrie-Anne Lauder. Minutes approved.

C. Financials – Gary Crosby – September 2007

- Motion for approval of the Sept 30 financial statement made by Earlene Worrall and seconded by Connie Prentice. Financial statement approved.

D. Presentation of Budget Requests – Steve Gardner, Jan McGowen-Young (Literacy Teacher), Mary Ellen Edwards (Teacher-Librarian)

- As agreed last meeting, we reviewed key budget requests in preparation for the donation letter, so we can have a sense of funding requirements.
- Last year's literacy funding from UPSAC went toward levelled readers for the guided reading program. To date we have some materials for primary and junior, but insufficient quantities and variety, and are less developed at intermediate level. The guided reading program requires supplementation, so additional funding is required per Jan McGowen-Young, Literacy Teacher.
- \$4971 directed toward literacy initiatives last year, approximately 1/5 of UPSAC's investment for the year, and looking for \$6000 this year, which Ms. McGowen-Young states will get UPS to a reasonable level for guided reading. Will then require something closer to maintenance-level investment ongoing, to keep collection fresh.
- Lorrie-Anne relayed a concern about lack of materials for the Grade 1 reading program (ie. using photocopied books since much of the past collection was owned by Mrs. Fedy.) Does this void also need to be addressed by UPSAC funding? Ms. McGowen-Young stated that her proposed investment in guided reading will address the void for Grade 1, there will not be a need for separate funding (ie. there will be sufficient

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- levelled books at the appropriate levels for Grade 1s to take home 5 books every week for optimal progress against becoming proficient readers).
- Council requested that Steve and Ms. McGowen-Young connect back with Grade 1 teachers (Ms. Chaplin and Ms. Berdugo) to review specifics of her proposed order and confirm that Grade 1 needs will be met, and/or to understand the additional investment required.
 - Want to order ASAP so books can be used, but there is no official budget request yet nor even a budget. Agreed that request will need to be reviewed and approved at November meeting.
 - Mary Ellen Edwards, Teacher-Librarian, noted that the library requires updating. Will need to be addressed over a period of years given significant investment required (no total indicated, but mentioned that \$100,000 is insufficient to stock a new library). UPS's book collection is smaller across all categories given removal of extremely worn books last year, and some books still need to be culled given outdated information and politically incorrect language. Reference books in particular are lacking, and Ms. Edwards proposes addressing that need this year.
 - An investment of \$6000 was proposed for 2007/08. No investment in the library was made by UPSAC last year.
 - Steve proposed Technology Cost Share of \$6340 for '07/08, comparable to \$6606 last year. With Board matching 2:1, this investment would secure \$21,166 of new technology including 5 MacBooks, 2 LCD presentation kits, 1 LCD projector, 2 digital camera and 2 Apple iMacs for the music room.
 - Playground structure repair requirements total \$3489 (priority 1 and 2 per inspection in June). Ideally would also have a reserve for future costs. We are fortunate to have about \$160,000 of playground equipment with the 3 structures, but ongoing maintenance must be funded as much of it is 10+ years old.
 - UPS also needs a crash mat at cost of \$1000 since our current one is a safety concern at 10 years old. Required for high jump. Other athletic items (ie. volleyball jerseys, badminton racquets) have been covered off by team fundraising and tournament fees. Basketball jerseys are the only other potential athletic funding requirement.
 - Occasional teacher support frees up our teachers to supervise students at sports events, community service events, etc. Projected cost is \$2177.
 - Budget requests presented total \$25,000. This does not include support for ongoing programs such as Environmental Committee, House Colours, etc. (\$2580 last year) and classroom support (\$1844 last year). Based on this input and a lower balance coming into the school year, UPSAC set a target of \$35,000 for 2007/08 fundraising.

E. Fundraising Committee Update – Pamela Nitert

- UPS's last large fundraiser was about 10 years ago per Barbara, a silent auction/gala that raised about \$25,000, primarily for playground equipment.

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- Other schools (Berczy) raise more money through their donation program, but call it “investment in education” and allow parents to direct their investment to particular areas of interest. Council agreed that this approach would inspire larger contributions.
- Pamela proposed two other fundraising ideas for 2007/08:
 - Dance-a-thon – \$25 per student, 98% participation and raised \$25,000 at a Burlington school.
 - Cook book – collection of UPS family recipes at cost of \$10.
- Agreed that the other fundraising initiatives will be developed later in the year, and will be addressed in the donation letter merely by saying that the investment in education campaign is “our major fundraising effort of the year”. Also communicate the target of \$35,000, which implies that additional fundraising will be required should we fall short.
- Agreed that Pamela will finalize the “investment in education” letter, working with her fundraising committee as well as JP and Steve. Objective is to issue letter by end of next week, requesting that investments be made within a two or three week period. (Historically, most of the donations come in within the first week following issue of the letter.) Timing is critical so we know how much money we have available for funding approvals next month.

F. Environmental Committee Update – Connie Prentice

- Report pre-issued. No questions or concerns.

G. Community Outreach Initiatives – Tess Georgakopoulos

- Agreed that too cumbersome to tie Unicef donations to House Colours.
- Re the suggestion to “adopt” a needy school in the community, there is interest in creating holiday hampers, also donating shoes or whatever else is needed. Steve will connect with the school’s principal to confirm need and post Council at next meeting.

H. House Colour Update – Lesley Ruttan

- Summary was circulated electronically for Council input and is now ready for distribution. No additional discussion required.

I. Student ID Buttons – Lorrie-Anne Lauder

- Need expressed for buttons to be worn by students when offsite for school trips, etc. Steve will calculate numbers required and investigate cost (anticipated to be minor).

J. Principal’s Report – Steve Gardner

- Report follows, with discussion points inserted:

Administrator's Report - October 2007

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1. Area Cross Country Meet is set for Thursday, October 18th. We have over 100 students participating! Looking forward to a wonderful day at Milne. Grade 3-8 participating.
2. Our CN Tower climbers have raised more than \$2 000 for the United Way. The climb is set for Thursday, October 18th. UPS has 55 students participating. Mr. Norquay and Ms. Worthington are the coordinators and supervising teachers.
3. On Saturday, September 29th, students of the UPS Concert Band were the special invited guests of the Ontario Band Assoc. Symposium. The bands invitation was based on their outstanding performance in the Concert Band Festival in February 2007. We are incredibly proud of our performers and Mr. Stokes.
4. UPS Food drive was an incredible success. 2 765 non perishable food items were collected for the Markham Food Bank. Thank you to everyone! A special thank you is extended to Mrs. Georgakopoulos and her team.
5. We are in the midst of organizing an Arts Package for all UPS students. Each division will see 4 performances. These include story telling, music and dance. We received some Ministry money which allows us to offset the cost (TBD) of the performances. We will create an Arts Package for each student with an accompanying fee. Details will follow in the next 2 weeks as dates and performers are confirmed.
 - Proposal required by Friday for \$1000 from Board for promoting parental engagement around literacy (ie. a storyteller program or borrow-a-book program). Proposal must come from a Council member but Steve will assist. Agreed that Noelle will work with Steve to complete proposal.
6. On October 24th, The UPS Primary division will be hosting a Literacy Evening. Our focus will be Reading - The home and school connection. We are fortunate to have books donated by Pearson Publishing as door prizes and Chapters.

K. Meeting Adjourned 10:00 p.m.
Next meeting Nov 20.