

# **Heritage Hills Elementary School Council Meeting**

## **Monday January 18, 2021**

**In attendance:** Jim Seutter, Bill Schlacht, Kyle Samaratunga, Suzanne Cleet, Stacey Carruthers, Theresa Wells-Taylor, Jocelyn Coulter, Sarah Witholt, Susan Shwaga, Richelle McLean, Lisa Solamillo, Lori Tootoosis-Friesen, Jodi Lakevold, Heather Theriault, Erin Kipps, Christi Ross, Andrea Kardal

### **1.0 Call to Order 6:35pm**

- **1.1** Review agenda, no amendments

### **2.0 Motion to approve November School Council meeting minutes**

- Approved

### **3.0 Update for Parents**

#### **3.1 School Trustee Update- Jim Seutter**

See attached

#### **3.2 Principal Update- Bill Schlacht**

- HHE will be an open boundaries school for 2021/2022 school year.
- HHE has received extra funding to provide 2 new English Kindergarten teachers for Monday and Wednesday classes.
- 2 class sets of snowshoes have been purchased for the school.
- Admin would like to thank the parents and fundraising society for the successful Bye Bye Brightspace bottle drive.
- Wishlist update:
  - Extra chromebooks are needed. Will use Casino money to purchase them.
  - Outdoor recess games are needed for the students.
  - Bottle drive money could be used for continuing to add to the playground and the outdoor classroom.
  - Identifying where funds need to be spent, must be done prior to the fundraising meeting.
- Admin would like to thank parents and Staff Appreciation Committee for gifting the teachers coffee gift cards for all of their hard work.
- Parent Question: Is there a dog on school grounds update? Yes, there seems to be less dogs on the front side of the school property, but they continue to see them behind the school.
- Many children and parents are using the playground after school, not wearing masks. This will make contact tracing extremely difficult if a person is determined to have COVID.
- School has priority over the public, to be on the skating rinks during school hours.
- School fees:
  - School fee's need to be submitted for approval by March.

- Admin would like to hear from parents regarding their thoughts around school fees. A link will be in the Newsletter for parents to voice their opinions. Consult results will be discussed at next Council meeting.

- Fees include field trips, noon hour supervision and extracurricular activities.

- Fees are all cost recovery. The school doesn't profit from the fees.

- School trustee input: It is being discussed at EIPS central that school fees cannot be increased by more than 5% of previous year.

### **Field trips:**

- Field trips have been put on hold due to COVID. Admin is unsure of when field trips will be allowed to continue and what costs will be next year due to COVID.

- Field trip ideas originate from the school teachers. They need to be based on educational outcomes. Teachers research the field trips and submitted their idea's to admin for approval. They are also responsible for the children during the trips. Because of this, it is very important that field trip choices are made wisely, keeping the best interest of the children and teachers in mind.

### **Parent Feedback:**

- Parents expressed that they prefer quarterly school fees, as opposed to all fees being due in September. This is more budget friendly for parents.

Response: Quarterly fees are more difficult when have to plan for the budget.

- Comment: Field trips are important. Especially during the time that children's extracurricular activities are limited because of COVID.

- Question: Can fundraising be used to help off set the budget for the more expensive field trips. Example: skiing.

Response: Not necessarily. That would have to be discussed and would be dependant on many factors. Field trips are grade dependant. The entire school community will not want to fundraise for other children's field trips. Many schools are deciding not to do skiing field trips. Skiing field trips have proven to be very challenging for teachers. Children getting hurt, busy hills, busy rental department, parents not following proper field trip procedures, etc.

- Comment: Many parents would still appreciate swimming lessons still to be included in the field trips, if possible. It is viewed as a necessary life skill.

Response: Swimming can easily be tied to the curriculum as part of ongoing Physical Education and Safety. Swimming will be considered, if possible. Cannot predict if pools will be open for the next school year.

- Question: Can we continue or increase in-school field trips?

Response: Yes, there are a variety of ways to do in-school field trips. Including virtual, in-school guests and use of surrounding outdoor areas. Teachers have been using the skating rinks, as well as using the green space across the street for nature walks.

- Comment: Skating has gone really well. Children really enjoy it. Our support staff and admin help the children with skates because parent volunteers are not allowed.

- Question: Do field trip fees have to go to specific planned trips or can the funds be reallocated if the field trip is not allow to take place due to COVID?

Response: The funds are restricted, they can not be redirected.

- Question: Who decides that field trips/fees have to be decided upon by March?  
Response: Jim Seutter- EIPS district decides. He will enquire about an extension at the next board meeting. Special circumstances due to COVID.
- Question: Are you anticipating an increase of noon hour supervision fees?  
Response: Noon hour fees are all cost recovery. As of now, the school is not anticipating an increase of the fee. But, because the fee is based on enrolment, it may be increased if more children become enrolled.

### **Teacher Feedback:**

- Teachers may not be comfortable with the risk that comes with external field trips due to COVID.
- COVID will be added to the risks of a field trip that parents will have to sign off on. Not all parents may be comfortable doing that.
- Planning and preparing for 2021/2022 field trips is really difficult. Due to COVID, they are worried about illness. Cannot control sanitization on buses, in buildings, and around other schools during the field trip. This increases the COVID transmission risk.
- Would possibly prefer to allow for parent volunteers, in place of external field trips.
- Would like to utilize the whole entire school. Many area's are still going unused by the children.

## **4.0 Update from liaisons and representatives**

### **4.1 Distance Learning Rep- Sue Shwaga**

- A lot of frustration from distance learning parents. They feel EIPS distance learning delivery is below par compared to other Alberta districts.
- Many criteria that was stated as to what at home learners would receive has not been followed through on.
- Students do not have access to 1:1 instruction OR help (although they were told they would have a in school teacher), class sizes can be up to 200 students/class, insufficient feedback is being given to the parents surrounding their children's progress. Many have received no grades or communication for months.
- The material being taught in school does not align with distance learning material. This makes transitioning between the two extremely hard for the students.
- General feeling of disappointment after seeing how well the 3 days of Brightspace learning was set up for the in school learners.
- All students deserve the opportunity to receive an education equal to their peers.
- Nate Glubbish has been contacted by many, to no avail.
- Jim Seutter (HHE school trustee) will be taking this information and be sharing it with the EIPS board.

### **4.2 Fundraising - Lisa Solamillo**

- Bye Bye Brightspace fundraiser was a success. Many parents had volunteered and just over \$2700 was raised.
- The budget presented by admin in December was approved.

- Staff appreciation budget was increased to help support our teachers during this difficult time. The budget also included chromebooks, indoor recess activity bins, gym equipment and outdoor recess bins.
- HHE has to wait until 2023 for their next casino fundraiser.
- Hoping to fundraise to support the creation of an outdoor classroom.
- Looking for parent feedback regarding a pie fundraiser. Is there a preference between a pie voucher that can be used anytime by purchaser at the retailer OR sell pies directly for pickup at a set time and location? - Parent feedback supports the voucher method.
- Teacher question- Has fundraising looked into a flower basket fundraiser, using a local greenhouse? Answer- No.
- Parents are welcome to look at the fundraising bylaws on the HHE website and contact them if there are any suggestions or comments.

### **4.3 Staff Appreciation**

- The coffee cards given to teachers was much appreciated.
- Currently brainstorming ideas as to what to do next. Open to all ideas.
- HHE had received 6 Purdy's gift cards from the chocolate fundraiser before Christmas which could be used for staff appreciation.

### **5.0 Open Discussion**

- What will be the HHE boundaries for the 2021/2022 school year?

Answer: HHE will be an open boundary school next year. All currently registered students are guaranteed to have a spot. Other students not within the HHE boundaries, can apply and entry will depend on the HHE enrolment numbers. Available spots are not based on first come, first served, they will be done by draw.

- How is it decided if a temporary teacher will have a teaching position at a school? It is dependant on how many teaching positions there are. The district needs to hire permanent contract teachers first to fill the available teaching positions. Temporary teacher are not guaranteed a position.

- Is there a cap on the number of students that can be in a single classroom? No. It is the goal to have classroom sizes of less than 30 kids. Schools have to accept all the children within that school boundary, but they can limit the amount of children they bring in due to boundary exemptions to help keep class sizes smaller.

- Is there a limit of the number of FI classes per grade at HHE?

Yes. There is a max of 2 classes per grade.

### **6.0 Chair Update**

#### **6.1 Council of School Councils (COSC) Update - Sarah Witholt**

- Brief discussion about the annual Education Results Report review. This document is extremely informative. It provides an overview on how the district is supporting and educating our children, as well as analysis of how well the strategies are working, and areas that need to be approved upon.
- ASCA did not receive the same grants that they have in past years. This will affect how they be able to offer their services going forward. ASCA is looking into ways to find other sources of funds.

- Caregiver Education Series- created by Alberta Health Services, this is a series of virtual informational seminars on how to support children's mental health. Topics include anxiety, ADHD, depression, technology and much more. They are free. More information can be found on EIPS website.
- Two speakers from the First Nations, Metis and Inuit Education Centre attended. They are hosting a series of online information sessions, which are free to the community and start on Feb 2. For more information or to register, see the EIPS website.
- Speaker had mentioned inviting our indigenous lead teacher to attend our school council meeting.
- COVID update- as of Jan 6, there had been no in school COVID transmissions. All children who had contracted COVID have recovered.
- Saffron Centre has a monthly newsletter which provides tips, tools and strategies for parents to help them create a healthy relationship between their children and online experiences. This newsletter can be found on the EIPS website.

## **6.2 Review and Approve HHE School Council Operating procedures**

- School council chair asked for any feedback. Allowed more time for people interested to view them and email HHE School Council with any questions.
- Will approve at next council meeting.

~~**6.3 Next HHE School Council meeting will be changed from Feb 8 to Feb 22, 2021 at 6:30pm.**~~

## **6.4 Joining of FAHHE meeting after HHESC meeting**

- Council chair asking for feedback regarding having both meetings, back to back. To help promote communications for people who can not attend both meetings.

### **Feedback:**

- May be more effective to have separate meetings to be able to focus on the individual groups purpose.
- People can attend either or both.
- Admin had some concerns and further discussion will need to be had before a decision is made. It is important to follow proper procedures and protocols to make sure we set up our new school for success.

## **7.0 Meeting adjourned at 8:22pm**