

Manor Park School Council and Home and School Association Meeting Minutes

November 21, 2012
MPPS Library

Present:

Shari Brodie	Tami O'Dette	Shelia MacMillen
Sue Noble	Nancy Grinberg	Maha Albari
Wendy Colthart	Allanna Turcotte	Donna Muldoon
Susan Steele	Sandi Reggler	Laura Frappin
Marie Blythe-Hallman	Julie Sun	Sharon Leslie
Kari Glynes Elliott	Colin Chalk	
Erin Yoshida	Suzanne Chalk	

Welcome:

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm by Erin Yoshida

Item added to agenda regarding use of Playground.

Minutes from October meeting approved.

Use of Playground

Guests Colin and Suzanne Chalk presented a letter they had from city official (Dan) regarding the lease of the playground. Colin read an excerpt that clarified that city property is accessible to public at all times, the school is not able to restrict access.

There were some comments that there has been concern about safety of the small children; the caregivers argued that since the ratio of adults to children in a home daycare is less than for school kids at school, such concerns were invalid.

Caregivers who attended meeting said that they felt unwelcome in the playground. They now say that they will be in the park when they want.

Council executive

It was announced that Marie Blythe-Hallman and Erin Yoshida are willing to be co-chairs for this year. They were nominated and approved, motion passed.

Principal's Report:

- Madame Albari has been taking lead on reviewing technology that will be purchased from council funds (see minutes of September meeting for details). Will be combination of ladybugs and media carts, ceiling-mounted projectors. She is pretty close to making decision, want to confirm that school board will support technology. Not everyone will have a media cart, but there will be enough so that everyone will have ACCESS. Order expected within next 8 weeks.
- handball practices ongoing, tournament in January
- after that, volleyball and basketball (depending on labour situation)

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- parent volunteers have undergone extensive review – essential if parents are going to take over sport teams, means that these volunteers will also be covered by Board insurance (like employees)
- if others want to step up, sooner the better, another training session coming up (see below)
- fundraiser – leadership club raised money for Hurricane Sandy victims, rolling pennies
- field trips going on, Remembrance Ceremony took place, also honoured animals who were victims of war
- 'Go Girls' program of up to 10 girls working on self confidence, body image, resolve conflicts, girls in grade 5 and 6, another group might start up after Christmas, older girls who are running this program are trained through Big Sisters
- grade 6s are talking about grade 7 – Queen E principal coming soon to talk about their school, on Dec 13th students will go to Queen E for visit
- given 4 hours more for adult lunch monitors (paid)
- dental screening happening tomorrow and Friday, parents get report if problems are found

Update on labour relations

- some people are in different unions – EAs (educational assistants) have withdrawn some services, school has shrunk the yard, need more teachers supervising since EAs are not. Some parents have offered to help. Shari says maybe in future (not necessary to have police check for this volunteering activity).
- big impact in office, staff will no longer supervise children sent to office, for example sick children do not usually stay in class, now looked after by principal or vice-principal, Laura Frappin (vice-principal) is half-time teacher, but she has been released from her teaching duties so she can do other tasks, decision might be made Dec 1st.
- conversation in last meeting was about being respectful of teachers – Susan Steele went back to union - reported that teachers are pleased, union's point of view is that parents are VERY welcome in school – good feedback.
- right now, job action is voluntary, in future some action might be made mandatory, parents are reminded that teachers may not have choice, be nice.
- Erin asked about contingency plans – Shari unable to give much detail, but she is positive that this school will weather problems.
- Erin reported that parents have been responding to requests for help in newsletter – these requests should be handed to respective teacher.

Swipe doors

Shari also wanted to mention that a 3rd swipe door has been installed, near kindergarten. Teachers have swipe cards, MPCC staff also have swipe cards. Shari is hoping that the last door will be paid for next year, other doors paid for partly by school, very expensive,

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alternative is propping doors open (security risk). Personal swipe cards are on timers (don't work after hours) and can be shut down if lost.

Washroom report

- Some sinks have had new taps that turn off automatically installed since last meeting
- Also new sink and vanity in staff room washroom

Portable

A portable has been removed. Shari requested access to the last portable (maybe for music lessons), but custodial staff say portables take a lot of time to clean, may create a music room elsewhere.

Parent volunteers – new approval process

Erin spoke on approval process

- specifically for parents volunteering in absence of teachers, esp. coaches
- if you undergo screening, you are covered by school board, gives you certain responsibilities, esp. concerning child abuse or child neglect
- first step is complete application form (online on MPSC website and school board website)
- provide references – school board does follow up
- valid police check, Shari has letter for applicants to speed process
- varied fee structure, free if you wait 4-6 weeks, \$35 for rush
- must attend orientation session – Erin said it was informative, useful, mainly security, how to respond and report on incidents, different types of lockdown
- another info session coming up Nov 29th – no further sessions planned for a while
- can go to session before completing all other steps
- school board has a schedule on its website regarding sports if people want to plan ahead
- council agreed that we want to publicize the need for parent help in various newsletters
- Erin would like to propose that the council pay rush fee – there was a debate on circumstances – who would we pay for? Need specific guidelines. Erin will table this.

Kindergarten update

Mostly seems to be going well

Some questions about drop off procedures

If parents arrive after 1st bell, should they take kids into school? In general, teachers are taking kindies in after 2nd bell. If class is already in, kids should be dropped off with their own teachers or EA. Children should be in line by 1st bell

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Pick up of kids walking home – parents should be there by 3, even better if they are early because kindies pre board the buses

Parents reported inconsistency among classes

Shari suggested that concerned parents talk to specific teachers

Toys for Kindergarten classes

A request for toys went out in the kindie newsletter, but organizer has since realized that it would have been better to go through general newsletter to catch parents whose children have outgrown toys – therefore, another request will go out

Christmas concert should take place – we were warned not to get our hopes up, but kids are preparing.

Parent Resource Lending Library

Susan Steele gave update on parent resource lending library. This Lending Library was made possible by generous grants from the Ottawa Public Health Department (\$500.00) and Parents Reaching Out (\$1,000.00). The combination of these two grants has allowed us to build a lending library boasting over 120 books on a wide range of topics which relate either directly or indirectly to the social, emotional and mental health of elementary school-aged children.

Request for clothing

Susan says that she needs small size clothes (size 4-6) for kindies, also need running shoes
Maha reminded people that small children often need gloves (not knit mittens that get wet).

Meeting adjourned at 8:31. Next meeting will be held in January (not December)

Meeting of the Home and School Association

Meeting of the home and School Association called to order.

Financial update

Mike McMullen

Teacher support – 25 teachers asked for money, association distributed \$2000 total, money left over will be moved to program support

Magazine fundraiser has earned \$2100 so far

Former treasurer Maggie Martel still listed on TD statement

Will need new treasurer for next year.

Funding requests

None at this time.

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Vice-principal asked if council ever supports families in need?

In some years, teachers have done specific things like hampers, but council has not traditionally supported individual families

Erin noted that council resources generally focus on whole school population

Fundraisers

- nothing to report from pizza
- magazine subscription -earned \$2141 – goes on thru school year – Tammy wants someone else to run it, very easy
- scholastic book fair - sales about \$7500, earned \$4200 in books, sales were down from last year, not sure why – maybe lots of new kindie parents, lots of parents whose kids graduated were big spenders, report card meetings occurred at different times, some material was less appealing. One of the best fairs in city
- dance a thon – Feb 8th – save the date, more info coming in newsletter

Meeting adjourned at 8:47.

Next meeting to be held in January.

Secretary

Chair