

Hopewell Avenue Public School Council
Meeting Minutes
November 11, 2008

Attendance: Adam, Barbatbun, Brommmersma, Calder, Charland, Corbett, Daniels, Fines, Goodrich, Inglis, Jull, Maule, McDonald, Owens, Sprott, Derksen, Huang, Santor, Mallroy, Morris, Nadia, Reem, Brodtkin, Turpin, MacDonald, Theriautt.

Absences: Assal, Bartley, Byrne, Davidson, Franklin, Geduld, Gee, Gemmell, Jonasch, McAlpin, McAtee, McQueen, Nafar, Noble, Oliver, Page, Ramsay, Richardson, Root, Savoie, Shaw, Tusk, Turnbull, DeGrandpre.

Regrets: Johnston-Hobbs and Calvert

1. **Welcome and Call to Order** by HAPSC Chair Tina Daniels. The Chair began the meeting at 7:10 pm with introductions.
2. **Agenda** for November 11, 2008 meeting approved.
3. **Approval of Minutes from May, June and September 2008** delayed until the end of the meeting, once everyone had a chance to review minutes from all three meetings.
4. **Guest Speaker - Lesotho Project**
www.helplesotho.ca

Minou Morley began by introducing guest speaker Michelle Pierce to the Council. Michelle took a sabbatical last year to spend her time working with the Help Lesotho charity. She spent a portion of the year in Lesotho, Africa teaching and volunteering in a community which has the third highest rate of HIV and aids in the world. Help Lesotho is an Ottawa based charity that has been in existence for about four years and has been set up to work with the children that are left alone and have nowhere to go.

Their main focus is:

- To help orphans and vulnerable children
- To provide Grandmother support
- To aid in education and school projects
- To provide leadership development and training and
- To promote HIV/aids information awareness and gender equity

There are many ways that we, as a School Council, can help this cause:

- Sell calendars where part of the proceeds go to Help Lesotho,
- Conduct a one time fundraiser (i.e.: to buy shoes, school uniforms, school desks)
- Help out with the Join hands initiative to complete infrastructure repairs, etc

- Participate as a twinned school - a long-term, multi-year relationship with the school where commitment from an engaged principal, a teacher lead & a parent lead are necessary for success.

This presentation was prepared to introduce the Council to this initiative and generate discussion for possible fund raising initiatives in the future.

Minou Morely and Anna Krieg both feel that Help Lesotho would provide Hopewell students with real opportunities for student leadership, for awareness of global problems, specifically problems faced by children in Lesotho and hopefully foster some of the spirit of giving and charity among the students. The organization is endorsed by Stephen Lewis and Unicef, amongst others, and has no religious affiliation. Help Lesotho is currently working with other schools in our area: Ridgemont, Rockcliffe Park, Corpus Christi and Riverview Alternative and First Avenue has a partner school in Mali.

This year will be a trial year for the campaign. The goal for this year is, as a student body, to raise money for a school in Lesotho (for a specific need, such as a roof, shoes, a sweater etc.), to familiarize themselves (staff and students) with the continent of Africa and the country of Lesotho at different levels (Primary, Junior and Intermediate) and to come together to create student-lead fundraisers (making bracelets to sell, using the proceeds of an Intermediate dance) and hopefully a school-wide fundraiser (a multicultural fashion show) in the Spring around Education Week. It is their hope that the staff and parents and School Council will support this opportunity for our students and help to make them own this project and be responsible for a great deal of the way it is run. If the project is successful we will be partnered with a twin school in Lesotho next year and we will have penpals with them etc.

The mission statement, a PowerPoint and statistics for the organization are available online - please check it out at:

www.helplesotho.ca

5. Principal's Report - Nicole Turpin

Structure

Nicole updated the Council on the school structure. All of the classes and teachers are now in place and have settled into a good routine. There are 930 students enrolled this year, with 60 teachers, a principal, a vice principal, a librarian and 2.5 admin staff to support the school.

Safety

Nicole reinforced that safety was the school's first responsibility, which is why the rules about running in the halls and on the stairs have been so strictly enforced. The students are now making a solid effort to use the stairwells more carefully and staff have noticed an improvement.

As well, parents have been reminded that they need to sign in and wear a visitor's tag on them at all times. All students have been directed to tell a teacher if they see an adult in the school with no identification.

The bathroom policy remains in effect, where students are going to the washrooms in pairs until Grade 7. Once in Grade 7, if they request to go in pairs, the request should be granted. Pairs going to the washroom need not be the same sex. It is most important that they are in pairs and looking out for each other. An adult bathroom policy has been implemented as well. Please ask the office where the adult bathroom is as all of the other bathrooms are for the use of students only.

A Secure the School action was required recently due to a stranger in the school. As the note that went home to the parents indicated, all of the safety policies were used and the school was secured until it was clear that no danger existed. The school will have a full Secure the School practice sometime before Christmas when our School Resource Officer is present. There are two different levels of this procedure:

- Secure the School: where the doors are locked and there is no imminent danger to the students (used for medical emergencies) and
- Full Lockdown: where police are called due to a physical threat - students are in a corner of the classroom, out of sight, with lights out.

There are procedures in all classrooms but each occurrence, whether real or practice, is fairly unique and the procedures are always a work in progress.

EQAO Testing

Nicole reported that our school has shown a static or declining trend in EQAO results for the past three years and has now been deemed an OFIP (Ontario Focused Intervention Partnership) level 3 school by the Ontario Ministry. As a result, resources will be made available to the school for coaching teachers in professional development so that best practices are more readily understood and used to improve student achievement. These resources are not necessarily additional teaching staff, but may come in the form of literacy and numeracy coaching and release time to allow teachers to participate in professional learning in the school. As a school, we will also be focusing resources on literacy to help improve scores. One of the changes already implemented is the reduction of bells and announcements so that children are better able to focus in a more uninterrupted learning environment. In response to the question "How can Council help?":

- Donate read-a-thon funds raised to provide teachers with additional resources instead of using for the library
- Purchase other non-textbook resources
- Supply a math cart/tubs to help further develop numeracy in the classrooms
- Help out with supplying items on the teachers' wish list (to come soon...)

Fundraising

Nicole thanked all of the parents for their generous support of the United Way and promised that fundraising would slow down for a while.

Reducing Paper

The list of emails received to date is not as high as was hoped for. The cost of sending home all newsletters and correspondence on paper (photocopying, distribution time, etc) is quite expensive and we would like to find a way to reduce this expenditure. One suggestion was to have a representative for each class call the parents to request email addresses.

Other

A request was made by a Council member to have a presentation about numeracy at a future Council meeting.

6. Teacher's Report - Caroline Therieault

Fifteen new student teachers began this week. Intramurals are just beginning now. There are many things going on and all the children are working hard.

7. Past Chair's Report - Sara Adam

Sara presented Council's 2007-2008 Annual Report (see attached report).

8. SnowHawks – Harvey Brodtkin

Harvey Brodtkin attended the Council meeting to provide information about the SnowHawks Ski and Snowboard program. This is a program that is offered to Grade 6 to 8 students at Hopewell over four Mondays in January. The SnowHawks' program is not sponsored by the school – there are no teachers on the trips and no school funding is directed at the program - but it's an opportunity for children to learn how to ski or snowboard at some of the local ski hills. The SnowHawks organize all of the bus chaperones, instructors and other volunteers. In the past about 140 to 150 students have participated.

The SnowHawks use a buddy system to ensure that no child skis alone. Alpine safety codes are taught and reviewed on the bus ride up to the hill. Lessons are offered for students that are interested. Although rules are enforced, the number one objective of the SnowHawks is that the students have fun. Instructors are certified. For more information, please contact Hopewell parent James Hunter. See www.snowhawks.com for more information.

9. Space Camp – Kathryn Owens

Space camp planning is well underway for Grade 6 students. A general information letter will be going home with students shortly. Fundraising plans are being finalized with a goal to cover the transportation, pizza dinner for the first night and snacks for the entire trip.

The Space camp planning committee requested that the final payment for Space camp be paid by Council (\$100 per student for 85 students). The initial deposit of \$5,000 was approved and paid in the spring and the request is for the remaining \$3,500.

Motion requesting \$3,500 final payment for Space Camp and \$200 for photocopying expenses: Kathryn Owens

After some discussion, it was decided that the motion would be tabled until the Budget Committee had been established. The remaining funds for Space camp will be requested at the next Council meeting.

The committee organizing Space camp requested the Council provide a loan of \$2,000 for the purchase of the water bottles to be used in the fundraiser. The fundraising is expected to be completed early in the new year and the loan will be repaid to Council at that time.

Motion requesting \$2,000 loan for the purchase of water bottles by:

Seconded:

None opposed. Motion passed.

10. Sub-Committee Updates:

- a. Enrichment Sub-Committee – Marcia McAlpin was the past chair of the committee. She is unable to continue to chair the committee, but will continue overseeing the Grade 5 Cross Country Ski program.
- b. Safe and Caring Sub-Committee – See mandate attached by Tina Daniels

Motion to re-establish the Safe and Caring Committee by:

Seconded:

None opposed. Motion passed.

- c. Playground Sub-Committee – Kim MacDonald, Hopewell's Vice Principal, will oversee the implementation of the Greening Grant that was awarded to the school. The drainage issue is still under consultation. Anyone wishing to join the playground committee should contact ???
- d. Allergy Sub-Committee – The allergy committee is Co-Chaired by Allison Fines and Karen Goderich. The committee welcomes anyone who would like to join.

Motion to re-establish the Allergy Committee by:

Seconded:

None opposed. Motion passed.

- e. Technology Sub-Committee – Susan Barbatbun proposed the establishment of a new Technology Committee that would use expertise in the parent community for hardware issues, troubleshooting and support. See mandate attached. Anyone wishing to offer their time to this committee should contact Susan Barbatbun.

The contact person on staff at Hopewell is Kathy Manser (while Anne Marie Gervais is on leave). Some of the School Council members expressed an interest in teacher recommended research sites and appropriate Internet usage. As well, there was some discussion that Nortel was looking to promote partnerships with schools (there was a suggestion that we approach a Hopewell parent who works at Nortel). The Ottawa Public library teaches students and parents how to use their free tools through your home computer, if you have a library card.

Motion to establish a Technology Committee by:

Seconded:

None opposed. Motion passed.

- f. Budget Sub-Committee – The budget committee is co-chaired by Michelle Sprott and Sara Adam. See mandate attached. If you are interested in joining the Budget Committee, please contact Sara or Michele, as new members are needed.

Motion to re-establish the Budget Committee by: Seconded:

None opposed. Motion passed.

- g. Nutrition and Wellness Sub-Committee – The possibility of a Nutrition and Wellness Committee was discussed. This committee would be formed to deal with the new transfat standards that will be implemented in the schools next year. There is some concern that the current pizza lunch fundraiser will not comply with the transfat standards and the fundraiser will need to be reviewed (TBD – did Vanessa Riddel already review the pizza lunch fundraiser to see if it complied with the new transfat standards?). Any fundraising that is done through the sale of food will always be required to be approved by the Allergy Committee, School Council and the Administration (for instance Funchboxes and a milk program)

11. Grocery Coupon Update:

The Grocery Coupon fundraiser is run by Denise Inglis and Marie-Claude Savoie. Revenue is expected to be about \$1,800, which is lower than last year. There was a change in the pick up process and, as a result, we can only offer PC cards since the pick up must be done at Your Independent Grocer. This process was established due to over burdened office staff that is no longer being able to hand out grocery cards from the main office. It's unclear whether there is another way to distribute the cards using volunteers.

12. Treasurer's Update:

Michele Sprott gave an update on the School Council finances. In the future, it was requested that the budget update be sent out prior to the Council meeting so that Council members would have time to review.

Last year Hopewell School Council entered the year with a surplus of \$14,000 and raised \$38,000 of which \$48,000 was spent. For the 2008/2009 year, the price of pizza lunches has increased so we expect higher revenue from this fundraiser. The grocery coupon fundraiser isn't doing as well this year and isn't expected to generate as much revenue as it has in the past. As a Council, we will need to decide how to allocate the funds raised by the read-a-thon. In the past the funds have gone to the library and/or beacon schools.

The QSP fundraiser has been transferred to the school administration. As a result we will no longer be allocating funds to the Principal. The funds raised by the QSP fundraiser and the Principal's allocation offset one another.

13. Chair's Report:

Tina Daniels introduced herself as the new Chair of the Hopewell School Council. As a practicing child psychologist, Tina has committed to providing the Council members with key new learnings on literacy and research that she is exposed to.

Tina also discussed the current Council slate. There are still some vacant positions on the slate that should ideally be filled. The responsibilities according to the constitution have been included so that people understand the positions are not onerous.

Janet Jull has put her name forward as the Special Needs Representative. She was acclaimed to this position.

14. New Business:

The email list is still not as large as we'd like to see. Would it be possible for the Council's parent representatives to call all of the parents in a class to obtain this information? Possibly, the teacher's could have a sign up during the parent-teacher interviews.

The current meeting Agenda and Minutes from previous meetings are often provided as copies to Council members at the meeting. In the future, if the Agenda and Minutes are sent the week before the meeting, copies will not be provided.

15. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

*Motion to approve the May meeting minutes by: Seconded:
None opposed. Motion passed.*

Motion to approve the June meeting minutes with the following adjustments by:

Adjustment – Page 3 – soil engineer should be changed to surveyor

*Seconded:
None opposed. Motion passed.*

*Motion to approve the September meeting minutes by: Seconded:
None opposed. Motion passed.*

16. Meeting dates: Council will meet the second Tues. of the month for the rest of the year:
Dec. 9th, Jan 13th, Feb 10th, March 10th, April 14th, May 12th, June 9th.

17. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.