

EQUINOX HOLISITIC ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

Council Meeting Minutes October 19, 2016

Library | 7:20 pm - 9 pm

SCHOOL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Chair: Matthew Hall
Co-Treasurer: Cherokee MacLeod
Secretary: Angela Matich
Board Liaison: Amelia Golden
Roden Liaison: James Lewis

SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVES

Principal: Mark Lasso
Vice-Principal: Chris O'Shaughnessy
Teacher Rep.: Tanya Demjanenko

MEETING ATTENDEES

Megan Hunt, Boriana Karan, Branco Karan, Genevieve Lennox, Heather Bell, Sara Gordon, Amelia Golden, Tina Faridi, Lorien Iantomasi, Armaity Homavazir, Shelagh Smith, Suzanne Van Winkle, Irit Kelman, Kristin Simpson, Syd Grainger.

REMINDERS

All School Council meeting attendees, except school staff, may vote on items presented.

CO-TREASURER NEEDED

Our School Council needs a Co-Treasurer to work with the very knowledgeable Cherokee MacLeod this year. She will show you the ropes of this volunteer position as she transitions from this role. If you are interested, please email Angela Matich at gtafemale@gmail.com.

> 1. OPENING OF MEETING

> 2. SCHOOL REPORT

OPENING VIDEO

The meeting opened with a video of the Toronto District School Board Director of Education, Dr. John Malloy. The video was created as a tool to help explain the role that parents/guardians play in supporting student achievement and well-being and emphasized the importance of parent engagement across our system.

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/AboutUs/DirectorofEducation/VisionforLearning.aspx>

READ-UP CLUB

Chris O'Shaughnessy confirmed he would be submitting a \$200 RFF for this year's Read-up Club program.

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IN-HOUSE CULTURAL PERFORMANCES

Last year Equinox and Roden were able to host three different professional cultural performances at the school. It cost \$4,000 in total. Roden's School Council covered those costs for Roden's students while Equinox students paid out of pocket. Chris O'Shaughnessy confirmed that he would like to increase the number of professional cultural performances to six this year: music, dance, puppets, opera, drama, and storytelling. The new cost would be \$8,000.

EXTRA CURRICULAR SPORTS AND CLUBS

- **Cross Country - Instructors: Denise Chan, Brad Niven and Jennifer Kozelj**
A big thank you to all those who ran, participated and supported our cross-country team this year.
- **Toronto Police Sports Group Grade 7/8 - Instructors: Sherman Lam and PC Adam Whyte**
Alternating Tuesdays | Gym
- **Karate Kids**
Tuesdays (Sept. 29 – Dec.15) | Gym and 2nd Floor Common area
- **Ukulele Club Grade 4/5 School - Instructor: Lisa Olafson**
Wednesday and Thursday | Lunch | Library
- **Colouring Club Grade 1 - Instructor: Pauline Vaccinos**
Mondays (Sept. 12-Dec. 19) | Library | 12:15 pm
- **Read-up Club**
Tuesdays | Library | 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

OUTDOOR KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS PROJECT

Mark Lasso thanked everyone for their patience as the project is being completed on the kindergarten's outdoor classroom. He confirmed it should hopefully be finished by the end of this month.

NEW KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM AND REPORTS

Mark Lasso shared that teachers are being trained on the new curriculum and that SK students would receive three reports this year: November, February and June. JK students will receive two progress reports this year: February and June. Starting next year, there will be three reports for both JK and SK students.

SCHOOL COUNCIL INSURANCE

The \$130 per year insurance fee for School Council was approved. The current insurance policy ends later this month. The insurance covers School Council for events and fundraising activities.

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RENEWED MATH STRATEGY

Equinox was chosen to be a Level 1 Renewed Math Strategy (RMS) school due to low EQAO Math scores for Gr. 3 and 6 due in large part to many parents not consenting to their children participating in the assessment. This has resulted in our school receiving increased funding and support for math as part of the ministry's new overall investment in math learning. The exact details for this program and how they will impact our school are still to be confirmed.

FRENCH TEACHER

Great news! Tera Dabner has received a half-time permanent contract and will be staying on at Equinox Holistic Alternative School as our Core French Teacher.

MOVIE NIGHT FUNDRAISERS

If both schools want to operate movie fund-raisers, Mark Lasso recommended both Equinox and Roden split the approx. \$600-\$800 cost of the movie license fee for the year.

PREFECT PROGRAM

The Prefect Program has begun for both Gr. 4 & 5 students monitoring the doors during recesses and assisting students when needed. New blue t-shirt were purchased and will make it easy for other students to find them during recess when they are in need of assistance.

PEACE MAKERS

As an addition to the Prefect Program, Mark Lasso shared that when time and energies allow, the school would like to start a Peace Makers program for Grade 6 students.

UNIVERSAL SCREENING ASSESSMENTS – GR. 3

Assessments were conducted last month for those that consented. The assessments help to identify and allocated supports for students with identified needs. Results are due soon.

In response to a question...

FOYER DISPLAY SCREENS

Power receptacles were finally installed for the display monitors in each entrance foyer after almost four years of waiting. The school is now trying make them compatible with current technology for displaying school information. They hope not to have to obtain new equipment.

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In response to a question...

LUNCH SUPERVISORS

A parent outlined concerns about bell use by lunch supervisors in the yard, specifically how they are rung near children's ears. Mark Lasso confirmed that he would speak with the lunch supervisors about this concern. He also outlined that there is no formal training for lunch supervisors by the TDSB including the use of bells, except for health and safety. The schools however do provide training on school procedures.

In response to a question...

WEATHER AND RECESS

Mark Lasso and Chris O'Shaughnessy confirmed that there is no policy on "rain" and that an indoor or outdoor recess is determined by the conditions at the time outside the building. The goal is to have students outside as often as possible even during light precipitation. When it becomes heavier, student are kept in or brought in early.

In response to a question...

BREAKFAST CLUB

Like last year, Mark Lasso is considering sending out a one-time donation request to families for the Breakfast Club. Last year, the community raised \$3,000 and each school council donated \$1,000. A total of \$5,000 was raised. Currently, there is a wish list of items needed posted on the wall by the Breakfast Club. They welcome non-prepared food donations, such as fruit, eggs, cheese, etc.

In response to a question...

CARPET REPLACEMENT

Mark Lasso confirmed the replacement of the carpets was approved and timelines are pending.

CLASS PARENT REPRESENTATIVES

All classrooms currently have active class parent representatives. It was discussed if there would be value in having a Class Representative Coordinator on School Council as in previous years; however, it was pointed out that it wasn't very useful in the past and the role was ended.

AGENDA

School Council will try to release the meeting agenda to the community a minimum of two weeks prior to the meetings.

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TEACHERS UPDATE

- ***GRADE 8 GRADUATION TRIP***
Kyle has requested a \$500 donation from the School Council to help fund the Grade 8 graduation trip. This will help ensure all students will be able to participate. Kyle will also be doing his own fundraising to help with the trip, such as sell hoodies, t-shirts and toothbrushes.
- ***GOOGLE EVENTS CALENDAR***
A Google calendar is being created to cover all the various important events and field trips.
- ***THE P.I.N.E. PROJECT TRIP - - <https://www.pineproject.org>***
All the p.i.n.e. project trip dates have been finalized. Waiver forms are now required for all students to participate. The delay in finalizing the p.i.n.e. project trip dates this year was due to some changes required to accommodate the different class sizes and p.i.n.e. project's request for a formal contract, and the need for it to be reviewed by the Board. The final schedule is pending as is the fee schedule which is very similar to last year. Funds will be requested soon as well as additional donations to help those families that request financial support. The goal is for every student to be able to participate in this and all school programs. Jodi will be coordinating the collection of funds and will also receive any confidential requests for financial support.
- ***FISH ALLERGY***
One of the teachers has a severe allergy to fish. The school is asking that fish or fish products only be consumed in the lunch room or outside, and not on the third floor. Please take the time to remind your children about this severe fish allergy.

SCHOOL COUNCIL BUDGET

Cherokee MacLeod gave the Principal and the School Council the budget for review. It will be presented at the November meeting in more detail.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Elisa Keay, James Lewis and Angela Matich will be putting out a request for volunteers for the Communication Committee soon. The goal will be to develop a communications plan and schedule, as well as update the website as needed.

WINTER FAIR COMMITTEE

The Winter Fair volunteers are working hard to prepare for this year's event. At the time of the School Council meeting, this committee did not yet have a Chair or Executive team. Since the School Council meeting, they have established an Executive team to help organize the Winter Fair.

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GRANTS COMMITTEE

Angela Matich will be creating a new Grants Committee. She will be sending out a call soon for volunteers. More information will follow at the next meeting.

EGG PROGRAM

Mark Lasso confirmed that the School Council insurance covers the egg program fundraiser and may operate as a council fundraiser.

OUT OF TIME

Matthew Hall (Chair) and Angela Matich (Secretary) apologized that time ran out for opening the floor to new business. If you have any pressing issues or want your item added to November's meeting agenda, please feel free to contact Matthew at mattmung@hotmail.com and Angela at gtafemale@gmail.com.