

EQUINOX HOLISITIC ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

Council Meeting Minutes November 23, 2017

Library | 6 pm – 7:45 pm

SCHOOL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

(In Attendance)

Co-Chair: Matthew Hall
Co-Chair: Angela Matich
ASAC Rep: Boriana Karan

Principal: Catherine Pollock
Vice Principal: Chris O'Shaughnessy
Teacher Rep: Lori Baxter

ADDITIONAL MEETING ATTENDEES

Heather Bell, Lisa Olafson, Susan Tiihonen, Jen Pendergast (Roden School Council Representative)

VOTING PROCESS

All Equinox parent/guardian attendees were able to vote on anything presented during the meeting. Whether a vote was passed or not has been recorded below. Before each vote, the School Council motioned for the vote and one of the meeting attendees seconded it.

OPENING

The School Council meeting opened by reading the TDSB acknowledgement of the Traditional Territories/Ancestral lands of Aboriginal peoples. Next, Matt led the group through an opening circle where everyone was invited to share their name, their children's names and grades, as well as what they were looking forward to most at the Winter Fair.

OCTOBER MEETING NOTES

The meeting notes from October were approved. All meeting notes from this school year are available online at www.EquinoxSchool.ca for reference.

2017-2018 SCHOOL COUNCIL BUDGET - APPROVED

Prior to the meeting budget vote and approval, Angela shared that 67 budget surveys were completed. 93% of those replies agreed with the proposed budget. There were five online survey responses that expressed concerns/questions regarding the budget.

1. **Inquiry:** Unclear as to where the Winter Fair money was being allocated.

Answer: Beside each Winter Fair activity in the budget was a note indicating where the funds would be allocated.

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2. **Inquiry:** Unclear why \$6,250 has been allocated to the EOK Makeover project.

Answer: The \$6,250 Equinox Outdoor Kindergarten Makeover Project funds were raised approx. 4+ years ago specifically for this long-term large-scale project. The donor engravings approx. 85 one-word rock engravings and 13 “feature” one-line engravings still need to be completed. These engravings were promised to donors through the original project donation drive. See the full details on the original [donation drive website](#). Some of these funds are also allocated towards the water wall accessories package which costs approx. \$2,000+. Any funds remaining will be used towards the Equinox Outdoor Kindergarten forte (aka cage) storage for loose materials such as shovels, rakes, hula hoops, rocks, etc.

3. **Inquiry:** Budget should focus more on academic support such as purchasing academic books and classroom supplies.

Answer: The School Council proposed budget includes approx. \$1,900 for classroom supplies. We also gave \$200 towards the Read-Up Club. There are limitations on what academic supports the School Council may or may not fund. TDSB and the Ontario Ministry of Education state, “Money raised through fundraising is not to be used to provide resources necessary for the delivery of curriculum or a safe learning environment, i.e. structural repair; sanitation, emergency repair, textbooks required to deliver curriculum...” If there is a specific initiative you would like to see the School Council support, please email chair@equinoxschool.ca.

4. **Inquiry:** How is the proposed budget funding the p.i.n.e. project shortfall?

Answer: Over \$1,400 was raised last Spring for the p.i.n.e. project through the A Time for Gardens fund raiser. The school received those funds last Spring and will apply them to this school year’s shortfall.

5. **Inquiry:** How is holistic programming being supported through the proposed budget?

Answer: A majority of the proposed budget is supporting holistic learning. Experience & Inquiry-Based Learning: \$3,600 Legacy Fund, \$1,400 the p.i.n.e. project field trip shortfall, \$1,900 classroom supplies, \$572.80 grade 7/8 end of year trip and \$500 grade 8 graduation (traditional Equinox right-of-passage experiences and ceremony). Arts-Based Learning: \$500 music supplies, \$1,400 cultural performances and \$1,000 annual production. The student’s overall health and well-being has been included with funding towards \$500 lice checks and \$1,000 nutrition – the snack program.

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| EHAS Budget Summary 2017/18 | | EHAS Projected Revenue & Allocations 2017/18 | |
|---|--------------------|--|-------------------|
| BANK TOTAL | \$10,376.84 | 2017 AUTUMN FUND RAISERS COMPLETED | \$1,626.80 |
| Bank Balance | \$10,143.84 | Egg Sales (July-September) - <i>Cultural Performances</i> | \$479.00 |
| Deposits Pending Pick-up | \$233.00 | Roden/Equinox Curriculum Night Food Sales - <i>Nutrition Program</i> | \$267.00 |
| | | Fresh From the Farm Baskets - <i>Grade 7/8 End of Year Trip</i> | \$572.80 |
| ALLOCATED FUNDS TO BE DISTRIBUTED | \$8,077.31 | Egg Funds (starting Oct. 2017 onwards) - <i>Legacy Fund</i> Approx. \$300/month or \$3,600/year. Raised To Date: October 2017 (\$308) | \$308.00 |
| 3rd Floor Classroom Storage (aka Mural) | \$1,235.00 | | |
| Eco Colour Printers - Approved Feb. 15, 2016 Funds Given \$777.38 vs. Actual Cost Spent \$811.27 | \$33.89 | 2017-2018 FUND RAISER ALLOCATIONS TBC (\$ = net not gross) | \$9,750.00 |
| 2017 Equinox Social - Physical Ed. Program | \$358.42 | Winter Fair Pre-Event, Entry Tickets, Ticket Holders - <i>3rd Floor Classroom Storage (Cabinets, Coat Racks etc.)</i> | \$1,500.00 |
| EOK Makeover Project Final Grant Funds | \$6,250.00 | Winter Fair Raffle Baskets - <i>Cultural Performances</i> | \$855.00 |
| 2017 Read Up Club Supplies - Using Existing Funds | \$200.00 | Winter Fair Food/Beverage Sales - <i>Nutrition Program</i> | \$945.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Bake Sales - <i>Annual School Production</i> | \$900.00 |
| MONEY LEFT TO SPEND | \$2,299.53 | Winter Fair Artisan Market - <i>School Lice Checks</i> | \$450.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Woodland Pond - <i>Grade 8 Graduation Celebration</i> | \$500.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Children's Store - <i>Teacher Classroom Supplies</i> | \$1,200.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Face Painting - <i>Teacher Classroom Supplies</i> | \$150.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Oracle - <i>Teacher Classroom Supplies</i> | \$150.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Craft Table - <i>Teacher Classroom Supplies</i> | \$150.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Tattoos - <i>Tech (Ink Replacement \$50) + Teacher Classroom Supplies</i> | \$100.00 |
| | | Winter Fair - Story Time with April - <i>Teacher Classroom Supplies</i> | \$50.00 |
| | | Winter Fair NEW Amazing Winter Challenge - <i>Teacher Classroom Supplies</i> | \$150.00 |
| | | Winter Fair NEW Sing Along & Crafts with Tera - <i>French/Music Room</i> | \$150.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Pocket Fairy - <i>N/A (No charge activity)</i> | \$0.00 |
| | | Lantern Walk/Winter Concert Bake Sale - <i>Jr./Inter. Music Supplies</i> | \$500.00 |
| | | 2018 Equinox Social - <i>3rd Floor Classroom Storage</i> | \$500.00 |
| | | 2018 A Time for Gardens - the p.i.n.e. project shortfall | \$1,500.00 |
| | | ***All projected numbers are approximations only.*** | |
| | | Winter Fair Projected Total Raised After Expenses & Glen Rhodes Donation | \$7,250.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Projected Total Teacher Classroom Supplies (approx. \$172 x 11 programs - FDK A & B, Grades 1-8, French/Music, Spec.Ed/P/E *Library said they didn't need it) | \$1,900.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Projected Total Raised for 3rd Floor Classroom Storage | \$2,000.00 |

**Equinox School Council Budget
DRAFT: 11/23/17**

Cathy confirmed during the budget meeting that Tera's Music/French Room \$600 furnishings/accessories shortfall will be covered by TDSB. If you have no idea what this is about, here is the backstory. Spaces in the school are being reallocated as both Roden and Equinox schools continue to grow in enrolment numbers. This year, Roden took over Equinox's 3rd floor French Room. The Equinox Music Room is now for both French and Music. This space had no desks, tables, chairs etc. Tera the Music/French Teacher was given a budget to purchase the required items. Unfortunately, approx. \$600 of the items were purchased from IKEA – a vendor who is not on TDSB's approved vendor list. TDSB didn't want to cover the \$600. Cathy worked hard and has finally got confirmation that TDSB will indeed cover the shortfall.

*****The updated budget is attached at the end of this document for reference. It reflects the final Winter Fair totals.*****

STATEMENT OF NEEDS

The School Council asked for feedback from the community on the Statement of Needs, but did not receive any. So, the same Statement of Needs was submitted from last year with one minor change to correct the number of student currently enrolled in the school.

TEACHER UPDATE

Nothing new to share.

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ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC) UPDATE

Boriana, the Equinox School Council ASAC Rep and also the ASAC Co-Chair, shared the following updates:

- Deborah has agreed to be the ASAC Teacher Rep.
- ASAC is looking for a Student Rep. If any student is interested, please contact Boriana or chair@equinoxschool.ca. Boriana is also going to inquire with Tera, the Student Council teacher rep.
- The Alternative School Review Summary has been released, but not online yet.
 - Interesting Discoveries:
 - Although only 2% of the TDSB population currently reside in an alternative school, 1 out of 5 TDSB students will attend an Alternative School at some point in their TDSB elementary/high school enrolment.
 - Elementary schools' demographics show that the majority of students are from middle/upper income households and the schools are lacking in diversity. High schools' demographics show the students have a higher make-up of under privileged households and are much more diverse. This raises questions about equity and making alternative schools more accessible to everyone. One parent at the meeting said, "Knowing alternative schools even exist is half the battle."
- One of the key challenges with ASAC is the lack of communications between alternative schools. ASAC has started a Communications Committee to develop Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts. This still needs to be approved by TDSB; however, while waiting for that approval, ASAC's Communication Committee is looking for 2-3 volunteers per each school to start collecting materials, such as images, stories etc. If you are interested in volunteering on behalf of Equinox, please contact Boriana or chair@equinoxschool.ca
- ASAC is asking TDSB to recommit to [Policy 062](#). This topic evolved into a discussion about Equinox's Mission Statement. Alternative Schools are required to review and recommit to their Mission Statements at a minimum of every five years. Some schools review it annually so it becomes a less arduous process. Boriana explained that TDSB requires all of its alternative schools to stick fairly close to their original proposed statements because that is what TDSB originally agreed to when supporting the alternative school's creation. If it changes too much then the school is no longer fulfilling that original agreement. They may have even over time become more similar to TDSB's traditional schools by no longer offering a different learning experience.

Angela confirmed that the Equinox teachers are refining the Equinox Mission Statement and it will be shared with the parent/guardian community for review/feedback in 2018.

- Cathy and Lori confirmed that Equinox has teaching guidelines and documents to support best holistic teaching practices at our school. Supply teachers are even given detailed instructions for each class.

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OPEN FLOOR REMARKS

- The equity discussion was continued. The School Council agreed that a Social Justice/Equity Committee would be started to give those interested in this topic a forum and avenue to make change. One of the ideas was conducting an online/printed survey/census to learn more about the Equinox community. For example, why did you decide to send your child to Equinox? Another idea was to create an anonymous “Exit Survey” to learn why families decided to leave our school.

If you are interested in learning more about this committee, please email chair@equinoxschool.ca. A meeting will be held in January sometime. The exact date/time/location will be confirmed after the winter break.

- Cathy explained how TDSB allocates Music and French resources to its elementary schools. French is used to cover 4-8 homeroom teachers' prep time. Staff need to use other allocations of prep time to cover the Primary Classes. Prep can be covered through Music, Gym or another reportable subject. At Equinox, there isn't enough combined teacher prep time to warrant allocating a full time Music, Gym or French teacher. The only way Equinox could get a dedicated full-time Music teacher and a full-time French teacher would be to grow our student enrolment numbers to the point that more homeroom teachers would need to be hired. A large enough increase in the overall combined homeroom teacher prep time total would warrant the allocation of a full-time Music teacher and French teacher. This would not mean students would get more Music, Gym or French, it would just be spread out over the additional student body. Unfortunately, increasing our enrolment and number of home teachers is impossible because our school enrolment is capped by TDSB at approximately 200 students due to building space limitations.

JOINT RODEN/EQUINOX COUNCIL MEETING

- **TDSB Facilities Updates:**
 - Danger Bay:
The stairs located by the south playground and gym area will be getting a higher railing installed to help reduce the chances of students climbing and getting hurt.
 - Roden Kindergarten North Gate:
A work order has been put into TDSB to have it repainted to address the current rust problem.
 - Library:
Lori's classroom will be relocated to the Drop in Centre room. The Drop in Centre will be moving into the Library. Two new walls are being installed to create an enclosed room for the Drop in Centre. An entranceway will be knocked through the wall to the Breakfast Room. The Drop in Room will be able to use the Breakfast Room bathroom and park stroller in that space. The Breakfast Club will still be able to use the Breakfast Room as it is open during different hours.

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- **School Improvement Plan (SIP):**
Click [here](#) to view full School Improvement Plan (SIP) document online as PDF.
- **Equinox/Roden Student Dance Fundraiser:**
Equinox and Roden School Councils agreed to host a February Student Dance fundraiser for all grades at both schools.
- **Extracurricular Activities, Sports and Clubs:**
Twitter: @Roden_HPE (*Coming Soon*)
 - ***Read Up Club (K – Grade 3)***
Every Tuesday 3:30 – 4:30 | Library
 - ***Karate Kids (Grades 1 – 5) |***
Tuesdays at noon | Gym and 2nd Floor Common Area
 - ***Indoor Police Sports Program/Indoor Soccer (Grade 7/8)***
Alternating Tuesdays 3:30 – 4:40 pm | Gym
 - ***Boys Volleyball (Grade 5/6)***
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8 am | Gym
 - ***Girls Volleyball (Grade 7/8)***
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8 am | Gym
 - ***Boys Volleyball (Grade 7/8) | Coach: Doug Mighton***
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8 am | Gym
 - ***Boys and Girls Basketball (Grade 5/6)***
 - ***Boys and Girls Basketball (Grade 7/8)***
 - ***International Languages - Spanish and Cantonese***
Mondays after school | Areas 18, 19, 20 and 29
 - ***U-School Ukelele Club (Grade 4/5) | Coach: Lisa Olafson***
Wednesday and Thursday Lunch | Library
 - ***Primary Choir (Grades 1-3) | Coach: Lisa Olafson***
Tuesdays Lunch | Library
 - ***Colouring Club (Grades 1-2)***
January 8th - March 12th | 12:15 pm – 12:40 pm | Library

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- **Roden/Equinox School Council Meeting Dates:**

- Wednesday, February 21st, 2018 | Roden @ 1 pm | Equinox @ 1:45 pm
- Monday, April 23rd, 2018 | Equinox @ 6 pm | Roden @ 7:20 pm
- Wednesday, May 23rd, 2018 | Roden @ 6 pm | Equinox @ 7:20 pm
- Wednesday, June 20th, 2018 | Equinox @ 1 pm | Roden @ 1:45 pm
*Volunteer Thank-You Tea @ 2:30 pm

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UPDATED SCHOOL COUNCIL BUDGET – February 20, 2018

When the November 2017 meeting notes were approved at the February council meeting, it was agreed that an updated budget would be included at the end for the parent community's reference.

| EHAS Budget Summary 2017/18 | | EHAS Projected Revenue & Allocations 2017/18 | |
|--|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| BANK TOTAL | \$10,376.84 | 2017-2018 FUND RAISERS COMPLETED | \$11,917.61 |
| Bank Balance | \$10,143.84 | Egg Sales (July-September) - <i>Cultural Performances</i> | \$479.00 |
| Deposits Pending Pick-up | \$233.00 | Roden/Equinox Curriculum Night Food Sales - <i>Nutrition Program</i> | \$267.00 |
| | | Fresh From the Farm Baskets - <i>Grade 7/8 End of Year Trip</i> | \$572.80 |
| | | Egg Funds (starting Oct. 2017 onwards) - <i>Legacy Fund</i> Approx. \$300/month or \$3,600/year. Raised To Date: October 2017 (\$308), November (\$459), Dec 2017 (\$329), Jan. 2018 (\$346) | \$1,442.00 |
| ALLOCATED FUNDS TO BE DISTRIBUTED | \$8,043.42 | Winter Fair 10% Donation to Glen Rhodes Food Bank | \$832.20 |
| 2017 Equinox Social - Physical Ed. Program | \$358.42 | Winter Fair Pre-Event, Entry Tickets, Ticket Holders and Raffle Baskets - <i>3rd Floor Classroom Storage (Cabinets, Coat Racks etc.)</i> | \$992.00 |
| EOK Makeover Project Final Grant Funds | \$6,250.00 | Winter Fair Raffle Baskets - <i>Cultural Performances</i> | \$1,199.00 |
| 2017 Read Up Club Supplies - Using Existing Funds | \$200.00 | Winter Fair Food/Beverage Sales - <i>Nutrition Program</i> | \$1,081.00 |
| 3rd Floor Storage | \$1,235.00 | Winter Fair Bake Sales - <i>Annual School Production</i> | \$1,286.00 |
| MONEY LEFT TO SPEND | \$2,333.42 | Winter Fair Artisan Market - <i>School Lice Checks</i> | \$501.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Woodland Pond - <i>Grade 8 Graduation Celebration</i> | \$494.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Children's Store & Storage Funds - <i>Teacher Classroom Supplies</i> | \$1,454.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Face Painting - <i>Teacher Classroom Supplies</i> | \$124.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Oracle - <i>Teacher Classroom Supplies</i> | \$46.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Craft Table - Tech (Ink Replacement \$50) + <i>Classroom Supplies</i> | \$119.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Tattoos - <i>Teacher Classroom Supplies</i> | \$30.00 |
| | | Winter Fair - Story Time with April - <i>Teacher Classroom Supplies</i> | \$32.00 |
| | | Winter Fair NEW Amazing Winter Challenge - <i>Teacher Classroom Supplies</i> | \$44.00 |
| | | Winter Fair NEW Sing Along & Crafts with Tera - <i>French/Music Room</i> | \$38.00 |
| | | Winter Fair Pocket Fairy - <i>N/A (No charge activity)</i> | \$0.00 |
| | | Lantern Walk/Winter Concert Bake Sale - <i>Jr./Inter. Music Supplies (\$ TBC)</i> | \$812.00 |
| | | Mable's Labels - <i>Nutrition Program</i> | \$72.61 |
| | | SPRING FUNDRAISERS - COMING SOON | \$2,750.00 |
| | | March 2, 2018 - All Grades Student Dance - <i>Professional Inspirational Speakers</i> | \$750.00 |
| | | April 28, 2018 - Equinox Social - <i>3rd Floor Classroom Storage</i> | \$500.00 |
| | | May 2018 - A Time for Gardens - the p.i.n.e. project shortfall | \$1,500.00 |
| | | ***All projected numbers are approximations only.*** | |
| Equinox School Council Budget | | | |
| DRAFT: 02/20/18 | | | |
| Winter Fair Total After Expenses and 10% Donation: | \$7,440.00 | | |
| Winter Fair Classroom Supplies Total: | \$1,849.00 | | |