

**Elmdale School Council Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday October 19, 2022  
Held in Person and Online (Hybrid Google Meet)**

**1. Welcome and Opening of Meeting**

The second Elmdale School Council for the 2022/2023 Academic Year was called to order by the Council Co-Chairs, Andrea Anastassiades and Kimberly Patriquin, at 1808hrs. The following individuals were present for the meeting – total of 37 participants, including 14 on-line participants:

Andrea Anastassiades, Co-Chair	Dawn Liew	Lesley Taylor
Kimberly Patriquin, Co-Chair	Mildred Leung	Kelley Voros
Saruul Ayurzana	Erica Lobdell	Lotte Wannet
Branko Boskovic	Kenneth Ma	Traceylyn Watchorn
Jonathan Bourgeois	Shilhav Mayo	Denise Wong
Alison Clegg	Rae-Anne Moss	Dave Wotherspoon
Liette Connolly-Boutin	Susie Munro	Dana Yamamura
Joanna Dymont Carrasco	Sofia Ribchinsky	
Amanda Ethier	Danica Rogers (online moderator)	
David Froom	Catherine Rossiter	
Stephen Froom	Nadine Saikaley (Principal)	
Caroline Hatton	Kouka Sawadogo-Lewis	
Erin Hetherington	Joel Schmuland	
Kristin Honshorst	Amanda Scott	
Angela Joya	Larry Shamash	
Holly Kardish	Elizabeth Shouldice	
Calvin Kwok	Vanessa Sikora	

**2. Approval of September 28 2022 Minutes.**

Council member moved that the minutes be approved. Seconded; minutes approved with no changes.

**3. Vacant positions – Education Committee Chair and OCASC representative**

- Kimberly: several people interested in helping with education mandate; Chair position likely to be sorted out soon (in the meantime committee members will handle).

- Kristin Honshorst has offered to take the OCASC position. Caroline Hatton has offered to continue on as a back-up.

#### **4. Principal's Introduction, Report and Update (Nadine Saikaley)**

- Thanks to all for joining in-person Meet the Staff evening. Great turn out, good opportunity to learn about classrooms and routines.
- Grade one and two dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills – this assessment administered to students this month. Set of procedures and measures to assess acquisition of literacy skills. This is to detect risk of reading difficulties and monitor the development of skills up to grade 8. Training also made available to rest of staff. Data has just arrived – will be assessed for instructional responses. Tool provides interventions required as well. Assessments of rest of school will continue.
- Building heating now operational, working well this year.
- Chief custodian Dan on leave, Stephane is replacing him.
- Fire drill to be carried out tomorrow. Planned drill for first instance.
- Teachers undergoing concussion training related to Rowan's Law.
- Communication of learning and progress reports are underway. Families where children are having difficulties will be informed prior to issuance of the report.
- PD Day activities – culturally relevant and responsible pedagogy; objectives by group; science microbits training (coding); report card training. Staff excited about tech/robotics opportunity.
- Tutoring – program of Government of Ontario in the news – sessions are supposed to start at end of October, awaiting word on what resources we may get.
- Question: anything on virtual tutoring? Nadine: Yes – early stages of set up. A council member that has offered to be a tutor confirmed training starting for those that have a position.

#### **5. Treasurers' Report (September 2022)**

Kimberly: Discussion will combine treasurers' report and the teachers' wishlist

- Starting balance about \$100K. This includes the Playground Fund of \$52K. Remaining total funds of about \$60K to allocate for wishlist and reserves.
- Detailed wish list has been received from teachers/staff. Treasurers have notionally allocated to budget buckets.

##### General Spending Bucket

- Includes normal annual expenditures – grade 6 grad; staff appreciation lunch; gifts for staff leaving, as well as other fixed fees – bank fees, school council pizza babysitting.
- Annual teacher spending allowance also provisioned (\$100 class).
- New: Librarian's request for some library furniture for new space – range of \$3 – \$8K.
- Other new wish list items: various materials, goods for kinders, including items to ensure all of the classes/cohorts have equal supplies (e.g., an additional

## Draft

- light table or cube for kinders (to allow for each cohort to have one).
- General Spending would be over-allocated if all needs met, but plenty of room in other buckets could make up this shortfall.

### Arts (20% of the budget)

- Limited new from wish list: Dance workshop for Gr. 1s, paint brushes
- Leaves significant room for spending (about \$9K) – typically enabling the Council to decide on more activities throughout the year.

### Science, Math, Technology (20% of the budget)

#### Wish list items:

- New incubator (2) for chicks, but for this year have the opportunity to do ducks – would want 3 duck incubators so each cohort can have one. (Kelley)
- Nadine – noted that ducks at Hilson was a very successful whole-school experience (web cam, swimming).
- Science and tech workshops for every class – 24 classes in total – would be about \$5K to have one per class.
- Kinder asks – building sets, counting, whiteboards etc. – total of about \$1,5K

### Phys Ed (20% of the budget)

- Bussing to cross country meet – about 185 kids going to cross country next week, also provisioning for bussing to other events.
- Sports equipment for the yards: whiffle balls and tennis nets.

### Literacy (10% of the budget)

- Fulfillment of annual wishes: Forest of Reading program; library resources (about \$3,250)
- Various book sets and resources requested by teachers.
- Kinder literacy resources, resources for Ms. Myers.
- Literacy would be over-allocated if all needs met, but plenty of room in other buckets could make up this shortfall.

Elmdale Cares 5% – unallocated, but ideas from Gr. 6s to come (about \$2,250)

Healthy Earth 5% – unallocated but many ideas to come (about \$2,250)

#### Discussion:

Additional Staff Request: a set of yoga mats for the grade 6 wellness program that is now running. Council member suggested that it might be a solution to ask parents offering to donate these. Alternatively, could fit this under-unallocated in Phys Ed. Agreed to work with Comms to seek donations.

Question: Are we certain we want to allocate everything this year, or do we want to have a reserve as we have in past years due to the uncertainty around COVID fundraising?  
Nadine: Many councils worried about uncertainty; but clarification that all the money fundraised for this year is supposed to be spent on the kids this year. This is direction from the Board. Should go back to spending full allotment.

Question: Are we wanting to look at the allocations across the buckets (%s assigned to each bucket). Second issue is that some committees don't have a fixed budget e.g. – Diversity and Equity – should we think about assigning these a fixed percentage? (discussion on this resumed below).

Question: is there any room for parents to submit requests – some discussion about what parents might want to see. Or should we be examining if there are there families in need in the school and community?

Nadine: there is a collection of donations for families in the community in need each year around Christmas – will be doing that drive again. Within the school, we also have a process for families that identify need and a pool of funds to assist with this – not necessary for Council to add to this.

Suggestion: could we look at historic usage by committees to see if the proportions are correct?

In response, Council member noted that it was good to leave room as lots of proposals coming. Noted that Committees will now suggest their additional projects to form rest of spending for the year e.g., dance workshops and scientists in the school.

Suggestion: perhaps up Literacy percentage as they consistently use their budget.

Question: Do we have teacher wish lists that will emerge throughout the year? Also, what about requests that are being made by teachers directly to parents – could these be covered instead?

Nadine: I think some practices from the past about asking parents for money for things have been historic – have now asked teachers to come through the principal's office so we can examine and determine if there are school funds for these. School office also has an “ask me” budget – flex funds for principal/administrators to administer (small ongoing asks).

Motion: Council member moved that, given sufficient funding exists to fully fund the staff wish list, that this be approved in bulk. Seconded, general agreement of group. Staff wish list items approved – with proviso that for larger ticket items with a range of spending, the lower amount is approved. This could be re-visited once Nadine has obtained the school budget from the Board and determines what the school will fund (e.g. furniture for library request).

Next meeting: Will look at question of allocating budget to other committees.

## **6. Outreach to Staff and Council Calendar of Events (Co-Chairs)**

- Kimberly: have added this because of request for some Committees planning events and wanting to check in with teachers about wants/curriculum – Co-Chairs propose that we poll the teachers all at once on priorities.
- Council Calendar of Events: Also proposing to lay out events on a central calendar so that teachers and staff can see workshops and events that are planned, and have input in terms of good timing for curriculum.
- Nadine: would also be a good idea to integrate fundraising events in this calendar so they are well-paced.

- Calendar would be online but also for David's social media efforts. Also could be an option for an external calendar. Suggestion that the existing calendar on school's website could be explored as a way to advertise these. Nadine – great, can populate and let people to know to check this regularly.
- Co-chair suggested that this exercise could also help us set some priorities in terms of budget planning.
- Co-Chairs requested that Committee Chairs provide input on proposals by next Friday

## **7. Committee Updates & Discussion**

### **a) Internal Communications (Lesley Taylor)**

Nil.

### **b) External Communications (David Froom)**

- Early objectives will be to grow the membership in social media and increase reach of messaging for some events like fundraising. Will look at cross-promotion in other groups (e.g. local councilor channels). Would like to review the website – also would not we cross-promote calendar usage on various platforms.
- Also doing a general call for helpers with comms – would love 1 to 2 volunteers to help. General request that if people want to help, just get in touch.

### **c) Fundraising (Amanda Ethier; Shilhav Mayo; Traceylyn Watchorn)**

- Shilhav: this year we have the Merry Dairy already – raised about \$700 via pint sales. Upcoming Dance-A-Thon on Halloween. Council member noted that there is not a lot of awareness yet. Nadine: we strategically slow the communications to avoid getting kids too worked up. Can now donate online, but cutting down on paper. Kelley – teachers could post on google classroom to help build awareness.
- Question on last year's fundraising: We had \$26,394 in fundraising. Aiming higher this year.
- Most popular ice cream: Cookies and Cream – 314 pints sold, \$25 of donations, 10% of truck sales.
- Comment: For Dance-a-Thon – think about spending \$100 on gift cards for kids dance competition – was a hit last year.
- End of spirit wear sale was today.
- Volunteers needed for Dance-a-Thon – would be appreciated by school. Sign up to be launched.
- Question: Can we share photos of fundraisers? Nadine: About half the school hasn't signed their media consent forms, so sharing photos an issue. Would really be helpful if parents signed these.
- Question: Is there a place where kids can get a costume if they don't have one – is there even something we can organize for the day, or a swap?
- Kelley: Younger classes have a bin of costumes, we could offer things to kids on the day.
- Suggestion: what about a costume swap and asking for donations ahead of time? Council member offered to draft a request.
- Bridgehead sale – also ongoing every two months (next one in December).

**d) Healthy Earth (Branko Boskovic; Alison Clegg)**

- Branko: Committee has a few ideas – some things we want feedback from Council – First, we propose to reconvene the newsletter – one just before Earth Day, but we are thinking of two this year. Education: having external educators come in paired with curriculum – discussion with teachers on what this could be. Alison – e.g., Riverkeeper has previously sent someone to come and talk about the watershed. Gardens at the school: we have the foundation grant from last year, and have a committee of teachers, perhaps Mothercraft able to be engaged to keep it going. May have some time for pollinator gardens in the school. Workday in the yard: Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> the Saturday – have a fall clean-up day in the yard – with families. Nadine – would need to do a community use of school application, just for liability etc.
- Last: also thinking about looking at Reconciliation – how this can be integrated.
- Council member offered a contact at Riverkeeper.
- Council comment that Grade 5 field trip to Champlain park was great – had an expert from the community, would be good to replicate this. Also, Hampton Park has a conservation group that does tours.
- Comment: when spirit wear comes in – could also encourage an exchange of outgrown items to promote recycling.

**e) Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee: Stephen Froom; Kristin Honshorst**

- Stephen: first priority was wanted to make sure this meeting was accessible – good feedback from the group online at home. Reach and participation of council important.
- What we want to accomplish this year – resources in the classroom – potentially a wish list of EDI resources for the classroom. Looking at partnering with other schools. One small way is we could buy the books and resources and donate to partner schools.
- Implement a few things from last year – digitizing fundraising efforts to increase accessibility.
- Annual EDI report to provide feedback to the school.
- Explore a student-led club idea on EDI.
- Kristin – committee has about 8 to 10 people – two things that have come up are Reconciliation and addressing gender and gender identity in the school – especially for French immersion – some parents are raising questions about pronouns in French – some teachers are raising this – options to make this more even in application.

**f) Arts: Natasha Beg, Erin Hetherington**

- Want to focus efforts in areas of dance and have been thinking about Reconciliation – can we bring elements of these themes in. Great if we could bring the whole school in but likes idea of checking in with teachers.
- Focus is bringing back the Arts Calendar – pre-COVID, there was a fundraising initiative but also to feature student art. Looking at ways for every student to be reflected in the calendar. Could we look at collective art projects that could be put into the calendar for 2023?
- Nadine – with 24 classes, we could probably engage each class.
- Could also work with the Equity and Diversity, but also Fundraising to add key dates.

- We used to have artist in the school. Erin –yes, we did have this person that would paint in the school – kids would watch him paint for a day. Will reach out him.

**g) Safe Travel Committee: Liz Shouldice**

1. Actively talking to OSTA about the bus lateness issue – has escalated, suggesting to them that they could amalgamate two busses to resolve the issues.
  2. Have heard from Jeff Leiper's office – they have asked us to publicize that the city has a drastic shortage of crossing guards.
  3. Going to organize a better walk to school day (coffee in yard etc.)
  4. Traffic control around the school – can we poster at gates to try and travel only one direction around the block before snow comes.
  5. Walking school buses. Lots of interest, parents looking into a grassroots bus or an official thing.
- Nadine: update from superintendent – OSTA had surveyed the community, only heard some concerns, parents had requested to come on the yard at 8:45, but some families had also noted the advantage – older kids from Fisher could get here to walk students home. Change is permanent from their perspective.
  - Liz: will reach out to the new Trustee after the election. We may need to start presenting data on the bus on-time schedule. Looks like they have scheduled the routes too tightly, but consequence is that kids aren't getting to school on time.

**h) Elmdale Cares: Catherine Rossiter (online) – Grade 6 teachers have been engaged, starting to look at opportunities.**

**i) Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC): Kristin Honshorst Nil.**

**j) Education: Nil.**

**8. Reconciliation (Alison Clegg)**

Lots of interest around school in this topic – if people want to look at this more closely, volunteering to set up a separate dedicated meeting. Indicate interest to co-chairs.

**9. Other business:**

Council member noted minor deficiencies in the playground. Nadine asked for follow up email with information.

Suggestion: Can we also look at the accessibility of the play structure?

Noted that mulch is the Board's preferred material. Also has to be a certain amount of pavement close to it. Asked that if we are going to re-examine the play structure, could we examine this? Council member noted that in the past – we have looked at accommodations when we have students that need them, tailored to their needs.

**Co-Chairs adjourned the meeting at 2004 hrs. Next meeting to be held November 16, 2022.**