

**Elmdale School Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday February 15, 2023**  
**Held in Person and Online (Hybrid Google Meet)**

**1. Welcome and Opening of Meeting**

The fifth Elmdale School Council for the 2022/2023 Academic Year was called to order by the Council Co-Chairs, Andrea Anastassiades and Kimberly Patriquin, at 1807 hrs. following individuals were present for the meeting – total of 28 participants, including 9 on-line participants:

Andrea Anastassiades, Co-Chair	Alison Clegg
Kimberly Patriquin, Co-Chair	Susie Munroe
Saruul Ayurzana	Katherine Muldoon
Tammy Barrat	Sofia Ribchinsky
Jonathan Bourgeois	Danica Rogers
Alison Clegg	Nadine Saikaley (Principal)
Joanna Dymont Carrasco	Kouka Sawadogo-Lewis
Sherine El-Medani	Joel Schmuland
Amanda Ethier	Elizabeth Shouldice
David Froom	Amber Steeves
Stephen Froom	Lesley Taylor
Caroline Hatton	Traceylyn Watchorn
Kristin Honshorst	Vicky Weekes
Karin Kincaid	Alison Zinni

**2. Approval of January 18, 2023 Minutes**

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

**3. Additional Item: Recognition of Dan Weber**

Kim: Chief Custodian Dan has been coming in an extra hour to clear snow for safe arrival in the morning. Co-chairs have used their discretionary fund for purchase of gift cards and card to recognize these efforts.

Council members expressed support for this initiative and general thanks to Dan for all the extra effort.

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

- Report cards sent electronically today. Feel free to reach out to teachers for follow up.

- PD Day Friday – all employee groups participating in educator workshops on a variety of subjects.
- Staff meeting – shared ideas on how to mark Pink Shirt Day (anti-bullying) (Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>) and Black History Month activities.
- Katie has planned The Gumboots Dance Workshop for Gr. 3s and 4s. Kids wear rainboots for this dance activity that introduces the South African dance of Gumboot (including education on the historical significance of the dance).
- Arts committee planning other activities for other grades.
- Next Principal's Communication will invite placement requests – to be sent to the school in letter (paper) format addressed to Nadine to examine. Not friend requests please – this is to focus on educational issues/extenuating circumstances.
- Kindergarten Information meeting held – 30-40 people attended. Lots of questions, tours etc.
- During reno – projector screen disappeared. The screen will be replaced for this spring.
- Keypad installed at rear door. This is not to be used for morning access, however. Code will be changed so only accessible in the evening.
- Bussing challenges: Principal's Communication explained issues. Ongoing discussion and concerns being shared with OSTA. Liz Shouldice continuing to be a strong advocate.
- Gr. 6s are enquiring about a fundraiser for earthquake victims in Turkey/Syria. Would like to contribute via a fundraiser. Trusted organization will be selected as recipient (e.g. Red Cross etc.).

## **5. Treasurers' Report (September 2022) – Tammy Barratt**

- Total available funds about 74K.
- Teachers can continue to proceed with Wishlist asks; Committees will be continuing to book workshops etc.
- Playground – principal will follow up with the school board Design and Construction team to confirmation if anything is outstanding regarding playground renovations.
- Mr. Renault is going to reach out on some Phys-Ed purchases.

Kim (On behalf of the Arts Committee), introduced discussion of upcoming events/spending priorities:

- Have booked the Métis workshop for grade 4 – 6 (180 students).
- Looking at booking the Afro Caribbean workshop (376 students – multiple days, 30 students at a time).
- These workshops both align with arts and EDI mandates.
- One issue – they will require additional funds beyond those approved.
- That overage amount, plus additional EDI funds required for Gumboots - \$3,435 to be approved by Council tonight.
- Compromise suggested – could eliminate grade 4s from the Métis workshop to lower overall costs (giving them one activity (Gumboots) rather than two, on par with the other grades).
- EDI: This committee is still searching for additional workshops to host, similar to unconscious bias workshop of last year.
- Nadine: superintendent has mentioned that there is a parent involvement committee fund that could be tapped into.

- Kim: clarification that parent involvement committee has \$500 to support enhanced parent involvement. This could potentially go to education committee for a parent workshop.
- There is an additional grant – PRO grant. Application due the 20th however.
- Support from council members for the compromise position re: grade 4s.
- Kim: new tally will be done for the Métis workshop.
- Council agreed to approve funds on that basis.

## 6. Committee Updates & Discussion

### a) **Fundraising: Amanda Ethier, Traceylyn Watchorn, Mildred L.**

- Bookfest going great – over 30K books brought in, the 16<sup>th</sup> the last day for donations.
- PD day will be used to bring boxes into the tables, need volunteers to bring books in. Lots of openings in bake sale as well.
- Have also organized author readings and storytellers – haven't had much attention on this – option might be to have parents come in and read to kids. Will be opening to parents Wednesday – elmdalebookfest@gmail.com for volunteers.
- Signage has been found (68 signs that we use for categories and big street signs) – these will be put out Thursday night. Bookfest organizers have also printed 18 signs for directing traffic – \$75 for this addition (to be settled out of Bookfest funds).
- Kim: last month – mats for gym floor was raised. Traceylyn - No solution yet.
- EDI Council member: Could EDI “shop” the Bookfest for any books that might fit the bill for the representation goals etc. for donation to our Library? May help offset overage for Gumboots.
- Tracelyn – yes, support this idea (we already allow teachers to select materials from the donations).

### b) **Safe Travel: Elizabeth Shouldice**

- Update – very busy with safe travel over last month: advocated with city for snow clearing – many meetings held; worked on keypad installation; advocating with OSTA ongoing; mailbox drop to neighbours.
- Significant school bus issues: including that one child did not arrive home until after 5 pm today. Feels this needs to be escalated to the Trustee.
- Nadine – agreed and wants to investigate this serious situation.

### c) **Truth & Reconciliation: Alison Clegg, Shannon Clarke**

- Alison – have been looking at how to approach reconciliation in the Elmdale community in a way that builds on what OCDSB is doing. Noted she is joined today by another Elmdale parent that works in this area.
- Parent: introduced themselves and noted that they have work on consulting/ Reconciliation strategies as expertise in this area. Looking at whether core resources can be brought in, or share experiences with other schools in the area. Trying to understand who might be interested in coming in from the Community. Look at a few areas that we might want to focus on for the Fall.
- Alison: want to take time to consult properly with resources within the board and then aim for a plan for the fall.

- Nadine: Board is reaching out on strategic plan renewal – as part of this, could meet separately to see what we want to do and what we want support with. Has found when reaching out to the Board, best to be succinct with what we want.
  - EDI member: Noted that the Board has a Roadmap for Equity Diversity and Inclusion, including Reconciliation. EDI committee happy to help as well.
- d) **Teacher Representatives: Karin Kincaid (on behalf of teachers)**
- Students have been learning about prominent black Canadians for Black History Month. Will be preparing a wax museum to feature what was learned.
  - Gr. 2s enjoyed presentation by Ottawa Humane Society.
  - Phys ed – a big thanks to Fisher Park Rec Council for allowing skating activities and also allowing Broomball to take place.
  - Gr. 6 – will be sorting unclaimed lost and found – will be donating to a sister school for their outdoor clothing cupboard.
  - Student Council has been busy – candygrams was very busy. Final number – almost \$800 – to be donated to CHEO and Humane Society; will donate on double up day to Humane Society.
  - Anything but Backpack Day – lots of fun.
  - In art world – drama and plays going on, using this to learn Francophone songs.
- e) **OCASC: Kristin Honshorst**
- This month's meeting is tomorrow, so has been updating via Counsel Co-Chairs if there are any urgent items.
  - Lots of policy going on at board level. For Liz/Safe Transport Committee – OSTA has reached out to OCASC to see if there is a way to engage school councils in the staffing problems – Liz will connect for our Council.
  - Over and above Black and Indigenous equity coaches, a Jewish equity coach will be hired. This responds to a recent rise in antisemitism.
  - Engagement kit: as part of strategic plan, engagement with student councils important – looking to share tools to engage adult community.
  - PRO grants: these are a provincial initiative to try and encourage engagement of the parent community and get adults involved in activities that foster sense of belonging. Available to every school in board, but the window for application is short – close next week. Grant writing experience will be helpful – Kristin willing to work on this. Opportunity would align with EDI work – main objectives must focus on anti-racism, food sovereignty, etc. \$750 per school – have to show ability to execute this and submit a follow-up report. Eligible expenses will be shared for consideration.
  - OCASC also seeking volunteers to help schools with less engaged parent councils to ensure funds are claimed. Board-wide volunteer call out for help with grant applications.
  - Kim: if a small group could meet tomorrow, we could review opportunities and could start the draft on that basis.
  - Question from Council member: For schools in need – could we just share our work and see if they can draw from that?
  - Also noted that our school board is behind schedule in launching these grant processes compared with other boards – something we should provide as feedback for next year.
- f) **Healthy Earth: Alison Clegg**

- Several planning exercises underway: Mindfulness workshops; garden renewal for the spring – looking to connect with teachers to sign up for garden work.
- Teachers have the edible garden grant with about \$2-3K left to be spent over the next time – could be used for building something – could think about what would be useful. Ideas welcome.
- Nadine: Best to survey teachers in a Google doc. Kim, Andrea, Karin met to discuss one of the grow towers in a kindergarten room, May need to replace motor – could be a use of the funds.
- Also noted that Salad parties have been a success would be nice if we could do other towers to involve more kids – have some room on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor to do this.
- Feedback from a Council member: tomato planters last year were great.

**g) External Communications: David Froom**

- First message sent by Council Co-Chairs was well received by community.
- Exploring using the Elmdale calendar for key events – looking at this.
- Nadine: update re: Calendar – have reached out to tech at the Board. We can't add anyone who is non-OCDSB member to the calendar permissions. But, Nadine could add any elements.
- Council member noted that it's a google calendar – could try a test where we just send invitations to the calendar for approval. Want to make a decision on what we might want to add – major fundraiser events, flagship events. Suggestions that committees share information early about events so they can be added to the information.
- Issue – thought was also being given to a separate Council calendar – what about if we did this and made it public?
- Council member noted that we might have two distinct objectives – coordination within council, but also making the calendar we develop available to broader community once finalized. Should be fine to have two calendars (Elmdale school and Council) but will think more about the right solution.
- Reiterated offer to support with coms on any event.

**h) Equity, Diversity & Inclusion: Stephen Froom**  
(covered under other topics).

**i) Elmdale Cares: Catherine Rossiter, Amber Steeves**

- Grade 6s are partnering with a sister school – raise money – teachers tying the work on the project into curriculum with persuasive writing, financial and media literacy ideas. Kids will be creating a tote bag to sell at Bookfest. All proceeds will go to sister school. Class has developed a proposal for Council, sourced the totes themselves, put together the financial costs and developed logo design for totes.
- Amber presented the proposal slide deck written by the Gr. 6 group.
- Locally sourced tote bags – 100 bags to be sold. Asking for \$282.50 for cost of bags, plus cost of paper \$33 (sublimation printing). Printing to be donated. Grade 6s will volunteer their time to sell the bags.
- Profit would be about \$700.
- Catherine – request for funds for the project put to Council.

- This will be one of a few initiatives. e.g., Grade 6s have sorted and washed all of the unclaimed lost and found items – will be donated to the community closet at the sister school.
- Council member question – will the fundraising be enough for the cost of the programs we want to support at the sister school?
- Catherine – idea is not tied to a specific program cost coverage, just trying to raise funds as possible, donate with hope they will be used for these objectives.
- Question about vetting of lost and found – assurance from Nadine that all kids had a chance to scan the items and all labeled items were returned prior to the donation occurring.
- Question about how the sister school selected. Nadine explained that all schools assigned an index based on socio-economic categories. Board advised on which of the lower indexed schools would most benefit from a sister school on that basis (as well as interest of the school).
- EDI – could participate as well – e.g., idea of doubling up the library resources they buy.
- Moved that funds for the Grade 6 fundraiser approved, seconded. Approved.

**j) Education: Jenny Becker**

- Reiterated suggestion to create a calendar – better timing of Council events.
- Workshop focused on discussing sex education with parents.
- Will use the parent involvement funds for this.
- Will connect with Ottawa Public Health on workshop.
- Is there a documented process on how to do a workshop? Steps involved?
- Kim – don't think there is a checklist of this type, but good idea for future.
- Nadine – there is a business case proposal that can be used as a template.-
- Council Question: Would it be possible for school to have a slot each month – so there's a set time for workshops to be held each month?
- Nadine – would be hard to block off parts of gym for this, but there are some that could be done in the classroom – might work.
- Idea of prepping things for next year.

**k) Community Representative: Susie Munro**

- No update items tonight. Kindergarten info night was a success.

**l) Arts: update by Kim/Andrea**

- (see above in the Treasurer's report section for summary of Gumboots/Métis/Afro Caribbean workshops and budget issue).

**7. Round Table/Other business:**

Bookfest organizers noted that they are in need of bookshelves – the ones they used to use were damaged, can we borrow from the classes? Nadine: Teachers' bookshelves might be bolted down in a lot of cases. Bookfest organizers to contact teachers via Nadine.

**Co-Chairs adjourned the meeting at 2007hrs. Next meeting to be held March 22, 2023. Communication to come before March Break**