

Elmdale School Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday April 26, 2023
Hybrid Meet (In-person and Online)

1. Welcome and Opening of Meeting

The meeting was called to order by the Council Co-Chairs at 6:10 p.m. The following individuals were present for the meeting:

Andrea Anastassiades (Co-Chair)	Karin Kincaid (Vice-Principal)
Kimberly Patriquin (Co-Chair)	Pete Laughton
Tammy Barratt (online)	Susie Munroe
Saruul Ayurzana	Danica Rogers
Jennifer Becker	Nadine Saikaley (Principal)
Branko Boskovic	Amber Steeves (online)
Alison Clegg	Catherine Rossiter (online)
Sherine El-Medani	Vanessa Sikora
Stephen Froom	Traceylyn Watchorn
Teresa Hanna-Mohacsi	Alison Zinni (online)
Kristin Honshorst (online)	

Council member moved that the minutes of the March 22, 2023 Elmdale School Council be approved. Seconded; minutes approved with one revision, under Committee Updates and Discussion, section 7.k) Elmdale Cares, the tote bags were sold for \$8 each.

2. Principal's Report: Nadine Saikaley

- Nadine passed on a message from the sister school indicating their gratitude the support Elmdale school has provided this year.
- The tentative staff planning for 2023/24 includes 24 classes (five kindergarten, four grade 1, four grade 2, three grade 3, one 3/4 split, two grade 4, one 4/5 split, one grade 5, one 5/6 split, and two grade 6). Class sizes are in-line with school board and provincial guidelines.
- Staffing will be solidified in May and is subject to change based on changes to enrollment and up until September 30, 2023.
- Class assignments will be communicated to families via email in late August 2023.
- Volunteers for the library are welcome and those interested are invited to contact the librarian, Ann Reilly.

3. Treasurer's Report: Vanessa Sikora

- Available funds are approximately \$85,000.
- There was a request to use playground funds for the following items: a sand pit/long jump for the junior yard (waiting proposal); line painting in the junior yard to include two

small 4-squares (\$90), one large 4-square (\$200), basketball court (\$538), speedball (\$538) and number bubbles, and hopscotch with indigenous and/or nature theming for the kinder yard. The total estimate is between \$3000 - \$3500. The painting must be completed by a OCDSB contractor

- It was suggested that the kinder fence between the sand pit and staff parking lot be covered e.g. plastic slats or affix wood and paint a mural. Confirmation needed if work on the fence and materials requires school board approval.
- Request to approve the following wishlist items: buses for borden ball tournament (\$400), sports equipment (\$150), maths supplies (\$80).
- A further update on the yard will be provided at the May school council meeting, following a site visit from the school board to look at drainage potential. Confirmation pending if the school board will cover the cost to fix the junior school yard fields. It was noted that the snow removal company was responsible for rolling up the sod.
- Buddy benches were suggested recognizing the rock garden and two regular benches are being used for this purpose. Is was asked if it would be possible to repurpose the existing benches as buddy benches with a fresh coat of paint?
- With regard to unused school council funds, staff have been requested to provide a complete list by April 30.

Council member moved to approve the request to purchase line painting in the junior and kinder yards estimate between \$3000 - \$3500 as well as buses for Borden ball tournament (\$400), sports equipment (\$150), maths supplies (\$80). Seconded; approved

4. Spring Bike Rodeo Update: Teresa Hanna-Mohacsi

- The date is set for May 27th from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Elmdale school yard and will include: a City of Ottawa helmet safety and road safety; a longboard demo; wheels sale; bike tune ups; bike washing; bike decorating; bake sale; and a seedling sale hosted by grade 5B.
- Details and a call for volunteers will be shared through the principal's weekly email.
- Starting May 1st wheel donations e.g. bikes, scooters, etc. can be dropped off at the front (like book donations during Bookfest).
- Unsold wheels will be donated to Ottawa Community Housing (OCH), an organization that will refurbish and tune up bikes, purchase helmets and distribute to children in communities of need in Ottawa.
- Questions around insurance were raised e.g. waiver for the volunteer bike technicians.

5. Committee Updates:

a) Fundraising: Teresa Hanna-Mohacsi

- A hotlunches sales summary was shared outlining the net revenue generated to date (over \$30k) from pizza and sub lunches, coffee/tea sales, and the spring seedling sale.
- It was suggested that consideration be given to suppliers for school pizza and subs days

i.e. use local businesses versus large franchises. Proposals are welcome with consideration to leadership and balancing the order volumes and service delivery e.g. currently the order per pizza day is approximately 100+ pizzas, etc.

- Planning is underway for Fun Fair which is scheduled to take place on June 22nd from 5 to 8 p.m.
- Volunteers and sponsorships are welcome.
- More details will be shared through the principal's weekly email and through the Elmdale Families Facebook page.
- Planning has also begun for the end of year staff appreciation luncheon.

b) Safe Travel: absent

c) Teacher Representative: Peter Laughton

- Students presented wax museums on prominent Black Canadians that was very well received.
- The inter-school basketball tournament that took place on April 26th between Elmdale and Connaught (at Connaught School) was a success and a great time was had by all.
- In May mat ball and track & field will begin. The track & field meet is scheduled for June 22nd.
- Kindergarten duck eggs are almost all germinated. The children are using special magnifying equipment to look at the eggs.
- There are many upcoming field trips and some highlights include: kinder trip to the experimental farm/agricultural museum; grade 1 community walk, and the grade 3 attendance at the upcoming children's festival

d) Elmdale Cares: Catherine Rossiter

- The sister school is looking to fundraise to support their playground and learning commons.

e) Community Representative: Susie Munro

- Registration is open for the Mothercraft summer camp program. Field trips will be back and are being planned.
- The Mothercraft team is willing to look after the Elmdale school gardens during the summer months.
- Registration numbers remain high for 2023-24 and acquiring sufficient staffing remains a challenge/concern.

f) Truth and Reconciliation: Alison Clegg

- The committee is building their approach and looking for feedback from one of the

board's Indigenous itinerants.

- Input is being sought from staff about their needs and the resources they currently use.
- It was noted that grades 1 to 3 will be receiving an updated curriculum for 2023/24 with an improved section on indigenous communities and truth & reconciliation.

g) Healthy Earth: Branko Boskovic

- An Earth Day newsletter was shared with Elmdale families. Special thanks to all who helped put it together. It was well received.
- Replacement of a motor for one of the plant towers is in the works.
- May 22nd will be Elmdale school yard clean up day. Seeking volunteers.
- Gardening in the Elmdale yards will begin soon. Seedlings have been purchased through the school fundraiser as well as some for teachers and Mothercraft.
- A question was raised, can soil orders be made through Dan (chief custodian)?
- It was suggested that perhaps garden name plates could be taken on by students or Mothercraft.
- It was noted that any surplus lettuce yields would be welcomed by Hersey.

h) Education Committee: Jenny Becker

- Planning is for a Sexual and Reproductive Health workshop for parents/caregivers of grade 5&6 is underway. The following are options that can be considered:
 - Planned Parenthood Ottawa - currently they provide workshops for children and youth and can conduct one for Elmdale free of charge. They are happy to develop a workshop for parents for \$500.
 - Dr. Lesley Spencer - does workshops from more of a medical approach but can also speak to how to talk about SRH with kids. Works frequently with Planned Parenthood Ottawa and would be happy to do a joint event with them or one on her own. She does not have a speaking fee.
 - Frederique Chabot with Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights is happy to do a workshop free of charge, She shared that Planned Parenthood Ottawa are best placed for this kind of workshop, but can also provide information and answer questions from a more policy and research approach.
- It was noted that sex education curriculum is typically taught late school year so it was suggested a March 2024 timeframe would be best.
- Co-Chairs also shared a workshop they attended on Media Safety that was very good. They will share the link.

i) Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: Stephen Froom

- The committee is moving forward to spend allocated funds for new library resources. Working with the librarian on this.
- Question - Where are we buying the books from? Librarian is an advocate for more diversity to be featured in the library materials. The committee will ask. There was a suggestion to also check in with local bookstores.

j) Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC): Kristin Hornshorst

- Concern was raised that school board budget reductions will result in reduced arts funding.
- OCASC is encouraging school councils to support art resources and STEAM activities.
- There is a motion to reduce the number of delegations or recommendations a person can submit to the OCDSB to once per year.
- Ottawa Children's Festival made a presentation and asked for school support e.g. it was suggested sharing resources to pay for buses in order to increase attendance/participation.
- It was noted that Parents Reaching Out (PRO) grant applications were down e.g 75 schools received grants this year.

k) Arts Committee: Co-chairs on behalf of Natasha Beg and Erin Hetherington

- All workshops have been booked. Feedback has been positive. The last workshop, Afro-Caribbean is schedule to take place in early May.
- The Arts Committee would like to support the creation of a school calendar, perhaps with a Truth and Reconciliation and EDI focus.
- It was suggested that each month collective art classes could represent a special recognition e.g. holiday, cultural day or day or month of recognition, etc.

l) External Communications: Co-chairs on behalf of David Froom

- Guidelines will be posted on the Elmdale Facebook page as a code of conduct for members.
- The name of the group has been changed to Elmdale Families to reflect the diversity of Elmdale parents and caregivers community.
- There will be a separate "page" for the Council so that the Council can post on Elmdale Families as the Parent Council.
- Comments for approved events from Council will have comments turned off.

6. Round Table:

- Next and final substantive meeting for this school year is scheduled for May 17, 2023.
- The June meeting, week of June 12th with specific date to be confirmed, will be a social wrap up for the year. Details to follow.

Co-Chairs adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.