

Thompson Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

Meeting Minutes – November 21, 2018

Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am by Jen Dahl, Chair.

In Attendance

Jen Dahl – Chair, Pavan Padda – Co-Vice-Chair, Mimi Wolf – Co-Vice Chair, Crystal Huang – Treasurer, Olivia Berumen, Secretary, Bill Juhasz, Principal, Liz Ritchie, Gurjit Bains, Harjeet Manhas, Serene Cai, Rosa Maria Salazar.

Approval of Minutes from the October 17, 2018 meeting

Mimi Wolf made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2018 meeting. Liz Ritchie seconded motion to approve the minutes. **Motion carried.**

Volunteer Opportunities at Thompson

- **Safe Arrival Helper** – We can always benefit from more safe arrival helpers that are available.
- **Fundraising/Social Events** – Fundraising and special events coordinator.
- **Refreshments volunteers for monthly PAC meetings** – A couple of refreshment volunteers are needed later in the year.
- **Not sure if you can help out right now, but might be able to in the future?**

Principal Juhasz suggests that a newsletter mail group can be good to be emailing people about what it's available and might be able to help school-wide

Treasurer's Report

Crystal Huang informed that the funds are separated into three pieces. She put a line on the report to give a better understanding about where the money comes from and how is being used. First of all, we can see that there is some left over from last year. Most of the funds were left in the regular funds account. For the school board donation account, we have left about \$9,000 because we budgeted for projectors, but we haven't installed them yet. Therefore, we can see a large amount left in there. For the gaming account, we basically used everything because we must use everything the provincial government is giving the PAC to show that we need the funds in the following years. The gaming grant from the government was approximately \$5,000 this year. At the end of every school year, we submit a report to show how we used the funds and also submit a new application for the grant. The money has been deposited to our account and we can use it now. We are using that money to support the busses and field trips, and the Christmas Bollywood dancing program (which the PAC will cover most of).

The second part under the revenue is parent donations. This year we have budgeted for \$5,000. Last year we got \$5,920, and we had 51 families that donated. We have new students, and we think that we'll be safe with this budget because when families feel a connection to the school, they are more likely to make a donation. From Karen, we got an update that so far \$3,295 has been donated by 33 families. We think that the number of donations will slow down now.

Jen said that talking to Crystal about the budget, they thought that perhaps, around Chinese New Year they could send a letter to families with an update on fundraising, such as what was the target, the number of families that donated, and the total amount received, and that we're still hoping to get certain amount of

dollars to meet the goals. At the Burnett PAC, they ask for parent donations, and they fundraise for way more expensive things than Thompson. They send an update/reminder later in the school year. Even though the PAC accepts donations throughout the year, Jen feels that once the notice goes home, there is a window when people will donate, but then they forget about it. They don't see many donations after the first month that the letter goes out. Principal Juhasz commented that maybe they could add in the letter the philosophy on fundraising – we don't do chocolate sales or ask families to go door to door to sell things for the school. We don't think parents want to do that. Instead, we ask for donations. They could also add stats, as those are important too, such as we have 233 students in school, and we had these many making donations to school. Principal Juhasz thinks that it's also important to say that what the PAC is trying to do and why is valuable. Crystal commented that, as they have discussed before, a lot of parents don't know that the field trips or other events where PAC subsidizes is because parent donations support that. Principal Juhasz said that it is a good thing to remind people about because they can forget. We might change the letter where it says that donations start at \$10 to be \$25. Doing quick math, we are hoping the average donation is about \$100.

Crystal continued reporting on the budget. The Enhancement list, will be supporting Library Books, which is as usual \$500. It will also be supporting the projectors, a TV, and a whiteboard, for the amount of \$13,300. This covers the entire budget previously discussed. The third item is for the band teacher, as Crystal just got a note, where she requested to a new bass drum cradle and wind chimes for the cost of \$252. The amount is tight here and all depends on what the parents are going to donate and how generous they will be. Crystal mentioned that she talked to Jen, and can possibly move the band items to the regular expense and try to support that.

Principal Juhasz said for a typical request from the PAC, the staff discusses what the goals are and then they put in the request for funds. The staff is willing to do the technology piece, hence the projector request. We've also got the TV (in the multipurpose room) to support the band program. He said we can wait until we see how parent donations are before we approve the request.

Crystal continued with the other fundraising. For the hot lunches, budget is \$5,500 based on the last two years. For each pizza day we usually get around \$380 to \$430. The budget is been for \$380 for each pizza day, and we have been doing okay so far. For the pre-ordered lunch, we don't really make a lot of money , but budgeted about \$70 profit for each one. It enables students to experience different foods. Family photos were cancelled, so we didn't budgeted anything, but it may go ahead in the spring which would be a bonus. For the pumpkin pick up, \$297 was received. For the Nova foods we budgeted \$750. Last year, they budgeted \$800, but at the end of the year only \$738 came in. That's why budget is lower this year. Crystal suggests promoting this option with the families because there are a lot of parents that don't know about it Nova Foods. For the Christmas concert the PAC received \$388 last year. This year, we will not do anything big, but will do something like a raffle and budget \$250. These are for the regular fundraising, and this money will be used for the regular expenses.

Everything in the budget is the same as the last couple of years. For the PAC operating, \$750 will cover the BCCPA membership fees (the BC umbrella of PACs), refreshments at the PAC meetings, the welcome coffee at the beginning of the semester, and the bank fees. PAC Contingency is \$500, we cover unexpected items, such as gifts for long time teachers that leave the school. The JN Burnett Scholarship is for \$500 that will go to students that graduate from Thompson. The leadership volunteer is \$300, and this is for getting something for students at the end of the year for those that worked to support the school. DARE donation is a program to teach students about drug and alcohol abuse, per number of grade 5 students; this year is \$377.

Jen confirms that the student number for the DARE program changes every year. She also confirms that the recommended donation is \$13 per grade 5 student because a few years ago there was an email from the

RDPA. The RCMP run the DARE program. The RCMP officer comes to school and co-teaches with Mr. Badyal. The RCMP pay the officer, but the workbook and t-shirts are not covered. Therefore, the RDPA said to be aware that the cost is about \$13 a head for the supplies that the RCMP uses, and the program could be cancelled if it is not being supported. Schools are encouraged to make a donation to cover the costs. Principal Juhasz says that the officer is very into this program. The officer really makes an impression on their role in the community. Jen also confirmed that she signed through the RDPA for the movie copyright as the PAC gets a much better rate this way. The budget is \$200 for this year.

Crystal continued with outdoor education and confirmed that the budget is for \$1,000 this year for Grade 6 and 7. This year they have the outdoor education. Funds for Education Assistants, which we have 4 this year, get \$75 each, for a total of \$300. Teacher allotments, full-time teachers and resource teachers, including the band teacher, is a total of \$3,456. The teacher can use those funds for a special project or supplies for their classroom, which are usually consumables. Earthquake/emergency supplies have been purchased (granola bars) for \$92. For the Grade 7 dance we budget \$250, same every year. For the yearbook, we budgeted \$100 for a hard drive as we went digital last year, and it can be used for a long time. The item is Parent Education as it's every second year, and none has been budgeted for this year. At the end, the balance we would have is about \$2,500 on our regular account, around \$200 on our gaming account, and about \$600 on our school board account.

For the Enhancement list, Crystal said that Principal Juhasz mentioned that later in the year the school might need some furniture. If there is enough parent donations, PAC will make a motion to add this to the budget.

Mimi commented on the parent donations; she said that they were talking about whether they should have a breakdown on how much has been accumulated in donations and where it's going. She said that it might be good to explain that as some parents might be a little vague as to where the money is going. She comments that on one of the letters that came out, there was a little blurb about the school board and basically saying that the money will be disbursed but wasn't really saying that it will be disbursed to your child's school and maybe disbursed to another school. The letter is confusing. We should make it clear that the exact amount donated is the amount disbursed to us. She also suggested that maybe writing down where the donation is going, such as for example your child's field trip cost is certain amount but it could have cost a higher amount. She said that people want to see numbers.

Jen said the PAC has been doing this for 9 years and when they started doing this, if parents wanted a tax receipt, they had to have the notice from the school board. The school does and the PAC do not have a charitable number and cannot issue a tax receipt. Legally, the white sheet says that the school board can do what they want with the money donated, but Karen keeps track of exactly how much is being donated and all of the money comes back to us.

Principal Juhasz thinks we can put some clarification on the yellow portion of the letter. If the notice said something like: "if everybody donated about \$20 per student they could raise \$5,000 or if everyone donated \$40, we could raise \$10,000." This could help people see the big picture.

The carry over from last year from the overall parent donation is \$13,536. We expected to spend it on technology – projectors, Apple TV and a TV.

Approval of the Cash Flow and Regular PAC Expenses for the 2018-2019 Budget

Liz Ritchie made a motion to approve, as presented, the Cash Flow and Regular PAC Expenses for the 2018-2019 Budget for \$13,406. Mimi Wolf seconded motion to approve the Cash Flow and Regular PAC Expenses Budget. **Motion carried.**

Approval of the Enhancement List for the 2018-2019 Budget

Harjeet Manhas made a motion to approve, as presented, the Enhancement List for the 2018-2019 Budget for \$13,800. Pavan Padda seconded motion to approve the Enhancement List Budget. **Motion carried.**

Principal's Report

Principal Juhasz confirmed that the student learning initiative is up and running. Parents have been invited to look at the items in the portfolio and give their feedback. This could be considered parent's homework. He knows parents that go in and check their work and to see what's going on. Now, the parents can go into a place and see and make comments right there in the portfolio or just respond the notice that went home. They'll assess how many people responded. It will be interesting information for the school. Communication on student learning is two way, not just dumping information on the parents. The idea is that when the parent writes back on the form or on the four items of the portfolio, then the teacher can come to the conference and talk about the topics on the portfolio. The depth of the involvement of parents is key, and that will take a couple of years.

From the first communicating student learning meeting, there was feedback about having a meeting for parents that speak Chinese. We did that, and it was really interesting. One of the most interesting things was that Mr. Stokes came in and did the presentation, and I assumed that the biggest concern might be that there are no letter grades anymore in intermediate classes. What does that mean and what are the ramifications going forward? He thought that if they saw an intermediate class presentation, they could see the value added in the portfolio in comparison to letter grades.

There was a parent in the group whose child was in Mr. Stokes' class, for the second year in a row, and Mr. Stokes used last year's portfolio collection as an example. The mom did not know that Mr. Stokes had his portfolio with 31 pieces of evidence in there for the parents to look at. There were no shortages of notices going home to tell parents about the portfolio. It was a language issue. This is good information for us to ensure we are getting the message out.

Mr. Juhasz is learning many things and has already decided to change some things. He is in the process of working on communicating learning number 2 and number 3. In January there will be a report card document and performance indicator.

The staff have a curriculum implementation day this Friday, Nov 23 - No School for Students. The staff is going to school. They'll be talking about the new curriculum. The staff here is further ahead than other schools'. Some of the things they'll be talking about are some of the things they have already done or are doing. In the afternoon, the staff will be back here and continue to move forward. He feels like they are progressing so quickly with the whole staff doing it, that the cart is getting ahead of the horse a little. The ministry is not fully prepared to answer all of the staff questions and what they want to do with the portfolio because they are ready to move along.

They'll be doing a social responsibility refresher later in November – They'll be taking about what it means to wear your strips, as every once in a while they need a tune up on social responsibility.

Bollywood – We have a professional dance group coming to work with all the students, and he is working with the staff. He has been talking with Roni who is our go to person for special events to come up with some sort of Bollywood show. The first option is zero-budget, because of the cost of bringing the company in to work with the students for 10 days is a lot.

Educational Assistant program in progress – There's a shortage and Mr. Juhasz is aware of the needs, and he's working on finding a solution.

Work order update – The new sound system has been installed and is working on the gym. It sounds really good. The TVs are going in and he mentioned that there is a need for more iPads. We can look at putting that on the Enhancement list. A lot of things that he has put the work order for has been done, as lots of things have been done and been updated. The updating on the alarm system, stuff that isn't very interesting, the fire alarm system, new panels are being installed. In the kitchen new lights have already been installed and there's a painter in the school who is there right now doing a variety of touch-up paint jobs, and he'll be painting the kitchen. All the stuff on the shelves need to come out. He doesn't know if there are PAC things in there.

The meeting adjourned at 10:18 am.

Next Meeting – Wednesday, January 16, 2019 at 9 am