

**Minutes of CSS Parent Council
February 1, 2006**

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order in the school library at 7:10 p.m.

Present:

Carol Berlin-Miller(co-secretary)
Sherry Badior (treasurer)
April Toyota (member at large)
Jackie Benoit (president)
Ron Sweet (principal)
Latrice Lehman (board member)

Cathy Kurio(teacher rep)
Karen Miller (member at large)
Laurie Hirsch (co-secretary)
Debra Pylypiw (board member)
AnneMarie Fryer (member at large)

Absent:

James Cameron (board rep)
Ann Ahern (member at large)
Tammy Willerth (member at large)

Margaret Mills (vice President)
Karen Barlow (member at large)

1. Approval of Agenda

Debra Pylypiw moves to accept the Agenda and Laurie Hirsch seconded the motion

2. Approval of Minutes of December 7, 2005

Karen Miller moved to accept the December 7, 2005 minutes. April Toyota seconded the motion.

3. Guest Speaker

The Etiquette For Success Program presented by Yoka ter Kuile.

Taught by Mrs. Yoka ter Kuile and Taylor Hughes. These ladies have a lot of experience with other schools in Calgary. A 5 lesson program to run 5 consecutive school days except on hot lunch days. An example-starting with a 'Bread and Butter' theme which introduces the use of first and last names, table settings and seating - to the last lesson theme, 'Dessert and Punch' where the students are presented a certificate and toast to their completion of the course.

A minimum of 10 students is required with a maximum of 20-24. The course will be run back to back if numbers reach above 24. The first class will start up on Feb 22, 2006.

Reports

a) Chair – Jackie Benoit

A questionnaire is going out to get consensus on some social plans.

Fun Food lunches and a grade four to six dance are suggested.

It was agreed that the existing hot lunches have little administration. A snack day was suggested as an alternative.

For example, Texas donuts for \$1.00.

Latrice Lehman discusses the teacher appreciation night. There will be a request for volunteers in the next newsletter for the suggested date of June 9, 2006.

b) Principal's Report – Ron Sweet

Professional Development Activities - On February 16th and 17th a winter retreat for the teachers is being held. Focus will be on Ed Plan and items for the upcoming school year. This planning early will help with the budgeting process.

Outreach – On the 30th of January, we hosted a PD morning for 13 staff members from the CBE Science School at Langevin. It was a very positive experience. We are committed to working at strengthening our relationship with this group. A common PD day will be planned for the upcoming school year.

Gender Smarts – Attendance at present is 165 parents. An article in the Calgary Herald may yield a few more attendees. On the 3rd of February there will be close to 100 teachers in attendance for the Gender Smart educator's conference. Our staff has 10 different breakout sessions. A panel of grade nines is conducting a debate about gender to the assembly in the morning and Barry and Therese are interviewing these students during the latter part of the conference as part of their closing remarks. Plans are already underway for holding this conference again in 2007.

Technology – We are very pleased with OSI's service. On the 20th of December and again on January 16th, we held a Project review meeting with OSI and looked in detail at all aspects of their work with us. We are working hard to overcome some wireless problems. As well, we are moving ahead with a new backup strategy after holding a consultation session with OSI and Apple on February 1st.

On the 20th of January, we met with OSI to discuss possibilities surrounding a new email program for the teachers and student. We are looking at first class software. This may make it possible for example to automatically send out a email on overdue material to the borrower.

Last evening marked the first in a long series of CRC (Calgary Regional Consortium) seminars on technology being held in our building. Many teachers from other boards were in attendance. They were very impressed with our technological equipment and what they described as our fresh bright, shining school.

Grant Proposals

On the 19th of December, working in partnership with Galileo and Apple Canada, we put the finishing touches on the Emerging Technologies Grant proposal and submitted it to Alberta Education. It turned out to be an impressive document thanks to everybody's input and support, but especially because of the enthusiastic effort put into it by Scott Petronech. Our proposal was accepted without any changes and we were granted \$150,000. This means every grade six student in our building will receive their very own laptop which they will keep for the remainder of their schooling.

Debra Pylypiw mentioned that at Masters high school every high school student has their own laptop. Latrice Lehman asks if we should consider no longer having agendas for the grade 8 and 9's. It was agreed that a survey would be useful to check for desire, usefulness and size of the agendas.

At the end of November we submitted a Video Conferencing Grant proposal to Alberta Education. I am happy to report that in mid-January we received word that we have been granted \$30,000 to proceed with that proposal. On January 26th, three of us attended the Apex Audiovisual Fair to gather information about the type of specialized equipment we will require to make video conferencing a reality at CSS.

Facility

It is now finalized. During the two weeks of Spring Break, the library will be emptied and new flooring will be installed. The moving company will then return everything to its proper place. We are now working on lining up flooring upgrades on the first floor for the summer break. Linoleum will be used.

We are seeking clearances to weatherproof the area under the school library. This would give us a very useful covered area for physical education, daily physical activity and other activities. Approval for this project may not come easy. We have to get Alberta Infrastructure's permission before the CBE architects will do a preliminary design. This area will not be heated but will have better lighting.

Outdoor Activity Centre

The OAC Committee met for the second time on the 16th of January. CBE playground safety supervisor Ray Hauck was in attendance and gave us a lot of valuable information. A second guest, Don Mackenzie, gave us some great advice on how to proceed. The OAC Committee has formed four subcommittees:

Design, Funding, Maintaining Existing Equipment and Communication. The design subcommittee met on the evening of January 25th and worked out an initial design to be used in the communications we send out as we look for funding sources.

Japanese Intern

Unfortunately the Japanese intern teacher who we were prepared to host was unable to come to Calgary at this time. I am still finding out what went wrong. The Japanese

International Exchange Program has offered us another intern for August. We are undecided as to whether or not we will proceed down this path again.

Outdoor Education

March 12th to 17th marks the third time CSS grade nines will venture to the Pacific Ocean and the Bamfield Marine Biology Station. This year I will be accompanying the teachers and students as they make their six day trip.

c) Board Report – Debra pylypiw

In regards to the teacher exchange, the grade 8 teacher seconded from Rockyview is returning. This is a good outreach program which we plan to continue involvement in. The board is in favor of increasing the classroom number back to 25 students. This number works better for transportation and funding dollars.

c) Teacher's report – Cathy Kurio

A big thank you from the teachers for being given lots of opportunity to work with other teachers through the Galileo and Gendre Smart approach gatherings.

It was noted that when inquiry teaching is taken to too high a level (other schools) it equates to the parent doing the homework.

There was an article in the Herald about the Langevin School on a learning by doing approach (Reggio, which is an Italian Philosophy).

Briar Hill elementary does inquiry teaching.

Committees

a) playground – Ron Sweet

Discussion on the new playground center focused on the comfort of the existing center (wood is warm compared to metal in the winter), and whether it is necessary to remove the existing one but rather leave it and have both a new center and the existing one. The existing center may have another 10 years if it was built to last 35 years. We need it inspected by a structural engineer.

Letrice Lehman asks why are we doing CBE's work. Ron explains that the playground center is not leased to CSS.

The next O.A.C. meeting will be February 13th.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.